Try our best to prevent all forms of terrorist acts

By Dr Tha Sein

SOUTHEAST Asia today is not only the target of the Islamic State (IS) but an actual threat to peace and stability in the region. The disgraceful story of Marawi City in the southern Philippines is a threat to ASEAN neighbors including Myanmar. The incident demonstrated both the power and ruthlessness the IS wishes to show.

In recent months, security forces in Malaysia, Indonesia and Singapore have stopped most IS plots, including a plan to kill the king of Saudi Arabia in Kuala Lumpur.

An arm of jihadist group has occupied and caused the destruction of a city of 200,000 in the southern Philippines. The battle to liberate Marawi is about to enter its second month. Southeast Asian governments are worried that the incident in the southern Philippines could be the prelude to further violence as the militant group tries to establish a foothold in their region.

More recently, security forces found a tunnel, homemade weapons, shelters, rations, utensils and other items in the Mayu Mountains of Rakhine State.

Three armed attackers were killed in self-defence during the two-day area clearance operation. The security forces who managed to expose secret plots of terrorists and terrorist training deserve much praise. The discovery should also serve as a warning.

For Rakhine State, a lot of unnecessary harm and bad feelings have been caused by instability and insecurity. No area of the country is as deeply involved in murderous acts as the southwest. The number of those who were arrested or killed by insurgent groups in eight months in the restive region stood 56. Continued killings elsewhere show there is still much to do.

The atrocities are designed to cow both the peaceful people and the government as well as to gain more international attention. Such forms of perpetrations are wholly unacceptable and should not be tolerated.

The government restored peace and stability to the volatile region in the wake of the 9 October attacks. The Rakhine problem is certainly different from that in other parts of the country, and it has something to do with the ARSA . According to Mawlawi Jirabhu, in-charge of the ARSA who was arrested on 20 June, it was learnt that the 9 October attacks were carried out by Aqua Mul Mujahidan-AMM.

Prevention is better than cure. Effective preventive measures are to be taken to solve the long standing problems of the region.

Otherwise, Rakhine State could turn out to be a troubled city like in the southern Philippines.

Realizing the actual situation, we must now scramble and try our best to prevent all forms of terrorist acts. ■

Narration of Events and Thoughts on Democratization on the 48th Anniversary of Burma's Internal Unity Advisory Board's Submission of Report

By Dr. Myint Zan

On 29 November 1968 the Chairman of the Revolutionary Council of the Union of Burma the late General Ne Win 'invited' (or is it summoned?) 33 former politicians, all of them males, to submit proposals to achieve 'internal unity'.

General Ne Win had, prior to his invitation (and to redeploy the euphemism used then) had detained them or put a few of these invitees into 'protective custody'. Among the invitees that day, among others, the late U Nu, the late U Ba Swe, the late U Kyaw Nyein had spent stints up to a few years in the protective custody of General Ne Win's Revolutionary Council.

In his speech of 29 November 1968 General Ne Win raised the issue among others whether to 'revert' to or amend the old (1947) Constitution or perhaps to draw up a new Constitution. General Ne Win also asked the invited politicians to keep the deliberations confidential and he said 'please reflect tonight' whether they wanted to join a Board (in Burmese AH PHWEI) that he was forming.

I think ALL of those invited responded to accept General Ne Win's invitation.

I recall listening on MYANMA ATHAN ('Voice of Burma') on the night of 2 December 1968 where the announcer read a decree signed by 'Bo [Commander]' Ne Win of the formation of the 'Internal Unity Advisory Board' (IUAB) whose term was scheduled to end on 31 May 1969. (Informally it was known as the '33 men Advisory Board'.)

Again, I recall reading that on the night of 31 May 1969 diplomats attending a certain function at an Embassy left the function early to listen to the Burma Broadcasting Service (BBS) English language news which started either at 9:15 or 9:30 pm. The diplomats left the function early to be in time for the radio news in English.

Nothing, in the news came on the night of 31 May 1969. No news 'emanate' regarding the '33 Men advisory Board' the next night also.

But on the morning of 2 June 1969 General Ne Win met with (perhaps) 32 out of the 33 members of IUAB. Before the term of the IUAB ended among the '33' former Prime Minister U Nu left Burma for India on the pretense of taking medical treatment abroad. Professor Robert Taylor writes in his book General Ne Win: A Political Biography (ISEAS Publications, 2015) that General Ne Win and his colleagues in the Revolutionary Council suspected or gauged that U Nu's then 'illness' was a subterfuge but still decided to let U Nu go abroad as they felt that due to U Nu's popularity among segments of the then Burmese population he would be better abroad than 'internally'.

General Ne Win's speech of 2 June 1969 was somewhat anti-climatic in contrast to the speech of 29 November 1968 where he, among others, said that the meeting was not only of considerable importance (in Burmese TAW TAW AYAE KYEE) but 'an extremely important meeting ' (in Burmese IN-MA-TAN-AYAE-KYEE-DET-AGSI-AWAI –PAR-PAE.)

In his 2 June 1969 he said QUOTE I have not yet read your report UNQUOTE and though he apparently had not read the Report in full he knew about parts of it since he expressed his skepticism if not, in so many words, opposition to form a 'a government of national unity' as proposed by some members of the '33 ' .

On or about 5 February 1969, U Nu, about two months before he left Burma for India submitted an 'interim proposal' to the Revolutionary Council. In his proposal which was published in full in early June 1969 in all State-owned newspapers U Nu wrote that QUOTE currently there is no one who would dare even touch the Revolutionary Government with their fingers (literal translation by the writer) UNQUOTE and in such a situation IF General Ne Win and the Revolutionary government were to hand back power to him it would be an act of physical and moral courage (in Burmese LET YONE YI and HNA LONE YI).

U Nu also stated that he made his proposal in good faith because of his good will that he wanted the Revolutionary government to be a government 'freely elected by the people'. Otherwise, wrote U Nu, the 'Revolutionary government would remain as those obtained power through a [military] coup'. (The writer's own direct translation; I clearly recall that The Working People's Daily translated as 'The Revolutionary Council would be those who came into power by force'.)

And U Nu wrote that as soon as General Ne Win transferred power to him he would convene Parliament (that was abolished by decree by General Ne Win as Chairman of the Revolutionary Council in March 1962) and he would make sure that the Parliament elect General Ne Win as President. General Ne Win would be eligible to serve two full terms as President. General Ne Win did not mention or comment on the 'interim' report of U Nu in his speech of 2 June 1969.

Decades later may be around 2010 or so I read on line that on or about 5 November 1963 while U Nu was still incarcerated (let's eschew 'protective custody') he had written to General Ne Win stating similar proposals.

On what grounds did U Nu expect that General Ne Win who, in late 1963, ignored or disregarded U Nu's proposals would accept them more than five years later in mid-1969? Again decades later I read in a Burmese language source that U Nu had said in or around April 1969 in an interview with a newspaper in India that QUOTE Around June 1969 (repeat June 1969) Parliamentary democracy would be restored in Burma. UNQUOTE.

Fast forward to June 1990. In the immediate aftermath of the dishonored (okay 'null') elections of May 1990 I recall reading in TIME magazine published in early June 1990 that a foreign diplomat commented that QUOTE The State Law and Order Restoration Council (SLORC) will be in power next week, the SLORC will be in power two years from next week [June 1992] UNQUOTE. How truly, how TRULY the diplomat spoke.

And what false hopes or indeed false promises- though in a sense this statement emerging out of the writer's own bitterness does not constitute nor should it be construed as impugning U Nu's (general) moral integrity- had U Nu made in the late 1960s and early 1970s regarding the 'restoration of Parliamentary democracy'?

TO BE CONTINUED

Cash assistance donated to survivors of Y-8 plane crash

THE family of Vice President U Myint Swe and his wife, Daw Khin Thet Htay, donated Ks 1.5 million to the survivors of military personnel, air crews and other victims who died in the 7 June crash of a Y-8 Tatmadaw transport plane of the southern coast of Myanmar, according to a report yesterday by the Myanmar News Agency.

Union Auditor General U Maw Than collected Ks3 million in cash assistance from his employees at the Office of the Union Auditor General for victims' families. Union Minister for Defence Lt-Gen Sein Win accepted the donations on behalf of the victims' survivors in Nay Pyi Taw yesterday. —Myanmar News Agency ■

Vice President U Myint Swe and his wife, Daw Khin Thet Htay, donated Ks 1.5 million to families of Y-8 plane crash victims. **PHOTO: MNA**

Union Minister Dr. Pe Myint promotes local culture at 5th Ethnic Media Conference

UNION Minister for Information Dr. Pe Myint and Kayah State Chief Minister U L Phaung Sho delivered opening speeches at the 5th Ethnic Media Conference held in township hall, Loikaw, Kayah State yesterday morning.

Union Minister Dr. Pe Myint said the Ministry of Information is striving to promote ethnic media and literature.

"Currently, ethnic language programs are broadcast and published from state-owned television, radio and newspapers and we consider it to be our duty to do so," said the Union Minister. "However, what is being accomplished is still too little and there needs to be more coordination with ethnic media and related state and region governments."

The Union Minister expressed his hope that ethnic media would also enhance the peace process.

Past ethnic media conferences were held in Mawlamyine, Mon State in 2013, Taunggyi, Shan State in 2014, Haka, Chin State in 2015 and MraukU, Rakhine State in 2016. This year's conference was hosted by Burma News International and Kantarawaddy Times.

In the afternoon, the Union Minister met with State Chief Minister U L Phaung Sho and state ministers at state government meeting hall and discussed a proposal for a new high-rise building that includes an upscale cinema and community centre on the site of the old Thiri Cinema in Loikaw. On 25 June, the Union Minister visited the proposed building site and saw a television news production shoot. The Union Minister also visited the Information and Public Relations Department of Loikaw District and Dimawhso Township offices where accompanying Ministry of Information Permanent Secretary U Myo Myint Maung, Myanmar Radio and Television Director General U Myint Htway and IPRD Director General U Maung Pe discussed their respective sectors.

Dr. Pe Myint encouraged the gathering to establish a public library and community centre in the long run to promote ethnic literature, culture and literacy. — State IPRD ■

Union Minister for Information Dr Pe Myint visits a public library during his visit in Loikaw. **PHOTO: MNA**

Reporters suspected of relations with TNLA investigated

PROBES are being conducted into reporters who have been detained by troops of the Tatmadaw on suspicion of having relations with TNLA armed group.

The troops found seven suspects including two from DVB News Agency, one from the Irrawaddy News Agency on board of two cars en-route from Namhsan to Hsipaw near the village of Phayargyi in Namhsan township at 3:30 pm yesterday.

During the interrogation, it is found that they returned after meeting with TNLA armed group, which are making attempts to harm rule of law and peace and stability in the area, fighting against the Union government and leading committee of the Palaung Self-administered Zone.

They have been handed over to the police station in Lashio Township for further investigation, according to the Office of Commander-in-Chief of Defence Services. —Myanmar News Agency ■

Villager injured in Maungtaw Township spear attack

NOROSLAM, a villager of Leikya Myauk village, Leikya village tract in Maungtaw Township in Rakhine State was attacked by a group of six people and speared on the morning of 25 June.

Noroslam was praying when he was attacked. A fellow villager named Mawlawi Hardoular is suspected of participating in the assault.

Noroslam sustained injuries to his back and left arm before he fled and reported the incident to the Leikya Police Station. At least five other alleged attackers are still at large. —Myanmar News Agency ■

Suspect arrested in Maungtaw

AMA Ali, a leader of the Tat Oo Chaung Village Tract in Maungtaw Township, was attacked by a group of at least 10 masked assailants and stabbed to death on 17 June.

One man allegedly involved in the murder, Mar Mout Taw Yu was arrested in Bagone Alae village on 25 June. — Myanmar News Agency ■

Senior Level Official Management Course No/4 Opened

OPENING ceremony of senior level official management course No/4 was held at Nawarat Hall of the Central Institute of Civil Service (Upper Myanmar) yesterday. Present at the ceremony were Dr Win Thein, Chairman of Union Civil Service Board, U Myint Win, member of the Constitutional Tribunal of the Union, members of the UCSB, rector of the CICS (Upper Myanmar) and responsible officials, high-ranking officials-cum-trainees.

At the ceremony, Dr Win Thein said "The present course was opened with a view to upgrade capacities of high-ranking officials who are presently serving as senior officials in the sector of management. The course will last for 8 weeks, conducting "Public Administration Responsiveness Trainings, Code of Ethics, Anti-Corruption, Competency Frameworks" as overseas lectures, with "Constitutions and Federal Ideas" to be conducted by Hanns Seidel Foundation, "ICT and Sustainable Development, Project Management, Social Media for Development" by UN-APCICT, "Irish Civil Service Competency Frameworks and Health Management" by EU(GOPA) for 5 weeks.

Similarly, internal lectures—syllabus and curriculum compiled in accord with the international standards will be conducted by respective ministers, deputy ministers, permanent secretaries, director-generals and internal professionals and experts for 3 weeks." And, he added, "Implementing the tasks of emergence of federal democratic systems, Union Peace and development of the public's social lives, ability and capacity of the staff in the nation are of great importance.

The present training can fulfill capacities and abilities needed for all staff in the nation.

As for the governmental servicemen there will be transparency and emergence of good governance and clean government provided that they are equipped with ethics and qualified management skills. Government servicemen are actually the driving forces practically implementing policies of the government, concurrently the ones who are responsible for fundamental services for the public.

As governmental servicemen represent the government, they play the important role in building up the trust between the government and the people. In such a transitional period of the nation, people have greater expectation over government servicemen, unlike in the olden days. Only if the present trainees can provide perfect supports in accord with the present situation, can the good governance which guarantees responsibility and accountability be implemented."— Myanmar News Agency■