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Republic of the Union of Myanmar Ministry of the Office of the State Counsellor Press Release

(21st July 2017)

1. The UN Human Rights Council (HRC) passed at its 34th Session a resolution that called for the dispatch of an international fact-finding mission to Myanmar. This resolution also extended the mandate of the Special Rapporteur.
2. The resolution was based on unsubstantiated allegations. Additionally, the establishment of the fact-finding mission would do more to inflame, rather than resolve, the complex and challenging situation that confronts the country.

- Myanmar therefore dissociated itself from the HRC resolution as a whole.
3. Cooperation with the United Nations is the cornerstone of Myanmar's foreign policy. Despite our dissociation, we agreed to accept the proposal for the visit of the Special Rapporteur and to facilitate the discharge of her HRC mandate.
 4. Many government representatives discussed with the Special Rapporteur, during her visit, the challenges facing our country and our efforts to resolve them.
 5. During these discussions we outlined clearly for the Special Rapporteur the extensive steps the government has taken to promote peace and development for the benefit of the people of Myanmar. We also stated that we are committed to overcoming the challenges we face.

SEE PAGE-10

Rakhine slayings by insurgents

Journalists say militants are killing villagers who support government

IN the middle of the night on 4 July, more than a dozen masked men, dressed head-to-toe in black, surrounded Abdu Sulwon's home in northern Rakhine State. His widow says that was the last time she saw him alive.

"I saw a trail of blood where they dragged him away," said Haleda, 40, showing bruises on her body where she says the men beat her with sticks. Her husband's body was found in a ravine near their village, Maung Hna Ma, a week ago.

She gave her account to reporters during a government-organised trip for local and foreign journalists to northern Rakhine State.

Officials say Muslim insurgents are behind this and a slew of killings in the area that has been racked by violence in recent months, with security forces accused of committing atrocities against civilians.

"It is clear that Muslim militants are taking out Muslim villagers who are perceived to be collaborating with the government," U Thaung Tun, National Security Adviser of Myanmar, told diplomats in Yangon.

At least 44 civilians have been killed and 27 have been kidnapped or gone missing in



A Myanmar border guard police officer stands guard in Tin May village, Buthidaung township, northern Rakhine state, Myanmar on 14 July 2017. Picture taken July 14, 2017. **PHOTO: REUTERS**

northern Rakhine in the past nine months, U Thaung Tun said.

It was not possible to independently verify those figures or establish who was behind any of the killings described to journalists. Insurgents have denied

targeting civilians.

But in two cases, including that of Abdu Sulwon, relatives of the victims broadly supported the official version of events.

Journalists who have reported from Rakhine State con-

firmed that many Muslim villagers have been killed by Muslim militants.

"Villagers who have relations with the authorities are mainly targeted by the insurgents, so far about 17 have been

killed", said Myint Maung Soe, a reporter from Myanmar Alin Daily, who also took part in the recent trip to troubled areas along with local and foreign journalists.

SEE PAGE-10

President U Htin Kyaw attends stake-driving ceremony for staff housing

A stake-driving ceremony for staff housing in Nay Pyi Taw was held yesterday morning in the presence of President U Htin Kyaw. The ceremony was held at the staff housing site near the highway police chief's office in Dekkhina Thiri Township.

The ceremony was attended by Pyithu Hluttaw Speaker U Win Myint, Amyotha Hluttaw Speaker Mahn Win Khaing Than, Union Constitutional Tribunal Chairman U Myo Nyunt, Union Election Commission Chairman U Hla Thein, Pyithu Hluttaw Deputy Speaker U T Khun Myat, Amyotha Hluttaw Deputy Speaker U Aye Thar Aung, Union Ministers Lt-Gen Kyaw Swe, U Thant Sin Maung, U Ohn Win, Dr. Myo Thein Gyi, Dr. Myint Htwe, U Kyaw Win, U Win Khaing, Union Auditor General U Maw Than, Nay Pyi Taw Council Chairman Dr. Myo Aung, Deputy Ministers, Nay Pyi Taw Council members, heads



President U Htin Kyaw poses for a documentary photo with participants at a stake-driving ceremony for staff housing yesterday. **PHOTO: MNA**

of departments, Myanmar Construction Entrepreneurs Association Chairman and members, invited guests and officials.

First, Pyithu Hluttaw Speaker U Win Myint, Amyotha Hluttaw Speaker Mahn Win Khaing

Than, Union Ministers Lt-Gen Kyaw Swe, Dr. Myo Thein Gyi, Dr. Myint Htwe, U Kyaw Win, U Win Khaing and Nay Pyi Taw Council Chairman Dr. Myo Aung drove stakes at the designated places.

Next, President U Htin Kyaw conducted a Myanmar traditional stake driving ceremony and concluded the event.

After the ceremony, the President and invited guests took commemorative photos.

The staff housing is built on a 21.84 acre plot beside the Nay Pyi Taw circular road consisting of 33 units of five-storey buildings with apartment sizes ranging from 502 sq. ft. to 1,000 sq. ft.—Myanmar News Agency ■

VP U Henry Van Thio addresses UN special session on water and natural disasters

VICE President U Henry Van Thio delivered a speech yesterday in New York City at the 3rd UN Special Thematic Session of Water and Disasters, pledging that Myanmar would focus on people, the planet, prosperity, peace, and partnership towards an inclusive and robust development path to achieve the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

“Myanmar has been playing an active role in regional and international arenas not

only for water-related development but also for water-related disaster management,” said the Vice President.

Myanmar suffers from many water-related disasters such as storms and floods every two or three years.

The country also faced flash floods and landslides in several states in regions across the country in 2015.

In his speech, U Henry Van Thio announced that the government of Myanmar was

going to host the 3rd Pacific Water Summit from 11 to 12 December in collaboration with the Asia-Pacific Water Forum-APWF.

The outcome of the Summit would be put forward to the 8th World Agenda for Sustainable Development and other internationally agreed-upon agendas.

He also endorsed the UN Resolution on International Decade for Action, “Water for Sustainable Development, 2018-2028”, which recommends further steps towards the achievement of sustainable development and integrated water resource management.

Meanwhile, Myanmar has joined the World Bank’s South East Asia Disaster Risk Management Project for financing resilience and disaster risk insurance.

In collaboration with the World Bank, the Netherlands and Australia, Myanmar has launched a water resources panel to find development and research partners as well as financial and technical assistance to enhance its networking relationship in the water sector.—Myanmar News Agency ■



Vice President U Henry Van Thio delivers a speech at the 3rd UN Special Thematic Session of Water and Disasters. **PHOTO: MNA**

State Counsellor receives Ms. Yanghee Lee



State Counsellor Daw Aung San Suu Kyi shakes hands with Special Rapporteur Ms. Yanghee Lee in Nay Pyi Taw yesterday. **PHOTO: MNA**

State Counsellor and Union Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar Daw Aung San Suu Kyi received the Special Rapporteur on the Situation of Human Rights in Myanmar Ms. Yanghee Lee at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Nay Pyi Taw, at 11:30 hours on 21 July 2017. During the meeting, they discussed matters pertaining

to promotion and protection of human rights in Myanmar; measures taken for development of Rakhine State and peace process in Myanmar.

U Kyaw Tint Swe, Union Minister for the Ministry of State Counsellor’s Office and U Kyaw Tin, Minister of State for Foreign Affairs were also present at the meeting.—Myanmar News Agency ■

GLOBAL NEW LIGHT OF MYANMAR
www.globalnewlightofmyanmar.com

ACTING CHIEF EDITOR

Aye Min Soe,
ce@globalnewlightofmyanmar.com
dce@globalnewlightofmyanmar.com

EXPATRIATE CONSULTANT EDITOR

Mark Angeles,
markrangeles@gmail.com

SENIOR EDITORIAL CONSULTANT

Kyaw Myaing

SENIOR TRANSLATORS

Khin Maung Oo,
editor2@globalnewlightofmyanmar.com
Khin Maung Win (Chief Proof Reader),
Zaw Min, zawmin.gnlm@gmail.com

INTERNATIONAL NEWS EDITOR

Ye Htut Tin,
editor1@globalnewlightofmyanmar.com

LOCAL NEWS EDITORS

Tun Tun Naing (Editor),
intlnews@globalnewlightofmyanmar.com
Nwe Nwe Tun (Sub-editor),
nwenwe9131@gmail.com

TRANSLATORS

Khaing Thanda Lwin,
reporter1@globalnewlightofmyanmar.com
Hay Mar Tin Win,
translator@globalnewlightofmyanmar.com
Ei Myat Mon
Zaw Htet Oo
Kyaw Zin Lin
Sandar Soe
Kyaw Zin Tun

REPORTERS

May Thet Hnin,
mayreporter.mmm@gmail.com
Tun Aung Kyaw,
reporter2@globalnewlightofmyanmar.com

PHOTOGRAPHER

Kyaw Zeya Win @ Phoe Khwar

COMPUTER TEAM

Tun Zaw (Chief of Computer Team),
Thein Ngwe, Zaw Zaw Aung,
Ye Naing Soe, Nyi Zaw Moe,
Hnin Pwint, Kay Khaing Win,
Sanda Hnin, Zu Zin Hnin

EDITORIAL SECTION

(+95) (01)8604529,
Fax — (+95) (01) 8604305

CIRCULATION & DISTRIBUTION

San Lwin, (+95) (01) 8604532,
Hotline - 09 974424114

ADVERTISING & MARKETING

(+95) (01) 8604530,
Hotline - 09 974424848
marketing@globalnewlightofmyanmar.com
subscription@globalnewlightofmyanmar.com

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gnlmdaily@gmail.com
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4,000 apartments to be constructed in Hlegu

By May Thet Hnin

About 4,000 apartments will be constructed on a 1500-acre plot of land between mileposts 3 and 5 in Hlegu Township, Yangon Region within two and a half years, said U Yu Khine, the director of Urban and Housing Development Department.

In the future, the department will also construct universities, hospitals, schools, supermarkets, golf courses, parking lots and parks. Initially, the department will only construct the apartments within two and a half years, he added.

"Now, we have already arranged to build the 4,000 apartments. We will lay the foundation very soon. The department is conducting the soil test now. The department has also constructed the walls on the land to ensure the safety of the construction site. The project will start as soon as possible despite the heavy rains," said U Yu Khine.

The land has been lent by the Alliance Stars Group of

Companies since 2013 for agricultural purposes. But the land cannot be put under cultivation. Therefore, the company has submitted a proposal in 2015 to implement this housing development project. In the first month of 2016, the presidential office ordered the company to give back the land. Later, the presidential office allowed the Alliance Stars Group of Companies to co-operate with the housing department to implement the housing development project. Both the previous and the incumbent governments have moved over 5,000 squatters off the land to implement this project. The project was begun after the incumbent government moved the squatters out in June.

"Only four- or five-storey apartment buildings are permitted to be constructed because of the soil condition. When we construct the apartments, we will focus on good quality. We have not decided yet for whom we will construct," said U Yu Khine.

After constructing the apartments, we will continue to build other facilities, but we don't know how long we will take to construct these facilities, he added.

Myanmar Property Association vice chairman U Than Oo said, "Upon completion of the project, we will think about squatters who have been moved out from the land. When we are selling the apartments in installments, we should sell the apartments with a longer payment period, like 30 years.

Five miles away from this project, a 600-acre plot of land in Hmawbi Township will be the site of industrial zones, industrial training schools, and agricultural and livestock breeding vocational training schools. This project will be implemented jointly by the Yangon Region government and Korean government.

The government plans to construct 100,000 apartments within five years term and targets one million apartments by 2030. ■



A truck runs near Muse 105-mile trade zone in northern Shan State. **FILE PHOTO: PHOE KHWAR**

Roads to be paved at Muse 105-mile trade zone

Upgrading the roads at the Muse 105-mile trade zone will involve construction of reinforced concrete roads for the convenience of trucks going to and from Muse 105-mile trade zone.

The mayor of Shweli, a major city in Yunnan Province, China, said his city will spend 10 million yuan on the

construction of the concrete roads to speed up the flow of commodities.

An official also said that the Shweli mayor will not charge entrance fees into the trade zone and will spend their own funds for constructing the concrete roads. Completion of the roads will facilitate the arrival and departure of the trucks to

and from the checkpoints.

About 500 export vehicles and 400 import vehicles travel the roads to and from the Muse 105-mile trade zone every day. Priority will be given to paving of the concrete roads at the import/export checkpoints because the budget of 10 million yuan is not enough for the entire zone.—GNLM ■

NEWS BRIEFS

WY-brand Amphetamine tablets seized at the 3-mile check-point, Maungtaw

At about 8:40 pm on 20 July, security forces checked the hilux vehicle carrying 6 passengers to search for drugs, finding WY brand amphetamine tablets worth Ks 156 million, packed in a Penang Bag brought by Naw Dolar and Soe Naing residing in Myoma (East) in Maungtaw township, at 3-mile check-point. Both were arrested, it has been learnt.—MNA ■

One Suspect Seized in Buthidaung Tsp

It has been learnt that more one suspect of the murder case of Adul Suwon living in Maung Hna Ma village of Nga Yant Chaung village-tract, in Buthidaung township was arrested by the security forces in the evening of 20 July.

After an anonymous tip-off that a suspect of the murder case in Maung Hna Ma village arrived at the village, security forces went there to seize the suspect named Marmed Tarshein residing in that village. He was being investigated at the local police station, it was learnt.—MNA ■

A Fire Breaks Out in Maungtaw Tsp

At about 2 pm on 21 July, a fire broke out in Latha Auk village in Maungtaw township, causing the loss of Ks 15000. A case was filed against Isu, the house owner for carelessness, it was learnt.—MNA ■

40,000 people visit the Secretariat in three days

About 40,000 people visited the Secretariat in three days to get a glimpse of the cabinet room where Bogyoke Aung San and the martyrs were assassinated. The historic building opened to public for three days from 19th July to mark the 70th Martyrs' Day.—Phoe Saint ■



Senior General Min Aung Hlaing peruses books displayed at the Myawady Literary House. **PHOTO: MNA**

Senior General Min Aung Hlaing visits Myawady Literary House

Accompanied by the Commander-in-Chief (Navy) General Tin Aung San, high-ranking officials of the Office of Commander-in-Chief and the Commander of Yangon Command, Senior General Min Aung Hlaing, C-in-C of Defence Services, visited Myawady Literary House yesterday morning, where he received explanations about the situations on publication and distribution of periodicals of Myawady issues by the chief editor of MLH, in-charge of Myawady news house (branch) Yangon.

The Senior General stressed the need for reading because it brings knowledge to people, though some books are found to contain false information overwhelmed by prejudices and bias, hence the need to make the truth known to the public, he said.

Afterwards, the C-in-C of Defence Services and members inspected books, periodicals and back issues such as collections of Myawady and Ngwetaryi magazines since the time of its first publication.—Myanmar News Agency ■



A nurse gives polio vaccine to a child in Maungta. **PHOTO: THAKKA**

Polio vaccination drive kicks off in Maungta Township

By Myint Maung Soe & Aung Kyaw Oo

A five days Oral Polio Vaccination (OPV) campaign commenced in Maungta, Rakhine State, yesterday to boost immunity of local under five children against the crippling disease.

The move to vaccinate

more than 10,000 children under five year old against polio comes after the five times door-to-door OPV vaccination in Maungta in 2016 following the finding of disease in 2015.

The vaccination activities began at more than 400 locations in the township simultaneously as part of the state-level cam-

paign covering 17 townships.

Besides, children aged from 3 months to two year old would be vaccinated against polio from 20 to 25 August, said Dr Ny Kaythi San, of Public Health Department in Maungta.

Myanmar is expected to declare a polio free country in 2019. ■



Ms Yanghee Lee talks to media at a press conference in Yangon. **PHOTO: MNA**

UN rights envoy asks ASEAN to assist Myanmar's transition

THE UN's human rights envoy to Myanmar urged ASEAN to assist Myanmar in its democratic transition.

Ms Yanghee Lee held a press conference in Yangon yesterday following completing of her 12-day fact-finding mission yesterday.

She expressed thanks to the government for assisting her in visits to Yangon, Nay Pyi Taw, Rakhine State, Shan State and Kayin State.

Ms Lee said during her visits to Shan and Rakhine states,

she met with representatives from local authorities and civil societies, discussing about issues internally displaced persons, impacts on the local people due to implementing special economic zones, and people detained on suspicion of involvement in October 9 attacks in Rakhine State.

She also discussed issues related with land grabbing and compensation in Kayin State, and Section-66 (D) of the communications law.—Myanmar News Agency ■

Yangon New City Project to start after rainy season

By Ko Moe

YANGON Region Chief Minister U Phyo Min Thein said they will begin the Yangon New City Project at the end of the rainy season.

He said the project is ready to begin to address the growing population in Yangon City, with the regional government also dealing with the flooding issue in the city.

The Chief Minister made the remarks at a meeting at the Union of Myanmar Federation of Chambers of Commerce and Industry (UMFCCI) on Thursday. The meeting was facilitated by Vice President U Myint Swe.

The Yangon New City Project will be launched in a proposed plot of 30,000 acres of land between The Hlinethaya-Twante Motorway and Seikkyi Kanaung-to Township on the opposite bank of Kyimyindine Township.

The New Yangon Develop-

ment Corporation was formed for the realisation of the project, under the complete administration of the Yangon Region Government.

The government has received loans from the World Bank, the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the International Finance Corporation (IFC) and other international organisations, said Daw Nilar Kyaw, the Yangon Minister of Electricity, Industry, Road and Communication.

A public-private partnership system will be used to provide a means to generate electricity and its own power grid and water supply for the new city.

The new city project is aimed at addressing the Yangon's increasing number of squatters, rising unemployment, unequal water distribution, inadequate electric supply, traffic jams and

rising land prices.

The new city project is also predicted to help boost domestic and foreign trade in Yangon and Ayeyawady Region.

Daw Sandar Min, chairman of the Yangon Hluttaw's Committee for Finance, Planning and Commerce, said she wants to discuss the new city project in the regional Hluttaw due to the massive scale of the project and the change in investors. The Yangon South West Development Public Company, Business Capital City Ltd and Shwe Popa International Construction Company formed a consortium as developers for the new city project during the previous government's administration. In the current government's administration, the contract with the previous consortium developers was abolished to give private businesses a chance to develop underdeveloped regions at the same pace. ■

Republic of the Union of Myanmar
Ministry of the Office of the State Counsellor
Press Release

(21st July 2017)

FROM PAGE-1

6. The Special Rapporteur met many government representatives who discussed with her the challenges we are striving to overcome in our efforts to achieve stability and peace throughout the country. The steps the Government has taken to promote development and communal harmony was also explained to the Special Rapporteur.

7. However, we are disappointed with the Special Rapporteur's end of mission statement.
8. We had hoped that the Special Rapporteur's statement would reflect the difficulties of resolving the problems that are a legacy of decades of internal conflict, isolation and underdevelopment. The Special Rapporteur's statement instead contains many sweeping allegations and a number of factual errors.
9. Our goal is clear: to achieve a peaceful, democratic, and prosperous country, for all the people of Myanmar. While we have made significant strides, we accept that many challenges remain and that these cannot be resolved overnight.
10. Forging a lasting nationwide peace is our first priority. The Government is committed to building a democratic federal union based on the principles of freedom, equal rights, and justice for all. ■

Rakhine slayings by insurgents

FROM PAGE-1

If militants were to blame for at least some of the killings, it would add to evidence the insurgency that flared in October has not been fully rooted out, despite the government announcing the end of its security operation in February.

A group known as Harakah al-Yaqin attacked Myanmar border guard posts on 9 Oct., killing nine policemen and prompting months of security clearance operations by the Tatmadaw.

About 75,000 Muslim villagers fled to Bangladesh during the ensuing military crackdown, which was beset by allegations of rape, torture and extrajudicial killings by security forces.

State Counsellor Aung San Suu Kyi's government has denied most of the allegations and is refusing access to a United Nations panel of experts, saying its mission will aggravate the situation on the ground in Rakhine.

Muslim villagers and Myanmar security sources described to Reuters earlier this year how Harakah al-Yaqin (HaY), or Faith Movement, began as a small group of leaders who recruited hundreds of young men in the run-up to the October attacks.

HaY says it is fighting for the rights of 1.1 million members of



A woman speaks to media in Maung Na Ma village, northern Rakhine, on 13 July 2017. **PHOTO: REUTERS**

the Muslim community in Rakhine who are denied citizenship and face restrictions on their movement in Buddhist-majority Myanmar. Militants have rarely confronted security forces in recent months, but troops checking a report of a militant hideout in Tin May village on 9 July clashed with armed men, killing two and arresting two.

Anthony Davis, a security analyst with Jane's at IHS-Markit, said the militants appeared to be regrouping.

"The pattern of events we've seen this year appears to reflect

a strategy of going back to grassroots and working politically in villages," said Davis.

"It appears they are attempting to eliminate potential intelligence liabilities and to a degree intimidate waverers among the population."

Brigadier General Thura San Lwin, Border Guard Police commander, said information garnered from interrogations and the discovery of militant training camps indicated that at least some of the recent killings were committed by insurgents.

Other killings could be down

to local disputes, he said.

Mohammad Tason, 28, was found dead with knife wounds across his neck and torso in Yinma Kyaung Taung village.

"My husband was on friendly terms with the military; I think that's why they killed him," said his wife Hawdiza, 23.

Like Haleda, Hawdiza was brought to meet reporters earlier this month by administrators in Buthidaung township during a media visit conducted under the close watch of Border Guard Police. Following Abdu Sulwon's killing, security forces raided

Maung Hna Ma village, arresting several men and sending others into hiding, according to accounts given by women there who beckoned reporters from a riverbank to tell of their missing husbands and sons.

"My son has nothing to do with terrorism," said Marmuda Hatu, 48, whose son Saad Ullah, 24, was arrested. "They don't have any evidence."

Chris Lewa from the monitoring group Arakan Project said the region was seeing "vicious cycles of violence" with security forces launching night-time raids in response to killings.

Police Major Tun Hlaing said around 20 people had been arrested in Maung Hna Ma this week in the investigation into Abdu Sulwon's killing. Most had been released, he said, but four suspected of working with the insurgents were being questioned.

Reporters said the threat of being recruited, intimidated or killed by Muslim militants continues to this day.

"Insurgents are still active", said Myint Maung Soe, the reporter from Myanmar Alin Daily. "Villagers from both (Muslim and Buddhist) communities are worried that they will be attacked by insurgents".—Reuters and GNLM ■

UNAIDS report: AIDS-related deaths drop by 52%

AIDS-related deaths in Myanmar have decreased dramatically since 2011 because of a widespread, centralised government effort at prevention and treatment, according to a UNAIDS report released yesterday in Paris.

The UNAIDS report on the global HIV epidemic showed AIDS-related deaths in Myanmar have dropped by 52 per cent in the past six years, which is

the steepest decline in Asia and the Pacific. Since 2010, new HIV infections have also fallen by 26 per cent, double the regional average of 13 per cent.

"The phenomenal drop in AIDS-related deaths and new HIV infections are strong indicators of the progress of Myanmar's national HIV response," said Oussama Tawil, UNAIDS Country Director. "This shows the country's leadership, com-

mitment and engagement is having results, which are saving thousands of lives."

The large decline in AIDS-related deaths is due to a massive scale-up in HIV treatment over the past few years. In 2013, the Myanmar government started to decentralise HIV services to provide HIV prevention and treatment even in remote rural areas, through government-run clinics. Previ-

ously, HIV treatment was mostly available only in private clinics. There were an estimated 230,000 people living with HIV (PLHIV) in Myanmar as of 2016, and 57 per cent were accessing life-saving antiretroviral therapy. This is a four-fold increase since 2010. Significant efforts have also been made to eliminate new infections among children, with 88 per cent of women living with HIV accessing services for the prevention

of mother to child transmission.

Myanmar's HIV epidemic is concentrated among key populations of people who inject drugs (PWID), men who have sex with men (MSM) and female sex workers (FSW) with national HIV prevalence at 28.5 per cent, 11.6 per cent and 14.6 per cent respectively, based on data from the National Strategic Plan on HIV and AIDS 2016-2020.—GNLM ■