

PARLIAMENT

Yangon-Mandalay Road to be upgraded to international standard with ADB assistance

PAGE-2**PARLIAMENT**

Motion to conserve natural resources as national duty passed

PAGE-2**NATIONAL**

NRPC discusses Framework, National-Level Political Discussion, TOR and SOP

PAGE-3

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Union Minister for Social Welfare, Relief and Resettlement Dr. Win Myat Aye provides cash assistance to a mother in Sittway yesterday. **PHOTO: MNA**

Mothers, children in Sittway receive cash assistance for nutrition

Under a programme to help pregnant women and children under 2 years of age, expecting mothers, toddlers and babies in Sittway and at the Thakkepyin IDP camp received cash assistance yesterday.

The programme is aimed at providing nutrition to children within 1,000 days after birth.

The cash was presented to mothers and their children yesterday by Union Minister for Social Welfare, Relief and Resettlement Dr. Win Myat Aye and local authorities. More than 8,000 mothers and children are eligible to receive the cash assistance under the programme, which is being carried out in Chin State, Rakhine State and the Naga Self-administered Zone.—MNA

Myanmar Permanent Representative to the United Nations delivers a Statement at Security Council on Government's efforts in Rakhine State

NEW YORK, 13 Feb — The United Nations Security Council held a briefing session regarding the situation in Myanmar at its Chamber in New York on 13 February 2018. At the session, U Hau Do Suan, Permanent Representative/Ambassador of

Myanmar delivered a statement at the Council on the Government's efforts on restoration of rule of law, peace and stability, preparation for repatriation of displaced persons from Rakhine State, and implementation of the Rakhine Advisory Commission rec-

ommendations. Some salient points of his statement are as follows:

- Myanmar has been cooperating with the United Nations in its efforts to alleviate the current humanitarian problems and to achieve its objective of sustainable solution

to the issue of Rakhine State.

- Myanmar and Bangladesh have made significant progress in their bilateral efforts for repatriation of displaced persons. Myanmar will draw on the services of the UNHCR as needed and at the appropriate time.

- Myanmar has already provided Bangladesh with information relating to the resettlement plan, provision of livelihood assistance, access to basic services, and safety arrangements for verified returnees.

SEE PAGE-3

'BANK OF THE YEAR IN MYANMAR 2017'

Awarded by Financial Times (The Banker)

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FROM PAGE-1

- Myanmar is ready to receive the first group of returnees and will continue to work in close consultation and cooperation with Bangladesh for the voluntary, safe and dignified repatriation of the displaced persons in accordance with the bilateral agreement.

- In recent days, members of the Diplomatic Corps and representatives of the UN Agencies including UNHCR, WFP, FAO and World Bank, have been given access to Maungdaw area to observe preparation for repatriation and the situation on the ground. The Government has also arranged day-trips to Rakhine State for the Diplomatic Corps and UN agencies residing in Myanmar in three groups in February.

- The Minister for Home Affairs of Myanmar will visit Bangladesh on 15 February to discuss with his counterpart on matters relating to cooperation in repatriation as well as to find solution to the problem of people stranded on Zero line of the border.

- The Government has the primary responsibility to protect its own people. As lives in the affected areas return to normalcy, the police forces have largely taken over security responsibility in most part of Maungdaw District. Although no major clashes with the terrorists have been reported in the past six months, there is always a threat of ARSA terrorists who are taking ref-

uge among innocent peoples. They will take every opportunity to undermine law and order and public security. They will not hesitate to use their brutal tactics of intimidation and killing innocent people who want peaceful life and living in harmony with other communities in Rakhine. The recent media reports on the killing of two camp leaders from refugee camps in Bangladesh sent a warning to those who want to return to their villages.

- On humanitarian assistance, the Government and the Union Enterprise have been providing food and household needs to all communities in Rakhine States in addition to building infrastructures and business activities for economic development of the region. The Red Cross Movement and the ASEAN Coordinating Centre for Humanitarian Assistance on Disaster Management (AHA Centre) are actively participating in the Government-led mechanism to deliver humanitarian assistance in affected areas.

- An Advisory Board headed by Dr. Surakiart Sathirathai, former Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Foreign Affairs of Thailand was formed to provide external perspective and advice to the Committee for the Implementation of recommendations on Rakhine State.

- Concerning allegations of human rights violations, the Government

of Myanmar has always made its position clear that it will not condone any action of abuse. If there is concrete evidence, action will be taken against the transgressor in accordance with the law no matter whom or what he is.

- With regard to the Reuters report in December last year on the finding of 10 bodies in a cemetery in Inn Din, Maungdaw, the Tatmadaw has already formed a high level enquiry team and conducted investigation on the incident. It was found out that 10 ARSA members were arrested by the security forces on 1 September 2017 soon after the terrorist attacks on 25 August. The next day, on 2 September they were executed and buried in the village cemetery without handing over to the Police. Therefore, actions are being taken against 16 individuals including army and police officers and some villagers who had acted in violation of standard operating procedures and rules of engagement. This action of the Tatmadaw is a positive step forward in taking responsibility and deserves encouragement.

- Achieving durable peace, harmony and development in Rakhine State is contingent upon the nation-wide peace and the success of democratic transition of Myanmar. The greatest national endeavour for Myanmar today is to forge a lasting peace.

- Without peace and stability and

rule of law, the country will not be able to realize its ultimate goal of building a genuine democratic federal union which will guarantee security, freedom and progress for all the people.

- On 13 of February, 2 ethnic armed groups, namely New Mon State Party (NMSP) and Lahu Democratic Union (LDU) have signed the Nationwide Ceasefire Agreement (NCA) in Nay Pyi Taw, bringing the total NCA signatories to 10.

- The current humanitarian crisis is the consequence of terrorist attacks against security posts. It was a clear present threat to the security, sovereignty and territorial integrity of Myanmar. It is not a religious issue as some people are trying to portray. The majority of Muslims living in other parts across Myanmar have been living peacefully and in harmony with other people of different faiths throughout history.

- The challenges facing Rakhine State has no easy quick fix. Ultimately, it is up to the people of Myanmar to determine how to achieve a peaceful and prosperous Rakhine State.

- Myanmar welcomes constructive cooperation from the international community. Myanmar should not become hostage of the one-sided media and activists in policy making process. Important judgment and policy decision should be based on careful examination of the information.—Myanmar News Agency

NRPC discusses Framework, National-Level Political Discussion, TOR and SOP

A WORKSHOP for Framework, National-Level Political Discussion, Terms of Reference (TOR) and Standard Operating Procedures (SOP) was held at the National Reconciliation and Peace Center (NRPC) in Nay Pyi Taw yesterday.

During the workshop, the Secretary of the NRPC, Deputy Minister for the Office of the State Counsellor U Khin Maung Tin delivered the opening speech.

Then, Director-General of the Ministry of the State Counsellor Office U Zaw Htay explained the items to be discussed.

Secretary of Peace Commission U Khin Zaw Oo talked about the structure, political discussion processes, and issues to be discussed during the political discus-

sion. U Hla Maung Shwe from the Peace Commission talked about National-Level Political Discussions concerning TOR, along with the CSO Forum.

Soon after, U Zaw Htay explained the procedures of the National-Level Political Discussion, and the roles of the organisers of political discussions of the SOP and the role of the supervising committee. A question-and-answer session was held next. The meeting was attended by Hluttaw representatives from groups representing the government, members of supervising committee of national-level political discussion, ministers of ethnic affairs, directors of Nay Pyi Taw Council area, states and regions and officials. —Myanmar News Agency ■



Workshop for Framework, National-Level Political Discussion, TOR and SOP held in Nay Pyi Taw yesterday. PHOTO: MNA