

Vice President U Myint Swe delivers address at Crans Montana Forum

VICE President U Myint Swe delivered an address at the opening of the Crans Montana Forum on Africa and South-South Cooperation yesterday, stressing the urgent need to seek solutions to global problems with collective efforts at the national, regional and world levels.

“We all have one common goal, to live in a better world that would ensure peace, security and prosperity for all the peoples. However, the world is facing numerous challenges caused by mankind, including armed conflicts, poverty, hunger, migration, climate change, unemployment, terrorism and violent extremism, cyber security and even the threat of nuclear war,” said U Myint Swe.

In his opening address following the speech of Joint-Chairman of the forum Mr. Jean-Paul Carteron, he said he congratulated African countries for their collective efforts in addressing their challenges through adoption of the New Partnership for Africa's Development over two decades ago and the implementation of Africa 2063 Agenda with the aim to end poverty, protect the planet and ensure prosperity for all.

This year marks the 40th anniversary of diplomatic relations between Myanmar and the Kingdom of Morocco.

“Our Government's strong desire to strengthen relations, friendship and cooperation with Morocco and other brotherly African nations has motivated us to participate in this important Forum on Africa and South-South Cooperation,” said U Myint Swe.

“We hope that this forum will provide opportunities to exchange views on various development issues and challenges facing the developing world, as well as to deliberate ways and means for strengthening trade and economic relations between

Africa and the rest of the world, with the vibrant region of Asia,” he said.

In our part of the region, the ten member States of ASEAN has successfully established a community since 2015 and charted out ASEAN Community Vision 2025. In addition, Myanmar has also been working together with other countries in the region through regional arrangements such as BIMSTEC and GMS cooperation programme which help foster economic corridors to promote connectivity, market access and to conduct other activities supporting trade and development in a comprehensive manner.

In the 21st century, Asia and Africa are the continents of growing opportunities for trade and investments, he said.

“We wish to highlight the tremendous potential in our collaboration in many areas for mutual benefits through south-south cooperation and the New Asian-African Strategic Partnership”, U Myint Swe said.

Myanmar was one of the leading countries in building friendship and solidarity among Asian and African countries over six decades ago, as one of the organizers of the historic Asian-African Conference known as the Bandung Conference. He also pledged that Myanmar will make efforts to revive the solidarity and friendship and explore ways to strengthen trade and economic ties with African friends.

“Our Government has made peace and national reconciliation a top priority to end the seven-decade long internal armed conflicts with the aim of establishing a democratic federal union that will ensure peace, security and prosperity for all the peoples. We have also made significant economic reforms and opened our doors wide to



Vice President U Myint Swe delivers the speech at Crans Montana Forum yesterday. **PHOTO: MNA**



Vice President U Myint Swe attends a dinner in honour of participants of the Crans Montana Forum on Africa and South-South Cooperation. **PHOTO: MNA**

foreign investments,” he said.

Today's forum is an important venue not only for strengthening solidarity and sustainable development for the African Continent, but also for forging closer partnerships between Asia and Africa. Asian and African countries have an enduring friendship bonded by the spirit of Bandung, a guiding principle for Asian-African Cooperation enshrined in the 1955 Bandung Conference.

In conclusion, Vice President U Myint Swe urged Asian and African countries to work together to enhance people-to-people connectivity, which is key for partnerships, strengthening contacts and networking among businesses and academics so as to bring about equitable prosperity, harmony and peace among them. At a time of a growing trend of retreating from globalization and a climate of uncertainty on the

part of our traditional development partners, the role of South-South cooperation has become all the more important than ever before.

Deputy Minister for Planning and Finance U Set Aung and Myanmar Ambassador to Morocco U Myint Lwin also attended the sector-wise meetings on normal trading, fishery and sufficiency of food and sustainable development of Africa. —Myanmar News Agency ■

Maungtaw Border Trade Zone attempts to increase bilateral trade

THE Maungtaw Border Trade Zone is trying to increase Myanmar-Bangladesh bilateral trade, according to trade zone officials.

After Maungtaw was affected by terrorist attacks, border traders from the two nations requested and were allowed to export goods using Myanmar kyats (MMK) to develop the bilateral trade.

“Last year's imports and

exports were paid with US dollars. Currently, some agricultural products and light industrial products were allowed to import with Myanmar kyats upon the request of the two nations' border traders. Fresh ginger, dried turmeric, seed fibers of silk cotton trees, dried plums, tamarind fruits, various kinds of beans and other items are exported as agriculture products along

with shoes, anti-acne cream, sweets, plum jam, Thanaka cake (yellowish-white cosmetic paste), cereal, thin blankets etc. are exported as light industrial products. But other exported goods such as rice and other goods are exported to Bangladesh with US dollars.” said U Cho Htwe, in charge of the Maungtaw Border Trade Zone.

There are some incon-

veniences in exchanging money when imports are being traded with US currency.

Therefore, officials allowed the requests of two nations' border traders on trading some imported goods with Myanmar kyats.

From April 2017 to 13 March 2018, border trade in Maungtaw, Rakhine State reached over US\$13 million, while in the 2016-

2017 FY it was only \$5 million.

From April 2017 to 13 March 2018, the most exported goods to Bangladesh from Maungtaw Border Trade Zone were agricultural products, aquatic products, forestry products and light industrial products including rice, fish, ginger, plum jam, shrimps, dried fishes, dried plum, turmeric and beans.—Kyaw Thu Win/Aye Min Thu ■

Union Minister Dr. Pe Myint attends Tun Foundation (2017) Literary Award ceremony

UNION Minister for Information Dr. Pe Myint delivered a speech at the Tun Foundation (2017) Literary Award ceremony held in Zabuyit Shwesin Hall, Myanmar Banks Association building, Yankin Township, Yangon, yesterday afternoon.

In his speech, Dr. Pe Myint said that the main factor for a country's development is the development of literature.

"It is said that the numbers who read are low in our country, and that the youth don't read. It is partly right, but not totally right. There are quite a number of people, both young and old, who read. Compared to the world, it may be low, but it can be said that there are those who read books and literature with interest."

"The support of organizations and individuals are important for good writing and literature to come into existence. Presenting awards like this is, in fact, supporting literature. There may be a few among the award winners today who earn their



Union Minister Dr Pe Myint addresses Tun Foundation (2017) Literary Award ceremony. **PHOTO: YE HTUT**

livelihood solely through writing, but many are simply writing because they want to write. They are not earning their livelihood, but they are creating literature. Nowadays, there are many such people."

"New books in new sectors (subjects) are being written, and this is seen as Myanmar's literature circle becomes more com-

plete. Nowadays, there are many books that ought to be read, books and writings on specific subjects that are being written. It is an indication that our literature is developing. The role of those giving awards is also very important in this development." The Union Minister also spoke about "book street" being organized at the Printing and

Publishing Department building on Theinbyu Road, Yangon, for the development of literature and to raise the public's interest in books. "Arrangements are being made for the 'book street' to become a destination for international tourists visiting Yangon.

Plans are also made to hold events, such as children's

literature festivals and an all-round youth development festival," said the Union Minister. He added that ethnic national literature book reading events, book and literature shows and similar events are to be held in Taunggyi.

"Literature circles are being formed, with the hope to create knowledgeable persons in the townships who can lead. As more knowledgeable persons are created, it is believed that their voices can be listened to in selecting books and writers who should be honored."

"The world of Myanmar books will develop as writers create books and writings to the best of their abilities, award givers present prizes and readers earnestly read, review, comment and support literature." In conclusion, the Union Minister requested those presenting awards to continue offering honors, and for writers to accept the honors and create better literature.

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Independent media gather information in Maungtaaw

AN independent media delegation, including journalists from local and foreign media agencies, arrived in Maungtaaw yesterday.

The media delegation was accompanied by Maungtaaw District Deputy Commissioner U Ye Htut, who also answered questions from the media on matters regarding readiness for repatriation, resettlement for returnees and works for regional peace and development. In the afternoon, the media delegation visited the Khon-Daing and Myawaddy vil-

lages of Mro ethnic nationals, Owe Htane village (Hindu) and Kyein Chaung village (Muslim), where journalists met villagers and freely gathered information, including accommodation being constructed under the UEHRD programme, issuing of NVCs and their living conditions.

In the evening, they also interviewed the Hindu women from Yebawkya Village, who had returned from the neighboring country and escaped from terrorists. —Thura Zaw ■



Journalists from local and foreign media agencies interview Hindu women from Yebawkya Village in Maungtaaw yesterday. **PHOTO: MNA**



Independent media delegation meet with villagers in Maungtaaw. **PHOTO: MNA**



Journalists observe Khon-Daing village of Mro ethnic nationals in Maungtaaw yesterday. **PHOTO: MNA**