6 JUNE 2018
THE GLOBAL NEW LIGHT OF MYANMAR

Solving the plastic crisis

The theme for World Environment Day this year centers on the increasing danger of plastic pollution. The United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) is focusing on this under the banner of "Beat Plastic Pollution" with a simple message that reads: If you can't reuse it, refuse it. With the very real threat of the dangers of plastic pollution manifesting itself before us, the world is giving thought to reducing plastic usage, which, given its deeply-rooted presence in our everyday life, is a herculean task.

Plastic has been in use for over 50 years, since at least 1960, especially after mass production made it easily purchasable by everyone. Plastic is light, easily shaped, strong, and inexpensive, making it unmatched by any other material. This is also why the disposal of plastic has greatly contributed to the level of pollution on a global scale.

Plastic pollution on land or in water will have disastrous consequences in the long run, and it is up to each and every one of us to reduce, reuse and restrict plastic products, and find alternatives (such as replacing plastic straws with bamboo straws).

Everything from plastic water bottles, plastic bags, household products (mostly containers) to fishing nets have been dumped on the outskirts of cities and villages, highways, forests, beaches and even in the deep blue ocean. Plastic landfills drain out toxic chemicals that seep into groundwater, flowing downstream into lakes and rivers. They render the soil infertile for plant life to grow and wildlife becomes entangled in plastic, they eat it, mistaking it for food, and feed it to their young.

More than half of the plastic produced globally is never recycled and tossed away after only one use. The disposed plastic under harsh sunlight and natural forces breaks off into smaller plastic particles generally referred to as microplastics, and can be ingested by aquatic organisms. Just a few days ago, a pilot whale in Thailand was found dead after swallowing 80 plastic bags.

Plastic pollution on land or in water will have disastrous consequences in the long run, and it is up to each and every one of us to reduce, reuse and restrict plastic products, and find alternatives (such as replacing plastic straws with bamboo straws). Fortunately, the rise in technology has created biodegradable plastic, which will be massively beneficial for the environment.

In conclusion, environmental conservation plays a vital role for us in the development of social and economic sectors at present and in the future. Beat plastic pollution so that we may live in harmony with the Earth's ecosystem.

Let's Combat Child Labour through Cooperation

By Khin Yadanar

Photo: Phoe Khwar

The Term 'Child Labour'

According to the International Labour Organization (ILO), the term "child labour" refers to the employment of children in works that deprive children of their childhood, their potential and their dignity, and is mentally, physically or morally dangerous and harmful to them as well as interferes with their ability to attend regular school.

Not all work carried out by children should be classified as "child labour" or be targeted for elimination by communities. The engagement of children and adolescents in works that does not affect their health and personal development and does not keep them from attending school is generally regarded as positive. This includes such activities as helping their parents with housework, assisting in a family business or earning pocket money outside of school hours and during holidays.

Whether or not particular forms of "work" can be called "child labour" depends on the child's age, the type and hours of work performed, the conditions under which it is done and the objectives pursued by individual countries.

Child labourers in Myanmar

It should be noted that, according to data and statistics, 61 per cent of all child labourers in Myanmar receive the minimum wage, and males get higher pay than females. Child labourers who reside in urban areas receive a salary, while those who live in rural areas get paid only on a daily basis. Being a developing country, there are still many challenges to tackle the issue of child labour in Myanmar, and cooperation is needed to enforce the full rights of child labourers and their rights in accordance with the laws of Myanmar.

Justice for Children

U Myo Aung, Permanent Secretary for the Ministry of Labour, Immigration and Population said, "We have found out that many child labourers in Myanmar are employed in the agriculture, livestock and breeding sectors in rural areas rather than those who work in factories in urban areas. There remain some difficulties to tackle the issue as a nationwide problem. Therefore it is very crucial to take part in dealing with this problem. There should be plans to educate the employers to give the wages they deserve, and not to employ under-age workers. Or else, they can file complaints at their relevant Township Labour Offices. We are all duty-bound to protect child labour and to ensure that justice becomes reality."

Children's Workforce Survey

According to a survey conducted by the Ministry of Labour, Immigration and Population, the average child labourer is paid Ks400 an hour across all sectors, while mining and quarrying pays the highest wages of Ks600 per hour.

In Myanmar, 18 per cent of children between the ages of 15 to 17 work in dangerous environments, according to the Children Workforce Survey, most of whom do not attend school. Also, children who live in rural areas have to contend with more dangerous worksites than those who reside in urban areas.

Union Minister for Labour, Immigration and Population U Thein Swe met with Ms. Virginia Gamba, the Special Representative of the Secretary-General (SRSG) for Children and Armed Conflict, in May 2018, and discussing matters related to prevention of the recruitment and use of underage soldiers. The Ministry is cooperating with international organisations with the aim of protecting the children and preventing future violations against them.

Child Labor Force Survey

According to the Myanmar Labour Force, Child Labour and School to Work Transition Survey 2015, of the total child labour pool, a 55.7 per cent are working in agricultural, forestry and fisheries jobs. For children in rural areas, 66 per cent work in the farming sector. Child labour is a serious challenge, and efforts are being made to eradicate the problem for the sake of the country's future. It's been learnt that there are about 12 million children aged 5 to 17, and all the children who can work cannot be regarded as child labourers. About 9 per cent out of all the children are child labourers, and 54.8 per cent of those children have to work in a dangerous environment. Child labourers aged 15 to 17 worked primarily in the forestry and farming sectors. The average weekly hours of work by child labourers is 54.22 hours, which is more than nine hours per day, according to the Survey of Child Labour. Urban children, and more specifically urban girls, work for extremely long hours. A total of 616,815 children work in hazardous environments and they work an average of 51.9 hours per week.

In Myanmar, there are about 11 million households, of which 28 per cent reside in urban areas, 72 per cent in rural areas. Of these families, about 60 per cent have at least one working child. There are more than 1,278,909 working children who were employed across informal and formal sectors including unpaid labour for family businesses such as farming. Of these, 153,348 children are not child labourers. The number of children doing hazardous work is 616815; other child labourers total 508,846, according to the Child Labour and School to Work Transition Survey 2015.

National Action Plan on Child Labour issue

Union Minister of the Ministry of Labour, Immigration and Population U Thein Swe had attended the meeting regarding the Child Labour Issue, which was held in Buenos Aires in 2017. With the ultimate goal of elimination the child labour problem, the Ministry has drawn up a National Action Plan on Child Labour as a national-level measure to tackle the rampant spread of child labourers across the country. The 15-year scheme that spans from 2018 to 2033 is a concerted effort of officials representing different government agencies such as the Ministry of Labour, Immigration and Population, the Ministry of Social Welfare, Relief and Resettlement, the Ministry of Education, the Ministry of Home Affairs and city development committees.

Child Labour Elimination in Myanmar

Myanmar has committed itself to taking immediate action to prohibit and eliminate the worst forms of child labour by ratifying the Worst Forms of Child Labour Convention, 1999 (No. 182) agreed to by ILO member countries.

As for the Ministry of Labour, Immigration and Population, concerted efforts have been made to eliminate the worst forms of child labour including slavery, trafficking, the use of children in armed conflicts, the use of a child for prostitution, pornography, illicit activities such as drug trafficking and other hazardous jobs across the country. The public should be aware of it and cooperation is of paramount importance in dealing with this problem.

Translated by Win Ko Ko Aung

Republic of the Union of Myanmar
Office of the State Counsellor
Order 1/2018

7th Waning of Nayon, 1380 ME
5 June 2018

Appointment of Advisor to the Chairperson of the Committee of the Union Enterprise for Humanitarian Assistance, Resettlement and Development in Rakhine

1. The Committee of the Union Enterprise for Humanitarian Assistance, Resettlement and Development (UEHRD) in Rakhine has been established in accordance with Order 86/2017 of the Office of the President dated 17-10-2017.

2. In order to provide support to the activities and duties of the above Committee, U Toe Oung has been appointed as Advisor to the Chairperson of the Committee of the Union Enterprise for Humanitarian Assistance, Resettlement and Development (UEHRD) in Rakhine.

Sd/ Aung San Suu Kyi
State Counsellor
Republic of the Union of Myanmar

MYANMAR GAZETTE

Heads of Service Organizations transferred and confirmed

1. The President of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar has transferred Dr Soe Naing, Managing Director, No. (3) Heavy Industries Enterprise, Ministry of Industry as Director-General of Directorate of Industrial Collaboration from the date he assumes charge of his duties.

2. The President of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar has confirmed the appointment of U Maung Maung Aye, Director-General, Social Security Board under the Ministry of Labour, Immigration and Population on expiry of the one-year probationary period.

Rain to increase in coastal areas

There is an increase in rainfall in the coastal areas, as the monsoon is strong over the Andaman Sea and South Bay and weak to moderate elsewhere over the Bay of Bengal, according to the Myanmar Daily weather report issued by the Department of Meteorology and Hydrology yesterday.

The forecast for Yangon, Mandalay and the neighbouring areas for today is isolated rain or thundershowers, and the degree of certainty is 100 per cent, whereas for Nay Pyi Taw and the neighbouring area it is one or two rain or thundershowers, and the degree of certainty is 100 per cent.

Squalls with moderate to rough seas are likely at times in Deltaic, Gulf of Mottama, and off and along Mon-Taninthayi coasts. The surface wind speed in squalls may reach 35mph. Seas will be slight to moderate elsewhere in Myanmar's waters. The wave height will be some 7-9 feet in Deltaic, Gulf of Mottama, off and along Mon-Taninthayi coasts and some 3-6 feet off and along Rakhine coasts.—GNLM

Rakhine State Chief Minister meets Yathedaung residents

RAKHINE State Chief Minister U Nyi Pu and ministers met with local authorities and residents of Yathedaung Township, Rakhine State, yesterday and called for cooperation from the local communities in making efforts for regional development.

"Security, the rule of law and peace is important for the betterment of the socio-economic status of the people." said U Nyi Pu, " The government is building the necessary infrastructures for the transportation, education, health and agriculture sectors, which are required for promoting the socio-economy of local people."

"Cooperation from the people will speed up development in the region," said the Chief Minister.

The Rakhine State Government is striving for increased investment in the education and other sectors, as investment in education plays an important role in the development of a country, he added.

At the meeting, the Chief Minister also expressed the government's commitment to building a Federal Democratic Country through negotiation, mutual respect and transparency while taking lessons from the past.

Rakhine State Chief Minister U Nyi Pu delivers cash assistance to residents of Yathedaung Township, Rakhine State. **PHOTO: MNA**

Afterwards, Yathedaung Township Administrator U Win Aung reported on projects to be implemented in the interim financial period, which starts in April and ends in September, and future plans.

Following the meeting, Chief Minister U Nyi Pu inspected the water supply system, which pipes in water from the Kandawgyi Reservoir to residents of Yathadaung.

The Chief Minister and ministers also visited villages and fulfilled the requirements for the rule of law, education, health, agriculture and social security of the people.—MNA ■

Thai Embassy to commemorate 70th anniversary of diplomatic relations with Myanmar

THE Thailand Embassy in Yangon announced yesterday that it will conduct cultural activities to mark the 70th anniversary of diplomatic relations with Myanmar.

According to the announcement, "Colours of Friendship: Thailand – Myanmar Art Exhibition" will be held from 7 to 14 June at the National Museum in Yangon, with displays of creations of prominent artists from Thailand and Myanmar.

"Khon: Masked Dance Performance of Thailand" will be held in three major cities of Myanmar — at the National Theatre in Yangon on 19 June, at MICC in Nay Pyi Taw on 21 June and at Mandalay National Theatre on 23 June.

The performance will feature a Thai version of the Ramakien.

Thai embassy plans to hold cultural activities to mark 70th anniversary of diplomatic relations with Myanmar. **PHOTO: GNLM/PHOE KHWAR**

Tickets for the performance in Yangon will be available at the Embassy (visa section) from 6 June 2018.

The embassy will organise the Thai Film Festival from 6 to 8 July at JCGV Junction City.

The embassy, together with Novotel Yangon Max, will organise "Thai Food Week" from 9 to 13 July at Novotel Yangon Max.—GNLM ■

Myanmar's restaurants need to improve quality, services

The Myanmar restaurant business needs to upgrade its quality and services, said U Nay Lin, chairman of Myanmar Restaurant Association (MRA) at the 2017 MRA's annual meeting, which was held at Dolphin Restaurant on 5 June 2018.

"Restaurants currently operating in Myanmar lack many requirements; for example, the street food shops in Myanmar. The most important thing is cleanliness. These days, most of the restaurants are upgrading their services and hygiene. Consumers are choosing foods that are healthy. Therefore, we plan to focus only on health and cleanliness," said U Nay Lin.

"We need the support of other related government departments, when we conduct the development of street food shops and restaurants," he added.

"The Food and Drug Administration needs to check some of the food ingredients that should not be included in our daily foods. Some such foods include dye and mouldy items. Our team alone cannot ensure hygiene. We can only educate them," he added.

The Myanmar Restaurant Association has over 570 members.—Nyein Nyein ■

Action taken against rule-breaking cars, drivers

Ten cars running beyond speed limit were seized at the 201-mile checkpoint and six at the Phyu tollgate on Yangon-Mandalay Highway on 2 and 3 June. Action will be taken against the rule breakers.

Drivers from a total of 32,434 cars running beyond speed limit were arrested from 1 September 2016 to 3 June 2018.

Likewise, four drivers who did not fasten their seatbelts while driving were arrested at the Sagar-in tollgate in TadaU township, whereas 12 drivers who did the same were arrested at the No. 3 Junction tollgate.

From 1 June 2017 to 3 June 2018, action was taken against 5,012 drivers who did not fasten their seatbelts while driving.—Myanmar Digital News ■