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Due to limitation of space we are only able to publish "Letter to the Editor" that do not exceed 500 words. Should you submit a text longer than 500 words please be aware that your letter will be edited.

State Counsellor visits Mawlamyine

STATE Counsellor Daw Aung San Suu Kyi visited Kyaikthalan Pagoda and paid homage to Sayadaws of the pagoda Board of Trustees yesterday.

The State Counsellor, together with Union Ministers Lt-Gen Kyaw Swe, Lt-Gen Ye Aung, Dr. Myint Htwe and Deputy Minister U Min Thu, arrived in Mawlamyine yesterday morning and were welcomed by Union Minister for Ethnic Affairs Nai Thet Lwin, Chairman of the Peace Commission Dr. Tin Myo Win, Mon State Chief Minister Dr. Aye Zan, Speaker of Mon State Hluttaw Daw Tin Ei, members of the Mon State Cabinet, MPs, Mon State Advocate, Mon State Auditor and local people.

During the visit to Kyaikthalan Pagoda, the State Counsellor donated offertories to the members of sangha led by Bhaddanta Sumana Ovadacariya Sayadaw of the Board of Trustees of the pagoda.

After the visit, the State Counsellor attended the peace talk with local people at the Mawlamyine University.

After the peace talk, State Counsellor Daw Aung San Suu Kyi viewed local products from Chaungzon Township displayed outside the hall.

Local people gifted a slate as a souvenir to the State Counsellor.

Local women gave a demonstration of traditional weaving for



State Counsellor Daw Aung San Suu Kyi views local products following the Peace Talk. **PHOTO: MNA**

producing blankets and textiles.

The State Counsellor held a meeting with members of the New Mon State Party at the Aung San Hall of the Mon State Government.

Also present at the meeting were Union Ministers Lt-Gen Kyaw Swe, Lt-Gen Ye Aung, Dr. Myint Htwe and Nai Thet Lwin, Chairman of the Peace Commission Dr. Tin Myo Win,

Mon State Chief Minister Dr. Aye Zan and members of the Mon State Cabinet, Mon State Advocate, Chairman of New Mon State party Nai Htaw Mon and members.

At the meeting, State Counsellor Daw Aung San Suu Kyi delivered an opening speech and attendees discussed organizing a coordination committee for regional development tasks,

and another coordination committee for carrying out business through the Public, Private Partnership-PPP.

Following the meeting, the State Counsellor held a meeting with the Union Ministers and members of the Mon State Cabinet. She arrived back in Nay Pyi Taw by special flight in the evening.—Myanmar News Agency ■

Local media gathers news in Maungtaw

A group of local media visited villages in Maungtaw Township to report development there. They arrived at the Sit-tway Airport yesterday morning by air.

The media group went to the Angu Maw Port via the Yaychanpyin Port by boat, and continued to Indin village where they met local residents and collected news on ARSA terrorist attacks which occurred on 25 August, their living conditions, and living in harmony between the two



Journalist from local media interview a woman in Ngakhuya Village in Maungtaw. **PHOTO: MNA**

communities.

Next, they proceeded to Kainggyi (Mro village) and interviewed local people. The media group arrived at the Ngakhuya Reception centre

where they met with the boat crash survivors and asked their experiences which they encountered in the sea. Afterwards they went to Kyet Yoe Pyin village where they met lo-

cal people and gathered news.

The group included reporters from various media houses, including VOA, MIZZIMA, Irrawaddy, MRTV, MITV and MNA. —MNA ■

The Committee for Implementation of Recommendations on Rakhine State

Report to the People on the Progress of the Implementation of Recommendations on Rakhine State
(January to April 2018)

(CONTINUED FROM YESTERDAY)

With support from the JICA, a solar system was installed as a step to provide required electricity for setting up a mini-blood bank in Buthidaung township hospital.

Suggestion boxes are now in place at all hospitals and health care centres to prevent and address corruption, illegal collection of service fees, exploitation and discrimination in the health sector.

Five meetings and discussions with experts from Norway, the European Union and 3MDG fund were held, and a Working Group Committee was established for developing a master plan for upgrading Sittwe General Hospital. Eight repair and maintenance activities of Sittwe General Hospital are now completed, and the other three are ongoing.

Data collection from 30 Enumeration Areas (EAs) (23 EAs of only ethnic nationals, 4 EAs of only Muslims and 3 EAs of both ethnic nationals and Muslims) in Rakhine State - as part of the nation-wide Myanmar Micronutrient Food Consumption Survey - is now completed; and the data collected are now being analyzed. At the same time, routine nutrition activities such as vitamin A supplementation and deworming continues as planned in Rakhine State.

Four training courses on management of malnutrition for a total of 204 health staff were delivered.

Commodities for nutritional development including 100 sets of training aid materials for Integrated Management of Acute Malnutrition, 6 electronic devices for measurement of nutritional status of mothers and children, 6 height measuring instruments, 200 measuring tapes for mid-arm circumference of children and 6 boxes of different special infant formulas were also provided.

Drugs

A new National Drug Control Policy that is rooted in the principles of public health, human rights and development was launched on February 20, 2018, with an aim to affectively deal with drugs issues alongside health and education efforts.

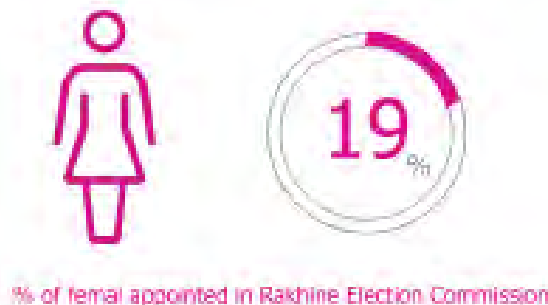
There were 66 drug-related arrests during this reporting period, with a total 88 suspects (80 males and 8 females) and drugs worth of 25,324.93 million MMK (equivalent to US\$ 19.04 million) in custody.



Communal Participation and Representation

Efforts are being made to promote political representation and civic participation of ethnic minorities, communities and women in Rakhine State. The Union Election Commission organized four training workshops and two follow-on workshops for election tribunal office staff, chairpersons, members and staff of sub-commissions at different levels - including those from Rakhine State. The purpose was to identify needs and explore ways for promoting equal participation of all citizens in electoral process, increased youth participation in 2020 general elections, and greater involvement of women and disabled persons in different stages of electoral cycles. In a closer look at women participation in the election commissions, the percentages of women working for sub-election commissions at Rakhine state level, district levels and township levels are found to be 16.67%, 24.14% and 17.89% respectively.

Registration of CSOs are also being supported as a measure to promote social works of all communities and religious organizations, in accordance with the rules and regulations. A total of 21 organizations were registered during this reporting period, including 10 organizations that received registration certificates from the State Registration Board (7 of those received temporary registration certificates); and 11 organizations that received registration certificates from the Township Registration Board.



Inter-communal Cohension

Promoting inter-communal cohesion is a crucial part of endeavors to bring development, peace and stability to Rakhine State. As an initial stage, a meeting to discuss this issue was held in Nay Pyi Taw on 29 April 2018 with MPs of Rakhine State parliament, representatives from all the communities in Rakhine State and government officials. The suggestions and outcomes of this meeting will be reviewed and implemented as a step-by-step approach to build inter-communal cohesion.

The drafting of an anti-hate speech bill is currently in progress, with an aim to prevent spreading hate speech, incitement of violence and shattering unity among different religions and races; as well as to promote harmony and peaceful coexistence between diverse racial and religious groups.

The Security Sector

Training and capacity building programs continue to enhance the performance and capacity of security forces as well as to strengthen the implementation of the Community Policing System. During the reporting period, seven training and workshops were organized, with 245 police officers/other ranks trained.



All police personnel on active duty for security and law enforcement now wear visible name badges. The Office of the Chief of the Rakhine State Police Force has requested to allocate 20.53 million MMK from the State budget, for installation of 26 CCTV cameras in 26 checkpoints in Rakhine State.

All police personnel in Rakhine State are under the command of the Chief of Myanmar Police Force. Police personnel are executing their duties -including arrests and detentions of suspects - in accordance with the standard operating procedures prescribed within the legal framework. The Myanmar Police Force initiates departmental investigations that they receive for any complaints on breach of such procedures; and takes actions for those who are found guilty as accused.

Additionally, the Myanmar National Human Rights Commission and the Anti-Corruption Commission are also carrying out investigations upon receipt of complaints and taking actions if the accused is found guilty, in accordance with the laws and procedures.

To enhance communications and avoid unnecessary misunderstanding between the security forces and the communities, local people and police personnel who speak local dialects are now used as interpreters.

Cultural Development

The following activities were carried out in this reporting period as part of continuing efforts for promoting cultural development in Rakhine State, as well as to enlist Mrauk-U as a UNESCO world heritage zone:

- field visits and data collection on water sources in some wards and villages of Mrauk-U;
- Drone Photography of ancient buildings in Mrauk-U;
- Education programs in urban wards of Mrauk-U regarding Mrauk-U cultural heritage;
- Documentation of intangible cultural heritage; observations, studies and documentation of Rakhine traditional wedding ceremony; field study of an ancient pagoda and stone sculptures in Pyine Mountain near the boundary post between Kyauktaw and Ponnagyun townships; documentation of silver coins, glazed ware and utensils exhibited in the Mrauk-U Museum;
- Repairs and preservation work by Mrauk-U Cultural Heritage Site Conservation Working Group for Mya Wah Taung, Barbu Taung, Shin Nge Tet, Phote Taw Maw and Mingala Munaung Pagodas, as well as preservation of Buddha images in the Nivuzar Mountain Range;
- Layout documentation and unearthing work of the ancient palace site;
- 11 coordination meetings with ministerial officials, national/ international experts, ambassadors from partner countries and locals, for listing Mrauk-U as a UNESCO World Heritage Site; Documentation of the history of 43 pagodas and Buddhist religious buildings that are over 100 years old in Ponnagyun, Rathaedaung, Sittwe and Pauktaw Townships.

(TO BE CONTINUED)