

THAILAND

1 – 17 August 2018

MEDIA MONITORING REPORT # 188

LAW AND GOVERNANCE

'There is no government that does not make mistakes': State Counsellor

Mizzima, 10 August 2018

The State Counsellor Aung San Suu Kyi said that there was no government that does not make mistakes, the important thing is to correct those mistakes.



She was speaking at a peace talk with local people at Chaukkan village, Pakkokku Township, Magway Region on August 9.

"No government is perfect and free from blunders. And no government is free from error. The proverb says there is no lawyer free from errs but governments are more prone to errs than these lawyers. The

important thing is to correct the mistake if any. We time and again say the problem is not important but how to fix the problem is."

Moreover, the government elected by people must be responsible to the electors, she said.

"I ask people wherever I go if your Chief Minister is polite and clever. Our Magway Region CM seems to be polite and clever. The people will know it more than I do. Our government is answerable and responsible to people. The government elected by people must be responsible to electors. They must do their best to make people's lives better," she said.

State Counsellor has held peace talks five times in 2017 in January and April 2017 in Naypyitaw, one was held in Panglong, Shan State on February 12, Myaytainggan village, Wandwin Township, Mandalay Region in August, and Loikaw, Kayah State on December 29.

And then in 2018, the sixth peace talk was held in Myaungmya on April 10, 2018, the seventh peace talk was held in Mawlamyine on June 14 and this talk held in Pakkokku Township is the eighth.

Similar peace talks are planned to be held with students in Kayin State, Mandalay and Yangon Regions.

Link: <https://www.bnionline.net/en/news/there-no-government-does-not-make-mistakes-state-counsellor>

LAND AND PROPERTY

More than 3000 acres of unused land returned to farmers

Myanmar Times, 8 August 2018

More than 3000 acres of farmlands that were confiscated for the Mandalay international airport project at Tada-U Township were returned to their farmer-owners.

Vice President U Henry Van Thio gave temporary land use certificate, commonly referred to as Form 3, to farmers who were original owners of farmlands, during a ceremony held over the weekend in Tada-U Township.

The vice president said a total of 3019.44 acres of farmlands sized by Department of Civil Aviation have been returned to 1087 farmers.

A total of 28,576 acres of farmlands were seized for the airport project in 2013. But more than 9000 acres and the government has been returning these unused farmlands since 2014. There are farmland inspection teams formed at regional or state levels as well as in district and township levels. These teams determine the real owners of the land and this takes time so the public needs to understand the delays in transferring lands, said Mandalay Region Chief Minister U Zaw Myint Maung.

Link: <https://www.mmtimes.com/news/more-3000-acres-unused-land-returned-farmers.html>

ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT

Malaysian companies hire Myanmar workers directly, without broker fees

Myanmar Times, 1 August 2018

Malaysian factories are hiring Myanmar labourers directly, without charging them broker fees, because of a labour shortage, according to the Myanmar Overseas Employment Agencies Federation.

“Employers from Malaysia are directly hiring Myanmar workers with zero fees. This will lead to the increase of workers in the peninsula,” U Kyaw Zaw, general secretary of the federation, told *The Myanmar Times* on Tuesday.

Members of the federation said they expect to send hundreds of workers to Malaysia because Nepal has banned the export of its workers to Malaysia, and Malaysia has banned labourers from Bangladesh at the moment. But, Myanmar migrant activists and workers in Malaysia have warned Myanmar workers not to come to Malaysia because of unsafe working conditions, low salaries and government crackdowns on illegal foreign workers. They advised them to find work in other countries.

Link: <https://www.mmtimes.com/news/malaysian-companies-hire-myanmar-workers-directly-without-broker-fees.html>

MIC approves Border Guard Force-backed luxury villas project

Frontier Myanmar, 1 August 2018

YANGON — The Myanmar Investment Commission has approved the first phase of a multi-billion dollar “city

expansion” project in Kayin State’s Myawaddy Township backed by a local Border Guard Force and Chinese conglomerate.

Myanmar Yatai International Holding Group, formed by the Kayin Border Guard Force and Chinese listed firm Jilin Yatai Group, will invest US\$22.5 million in the project, a Directorate of Investment and Company Administration official told Frontier.

Daw Mya Sandar, director of Investment Division 3 at DICA, said the first phase of the city expansion would see the company build high-end villas on 25.5 acres of land beside the Thaung Yin River in the Kaukoo Myaing region of Myawaddy. The project was approved on July 26.



MIC data shows the BGF will hold a 20 percent stake in Myanmar Yatai, while Jilin Yatai will own the remainder.

BGF official and Myanmar Yatai director Saw Min Min confirmed earlier reports that the entire project would see 2,000 acres of land along the border developed. The project will include a hotel, school, monastery, shopping centre, park, villas and golf course, and will connect with the Asia Highway, he said. Myanmar Yatai Group expects to complete the first phase within three years and is also hopeful of receiving prompt approval for phase two. The engineers on the first phase of the project would be Chinese, he added.

Mya Sandar said MIC had no information on future phases of the “city expansion” project.

“They just submitted a proposal for high-end villas project. We don’t know about the rest,” she said.

However, Min Min from the BGF confirmed that the three foreign directors involved in Myanmar Yatai are representatives of Jilin Yatai Group, which is involved in the building materials, real estate, pharmaceutical, finance, coal, and trading industries.

He said the directors are Chinese but hold citizenship of other countries.

Link: <https://frontiermyanmar.net/en/mic-approves-border-guard-force-backed-luxury-villas-project>

Govt to promote ethnic language teaching assistants

Myanmar Times, 2 August 2018

The Ministry of Education plans to promote ethnic language teaching assistants in public schools to permanent teachers if they have bachelor’s degrees, the Department of Ethnic Literature and Culture said.

The teaching assistants were hired by the Department of Basic Education to improve the learning process and efficiency in basic education and to cut the dropout rate in ethnic regions.

In December 2017, the ministry hired nearly 5200 ethnic language teaching assistants from part-time volunteer teachers at monthly salaries of K30,000 (US\$20).

“The Ministry of Education approved the promotion to permanent teachers of those who have bachelor’s degrees after training,” U Win Naing, deputy director general of the Department of Ethnic Literature and Culture, said on Tuesday. With the approval of the regional parliaments, the ministry began the teaching of ethnic languages in basic education schools in 2013 to preserve and develop ethnic languages, literature and cultures.

Link: <https://www.mmtimes.com/news/govt-promote-ethnic-language-teaching-assistants.html>

MADB provides over Ks 60 billion loan to over 80,000 Rakhine farmers

Narinjara, 2 August 2018



The Myanmar Agricultural Development Bank (MADB) has loaned over Ks 60 billion to over 80,000 farmers from the Rakhine State during this monsoon agricultural season.

Although the bank planned to give out loans from May to June in this monsoon agricultural season, it has extended the loans to the end of July.

The farmers said they welcome the plan to extend the loan period and give out more loans to the farmers.

Although actions will be taken against farmers who have failed to pay back the loans from the previous years, no actions has been taken so far and the bank is still campaigning the farmers to pay back the loans, according to the MADB.

Link: <https://www.bnionline.net/en/news/madb-provides-over-ks-60-billion-loan-over-80000-rakhine-farmers>

Health Ministry to launch Elderly Caregiver Vocational Training

Eleven Myanmar, 3 August 2018

YANGON- Myanmar, together with Japan, will be opening Elderly Caregiver Vocational Training at the Yangon General Hospital, according to the Ministry of Health and Sports.

The Union Minister of Health and Sports yesterday discussed about the opening of elderly care give vocational training course in Myanmar with the Honorary Japanese Consular that also met with the government authorities aiming to provide aid for Myanmar.

On the occasion, Health Minister Dr Myint Htwe said that he wanted to open an elderly caregiver vocational training school with Japanese help, aiming to create new job opportunities for youths and Japanese instructors could teach at the training school. He also urged Japanese authorities to employ Myanmar graduates of said school in Japan.

The Ministry of Labour, Immigration and Population reported that Japanese government already offered Myanmar workers for elderly care services in Japan. As for Myanmar labours willing to work in elderly care services, they will obtain wages designated by the Japanese government.

In Myanmar, the ratio of child dependency are now decreasing but the numbers of elders are on the rise.

Link: <http://www.elevenmyanmar.com/local/14470>

Govt readies 70,000 baskets of seed to aid paddy farmers

Myanmar Times, 3 August 2018

The government has prepared 70,000 baskets of seed to help rice farmers whose crops have been destroyed by

the widespread floods, a senior agriculture official told *The Myanmar Times* on Wednesday.

U Myo Tint Tun, deputy permanent secretary of the Ministry of Agriculture, Livestock and Irrigation, said that during the past two months, hundreds of thousands of acres of paddy fields have been destroyed by floods.

“The ministry will supply seed to the farmers to replant their monsoon crop as well as help them ploughing,” he said.

“They can catch up with the season in time if they replant. If they plant seed, it will need a shorter time to ripen, like 90 days, so production will be as good as normal,” U Myo Tint Tun added.

According to the Agriculture Ministry, as of July 27, over 0.7 million acres of farmland across the country was flooded, of which 300,000 acres were destroyed. Some farmers will now grow monsoon paddy in destroyed fields of sesame while some will try pulses and other crops, according to U Myo Tint Tun.

Link: <https://www.mmtimes.com/news/govt-readies-70000-baskets-seed-aid-paddy-farmers.html>



WWF to supply off-grid solar power for 1,000 households in Kayin and Taninthayi

Eleven Myanmar, 8 August 2018

The World Wide Fund for Nature (WWF) is planning to supply off-grid solar power for about 1,000 households from nine villages in Kayin State and Taninthayi region in this year, said Manager Shun So Oo from energy department of the WWF (Myanmar) on August 7.



“If the state and region governments led the project, we will provide help with great amount. About 750 households from six villages in Taninthayi region and 250 households in Kayin State will have solar power,” he said.

He continued energy is much needed in Myanmar and they will provide help if the government organize it.

There are organizations from Europe which planned to aid millions of dollars to develop renewable energy in Myanmar. At the present, the WWF, governments from Denmark and Sweden, businessmen and technical experts are providing funds and technologies.

Link: <http://www.elevenmyanmar.com/local/14510>

Two years maternal and child health care program launched

Mizzima, 9 August 2018

‘A Drop of Milk’, a 2-year pilot program for improving maternal and child health outcomes across 138 villages in Southern Shan State, Myanmar was launched by Tag International Development (TAG), Rotary Club of Yangon

& @Rotary Club of Vashon and the Pindaya General Hospital together with the support of the Embassy of Israel and Israeli Doctors from Tel Aviv Sourasky Medical Center, according to a press release.

The opening ceremony of the project was held on 6 August 2018 at Pindaya General Hospital, attended by Ambassador of Israel to Myanmar, Mr. Daniel Zonshine, the authorities of the hospital and regional government officials from Pindaya Township,



‘A Drop of Milk’ will impact 4 hospitals and 138 rural villages in Shan State of Myanmar. The Hospitals will receive life-saving equipment for high-risk pregnancy and births. Some of the equipment is donated by Tel Aviv Sourasky Medical Center, including an ultrasound machine previously unattainable in the local hospital.

The Embassy of Israel in Myanmar is providing the relevant support for the project and the Embassy affirms that Israel will continue helping with aid in the appropriate area of Myanmar, according to needs.

Link: <https://www.bnionline.net/en/news/two-years-maternal-and-child-health-care-program-launched>

Over 100,000 students study Karen literature in Ayeyarwady Region

Karen Information Center, 10 August 2018

A total of 123,696 students are learning Karen (Kayin) literature in government schools in the Ayeyarwady Region in the 2018-2019 academic year, according to the regional education office.



There were only 91,871 students learning Karen literature in the previous 2017-18 academic year in the Ayeyarwady Region and the number of students has increased up to 31,825 in this academic year.

“Many Karen people reside in the Ayeyarwady Region. Since the government has officially allowed [the teaching of Karen literature], there have been a rise in government schools teaching Western Pwo Karen literature, S’gaw

Karen literature and students [learning Karen literature] this year compared to last year,” Mahn Thein Kyaw, deputy director of the Ayeyarwady Region Education Office, said to KIC News.

A total of 74,274 students are learning Pwo Karen literature in 934 schools, 49,422 students are learning S’gaw Karen literature in 650 schools this year. There are 2,218 Pwo Karen teachers and 25,754 S’gaw Karen teachers, according to statistics from the Ayeyarwady Region Education Office.

Statistics from the regional education office showed that there were 52,200 students and 1,440 teachers in 721 Pwo Karen schools and 39,671 students and 1,256 teachers in 536 S’gaw Karen schools in the Ayeyarwady Region during the previous 2017-18 academic year.

Other ethnic literature classes are also taught in the region during this academic year and there are 1,622 students learning Asho Chin literature and 3,736 students learning Rakhine literature.

Link: <https://www.bnionline.net/en/news/over-100000-students-study-karen-literature-ayeyarwady-region>

Unique ID Numbers to issue all people in the country

Eleven Myanmar, 11 August 2018

Without any discrimination of citizenship or non-citizenship of Myanmar, Unique ID Numbers will be issued to all people living in Myanmar according to a coordination meeting on holding of CAS Report held at the Office of the ministry of immigration and manpower in Nay Pyi Taw on August 10.

“We are now implementing the Credential Assembly Service Report (CAS Report). Just like India and Japan, which have CAS Report, we will issue unique ID numbers without any discrimination on citizenship or non-citizenship. Later, we will carry out population resolution or registration the numbers of people residing in the country. And then, we will do things that will support e-government or digital government. We have been observing this since 2016. We will add momentum to the implementations,” said Minister Thein Swe.

He continued in saying that using high technology just like international societies, the unique ID numbers will issue based on individual data, finger prints, eyes and facial features. Later, smart cards will be issued.

Link: <http://www.elevenmyanmar.com/politics/14531>

Strategic plan for Youth Policy to be finalized by November

Myanmar Times, 13 August 2018

The Ministry of Social Welfare, Relief and Resettlement has set to finalize a strategic plan which is designed to implement the country’s National Youth Policy.

“After strategic plan for Youth Policy is completed, the ministry will implement it in stages. We will start this year,” said union minister Dr Win Myat Aye on the sidelines of the third meeting in the drafting of a strategic plan for the Youth Policy held in Nay Pyi Taw earlier in the week.

The Youth Policy was first drafted in 2016 and finalized late last year. It was released by State Counsellor Dar Aung San Suu Kyi on January 5, 2018.

“Strategic plan is very important so we need to make it as detailed as possible,” said Dr Win Myat Aye.

In drawing the strategic plan for youth policy, important issues such as health, education, drug abuse will be put in the 16 sectors of Youth Policy, said Daw San San Aye, Director General of the Department of Social Welfare.

The Ministry of Social Welfare, Relief and Resettlement expects the completion of the Strategic Plan for Youth Policy in November and it hopes to begin implementing it thereafter.

“If we can implement this strategy systematically for the next generations, it can change many things. I hope it will be a policy that we can rely on,” said Wai Yan Aung, secretary of Youth Affairs Committee from Magwe Region.

Link: <https://www.mmtimes.com/news/strategic-plan-youth-policy-be-finalized-november.html>

Mobile medical teams to provide healthcare to rural people

Eleven Myanmar, 13 August 2018

In a bid to ensure the better health coverage in rural areas, the Ministry of Health and Sports plans to form mobile medical teams.

According to the 2014 Nationwide Census, the average life expectancy is 66.8 years. As a long-term benefit, the ministry aims to promote the average life expectancy of citizens amongst other health indexes.

The ministry is discussing details about the types and numbers of health staff included in the mobile medical team, healthcare types, medicine and medical equipments, the number of field trips and targeted areas.

In order to cover rural areas more, the ministry will provide necessary assistance after a review of the facts about rural health departments and branches with staff, medicine and medical equipment, coverage and capacity.

The Ministry will introduce a computer system for medicine stock and storage at the People's Hospitals under 50 beds. The ministry has distributed computers to the central and township hospitals to ensure the systematic operation of medicine buying, storage, supply and use, minimize wastes and avoid a shortage of quality medicine and medical equipments for public health care.

Link: <http://www.elevenmyanmar.com/local/14542>

Myanmar Strategic Opens Third English Learning Centre in Myanmar

Alliance News, 13 August 2018

Myanmar Strategic Holdings Ltd said Monday it opened its third Wall Street English learning centre in Yangon.

The developer and operator of consumer-focused businesses in Myanmar said the centre will have the capacity to host over 800 students.

Two Wall Street English learning centres, opened in February and December last year, currently serve over 1,000 students, the company said.

"The three centres operate according to internationally recognised standards and offer students access to a first-rate English language education using a blended learning methodology with students able to complete lessons online and attend classes at the centre," the company said.

Myanmar Strategic shares were untraded on Monday at USD9.50.

Link: http://www.lse.co.uk/AllNews.asp?code=iduthsf5&headline=Myanmar_Strategic_Opens_Third_English_Learning_Centre_In_Myanmar

Mon State gov't to assist flood-hit farmlands

Network Media Group, 13 August 2018

The Mon state government will provide a bushel of paddy seeds per acre for the farmlands that have been affected by the flood in the Mon State.

Over 65,000 acres of monsoon paddy have been inundated in Kyaikhto, Bilin, Thaton, Paung, and Kyaikmaraw

Townships in the Mon State due to heavy rain in July and around 17,000 acres have been completely damaged, according to statistics from the Mon State Department of Agriculture.

“The state government has given Ks 100 million to the Department of Agriculture and instructed it to buy and collect paddy seeds quickly. There are plans to provide more assistance if it’s needed within the state. [We will provide] a bushel per acre,” said U Tun Htay, Mon State Minister of Agriculture, Livestock, and Transportation.



Around 2,000 acres of farmland were damaged by flooding in the state in June.

Link: <https://www.bnionline.net/en/news/mon-state-govt-assist-flood-hit-farmlands>

1000 acres bamboo cultivation zone to be established

Myanmar Times, 13 August 2018

About 1000 acres of bamboo cultivation zone will be established in Nay Pyi Taw and the government is set to help entrepreneurs upgrade their bamboo products, U Kyaw Thu, secretary of Myanmar Bamboo Growers Association told The Myanmar Times.

The land of bamboo growers is being measured and consolidated to build this zone. They are arranging to submit the detailed map and to start the process. After the bamboo zone is established, they will educate local bamboo farmers and will improve the poor quality bamboo products to exportable quality products, he added.

“If we get permit, we will educate residents about bamboo growing and bamboo crafts so they can increase their income,” he said. “Currently, we are providing trainings to the growers by cooperating with related departments.”

In Myanmar, most people are relying on the natural bamboo forests and if they get permit, the local growers and the groups will fell the bamboo trees and pluck the bamboo shoots systematically, U Kyaw Thu said.

Myanmar joined the International Network on Bamboo and Rattan (INBAR) in 1997. Currently, it is carrying out promotion on sustainable management and use of bamboo resources in cooperation with Thailand International Cooperation Agency (TICA).

The Forest Department will implement reforestation project from 2017 up to 2027, said Natural Resources and Environmental Conservation Minister U Ohn Win.

According to current global market, bamboos can be used for small scale furniture productions of parquets, ceilings, curtains, among others. It can also be used in building native hostels and widely used for toothpicks, thus, could increase income opportunities for farmers.

To export bamboo products to China, Vietnam and other countries, bamboo producers are making arrangements to establish an export-import company.

Link: <https://www.mmtimes.com/news/1000-acres-bamboo-cultivation-zone-be-established.html>

Agri sector receives aid in value chain financing

Myanmar Times, 16 August 2018

Myanmar will receive US\$27 million in funds under the Global Agriculture and Food Security Programme (GAFSP) to kickstart a value chain financing project for agricultural businesses in the Dry Zone, said U Hla Kyaw, deputy minister of the Ministry of Agriculture, Livestock, and Irrigation (MOALI). The GAFSP loan will cover water supply, digging of wells, education on nourishment and 24-7 monitoring, which are not covered by the ADB, said U Hla Kyaw.



The project will be carried out in five townships of Magwe Region, four townships of Mandalay Region and five townships of lower Sagaing Region. Financing will be provided for the training of farmers, provision of higher quality seeds so that producers can enjoy better paddy, chick pea and sesame yields that are more resistant to the weather as well as establishing a digital loan repayment system for agriculture purposes.

The project, which is for a period of seven years until September 2025, will also include financing for the upgrading of laboratories where foodstuff, insecticides and quality of fruits are examined.

To implement the project, factors such as the existing value chain established with producers, suppliers and traders, surplus production of crops, existence of agribusiness infrastructure which should be repaired and expansion in network of water wells was considered, said U Hla Kyaw.

The return on investment is estimated to be at least 12pc.

Link: <https://www.mmtimes.com/news/agri-sector-receives-aid-value-chain-financing.html>

Livestock insurance to be launched by year-end

Myanmar Times, 16 August 2018

Myanmar will launch an insurance policy covering livestock insurance for the first time in 30 years. “We estimate livestock insurance will be launched by year-end,” Daw Sandar Oo, managing director of Myanma Insurance, told The Myanmar Times.

State-owned Myanma Insurance, the Department of Livestock Breeding and Veterinary under the Ministry of Agriculture, Livestock and Irrigation (MOALI), Singapore-based InfoCorp Technologies and Myanmar’s RGK+Z&A Group are cooperating to launch the livestock insurance pilot project, which will be supported by the bank.

The insurance application process will involve registration of the livestock using InfoCorp Technologies’ tamper-proof livestock identification tagging technology. This involves inserting a digital



chip into each animal, said U Zeya Mon, CEO of RGK+Z&A Group.

The registration fee per head of cattle is estimated to be around US\$2. There is also a premium rate of about 1pc of value of the livestock.

Currently, Myanma Insurance is drafting the livestock insurance policy, including how to provide compensation in the event of death or disease. The policy premiums have yet to be announced.

According to official data, there is currently a total of 11.5 million head of livestock in Myanmar.

Link: <https://www.mmtimes.com/news/livestock-insurance-be-launched-year-end.html>

New Kayan curriculum drafted for primary level

Kantarawaddy Times , 17 August 2018

The Kayan Ethnic Literature Curriculum Drafting Team has started drafting a new curriculum for primary level Kayan literature from Grade-1 to Grade-3 after the team was established by the Kayan Literature and Culture Central Committee.



Khun Hlwee Si from the Kayan Ethnic Literature Curriculum Drafting Team said a draft version of the curriculum will be drafted within this month and will be submitted to the Kayah (Karenni) State government.

The new curriculum is being drafted separately for the Kayan people instead of the previous curriculum where the text is directly translated from the Burmese curriculum.

The primary level curriculum will include basic Kayan alphabets, cartoons, and greetings in the Kayan language.

Daw Sophia, a teacher who is teaching Kayan literature in a primary school in Daw Ngan Yauk Village, said it is easier for the children to learn Kayan literature using the existing curriculum as they have already been taught in Burmese before.

“In this curriculum, the children have already been taught in Burmese so it’s easier for them to learn when they are taught in Kayan. I think it would be better to pair Kayan sentences with Burmese sentences in the drafting of the new curriculum,” she said.

She added that there are a few difficulties in teaching the curriculum even though it is going well.

The Kayah State government has instructed the drafting of a new curriculum for six ethnic languages in the Kayah State, namely the Kayan, Kayah, Kayaw, Yintale, Kawyar, and Gaybar.

The curriculum has to be drafted from Grade-1 to Grade-9 and the new curriculum for Kayan literature will only be drafted for Grade-1 to Grade-3 this year. Khun Hlwee Si said the new curriculum may likely be taught in the upcoming 2019-2010 academic year. This curriculum is only for the Kayah State and no instruction has been

issued to draft the curriculum for the Kayan people living in the Shan State, the Karen (Kayin) State, and Nay Pyi Taw Council area, he added.

Kayan literature has been taught outside school hours in government schools since 2012-2013 academic year.

Around 300 Kayan teachers from 240 government schools are teaching Kayan literature in the Kayan area in this 2018-19 academic year.

Link: <https://www.bnionline.net/en/news/new-kayan-curriculum-drafted-primary-level>

Mon Education Department upgrades curriculum in parallel with govt

Than Lwin Times, 17 August 2018

While the government is carrying out educational reform under the 'KG + 12' plan by gradually upgrading the curriculum that meet four guiding principles, the Mon Education Department has also been upgrading the curriculum in over 30 Mon national schools in the Mon State since the previous 2017 academic year.

Students are taught in the mother tongue in these Mon national schools and a new curriculum for mother tongue teaching is being implemented.



"We can only build our country with modern education when we teach with a curriculum that meets the standard and is based on the mother tongue," said U Min Aung Zay, coordinator of the Mon Education Department.

The new curriculum is not being upgraded to keep abreast of the government and it is only carried out to reform the Mon education system, he continued.

The country will have peace and tranquility and become developed only when unbiased and fair curriculum that avoids subjectivity can be obtained in drafting the curriculum.

"Our country truly needs unbiased curriculum just like other countries. The government has been doing reforms. That's why we are trying to achieve success in the education reforms just like the government," said Dr Than Naing, a consultant in the drafting of the new curriculum.

U Aung Maung, a retired state education officer, told a workshop that the current education system has been criticized because the teachers are still teaching in the form of rote learning even though adequate teacher's guide has been provided in some subjects in the school curriculum in Myanmar.

As Myanmar education system mainly relies on memorization to sit for the exam, both the teachers and parents lack interest in critical thinking and environmental surveillance. The Mon Education Department has been implementing the new curriculum since the previous 2017 academic year and it is currently drafting the curriculum for Grade-2.

Link: <https://www.bnionline.net/en/news/mon-education-department-upgrades-curriculum-parallel-govt>

PEACE AND RECONCILIATION

[IKO urges KNU to call emergency congress to review peace process](#)

Karen Information Center, 16 August 2018

The International Karen Organization (IKO) has urged the Karen National Union (KNU) to call an emergency congress to review and steer the ongoing peace and political processes.



The IKO spokesperson Mahn Orlando told KIC News that the IKO gave the suggestion in a statement that was released at the end of its second conference, which was held in Omaha, Nebraska in the United States on August 6-8.

“The KNU chair himself has admitted that doing peace is like climbing a greasy pole. Both the delegates who attended [the conference] and those living outside [the country] believe

that this path will not take us to the path, which is expected by the entire Karen people. That’s why they need to call the congress and discuss how to proceed on this [issue]. The KNU needs to respect and listen to not only the IKO’s voice but also the public’s voice and review the future plan,” said Mahn Orlando.

The IKO advised the KNU to rebuild solidarity based on the organization’s policy in order to strengthen the organization, build a stronger administration and the Karen National Liberation Army (KNLA), cooperate with allied organizations, and for the KNU leaders to rebuild affection, respect, and trust from the Karen people.

A total of 110 delegates from respective member countries from Asia-Pacific, Europe, and the United States-Canada attended the IKO Conference and reviewed work programs that were set down by the first conference and discuss the ongoing peace implementation process and political processes in Myanmar.

The IKO was established by Kayin social organizations from over 30 countries in the Asia-Pacific, Europe, and North America in September 2014 and the conference is held annually.

The KNU Congress is held every four years in line with its constitution and the last congress covered a review on the tasks that were carried out within four years, submission and review of reports by respective townships and districts, and election of central executive committee members and central standing committee members.

Link: <https://www.bnionline.net/en/news/iko-urges-knu-call-emergency-congress-review-peace-process>

OTHERS

[Ceremony changed title after authorities ban the use of ‘Karenni National Resistance Day’](#)

Kantarawaddy Times, 10 August 2018

A ceremony commemorating the 70th anniversary of the Karenni National Resistance Day was held as a multi-organization prayer service on August 9 as the coordinators were not allowed to use the words ‘Karenni

organization prayer service on August 9 as the coordinators were not allowed to use the words 'Karenni National Resistance Day'.

The Karenni (Kayah) State Minister of Security and Border Affairs met with the ceremony coordinators and asked them to use a different title.

The ceremony was only allowed to use the title 'multi-organization prayer service' when it was held at Mya Le, also known as Man Lar, Village of Demoso Township.



"We have original planned to hold the 70th Karenni National Resistance Day ceremony, as stated in the invitation letters to the public. We planned to use the words in the archway, but the state government, especially the Security and Border Affairs, the Tatmadaw, summoned us and pressured us to use a different title," the ceremony coordination committee's chair U Chit Tun told the media at the end of the ceremony.

He explained that the title 'Karenni National Resistance Day' was used due to the history and the ceremony did not include anything that can make the country and the state suffer.

"No matter what organization, party, or government, they should negotiate with the public and consult us in such kind of situations where they cooperate with the public. It's not good to restrict us with letters or threaten us from far away," U Chit Tun continued.

A local youth who attended the ceremony said he did not know the reason why the title was changed but he felt sad about it.

"I thought I would see the Karenni Resistance Day ceremony, but when I felt something when I arrived here. I feel sad. It's questionable why we are not allowed to use the words," he said.

This was the first time local organizations in the Karenni State gathered to commemorate the 70th anniversary of the Karenni National Resistance Day. Leaders of ethnic armed organizations, various ethnic people from the Karenni State, respective civil society organizations, and local residents attended the ceremony.

Link: <https://www.bnionline.net/en/news/ceremony-changed-title-after-authorities-ban-use-karenni-national-resistance-day>

Despite Official Threats to Stop Karen Martyrs' Day – It Marches On – Commemorated in the Delta Region

Karen Information Center, 14 August 2018



Karen leaders in the Irrawaddy Region ignored warnings and threats from Burmese authorities trying to stop Karen people commemorating the annual Martyr Day on August 12.

The Karen leaders from Hinthada Township are angry at the Burmese authorities for disturbing and threatening

law suits over the commemoration of the 68th Karen Martyrs Day.

Officials from the Kayin People's Party's said they ignored warnings and threats from the government and held the Karen Martyrs'.

Martyr Day activities include the singing of the Karen National Song, saluting the Karen Flag, saluting the deceased Karen Martyrs and the placing of wreaths given by each township.

Event organizers said that Saw Kyaw Gyi, the KKP officer for Hinthada Township who organized the event, together with P'doh Mahn Nyein Maung, the head of the Karen National Union Alliance Affair Department and Executive Committee member and three other event organizers are now the focus of an investigation at the township office.

The Karen National Union's Executive Committee member, P'doh Mahn Nyein Maung said the disruptions by government authorities was a deliberate attempt to sabotage Martyr Day and is not seen as a positive move.

"This act of disturbing and disrespect of ethnic people traditions, culture, and historical heritage is insulting to the dignity of the ethnic group. It is an insult to all Karen people. They [government authorities] will have to be held accountable for this. This type of action adds difficulties to the ongoing peace process and to national reconciliation."

The celebration was attended by a crowd of about 1,000 youths from Myan Aung, Lay Myat Nar, Zalon, Danu Phyu, Ma Au Pin and Hinthada Townships.

Link: <https://www.bnionline.net/en/news/despise-official-threats-stop-karen-martyrs-day-it-marches-commemorated-delta-region>

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