

**The press conference on Rakhine trip by Chairman of the Central Committee
for Rakhine State Peace, Stability and Development Implementation Vice
President Dr Sai Mauk Kham**

Yangon, 9 July 2013

The press conference on Rakhine trip by Chairman of the Central Committee for Rakhine State Peace, Stability and Development Implementation Vice President Dr Sai Mauk Kham was held at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (Yangon Branch), on 9 July 2013.

It was attended by Secretary of the Central Committee and chairmen of the works committee, Rakhine State Security and Border Affairs Minister, the State Advocate-General, foreign ambassadors, diplomats, officials from UN agencies and local and foreign media.

Deputy Minister for Foreign Affairs U Thant Kyaw said that the government has resolutely taken measures for putting an end to the communal violence in Rakhine State and ensuring the safety and security of the lives and prosperity of the people there, irrespective of their racial or religious background. The trip gave us all a great chance to witness the situation in Rakhine State and the works done so far, by the State government, regional government and the concerned working committees under the guidance of the Central Committee in collaboration with the UN agencies and international organizations, he added. He continued that the State sees a number of achievements on the humanitarian works but there are challenges on humanitarian works, recovery and development assistance.

Secretary of the Central Committee Deputy Minister Maj Gen Zaw Win explained transparent cooperation of the Union government and the state government with UN agencies and INGOs. For more effective coordination, Coordination Centre has been opened in Sittway since 4 May, 2013. It really effects correct information sharing and coordination tasks.

Coordination Centre should be extensively opened in the conflict-affected areas such as Meybon, Pauktaw, Minbya, MraukU and Kyaukpyu Townships.

The Central Committee is placing great emphasis on recommendations by the Rakhine State Conflict Investigation Commission's Report. UN agencies and International Organizations also suggest that under the government leadership, confidence and trust-building and reconciliation efforts reducing tensions between the two communities should be addressed and get free movement to undertake the normal livelihood activities of IDPs, he added.

Chairman of the Socio Economic Development Working Committee Union Minister U Aye Myint explained briefly about the supply and distribution of paddy seeds and fertilizers, completion of water ponds and wells, supply and distribution of tractors and power tillers, completion of training course for utilization of tractors and power tillers, land cultivation, use of fuel for agricultural machineries, distribution of fuels, requirements of fishing boats and fishing nets and the matters related to education, health, communication and job creation.

Out of 19,860 baskets of paddy seeds that had already arrived in Rakhine State in May, 15,487 baskets have been supplied to 9,930 farmland acres till 4 July and the remaining paddy seeds shall be distributed to the required areas. 11 water ponds and 4 handheld wells are already completed in five designated townships—Minbya, Mrauk U , Yathedaung, Myebon and Pauktaw and it cost K 34.82 million.

In May 2013, 2 tractors and 288 power tillers and accessories have already been delivered to Rakhine State and 282 power tillers have been distributed and the remaining 6 power tillers have already kept in Sittway as a reserve. It cost K 506.93 million for those machines.

Regarding the training courses for proper utilization of Tractors and Power Tillers, Agricultural Mechanization Department has already conducted training courses for proper utilization of Tractors and Power Tillers in villages of Kyauktaw, Pauktaw, Minbya, Maungdaw and Yathedaung Townships in the Rakhine State in order to perform the startup of cultivations in time.

The diesel price during the training course costs K3.37 million. 3521 acres of land has been cultivated by Farm Machineries and Accessories by using 17 Tractors and 2

Power Tillers owned by State Government and the remaining land will be cultivated before the end of the ploughing season.

For the supply of fertilizers for agricultural activities, 12, 800 bags of fertilizers arrived in Sittway by early June 2013 and 8, 614 bags have been distributed to various townships — Minbya , Kyauktaw , Mrauk U , Yanbye , Maungdaw , Pauktaw, Yathedaung and Sittway—according to their requirements. The remaining bags have been handed over to Rakhine State Government as a reserve and for necessary use.

Regarding with the distribution of diesel fuels, the total of 6,952 galloons of diesel have been issued to Sittway, MraukU, Minbya, Kyauktaw , Myebon , Pauktaw, Yathedaung, Maungdaw and Yanbye Townships.

2000 sets of different types of fishing nets and 500 rolls of ropes have already been delivered to the relevant fishermen. Over K 430 million is required to buy fishing boats and related fishing nets.

A total of 7034 students are studying at 23 camps in six townships and 209 teachers are required to fulfill the requirements of education. Actually, 33 schools are to be constructed within the affected areas in the Rakhine State and among them, 26 schools will be built by UNICEF and seven by the Ministry of Education.

The Government of Rakhine State has approved to construct the schools in respective villages by using US\$ 1 million Aid from Indonesia. In the health sector, 29 temporary clinics are to be constructed at 11 townships in Rakhine State.

The phone cards have been delivered to 69 camps for better communication in this Region. Extension of auto telephone lines will be carried out.

Rakhine State Advocate-General U Hla Thein said that shelters have been arranged for 90 per cent of victims before the rainy season even though the plan would be dilemma because of Cyclone Mahasen. The job would be better than before will be arranged for those people in this region. To live peaceful co-existence and not to happen any conflicts between two social groups, cooperation with unity will overcome these issues.

The Union Ministers, the deputy ministers and responsible persons replied to questions raised by local and foreign media persons.

Q: We heard that some prisoners died in the prison in Rakhine State and please let us know why they died?

Second questions is: which action is being taken against those who occupied the places which were owned by Bengalis before the conflict happened?

A: The news that the prisoners died in the Sittway Prison is just a rumor. If prisoners die in Sittway Prison, responsible departments will report us.

For the second question: according to the law in Myanmar, the government is solely responsible to manage an area after fire. Both Bengali and Rakhine are not allowed to stay in the area. Regarding the resettlement in the area, it has something to do with a policy that could deter conflicts.

Currently, the Union government, Rakhine State government and international agencies are working together to resettle the both communities under the shelters

Q: Please let me know how measures would be taken to build the mutual trust between the two communities?

A: It is found that the conflict has spread to other countries such as Malaysia and India. How does the government take measures to settle the issue.

It will take time for both communities to heal themselves to relieve from mental trauma. The two different communities are staying separately because they feel that they are safe only when they are separated.

That is the current and temporary problem. Our government is working our best to bring peaceful coexistence to the two communities.

We all not only denounce the terror attacks on holy places but also on any place in any country and on any place in the world. The government has been making all out efforts for peaceful coexistence of different communities in the country and for community peace.

All countries should co-operate each other to stop the spread of conflicts to other countries.

Q: Regarding the rule of law in Rakhine State, How many cases have been judged and how many cases remained to be judged? How can we measure the peaceful coexistence in the long run?

A: Five hundred and seven culprits of 195 cases have been sentenced. Courts are still hearing 45 cases involving 662 culprits.

Q: How many security forces are deployed in Rakhine State?

A: Over 6000 forces comprising 2000 policemen of Rakhine State Police Force, over 3000 security forces and 1200 border region and immigration forces, and forces from the Tatmadaw are cooperating to provide security to the state.