

## THAILAND

4 – 26 February 2016

### MEDIA MONITORING REPORT # 143

#### PEACE AND RECONCILIATION

##### [Stressing Unity, UNFC Forms New Team to Lead Peace Dialogue](#)

Irrawaddy News, 22 February 2016

CHIANG MAI, Thailand — a meeting of ethnic armed groups in Thailand ended on Sunday with the forming of two separate teams tasked with resolving ongoing conflict in northern Shan State and leading peace negotiations with the incoming government.



During the four-day meeting in the northern Thai city of Chiang Mai, nearly 50 leaders of the United Nationalities Federal Council (UNFC) discussed developments in the country's military and political affairs as well as the prospects for federalism.

One of the outcomes of the meeting was the creation of a five-member "negotiation team" led by Nai Hong Sar, a senior negotiator for Burma's ethnic armed groups.

The body will aim to reduce tensions between UNFC member the Ta'ang National Liberation Army (TNLA) and the Shan State Army-South (SSA-S), a non-member.

Link: <http://www.irrawaddy.com/burma/stressing-unity-unfc-forms-new-team-to-lead-peace-dialogue.html>

##### [Myanmar gov't, signatory armed groups agree to prevent further clashes](#)

Xinhua, 25 February 2016

YANGON, Feb. 25 (Xinhua) -- The Myanmar government, eight signatory ethnic armed groups and civil society groups have agreed to seek ways to prevent further clashes, an official report said Thursday, quoting a statement from the Joint Cease fire Monitoring Committee (JCMC).

The JCMC issued the statement following three days' talks at the Myanmar Peace Center in Yangon, referring to the development in the aftermath of the Nationwide ceasefire Accord (NCA) signed on Oct. 15 last year, particularly recent clashes between the Restoration Council of Shan State (RCSS) / Shan State Army-South (SSA-S) and Taaung National Liberation Army (TNLA) in northern Shan state which have displaced nearly 4,000 people.

The JCMC said it reserves the right to take action against any party responsible for further clashes, adding that all the committee members remain steadfast in the peace process and add new momentum to the restoration of lasting peace.

Link: [http://news.xinhuanet.com/english/2016-02/25/c\\_135129527.htm](http://news.xinhuanet.com/english/2016-02/25/c_135129527.htm)

## LAW AND GOVERNANCE

### [Pyidaungsu Hluttaw schedules presidential nominations for 17 March](#)

The Global New Light of Myanmar, 9 February 2016

The Pyidaungsu Hluttaw announced yesterday that group meetings for the nominations of three vice presidents will take place on March 17 in order to elect Myanmar's next president and two vice presidents.

The three candidates are to be respectively nominated by the Amyotha Hluttaw (Upper House), the Pyithu Hluttaw (Lower House) and the Tatmadaw MPs.

At the first meeting of the second parliament, Speaker Mahn Win Khaing Than pledged to strive, without corruption or bias, to promote democracy and human rights for the people of Myanmar.



Out of a total of 653 MPs, 648 parliamentarians attended the parliamentary meeting.

Link: [http://issuu.com/myanmarnewspaper/docs/9\\_feb\\_16\\_gnlm](http://issuu.com/myanmarnewspaper/docs/9_feb_16_gnlm)

### [Suu Kyi urges patience over Myanmar presidency decision](#)

Mizzima, 4 February 2016

Suu Kyi and hundreds of fellow lawmakers from her National League for Democracy (NLD) strode into the legislature on Monday with a huge mandate from November elections, carrying the hopes of a nation desperate to rebound after decades under the military yoke.



But the democracy champion, who is herself barred from the presidency under a constitution scripted by the former junta, said it was "not yet time to form a government".

She was speaking at her first press conference since the new parliament.

"Don't be anxious. You will know when the time comes," Suu Kyi told reporters, adding that the party must "think carefully" about its choice of a candidate and suggesting the decision would not come until next month.

Elected members of both houses of parliament and the military will nominate three candidates to replace outgoing President Thein Sein, who retains his post until the end of March.

Link: <http://mizzima.com/latest-news-news-domestic/suu-kyi-urges-patience-over-myanmar-presidency-decision#sthash.sQ4I6Z5J.dpuf>

### [Mon State Elects Parliament's First Female Speaker](#)

The Irrawaddy, 10 February 2016

Tin Ei, an MP from Thanbyuzayat constituency in Mon State, has become the first female speaker of one of Burma's regional parliaments.

Burma's 14 state and division legislatures elected speakers and deputy speakers on Monday, with lawmakers from the National League for Democracy (NLD) assuming the posts in all but two parliaments—Arakan and Shan states.

Tin Ei, a vibrant 70-year-old, said she learned on Sunday that she would be nominated as the speaker of the Mon State parliament. The selection of the position was finalized on February 8, the first day of meetings for state and division parliaments.

An NLD veteran since 1988, Tin Ei's first parliamentary campaign was contesting the 1990 election, but she lost to a candidate from the Mon National Democratic Front.

Now a lawyer with 35 years' experience practicing law in Mon State, Tin Ei hopes to bring about legal sector reform through the regional parliament. She is currently reviewing the laws enacted by the state's previous legislature and assessing why others did not pass.



Link: <http://www.irrawaddy.com/burma/mon-state-elects-parliaments-first-female-speaker.html>

### **Myanmar Government Team Meets With Opposition Party to Discuss Power Transfer**

Radio Free Asia, 24 February 2016



Representatives from Myanmar's government met with a team from the opposition National League for Democracy (NLD) party on Wednesday in Naypyidaw to discuss the transfer of political power that will formally take place on April 1, a member of the president's office said.

"Today's meeting mainly focused on the transfer-of-power ceremony scheduled to be held at the Presidential Palace," Zaw Htay, deputy director general of the president's office, who attended the meeting, told RFA's Myanmar Service.

The government formed the support committee to handle the power transfer following a meeting between President Thein Sein and NLD chairwoman Aung San Suu Kyi in early December.

Link: <http://www.rfa.org/english/news/myanmar/myanmar-government-team-meets-wtih-opposition-party-to-discuss-power-transfer-02242016162217.html>

## **ECONOMIC AND DEVELOPMENT**

### **Myanmar to import electricity from Laos**

Mizzima, 4 February 2016

Myanmar hopes to import electricity from Laos at an installed capacity of about 300 megawatts (MW) in the near future, the *Vientiane Times* reported on 3 February.

Speaking at the 10th Party Congress recently, Party Secretary of the Ministry of Energy and Mines Dr Khammany Inthirath



reported that Laos will begin initial electricity exports to Myanmar this year.

Deputy Minister of Energy and Mines Viraphonh Viravong explained that the initial exports will be only a small quantity for use in a few villages in Myanmar that are close to Luang Namtha province of Laos.

Link: <http://mizzima.com/latest-news-news-domestic/myanmar-import-electricity-laos>

**KNU to start Myawaddy to Patheingyi bus service**

Mizzima News, 5 February 2016

Karen National Union (KNU) Brigade 7 will start running the first KNU highway express bus route when its bus company, Doe Meik Swe, starts operating a service between Myawaddy, Rangoon and Patheingyi.



The Doe Meik Swe bus company is a subsidiary of the Moe Ko San Company which is owned by KNU Brigade 7.

Doe Meik Swe’s operation manager, Saw Truman said: “We have already rented the gate in Patheingyi for this bus line, [but] we will only start our operation in March due to some work requirements,”

Since 24 January Doe Meik Swe has been running a service from Myawaddy to Yangon and from Myawaddy to Taunggyi using eight Hiace 15-seater buses.

The fare from Myawaddy to Yangon is 15,000 kyats, from Myawaddy to Taunggyi it is 13,500 kyats and from Myawaddy to Patheingyi the fare will be 20,000 kyats, according to Doe Meik Swe officials. The Moe Ko San Company has offices in Myawaddy and Hpa-An.

Link: <http://www.mizzima.com/latest-news-business-domestic/knu-start-myawaddy-patheingyi-bus-service>

**Moulmein and Fort Wayne official sister cities**

Mon News Agency, 9 February 2016

An agreement to officially establish sister-city status between Mon State’s capital of Moulmein and Indiana’s Fort Wayne in the United States was signed on Thursday.

A signing ceremony was held at Aung San Hall in the Mon State Government Office in Moulmein on February 4.

In attendance were outgoing Chief Minister of Mon State, U Ohn Myint, state government officials and representatives from Fort Wayne Sister Cities International. The two cities’ governments have been working to achieve city sisterhood since 2012.



According to Dr. Toe Toe Aung, City Development Minister in Mon State, the agreement includes plans for cultural and commercial exchanges. Businesspeople, artists, and scholars from Moulmein City can now travel to Fort Wayne to share knowledge and experiences with counterparts there, he said.

As part of the agreement, the two countries will initiate a youth exchange program in 2017. Participants under

21 years of age will be invited to visit and observe high schools and universities in each of the sister cities.

**Link:** <http://monnews.org/2016/02/08/moulmein-and-fort-wayne-official-sister-cities/>

### **Leiktho tsp to receive access to electricity**

The Global New Light of Myanmar, 13 February 2016

Residents of Leiktho Township in hpa-an District, Kayin State, will soon get access to electricity after the installation of 33/11 KV 5MVA power sub-station, a project engineer said.

The electricity Distribution Department has put more effort into building the power sub-station with funds of the Kayin State government.

“We will distribute power not only to Leiktho Township but also to areas located within a two-mile radius of the township. We plan to supply electricity to nearby villages through solar systems this year,” said Township electric engineer U Chit Ko Ko.

Since 1969, residents of the township have received low-voltage electricity through a 100KVA generator. With funds from the regional government, the township electricity department recently replaced wooden lamp posts with the concrete ones across the township.

**Link:** [https://issuu.com/myanmarnewspaper/docs/13\\_feb\\_16\\_gnlm](https://issuu.com/myanmarnewspaper/docs/13_feb_16_gnlm)

### **Loikaw downtown bridge nearly complete**

The Global New Light of Myanmar, 26 February 2016

A reinforced concrete bridge in downtown Loikaw, Kaya State, is being built by the Public Works Department under the Ministry of Construction, with funds allotted by the Kaya State government. The construction began on 26 December 2014. Now, 80 per cent of the construction is complete, said U Aung Myint Thein, the engineer in charge of the project.

The K800 million (US\$646,726) projects, which includes a 300-foot reinforced concrete bridge with two lanes as well as pedestrian paths.

The bridge can bear 60 tones, said the engineer. Construction is slated to be completed by March. U Chit Hla, minister for transport in the Kaya State government, inspected the construction of the bridge and called on those involved to finish on time.

**Link:** [https://issuu.com/myanmarnewspaper/docs/26\\_feb\\_16\\_gnlm](https://issuu.com/myanmarnewspaper/docs/26_feb_16_gnlm)

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