

Thura NewsViews

Politics

■ US official criticizes repatriation process

Myanmar is still struggling to resolve the refugee crisis, which continues to damage its international reputation. A top-ranking US foreign aid official delivered a sharp criticism of how Myanmar is handling the repatriation process for more than 750,000 thousand Muslims who have fled to Bangladesh.

Speaking to ABC News, U.S. Agency for International Development administrator Mark Green bashed both the approach and pace of the repatriation. "They have stopped the democratic journey... It is not continuing as long as you have Rohingya and others who are denied their most basic rights, and so we need to be firm in that message all the time, and consistent," he said.

His comments are a worrying sign for Myanmar as it works to rebuild its global image. The 2017 "clearance operations" by the military damaged its reputation with the United States, Europe and other foreign powers. The United Nations has labeled the situation a "genocide" and has called for a boycott of all military affiliated businesses. Foreign investment as well as Myanmar's tourism industry have taken a hit.

In response, the Myanmar government has claimed that the UN's allegations are overblown. The government recently urged the UN to spend less on investigations and more on assistance for repatriation. Myanmar has made several attempts to entice refugees back across the border, but with little success. A UN investigator commented recently that a "system of persecu-

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This Week's Highlights

In its latest iteration of the East Asia and Pacific Economic Update published last week and titled "Weathering Growing Risks", the World Bank projects a GDP growth of 6.6% in 2020 despite high inflationary pressures.

Among a surge of readily available units on the market that has driven the property market prices down, professionals remain optimistic about the future of the sector.

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Hot news regarding investments in Myanmar



Thai Chang beer brewed in Yangon

Oct 10, 2019
Yangon's new Emerald Brewery canned its first Chang beer on September 25th. Singaporean firm F



Huawei will remain big part of Myanmar telecom development

Oct 10, 2019

Upcoming Events

Myanmar Textile Summit
October 30, 2019 - October 31, 2019

International Conference on Wireless Communications and Sensor Networks
November 1, 2019 - November 2, 2019

Myanmar Plas Print Pack
November 1, 2019 - November 4, 2019

Oil & Gas Myanmar
November 6, 2019 - November 7, 2019

Myanmex Myanmar Marine Expo
November 7, 2019 - November 8, 2019

More Events

Submit Event

Highlights

FDI in SEZ

tion” still exists for Rohingya Muslims and that it is not safe for them to return, according to a Washington Post report.

Meanwhile, Myanmar has focused on business relationships with Asian nations, especially China.

■ **NLD to change candidates for 2020 election**

The National League for Democracy (NLD) will cut more than half its anticipated candidates for the next election.

Monywa Aung Shin, a party spokesperson, told the Myanmar Times that many of the current candidates do not meet the party’s standards. “The current candidates have weaknesses. So, we have plans to replace them – not just half - maybe even beyond that,” Monywa Aung Shin said.

The final selection of candidates for township, state and regional, and national offices will be decided in 2020. “The party has decided on how many MPs will participate in the 2020 General Election. We will choose them based on their performance, relevant executive committee’s appraisal and the people’s support during five-year term,” another NLD official, Dr. Myo Nyunt, told Eleven Media Group.

After boycotting the first election of Myanmar’s new democratic era, the NLD returned for an easy victory in 2015, unseating many incumbents from the military-backed Union Solidarity and Development Party. The party ran 1,152 candidates that year, the most of any party. However, the party failed to live up to the arguably impossible expectations of the Myanmar electorate. It was criticized for legislative inefficiency and faced a corruption scandal surrounding several officials in Tanintharyi Region. Needless to say, the NLD will have a tougher battle in the 2020, and it aims to fill the ballot with the best candidates possible, even if it means leaving a few hopefuls behind. But despite the shake-up, the party remains optimistic, recently announcing that it aims for another landslide victory.

Economy

■ **Second Thai-Myanmar Friendship Bridge opens October 30**

A second bridge across the Moei River will soon link Thailand and Myanmar. The Second Friendship Bridge, which will link Myawaddy with the border town of Mae Sot, Thailand, aims to boost cross-border freight and personnel traffic. The ribbon-cutting ceremony will be held October 30th.

The new bridge will operate along side the original Friendship Bridge, also located in Myawaddy. For decades, the Friendship Bridge has hosted the bulk of land exchanges between the two countries, however trade is rapidly increasing.

The legal border trade is overshadowed by smuggling through unofficial border crossings. These are often controlled by ethnic armed groups offering cheaper and easier passage of goods. As it works with Thailand to develop the East-West Economic Corridor, the government has attempted to cut down border smuggling. In May, Khun Pakainay, former Thai Minister Counsellor for Commercial Affairs to Myanmar, told the Myanmar Times that such infrastructure projects

Myanmar in Figures

GDP (PPP): \$330.88bn (2017)
GDP (official ex.rate): \$59.5bn (Jan 2018)
GDP growth rate: 6.2% (2018)
Population: 54.22 mn people (Apr 2019)
Inflation: 7.1% (2018)
Foreign trade: \$35.9bn (2017-2018)
FDI: \$80.9bn (30/06/2019)
International reserves: \$5.2bn (Jan 2018)
CBM rate Kyat/\$ = 1,533K/1\$ (17/10/19)

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are key to encouraging traders to choose legal channels. “Myanmar should try to fulfill the needs of people in border areas such as water, power and infrastructure. If the procedures for commerce become simpler and clearer, legal trade between two countries will grow,” he said.

- **Rice floor price to remain MMK500,000 per basket**

The Myanmar government will maintain its minimum rice price to protect farmers from market fluctuations. The rice floor price, or reference price, will remain at MMK 500,000 per basket through 2020. The announcement came from the Leading Committee for Farmer’s Rights Protection and Interests Promotion, a government organization. “The basic reference price of 100 baskets of paddy, each basket weighing 46 pounds, will be MMK 500,000 if the grains have moisture content of 14 percent, are free of dust, sand, gravel, and meet the set standards,” it read.

Current prices for top quality rice generally fluctuate between MMK 800,000 and MMK 1.2 million for 100 baskets, according to data reported by the Myanmar Times. According to the Myanmar Rice Federation (MRF), a basket of rice costs around MMK 350,000 to produce, ensuring a profit margin of at least MMK 150,000 per basket for farmers.

The price floor aims to be a safety net for farmers as the public and private sectors attempt to breathe life into Myanmar’s global rice trade. In its colonial era, Myanmar was the world’s top rice exporter. In 2015, U Chit Khaing, chairman of the MRF, told Frontier magazine that while Myanmar still produces some of the highest volumes of rice in the world, it exports very little. However, this year the MRF signed an MOU with China to export 250,000 tonnes of rice. An industry report by the World Bank said “there are good market prospects to accommodate higher rice exports from Myanmar over the next 10-15 years. China is becoming a large net importer of Myanmar rice. The European Union has opened its markets for duty free imports from Myanmar.”

Companies and Investments

- **Hong Kong company wins emergency power tenders**

Hong Kong company VPower Group (VP), working with Myanmar’s Zeya & Associates, has been awarded four emergency power tenders as the government races to meet its growing demand for power. The four projects would use imported liquified natural gas (LNG) to generate 920 megawatts of power. “All the projects are expected to commence commercial operation in the first half of 2020,” VP said in a statement.

In January, 2019, the Ministry of Electricity and Energy (MOEE) announced that it would turn to imported LNG to fill its power supply gaps. It announced emergency tenders for projects that would eventually add 3,000 megawatts of new generating capacity. But those projects fell well short of their goal, and in June, the government opened a new set of emergency tenders to try and meet power demands for the 2020 hot season.

However, the MOEE’s effort has been criticized for essentially trying to meet Myanmar’s long term and short term power needs at the same time. Analysts have said the scope of the projects are too large for their timelines of 210 days and harsh penalties for not meeting the deadlines. Speaking to the Myanmar Times, an anonymous industry consultant said, “Most reputable companies that looked at the emergency power tenders walked away as it is nearly impossible to execute.”

Nevertheless, VP is forging ahead with LNG-based power plants in Kyaukphyu Township, in Rakhine State, and Thanlyin and Thaketa townships in Yangon Region. The company will build on a track record of successful projects, including a 90 megawatt plant in Myingyan, a city in Mandalay Region.

■ Yoma Strategic to invest in renewable power

One of Myanmar's biggest corporations is investing in renewable energy. Yoma Strategic Holdings will work with Philippine partner Ayala Corporation for a 200 megawatt micro generation enterprise, the Myanmar Times Reported.

Yoma Strategic and Ayala subsidiary AC Energy will invest USD 30 million into Yoma Micro Power, which will finish 250 micro generation plants by the end of 2019 and scale up to around 2,000 sites over the next four years. These would likely include small scale renewables such as micro-hydroelectric dams and solar mini-grids. Hydropower already accounts for more than half of Myanmar's electricity, but the hydropower industry has come under fire from environmental groups and local communities wary of potential damage to river ecosystems. Micro-hydro technology could be a more socially and environmentally friendly alternative.

"There is a need to significantly increase generation capacity and build out last-mile distribution infrastructure, which Yoma Micro Power has embarked upon," the Myanmar Times quoted Melvin Pun, CEO of Yoma Strategic, as saying.

Myanmar has one of the lowest electrification rates in Asia with only around 60 percent of households connected to the national grid. The government aims for total electrification by 2030, but that goal will require USD 2 to 3 billion, by most estimates. Solar and micro-hydro technology are merely a fraction of the government's planned energy mix. But proponents claim that small, independent grids are an effective way of supplying power to remote populations.

In addition to long-term electrification, the Myanmar government has been struggling to fill the immediate demand for power. It recently awarded four high value emergency tenders to Hong Kong supplier VPower Group. The tenders call for over 900 megawatts of liquid natural gas-generated power. However industry experts have criticized the short timeline of the tenders (210 days) and harsh penalties for not meeting them.

Events

Name	Details	Organizer/Ministries	Contact Information
Myanmar Textile Summit	Venue: Yangon Date: 30-31 Oct 2019	ECV International	marketing@ecvinternational.com +86-2156-797705
MyanFurniture	Venue: Tatmadaw Hall, Yangon Date: 31 Oct-2 Nov 2019	AMB Tarsus Exhibitions Sdn Bhd	darren@ambtarsus.com +959-31496493
International Conference on Mechanical and Aeronautics Engineering	Venue: Mandalay Date: 1-2 Nov 2019	SciencePlus	papers.scienceplus@gmail.com +91 8763630137
International Conference on Sustainable Water Management	Venue: Mandalay Date: 1-2 Nov 2019	SciencePlus	papers.scienceplus@gmail.com +91 8763630137
International Conference on Wireless Communications and Sensor Networks	Venue: Mandalay Date: 1-2 Nov 2019	SciencePlus	papers.scienceplus@gmail.com +91 8763630137
Myanmar Plas Print Pack	Venue: Yangon Convention Center, Yangon Date: 1-4 Nov 2019	Chan Chao Int'l Co., Ltd.	overseas@chanchao.com.tw +886-2-2659-6000
Oil & Gas Myanmar	Venue: Novotel Yangon Max, Yangon Date: 6-7 Nov 2019	Fireworks Myanmar	myanmar@asiafireworks.com +95-9-2501-75661
Myanmex Myanmar Marine Expo	Venue: Yangon Convention Center, Yangon Date: 7-8 Nov 2019	Fireworks Myanmar	myanmar@asiafireworks.com +95-9-2501-75661
ASEAN LPG Forum Series LPG Myanmar	Venue: Sedona Hotel, Yangon Date: 13-15 Nov 2019	Gas Academy	info@gasacademy.com.sg +65-6742-2485
Asia IoT Business Platform	Venue: Sedona Hotel, Yangon Date: 21-22 Nov 2019	Industry Platform Pte Ltd	irza@industry-platform.com +65-6733-1107
Myanbuild	Venue: Tatmadaw Hall, Yangon Date: 28-30 Nov 2019	AMB Tarsus Exhibitions Sdn Bhd	support@ambtarsus.com (603) 2692 6888

Tenders

■ Ministry of Electricity and Energy: Open Tender

1. Myanma Oil and Gas Enterprise under the Ministry of Electricity and Energy invites open tender for supply of the following respective items in MMK.

Sr. No.	Tender No.	Description	Remarks
(a)	DMP/L-004(19-20)	13 5/8" x 5K Annular BOP (1) No	MMK
(b)	DMP/L-005(19-20)	Swivel / Drill Pipe Power Tong (2) Items	MMK
(c)	DMP/L-006(19-20)	Travelling Block with Hook (2) Sets	MMK
(d)	DMP/L-007(19-20)	LAS-E350 Continuous Liquid Additive Skid (1) Set	MMK
(e)	DMP/L-008(19-20)	840 KW Generator for Rig Engine (1) Set	MMK
(f)	DMP/L-009(19-20)	Water Cooled Electromagnetic Eddy Current Brake (2) Sets	MMK
(g)	DMP/L-010(19-20)	2900 Series Well Head & Christmas Tree Equipment (4) Sets	MMK
(h)	DMP/L-011(19-20)	1500 Series Well Head & Christmas Tree Equipment (2) Sets	MMK
(i)	DMP/L-012(19-20)	Single Pump SJS Cementing Unit With Engine and Accessories (1) Set	MMK
(j)	DMP/L-013(19-20)	Batch Mixer (1) Set	MMK
(k)	DMP/L-014(19-20)	1.5 MW Gas Engine Driven Generating Set Attach With Switch Gear Panel (1) Set	MMK
(l)	DMP/L-015(19-20)	900 Series Well Head & Christmas Tree Equipment (1) Set	MMK
(m)	DMP/L-016(19-20)	Lathe Machine with Motor (2) Items	MMK
(n)	DMP/L-017(19-20)	Steam Boiler / Foam Pump (2) Items	MMK
(o)	DMP/L-018(19-20)	Trolley Way (1) Set	MMK
(p)	DMP/L-019(19-20)	50 Ton Hydraulic Mobile Crane (1) Unit	MMK
(q)	DMP/L-020(19-20)	Truck Mounted Double Drum Well Servicing Unit (1) Unit	MMK
(r)	DMP/L-021(19-20)	Marine Engine with Gear Box Assy; (2) Sets	MMK
(s)	DMP/L-022(19-20)	Caterpillar 3512 Engine with Generating Set (2) Sets	MMK
(t)	DMP/L-023(19-20)	Model 8040 D 10 Dual Cell Pressure Size Consistometer (1) Set	MMK
(u)	DMP/L-024(19-20)	Crawler Type Dozer (1) Unit	MMK
(v)	DMP/L-025(19-20)	Replacement & Installation of the Metering System For Shwe Taung GCS (1) Lot	MMK
(w)	DMP/L-026(19-20)	CNG Ground Storage Cascade (2) Sets	MMK

Sr. No.	Tender No.	Description	Remarks
(x)	DMP/L-027(19-20)	Control & POS for Dispenser & Computer Communication System (1) Lot	MMK
(y)	DMP/L-028(19-20)	Skid Mounted Gas Dryer (1) Unit	MMK
(z)	DMP/L-029(19-20)	400 KW Gas Engine Generator (Complete Set) (1) No	MMK
(aa)	DMP/L-030(19-20)	Cascade Tube Skid/Cascade Trailer/Tractor (3) items	MMK
(ab)	DMP/L-031(19-20)	Air Compressor Engine Driven Skid with Air Dryer (2) Sets	MMK
(ac)	DMP/L-032(19-20)	Container (2) Items	MMK
(ad)	DMP/L-033(19-20)	Excavator (2) Items	MMK
(ae)	DMP/L-034(19-20)	6" x 8" R Mission Pump with Motor (2) Sets	MMK
(af)	DMP/L-035(19-20)	Mud Chemicals (1) Lot	MMK
(ag)	DMP/L-036(19-20)	Fuel Bowser (2) Units	MMK

- The open tender forms including description of materials/ Qty with detailed specifications and tender terms and conditions can be available during office hours commencing from **4th October, 2019** at the Finance Department, Myanmar Oil and Gas Enterprise at No. 44 Complex, Nay Pyi Taw, Myanmar.
- The interested bidders should submit the **technical specifications with original bid bond and commercial quotation** in each separate sealed envelopes on which to be addressed to the Managing Director, Myanmar Oil and Gas Enterprise and should reach in tender box of the Myanmar Oil and Gas Enterprise not later than **02:00 p.m.** on **4th November, 2019**.
- The tender closing date and time is **4th November, 2019 at 02:00 p.m.**
- Further information can be obtained at the Myanmar Oil and Gas Enterprise over the telephone number: +95-67-411206.