

Myanmar National Day Special

Moving toward stability through a peaceful process

THURAIN THANT ZIN
AMBASSADOR OF THE REPUBLIC OF THE UNION OF MYANMAR



On the auspicious occasion of the 71st Anniversary of the Independence Day of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar, on behalf of the government and people of the

Republic of the Union of Myanmar and myself, I would like to convey our heartfelt and respectful greetings and wishes to Their Imperial Majesties Emperor Akihito and Empress Michiko, the Imperial family, government and people of Japan to be blessed with auspiciousness, success, good health and happiness.

Since olden times, Myanmar has existed as an independent and sovereign country under our own king. Our people, who were born and brought up in this union, have never committed aggression against others and have tried to avoid aggression committed against us. We have this basic innate correct stance. Colonial imperialists waged three wars against our nation, and we lost our sovereignty in 1885 and became a conquered nation.

While we struggled for independence, Japan was one of our good partners in providing military assistance and support for the great efforts of Myanmar's independence struggles. Japan assisted Gen. Aung San and 30 young nationalists who opposed the British colonial regime, with administrative and military training through the arrangement of a secret intelligence unit called the Minami Kikan at Hainan Island.

Furthermore, in seeking liberation from this life of slavery, all the ethnic national races, from the mountains to the plains, sacrificed their lives, blood and sweat to escape from slavery. As a result of these efforts, we were able to achieve our independence, the symbol of our success, on Jan. 4, 1948.

Today is the 71st anniversary of regaining independence for the Republic of the Union of Myanmar and we, all nationalities, have responsibilities, to continually protect our independence as our national duty.

Nowadays, we are at a time to reconstruct the nation to make it a peaceful, stable and strong one. At the same time, following the attainment of independence, we have to build a union where justice, freedom and equality will prevail. Therefore, in the process of establishing a peaceful, prosperous and resilient nation, we must take into account the need to strengthen the mechanisms and institutions of government. It is of paramount importance to uphold the rule of law; ensure the mental and physical well-being of our citizens; deliver basic services to our people, including education, health, social services, transportation, communication and infrastructure development; and strengthen the administrative mechanisms of government. Even though the government is undertaking to establish a union for the benefit of all its citizens, however, there are still many challenges to overcome to ensure our



President of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar Win Myint

successful transition to democracy.

Therefore, today, our government has made the peace process a top priority. With the peace process at the center, national reconciliation can also be achieved, and this shall lead to democratic transition and the establishment of a union. The main goal of the current peace process is to reach political agreements, to sign the Union Accord and to implement steps for establishing a union based on democracy and federalism.

In doing so, common approaches will be agreed through the process of political dialogue. In order to bring about a political agreement, the 21st Century Panglong (Union Peace Conference) has already been held three times. As of now, 51 political agreements have been agreed.

As we build the democratic federal republic in accordance with the results of political dialogues, establishing a federal union and achieving the democratic

standards anticipated by the government will take time and can only be done step by step. However, our ultimate goal to establish a democratic federal union is unwavering.

Moreover, Myanmar respects the sovereignty and dignity of each individual nation, and therefore it will continuously work toward fostering closer friendships that will contribute to global peace and the improvement of international relations.

Additionally, we really appreciate the Sasakawa Peace Foundation of Japan, which is working together with our government for the development of the peace process in Myanmar.

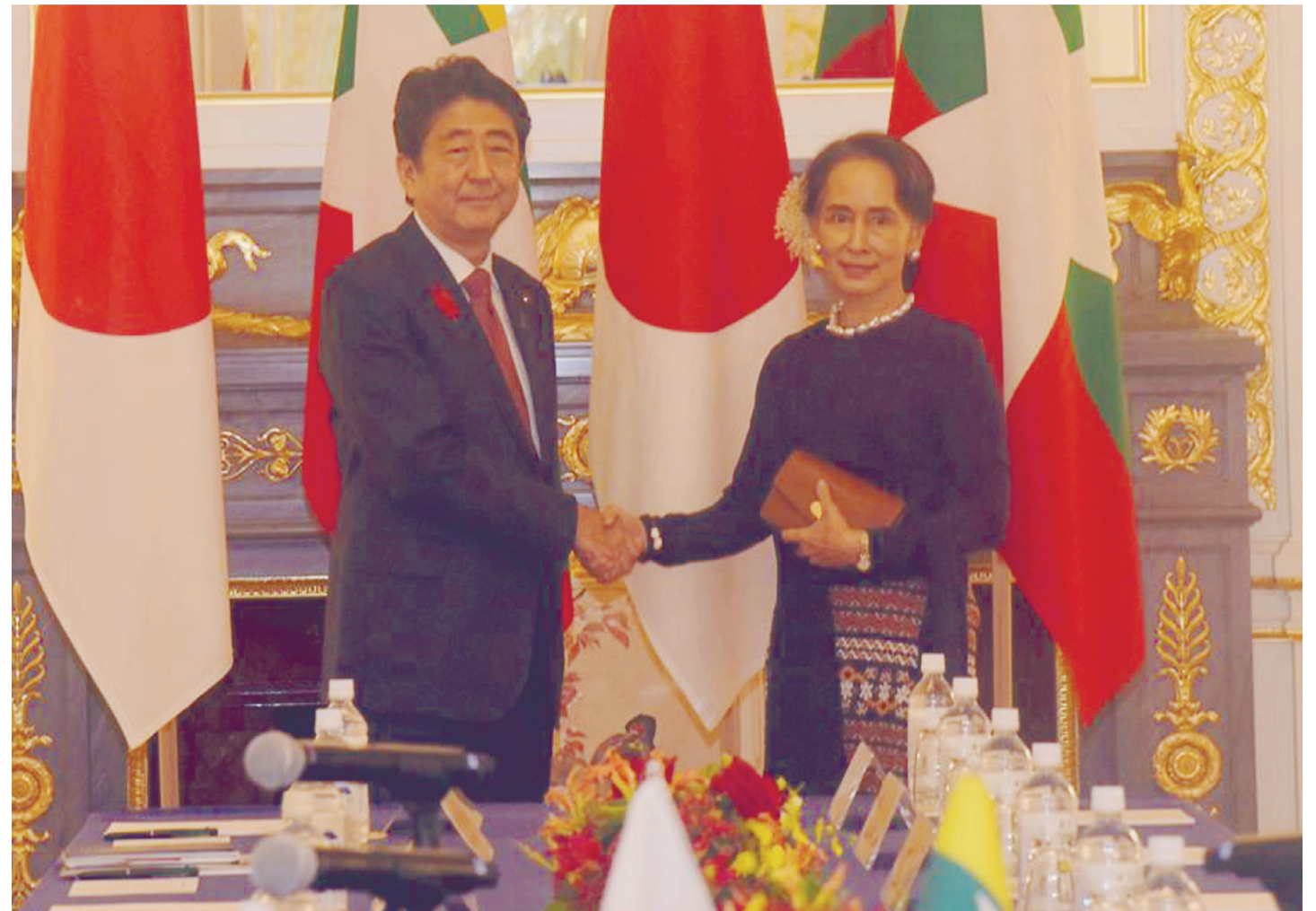
At this important juncture in our national history, we only ask that the international community, including Japan, continues to support our efforts to achieve peace, prosperity and democracy.

Furthermore, in order to achieve economic development, the government of Myanmar places a great deal of effort in enhancing productivity, developing our main economic drivers as well as creating a favorable investment and business climate.

Therefore, the government has laid down new business policies, amended investment rules and regulations and drew up new mechanisms and institutions to create a good business environment in Myanmar's investment sector.

Also, by encouraging and supporting the private sector, which is very important and is the main engine of growth of the economy, the socioeconomic life of our people will be improved. Therefore, we are looking forward to Japanese and international investments in Myanmar.

While official Myanmar-Japan diplomatic relations date back to Dec. 1, 1954, our bonds date back to time immemorial, with strong relations in various sectors. Japan has extended continuous coopera-



Prime Minister Shinzo Abe and State Counsellor Aung San Suu Kyi during their meeting in Tokyo on Oct. 9. EMBASSY OF MYANMAR

tion focusing on various areas in order to support Myanmar's efforts for reforms toward democratization, the peace process, national reconciliation and sustainable development. For this, we genuinely appreciate the Japanese government and the people of Japan.

For the improvement of bilateral relations, we are further strengthening the exchange of high-level visits. In this

regard, State Counsellor of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar, Her Excellency Aung San Suu Kyi visited Japan from Oct. 5 to 10 and met with His Excellency Prime Minister Shinzo Abe on Oct. 9. Therefore, we strongly believe that our bilateral relations will be developed further in the near future.

Finally, I would like to assure people that, as ambassador of the Republic

of the Union of Myanmar in Tokyo, I will work to strengthen the future of Myanmar-Japan friendship and cooperation for benefits of our two peoples and countries.

This content was compiled in collaboration with the embassy. The views expressed here do not necessarily reflect those of the newspaper.



Mandalay Palace in the former capital and second-largest city of Mandalay in Myanmar. The palace was the last residence of the Burmese royal family. EMBASSY OF MYANMAR

Congratulations
to the People of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar on the 71st Anniversary of Their Independence

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Let's look at the campus life of Meiji University's international students from Myanmar!

YouTube Tokyo DOKIDOKI Campus LIFE Epi 2

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