

PM Bouasone leaves for Myanmar to bring bilateral relations closer.



(KPL) Prime Minister Bouasone Boupavanh left here yesterday for Nay Pyi Taw to start his three day official working visit to Myanmar as the invitation of his Myanmar counterpart U Thein Sein. Accompanied PM Bouasone Boupavanh for the visit included Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs Thongloun Sisoulith, Minister of Public Works and Transport Sommat Pholsena, Minister of Planning

and Investment Sinhlavong Kounpaithoun and Minister to the Prime Minister's Office and Chairman of Lao National Tourism Authority Somphong Mongkhovilay. It is Boupavanh's second visit to Myanmar in nearly four years, the first in November 2006.

The visit also represents a return trip to that to Vientiane made by his Myanmar counterpart U Thein Sein in November 2007.

The two prime ministers are expected to hold talks on enhancing the two countries' bilateral ties including bilateral cooperation.

Myanmar and Laos have worked for promoting tourism as part of their bilateral cooperation, upgrading the two countries' respective border check points in January in 2007 to meet international standard to boost arrivals of world tourists and those from the third countries visiting the two border areas.

These checkpoints are Wan Pong in Tachilek of Eastern Shan state on the Myanmar side and Ban Muang Mom on the Lao side.

The Mekong River flows between the two towns as a border line.

In February 2009, regional border committee of the two countries at deputy foreign minister level met for the first time in Myanmar's border town of Tachilek in eastern Shan state to step up bilateral cooperation in dealing with border affairs.

That meeting covered the issue of security along the border of the two countries, promotion of border trade and exchange of visits of peoples of the two countries.

Initiated during Thein Seine's 2007 trip to Laos, Myanmar and Laos reached a memorandum of understanding in Nay Pyi Taw in May 2009 on establishing sister cities between Myanmar's ancient city of Bagan and Laos' Luang Prabang.

In November the same year, Lao Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Thongloun Sisoulith visited Myanmar, during which the two countries again signed two

memorandums of understanding in Nay Pyi Taw respectively on mutual visa exemption for holders of ordinary passport and avoidance of double taxation and prevention of fiscal evasion with respect to taxes on income.

Sisoulith also attended the 9th meeting of Myanmar-Lao Joint Commission for Bilateral Cooperation in Taunggyi, the capital of Myanmar's Shan state, discussing with Myanmar Foreign Minister U Nyan Win matters relating to further strengthening and cooperation between the two countries as well as enhancing in mutual cooperation in regional and international forums.

In the latest development, the two countries agreed in Vientiane in February this year's 9th meeting of Myanmar-Laos border authorities to further strengthen bilateral trade and cooperation between the two countries' border affairs as well as in drug abuse control.