

## **Meeting between Prime Minister Noda and Myanmar President Thein Sein**

Prime Minister Yoshihiko Noda of Japan held a meeting with President Thein Sein of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar on November 18 in Bali during his visit to Indonesia to attend ASEAN-related summit meetings. The bilateral meeting marked the first summit talks between the two countries since the transfer of power to a civilian government in Myanmar this year. The following is a summary of the meeting.

1. At the outset of the meeting, Prime Minister Noda welcomed the ASEAN Summit decision to name Myanmar the chair of ASEAN in 2014 and paid tribute to the positive steps taken by President Thein Sein toward Myanmar's democratization and national reconciliation, expressing Japan's readiness to support the President's efforts. Furthermore, Prime Minister Noda referred to a decision, made on the day of their Bali meeting, by the National League for Democracy (NLD) led by Daw Aung San Suu Kyi to register as a political party and participate in a by-election. He welcomed the move as concrete progress toward national reconciliation in Myanmar. At the same time, the Prime Minister expressed hope that Myanmar would endeavor to solidify democratization and national reconciliation, including the release of more political prisoners. President Thein Sein responded by saying that since the transfer of power to civilian control, the government was swiftly carrying out a variety of reforms for the sake of the people and would continue to make those efforts, adding that he would cooperate with NLD leader Daw Aung San Suu Kyi.
2. Prime Minister Noda renewed his gratitude for the sympathy and relief money given by Myanmar after the Great East Japan Earthquake. He conveyed words of sympathy to Myanmar for damage caused by floods. Referring to Japan's emergency assistance already extended, the Prime Minister expressed readiness to consider offering further support if requested.
3. Prime Minister Noda then told the President that Japan would conduct a study on comprehensive development of Myanmar, following up on his statement to that effect made at the Japan-ASEAN Summit meeting. He also conveyed to the President Japan's wish to promptly begin working-level talks on policy consultations concerning economic cooperation. President Thein Sein said economic development, including development in poverty-stricken provincial areas, was important to cement democratization and national

reconciliation. He expressed hope for cooperation from Japan in this connection.

4. Prime Minister Noda stated that in the economic field, a number of economic missions had already visited Myanmar and that some companies were moving to realize investments.
5. With respect to cultural exchanges, Prime Minister Noda said Japan planned to send specialists on restoration and preservation of heritages to Myanmar shortly.
6. Prime Minister Noda sought cooperation of the Myanmar government in investigation into the realities of the death of Japanese journalist Mr. Kenji Nagai, who was killed in 2007 while covering anti-government demonstrations in Yangon, and in the return of items left by Mr. Nagai. President Thein Sein said the government had been striving for investigation and cooperation with Japan but had not found Nagai's belongings, adding he was pained by Mr. Nagai's death.
7. Prime Minister Noda said Japan would host the Fourth Japan-Mekong Summit Meeting at an appropriate time next year and expressed hope of welcoming President Thein Sein on that occasion. In reply, the President said he would endeavor to realize a visit to Japan. The President also asked the Prime Minister to visit Myanmar.

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