First regular session of Pyidaungsu Hluttaw continues for 16th day
Queries raised and replied, proposal discussed, approval sought
Pyidaungsu Hluttaw agrees to join ASEAN
Inter-Parliamentry Assembly (AIPA) as full-fledged member

NAY PYI TAW, 28 March-First regular session of Pyidaungsu Hluttaw continued for the 16th day at Pyidaungsu Hluttaw Hall of Hluttaw Building here at 10 am today. It was attended by Speaker of Pyidaungsu Hluttaw U Khin Aung Myint, Speaker of Pyithu Hluttaw Thura U Shwe Mann, Pyithu Hluttaw representatives and Amyotha Hluttaw representatives.

After taking the position, Pyidaungsu Hluttaw Speaker U Khin Aung Myint announced the validity and start of the 16th-day first regular session of Pyidaungsu Hluttaw as 653 out of 656 representatives attended the session, accounting for 99.54 per cent of attendance.

Members of union level organization Minister for Agriculture and Irrigation U Htay Oo, Minister for Immigration and Population U Maung Oo, Minister for Electric Power No.2 and for Construction U Khin Maung Myint answered queries raised by U Hla Maung (a) U Naing Hla Maung of Chaungzon Constituency on “losses of crops due to the impact of climate change” and “to consume electricity at low price” U Min Swe of DaikU Constituency on “continued implementation of irrigation system in Bago Region”, U Tin Maung Win of Mingaladon Constituency on “issuance of citizenship scrutiny card and household registration certificate to every citizen born of Myanmar citizen parents” and U Ye Htut Tin of Pasawng Constituency on“upgrading of Aungban-Loikaw-Maesei motorway and construction of Thanlwin River-crossing bridge (Pasawng)”.

U Hla Maung (a) U Naing Hla Maung of Chaungzon Constituency withdrew his question on“issuance of citizenship scrutiny card” because his question is similar to that of U Sai Mya Maung of Kachin State Constituency No. 10 at Amyotha Hluttaw session, replied by Minister for Home Affairs U Maung Oo.

Pyidaungsu Hluttaw representatives discussed proposal submitted by Dr Myat Nyana Soe of Yangon Region Constituency No.4 on “call on the government to form migrant workers affairs department under an appropriate ministry” and proposal submitted by Dr Aye Maung of Rakhine State Constituency No.1 on “call on the government to pay compensation or provide cash assistance and special loans for regeneration works to national entrepreneur breeders in case of culling of poultry due to bird flu outbreak”.

Members of union level organization Minister for Labour U Aung Kyi and Minister for Livestock and Fisheries U Maung Maung Thein explained and discussed the proposals. The Pyidaungsu Hluttaw sought the approval.
After that, the Pyidaungsu Hluttaw Speaker sought the approval to join ASEAN Inter-Parliamentary Assembly (AIPA) by Pyidaungsu Hluttaw as a full-fledged member. Pyidaungsu Hluttaw announced that Pyidaungsu Hluttaw agreed the proposal.

The Pyidaungsu Hluttaw Speaker announced the end of the 16th-day first regular session of Pyidaungsu Hluttaw and the 17th-day first regular session will be held at 10 am on 29 March (Tuesday).

The session came to an end at 3.50 pm.

**A & I Minister replying query on implementation of irrigation system in Bago Region**

NAY PYI TAW, 28 March- At today’s Pyidaungsu Hluttaw session, U Min Swe of DaikU Constituency said that he had known that the government is implementing many dams for irrigation water; that despite having constructed dams in Bago Region, but not irrigation systems; that he would like to know whether they would be implemented or not, and how to implement if so.

For his part, Minister for Agriculture and Irrigation U Htay Oo said that the irrigation systems are being implemented although dams were constructed in Bago Region; that eight dam projects with irrigation system namely Kawliya, Bieda, Alieni, Min Hla, Bawbin, Gamone, Khaboung and Yenwe Dams are being implemented in that region; that those dams will irrigate a total of 278230 acres of farmland; that Thoneze Dam Project and Khaboung Dam Irrigation system Project are being constructed with loans of OPEC and they would irrigate a total of 88500 acres of farmland.

The Minister continued that upon completion of irrigation systems being constructed in Bago Region, they would irrigate a total of 366730 acres of farmland; that, irrigation systems are being implemented in other states and regions with the completion of dam projects.

The Minister continued that three irrigation systems-Maday, Pade and Bwetkyi Dam Projects are being constructed in Magway Region; that they would irrigate a total of 17489 acres of farmland; that in Mandalay Region, Chaungmange and Paunglaung Dams with irrigation systems, that would irrigate a total of 43000 acres of farmland; that in Sagaing Region, Myaukyama irrigation system dam project that would irrigate a total of 10000 acres of farmland is being extended; that in Yangon Region, Lagonpyin Dam Project with irrigation system under construction would irrigate a total of 5000 acres of farmland; that in Ayeyawady Region, Ma Mya Dam Project with irrigation system under construction would irrigate a total of 10000 acres of farmland and Kanyin Dam Project with irrigation system is being constructed with loans of Sudi, and that dam would irrigate a total of 25000 acres of farmland; that in Mon State, Kadike Dam Project with irrigation system is under construction and it would irrigate a total of 10000 acres of farmland; that in Rakhine State, Pyinechaung and Zeechaung Dam Projects with irrigation systems are being constructed and they would irrigate a total of 6000 acres of farmland; that in Shan State (North), Moneyin Dam Project with irrigation system under construction would irrigate a total of 2600 acres of farmland; that in Kayin State, Yebot Dam Project with irrigation system that would irrigate a total of 3000 acres of farmland is under construction.

The Minister said that there would be 498819 acres nationwide upon completion of a total of 23 dam projects with irrigation system; that as a result, not only weather changes would be overturned but the farmers would get many benefits by upgrading irrigation systems.

The Ministry of Agriculture and Irrigation would carry on its sectors annually depending on the State's budget.
NAY PYI TAW, 28 March - At today’s Pyidaungsu Hluttaw session, U Hla Maung (a) U Naing Hla Maung of Chaungzon Constituency put a question about whether or not there is any plan to be implemented for consuming electricity at low price by the multiparty democracy government like the Parliamentary Democracy Government and when the plan will start if there is, saying that local people of Chaungzon Township in Belukyun of Mon State had made some progress in their cottage industries to a certain extent as the region fully enjoyed electricity in the time of the Parliamentary Democracy Government. Now, electricity insufficiency had weakened the cottage industries, leading to a decline in their living standards.

Regarding the question, Minister for Electric Power No-2 U Khin Maung Myint replied that Chaungzon Township Electrical Engineer’s Office was opened on 23-12-1955 in the time of the Parliamentary Democracy Government and supplied electricity to four urban wards with the population of 815 through 80 KVA diesel generator two times a day - from 7 am to 1 pm and 6 pm to 12 pm.

With installation of four more transformers, the region enjoyed more electricity starting from 8-9-1957. As part of drive for more electricity supply, three more diesel generators with the installation capacity of 150 KVA installed in 1968, 1980 and 1983 together with the 80 KVA diesel generator supplied electricity to Chaungzon and five villages. On 4-8-1987, 608 KVA diesel generator was substituted in the places of old ones and it supplied electricity three hours a day. A 350 KVA diesel generator was installed as an extra generator on 27-11-1997.

In 1955, the price of a gallon of diesel was K 1.50 and the production cost for a unit of electricity was K 0.15.

Now the government saw a loss of K 294 in generating a unit of electricity due to high production cost. With the installation of more transformers in the township, electricity is being supplied to five urban wards two hours a day and to nine villages every two days, benefiting 1978 households with the population of 9891.

The numbers of electricity users has increased ninefold compared with that of in the time of the Parliamentary Democracy Government.

For availability of electricity in Chaungzon, the government uses 22800 gallons of diesel a year, distributes electricity at a loss of K 67.03 million a year and spends K 7.2 million a year for the salary of 10 employees of Chaungzon Township Electrical Engineer’s Office.

The government spent K 13.88 million on maintenance of diesel generators, power lines, subpower stations and building in 2010-11 fiscal year.

It is witnessed that the government is operating electricity supply service at a loss in Chaungzon Township.

More electricity is being supplied to towns in Mon States that want to extend the duration of the two-hour electricity supply by forming the committees that paid for the cost of diesel.

So it is necessary to understand the goodwill of the state on supplying electricity to Chaungzon Township.
During today’s Pyidaungsu Hluttaw’s session, five representatives discussed the proposal of Dr Aye Maung from Rakhine State Constituency No (1) to “give compensation or provide cash assistance for regeneration of works to national entrepreneur breeders in case of culling of poultry due to bird flu outbreak.”

U Khin Maung Aye of Sagaing Region Constituency No (7) said that there are many zootomists like anthrax, rabies, tapeworm besides H5N1. There are similar cases in marine breeding industry. And giving compensation whenever there is disease outbreak is not an appropriate solution, There are also outbreaks due to one’s negligence and failure to take prevention measures.

When the epidemic began to break out, the neighbouring country observed the disease by giving compensations as a temporary solution to collect information about the pandemic disease and control it. However, they failed to fully protect from the disease.

Myanmar saw four flu outbreaks from 2006 to 2010. As livestock breeding organizations have been set up in the country, breeders can exchange information quickly and take preventive measures in time. Giving compensation is unrealistic solution to the problem and biosecurity and disease control should be prioritized in solving the problem.

For food safety, farms are to be provided with reliable health care to ensure bio-security. Measures to be taken for that are already issued. Breeders are to cooperate with Department, and federation to gain knowledge about the disease. Bird density should be restricted in the beginning of cold season when birds come to Myanmar for hibernation.

If breeders are suspicious the poultry infected with disease, they are to report to the nearest vets and Livestock Breeding and Veterinary Departments and follow their instructions to control the disease.

Regarding bio-security, ASEAN nations have discussed and agreed common bio-security management standards scheme to harmonize the animal (both terrestrial and aquatic animals) health control for food safety, so breeders are to realize it.

HPAI disease is a problem which takes time to get stamped out and thus Livestock Breeding Federation in coordination with NGOs should provide cash assistance to the breeders other than giving compensation. Another mean is to provide assistance by setting up a fund by the private sector and the public and breeders themselves should exerted efforts to carry out breeding tasks. So, he disagree the proposal of Dr Aye Maung, said U Khin Maung Aye.

U Maung Maung Soe of Ingapu Constituency said that Dr Aye Maung proposed measures to be taken by the government; that is to systematically cull poultry in the area that requires to be under control, and to launch massive educative campaigns that help public understand and accept the procedures of the disease control.

Bird Flu Control Committees are formed in townships, district, states and regions with members of Myanmar Police Forces, township Development Affairs Committee, township Health Department, Livestock Breeding Federation and Livestock Breeding and Veterinary Department.

In every township, arrangements have been made to control the disease and to take actions in case of bird flu outbreak.

Township bird flu control committees are formed with three teams-surveillance team, culling team and disinfectant team. Culling team assumes responsibility of culling poultry one-mile radius of the infected layer farm.
One kilogram of chicken manure can infect one million of chickens rapidly and that insecticide are sprayed in the area systematically. Complete plans have been prepared for emergency control of bird flu in line with Contingency Plan for H.P.A.I Control. Every township now can respond quickly to the disease as swift communication network between sub-village and headquarters and local authorities at different level has been set up.

There will be no unavoidable problems between the breeders and authorities concerned because of educative talks, campaigns to promote bio-security, and similar exercise did by breeders, and consumers. Sample tissues are taken from the poultry died of suspected flu, and then are tested with rapid test kit for influenza Type A and then are quickly sent to diagnostic labs in Yangon and Mandalay to confirm the disease.

As soon as the diagnosis has come out, control zones are designated and sales of chicken and related products are banned in order not to spread of disease and infection to the people.

The proposal suggested that the government should give compensation or provide cash assistance to national entrepreneur breeders. Its means while the breeder himself enjoys the profit of his business, the government has to compensate him when he suffers losses due to various reasons. At present, the State neither can give compensation nor provide cash assistance whenever its private industries suffer losses for various reasons.

Some countries that gave compensation first did not give later. Breeders can have insurance against zootomists from Myanma Insurance. So, in stead of asking the State to compensate, breeders, sellers and consumers are to realize bio-security measures seriously so that there will no longer be problem.

The total number of poultry culled in the flu outbreaks since 3 March, 2006 is frighteningly high. 28 townships saw five bird flu outbreaks and suffered losses of 862,000 poultry amounting for K 38,78 million. It is also the losses of private sector including rural areas where poultry are breed on manageable scale.

It is learnt that in spite of such heavy losses, only a few compensation, financial aid and loans were provided to the breeders who suffered losses, so regeneration works were less effective and consequently, there were some problems as the public refused to cooperate with authorities concerned.

It is learnt that neighbouring nations gave compensation or special loans and supervised regeneration works and in Korea and Australia, breeders got full compensation.

Poultry breeding is vulnerable to climate change and natural disaster. If there is loss, it is the total loss and there is no recovery. So, it is risky.

Regarding profit of poultry breeders, it can be said the work is profitable. In addition to personal profit of breeders, the work supplies food to the people daily, controlling prices of meat and fish and generating jobs.

So The State requires to lay down insurance programmes to protect livestock breeding industry. Article 356 in Chapter (8) of the constitution states that the Union shall protect according to law moveable and immovable properties of every citizen that are lawfully acquired.

Dr Aye Maung’s suggestions for actions against bird flu are practical, and realistic and thus seconded the proposal said U Maung Maung Soe.

U Kyi Myint of Latha Constituency said that in market economy, each individual breeder has chosen his best occupation based on his qualification without the command of anyone else and sells eggs, fowl, and duck with the highest prices offered. If there are many buyers or there is lesser commodity, he
would either store his products or simply raise the price. It is the fact that makes the interests of private and the public different.

The GDP and revenue ratio is only three per cent and the Government has to pay large amount for bridge and road construction and electricity supply from its pocket due to small amount of regional revenue. It can be learnt in the answers of respective ministers to queries raised in the first regular sessions of Hluttaw. Inflation is the root-cause of it. Large revenue can prevent from inflation. Inflation can be prevented if expenditure is leveled with revenue. It should be ended that people are bearing tax burden added to commodity prices.

Businessmen including poultry breeders are already taking necessary actions on their own accord. Businessmen can practice insurance system for agriculture, livestock breeding and trade activities. It is profitable to insure for it can increase loanable fund to other industries, benefiting the both sides.

Each individual needs not to create burden to the nation even if they do nothing for the interest of the nation.

Since 1998 to date, the State has reduced taxes and created environment for greater investment of individual, with a view to economic growth through increased per capita income.

Businessmen are to work for increase of spillover effect to the society. The proposal of Dr Aye Maung does not fit the market economic system of multi-party democracy system and thus he raised objection to the proposal.

U Khin Maung Yi (a) Khaing Maung Yi of Ahlon Constituency said that the proposal concerns the interests of the entire nation, calling for national-level programmes.

It is needed to build livestock industry systematically.

As 60 per cent of breeders in Myanmar are running small-scale farm, with less than 10,000 poultry and thus have difficulty in regenerating their business.

He said he believed in stead of the State giving compensation, it should issue laws to set up anti-bird flu associations under the supervision of the State and seconded Dr Aye Maung’s proposal.

In his response, Minister for Livestock and Fisheries U Maung Maung Thein said that the whole meat and fish sector has been privatized and Myanmar Fisheries federation and Livestock Breeding Federation have been set up as national political forces for private entrepreneurs.

Today, zootomists are increasing gradually, posing changeless to humans. The ministry, holding concept that the role of vets is becoming more important gradually, is taking necessary actions.

Myanmar saw four bird flu outbreaks from 2006 to 2010 with outbreaks in Rakhine State in February, in Sagaing in March in 2011. In the first outbreak in 545 farms in Sagaing and Mandalay regions, 660,000 chickens and quails, in the second outbreak in Yangon, Bago regions and Mon State in 76 farms, 110,000, in the second outbreak in Shan State (East) 30000, in the fourth outbreak in Yangon and Sagaing regions in 31 farms, 16000, in the fifth outbreak in Rakhine State and Sagaing region in 151 farms, 97000 were killed, altogether 913000 chickens and quails were killed in 803 farms in 31 townships in five flu outbreaks.

When the bird flu occurred for the first time in 2006, assistance was rendered by Thailand, FAO, OIE, WHO and JICA which has experience in dealings the case.

At first, there were some misunderstandings between breeders and authorities concerned, but later they all realized the situation had enabled authorities concerned to control the farm.
Livestock Breeding and Veterinary team had to clear the mess. They did it although the job was risky and not a pleasant one.

In he second time in 2007, Livestock Breeding and Veterinary Department assumed responsibility to examine the cases to ensure there is no panic among the public, loss to the breeders, delay in commodity flow and harm to the consumers, and issued health certificates.

When H5N1 virus outbreak in 2006 was examined, it was found to be identical to that of Hubei Region, Yunna Province of China. The virus of the second outbreak in 2007 is identical to Fujian in Fuzhan Province of China. So, it can be said that the virus did not spread from Sagaing and Mandalay to Yangon. So, the ministry educate people to pay attention to bio-security.

As the epidemic can spread rapidly with high mortality rate and can also infect to humans, it is required to control effectively and quickly. If people are infected with the virus, it is impossible to kill them and so poultry were killed for the health of the people. The ministry is taking measures in accord with the norms of OIE to control the disease.

Highly Pathogenic Avian Influenza was listed under listed transmitted diseases infected to animals with notification No (09/2004) dated 6 April, 2004 in accord with Veterinary and Development Law (1993) Articles 14 and 33. Regarding prevention of the listed diseases, the ministry issued notification No (49/99) dated 5 August, 1999.

Avian flu emergency preparedness project (February, 2009) have been drafted under article 15 of the above-mentioned law. Flu control procedures are carried out in accord with the project.

A personnel who was assigned by local authority chaired bird flu prevention committees at township, district, Region and State level. Representatives from Myanmar Police Force, Development Affairs Committee, Health Department, Livestock and Breeding Federation and related organizations are members of the committee to which secretary is assigned by Livestock Breeding and Veterinary Department.

Flu surveillance is carried out when birds are found to die of suspected flu. If avian flu case is suspected, laboratory samples were tested with Rapid Test Kit for Influenza Type A and sent to Mandalay or Yangon Diagnosis Laboratory.

Veterinary Diagnosis Laboratory underwent tests using Rapid Test Kit for Influenza Type A, RT-PCT & Real Time PCR and Virus isolation in embryonated chicken eggs methods to release confirmation of avian flu case. The Director-General submits lab result to the Ministry of Livestock and Fisheries if the tests indicate bird flu and confirms the case. The press release is sent to OIE and United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) as well as to public via dailies, televisions and radios.

To control spreading of the virus and prevent transmission to persons, zone is designated and transfer of chicken and related produce is restricted under avian flu prevention ways.

Transfer and trading of chicken and related produce, farm equipment and vehicles are limited, permitted and restricted in infected area, restricted area and control area.

Cleaning and disinfection are carried out in farms during flu control period. Flu surveillance and public awareness measures were taken in nearby areas of infected farm.

The director-general, heads of township/district/ Region/State Livestock Breeding and Veterinary Department report progress constantly to local authority and the ministry.

If no more flu case is reported in the area from the date of last outbreak to 21-day flu control period, the restrictions are withdrawn.
Director-General's Office of the department carries on works to classify the area as disease free area within 90 days from withdrawal.

Considerable cleaning, spraying pesticide and disease surveillance works are completed under Contingency Plan for HPAI control during 90 days from withdrawal. Breeding is allowed only after post-outbreak surveillance shows no more flu cases.

Averting public panic, breeders’ loss and disrupted commodity flow is considering points in disease control measures.

Transmission of flu to officials, volunteers and public is cautiously controlled in disease control measures.

The ministry is joining hands with international organizations - FAO, OIE, United Nations Children Fund (UNICEF), World Health Organization (WHO), Care Myanmar, USAID - in taking bird flu control measures since 2006. With the cooperation with FAO in implementing eight plans for avian flu control, laboratory of Yangon Zoological Garden is upgraded to Biosafety level II (BSL II), contributing to drafting contingency plan.

Commercial breeding farms in 11 Regions/States, 28 districts and 54 townships with mass breeding coverage and trading of chicken, duck and related products are recorded. A total of 16200 plasmas and samples for tracking flu have been sent to laboratory. Flu awareness trainings were disseminated to breeders in November and December in 2009 and January in 2010. Starting in June of 2010, bird flu surveillance tasks, upgrading laboratories, public awareness measures, improving bio-safety of breeding farms, bird flu surveillance in regions of birds hibernated, compiling trade reports of chicken, duck, pigs and related produce in markets, drawing trade amount and price map and tracking entrance of bird flu were carried out in 78 townships.

Breeding farms recording, GPS recording and inspecting bio security were being carried out.

Being bird flu resistance makes disruptions in diagnosis.

Countries exercising vaccination practices do not achieve absolute success yet. Vaccination is prohibited by the government in some countries. Myanmar is adopting Stamping out Policy after considering discussions in international meetings and advices of experts at home and abroad.

United Nations Bird Flu and Influenza A/H1N1 Senior Coordinator Dr David Nabarro recognized Myanmar’s successful control of disease transmission and transmission to public in cooperation with related departments and organizations. Two scholars of World Bank leveled Myanmar’s disease control when they informed Resident Representative of Myanmar as “one of most successful bird flu and Influenza A/H1N1 control projects in East Asia and Pacific region with aid of World Bank” after concluding their field trip to Myanmar.

Local authority, Ministry of Livestock and Fisheries, Ministry of Communications, Posts and Telegraphs, FAO and Myanmar Fisheries Federation equipped breeders in flu affected Mandalay, Sagaing, Yangon and Bago Regions and Mon State and Shan State (East) with GSM phones, medicines and chicks. They were recommended to receive loans from Myanmar Breeding and Fisheries Development Bank.

Some ASEAN countries provide compensation/ financial aid ranging from 15 to 60 per cent of current price, but some do not due to economic status.

With the approval of management committee meeting of the ministry held on 10 September, 2009, Myanmar Breeding and Fisheries Development Bank invested K 25 m seed fund.
Broiler Breeders and Traders Association (Yangon), established 12 December, 2007, raised its fund to K 40 m and is providing assistance for training breeders, spraying pesticide in markets, extended construction of shops and repair of shops.

FAO Compensation Consultant Dr Rose Azuba Musoke visited Myanmar from 24 January to 20 February in 2008. She submitted report on bird flu outbreak, control and providing compensation and relief, revealing the international community has accepted the concept of providing compensation/relief to inform the outbreak by breeders with the knowledge of stamping out; the compensation/relief system can not be endured solely by the government but by private-public partnership fund. He suggested the cooperation of MFF, BBTA (Yangon) and the ministry has prospects of wider development in bird flu control.

From 2003 to 2011 March, 63 countries were infected by bird flu. Avian flu broke out in Myanmar and other eight nations from January to March in 2011. From 2003 to 2011 March, 311 persons - 142 in Indonesia, 59 in Vietnam, 17 in Thailand, 11 in Cambodia and two in Lao- died of bird flu out of infected 528. As the disease control tasks were carried under international norms in Myanmar, only a girl in Kengtung of Shan State (East) was infected by avian flu and there was no death. To curb breeding in wards, breeding zones had been established.

Establishment of private-public partnership fund, subcommittees, drafting of notifications, directives and regulations and disbursing loans will continue.

Areas which needs disease control had been designated under OIE Protocol, bird flu control procedures had been disseminated through media. The State will not be able to provide compensation now. Myanma Insurance provides insurance related to animals.

Appropriate assistance had been provided to breeding business and recovery works and will be through Livestock and Breeding Federation. Regarding bank loan, Myanma Breeding and Fishery Development Bank will disburse loan in accord with banking procedures. As the complete clarification on bird flu was presented, it will not be needed to continue dealing with the proposal.

The speaker asked the will of Dr Aye Maung of Rakhine State Constituency-1, resource person, who requested the withdrawal of proposal and keeping it in record of the hluttaw.

The Hluttaw approved the recording of Dr Aye Maung’s proposal to be dealt with by next government and that the Hluttaw need not continue reacting the proposal with the volition of resource person.

A & I Minister replies to “damage of crops due to impact of climate change in Myanmar”

NAY PYI TAW, 28 March—U Hla Maung (a) U Naing Hla Maung of Chaungzon constituency put questions to Pyidaungsu Hluttaw session today, stating that recently harvested paddy were in ruin due to the rain in December 2010. He asked whether to conduct survey of crops damages or not, and preparedness measure against future climate change.

Minister for Agriculture and Irrigation U Htay Oo, for his part, explained that it is needed to weekly bring the facts about region-wise paddy growing and harvesting before the ministry after conducting daily surveys at local Land Records Departments. Conducting crops surveys is a necessary procedure the ministry needs to carry out at all times. In December 2010 in Mon State, it was learnt that there were 4.92 inches of rainfall in average three days and higher than normal rainfall 1.3 inches by 3.62 inches. As the farmers in Mon State needed to grow cold season crops and beans and pulses on schedule, they used to pile harvested paddy on embankment and ground before thrashing. Due to
collaborative efforts of local authorities, departmental personnel and farmers, there was only slight damage to paddy fields although the paddy in Chaungzon and Mudon townships caught the rains. To take a look at the damages to paddy fields, there were 200 acres in Chaungzon Township and about 150 acres in Mudon Township.

Despite rainwater on recently broadcasting 120 pea acres in Kautmupon village and Kanhwaw village in Mudon Township, beans and pulses could be grown without more ado. Due to such untimely rainfalls, Ministry of Agriculture and Irrigation separately asked regions concerned for submitting statistics. According to statistics presented to Agricultural Coordination Organizations in regions and states, there was no crop damage apart from slim spoils.

Based on weather issuance of Meteorology and Hydrology Department, Ministry of Agriculture and Irrigation has been making announcement of necessary measures to farmers through newspaper, radio and TV programmes to avoid damages to crop growing and harvesting in case of bleak weather.

In harvesting and thrashing staple paddy, educative talks on harvesting paddy with combine harvesters, moving harvested paddy to shelters and drying method were given to farmers.

Whenever climate change prospects occur, arrangements are being made to avoid damages and to reduce damages by warning in advance on a supervisory basis. All crop growing, harvesting and producing procedures are being surveyed and put them on record.

**Immigration & Population Minister answers question about issuance of citizenship scrutiny cards to citizens born to Myanmar nationals and Household Registration Certificates**

NAY PYI TAW, 28- U Tin Maung Win of Mingaladon Constituency raised questions at today’s Pyidaunghsu Hluttaw session.

He questioned whether there is any means to promptly issue citizenship scrutiny cards to citizens born to Myanmar nationals and household registration certificates (Form 10) at low price and when the issuance will start if there is; and whether there is any way to promptly issue official citizenship scrutiny cards and census certificates at low price, based on the lists of the temporary citizenship cards and census certificates issued for a prescribed period, and when the issuance will start if there is.

In response, Minister for Immigration and Population U Maung Oo said in accord with the law and procedures of the ministry, following points and documents are necessary in applying for citizenship scrutiny cards.

(1) Applicant must apply in person.

(2) Original census certificate that includes the applicant and its copy

(3) The application form for citizenship scrutiny card and the original letter of endorsement issued by Ward PDC concerned proving that the applicant lives in the ward concerned

(4) A copy each of parents’ citizenship scrutiny cards / national registration cards

(5) The original birth certificate (or) the school endorsement and its copy

(6) The blood test

(7) Four photos measuring 0.8 x 0.8 inches without spectacles
Likewise, for applying census certificates, a head of household must apply personally together with necessary documents.

There is no charge for issuing census certificates.

For applying citizenship scrutiny cards, a person must pay six kyats to the State for document fees. For applying again for a citizenship scrutiny card on account of the lost one, a person must pay 10 kyats. Speedy measures are taken if all the requirements of documents are met. Such documents are necessary to ensure correct facts and data in implementing State projects, correct facts of applicants and one’s holding of a single citizenship scrutiny card and census certificate.

The lists of temporary citizenship scrutiny cards and household registration are systematically recorded in the office of every township department of the ministry.

Those temporary cards were issued for those who have moved to other places without full necessary documents.

The ministry staff members are going down to wards and villages for issuing those cards and certificates for those with complete documents.

According to the township level organizational setup, an A-level township office has 18 staff members including a staff officer. The pay scale of the staff officer with the highest rank is K 100,000-2000-110,000 and that of a record keeper with the lowest rank, K 41,000-1000-46,000.

At present, the strength of staff members is only 75 percent of the organizational setup. The strength of staff members disproportionate to the area of township they are assigned to and its population cause delays sometimes. Costs in applying come from photos and other necessary documents of an applicant himself. If preparations are made for necessary documents, there will be few costs and delays.

Measures are being taken to ensure no staff member of the ministry takes bribe. It was already announced at all the township offices on 14-4-2007 that a complaint may be lodged to the director-general of Immigration and National Registration Department, Nay Pyi Taw in person or by letter, by phone or by fax if an applicant does not obtain the citizenship scrutiny card within 28 days from the applying date with complete documents. It has been announced many times in newspapers and journals. In connection with cases of staff member’s violation of the rules and regulations, action has been taken.

With the Notification No.435/3(8)2/NaYaKa date 29-4-2007, the State Peace and Development Council assigned duties to form scrutinization committees with heads of township departments of five ministries in every township in order to promptly issue citizenship scrutiny cards to those with the characteristics of a citizen in line with the 1982 Myanmar citizen law. Besides, measures have been taken for everyone who has come of age to be able to hold a certain form of card staring 12-4-2007. And now has reached project level-4. Measures are also being taken to issue the cards to those who have difficulty in submitting complete documents with the endorsement letters of townspeople concerned.

Therefore, it is the task that can be accomplished correctly and easily through cooperation of applicants, ward/village people and the ministry staff, the minister concluded.

Minister for Labour responds to question of Dr Myat Nyana Soe

NAY PYI TAW, 28 March- At today’s session of Pyidaungsu Hluttaw, three hluttaw representatives discussed the approved proposal ‘call on the government to form a migrant workers, affairs department under a suitable ministry submitted by Dr Myat Nyana Soe of Yangon Region Constituency No.4.'
U Paik Htwe of Kanma Constituency discussed the proposal, saying that the government is sending workers to foreign countries through oversea licensed employment agencies under a foreign employment law.

According to provisions of Foreign Employment Law (99) Section 25, Sub-section (d), these licensed agencies take responsibilities of the workers to enjoy the rights fully, when they are deprived of rights in foreign countries.

Most of migrant workers who went abroad through brokers and through borders are facing many difficulties.

The government is providing necessary assistance to them.

First, for instance, about 1000 Myanmar workers are working at fishing net factory in Khon Kaen, Thailand.

They demonstrated on 9-9-2010 because of not getting salary from the factory.

Officials from Myanmar embassy in Thailand helped them.

Second, some of the 600 illegal Myanmar workers who are working at garment factory in Amman of Jordan quarreled with some Bangladeshi workers there on 5-1-2010. The company has arranged to send Myanmar workers back. So Myanmar ambassador and officials from the Embassy settled the problem. As a result, the workers got damages and compensation. And they have to continue working there.

Third, more than 2700 illegal workers detained at immigration camps in Malaysia were sent to Myanmar in cooperation between two officials, starting 4-9-2009. It can be seen that the government helps workers working in foreign countries to enjoy the rights.

The government is taking necessary action on licensed employment agencies and brokers who do not obey existing laws. Authority concerned detected that brokers sent workers overseas illegally. A total of 17 cases were charged in line with the laws.

Altogether 14 oversea employment agencies that failed to follow the licenses provisions were terminated.

Ministry of Home Affairs is taking legal action against seven cases because of having no overseas employment licenses.

Myanmar is sharing border with Thailand about 1800 Kilometre. So, Myanmar workers are working in Thailand crossing border camps. Three border camps in Ranoung of Thailand issue temporary passports to workers in coordination between Myanmar and Thai governments. The government is sending new workers who want to work in Thailand in cooperation with respective ministries.

It is obviously seen that the government is undertaking migrant workers' affairs within the framework that should be. So, regarding the proposals of Dr Myat Nyana Soe, no need to continue to discuss, he said.

Afterwards, U Win Oo of Yebyu Constituency said that many of Myanmar citizens go abroad as workers and scholars. Myanmar embassies in respective countries are providing necessary assistances to them all. They have obligations to pay income taxes and are paying income taxes to Myanmar embassies.

Myanmar embassies in Thailand, Singapore, Japan and UAE settle workers’ affairs. In cooperation with local authorities, necessary assistances are being provided to Myanmar workers by forming an association for safeguarding Myanmar workers, including Myanmar ambassadors as patron and
Myanmar entrepreneurs as members. Myanmar workers are working in neighboring countries as general workers.

Being migrant workers, they have to face difficulties. Under the guidance of the Head of State, this affair is regarded as national plan. And it has been implemented since 2005.

Legal work permit in Thailand and passports have been issued to more than 400,000 workers. The government doesn’t collect income taxes.

Most of legal workers are working in foreign countries as skilled workers after attending training courses in respective ministries and private training schools. Now they get good reputations and well-paid jobs.

In the world of international sailors, Myanmar sailors earn good reputation and salaries because respective departments and private sector open Maritime University and Maritime Training Institute. To enjoy the rights fully, respective ministries and MOSA are supervising their affairs.

In addition, civil aviation such as cockpit crew and cabin crew will be conducted.

To get job opportunities in international airlines, respective departments will conduct the courses in cooperation with private schools.

Many national experts and skilled workers are working abroad for well-paid jobs.

The government is establishing port terminals, industrial zones and factories in the nation to crate remunerative jobs and to improve the living status of the people. Dawei Deep Sea Port Project, the largest of its kind in Myanmar is on schedule to be completed in 10 years and will create about over 200,000 jobs.

The government is safeguarding the rights of the people, training national workers for overseas jobs for reasonable taxes to the nation, so the proposal should not be under discussion any more.

U Kyi Myint from Latha Constituency said that the term “migrant worker” should be used as “Myanmar citizens working abroad for earnings”.

A migrant worker is a person who has decided to live in a foreign country for good. He may send remittances to his family or relatives, but illegally. The remittance of a citizen staying abroad for earnings is part of the mother country’s GDP and taxes. A national worker overseas may need help from the society of mother country, and the society is willing to extend a helping hand.

It is not difficult to establish a department in this regard, but national workers in foreign countries still need to declare all facts truly.

He disclosed that he is in support of the proposal in principle, but to establish a related department will come true only if legal or illegal national workers in foreign countries declare all facts truly.

Minister for Labour U Aung Kyi said that the proposal is composed of four points. Regarding the first point, in 2010, the State got 26.92 million US dollars from migrant workers as income taxes. Income taxes stated by the proposer on the 15th-day session are, indeed, remittances.

Regarding the second point, migrant workers should be termed documented migrant workers or undocumented migrant workers. The ASEAN Declaration issued at the 12th ASEAN Summit manifests that receiving states have to protect migrant workers in accordance with the law.

Sending states are also protecting their national migrant workers through MoUs with receiving states concerned.

Many more workers are being sent to Thailand through the centres according to the orders.

In 2001, MoUs were signed between Shwe Inwa Agency Co Ltd of the Myanmar War Veterans Organization and agencies in Malaysia to send Myanmar workers to work in. According to the MoU signed between Myanmar and the Republic of Korea, Myanmar has been sending national workers with Employment Permit System (EPS) since 2009.

Organizations for protecting Myanmar workers were formed in Malaysia and Thailand in 2009. A Myanmar official of the Ministry of Labour was sent to ROK in January 2011 to provide assistance to national workers there.

Regarding the third point, Oversea Employment Law was promulgated in 1999 and the people were allowed to form oversea job hunting agencies. It prescribes that agencies are responsible for rights of workers in coordination with the foreign companies concerned if a national worker is deprived of rights.

In 2010 alone, the two training centres under the ministry and four training centres of agencies trained 5210 skilled workers. Skilled workers were sent only 1.8% of the migrant workers in 2001, and 19.46% in 2010.

National Skill Standard Authority (NSSA) formed in 2007 will be upgraded to an organization at ASEAN level.

The ministry is in pursuance of short- and long-term plans to bring about a growing number of skilled workers.

Regarding the fourth point, the ministry does not need to open a department for migrant workers as it has already had an oversea employment division. In this case, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the Ministry of Home Affairs and the Ministry of Immigration and Population are working closely as a task force.

Overall, the proposal is intended to make Overseas Employment Mechanism more effective. He admitted that the ministry has yet to carry out many steps.

One of them is that the nation has not had enough necessary institutions. The nation needs to sign more bilateral agreements and upgrade the signed MoUs and MoAs to the ones that can guarantee that can safeguard the interests of Myanmar workers. The ministry is also trying to expedite tasks with the help from IOM. Local and foreign employment agencies and Myanmar migrant workers should choose right tracks, rather than shortsighted shortcuts. Everyone in favour of the interests of migrant workers is urged to render assistance and hold talks for institutional development and cultural change.

He wished individuals, agencies and migrant workers improvement in wisdom of big-picture thinking.

The speaker sought the opinion of the proposer.

Dr Myat Nyana Soe expressed thanks for the minister and the representatives for their assessments. He said that he has known well that the government has made all necessary arrangements in that regard. All concerned have to do their bit in the tasks for institutional development and cultural change.

He pledged that he will relay the minister’s clarification to the people. He reported that his proposal should be documented and it should not go on.
The Hluttaw approved the report and confirmed that the proposal is documented and it is no longer needed to discuss the proposal.

**Aungban-Pinlaung-Loikaw-Mae-sei Road will be upgraded to tarred one, but not any plan yet to build Thanlwin Bridge (Pasawng) for the time being**

NAY PYI TAW, 28 March—At today’s session of Pyidaungsu Hluttaw, U Ye Htut Tin from Pasawng Constituency asked if there are plans to resume the upgrading of Aungban-Loikaw-Mae-sei Road for swift commodity flow, and to construct Thanlwin River Bridge (Mae-sei) on Aungban-Loikaw-Mae-sei Road, and said that he wondered when the projects will begin if there are.

Minister for Construction U Khin Maung Myint in his reply said that the government is taking measures in various sectors for development of Regions and States including far-flung areas. The Ministry of Construction constructs new roads and bridges and upgrades and maintains old ones in Kayah State yearly.

Aungban-Pinlaung-Loikaw-Mae-sei Road, 212 miles and six furlongs long artery, is made up of two sections: 84 miles and six furlongs long section at Shan State (South) and 128 miles long section at Kayah State. Aungban-Loikaw-Mae-sei Road consisting of five sections goes through seven townships in Kayah State. Taunggyi District is upgrading and maintaining the 84 miles and six furlongs long Aunban-Pinlaung-Warikawkhu (Kayah State border) section in Shan State (South).

In 2010-2011 fiscal year, the ministry resurfaced the section for three miles and upgraded it for 12 miles and built culverts and small bridges along it.

The section in Kayah State stretching from Warikawkhu and Nanman through Loikaw and Pasawng is linked with the border trade route. The 89 miles and four furlongs long Loikaw-Bawlakhe-Pasawng part is a tarred one, and the 35 miles and four furlongs long Pasawng-Mae-sei-Nanman part, a gravel one. So, the three mile part is yet to be upgraded to a gravel one.

In Kayah State in 2010-2011 fiscal year, 24 miles section was upgraded, three 15-foot bridges were built, and 2 miles and 2 furlongs long part was rebuilt.

Pasawng-Meisenan-Maesei-anman section, part of the border trade route, will be upgraded to a fine one.

The ministry also built six above-180-foot bridges apart from 306-foot Kandarawady Bridge in Loikaw. In addition, 240-foot Hteesekah Bridge was opened on 29 June 2009, and 228-foot Htoo Creek Bridge, on 9 March 2011.

It constructed Thanlwin River-spanning bridges: Tarpar Bridge (600 feet), Kunlon Bridge (789 feet), and Tarkaw-et Bridge (600 feet) in Shan State (North), Tarkaw Bridge (780 feet) and Tarhsan Bridge (900 feet) in Shan State (South), Hpa-an Bridge (2252 feet) in Kayin State, and Mawlamyine Bridge (11575 feet) in Mon State.

The Thanlwin River is about 1,800 feet wide in Pasawng, and a Z-craft makes eight runs a day. So, there is not any plan yet to build Thanlwin Bridge (Pasawng) at present. But, if the route copes with grater traffic, a proposal may be submitted to the government for putting the dream into reality.

In Kayah State, 237 miles of roads have been upgraded to tarred ones; 43 miles and five furlongs, to gravel ones and 115 miles and five furlongs, to gravel ones, and 124 miles and three furlongs, to laterite ones, totaling 520 miles and five furlongs, and 371 bridges were built.
In conclusion, the minister said that Aungban- Pinlaung-Loikaw-Mae-sei Road will be upgraded annually to a tarred one, but there is not any plan yet to build Thanlwin Bridge (Pasawng) for the time being.

**Pyidaungsu Hluttaw Speaker comforts hospitalized Amyotha Hluttaw Representative**

NAY PYI TAW, 28 March-Speaker of Pyidaungsu Hluttaw U Khin Aung Myint, together with elected Vice-President Dr Sai Mauk Kham, Amyotha Hluttaw Deputy Speaker U Mya Nyein and officials, enquired after Amyotha Hluttaw Representative U Tin Myint who is receiving treatment at Nay Pyi Taw People’s Hospital (1000-bed) here this evening.

On arrival at the hospital, the Speaker and party were welcomed by Minister for Health Dr Kyaw Myint, departmental heads, Medical Superintendent of the hospital Dr Daw Phyu Phyu and doctors and nurses.

The Speaker and party comforted U Tin Myint from Bago Region Constituency No (3).