Eighth day third regular session of first Amyotha Hluttaw continues. Donation to Amyotha Hluttaw Library recorded, eight questions answered, one report approved, four bills discussed, three new proposals submitted

NAY PYI TAW, 29 Feb—The eighth day third regular session of the first Amyotha Hluttaw continued at the Amyotha Hluttaw Hall of the Hluttaw Complex, here, at 10 am today.

It was attended by Speaker of the Amyotha Hluttaw U Khin Aung Myint and 204 Amyotha Hluttaw representatives.

The Amyotha Hluttaw announced that the cash donation of Amyotha Hluttaw representatives for the library of Amyotha Hluttaw was put on record.

As two Hluttaw representatives asked questions on environmental conservation and forestry sector, Union Minister for Environmental Conservation and Forestry U Win Tun replied to the questions.

With regard to irrigated cultivation, hydropower generation and protection of forest-covered areas that conserves above and underground water resources asked by U Myo Myint of Mandalay Region Constituency No. 6, the Union Minister replied that the period from 2004-2005 to 2009-2010 was termed as a five-year plan for declining of erosion, landslides and silting at dams and watershed areas and greening Bago mountain ranges so as to conserve origins of quality teak plantations and maintain the dams and reservoirs that contribute to economic development of the State in agriculture sector. Moreover, the second five-year plan is being implemented from 2010-2011 to 2014-2015.

Up to now, ten main tasks such as conservation of natural forests, natural plant propagation, establishment of forest plantations, upgrading natural forests, seizure of illegal timbers, establishment of local people-owned forests and model forest villages, extension of educative works, use of firewood-substitute fuel, availability of water, designation of natural teak reserves and research works. Moreover, a total of 79280 acres of watershed areas are being nurtured on watershed areas of 63 important dams in Bago Region.

With the technological assistance and cooperation of international organizations, the ministry is carrying out control and reduction of carbon emission and gas emission from deforestation harming the climate change and causing natural disasters in Bago mountain ranges. Joining hands with Forest Management Division of Korea and International Tropical Timber Organization, the ministry is undertaking the tasks of conducting the human resources development trainings and workshops and seeking technological assistance from foreign countries. Moreover, the ministry is drawing the pilot plans in cooperation with UN-REDD Programme.

Regarding the second question on extraction of teak and hardwood in Bago Region exceeding that of other regions and states, the Union minister replied that about 25 per cent on average of timber across the nation are being extracted from Bago Region. It exceeds the annual forest production based on forest management system. Beginning 2012-2013, emphasis is being placed on drawing the plans to reduce timber extraction by stopping production at some forests and nurturing some forests. In this regard, Bago mountain range will be first prioritized.

In asking that whether there is a plan to reduce teak and hardwood extraction from Bago Region and increase timber extraction in other regions and systems, the Union Minister replied that a plan is underway to reduce timber extraction not only in Bago Region but also in other regions and states and control plenty of timber extraction from single area.

At present, a total of 582.5 acres of lands have been allotted to six groups from six villages for establishment of public-owned forest plantations in Bago Region. Efforts will be doubled in organizing
the local people to establish public-owned forest plantations. Directives for public-owned forest plantations are being upgraded as bylaw and it has been submitted to the Office of the Union Attorney-General. After coordinating with ministries concerned, easier and effective process will be created for the local people to carry out the tasks of public-owned forest plantations.

Likewise, the timber extraction will be scrutinized in other regions and states and emphasis will be placed on production of timber to satisfy the local demand.

Dr Myint Kyi of Yangon Region Constituency No. 8 asked whether there is a plan to constantly check contents of carbon dioxide in the air. The Union Minister replied that with regard to conservation of air pollution in Myanmar, members of the Vienna Convention for the Protection of the Ozone Layer member countries must stop use of chlorofluorocarbon at refrigerator, automobile, air conditioners and cold storage in 2010. Thus, Myanmar has stopped use of chlorofluorocarbon as of 2006.

The surveillance plan on implementation of cold storage materials management project and the recycling plan of chlorofluorocarbon from refrigerator have been implemented in Myanmar. At present, the programme for reduction of Ozone layer harming materials and the plan on establishment of national Ozone unit and cold storage management plan are under implementation.

The Ozone Regulation Bill and the Hydrochlorofluorocarbon reduction bill have been drawn.

Air quality was measured in Yangon, Mandalay, PyinOoLwin, Nay Pyi Taw and Tachilek with the use of air pollution measuring device as of 2008. Ministry of Health and Yangon City Development Committee jointly designated trading area, residential area and industrial zone area at a time when they measured air quality for the first time. They could set records on contents of dusts, the dusts less than 10 microns, sulpha dioxide and nitrogen oxide in the air.

Myanmar signed the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change in 1994 and Tokyo Protocol in 2003 and then it implemented the projects as member of the convention. With the assistance of the Asian Development Bank, Myanmar together with 12 Asian countries realized the Asian Greenhouse Gas Reduction Strategy and designated 1990 as the basic year for measurement of greenhouse gas in energy sector, reform of land utilization, forest sector and agriculture sector. Myanmar annually emits 41.5 million ton of greenhouse gas and it is expected to hit 62 million tons in 2005. According to the data in 1990, emission ration of carbon dioxide to person was less than one ton yearly and such amount was less than that of Mekong Sub-Region countries.

With the assistance of the UN Environmental Programme and the World Environmental Programme, the ministry designated the year of 2000 as the basic year after collecting greenhouse gas measurement data of the initial national report compilation project that started in 2008 on climate change in energy, industrial, agriculture and livestock breeding sectors, change of land utilization and forest sector and waste materials sector. According to the statistics, it was reported that energy sector would increase emission of greenhouse gas to 8.12 million tons from 7.86 million tons in 2005 and the industrial sector to 0.51 million ton from 0.46 million ton. In the year 2000, a total of 74.358 million tons of greenhouse gas was absorbed in Myanmar in 2000 and forests absorbed 142.221 million tons of greenhouse gas. Thus, Myanmar stood as the top country in greater absorption of greenhouse gas at that time.

As the developing countries are facing technological difficulties and plenty of expense in collection of greenhouse gas measurement, they cannot submit the annual report on the amount of greenhouse gas emission.

Depending on technology assistance and allotment of fund, Myanmar like other developing countries will carry out measurement of greenhouse gas emission in some years.
Deputy Minister for Health Dr Daw Myat Myat Ohn Khin replied to questions on health sector raised by six Hluttaw representatives.

U Hlaing Oo of Ayeyawady Region Constituency No. 12 asked whether there is a plan to appoint necessary dentist, assistant doctors, nurses and health staff at Labutta General Hospital (200-bed) to some extent and provide hospital equipment to there. The deputy minister replied that a total of seven doctors—three assistant specialist surgeons and four assistant surgeons are discharging duties at the Labutta General Hospital. Arrangements are being made to appoint the one dentist after fresher doctors would have completed the basic officer course at the training institute. Moreover, nurses will be appointed there and senior nurses will be added to the hospital. If it gets more appointments, the recruitment will be assigned to the hospital. So far, 105 beds, 105 mattresses, two patient test beds, two slides, two instrument trolleys, five medicine trolleys and one set of dental chair have been provided to the hospital.

The Ministry of Health is fulfilling the hospital equipment to hospital on priority. If necessary, the hospitals are to submit applications for the demands to heads of Township Health Department with recommendations of the heads of Region/State Health Departments to be able to seek the assistance.

U Ha Shein Bwe of Chin State Constituency No. 8 asked whether there is a plan to build a two-storey patient ward instead of overage medical wards from Mindat General Hospital (100-bed). The deputy minister replied that there is no plan to build one two-storey patient ward at that hospital, and the ministry is building and maintaining the structures depending on the allotted funds.

U Hla Swe of Magway Region Constituency No. 12 asked whether there is a plan to upgrade rural health centre of North Khinyan Village in Gangaw Township to 16-bed station hospital. The deputy minister replied that Gangaw Township of Magway Region has opened one 100-bed district hospital, one 16-bed Kan Village Station Hospital, one station hospital in Kyaw Village, one station hospital in Min Village, three station hospitals, seven rural health centres and 28 rural health branches.

U Zon Hle Htan of Chin State Constituency No. 2 asked whether there is a plan to construct staff quarters and to repair laboratory hall at Falam Township People’s Hospital. U Aung Cho Oo of Bago Region Constituency No. 11 asked whether there is a plan to construct the building of rural health centre in Seinkantlant Village in Letset Village-tract of Minhla Township. The deputy minister replied that there is no plan to maintain and construct the buildings at present, and the buildings of hospitals, rural health centres and branches of the Ministry of Health will be built depending on the funds allotted by the State.

Dr Myat Nyana Soe of Yangon Region Constituency No. 4 asked whether there is a plan to draw health care insurance law instead of cost-sharing health care system, and if not, why didn’t implement for the law, and if it is, when the bill will be submitted to the Hluttaw. The deputy minister replied that with regard to the question, there need fundamental requirements for exercising health care insurance system before promulgation of the health care insurance law. The health insurance must have coverage over the entire people regardless of the rich and poor.

Worthy persons can practise the system with insurance fee by setting up the private health care insurance system. It must be compulsory as social health insurance system for the majority of the people.

To establish a socio health care insurance system, things that should be taken into account were economy of the State, management and administration skills, funds for the system, jobs and income in the country and providing health care for the people, she said.

Ministry of Health and UNICEF jointly carried out a survey in 2011 in DaikU and Kyauktaga townships in Bago Region to assess whether a health cover costs was possible and plans had been
making to carry out a “township based health cover costs programme” in DaikU based on the results of the survey, she said.

A survey on a maternal and child health care voucher system was carried out in Yedashe Township and Nay Pyi Taw Tatkon Township in 2010 and 2011 and the survey showed that the system would help to meet the UN’s millennium development goals and help providing health care to mothers and children in poverty, she said. Preparations were being made to carry out the maternal and child health care voucher system as a pilot project in Yedashe Township, Bago Region, she added.

As part of the township health care system development programme, Ministry of Health and World Health Organization (WHO) had planned to set up a funds for providing health care for mothers and children living in poverty in 20 townships as a first step as from March, 2012.

Experts and health care staff in the fields had held meetings to exchange views and to assess background and present situations related to health insurance and health care costs, she said.

Measures were being taken to review the health care programmes of the Ministry of Health and other organizations and based on the outcomes of the survey, infrastructures for the health care system would be set up step by step to pave the way for the better system, she said.

To promulgate the “Health Care Insurance Law” instead of “health care costs sharing system”, basis needs for the people were sine qua non for the socio health insurance system. Only after the basic needs for the people were fulfilled, measures for promulgation of the law should be taken within a certain period. Therefore, the Ministry of Health had not yet drawn a health care insurance law currently, she said.

U Saw Ohn of Mon State constituency No. 9 seconded the report of the Amyotha Hluttaw’s Government’s Guarantees, Pledges and Undertakings Vetting Committee, saying that he seconded the questions and proposals raised and submitted by the committee during the second regular session of the First Amyotha Hluttaw. There were 320 questions were raised and 31 proposals which had been approved during the second regular session which was held from 22, August, 2011 to 16, November, 2011, he said.

Out of the questions, 48 were raised to Ministry of Construction and 43 to Ministry of Agriculture and Irrigation, showing that the two ministries were major ministries to fulfill the requirements of the people, he said.

According to the review of answers of the responsible personnel of the union ministries, they satisfied the answers of Ministry of Border Affairs, Ministry of Transport and Ministry of Health as the answers reflected the plans to be implemented by the ministries, he said.

During the second regular session, he raised two questions: asking the Ministry of Agriculture and Irrigation whether the ministry had made arrangements for the silted down-stream outlet channels of the Mayangon Sluice Gate and Seikkyun Sluice Gate in Thaton Township, Mon State. The deputy minister for Agriculture and Irrigation replied that the ministry would carry out the task depending on the budget allocation for the ministry. The questioner, the people and the farmers did not like the answer. He submitted the proposal related to the gambling on 13, September, 2011, during the second regular session, suggesting to do campaigns to root out all forms of gambling which harmed the micro credit schemes for poverty reduction, he said.

He suggested the Amyotha Hluttaw’s Government’s Guarantees, Pledges and Undertakings Vetting Committee to compile the answers of the Union-level personnel, to get reports within the first week of a next regular session from questioners on measures taken for questions and proposals and to review
and assess the government’s guarantees, pledges and undertakings regarding the questions and proposals and to coordinate with the Union Government.

He urged the committee to carry out its tasks earnestly to conserve the dignity of Amyotha Hluttaw as it was the responsibility of the committee to carry out the main tasks of the Hluttaw.

U Nyan Lin of the committee submitted a proposal to accept the report of the Amyotha Hluttaw’s Government’s Guarantees, Pledges and Undertakings Vetting Committee and the hluttaw approved it.

Member of Bill Committee U Sun Dot Tian put forward the proposal to consider Labour Dispute Settlement Bill sent by Pyithu Hluttaw with amendments by Amyotha Hluttaw, together with the report of the committee.

Hluttaw representatives who want to discuss the bill could submit their name lists.

Member of Bill Committee U Kyaw Kyaw read out and explained the report of the committee on suggestion of the Amyotha Hluttaw representative on Vacant Land, Fallow Land and Virgin Land Management Bill.

In seeking approval for Vacant Land, Fallow Land and Virgin Land Management Bill which had been approved by Amyotha Hluttaw and sent back by Pyithu Hluttaw with amendments, the bill was approved as amended by Amyotha Hluttaw as there was no vote.

Dr Myat Nyana Soe submitted the proposal to promptly submit the differences between the approval of Amyotha Hluttaw and that of Pyithu Hluttaw to Pyidaungsu Hluttaw and seek its decision. Amyotha Hluttaw decided to submit the bill to Pyidaungsu Hluttaw.

Member of Bill Committee Dr Myat Nyana Soe read out report of the committee on suggestions of Amyotha Hluttaw representatives on Environmental Conservation Bill sent with amendments by Pyithu Hluttaw.

In seeking approval for Environmental Conservation Bill which had been approved by Amyotha Hluttaw and sent back by Pyithu Hluttaw with amendments, the bill was approved as amended by Amyotha Hluttaw as there was no vote.

U Tin Yu of Yangon Region Constituency (11) submitted the proposal to promptly submit the differences between the approval of Amyotha Hluttaw and that of Pyithu Hluttaw to Pyidaungsu Hluttaw and seek its decision.

Amyotha Hluttaw decided to submit the bill to Pyidaungsu Hluttaw.

Member of Bill Committee Defence Services Personnel Hluttaw Representative Col Hla Tun read out report of the committee on suggestions of Hluttaw representatives on Social Welfare Bill.

Union Minister for Labour U Aung Kyi submitted the proposal to discuss Social Welfare Bill.

The suggestions of Hluttaw representatives on the bill were approved paragraph-wise.

Union Minister U Aung Kyi submitted the proposal to approve the bill and Dr Myat Nyana Soe seconded the proposal.

In seeking approval of Amyotha Hluttaw for Social Welfare Bill, the bill was approved as amended by Amyotha Hluttaw as there was no vote.

U Nyan Lin of Ayeyawady Region Constituency (3) submitted the proposal that “the Union government is urged to add political science as additional subject in universities under management of respective Union ministries” and a Hluttaw representative seconded the proposal.
As the Hluttaw agreed to discuss the bill, Hluttaw representatives willing to discuss the proposal could submit their name lists.

Dr Myat Nyana Soe of Yangon Region Constituency (4) submitted the proposal that “the Union government is urged to extensively teach art subjects in basic and higher education levels create more job opportunities for graduates in Arts” and a Hluttaw representative seconded the proposal.

As the Hluttaw agreed to discuss the bill, Hluttaw representatives willing to discuss the proposal could submit their name lists.

U Khin Maung Yi of Ayeyawady Region Constituency (6) submitted the proposal that “the Union government is urged to improve education standard” and a Hluttaw representative seconded the proposal.

As the Hluttaw agreed to discuss the bill, Hluttaw representatives willing to discuss the proposal could submit their name lists.

Today’s Amyotha Hluttaw regular session concluded at 4.20 pm.

At today’s session, cash donation of Amyotha Hluttaw Library was put on record, eight questions were raised and answered, one report was submitted and approval was sought for it, four bills were discussed and three new proposals were submitted.