

Fourth regular session of First Amyotha Hluttaw continues for third day. Six questions answered, two proposals submitted

NAY PYI TAW , 6 July - The Fourth regular session of the First Amyotha Hluttaw continued for the third day at Amyotha Hluttaw Hall of Hluttaw Building at 10 am today, attended by Speaker of Amyotha Hluttaw U Khin Aung Myint and 211 representatives.

First, Speaker U Khin Aung Myint announced that Chairman of Mines and Mineral Resources Affairs Committee of the Amyotha Hluttaw U Nay Win Tun contributed K50 million and representatives their three-day per diem to the fund for rehabilitation of refugees who lost their Hluttaw put the donation on record.

Afterwards, the question and answer session continued and U Nu of Yangon Region constituency No. 10 asked if there was a plan to construct a new building for Myanmar Economic Bank branch in Insein District. Deputy Minister for Finance and Revenue U Win Than replied that it is true that the bank branch building is not big enough for the staff and banking services, causing troubles for customers. Staff of the bank branch are working their best to provide banking services to the customers, he said.

The deputy minister continued to say that the ministry would seek the allotment for the new building when it found a site at a strategic location which can provide security to the building. Afterwards, U Nu of Yangon Region constituency No. 10 asked if the Ministry of Sports had a plan to upgrade the township sports ground owned by the ministry with the aim of uplifting sports standard of the people.

Deputy Minister for Sports U Aye Myint Kyu replied that the ministry had given priorities to sports grounds and stadiums and a sports athletes village at present as part of efforts for hosting the XXVII SEA Games in Nay Pyi Taw in December 2013.

Besides, the ministry had planned to upgrade township-level sports grounds, considering that building sports grounds is an important part for promoting the sports standard in the country. For hosting the XXVII SEA Games in 2013, the ministry had to spend financial allocation for building the sports grounds meeting international standard.

Only after the XXVII SEA Games, the ministry would make arrangements in coordination with Region governments for upgrading sports grounds in townships. Afterwards, U Kyaw Tun Aung of Rakhine State constituency No. 5 asked if Ministry of Construction had a plan to continue the construction of Pauktaw-Minbya Road which is 20 mile and six furlongs long in Rakhine State, Dr Sai Hsai Kyauk Hsam of Shan State constituency No. 6 asked if Ministry of Construction had a plan to upgrade Naung Hpar Bridge on Kengtung-Monghkat-Mongyan Road to RC one and U Phone Myint Aung of Yangon Region constituency No. 3 asked if cooperative societies would get land grants and U Tin Maung Win of Mandalay Region constituency No 3 asked a question related to collection of fees at toll gates . Regarding the first question, Deputy Minister for Construction U Kyaw Lwin replied that Pauktaw-Minbya Road is 20 miles and six furlongs long and one mile and one furlong long section of the road has been paved with tar and the remaining section is a gravel one. In 2011-2012 fiscal year, the ministry spend K539.40 million on construction of an earthen embankment which has a distance of 4 miles and four furlongs, on paving the road with gravel which has a distance of four miles and two furlongs, on earth works on approach roads to Hsindhontaing Bridge and Sonye Bridge and on building three iron reinforced concrete bridges.

Spending the allocation for maintenance of roads and bridges for the 2011-12 fiscal year, the ministry had carried out road works maintaining a total distance of 20 miles and six furlongs and repairing a distance of eight miles. Out of over 180-foot long three bridges on Pauktaw-Minbya Road, Ywachaunggyi Bridge which is 250 ft long has been completed and Sonye Bridge which is 1216 ft

long and Hsinkhontaing Bridge which is 900 ft long are under construction. Thirty-nine per cent of the Sonye Bridge project and 36 per cent of Hsinkhontaing Bridge have been finished. In 2012-2013 fiscal year, maintenance of Pauktaw-Minbya Road would be continued, K5077.5 million would be injected into the two projects of bridges as a financial allocation and efforts would be stepped up to complete the two bridges in 2012-2013 fiscal year.

Regarding the second question, the deputy minister replied that Naunghpar Bridge on Kengtung-Mongkhet-Mongyan Road is 110 ft long and RSJ type one with wooden floor. The bridge is strong enough as the ministry has spent yearly maintenance allocation on repairing the bridge yearly.

The ministry has already received K500 million allocation for the road for the 2012-2013 fiscal year to carry out road works and to upgrade the road. To upgrade Naunghpar Bridge to a two-lane iron reinforced bridge, the ministry would seek allocation in 2013-2014 fiscal year. Regarding the third question, the deputy minister said that there are Cooperative Department and Cooperative Society. Among cooperative societies, there are groups of particular fields. If there is application for land grant by both the department and societies, the Human Settlement and Housing Development Department under Construction Ministry issued grants, depending on availability.

The land of which grant is issued to the department was transferred to the department with the requirement to return it in case it is not necessary. The lands were leased to the societies for three years with temporary lease license.

While new cooperative societies are emerging, some old ones are stopping operations. They sometimes sold the leased land at a fixed price. Entanglements in ownership of the cooperative societies are not related to the land grant. If the lease license expires, the extension for further three years is allowed. Regarding the fourth question, there are 24284 miles and seven furlongs of roads up to March 2012 while only 16 per cent of these length 3896 miles and 3 ½ furlongs was constructed through BOT system. The usage of roads and bridges in remaining 84 per cent 20388 miles and 3 ½ furlong is charged through auctioning system. Generally, each toll gate lies 50 miles from another on BOT roads. The gates are placed after taking convenience of the road users into consideration.

Successful national bidders are running toll gates on roads implemented by Public Works of the Ministry of Construction. Both gate passage fee and Patheingyi township passage fee were charged at 16-mile Asia World toll gate at the entrance to Mandalay from PynOoLwin in order to reduce one toll gate in coordination with Patheingyi Township Development Affairs Committee. The gate two miles ahead of Aungpinle is the one where Mandalay City Development Committee collects Mandalay entrance fee. Town entrance fees were collected at the gates on expressway to avoid delays.

The collection of town entrance fee is of respective DACs and the problem of the large number of the toll gates will be resolved in coordination with relevant DACs. The Construction Ministry is collecting the fees depending on types of vehicles as categorized by Road Transportation Directorate under the Rail Transportation Ministry in line with the ASEAN standards. Passenger buses are loading commodity plus passenger for making more profits. And if they have to pass a toll gate, they request the passengers to get off in order to avoid tenfold overload fine. This act seems to create the clash between the toll gate and the passengers. So, 'Passengers need not to get off' signboard is erected and disciplinary measures are taken against vehicles which do not stick to the rules. Passenger buses are charged K 10 per mile. They have to pay commodity charges if they load commodity. The charge for trucks is higher than that for passenger buses so that the passenger buses become a favourable option to transport commodity. There is a rule that no passenger buses are allowed to bear loads. As there is the check, the passenger buses request the passengers to walk past toll gate. To resolve the issue, the fixed fees for each type of vehicles that vary from K 10 to K 25 are collected at the toll gates as of 9-6-

2012. The ministry is studying SWOT of ASEAN toll gate systems and will continue to ensure convenience of the road users.

U Thein Win of Sagaing Region Constituency No (9) submitted the proposal 'urging the Union government to initiate reforms for development of financial and legal infrastructures while drafting monetary and investment bill in developing monetary and capital market'. A Hluttaw representative seconded the proposal. As the Hluttaw decided to discuss the proposal, the Hluttaw representatives willing to participate in discussion were asked to submit their name lists.

Dr Myint Kyi of Yangon Region Constituency No (8) submitted the proposal 'urging the Union government to start drafting Competition Law and Competition Policy to prevent international monopoly-alike'. A Hluttaw representative seconded the proposal. As the Hluttaw decided to discuss the proposal, the Hluttaw representatives willing to participate in discussion were asked to submit their name lists.

The third day regular session of Amyotha Hluttaw concluded at 11.45 am. And the fourth day session resumes at 10 am on 9 July. At today's session, six questions were answered and two proposals were submitted.

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