Pyidaungsu Hluttaw discusses housing, infrastructure loans

THE seventh regular session of the second Pyidaungsu Hluttaw held its ninth-day meeting yesterday morning at the Pyidaungsu Hluttaw meeting hall in the Pyidaungsu Hluttaw building, Nay Pyi Taw.

At the meeting, a bill on the registration of deeds, considered as approved by the Pyidaungsu Hluttaw, was put on record by the Pyidaungsu Hluttaw.

Explaining the loans provided by the Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA), sent by the President, Deputy Minister for Planning and Finance U Maung Maung Win said the interest rate of 8.5 per cent was set after co-ordinating with the JICA, the Ministry of Planning and Finance and SME committee representatives, as well as by taking into consideration the interest rates of other local loans. If each loan duration is set at three years in the total duration of 40 years, loans can be provided 13 times, and if the loan duration is set at five years, loans can be provided eight times. More SME businesses can get loans, as the number of loans provided will be higher. As only secured loans were provided during phase-1 of the project, the provision for unsecured loans, through the CGI system, to provide loans to people without guarantor in phase-2 of the project will be one of the concessions made. SME business owners should cooperate by providing the required information completely when applying for loans, said the Deputy Minister. The Hluttaw approved the matter after a majority of the Hluttaw representatives supported it and a decision was taken.

This was followed by the deputy ministers explaining the utilisation of Ks26,011.13 billion from the emergency funds included in the 2017 Union Budget Law sent by the President. Deputy Minister for Home Affairs Maj-Gen Aung Soe said the fencing of 182.68 miles of land border between Myanmar and Bangladesh was conducted in three stages, and 126.66 miles had already been completed. Some 56 miles, up to B-1, the border junction of Myanmar-Bangladesh-India, is yet to be fenced. In the fourth stage, 11.5 miles of border fencing was conducted in the 2016-2017 fiscal year (FY), and in the 2017-2018 FY, 3.2 miles of barbed wire fencing was extended by 2 feet with a modified design. The extension of 2 feet of barbed wire fencing with a modified design on 11.5 miles near BP-68 and BP-69 will be conducted with the 2017-2018 FY President’s emergency fund of Ks20 billion, explained the Deputy Minister.

Similarly, Deputy Minister for Defence Rear Admiral Myint Nwe and Deputy Minister for Border Affairs Lt-Gen Ye Aung explained the respective works of the ministries. Next, the deputy ministers explained the 15 billion Japanese yen loan provided by JICA, US$380 million loan from the Asian Development Bank (ADB) and the ASEAN Infrastructure Fund (AIF), and $80 million from ADB for the Ministry of Construction project works, sent by the President.

U Kyaw Lin said the 15 billion yen loan for the development of housing will fulfill housing requirements and allow low-income people to own a place while reducing the use of government funds. The permission of the Pyidaungsu Hluttaw is sought to approve the loan, explained the deputy minister. Similarly, the $380 million loan is for the development of roads in the Greater Mekong Sub Region. The Yangon-Pathein road, Bago-Thanlyin road and Yangon-Mandalay road are the main arteries of the economy of Myanmar and from there, it can connect to the most developed economic zones, and they will be the most used roads by the people. The Pyidaungsu Hluttaw is requested to approve the loan, stated the Deputy Minister. The $80 million loan from ADB is for the socio-economic and infrastructural development of the cities in Myanmar, Mawlamyine, Hpa-an and Myawady that are along the Greater Mekong Sub Region economic corridor road and supports the sustainable development goal of making cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable, and thus the Pyidaungsu Hluttaw is requested to permit the loan, explained the Deputy Minister.

In the same way Deputy Minister for Planning and Finance U Maung Maung Win said the 15 billion yen loan for the housing development project is for the sale of housing units in Yangon, constructed by the Department of Urban and Housing Development during the housing development project phase one, and in the second phase, it is for the sale of new housing units constructed according to the JICA standard. In the second phase, loans will be provided to people who want to buy houses not only with loans provided by the Construction and Housing Development Bank but also by other private banks under PFI (Private Finance Initiative). Loan agreements will be signed between PFI banks and Myanmar Economic Bank. The Pyidaungsu Hluttaw is requested to permit the Ministry of Planning and Finance and the Ministry of Construction to implement the programme enabling the home less to become home owners, said Deputy Minister U Maung Maung Win.