

Pyithu Hluttaw

Fourth-day meeting of Second Pyithu Hluttaw's 9th regular session held

THE second Pyithu Hluttaw's ninth regular session held its fourth-day meeting at the Pyithu Hluttaw meeting hall yesterday, where asterisk-marked questions were answered, a motion tabled and a bill decided.

Opening of ethnic national media school (college)

In the asterisk-marked question and answer session, U Oo Hla Saw of Mrauk U constituency first raised a question on plans to open ethnic national media school (college). Deputy Minister for Information U Aung Hla Tun replied on behalf of the Ministry of Information and together with Ministry of Ethnic Affairs and Rakhine State government.

The Deputy Minister said there are more than 100 ethnic nationals living in Myanmar and ethnic national media plays an important role in socio-economic development of ethnic nationals in the regions. With the abolishing of pre-publication censorship in August 2012, private media rapidly developed and together with it, ethnic media and me-



Pyithu Hluttaw Speaker U T Khun Myat. PHOTO: MNA

dia formerly based abroad or in border regions moved into the country.

Some ethnic media combined to become the Burma News International (BNI) with 11 members in 2013 and had now grown to include 13 members. There are many more ethnic national media that have not become BNI members yet. BNI organized six ethnic national media conferences from 2013 to 2018 and the participation and

cooperation of the Ministry of Information and related state/region governments was seen to have assisted and supported ethnic national media development.

At the moment, 11 ethnic national television programs are broadcasted by state-owned media — Myanma Radio and Television (MRTV) of the Ministry of Information, starting from 15 October 2013. Myanma Radio is also broadcasting 17 ethnic national radio programs.

Starting from 1 August 2014, sub-printing house (Mawlamyine) is printing and distributing 4 pages (color) of Sunday supplements in Mon, S'gaw Kayin, Pwo Kayin and Pa O languages in Myanma Alinn and Kyemon newspapers. An ethnic national section (Kachin language) supplement was printed by sub-printing house (Mandalay) and distributed in Kachin State every Saturday starting from 9 September 2017. An ethnic national section (in Myanmar language) was also included as supplement in Kyemon newspaper every Saturday starting from 30 September 2017.

A supplement (in Rakhine language) was also printed in sub-printing house (Sittway) every Wednesday starting from 20 September 2017 and distributed in Rakhine State. A special section on Rakhine State (in Myanmar language) was also printed in sub-printing house (Sittway) starting from 5 October 2017 and distributed in Rakhine State, said the Deputy Minister.

The Deputy Minister then

explained briefly about the work of the Ministry of Ethnic Affairs, formed by the previous government. This ministry organized a forum on sustainable development of ethnic nationals from 18 to 19 January 2018 and in the peace and ethnic national media sector. Nine points on media development was obtained, out of which one is to open an ethnic national media training school. Ministry of Ethnic Affairs had informed of the appropriateness of opening an ethnic national media school (college) said the Deputy Minister.

The Ministry of Information acknowledged the importance of ethnic national media development, but it has no plans at the moment to open an ethnic national media school (college), said the Deputy Minister. Instead of the Ministry of Information, this is better coordinated and conducted with the Ministry of Education and the Ministry of Ethnic Affairs that are at the moment providing courses on journalism, he added.

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Amyotha Hluttaw

Fourth-day meeting of Second Amyotha Hluttaw's 9th regular session held

THE second Amyotha Hluttaw's ninth regular session held its fourth-day meeting at the Amyotha Hluttaw meeting hall yesterday morning, where a proposal to donate a day's allowance of the Amyotha Hluttaw representatives to flood-affected people was made, asterisk-marked questions asked and answered and a bill discussed.

A day's allowance of Hluttaw representatives donated to flood-affected people

First, Amyotha Hluttaw Speaker Mahn Win Khaing Than proposed donating a day's allowance of Amyotha Hluttaw representatives to people in states and regions of Myanmar, affected by flooding and inundation caused by heavy rains. An announcement of the Hluttaw approving the proposal was made after Hluttaw's approval was obtained.

Open Government Partnership membership

Replying to the first asterisk-marked question posed by U Soe Thein of Kayah State constituency 9 on plans to becoming



Amyotha Hluttaw Speaker Mahn Win Khaing Than. PHOTO: MNA

a member of Open Government Partnership, Deputy Minister for State Counsellor's Office U Khin Maung Tin said Myanmar started the process of becoming a member of Open Government Partnership (OGP) after OGP proposed it in 2013. At the moment, Myanmar is not aiming toward becoming a member of OGP, but the work of the government is in accord with norms set by OGP, said the Deputy Minister.

From the financial side, financial information was published according to the budget year. In order to be transparent

in obtaining international aid, Myanmar is striving toward becoming a member of International Aid Transparency Initiative. A website is being hosted using Aid Information Management System, in order to be transparent in obtaining assistance and support from development partner countries. Financial information of Myanmar for five years, from fiscal year 2012-2013 to 2016-2017, was posted on the Ministry of Planning and Finance website. To be transparent in extractive sector and inflow of tax money to the country, second and third

EITI (Extractive Industries Transparency Initiative) reports were submitted, posted and announced in Myanmar EITI website and the Ministry of Planning and Finance website. On Access to Information, the Ministry of Information is broadcasting on television channels. It is also broadcasted in 17 ethnic national languages. The ministry is publishing two Myanmar and one English daily newspapers. Myanmar Digital News is broadcasted from News Portal through MOI web portal Myanmar Facebook, website (Myanmar, English) MOI Blog and MOI Twitter.

The Ministry of Information had discussed the Right of Access to Information Bill eleven times and had drawn it up with 14 chapters and 68 clauses and is working toward enacting it. 46 newspapers, 542 journals, 444 magazines and 107 news agencies were being permitted for the private media sector of which 26 newspapers, 219 journals and 210 magazines were being published.

In addition to this, the present government is working to-

wards successfully implementing an e-Government system in Myanmar and had formed an e-Government steering committee and implementation work committee with President Office notification 14/2018 and was implementing it, setting priority projects and working toward having a complete ICT support plan.

The incumbent government had enacted the fourth amendment to the Anti-Corruption Law on 21 June 2018, formed the Anti-Corruption Commission on 23 November 2017 and conducting anti-corruption work. Furthermore, an announcement was made by the Office of the President on 8 May 2018 about the President submitting his assets and values to Pyidaungsu Hluttaw Speaker in accordance with the Constitution. Similarly, with the approval of the Pyidaungsu Hluttaw, the list of assets and values of the Union level persons previously appointed and additionally appointed were being submitted to the President in accordance with the Union Government Law.

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In conclusion, it is better to implement the opening of ethnic national media school (college) by coordinating among the Ministry of Education, Ministry of Ethnic Affairs and state/region governments. The Ministry of Information will coordinate and assist in this, said the Deputy Minister in his answer to the question posed.

Plans to open a passport issuing office in Muse

Next, U Sai Pho Myat of Muse constituency posed a question on a plan to open a passport issuing office in Muse. Deputy Minister for Home Affairs Maj-Gen Aung Thu explained that BP (Border Pass) book (red color) and TBP (Temporary Border Pass) ticket (green color) were being issued to Myanmar nationals for travel into China up to 60 km from the

border. In the past, applications can be made to the Ministry of Hotels and Tourism and with the permission of the Office of the President, Myanmar nationals with ordinary Myanmar passports and Chinese nationals with Chinese passports can cross the border and visit the other country. But starting from 21 November 2016, ordinary Myanmar passport holders were no longer permitted to cross the border into China because of security situation.

Myanmar citizens living in Muse can leave for foreign countries through Nay Pyi Taw, Yangon and Mandalay, and passports can be made in Lashio, which is only 110 miles from Muse. Passport office (Lashio) is also making timely assessment and issuing of passport to applicants, depending on local situation. Passport office (Lashio) occasionally conducts home service to Muse. As such, there

is no plan to open a passport issuing office in Muse, said the Deputy Minister.

Similarly, questions raised by U Oo Hla Saw of MraukU constituency, U Sai Ngaung Hsai Hein of Maukmai constituency, Daw Ni Ni May Myint of Taungup constituency, U Naing Naing Win of Tamu constituency and U Aung Kyaw Kyaw Oo of Hline constituency were answered by Deputy Minister Maj-Gen Aung Thu.

Motion to upgrade One Stop Shops to One Stop Service

After the question and answer session, U Tin Ko Ko Oo @ U A Tut of Bilin constituency tabled a motion urging the government to upgrade and implement One Stop Shops to One Stop Service.

Pyithu Hluttaw Speaker U T Khun Myat announced Hluttaw's agreement to discuss the motion after obtaining the con-

sensus of the Hluttaw. Following this Pyithu Hluttaw Speaker U T Khun Myat announced that Hluttaw representatives who want to discuss the motion to enroll their names.

Decision on Myanmar Tourism Bill

Afterwards, a bill committee member explained about amendment motions tabled by Hluttaw representatives on Myanmar Tourism Bill, approved and sent with amendments by Amyotha Hluttaw and obtained the approval of the Hluttaw.

Following this, Pyithu Hluttaw Speaker U T Khun Myat announced the entire bill being approved by clauses and sub-clauses as amended and to proceed further on it.

The fifth-day meeting of the second Pyithu Hluttaw's ninth regular session will be held on 3 August, it is learnt.—Aye Aye Thant (MNA) ■

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On the cooperation and participation of the people, NGOs and INGOs, together with civil society organisations are participating in the government's Sector Coordination Groups (SCGs). Representatives of ethnic nationals, civil society organisations, economic organisations, experts and people who ought to participate were also participating in the Union Peace Conference-21st Century Panglong.

The Union Enterprise for Humanitarian Assistance, Resettlement and Development (UEHRD) in Rakhine State committee project work groups were formed with civilian experts, while 351 youth volunteers

were conducting it. Myanmar National Committee for Women's Affairs formed to implement women's development work was reformed as All-Myanmar Women's Affairs Committee. This committee is reporting to UN-CEDAW (United Nations Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women) committee once every four years, implementing notifications, implementing ASEAN women's affairs committee work programme 2016-2020, implementing Gender Issues included in Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and full participation of women in Myanmar society. As such, it is clear that even though Myanmar is not a member of Open Govern-

ment Partnership (OGP), it is conducting and implementing work that are according to the norms of OGP. The former government also had abolished the OGP steering committee and work committee before power was transferred to the incumbent government. Matters that were not revoked, rescinded or abolished could be restarted and worked on if need to. But it is not possible to restart matters that are revoked, rescinded or abolished and thus there is no plan to become a member of OGP, replied the deputy minister.

Asterisk-marked questions posed by U Tet Tun Aung of Rakhine State constituency 2, U Wai Sein Aung of Rakhine State constituency 1, U Myint Naing

of Rakhine State constituency 5 and U Khin Maung Latt of Rakhine State constituency 3 were then answered by Deputy Minister for Education U Win Maw Tun.

Discussion on Traditional Medicine Council Bill

After the question and answer session, U Hla Oo of Sagaing Region constituency 4, U Htay Oo of Yangon Region constituency 2 and Dr. Kyaw Than Tun (Canton) of Mandalay Region constituency 3 discussed the Traditional Medicine Council Bill. The fifth-day meeting of the second Amyotha Hluttaw's ninth regular session will be continued today, it is learnt.—Aung Ye Thwin (MNA) ■

MPPE sells locally-produced petrol to stabilise fuel oil price

IN order to stabilize the fuel oil price in the local market, the Myanmar Petroleum Products Enterprise (MPPE) is selling petrol, produced in Myanmar, at state-owned fuel stations.

The MPPE has put on sale petrol, produced from the Petrochemical Complex (Thanbayarkan), Myanmar Petrochemical Enterprise, under the Ministry of Elec-

tricity and Energy, at Ks3,800 per gallon at state-owned fuel filling stations. According to private filling stations in Mandalay, the price of a litre of diesel reached around Ks690 in the retail market, while one litre of high quality diesel was sold at Ks975, Octane 92 at Ks950, Octane 95 at Ks995 and petrol at Ks900 on 30 July.—Thiha Ko Ko (Mandalay) ■



An employee at a fuel station fills up a car's oil tank.
PHOTO: PHOE KHWAR