

**First regular session of Amyotha Hluttaw continues for eighth day.
Everyone of different regions has access to higher learning education.
Kalay University opened for those from Chin State (North),
Pakokku University opened for those from Chin State (South)**

NAY PYI TAW, 11 March-The first regular session of the Amyotha Hluttaw continued for the eighth day at Amyotha Hluttaw Hall of Hluttaw Building, here, at 10 am today, attended by Speaker of Amyotha Hluttaw U Khin Aung Myint and Amyotha Hluttaw representatives.

The attendance of 220 made up 98.65 per cent of 223 Amyotha Hluttaw representatives, and the eighth day session was therefore valid, declared Speaker of Amyotha Hluttaw U Khin Aung Myint. Of the questions submitted by Amyotha Hluttaw representatives, permitted ones were raised, and members of respective Union level organizations replied to the queries.

First, U Zone Hle Thang of Chin State Constituency-2 asked whether two colleges can be established in southern and northern Chin State.

Dr Banya Aung Moe of Mon State Constituency-7 asked whether educative centres for national races should be opened.

U Steven Thabeik of Chin State Constituency- 4 asked whether languages and literatures of national races can be permitted at government schools for improvement of national races' languages and literatures, and if possible, he wanted to know the time to permission of creating the learning opportunity.

Minister for Education Dr Chan Nyein responded the question of U Zone Hle Thang of Chin State Constituency- 2. He said that the Ministry of Education is carrying out tasks to open and upgrade universities and colleges for uplift of national education standards. A college representing Chin State was opened with the name of Kalay College on 16-3-1993. It was upgraded to Kalay Degree College on 7-7-1999 and Kalay University on 14-5-2003.

As the Ministry of Education titled its educational institutions with the names of town on their locations, Kalay University has been initially called Kalay College since its establishment.

Kalay University is opened for those from northern townships of Chin State wishing to pursue higher education and Pakokku University for those of southern townships of Chin State. Anyone living in all parts of the nation can enjoy the opportunity to learn education at University of Distance Education. With regard to the question raised by Dr Banya Aung Moe of Mon State Constituency-7, the Ministry of Education is giving priority to creation of opportunity for all the citizens to pursue basic education and ensuring uplift of State's education standard.

To preserve languages, literatures and culture of national races, the Ministry of Education has any plan to establish the education centres for national races at present.

Regarding the question raised by U Steven Thabeik of Chin State Constituency-4, the curricula for basic education meeting international standards were drawn with the participation of local and international experts, scholars from UN agencies and international experts so as to turn out the students to be good and able educated citizens equipped with Union Spirit and nationalistic spirit.

Myanmar, being a home to over 100 national races, has many languages. Some ethnics use different dialects based on their residences. As many ethnics are living in all regions and states, a classroom of the school can be found with multi-national race students.

The present curricula and syllabuses were drawn in conformity with aged and learning capability of children based on education policy in line with the education goal of the State. As Myanmar language is designated as the office language in Myanmar, the curricula of basic education are drawn inclusive of Myanmar and English.

At present, it is impossible to draw basic education curriculum with each literature of national races from Regions and States due to the fact that many national races are residing in Myanmar. If necessary, the ministry will provide necessary assistance for teaching national races as non-formal education. U Khet Htein Nan of Kachin State Constituency-1 asked whether Myitkyina Airport can be extended for landing of jets, and whether arrangements can be made for landing at and taking off passenger jets. U Zone Hle Thang of Chin State Constituency-2 asked whether two airports can be constructed in Falam of northern Chin State and a suitable place in southern Chin State.

With regard to the question raised by U Khet Htein Nan of Kachin State Constituency-1, Minister for Transport U Thein Swe replied that Fokker F-28 jets land at and take off from 6000 feet long and 150 feet wide runway of Myitkyina Airport. The maintenance of the airport commenced in 1992-93 financial year and it was completed in 1993-94. The present runway is being added with 1000 feet long and 150 feet wide extended section. On completion, Fokker F-100 and Y-8 airplanes can land at and take off from Myitkyina Airport. The more extension of runway will be carried out there.

Concerning the question raised by U Zone Hle Thang of Chin State Constituency-2, the minister said that Myanma Airways of the Ministry of Transport is placing emphasis on giving aviation service to regions and states for convenience of passengers. Thick mountains and forests in Chin State are natural barriers for airplanes to land at and taking off at the airport. An airport was built in Kalay for better transport of local people in northern Chin State and one airport in Pakokku for the people of southern Chin State. Moreover, a new airport was constructed in Kyaukhtu. Airplanes have regular flight schedules to these airports. At present, any plan is not to be undertaken to build airport. Afterwards, the session was stopped for a while.

When the session resumed, the member of respective Union level organization replied to the proposal submitted to the Amyotha Hluttaw and sought the approval of the Amyotha Hluttaw.

With regard to the proposal calling for reviewing the current education system by forming a board comprising experts and well-experienced persons submitted by U Steven Thabeik of Chin State Constituency-4, Minister for Education Dr Chan Nyein responded that systematic arrangements are being undertaken for ensuring international standard education system in line with the national education promotion 30-year long-term plan. They are: (a) the Myanmar Education Committee was formed at the State level to adopt the education policies for promotion of national education (b) the Council of University Education Boards and the Universities' Central Council were formed in the higher education sector and the Basic Education Council in the basic education sector to realize the policies (c) the University Management Board and the University Education Board were formed with experts of universities and outside scholars at the university level. According to task, 23, 24, and 32 of the national education promotion 30- year long-term plan, Curriculum Development Teams-CDT were formed at every university and university curricula are being reviewed to meet the international standards (d) making cooperation with international universities as a member of (ASEAN University

Network-AUN), conducting research in cooperation with universities in England, American, Australia, Germany, Republic of Korea, Japan, India and the People's Republic of China, works are being made in opening of research department and academic centres, delivering lectures by visiting professors and supervising, examining and holding subjectwise discussions and sending scholars in accord with international standard (e) basic education curriculums and syllabus are being upgraded with the participation of officials of basic education and higher education departments in accord with the procedure (3) of 30-year long term plan in basic education level as well as programme of international standard learning and teaching, criteria to judge education standard and programme for promotion of teachers are being implemented with the cooperation of JICA, KOICA and TICA.

As National Education Promotion Seminars with the participation of officials concerned and experts are being held, works for development of education are being reviewed, assessed and modified regularly and cooperation in education with international universities are being made, the motion tabled by U Steven Thabeik has already been included as part in already-implemented and ongoing works of the ministry. U Steven Thabeik of Chin State Constituency-4 expressed thanks for detailed clarification on undertakings in education sector by the Ministry of Education; said that he did not intend to withdraw his motion and he would accept the decision made by the majority of the Hluttaw.

In casting votes with the help of voting machine for whether or not the motion to review the current education system by forming a board comprising experts and wellexperienced persons should be approved, the Hluttaw announced that the motion was rejected as 22 voted in favour, 181 against and eight abstained.

In his response to proposal for establishment of a college in Haka, the capital city of Chin State submitted by U Paw Lian Lwin of Chin State Constituency-9, Minister for Education Dr Chan Nyein replied that Kalay University had been set up for youths from northern Chin State regions to be able to pursue higher education and Pakokku University for those from southern Chin State regions.

International norms of the universities worldwide were accessibility, quality education, and diversity. With regard to accessibility, a total of 968 undergraduates from Falam, Haka, Tiddim, Tonzang, and Tantlang were pursuing education at Kalay University and a total of 667 undergraduates from Matupi, Mindat, Kanpetlet at Pakokku University. So, it could be concluded that youths of Chin State had an easy access to education like those from other states and regions.

With respect to quality of education, Kalay University was equipped with 170 lecturers, 41 of who had got Ph.D degrees. Of over 200 lecturers in Pakokku University, 49 are Ph.D holders. So, it could be seen that education at those universities was on a par with any other universities in the nation.

Moreover, those universities were made of fine buildings furnished with modern padegogical aids. Concerning diversity, as both of the universities taught 12 major subjects, youths could learn according to their own choices. So, those from Chin State wishing to pursue higher education were learning at international standard universities like others. Distance Education System, which was internationally practiced worldwide, had been set up to ensure everyone had access to higher education regardless of the place he lives.

Minister Dr Chan Nyein then requested the representative to withdraw his proposal if he could understand his clarification.

U Paw Lian Lwin then replied that he much appreciated the minister for elaborating on endeavors of the Education Ministry but he did not intend to withdraw his proposal and would like to listen opinions of other representatives.

With the help of voting machine, representatives cast votes to decide whether the proposal should be discussed or not, and the result was-13 voted in favour, 190 against and 10 abstained. Accordingly, the Hluttaw declared that the proposal was rejected.

Hluttaw representatives discussed proposals submitted to Amyotha Hluttaw.

In her reply to proposal for upgrading of motor road between Gangaw and Yayzwa to weatherproof one and upgrading of suspension bridge between eastern and western Gangaw into a bridge with motor road made by U Paw Lian Lwin of Chain State Constituency-9, Daw Khin Waing Kyi of Yangon Constituency-1 said that two districts, nine townships and three sub-townships constituted Chin State which lagged behind other states and regions in education, health and development due to lack of natural resources, and poor transportation resulted from geographical condition. Although a motor road was built between Gangaw and Yayzwa in 1960 and 1970 with a view to enhancing socio-economic status of the region, the road was mere earth and gravel road and could be used in summer just for four months.

She said that she supported U Paw Lian Lwin's proposal considering the development and smooth transportation of the region, pointing out that transportation between Magway Region and Chin State was extremely poor, and the suspension bridge between eastern and western Gangaw was still not in the service of vehicles.

U Thaw Zin Oo of Magway Region Constituency-9 discussed that the suspension bridge across Myittha River between eastern and western Gangaw lay on 105-ft long motor road linking Gangaw of Magway Region and Yayzwa of Chin State only can cope with motorbikes. So, the government should grant a fund to upgrade the bridge as it is a gateway to Gangaw, Htilin, Kyaukhtu, Pauk, Pakokku and Mandalay from Yayzwa.

Nevertheless, he continued his discussion, a bridge linking Gangaw with Haka, Kalay and Tamu was built spanning Myittha River about three miles from the suspension bridge. Owing to the storm in October 2010, Ohntaw Bridge and Yepya Bridge across Yaw Creek on Gangaw-Htilin-Kyaukhtu-Pakokku motor road near Pauk were completely damaged and are in urgent need of repair.

If those two bridges could not be repaired in the soonest time, Kanpetlet, Mindat, Matupi and Haka of Chin State would be cut off from the central regions of Myanmar.

Therefore, the Government should take urgent measures to reconstruct those bridges. Repairing of Gangaw Suspension Bridge would only benefit Yayzwa Sub-township and thus it should be done later depending on budget of the State.

He then said he disagreed with U Paw Lian Lwin about his proposal and thus he should withdraw his proposal.

Then, U Ohn Tin of Rakhine State Constituency-10 expressed his opinion about the proposal of U Paw Lian Lwin for urgent construction of a motor road between Paletwa and Matupi: Chin State and Rakhine State were two states sharing border and the least-developed states of 14 states and regions

mainly due to poor transportation. Despite the fact that Paletwa is located in Chin State, it was not accessible for poor transportation and Sittway is communicated with instead. If there emerged a motor road linking Paletwa and Matupi, transportation would become smooth in Chin State and commodity flow swift as well. He then said for those reasons, he supported the proposal of U Paw Lian Lwin.

U Salai Kweyan of Chin State Constituency-12 seconded U Paw Lian Lwin's proposal, highlighting the benefits of the motor road. He said transportation was fundamental in enhancing socio-economic status. From Paletwa to the capital city of Chin State, Haka, one had to pass through Rakhine State, Magway Region, Mandalay Region and Sagaing Region. Residents of villages between Paletwa and Matupi had to rely on their own feet for living, education, and health matters. In spite of the region being rich in fertile soil and producing bumper harvest, products of the region could not reach the markets. If transportation was better, Paletwa could be accessible from Matupi, Mindat, Rakhine State and other states and regions.

According to the condition of alignment of Paletwa- Matupi motor road, there was over 170 miles of motor road between Paletwa and Matupi. Currently, four miles distance from Paletwa was gravel road and over five miles distance from Matupi was earth road whereas the remaining section still existed as alignment, so walking was Hobson's choice for villagers between Paletwa and Matupi. So, construction of Paletwa-Matupi motor road should be undertaken as a priority to improve socio-economic status of locals of Matupi Township and smoothly running of administrative machinery.

Afterwards, U Zone Hle Thang of Chin State Constituency -2 discussed proposal made by U Zhun Kan of Chin State Constituency -1 to construct low-cost housings and sell them to staff in monthly installments. He said he learnt that governments worldwide have plans for their peoples to own a house. If the Government raised a fund to build housings for its staff, they could purchase a house by installments and their living standard will higher as a result.

He said he therefore supported the proposal.

Afterwards, the session took a break. When the session was resumed, proposals were submitted to Amyotha Hluttaw and discussed.

U Zhun Kan of Chin State Constituency -1 submitted a proposal that the Government should provide financial assistance to those aged 75 and above and to retired persons of the armed forces and governmental departments in addition to pension. U Paw Lian Lwin of Chin State Constituency -9 supported the proposal.

Afterwards, Amyotha Hluttaw called the representatives to express their opinions about the proposal. As there were some representatives that raised objection to the proposal, according to Amyotha Hluttaw Rule 17-Ta (3), they stand up and vote to decide whether to discuss the proposal or not. As less than 40 representatives wished to discuss the proposal, Amyotha Hluttaw declared that the proposal was turned down.

U Zhun Kan of Chin State Constituency -1 then submitted proposal to raise pension of retired persons of the armed forces and governmental departments who did not catch up the current pay scales, according to their ranks when they retired. The proposal was supported by U Hui Yein of Chin State constituency -11.

Afterwards, Amyotha Hluttaw called the representatives to express their opinions about the proposal. As there were some representatives that raised objection to the proposal, according to Amyotha Hluttaw Rule 17-Ta (3), they stand up and vote to decide whether to discuss the proposal or not. As more than 40 representatives wished to discuss the proposal, the Hluttaw accepted the proposal and declared that those wishing to discuss the proposal may report to the deputy director general of Hluttaw Office when the session ended.

In accord with Sub-section (a) of Amyotha Hluttaw Rule 138, U Paw Lian Lwin of Chin State Constituency - 9 said that he would like to withdraw his proposal to the Hluttaw for launching nationwide campaigns to persuade peoples to pay taxes with a will.

Then again, U Paw Lian Lwin withdrew his proposal that short-term and long-term plans should be adopted to substitute slash-and-burn farming with growing of crops and the Central Bank of Myanmar should provide loans to farmers to carry out those plans, in line with Sub-article (a) of Amyotha Hluttaw Rule 138.

Next, the Amyotha Hluttaw Speaker announced that the eighth day of the first regular session of Amyotha Hluttaw ended and the ninth day session would be continued at 10 am on 14 March.

The session came to an end at 2 pm.

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