

**U Zon Hlyal Htan of Chin State Constituency (2)
asks if government preparing to allow foreigners to enter Myanmar through border-
crossing points and stay for at least two weeks**

NAY PYI TAW, 18 March-At today's session of Amyotha Hluttaw, U Zon Hlyal Htan of Chin State Constituency (2) put a question about the length of stay permit for foreigners who come into Myanmar through border gates.

He said that currently, foreigners are only allowed to enter Myanmar with permit of respective committees, which causes restriction on number of visitors to Myanmar. At present in Chin State, foreigners are allowed to enter Myanmar through Reed Gate for a day period.

But, if foreigners are allowed to stay in Myanmar for two weeks, it would contribute business and jobs in hotel industry, transportation service, and tourism industry. He asked whether foreigners are allowed to enter Myanmar through border gates and allowed to stay in Myanmar for at least two weeks.

Minister for Immigration and Population U Maung Oo replied that although Myanmar and India have not reached an agreement on border-crossing, the two nations have understanding that those residing in border regions can cross the each other's border legally. Myanmar-India border gates were commissioned in Tamu of Sagaing Region, and Falam of Chin State in 1989 and entries and departures are permitted through those gates with certain charges for crossing the border. According to direction of Announcement 066/1(2)-1/SLORC dated 7 February, 1995 issued by State Law and Order Restoration Council, foreigners are allowed to visit Myanmar for a day- period since 22 February 1995 with border-crossing permit.

Myanmar has signed agreements with her neighbours such as China, Laos, and Bangladesh for crossing borders.

Entries and departures are permitted in compliance with border regions management and cooperation agreement signed with China on 25, March 1997.

Visitors are allowed to make six-night seven-day trips through entrances/exits at Muse, Kyugup, Chinshwehaw, Kanpeikti, Mongla, Lwejel, Yanlonkyaing, and Namhkam covered by the agreement to border district, relevant-ministry-permitted citizens of the neighbours and third countries are permitted for 13-night 14-day trips through the border crossing, visa-holders are allowed depart from other exits other than the border-crossing points they have entered with the recommendation of the relevant ministry and the permission of the department concern.

Entries and departures are permitted in compliance with border regions management and cooperation agreement signed with Thailand on 16, May 1997. Visitors are allowed to make six-night seven-day trips through entrances/exits at Tachilek, Myawady, Kawthoung covered by the agreement to border district, relevant-ministry-permitted citizens of the neighbours and third countries are permitted for 13-night 14-day trips through the border cross-ing, visa-holders are allowed depart from other exits other than the border-crossing points they have entered with the recommendation of the relevant ministry and the permission of the department concern.

Entries and departures are permitted in compliance with border regions management and cooperation agreement signed with Laos on 29, March 1997.

Visitors are allowed to make five-night six-day trips through entrance/exit at Wanpon covered by the agreement to border district, foreigners holding visas and passports are allowed to enter Myanmar for a day-period.

Entries and departures are permitted in compliance with border regions management and cooperation agreement signed with Bangladesh on 19, December 1980. Visitors are allowed to make six-night seven-day trips through entrances/exits at Maungtau and Sittway covered by the agreement to Maungtau, and Bangladeshi traders holding visas along with recommendation of the Bangladeshi Traders Association under the permission of Foreign Policy Committee Meeting No (6/2004) are permitted for 13-night 14-day trips to Sittway.

So, regarding entries and departures through border-crossing points of Myanmar, citizens of neighbours residing at border areas and third countries are permitted to enter and depart according to MOUs between Myanmar and neighbours, and there is no discrimination against regions or states. India and Myanmar are still negotiating in detail to reach agreement on border-crossing and thus the representative's proposal would be considered only after the two nations have reached the agreement.-
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