Second regular session of first Amyotha Hluttaw continues for 26th day

Eight questions raised and answered; one question transferred to Public Complaints and Petitions Committee, one proposal discussed and approved

NAY PYI TAW, 27 Sept- The first Amyotha Hluttaw second regular session continued for the 26th day at Amyotha Hluttaw Hall of Hluttaw Building here this morning, attended by Amyotha Hluttaw Speaker U Khin Aung Myint and 206 Hluttaw representatives.

During the meeting, Dr Aye Maung of Rakhine State Constituency No. 1 asked whether there was a plan to upgrade the Agnumaw-Zedipyin-Buthidaung earth road linking Yathedaung and Buthidaung townships to an all-weather gravel road, and to a tarred road as the road would play a part for development of eastern region of the May Yu Mountain.

Deputy Minister for Border Affairs Maj-Gen Zaw Win replied that as part of the Union Government's efforts for better transportation, Rakhine State Development Affairs Department earmarked K 922.921 million for roads and bridges in urban areas and K 422.821 million for roads and bridges in rural areas.

Similarly, Buthidaung Township Development Affairs Committee earmarked K 28.82 million and Yathedaung Township DAC K 8.775 million for roads and bridges in rural areas. The Agnumaw-Zedipyin- Buthidaung road passed through 22/4 miles in Yathedaung Township and 18/6 miles Buthidaung Township, he said.

He continued to say that on the Agnumaw-Zedipyin- Buthidaung road there were 70 bridges : over-100 ft long seven bridges and under-100 ft long 63 bridges: jointly constructed by departments, the people and UNHCR.

Buthidaung Township Development Affairs Committee had injected K 49.97 million into upgrading of roads, maintance of Takyatbat Bridge and construction of a reinforced concrete bridge in the 2010-2011 fiscal year.

Buthidaung Township and Yathedaung Township development affairs departments had a plan to spend K 40.1 million in the 2011-2012 fiscal year: K 25 million funded by the Development Affairs Department (Head Office), K 15.1 million funded by the township development affairs committee: on maintenance of the Agnumaw- Zedipyin-Buthidaung road, and had a plan to ask the central committee for implementation of development of border areas and national races to fund the roadwork.

Afterwards, U Saw Taw Pale of Kayin State Constituency No. 7 asked if there was a plan to move Thandaunggyi Township offices to the previous administrative town Thandaung for the convenience of the people and government service personnel.

Union Minister for Home Affairs Lt-Gen Ko Ko said Thandaunggyi Township was established in 1900 during the colonial period and it became the seat of the local administrative body. The office was moved to Leiktho (now sub-township) in 1910 and to Thandaunggyi, a summer resort, in 1935. In 1959, the office was moved to Thandaung Myothit, about 15 miles from Thandaunggyi, for security reasons. In 2002, Thandaunggyi was upgraded from the village-tract to the sub-township, and in 2006, from the township-branch to the township. For the development of areas in the north-east part and eastern part of Thandaunggyi, the offices had been opened as from 1, January, 2007, he added.

A plan had been made to upgrade the road linking Thandaunggyi and Leiktho and the 15-mile long Thandaungthit-Thandaunggyi Road had been upgraded to a two-lane tarred road.

Necessary infrastructures had been laid down to supply electricity and water round the clock to Thandaunggyi as part of efforts for development of Thandaunggyi though it was located on the mountain, the Union Minister said. Buildings for departmental offices were being constructed in the township and the seat of the township administrative body was moved to Thandaunggyi for the development of the region, the Union Minister said.

Afterwards, U Nyi Nyi Tun of Mon State Constituency No. 11 asked if there was a plan to allocate alluvial land left by rivers and creeks to the right hands when the plains were allocated to farmers.

The Union Minister replied that the Rule 16 (1) of the 1963 Tenancy Law had allowed to allocate the alluvial land caused by change of watercourse of rivers and creeks to farmers in accordance with the rules and regulations 16 (4) of the law.

Regarding the allocation of alluvial land, region and state governments concerned made decisions in accordance with the Rule 16 (4) (b) of the 1963 Tenancy Law and allowed the district administrative bodies to allocate the land to farmers. According to the question, the alluvial land located between Shankaing Villagetract Waw Township, Bago Region, and Moppalin Village in Kyaikhto Township, Mon State, was gained from the Sittoung River as from the 1989-1990 fiscal year.

When the land had became fertile, farmers from both townships grew plants, causing disputes. In the 2009-2010 fiscal year, the total area of the alluvial land had reach 514 acres and farmers from Waw and Kyaikhto townships had grown crops.

Except from the land for farmers in Waw Township, the remaining 134 acres had been allocated to Min Min Tun Company with the agreement of Bago Region Government for one season. Regarding the allocation of the alluvial land, measures, which were based on the cooperative system, were taken to allocate the land to right farmers who had no farmland and anyone could apply for the land to region/state governments concerned in accordance with the rules and regulations.

U Maung Saw Phyu of Rakhine State constituency No. 4 asked how the Union Government would solve complaints about farmland confiscation in Ngan Tat Village-tract and Hpontha Village-tract in Minbya Township, Rakhine State.

Deputy Minister for Agriculture and Irrigation U Khin Zaw replied that the Section 37 (a) of the constitution of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar says "The Union is the ultimate owner of all lands and all natural resources above and below the ground, above and beneath the water and in the atmosphere in the Union."

Therefore, to protect the sovereignty and territories and to take the national security duties, security forces were posted in the interests of the State, he said.

To carry out such tasks, designating areas for local regiments and battalions to protect the State and the people was the far-sighted management of the government. Regarding the tenancy of the farmland by the local regiments and battalions, local authorities would re-scrutinize the tenancy and would coordinate with officials of local regiments and battalions and the Rakhine State Government to make assessment of the farmland in the interests of the local people.

The Hluttaw decided to let Public Complaints and Petitions Committee handle the proposal.

Next, Union Minister for Industry (1) and for Industry (2) U Soe Thein answered queries raised by two Hluttaw representatives.

Dr Myat Nyana Soe of Yangon Region Constituency No. 4 asked "whether Ministry of Industry (2) can manufacture industrial quantities of Myanmar mini saloon automobile so that the public can easily purchase it; whether the ministry could permit importation of Cherry wagon like Myanmar mini saloon from the People's Republic of China; whether the ministry could permit importation of other mini automobiles with less fuel consumption."

The Union Minister replied that the nature of industrial production is to be considered; to increase the daily rate of production, primary factory is to be established first; moreover, purchase of necessary parts for production of automobiles is to be included in the budget; the Ministry of Industry (2) has to practice division of budget as it has to manufacture other industrial products in addition to automobiles.

The Union Minister went on that the ministry is implemented projected production of home-made automobiles; in addition, it is focusing on use of skilled workers, equipment, jigs & robot welding; importation of automobiles may affect the local job market, deterring the development of automobile production techniques; in addition if automobiles are imported, levied taxes will be paid to the government according to the procedures, which means an inevitable rise in current price of automobiles; so the ministry has increasingly focused on localization and sale at lower price.

The Union Minister went on that the Ministry of Industry (2) will manufacture about 1500 units of Myanmar mini saloon automobile in 2011-2012 fiscal year and will manufacture more in the future, equipping more machines; the Ministry of Rail Transportation has issued notification of importation of automobiles on 11-9-2011; in addition, foreign, joint-venture and enterprise automobile makers will be permitted in Myanmar foreign automobile makers; the ministry is taking measures for people to be able to purchase automobiles either at showrooms or import from abroad freely in the future.

U Kyi Tun of Mandalay Region Constituency No 1 asked "whether the ministry would permit private sector to engage in western pharmaceutical manufacturing industry."

The Union Minister replied that Myanmar Investment Law is in the process of amendment and local and foreign entrepreneurs can make investment in medicine production industry in line with existing laws, rules and regulations; currently, Myanmar Economic Holdings is running medicine factory in PyinOoLwin; western pharmaceutical products are to be produced at separate rooms dividing sterile product, non-sterile product and biological product room and production processes has to be in line with internationally-recognized WHO good manufacturing practice at least; factory equipment should be purchased from ISO certificate holder companies and the storage of raw materials and finished goods must be in line with good storage practices described in internationallyrecognized GMP of WHO; in addition, raw materials to be used in medicine production are to be B.P, U.S.P, and I.P standard pharmaceutical ingredients and the suppliers should be certificate holders recognized by the WHO; each step of water pre-treatment system and water for injection (WFI) water processing system, which are vital in pharmaceutical manufacturing, are to observed in accordance with WHO GMP and ASEAN GMP; moreover, workers engaged in pharmaceutical manufacturing have to be well-trained, skillful, pharmacists, chemist and biologists who are healthy and care personal hygiene.

The Union Minister said that production of western medicines will be permitted if standard medicines are manufactured in line with Myanmar Investment Law, Private Industry Law, National Pharmaceutical Law, rules and regulations and required principles for establishment of western pharmaceuticals industry.

U Zone Hle Htan of Chin State Constituency No 2 asked "progress in power supply tasks for Haka, Falam, Tiddim, Matupi, Mindat, Paletwa and Kanpetlet townships" and Union Minister for Electric Power No (2) U Khin Maung Soe said that although Chin State still cannot enjoy power from national grid, it has access to electric power through as 11 township electrical engineers offices in Haka, Falam, Tiddim, Tonzang, Htantalan, Kyikha, Reedhorda, Mindat, Matupi, Kanpetlet and Rawza townships are supplying electric power with 23 generators and the State is using 3640 gallons of oil per month for power supply to Chin State.

The Union Minister went on that Kyaw has already access to national grid, from which construction of 30 miles long 66 KV power lines and power stations in Gangaw have been started in 2011-2012 in fiscal year, in consideration of potential surplus of the national grid; projected construction of 66 KV power lines such as Gangaw-Haka (60 miles), Haka-Falam-Thaingngin– Kalay-Kalewa (90 miles), Kalay-Tamu (70 miles), Pauk-Mindat (35 miles), Mindat-Matupi (110 and related power stations are in the process of implementation; upon completion of those projects, electricity can be supplied to Haka, Falam and Thaingngin through national grid; power lines can be connected to Tiddim, Tonzang and Kyikah from Thaingngin and on completion of Myittha, Manipura hydropower projects, 230/66/11 KV, 100 MVA main power station is projected to be constructed in Gangaw so as to link with national grid.

The Union Minister went on that upon completion of Saidin hydropower projects, electric power can be supplied to Paletwa of Chin State trough Kyauktaw of Rakhine State and upon completion of Pauk-Mindat- Matupi power line, electric power can be supplied to Kanpetlet of Chin State through Saw of Magway Region.

U Zone Hle Htan of Chin State Constituency No 2 asked "whether there is progress in detailed coordination between Myanmar and India to sign national agreement on tourism in Chin State" and Union Minister for Immigration and Population U Khin Yi replied that although a particular MoU on entrance and exit between Myanmar and India has not been signed, Zokawdo exit in Mizoram State of India and Reedhorda border check point in Reedhorda subtownship of Falam District of Chin State of Myanmar have been legally opened since 11-2-1989 under the agreement of border area authorities of the two nations; the entrance fee is 10 Rupiah per head for Indians with one-day visit allowance to Reedhorda and around Reed Lake and the exit fee is K 500 per head with oneday period.

The Myanmar-India border gate in Tamu of Sagaing Region was opened on 1-2-1989; it was closed on 11-10-1997 following the insurgent attacks under the agreement of security authorities of both sides; for legal entrance, State level agreement which requires to report to each levels is needed; negotiations between Myanmar and India over entrance started as of 2003; under the resolution of State-level Myanmar-India Border Authorities Meeting held in Yangon in October, 2003, Indian side sent Myanmar-India Border Agreement (Draft) drafted by India via the embassy in July, 2004; in the draft, India demanded to establish border gates in Zokhoda, Pansha and Nampaung in Myanmar; the border gate, namely Zokhoda in India and Reedkhoda in Myanmar, has been established; Myanmar side discussed that the opening of border gates in other two places was not currently possible in 12th State level Meeting of Myanmar-India Border Authorities Meeting held in New Delhi of India; 17th State level Meeting of Myanmar-India Border Authorities will be hosted in Myanmar in opportune time and attitudes and discussions of Indian side will be considered, the Union minister said.

Hluttaw representatives Dr Khin Swe, Dr Myint Kyi, U Zaw Naing Oo, U J Raw Wu, Dr Banyar Aung Moe, U Sai Thant Zin, U Sai Kyaw Zaw Than, U Phone Myint Aung and U Hmat Gyi discussed the proposal submitted by U Aung Nyein of Magway Region Constituency No 2 on 26 September that "the Union government is urged to handle plethora of unsettled cases regarding farmland/land losses".

They discussed that peasant means the individual who operate the farm with his own hands as a main vocation or constantly, or who supervise the farm in the whole growing season as a main vocation; peasants representing 75% of ration's population deserve thanks of the people as they are doing agricultural works for food security and livings of over 60 million people; honest peasants are experiencing losses as the private companies did not pay full compensations for centralization of farmland, property, plots, plantations.

Deputy Minister for Agriculture and Irrigation U Khin Zaw said the centralization of farmlands is carried out if it is a bona fide need for regional development and construction works; in so doing, existing laws, rules and regulations, and directives are to be applied to settle the case at all in order to avoid loss of peasants; as the new government prioritizes rural development and poverty alleviation as the main task; the Ministry of Agriculture and Irrigation is realizing short-term and long-term plans for agricultural development as well; the President in his address to Pyidaungsu Hluttaw on the first day of second regular session of first Pyidaungsu Hluttaw said that the Region/State governments are to handle the cases correctly as they understand the reality of their own region, laws, rules and regulations, directives and coordination are needed to define functions among regional authorities, respective enterprises and departments according the powers to be shared; law experts are drafting Farmland Law, rules and regulations (drafts) to prevent losses of peasants, to settle farmland disputes correctly and hastily; nine matters related to the ministry regarding farmland and cropland disputes will be dealt in 2011.

The Hluttaw approved the proposal.

The 26th day second regular session of first Amyotha Hluttaw concluded at 3.15 pm and the session continues for 27th day at 10 am on 29 September.

At today's session, eight questions were raised and answered; one question was transferred to People's Complaints and Petitions Committee; and one proposal was discussed and approved.

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