

**First regular session of Pyithu Hluttaw continues for seventh day.  
Information, knowledge and entertainment programmes provided.  
Depending on progress of the nation, the government increased salaries of the  
personnel and pensions and allowed extra cash assistance and living allowance**



NAY PYI TAW, 10 March-The first regular session of Pyithu Hluttaw continued for the seventh day at Pyithu Hluttaw Hall of Hluttaw Building, here, at 10 am today.

The attendance of 431 made up 99.54 per cent of 433 Pyithu Hluttaw representatives, and the seventh-day session was therefore valid, declared Speaker of Pyithu Hluttaw Thura U Shwe Mann.

Of the questions submitted by Pyithu Hluttaw representatives, permitted ones were raised, and members of respective Union level organizations replied to the queries.

U Khin Maung Win of Lanmadaw Constituency said that Star Press of Kyauktada Township submitted the manuscript entitled“Penal Code” compiled by Writer U Thaung Tun (retired director), Advocate, to Press Scrutiny and Registration Division in 2010 to get permission of publishing.

He asked to know why the permission of publishing has not been granted yet although a single point breaching the relevant rules was not found in the manu-script, and he raised a question whether the manuscript can be passed or not.

Minister for Information U Kyaw Hsan said that the Central Supervisory Committee for Printers and Publishers Registration and Press Scrutiny and Publishing accepted and scrutinized the manuscript entitled“Penal Code” compiled by Writer U Thaung Tun.

The writer studied the legal affairs in detail and compiled the manuscripts in 585 A-4 sized papers.

Legal affairs is a particular branch of profession, and it is rather broad and sophisticated.

Therefore, the Press Scrutiny and Registration Division is to take time in scrutiny works to ascertain whether the manuscripts are in line with press scrutiny policies.

The minister explained the functions of Press Scrutiny and Registration Division in brief.

The manuscripts are scrutinized by sections formed with junior officers, the team led by the deputy director and then the leading team led by the director of the division.

Depending on the subjects, the division requests the remarks on the manuscripts from the ministries concerned.

If not, the final decision is to be taken from the Minister for Information. Due to scrutiny and work procedures, the division takes adequate time if necessary.

The above-mentioned manuscript was referred to the Attorney-General's Office and the Supreme Court to check whether the work is in line with legal and judicial affairs. The minister replied that after the opinion and remarks from ministries concerned have been achieved, the division will issue permission in accordance with the press scrutiny policies.

U Kyi Myint of Latha Constituency raised a question whether news announcement and educative programmes of Myanma Radio and Television under the Ministry of Information can be also presented through sign language.

With regard to the question, Minister U Kyaw Hsan replied that, the Union of Myanmar is home to over 60 million people. The Ministry of Information is supervising various types of media and information and edutainment. In the print media sector, five newspapers, 170 journals, 182 magazines are being published daily, weekly and monthly. Over 300,000 copies of newspapers are in circulation per day, 9 million copies per month and 108 million copies per year. Journals and magazines are published not less than 40 million copies per year. Moreover, over 4 million copies of over 4,000 books are published yearly.

Broadcasting of Myanma Radio, national race language radio, Padaukmyay Radio and seven FMs cover the whole nation from 5.30 am to 11 pm daily.

Likewise, MRTV, Myawady, Channel-4 and 30 related TV channels, and 38 Skynet TV channels are telecast across the nation. Some channels are on air round the clock. Myanmar International Channel (MI) is also broadcasting progress of Myanmar to the world through English language round the clock. Therefore, Myanmar people are on a par with the global people in enjoying information, knowledge and entertainment programmes.

With regard to the question on additional broadcasting with sign language raised by U Kyi Myint of Latha Township Constituency, the minister replied that most of the Asian countries including ASEAN member nations do not broadcast their programmes through sign language. Some countries simultaneously broadcast important news and speeches on the main screen with the small box at the corner of screen through sign language.

Among over 60 million people in the nation, there are 140,000 deaf and dumb persons according to the statistics focused by the Ministry of Social Welfare, Relief and Resettlement. Of them, over 360 persons have completed the sign language course.

Over 500 students are attending two deaf and dumb schools for the children that are providing sign language to the students. The SWRR Ministry is implementing the work plans on national level disabled persons for development of deaf and dumb persons.

The Ministry of Information is holding coordination with Ministry of Social Welfare, Relief and Resettlement, Ministry of Education and Ministry of Health and making necessary preparations.

At an opportune time, the TV channels, news and education programmes will be broadcast for deaf and dumb persons through sign language.

Dr Sai Kyaw Ohn of Namhkam Constituency asked if there is a plan to increase salaries of State service personnel and pensions.

Minister for Finance and Revenue U Hla Tun replied that the government has been focusing on the increase of salaries of State service personnel since post-independence period after 1948. Pay scale and wages of State service personnel were raised and temporary living allowance and extra cash assistance permitted in 1972, 1976, 1981 and 1988.

Moreover, pay scale, pensions and wages of the personnel were increased in 1989, 1993 and 2000. Again, the pay scale and wages of the staff were raised in 2006 and 2010. Depending on the progress of the nation, the government increased the salaries of the personnel and pensioners and allowed extra cash assistance and living allowance.

During the period from 1988 to 2010, the pay scales were raised once for 4-6 years on average with a view to ensuring welfare of personnel in service and retired staff.

To increase salaries of staff and pensioners, it is necessary to calculate inflation rate, circulation of money in the nation, GDP and currency situations of others countries. So, the pay scales will be increased at an opportune time, based on development of the State.

In raising his question, Sai Maung Tin of Laikha Constituency said that the people dislike bribery. It can be seen that the imbalance between salary of State service personnel and their costs of living is one of the basic factors for bribery.

Therefore, he asked how to cooperate with the people for reducing bribery cases after raising salaries of staff.

Minister U Hla Tun replied that the government has been focusing on the increase of salaries of State service personnel since post-independence period after 1948. Pay scale and wages of State service personnel were raised and temporary living allowance and extra cash assistance permitted in 1972, 1976, 1981 and 1988.

Moreover, pay scale, pensions and wages of the personnel were increased in 1989, 1993 and 2000. Again, the pay scale and wages of the staff were raised in 2006 and 2010. Depending on the progress of

the nation, the government increased the salaries of the personnel and pensioners and allowed extra cash assistance and living allowance.

During the period from 1988 to 2010, the pay scales were raised once for 4-6 years on average with a view to ensuring welfare of personnel in service and retired staff.

To increase salaries of staff and pensioners, it is necessary to calculate inflation rate, circulation of money in the nation, GDP and currency situations of neighbouring countries.

The method of raising the salaries of staff is not enough to reduce bribery. It is necessary to give educative talks that bribery can tarnish prestige and images of staff individually, of departments concerned and of the State. And, deterrent action will be taken against the offenders in a bribery cases . Moreover, the people are to participate in organizing the personnel to avoid bribery.

Next, the session was stopped for a while.

When the session resumed, the submitting proposals, discussing and resolving on whether or not proposals should be discussed were carried out at the session.

Three Hluttaw representatives discussed the motion that when a region or state could not handle the catastrophe caused by a natural disaster, the Union government has to declare the region or state as a disaster-hit region and provide direct assistance for rescue and rehabilitation tabled by U Pe Than of Myebon Constituency.

In his discussion, U Thein Swe of An Constituency said that generally, the Republic of the Union of Myanmar does not face as many natural disasters as other countries. However, natural disasters hit the nation several times in the past.

At present, disasters struck throughout the world due to climate change, and experts forecast that more natural disasters can fall across the world.

To be able to encounter the unexpected natural disasters, it is necessary to adopt short-term and longterm plans on preparations for minimizing loss and wastage. Especially, the entire people are to actively participate in emergency rescue and relief works and rehabilitation under the systematic management when the natural disaster comes.

Possible natural disasters we could face are climate change, earthquake, Tsunami, epidemic of diseases on human and animals, a large influx of insects and mouse and dangers of chemical, industry, radiation sickness and fires.

Natural disaster causes losses and damages such as loss of lives and properties, likelihood, crops and rations, equipments used in daily life running, buffalos and cows. And it caused damages to buildings, health and education sectors and roads and bridges, nature of arable land, source of drinking water and cause epidemics.

At a time when there are widespread damages in the regions, Union Government may announce these regions as disaster-hit areas, and will need to carry out rescue and rehabilitation directly.

Under the notification No.14/2005 issued by the State Peace and Development Council on 25-1-2005, the National Disaster Preparedness Central Committee was formed with the Prime Minister as chairman, the Secretary-1 of the SPDC as vice-chairman and 11 members. The committee has 9 duties and powers.

The paragraph (d) clearly states that “to give directives concerning declaration on emergency situation in the natural disaster-hit areas and taking security measures enlisting the strengths of the Tatmadaw in addition to Myanmar Police Force”.

It is obvious that assignment of duties to the Prime Minister as Chairman of the Committee is the government has farsightedness and places much emphasis on natural disaster and the people. And every observer knows that there are few governments and countries that assign such kind of duty to the Prime Minister.

Central, Region, State, District and township-level natural disaster preparedness committee were formed, and duties have been assigned to them.

As a result, the Nargis-hit regions have seen better-than-before condition in a short possible time.

Rescue and rehabilitation tasks have achieved success, and other countries took a good example of Myanmar.

In addition, the government has formed the National Disaster Preparedness Central Committee, National-level Committee for Natural Disaster Management, Ministerial Coordination Committee for Natural Disaster Management, Region and State Natural Disaster Management Committee, Management Committee of the Ministries, and announced ordinance for natural disaster management including detailed duties in January 2009. Region/ state/district/township-level natural disaster management committee were formed and duties, assigned to them.

Now, the State is carrying out rescue and rehabilitations tasks nationwide by paying serious attention even to normal dangers.

According to the State Constitution, Union Government, Region and State Governments have been formed. Region and State governments have many experiences. And they have been provided with equipments and systematic drill, carried out. Although storm Giri was strong, the death toll was a bit low.

The reason was that warning was issued two days ahead before storm Giri hit the region and precautions were systematically carried out. The Union Government announced the region as disaster-hit area and carried out reuse and rehabilitation tasks directly.

National Disaster Preparedness Committee has been tasked with powers by the government. So, the Union Government announces regions where there are severe natural disasters as natural disaster-hit regions, and should assist in carrying out rescue and rehabilitation tasks directly.

In his discussion, U Win Than of Thabaung Constituency said that not only the natural disaster directly-hit areas but also the indirectly-hit ones should be put under the legal protection. Thabaung Township has suffered from bitter impacts caused by recent cyclone Giri. If the various areas of the Union do not turn a blind eye to the disaster-hit area, they can forge the Union Spirit in the hearts of the disaster-hit victims.

He seconded the motion that when a region or state could not handle the catastrophe caused by a natural disaster, the Union government has to declare the region or state as a disaster-hit region and provide direct assistance for rescue and rehabilitation tabled by U Pe Than of Myebon Constituency. However, some provisions are to be considered on indirectly hit areas if necessary.

U Ba Shein of Kyaukpyu Constituency said that there remain impacts of heavy storms that hit in 2008 and 2010 on respective regions and local people.

Due to storm Giri, Rakhine State suffered heavy loss and wastage. He said he think that although the State, departments concerned, NGOs and INGOs provided the victims with necessary aid, their assistance is lesser than the loss and wastage. He noted that the authorities of Rakhine State, on their part, are not able to solve the problems of relief and rehabilitation for storm and floods caused by storm Giri in Rakhine State. Therefore, it is necessary to declare Rakhine State as entire emergency natural disaster region and then, the Union government is to directly undertake relief and rehabilitation works. So, he said he seconded the table of U Pe Than of Myebon Constituency.

Member of the Union level organization Secretary of National Disaster Preparedness Central Committee Minister for Social Welfare, Relief and Resettlement U Maung Maung Swe responded the motion, saying that he would like to explain when a region or state could not effort to handle the catastrophe caused by a natural disaster, the Union government has to declare the region or state as a disaster-hit region and provide direct assistance for rescue and rehabilitation tabled by the Hluttaw representative.

The State Peace and Development Council declared the areas hit by cyclonic storm Nargis on 2 and 3 May 2008 as the natural disaster-hit areas under the announcement No. 4/2008 on 3 May 2008. A total of 138,373 people and animals died or were missing in the storm Nargis and 6.5 million wounded in Ayeyawady and Yangon regions. In consequence, the State and private sectors lost property worth K 11.7 trillion. Direct assistance of the State could be seen in that case.

However, devastation of cyclone Giri in Rakhine State was similar to that of cyclone Nargis, only 45 persons died in the event. In addition, loss and wastage in the Giri was less than that of Nargis. The Giri affected over 220,000 local people with K 0.024 trillion in loss which was 0.2 per cent of cyclone Nargis.

Although the cyclone Giri left lesser death and loss, the government sent the Secretary of National Disaster Preparedness Central Committee Minister for Social Welfare, Relief and Resettlement and members Minister for Transport and Deputy Minister for Home Affairs to the storm-hit areas on 23 October during the period of storm for carrying out rescue, rehabilitation and reconstruction works. Then, the chairman of Rakhine State Peace and Development Council commander of Western Command and members of National Disaster Preparedness Central Committee led by the Prime Minister supervised the relief and rehabilitation works for gaining rapid progress. Moreover, the Minister for Industry-2 was assigned duties as in-charge of Kyaukpyu Township and the Minister for Forestry as in-charge in Myebon Township for supervising the rehabilitation works.

Regarding the motion made by the representative, I would like to clarify rehabilitation works in the aftermath of cyclonic storm Giri. First I would like to present progress of repairing dams. Three dams in Myebon Township, six in Pauktaw Township, one each in Kyaukpyu and An townships totaling 11 and two dykes were repaired by cent per cent. So far, 63 per cent of repair works for Ngalapwae dam in Kyaukpyu Township have been completed and works are underway to finish the remaining works before rainy season. So far, 19.18 miles or 73 per cent out of 26.28 mile-long dyke which was damaged in the storm have been repaired and works are underway to finish the remaining works before rainy season.

Although storm Giri caused damage to 72540 acres of cropland, there have been more sown acreages as 122, 195 acres have been put under winter crops. So far, paddy strains for 15000 acres from FAO have been stored for forthcoming rainy season. Arrangements have been made for distribution of paddy strains for growing of paddy in time by the Ministry of Agriculture and Irrigation and local and international nongovernmental organizations. A total of 74617.5 bags of rice were transported to Giri-hit areas. A total of 2196 cattle were given vaccine. Arrangements have been made for distribution of 1300 goats to 650 households in Myebon Township by Livestock Breeding and Fishery Department in cooperation with FAO.

The government takes disaster management measures in two situations. If a natural disaster is not much destructive, the Region or State concerned has to play the leading role while the central government provides assistance. And if a natural disaster is so much destructive, the central government takes the leading part in dealing with the catastrophe with the participation of the Region or State.

The ordinance for disaster management made by Natural Disaster Preparedness Central Committee has already been issued. The government is providing even one or two disaster-hit households with relief aids. The Region or State governments later will make more cooperation.

That's why the NDPCC, on behalf of the government, will be in charge of the disaster management if a natural disaster is not much destructive or if the Region or State concerned could not effort to handle the situation as a natural disaster is hugely destructive.

As the government has been carrying out the disaster management, the NDPCC was formed, direct assistance has been given by the central government and the NDPCC issued an ordinance for disaster management, the motion tabled by the hluttaw representative has already been carried out by the government.

Next, the Hluttaw sought the approvals for the motion tabled by U Pe Than of Myebon Township Constituency that when a Region or State could not effort to handle the catastrophe caused by a natural disaster, the Union government has to declare the Region or State as a disaster-hit region and provide direct assistance for rescue and rehabilitation and approved it.

Three Pyithu Hluttaw representatives held discussions on the motion “to set up a national health programme to grant health care to low-income people” tabled by Dr Sai Kyaw Ohn of Nankham Constituency.

U Sai Thein Aung of Tachilek Constituency said that he would like to take part in discussions concerning health care for the sake of people who reside across the nation. Low-income people get into difficulties while they are not in good health. I heard that low-income people in a neighbouring country enjoy health care service through health insurance card. I believed that if low-income people in our country have access to a national health programme, not only low-income people but also all walks of life will be convenient for health care services. Therefore he seconded the motion “to set up a national health programme to grant health care to low-income people”.

Next, U Khaing Maung Yi (a) Khin Maung Yi of Ahlon Constituency said that it is witnessed that the number of general hospitals, township hospitals, station hospital, regional clinics and social welfare clinics as well as special clinics and private hospitals has increased in rural and urban areas in the time of the Tatmadaw government. I was delighted to see 1000-bed hospitals.

Advancements in medicine and widespread use of high-tech devices and medical equipment are seen. For promotion of public health knowledge, a national health insurance programme that includes better ways and means should be set up as soon as possible.

Regarding the case, it is necessary to form a committee comprising intellectuals and intelligentsia. I would like to second the motion to set up a national health programme to grant health care to low-income people”.

U Kyi Myint of Latha Constituency said the government during the period from 1948 to 1988 practiced free medical care system covering every care for every citizen from birth to death. After 1988, it applied the cost-sharing system in which entrepreneurs and wellwishers run social welfare hospitals and clinics.

Presumably, the proposal is presented to find a more secure and guaranteed health system. Premiums should be paid under monthly installment for medical insurance policy for the unemployed and people of low-income bracket. The government or the employer should provide subsidy. In this way people will have the opportunity to enjoy proper health care. Market-oriented means should be applied to increase the fund provided by the government and employers till establishing an all-inclusive national health system. He then supported the proposal to set up a national health system guaranteeing people of low-income bracket accessible to health care submitted Dr Sai Kyaw Ohn.

Minister for Health Dr Kyaw Myint, a Unionlevel organization member, gave a reply, saying as the social standard of the nation is rising, objectives are being laid down and implemented a health system



that can respond to the rightful wishes of the evolving people. Various means are being applied in implementing a stipulation of the national health policy “to seek new means to raise fund for health”. In so doing, hospitals have adopted the a new system of raising health funds and cost-sharing scheme for the health care to be within the reach of all regardless of their financial wealth, race and religion. This system will remove the burden of public health cost and earn revenue for the health sector in accord with the country’s socio-economy.

He said central level hospitals and hospitals under region/state health departments will set up health funds for providing medical treatment to the people of low-income bracket. The ministry gives instructions to hospitals to give free medical care for the poor and cost-sharing system for the needy. Health funds, affluent wellwishers, the government and the donors from home and abroad are providing financial assistance to government-run hospitals to ensure free medical treatment and services for the needy in all townships. Cost-sharing system is even applied for the rich. In this way, the burden of health care cost is removed.

According to records after 2005, people in Thailand, Cambodia and Laos have to bear up to 67% of their medical cost. On the other hand, Myanmar has free medical and other services for the poor, health funds to provide all necessary assistance and free medical services and cost-sharing system for even the rich. Myanmar is organizing field health care services down to the grassroots with the participation of specialist physicians and health staff.

These field tours include dental care services, general treatments, surgical treatments and eye care treatments free of charge. Myanmar is so successful in kidney and liver transplant operations.

As the nation has effective means for the people of the low-income bracket accessible to all necessary health treatment, he requested the representative concerned to withdraw his proposal.

Concerning his response to the comprehensive discussions of three persons and the minister, Dr Sai Kyaw Ohn said that thanks to the minister, he came to understand the helpful means of the government to provide medical care for people of the low income bracket, the provision of medicines and assistance for other costs in addition to free medical services for the needy, the setting up of health funds, and free health services even for the rich and the cost-sharing system.

With the approval of the Hluttaw, he withdrew his motion.

U Ngon Moun of Haka Constituency submitted a motion “Transport facilitation in Chin State by the Union government.” U Paik Lin of Paletwa Constituency seconded the motion. The Hluttaw approved to discuss the topic at the eight day session of the Hluttaw tomorrow (Friday). There was an announcement for the representatives to register themselves at deputy director-general of the Pyithu Hluttaw this evening to discuss the matter.

U Khaing Maung Yi (a) U Khin Maung Yi of Ahlon Constituency withdrew his motion “A consideration of the early completion of the highway in Chin State to Indian border” as his is similar to U Ngon Moun’s. The Hluttaw approved it.

The Speaker announced the conclusion of the seventh session and holding of the eighth session at 10 am tomorrow (Friday).

The session ended at 2.30 pm

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