

First regular session of Pyithu Hluttaw convened for eighth day
To reduce the cost of mobile phones-a matter of short-and long-term projects
16th Mile Checkpoint opened for not prohibiting goods but for security reasons
Chin State saw better transport as Chin national appointed as superintending engineer



NAY PYI TAW, 11 March-The first regular session of Pyithu Hluttaw went on for the eighth day at Pyithu Hluttaw Hall of Hluttaw Building here this morning.

Present were Speaker of the Hluttaw Thura U Shwe Mann and Hluttaw representatives. Today session's attendance was 431 or 99.54 per cent of the 433 Pyithu Hluttaw representatives thus the session was valid, announced Speaker Thura U Shwe Mann. Sai Bo Aung of Muse Constituency in his question said that medical students from Shan State have to join Magway University of Medicine, instead of Mandalay University of Medicine which is nearer than the former.

And economics students from Shan State (North) have to attend classes in Monywa Institute of Economics.

Such restrictions on geographical location spark extra burdens on students and harm development of human resources.

He said he wondered if there was any plan to deal with such weak points.

Answering the question, Minister for Health Dr Kyaw Myint said that previously, there were only three universities for medicine: two in Yangon and one in Mandalay and they accepted 550 students in total; that at that time, Yangon University of Medicine (1) and Yangon University of Medicine (2) were available for medical students from lower Myanmar, and Mandalay University of Medicine, for medical students from upper Myanmar; that Magway University of Medicine was opened in May 2001; that now the four universities of medicine accepts 600 students each; that according to the new plan, Yangon University of Medicine (1) and (2) are for students of Yangon Region, Mandalay University of Medicine, for those of Mandalay Region and Magway University of Medicine, for those of other regions and states.

Sai Bo Aung of Muse Constituency also asked why a mobile phone costs 500,000 kyats in Myanmar, whereas a mobile phone costs less than 10,000 kyats in neighbouring countries.

Minister for Communications, Posts and Telegraphs U Thein Zaw said that the ministry is carrying out plans to improve phone lines and reduce their cost, that the cost for a phone line has been reduced from over 1 million kyats to 0.65 million kyats, and that for a mobile phone line, from 1.5 million kyats to 0.5 million kyats; that so far, over 2 million mobile phone lines have been installed in 221 townships; that a plan gets underway to transform the communication from Intranet to Internet system; that to achieve the goal, the ministry is working in cooperation with Yatanarpon Teleport Co and ITCS Co;

and that to improve and reduce the cost of mobile phone lines is part of the short- and long-term projects.

U Nelson (a) Sai Hsaung Hsi of Kyaukme Constituency asked if there is a programme to publish publications on existing laws, rules and ordinances for convenience of representatives.

Attorney-General U Aye Maung said that the laws promulgated by the government, ordinances and rules are issued through Myanmar Gazette; that the Attorney-General's Office publishes and distributes books on laws enacted, ordinances and rules yearly; that it is gearing up for publishing books on laws that have been sold out; and that laws books are available at the bookshop of the Attorney-General's Office.

U Soe Win of Sangyoung Constituency asked if recently-enacted civil military service law has come into force or not; and how young people will be summoned for military service if it comes into force.

Attorney-General U Aye Maung quoted the speech by General Aung San at the constituent assembly on 16 June 1947 that in the colonial days, to defend Myanmar was the duty of the British, but it was the duty of Myanmar people when the nation regained independence; that if the number of servicemen was not enough, a military service law had to be enacted for all healthy adult citizens to serve military service at least two or three years, that they had to engage in battles if there was a war, that that was one of the major tasks to be carried out when the nation regained independence.

He went on to say that Civil Military Act (1959) was promulgated on 11 March 1959; that act came into force on 1 July 1962; that Article 171 of the constitution (1974) says, "Every citizen shall, in accordance with law (a) undergo military training, and (b) undertake military service for the defence of the State; that Article 385 of the constitution (2008) says, "Every citizen has the duty to safeguard independence, sovereignty and territorial integrity of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar", and Article 386 says, "Every citizen has the duty to undergo military training in accord with the provisions of the law and to serve in the Armed Forces to defend the Union"; that the recently-enacted civil military service law will come into force on the date featured on the notification issued by the President; and that the processes to summon people for military service are stated in the law.

U Kyi Thar of Gwa Constituency said that the Ministry of Myanmar Industrial Development is yet to be formed, and asked if Myanmar Industrial Development Act will be enacted.

Minister for Industry-1 U Aung Thaung said that all governments of the Union of Myanmar tried for industrial development; that the State Peace and Development Council government also promulgated necessary laws for industrial development; and that the forthcoming government is likely to form the Ministry of Myanmar Industrial Development.

U Ye Tun (a) U Min Tun of Hsipaw Constituency said that at the 16th Mile Checkpoint between Mandalay and PyinOoLwin, such goods as rice, peas, flour and edible oil to the border of China and to northern Shan State are prohibited; that in consequence, local people of northern Shan State have to spend extra money to get unnecessarily expensive goods that are from black markets through the checkpoint; that it is like a trade embargo for growers in Mandalay, Sagaing, Magway and Ayeyawady regions; that it is contrary to the market economy; and that he asked what the new government's stance is in that regard.

Minister for Commerce U Tin Naing Thein said that the 16th Mile Checkpoint is to search weapons, explosives and narcotics, not to prohibit goods; and that the prohibition of goods is for security; that the flow of illegal goods was growing at the 16th Mile Checkpoint, so programmes were launched to fight trade of illegal goods including narcotics and gems; that domestic goods to northern Shan State are permitted, but such goods as rice, peas and flour, that are likely to be smuggled into neighbouring

countries, can be transported only with the permission of authorities; that if there is difficulty with transporting goods to the townships in northern Shan State, the case can be presented to authorities; that issues on transport of goods are addressed by the ministry in cooperation with related merchants' associations and companies, and the turnover of goods is increasing year by year at the checkpoint; that a new system has been launched to avoid unnecessary delay; that chicks can be imported to Shan State from other regions of foreign countries if with permits from the Livestock Breeding and Veterinary Department; that the previous prohibition was just a temporary programme launched by local authorities; that like the ruling government, the new government will try for swift commodity flow, fight against inflation, and boosting export of goods; that the programme is for security and fight against narcotics and transportation of goods without toll fees; and that he believes the new governments of Regions and States, and departments will pay careful attention to security, flows of goods, and convenience of the people in terms of food.

The session stopped for a break. U Ye Tun (a) U Min Tun of Hsipaw constituency seconded the proposal of U Tun Sar (a) U Sai Tun Win saying that Chapter-VIII, Section-354 of the 2008 constitution says every citizen shall be at liberty in the exercise of the following rights, if not contrary to the laws, enacted for Union security, prevalence of law and order, community peace and tranquility or public order and morality.

It is found that there are traders' association, livestock breeding farmers' association, free funeral service associations, literature and culture associations of national races etc. However, as it is not clear and easy to register, some associations are being run without registration and they become as if unlawful associations.

Such associations, organizations, peasants' union and labours' union are sine qua non for a democratic society. While working with such associations and unions, citizens can know how to exercise their democratic rights.

Therefore, he seconded the proposal of U Tun Sar (a) U Sai Tun Win, said U Ye Tun (a) U Min Tun.

In response to the proposal, Minister for Home Affairs U Maung Oo said the State Law and Order Restoration Council enacted the Law Relating to Forming of Organizations, No.6/88, on 30 September, 1988. According to the law, an organization or association can register at the Ministry of Home Affairs in accordance with the respective rules and regulations of the Ministry of Home Affairs. It shall apply for registration at An Township General Administration Department.

After scrutinizing the application, the head of the respective township general administration department is to report the application to the respective township and district peace and development councils. With the recommendations of the respective head of region or state general administration department, the application was sent to the headoffice of the General Administration Department.

The GAD is to send the application to the central supervisory committee for establishing organizations and associations after seeking remarks from ministries concerned.

After the central committee's agreement on establishing such organization, the application is sent to the cabinet which issue the license to the organization.

The Ministry of Home Affairs issued the order No 1/ 2010 on 15, July, 2010, and has issued a two-year license to an organization at cost of K100,000.

So far, a total of 218 organizations have been formed under the agreement of the respective ministries.

Therefore, organizations and associations are allowed to register their organizations in accordance with the prescribed rules and regulations, the minister said.

Afterwards, the Speaker of the Pyithu Hluttaw asked opinion of U Tun Sar (a) U Sai Tun Win over discussion of the Minister for Home Affairs and U Tun Sar (a) U Sai Tun Win accepted the discussion of the minister.

The Speaker announced that the proposal of U Tun Sar (a) U Sai Tun Win should not proceed seeking approval from Pyithu Hluttaw.

Afterwards, three representatives discussed the proposal “Rights of the national races to participate in the governance and administration sectors” submitted by U Ngun MOUNG of Haka Constituency.

U Ye Tun (a) U Min Tun said according to the Chapter- 1 Section 22 of the Basic Principles of the Constitution, the Union shall assist: (a) to develop language, literature, fine arts and culture of the National races; (b) to promote solidarity, mutual amity and respect and mutual assistance among the National races; (c) to promote socio-economic development including education, health, economy, transport and communication, so forth, of less-developed National races.

According to the Section (11) (B) of the Chapter-1 of the Basic Principles of the constitution, to implement the three tasks, the three branches of sovereign power namely, legislative power, executive power and judicial power are shared among the Union, Regions, States and Self- Administered Areas.

It is found that governance and administration duties are also shared with National races at state/region hluttaws and the Union Hluttaw.

Therefore, he seconded the proposal submitted by U Ngun MOUNG as his proposal would help building mutual respect and friendship among the National races, U Ye Tun (a) U Min Tun said.

Afterwards, U Kyi Myint of Latha Constituency took part in the discussion and suggested that greater consideration should be given to quality of a person or organizations than the sharing among National races to decide the motion of the participation of the National races in the governance and administration sectors. It is important to assign duties to highly qualified citizens in the governance and administrative sectors of the Myanmar society.

Only highly qualified person or organization can make the best use of natural resources of the country in order to boost the productivity, to benefit the people and to improve the living standard of the people. Therefore, considering quality or competitions is more suitable than the sharing to decide the participation of National races in the governance and administrative sectors, he said.

U ZONE TEINT of Chipwe Constituency discussed the proposal submitted by U Ngun MOUNG with two portions based on review and matters related to expression. At present, he said that all the national race representatives including the vice-president participate in the Union level committees and local people are assigned as ministers and appointed at the important posts at the region and state governments. It is satisfactory for assignments and appointments of national races without requests of any party or person.

With regard to expression, he noted that the national races mean all the nationalities. If proposals are submitted and questions raised at the Pyithu Hluttaw with the Union Spirit, it will be the best. As national races have been concluded in the administrative and management sectors, there is no need for serious discussion. Therefore, he said that the motion of U Ngun MOUNG should be withdrawn.

Regarding the proposal of U Ngun MOUNG of Haka Township Constituency of Chin State, Minister for Home Affairs U MAUNG OO said that he will make clarification on undertakings in line with law, rule and regulations enacted by the State. First, the motion should be considered in line with the constitution totally approved by the entire nation.

Section 348 in the Chapter-VIII, Citizen, Fundamental Rights and Duties of the Citizens states that the Union shall not discriminate any citizen of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar, based on race, place of birth, religion, official position, status, culture, sex and wealth.

With regard to participation of national races in administrative and management sectors, Section 349 states that citizens shall enjoy equal opportunity in carrying out the following functions:- (a) public employment; (b) occupation; (c) trade; (d) business; (e) technical know-how and vocation (f) exploration of art, science and technology.

Section 352 states that the Union shall, upon specified qualifications being fulfilled, in appointing or assigning duties to civil service personnel, not discriminate for or against any citizen of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar, based on race, place of birth, religion and sex. However, nothing in this Section shall prevent appointment of men to the positions that are suitable for men only.

Section 368 states the Union shall honour and assist citizens who are outstanding in education irrespective of race, religion and sex according to their qualifications.

Section 290 of Chapter-V states that matters relating to the appointment, promotion, retirement, enforcement of rules and regulations and taking action on the civil service personnel shall be exercised in accord with the law.

With regard to the proposal calling for participation of national races in administrative and management sectors tabled by U Ngun Moun of Haka Township Constituency of Chin State, the Constitution of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar proves that all the national races have equal rights.

Administrative and management sectors are being realized by State service personnel in line with law, rules, procedures, orders and policies. In appointing the personnel, they enjoy equal rights in accord with the provisions of 2008 Constitution of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar. According to Section 246, the Union Civil Services Board was formed to perform the duties of selecting, training the civil services personnel and prescribing of civil service regulations. The Civil Service Selection and Training Board provides international standard trainings to personnel at Central Institutes of Civil Service after appointing them. Approval is to be sought for appointment of personnel from the board of planning and scrutinizing organization set-up. After submitting it to the Union government office, the service personnel are to be appointed. Staff members cannot be elected with the approval of the majority.

The government has turned out the national races to be educated ones, graduates and post-graduates. Especially, University for Development of National Races and degree colleges under the Ministry for Progress of Border Areas and National Races and Development Affairs are opened for providing free education to the national races.

Graduate national races are assigned to respective ministries to discharge duties of the State. With regard to the motion, the Union level and relevant ministries are constantly realizing the appointment of national races in administrative and management sectors.

In studying the appointments concerning the three powers at Union level and Region/State level in line with the constitution, matters related to the motion have been undertaken. As the Union level organizations have performed matters related to the motion, he said that the motion does not need to be submitted to the Hluttaw.

The Speaker of Pyithu Hluttaw said he believed that all the representatives understood discussions of three persons on the proposal of U Ngun Moun of Haka Constituency and the full clarification of the Minister for Home Affairs. He noted that the motion does not need to be submitted to the Hluttaw.

Therefore, he asked the opinion of U Ngun Mounng regarding above-mentioned matter. U Ngun Mounng said that he submitted the proposal on 9-2- 2011 when he could not know the future progress. On that day, national races have not been assigned duties at the committees. At present, national races have been assigned at Hluttaws and region and state hluttaws. Therefore, the motion will not be submitted to the Hluttaw.

The Hluttaw declared that it is unnecessary to continue submission of the proposal to create opportunity for participation of national races in administrative and management sectors.

Next, U Ngun Mounng of Haka Constituency submitted the proposal calling for transport facilitation in Chin State by the Union Government.

Two representatives participated in the discussions.

U Khaing Maung Yi (a) U Khin Maung Yi of Ahlon Constituency said that Chin State is constituted with nine townships and three sub-townships. Capital Haka of northern Chin State has no access to its nearest town Matupi of northern Chin State. Likewise, Paletwa of southern Chin State has no access to its nearest town Matupi.

If the road linking Kalay of Sagaing Region to Reed Sub-Township near border of India through Tiddim can be constructed as an all-weather road, the facility will serve the best interest for the people. If the 64 miles long Falam-Reed Road can be built as an all-season road, Falam will achieve greater development.

That is why roads are to be upgraded and maintained in Chin State for realizing the border trade that plays an important role for development of the state.

In his discussion, U Khun Lein of Falam Constituency said that at a time when Myanmar had regained her independence, Chin State was designated as the Chin special division. In the post-independence period, the government built motor roads in Chin State. Nowadays, the local people have easy access to main land of the nation along three roads namely the Kalay-Tiddim-Tonzang-Falam-Haka Road, the Mandalay-Gangaw-Haka Road, and the Pakokku-Pauk Kyaukhtu-Mindat-Kanpetlet-Matupi Road. However, it is necessary to upgrade these facilities to be all-weather roads.

Paletwa of southern Chin State has no access to other eight townships of the state through motor roads. Therefore, he submitted his discussions to build a road linking Paletwa, Matupi and Haka. In conclusion, he submitted to upgrade the existing roads, to construct Paletwa-Matupi Road and maintain Falam-Reed Road.

With regard to the motion, Minister for Construction U Khin Maung Myint explained that Public Works of the Ministry of Construction is taking responsibility for construction and maintenance of 26 roads as road network including eight main roads in Chin State.

Eight main roads are as follows:-

- (1) 115 miles and one furlong long Haka-Falam-Thaingngin-Kalay Road
- (2) 107 miles and five furlongs long Thaingngin-Tiddim-Tonzong-Kyikha Road
- (3) 32 miles and three furlongs long Tiddim-Reed Road
- (4) 64 miles and two furlongs long Falam-Reed Road

(5) 70 miles and four furlongs long Haka-Gangaw Road

(6) 172 miles and seven furlongs long Haka-Rezwa-Matupi Road

(7) 114 miles and seven furlongs long Matupi-Mindat-Kyaukhtu Road

(8) 135 miles and three furlongs long Matupi-Paletwa Road.

A total of 1094 miles and six furlongs long roads, including 287 miles and 7 furlongs long asphalt roads, 282 miles and three furlongs long gravel roads, 15 miles and four furlongs long hard roads and 509 miles long earthen roads, are under construction in Chin State.

So far, box culverts and 80 bridges of under 50 feet, 29 bridges between 50 feet and 100 feet in length, one bridge between 100 feet and 180 feet in length, five bridges of above 180 feet totaling 115 have been constructed in Chin State. Among them, 270 feet long Natzan bridge, 240 feet long Lemyo bridge, 340 feet long Var bridge, 385 feet long Katel bridge and 460 feet long Manswang bridge are above 180 feet long facilities which were built in the present decade in Chin State.

For building of more roads and bridges in Chin State by the Public Works, one state Superintending Engineer's Office, two district senior engineer's offices, nine township engineer's offices and three sub-township offices are being opened to carry out maintenance work and road construction project special group-11 led by the deputy superintending engineer and road construction project special group-12 led by the deputy superintending engineer were assigned two base offices in Falam and Haka since 1994.

Road and bridge construction works were carried out with the 90 engineers, 75 staff, 300 workers and 199 heavy machinery in order to see more progress in Chin State year after year.

For better transport in Chin State, Chin national U Ngun Hsan Aung, Chin State in-charge Superintending Engineer of the Public Works, was promoted to higher positions from 1987 to date. At present, better transport facilities can be seen in the state.

For construction of reinforced concrete bridges in Chin State, along with remaining States and Regions, emphasis are being placed in three stages- bridges of 50 feet and above long are in first stage, bridges between 50 and 100 feet in length are in second stage and bridges between 100 and under 180 feet in third stage. Works are being carried out for bridges of above 180 feet after seeking approval of the government.

In 2010-2011 fiscal year, 824 tons of tar were sent to Chin State. Road works are being carried out on Haka-Rezwa-Matupi road. Preliminary engineering works are being carried out for Paletwa-Kaletwa-Myeik trade link by Max Co., of Myanmar in cooperation with IRCON Co., (Indian Railway Construction Company Limited). Plans are under way to upgrade Paletwa-Matupi road.

Construction works are being carried out on Kyauktaw-Paletwa road linking with Rakhine State by eight road construction groups and 16 bridge construction groups with the use of 30 heavy machinery.

Works for all-round development of Haka- Matupi, Matupi-Paletwa and Kyauktaw-Paletwa roads linking with India, roads linking with Rakhine State and southern and northern parts of Chin State are being upgraded.

As the government is striving for all-round development of roads, the entrance to Chin State, linking with Sagaing and Magway Regions and Rakhine State, trade routes and border routes, the proposal

calling for transport facilitation in Chin State by the Union Government submitted by the representative was not necessary to discuss again.

Next, the Hluttaw Speaker said that two representatives and the Minister for Construction made comprehensive discussions on the motion tabled by U Ngun MOUNG of Haka Constituency and that it was not necessary to submit the proposal separately. The speaker asked about the opinion of U Ngun MOUNG on the discussions of today. U Ngun MOUNG thanked to the minister and he came to understand that requirements are being fulfilled by the government systematically.

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

Next, U Ngun MOUNG of Haka Constituency submitted proposal “to allow visit of tourists to Chin State”.

Daw Zar Talam of Thantlang Constituency seconded the proposal. The Hluttaw approved to discuss the proposal at the ninth-day session of the Hluttaw on 14 March (Monday). There was an announcement for the representatives who will take part in discussions to register themselves at deputy director-general of the Pyithu Hluttaw this evening.

U Khaing Maung Yi (a) U Khin Maung Yi of Ahlon Constituency withdrew his proposal “to allow visit of tourists to Chin State for creating job opportunities for local people in Chin State with poor economic opportunity” as his proposal is similar to that of U Ngun MOUNG. The Hluttaw approved it.

Next, U Ngun MOUNG of Haka Constituency submitted proposal “to upgrade Haka, capital of Chin State, like capital of other States”.

Daw Zar Talam of Thantlang Constituency seconded the proposal. The Hluttaw approved to discuss the proposal at the ninth-day session of the Hluttaw on 14 March (Monday). There was an announcement for the representatives who will take part in discussions to register themselves at deputy director-general of the Pyithu Hluttaw this evening.

Then Speaker of Pyithu Hluttaw announced the conclusion of the eighth-day session and holding of the ninth-day session at 10 am on 14 March (Monday).

The session ended at 2.25 pm.