

## **Labour Minister and four representatives discuss proposal of U Tin Maung Win of Mingaladon Constituency**

NAY PYI TAW, 22 March-At today's Pyithu Hluttaw session, four representatives discussed the proposal of U Tin Maung Win from Mingaladon Constituency "to make arrangements for drafting a bill which would pave ways for creating more jobs, creating pleasant working environment, and improvement of skills of workers at the second regular sessions of Pyithu Hluttaw."

First, U Thein Tun Oo of Amarapura Constituency said that he has learnt that the State is taking measures to make systematic use of the mass of workers, to assign job seekers to suitable posts as quickly as possible and constant emergence of skilled workforce.

In doing so, the State will need to improve the skills of workers in accord with the changing market demand in order to tap the workforce of the nation.

In addition, it will need to take more measures for employment contracts to ensure good relations between employers and employees and favourable work condition.

The proposal to draft bill for job creation and improving skills of workers is in compliance with provisions of the constitution of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar and the bill is vital in economic growth of the nation. He then requested organizations concerned to draft the bill ahead of the coming Pyithu Hluttaw sessions so that it can be discussed and approved at those sessions.

U Kyi Myint from Latha Constituency said that the proposal of U Tin Maung Win has three facts, so it needs to draft three bills.

Job creation depends on economic policy. As the economy of the State is described to be market-oriented economy in Paragraph 35 of the constitution, the policy is correct for each individual citizen and will expand unlimited demands of the peoples. So, a policy to attract new investments is in need for job creation.

Public savings is the main source of new investments.

Here, main sources mean that the peoples play a major role.

Savings means surplus of income after consumption or saved cash from economy drive. But due to recession of financial market in last decade, The best and the fairest approach to promote saving capital and loan capital is establishment of stock market. So a bill to establish the stock market is needed in proposal of U Tin Maung Win for job creation.

The second fact of U Tin Maung Win's proposal- favourable working conditions-covers safety measures, free treatment,bonus, and allowances. Furthermore, modern social security net system is also needed to guarantee the future of employees.

Promotion of proficiency of workers is connected with developing technologies, refresher training courses for handling machines, and workshops. He then suggested that admin department of respective ministry, factory and workshop should take measures to constantly launch capacity building programmes for its employees.

Daw Su Su Hlaing from Dagon Myothit (South) Constituency said that 1950 Vocation and Training Act is one of the existing laws on labour affairs in the Republic of the Union of Myanmar and the act carries some defects in job creation and promotion of proficiency of workers in current conditions.

Section 29 and 30 of 2008 constitution of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar stated that the State has to fulfill requirements to the full for transforming from conventional farming to mechanized farming and industrial development of the nation.

In building the nation industrialized one, factories and plants can be established with domestic and foreign investment to create jobs. So, workers who will work in those factories and plants badly need to possess particular skills to suit the demand of labour market. Moreover, favorable working condition is instrumental in boosting productivity. So, employment agreement will be necessary for both employers and employees to build good relations between them.

In the time of State Peace and Development Council, National Skill Standardization Authority (NSSA) was established in 2007, central group for enforcing discipline and promoting proficiency of workers of the Union of Myanmar with 21 ministers and labour exchange offices were reopened in 2009 and employment rate has doubled.

As there will be migrant skilled workers in ASEAN nations in 2015 after implementation of ASEAN Economic Community, Myanmar workers will need to compete with others from ASEAN countries. So, promotion of proficiency of Myanmar workers should be the top priority of the government. Skilled workers will boost productivity and thus are beneficial to employers. So, the employers and employees themselves should play an active role in promoting proficiency of workers instead of relying on the government alone, only then skills of the workforce will be improved. Moreover, every citizen is responsible for assisting the State in making endeavours for human resource development according to Section 390 (c) of the constitution.

So, the proposal to draft bill for creating jobs, ensuring favourable working condition and improving skills of workers is in compliance with provisions of the 2008 constitution of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar and the bill is essential for industrial development of the nation. He then asked the hluttaw to make arrangements in order that organizations concerned can draft the bill ahead of the second Pyithu Hluttaw sessions for discussion.

U Ye Tun (a) U Min Tun from Hsipaw Constituency said that he assumed that the proposal of U Tin Maung Win is aimed to protect rights of workers in accord with law. The existing laws on labour are out of date and therefore should be amended.

He then suggested that the bill should be practical and acceptable. Regarding compensation for worksite injury, there may be cases of injury due to drinking at work. The bill should be practical and fair for both parties. Labour laws of countries whose conditions are almost the same with Myanmar should be taken into consideration in passing the law.

In response to the discussion, Minister for Labour U Aung Kyi said that the government set up a central group in 1.7.2009 with a view to creating jobs and improving skills of workers.

The meeting of that central group carried out two duties-reopening of labour exchange offices and improving skills of labors.

Altogether 77 labour exchange offices were reopened in July 2009, which led to an increase in employment rate from previous 112305 to 265694. But, at present laws supporting labour exchange works have not desirable effects for various reasons and so a law that can support more effectively labour exchange works and promotion of job opportunities.

It is important for employers and employees to be able to sign employment contract for ensuring peace at worksite and fair treatment. In accord with rules and laws practiced internationally, Ministry of Labour issued a directive in Notification No. 55 dated 31.12.1976, to sign employment contracts between employers and employees, with a view to ensuring employees enjoy full rights described in labour laws, disciplined working, good relations between employers and employees, peace at worksite and increased productivity. In response to the directive, employment contracts have been signed in 5817 factories, workshops and departments till 28 February 2011. However, there should be law supporting the notification.

Improving the skills of workers is part of the strategy for national development. According to labour statistics taken yearly, there were 793300 workers in private industry and jointventures, 2859325 self-employed and manual labourers, totaling 3652625 in 2010. The proficiency of that workforce lagged behind in productivity and competitiveness and thus its should be improved to a certain extent as technologies is developing at great pace across the globe and Myanmar is also seeing industrial development. So, a large number of training programmes will be needed to bridge the skill gap of labourers.

Government Technical Training School, Government Technical Institutes and Government Technical Colleges run by Ministry of Science and Technology can effectively improves the skills of future workforce. Likewise, training schools of Ministry of Industry-2 and other ministries can also contribute a great deal to the future workforce. But, the State alone cannot handle the problem and employers and employees should also cooperate with the government in unison. With workers getting skills improved, their working standards will also get improved increasing per capita income. And the employers will also have the capability to boost production both in quality and quantity.

Ministry of Labour set up National Skill Standard Authority (NSSA) under permission of the government of the Union of Myanmar with the participation of ministries and private entrepreneurs in 2007 to establish strong skill recognition system in its bid to standardize skill standard of Myanmar workers with ASEAN nations. From 2008 to 2010, a total of 15 2 kinds of skill standard have been set in line with norms of ASEAN Skill Standard. The ministry has also found 14 standardization committees and trying to confer proficiency certificates.

Of the many options that the government can choose for human resources development and improving skills of workers, levy and grant system is found to be successful approach in developing and developed countries. The system is in practice in over 30 nations including Singapore, Malaysia and the Republic of Korea. So, the ministry should observe the system thoroughly so that its can be practiced if necessary.

The Ministry of Labour would arrange for submitting a bill (draft) for vocation and proficiency development law, if Pyithu Hluttaw allow, said the minister.

Next, the hluttaw speaker said that discussion of four representatives and Labour Minister is constructive and points out the importance of investment, technology and management in a work to be successful. The hluttaw approved and accepted the proposal.

***Source: NLM 2011-03-23***