

**Pyithu Hluttaw Speaker calls for fight against HIV/AIDS in cooperation with INGOs, NGOs, other organizations -
Hluttaw urged to guarantee equality, freedom, social justice of national races residing in the Union [Pyithu Hluttaw, 16th day]**



NAY PYI TAW, 27 July- The fourth regular session of the First Pyithu Hluttaw continued for 16th day in Hluttaw Complex, here, today, attended by Pyithu Hluttaw Speaker Thura U Shwe Mann and 400 MPs.

Regarding the question of Dr Ne Lin of Seikkan Constituency about the staff infected by communicable diseases including HIV, Deputy Minister for Labour U Myint Thein replied that factories and General Labour Law Inspection Department under the Ministry of Labour is undertaking such major responsibilities as ensuring full legal rights to workers for protection of their interests, worksite safety and health care services. It is enforcing the existing laws and rules on labour affairs, conducting educational courses and monitoring the working conditions of hazardous factories and workshops with a view to reducing worksite accidents and work-related diseases. The Health Department enacted prevention against epidemics law in 1955 for the people suffered from communicable diseases including HIV. Civil servants in service have the right to receive medical treatment, take sick leave and medical pension and receive other social allowances in line with procedures concerned.

Pyithu Hluttaw Speaker Thura U Shwe Mann expressed his point of view about the question that the disease is on the global radar and is the global health issue of major importance.

Prevention is better than cure, there goes a saying.

Prevention is more effective and more useful than treatment. This calls for public education campaigns of the Health Ministry and ministries concerned. Only then, focus can be made on prevention of carriers and persons in their work and social circles against the disease. If the preventive measures fail to thwart the disease, there comes the role of Health Ministry and related organizations for medical attention. Less than 50 per cent of the country's population of 60 million people may know well about HIV/AIDS, which only adds more barriers to prevention and curing of the disease in comparison with other countries. This is far more serious when coupled with traditional shyness of Myanmar people over such cases. If there are certain cultural characteristics harmful to the health of citizens and people or the rights of people, those must be changed in a subtle way. Although a custom, a tradition or a rite should be cherished, it must be handled subtly if that particular characteristic poses threats to health and other problems to own national races, citizens and the humans.

HIV and AIDS are major concerns for the globe and Myanmar as well. So, the focal ministry should play a leading role in cooperation with INGO, NGO and other organizations for fighting the global major killer through systematic approaches, suggested the Speaker.

U Hla Maung of Chaungzon Constituency, U Kun Lein of Falam Constituency, U Ngun Maung of Haka Constituency, U Kyaw Tin Shwe of Mongshu Constituency, Daw Nan Sae Aua of Hpa-an

Constituency, Daw Nan Wah Nu of Kunhing Constituency, U Stephen of Kengtung Constituency, U Soe Yel of Dimawhso Constituency, U Maung Maung Nyan of Pantanaw Constituency and U Kyaw Naing Htay of Indaw Constituency discussed the proposal of U T Khun Myat of Kutkai Constituency about enactment of a specific law for protection of national races people.

They argued that provisions in the article (22) of the constitution are determining factors for harmonious development of social life of national races people and thus those facts must be put into practice no matter what.

The Hluttaw is required of placing an emphasis on adoption of a particular legislation for protection of interests of national races people.

The country now is practicing democracy and thus attitudes and overall dimensions of the old system must be reviewed. A special focus on guaranteeing equal rights of national races people and promulgation of law protecting the rights of national races people must be at the top of the agenda of the government.

Concerted efforts must be exerted for promotion of traditional cultural heritage of national races. In addition, minorities on the verge of extinction should be given special care for their revival enacting a specific law as early as possible.

The failure to exercise parliamentary democracy system well in the postindependence period led to the death of the rights of national races people, and in consequence, the disputes had sparked off conflicts. Over six decades have elapsed since the beginning of the conflicts with national races. For building lasting genuine peace, the paragraph (d) of the article (21) of the constitution states that necessary law shall be enacted to make citizens' freedoms, rights, benefits, responsibilities and restrictions effective, steadfast and complete. The lack of a law protecting the rights of national races people would lead to disunity among national races, decrease in patriotic spirit, less loyalty to the State, the governed's mistrust of the administration, increase in doubts of national races over the State.

The proposal is concerned with the rights of all the national races people residing in the Union and it is consistent with the same aspiration of the national races, making clear that a law for national races in dire need.

Deputy Minister for Immigration and Population U Kyaw Kyaw Win seconded the proposal. Deputy Minister for Home Affairs Brig-Gen Kyaw Zan Myint discussed that the national races mentioned mean all the national races including Burmese. Provisions in the constitution make sure there is no discrimination against races and religions. The nation would be built strong with the unity of all the national races if the provisions could be enforced effectively in practice. All the national races, taking themselves as the sons and daughters of the motherland, Myanmar, are residing under the Constitution of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar. In line with the constitution, all the national races have the right to enjoy equality, freedom and social justice.

So, there is no reason to object the proposal, seconded the deputy minister.

Deputy Attorney- General U Tun Tun Oo of the Office of the Attorney- General of the Union argued that the proposal is based on the paragraphs 38 and 46 of United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous People held on 13 September, 2007 plus provisions of the constitution. The proposer in his proposal defined the provisions of the declaration on the grounds of justice, democracy and human rights, equality, anti-discrimination, and good governance. Lawmakers need to take a wide spectrum of facts into consideration in writing a specific law for handling specific cases under the likely scenario.

In line with the provisions of the constitution, national races representatives are allowed to be elected to region or state or selfadministered legislature.

Also in regions or states, 29 national races representatives elected have been appointed as national races affairs ministers responsible for taking care of the issues of national races. So, the proposal for enactment of a law protecting the rights of national races is consistent with provisions about the affairs of national races in the constitution and thus should be promulgated, seconded the deputy attorney-general.

The law to be drafted should cover various aspects as promotion of language, literature, arts and culture of national races, strengthening unity, amity and mutual assistance among national races and socio-economic development of national races inclusive of education, health, economy, and transportation.

In addition, it needs to prescribe appropriate provisions concerned with all the national races as cultures and traditions vary from one national race to another.

Moreover, sharing of responsibility should be taken into consideration in enforcing the intention of the law to be formulated. So, a commission comprising MPs, representatives of the executive branch, national races affairs minister under the aegis of the Pyidaungsu Hluttaw in line with the constitution to legitimate the proposed law.

The Hluttaw approved the proposal. The Hluttaw approved the export/import bill as amended by the Amyotha Hluttaw and further proceedings would be made in line with Pyithu Hluttaw Rule 163, announced the Hluttaw.

One question was answered, one proposal discussed and approved and one bill passed at today's session. The session came to an end at 1 pm and the 17th session continues at 1 pm on 30 July.

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