

Pyithu Hluttaw 21 January, 2015

Pyithu Hluttaw discusses fall in oil price, losses of local merchants and farmers

Nay Pyi Taw, 21 Jan —Pyithu Hluttaw (Lower House) session discussed impact of falling oil prices, losses of Myanmar merchants to Chinese traders and upgrading and maintenance of regional reservoirs on Wednesday.

Concerning the impact of falling oil prices in the international market, Deputy Minister for Energy U Aung Htoo said that oil prices were falling in the international market due to imbalance of supply and demand and this had an impact on gas prices exported from Myanmar but incomes from gas could only slightly fall as production from new projects, Zawtika and Shwe, met the targets, adding that the ministry had an advantage of lower costs for imported oil and gas for local consumption.

The deputy minister continued to say that falling oil prices could also slow down the activities of exploration and production but there were advantages as well as disadvantages as Myanmar could gain short term benefits if it could buy and store reserve oil at low prices.

As for losses of Myanmar merchants to Chinese traders, Deputy Minister for Commerce Dr Pwint Hsan said that local merchants and farmers suffered losses because they did not follow rules and regulations and relied on trust between them and illegally traded goods. However, losses of local merchants and farmers would be recovered by negotiations between authorities of the two countries and between merchant associations if evidence was provided, the deputy minister added, saying that his ministry had already discussed the matter at the 10th China-Myanmar Trade Coordination Meeting but the Chinese side replied that it was necessary to investigate who engaged in illegal trade.

However, the deputy minister said the two countries had agreed to hold a coordination meeting and the list of Chinese merchants who still needed to pay for goods they bought would be given to Chinese authorities at the meeting.

For the question on upgrading of regional reservoir, Deputy Minister for Agriculture and Irrigation U Khin Zaw said that maintenance and upgrading of regional reservoirs is being carried out by state/region governments. At today's session, a motion calling for effective prevention and action against illegal trade of natural resources to other countries was submitted by a representative.— MNA

Source: *The Global New Light of Myanmar*, 2015-01-22