

Pyithu Hluttaw discusses road construction

By Mi Mi Phyto

THE eighth-day meeting of the seventh regular session of the second Pyithu Hluttaw was held yesterday morning in the Pyithu Hluttaw meeting hall, Nay Pyi Taw.

During the meeting, a question-and-answer session was held, a motion was tabled and a bill was approved.

During the question-and-answer session, U Pe Than of Myebon constituency asked whether there was a plan to connect the two sections of Myebon-Kantha-Kapaing Road in Myebon Township and Minbya Township with the Pyunshay bridge in the 2018-2019 fiscal year (FY). Ministry of Construction Deputy Minister U Kyaw Lin replied that new bridge and road constructions were being carried out based on priority and the allocation of union/state funds. In the 2018-2019 FY, a six-month budget, from 1 April to 30 September, of Ks200 million from the state reserve fund and Ks50 million from the union reserve fund were being requested to construct the Pyun-

shay bridge, and if the funds are allocated, it will be implemented, said the deputy minister.

Responding to questions raised by U Khin Maung Thi of Shan State Loilem constituency on the plan to continue the construction of the Loilem-Taunggyi union road section under the build, operate, transfer (BOT) system and the plan to find a new road axis while repairing and modifying the ascending and descending roads on Khauknwe Mountain, Deputy Minister U Kyaw Lin said the Meiktila-Taunggyi-Kengtung-Tachilek road section in Shan State (South) and the 60-mile-long Taunggyi-Loilem section are being constructed under the BOT system by Nay Min Yaung Company. The company has been instructed to lay asphalt concrete roads in Taunggyi Town and Hopong Town, widen the Hopong-Htansan road to a 24-foot wide asphalt road by June 2018 and to install road signs. The company is executing these works, replied the deputy minister. The ascending and descending roads on the Taunggyi-Loilem road section of Khauknwe Mountain is 19

kilometres long. From the 2011-2012 FY to the 2017-2018 FY, Nay Min Yaung Company has laid a 19-km-long and 5.5-metre wide road, widened the road shoulders by 10.36 metres for up to 1.81 km, installed 680 concrete road guard poles, installed 1,219 metres of aluminium guard rail, installed 64 road signs and built 36.57 metres of retaining wall. From the 2018-2019 FY to the 2020-2021 FY, the company will widen the narrow road sections of the ascending and descending roads of Khauknwe Mountain, making it a 7.3-metre-wide asphalt road, said the deputy minister.

Ministry of Construction Deputy Minister U Kyaw Lin also replied to questions on the construction sector raised by Dr. U Min Thein of YeU constituency, U Tun Tun of Pwintbyu constituency, Daw Khin Than Nu of Mindon constituency, U Myint Lwin of Twante constituency and U Aye Min Aung @ U Min Min of Paungde constituency. Next, Daw Nan Kham Aye of Namtu constituency tabled a motion on union- and state/region-level departmental organisations when



Pyithu Hluttaw Speaker U Win Myint. PHOTO: MNA

calling for tenders; handling the transport cost of work-related materials and works that the ministerial department does not need to do, due to technical issues, while not including those works in the tender; following the instructions and work guidelines from which the departmental organisations are deviating; and implementing fair competition by requiring the tender-competing companies to include rates for complete drawings and estimates prepared by the related ministerial department, in accordance with the region. Daw Nan Khin Saw of Kunhing constituency supported the motion and said the laws and instructions need to be followed not only by the (tendering) companies but also the departmental

organisations. Rules and regulations that are one-sided for the departmental organisations need to be removed, added the Hluttaw representative while supporting the motion. Pyithu Hluttaw Speaker U Win Myint requested Hluttaw representatives to enrol their names to discuss the motion. Later, the Pyithu Hluttaw Speaker went through each clause of the bill on registering agreements, sent with amendments by the Amyotha Hluttaw, to obtain the confirmation of the Hluttaw, and then announced the confirmation of the bill, as amended by the Amyotha Hluttaw.

The ninth-day meeting of the seventh regular session of the Pyithu Hluttaw is scheduled for 30 January. ■

MPs discuss fund for the disabled, tax ...

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As the NCRPD was formed, a separate fund for persons with disabilities will also be set up, said the union minister.

At the moment, the rehabilitation of persons with disabilities is being conducted with the ministry's fund. In the 2017-2018 fiscal year (FY), some 54 persons from Kachin State, Kayah State, Kayin State and Shan State disabled by mines were each awarded Ks200,000. A person killed by a mine in Kachin State was given Ks700,000. Six disabled persons who lacked support in Kayah State, Fruso Town, Taw Khu Village tract, were each awarded Ks500,000, while 31 other disabled persons were each given Ks200,000, and a sick disabled person was given Ks100,000. Once the fund for persons with disabilities is set up, full rights, as described in the law on the rights of persons with disabilities, will be provided.

The government had set up a law and rule for persons with disabilities, while arrangements are underway to set up a separate fund for persons with disabilities, and full rights will

be accorded to them, explained the union minister.

In reply to a question by U Kyaw Ni Naing of Shan State constituency 11 on the plan to officially set up a Kokang National Day in Kokang Self-administered Zone for Kokang ethnic nationals, Union Minister for Ethnic Affairs Nai Thet Lwin said determining a national day is not related only to a party, a

Therefore, to set up a national day for ethnic nationals, a steering group that includes all of them must be formed first, and the will and wishes of all the ethnic nationals must be obtained. A national day that is set up this way needs to be recognised by ethnic nationals and celebrated. It is appropriate for all Kokang nationals in the world and the country to estab-

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group, a regional organisation or an organisation that is in power. It is also related to the entire ethnic national community, as well as the will and wishes of the political organisation, cultural organisation, civil society organisations, religious organisations and all the ethnic nationals living in other states and regions.

lish a national day, and the government should not set it up, explained the union minister. U Ye Htut of Sagaing Region constituency 5 then asked whether there was a plan to exempt from commercial tax the entire service supply chain of books, literature and journals published by publishers who had applied



Amyotha Hluttaw Speaker Mahn Win Khaing Than. PHOTO: MNA

and obtained recommendation letters from the Ministry of Information's copyright and registration department, as well as books, literature and journals that are imported through trade channels. Deputy Minister for Information U Aung Hla Tun said the ministry only issued a recommendation letter to conduct printing, publishing and news agency works, and these entities need to obtain the necessary work permits from the municipality. Commercial tax, income and profit tax are collected by the Ministry of Planning and Finance, and the Ministry of Commerce and the Ministry of Information took no part in it.

The ministry of information had only coordinated with the relevant ministerial department for exemption from commercial

tax. The Ministry of Planning and Finance had responded that although it is not included in the goods and services that are exempted from commercial tax, while the 2018 union tax law is being drawn, discussions should be made in the Hluttaw so that commercial tax is exempted for books and journals, and the Hluttaw's decision should be followed.

The Ministry of Planning and Finance must further take into account the loss in tax revenue if the exemption is provided. The Ministry of Information seeks the development of the publishing of books and literature that raise the knowledge of people and will support tax exemption and relief, but tax is not the domain of the ministry, explained the deputy minister. ■