

## Pyidaungsu Hluttaw

## Pyidaungsu Hluttaw discusses utilisation of loans

Aye Aye Thant  
(MYANMAR NEWS AGENCY)

The 17<sup>th</sup>-day meeting of the seventh session of the second Pyidaungsu Hluttaw was held at the Pyidaungsu Hluttaw meeting hall in Nay Pyi Taw yesterday morning.

Dr. Myat Nyana Soe, secretary of the Joint Bill Committee, read the report on the committee's follow-up findings and comments on the 2018 Union Tax Bill. Apart from the clauses and sub-clauses that need to be amended, the amendments proposed by the Pyidaungsu Hluttaw representatives were discussed by the Joint Bill Committee, Public Accounts Joint Committee and the related departments and organisations. It was agreed that the Hluttaw should agree to the initial comments made by the Joint Bill Committee.

He said the Joint Bill Committee had discussed in depth and agreed on the 2018 Union Tax Bill, with the Hluttaw representatives, providing suggestions to the Public Accounts Joint Committee, Pyidaungsu Hluttaw's Legal Affairs and Special Cases Assessment Commission, related ministries and organisations. Therefore, the Hluttaw should agree to the initial amendments and the follow-up amendments proposed



Pyidaungsu Hluttaw is being convened in Nay Pyi Taw. **PHOTO: MYANMAR NEWS AGENCY**

by the Joint Bill Committee and approve the bill, he said.

The Joint Bill Committee then submitted a motion for the Hluttaw to approve the bill, section by section, and after the Hluttaw approved the bill, the approval was announced to the Hluttaw.

Next, Deputy Minister for Planning and Finance U Maung Maung Win tabled a motion for the Hluttaw to approve the entire bill, and after the Hluttaw approved the entire bill, the approval being announced by Pyidaungsu Hluttaw Speaker Mahn Win Khaing Than.

Later, 14 Hluttaw representatives discussed the 87.091-billion Japanese yen loan from the Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA) to be provided to the Ministry of Agriculture, Live-

stock and Irrigation, Ministry of Construction and Ministry of Transport and Communications.

In his discussion, U Khin Cho of Hlaingbwe constituency said the aim of the loan was to develop the agricultural sector, improve the transport sector, and develop lives and reduce poverty of the people living in rural areas. He sought details about the current utilisation of dam water, plans to upgrade it with the loan, and thus, the resulting increase in agricultural productivity and the GDP.

The Ministry of Construction is building bridges and roads through a contract system, and plans should be in place so that black-listed companies (and people) are not part of the works. On the Ministry of Transport and Communications utilising



Deputy Minister for Planning and Finance U Maung Maung Win. **PHOTO: MNA**

the loan, he suggested the ministry must study the additional services it can provide and the income it can earn through the upgrade of the railways, coaches and locomotives.

U Tun Wei of Phaungpyin constituency pledged his support, suggesting that the loan utilisation plan of the Agriculture, Livestock and Irrigation Ministry for the dam would benefit some 70,000 households. Although he supported the loan for the Ministry of Transport and Communications to upgrade the Yangon-Mandalay rail line, he noted that Myanmar Railways was a state-owned enterprise that was incurring losses every year and, thus, it should ensure the loan is not wasted. In his discussion, U Tin Tun Naing of Seikkyi Khanaungto constituency said he was nei-

ther objecting to the projects nor ignoring the benefits that could be accrued from the projects. However, the calculation and estimation of the benefits should be clearly explained. The return on investment, according to the explanation provided by the Deputy Minister for agriculture, livestock and irrigation, is very good, but it was too good to be true, he noted.

There is no objection to purchasing essential machinery with the loan, but the expenses for the machinery and equipment should be explained in detail, he said.

Similarly Dr. Tin Tin Win of the Bago Region constituency (5), U Aung Thihe of Seikphu constituency, U Kyaw Aung Lwin of Sedoktara constituency, Daw Yin Min Hlaing of Gangaw constituency, Dr. Win Myint of Bago Region constituency (11), U Sein Win of Maubin constituency, Dr. Win Aung of KhinU constituency, U Win Myint Aung of Tabayin constituency, U Tun Win of Kyunhla constituency, U Hla San of Magway Region constituency (1) and U Win Aung of Sagaing Region constituency (3) also discussed the loan.

An announcement will be made later on holding the 18<sup>th</sup>-day meeting of the seventh session of the second Pyidaungsu Hluttaw. ■

## MNHRC issues statement on peaceful assembly law

*Following is the unofficial translation of the statement released by MNHRC.*

THE Myanmar National Human Rights Commission has released a statement concerning the amendment of the Peaceful Assembly and Peaceful Procession Law.

The Amyotha Hluttaw, by a majority vote, approved the Bill of Amendment of the Peaceful Assembly and Peaceful Procession Law on 7 March 2018, and it will be discussed in the Pyithu Hluttaw soon.

The statement acknowledges that the general public is opposed to the amendments being made, which is said to be in opposition to democracy.

Critics say the amendments would place further restrictions on the right to protest and assemble. Opponents also claim

the changes are overly broad and could be exploited to stifle political dissent

The statement cites the UDHR (Universal Declaration of Human Rights) – Article 19, “Everyone has the right to freedom of opinion and expression; this right includes freedom to hold opinions without interference and to seek, receive and impart information and ideas through any media and regardless of frontiers”, Article 20, “Everyone has the right to freedom of peaceful assembly and association. No one may be compelled to belong to an association”, and Article 29, second paragraph, “In the exercise of his rights and freedoms, everyone shall be subject only to such

limitations as are determined by law solely for the purpose of securing due recognition and respect for the rights and freedoms of others and of meeting the just requirements of morality, public order and the general welfare in a democratic society.”

It also cites ICCPR (International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights) – Article 19, “Everyone shall have the right to hold opinions without interference; this right shall include freedom to seek, receive and impart information and ideas of all kinds, regardless of frontiers, either orally, in writing or in print, in the form of art, or through any other media of his choice.

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## Myanmar Investment Commission Meeting 4/2018

The Myanmar Investment Commission (MIC) meeting 4/2018 was convened in Yangon on 20<sup>th</sup> March 2018 and reviewed investment proposals consistent with the Myanmar Investment Law.

U Kyaw Win, Chairman of MIC and Union Minister for Planning and Finance and Dr. Than Myint, Vice Chairman of MIC and Union Minister for

Commerce and members of MIC attended the meeting. The submission of proposals and endorsement applications from investors and post-permit activities of MIC-permitted companies were discussed in the meeting. The MIC meeting (4/2018) decided to issue 7 investment permits and 7 endorsements in relation to the investment proposals.—MNA ■