

## Pyidaungsu Hluttaw

Fourth day of eighth regular session of 2<sup>nd</sup> Pyidaungsu Hluttaw held

U Tun Myint.



U Maung Maung Win.



U Thant Sin Maung.



Dr. Myo Thein Gyi.



U Khin Cho. PHOTO: MNA

IN the Pyidaungsu Hluttaw session yesterday, officials from two ministries answered questions on foreign loans and MPs discussed a report from the Myanmar National Human Rights Commission for 2017.

Firstly, the Hluttaw put on record President U Win Myint's travel record to Singapore and a letter of appointment from the President's office assigning Colonel Than Tun Aung to Sagaing Region's Ministry of Security and Border Affairs.

Next, Deputy Minister for Planning and Finance U Maung Maung Win submitted a bill from the union government amending the National Budget Use Law.

#### Ministries explain use of foreign loans in detail

The Ministry of Transport and Communications and Ministry of Education then explained the use of foreign loans obtained with approval from the Pyidaungsu Hluttaw in their projects up till 31 March 2017.

Union Minister for Transport and Communications U Thant Sin Maung explained that his ministry acquired foreign loans and used them in 11 projects during the first Pyidaungsu Hluttaw's term and for three projects during the second Pyidaungsu Hluttaw's term. The projects are classified as nine projects for the transport sector and five projects for the communication sector. The Directorate of Water Resources and Improvement of River Systems has acquired US \$100 million in foreign loans for use in the Ayeyawady Integration River Basin Management Project from 2015-2020.

The union minister said the department has also obtained a loan from South Korea to finance the construction of the Twantay Canal Development Project. The canal was initially constructed in 1970, but the area is under threat from a collapsing riverbank. The union minister said no money from the loan was

used yet, and the project period is from 2018 to 2024.

Other projects on the list that are financed by foreign loans include expanding the Yangon port into the Thilawa area, upgrading the Yangon-Mandalay railway, purchasing and repairing locomotives and other related machinery, purchasing 100 passenger cars (rail), developing the communications sector, and expanding the GSM/UMDS mobile network.

Union Minister for Education Dr. Myo Thein Gyi explained that his ministry had three projects financed by foreign loans with approval from the Pyidaungsu Hluttaw. Two foreign loans of \$60 million and \$20 million are being used to provide financial support to schools to reduce dropout rates and increase actual learning among students. The ministry has also obtained a \$98-million loan from the Asian Development Bank for capacity-building projects for youth working in the Depart-

ment of Educational Research, Planning and Training, the Department of Technical, Vocational Education and Training, the Department of Basic Education, and the Ministry of Industry.

MPs discuss Human Rights Commission; suggests adding ordinary citizens to MNHRC

Next, the MPs discussed a report from the Myanmar National Human Rights Commission for 2017.

U Tun Myint of Bahan constituency suggested a stricter and more direct approach to deal with violations of human rights instead of simply referring the cases to relevant departments. He also suggested adding people who valued human rights and representatives of civil society organisations (CSO) as members of the Myanmar National Human Rights Commission.

U Khin Cho of Hlaingbwe

constituency suggested holding annual seminars and workshops to spread human rights awareness and information throughout the states and regions. He explained that in 2015, some 1,778 of the 2,598 submitted cases of human rights abuse were resolved, while in 2016, all 2,094 submitted cases were resolved. However, in 2017, only 106 cases were submitted, and though they were all resolved, the number of cases for that year was only five per cent of the total submitted cases from the previous years. U Khin Cho said it was worrying if the number of cases that dropped was due to people opting to not report violations of human rights. He said more efforts must be made to inform the public of when and how to report human rights abuses.

The report was further discussed by 12 MPs. The fifth day of the next eighth regular Pyidaungsu Hluttaw session will be held on 28 May.—Myo Myint, Aung Ye Thwin (MNA) ■

## Myanmar economic development likely to increase 6.8% in 2018-2019 FY

THE economic development of Myanmar is likely to increase 6.8 per cent, according to the World Bank's Myanmar Economic Monitor (MEM).

According to the report, inflation was seven per cent in the 2016-2017 fiscal year and 5.5 per cent in the 2017-2018 FY. It will drop to 4.9 per cent in the 2018-2019 FY.

The development rate of domestic production reached 5.9 per cent in the 2016-2017 FY and jumped to 6.4 per cent in the

2017-2018 FY.

The increased rate is due to the development in agriculture, service and production sectors, according to the report.

However, improvement is slow in the travel and banking sectors, and Myanmar's economic development, while steady, faces challenges that could affect it in the future, said the report.

According to the report, Ellen Goldstein, the World Bank country director for Myanmar,

Cambodia and Laos, said the macro economic development was satisfactory. The Myanmar government is striving to implement balanced economic development schemes for sustainable development in the country.

He said it was a sign of the country's transformation and financial development.

The report was released at a ceremony supervised by the World Bank and was held at UMFCI in Yangon on 17 May.—Shin Minn ■

## Advancement of southwest monsoon expected in southern Myanmar areas

SOUTHWEST monsoon is likely to advance into southern Myanmar areas, as the weather is partly cloudy over the North Bay, and partly cloudy to cloudy over the Andaman Sea and elsewhere over the Bay of Bengal, according to the Myanmar Daily weather report issued by the Department of Meteorology and Hydrology yesterday.

The forecast for Nay Pyi Taw, Mandalay and the neigh-

bouring areas for today is isolated rain or thundershowers, and the degree of certainty is 80 per cent, whereas for Yangon and the neighbouring area it is isolated rain or thundershowers, and the degree of certainty is 100 per cent.

Seas will be slight to moderate in Myanmar's waters, and the wave height will be some three-seven feet off and along Myanmar's coast.—GNLM ■