



State and Region Parliaments News Bulletin

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Ethnic States Win Right to Draft Constitutions

12th May 2017

Myanmar's seven ethnic states have won the right to draft their own constitutions, an unprecedented breakthrough in their fight for equality and self-determination, according to the leader of an armed ethnic group.

After the Friday morning meeting of the Union Peace Dialogue Joint Committee (UPDJC), Col. Hkun Okkar of the Pa-O National Liberation Organization (PNLO) told reporters "the government has acknowledged the right to self-determination for the state as we are allowed to draft the state constitution."

"We were able to agree that we could draft our own state constitutions, which has never been done in the history," he said. "The states under the Union have never had such rights as to draft their own constitutions, but we have earned it today."

The meeting on Friday approved the basic principles covering political, economic, social, security, and land and environment sectors.

The UPDJC has so far agreed to six of seven principles of the federal Union to be negotiated in the second round of



the 21st Century Panglong peace conference to begin on May 24. These principles are: sovereignty, the practice of sovereignty, equality, self-determina-

tion, federal Union principles, and a multi-party democratic system.

UPDJC participants had to agree that their state constitutions do not contradict the Union's 2008 Constitution, which would take precedence in any possible disputes.

The state parliaments, governments, and courts will come under the state constitutions, whose authority will be protected from Union government interference.

"If the mandates are unclear, our country could not develop any further. If the state's mandates are clear, the Union level governance cannot revoke it," said Col. Hkun Okkar, referring to a time when his group asked the Shan state government to regrow trees, but the state government replied that they should ask the Union Ministry of Ministry of Environmental Conservation and Forestry.

On the topic of self-determination, the Tatmadaw requested to add the words "no secession" from the Union. The meetings participant's said "no secession" shared the same meaning as "non-disintegration" of the Union.

(Ref: <https://www.irrawaddy.com>)

Photo News



A coordination meeting of "Kayin State Reform Priorities and Budget" was organized by the Kayin State Government and The Asia Foundation (TAF), and the Ministers and the Hluttaw Committee Chairpersons attended the meeting.

(Ref: *Kayin State Hluttaw Facebook Page*)

"Performance Analysis of State and Region Hluttaws (Local Legislatures) in Myanmar (2010-2015)", conducted by Enlightened Myanmar Research Foundation (EMReF), is now available for download in both Myanmar and English: <http://www.mypilar.org/en/publication/performance-analysis-state-and-region-hluttaws-local-legislatures-myanmar-2010-2015>

Mon State Hluttaw Budget, Planning and Economic Affairs Review Committee Makes Field Investigation

9th May 2017

On 9th May, the Budget, Planning and Economic Affairs Review Committee of the Mon State Parliament went to investigate hotel construction in the Southern Myanmar Football Field, Mawlamyine, Mon State. Eight members of the Committee, officials of different government departments including the General Administration Department (GAD), the State Municipal Body, the State Hotel and Tourism Department, and the State Sports Department had a meeting with the representatives of the Southern Myanmar F.C. During the meeting, the committee members asked stages of the hotel construction, design and size of the hotel and revenue of the F.C.

(Ref: www.monhluttaw.com)



Mon Chief Minister Will Hold Four Public Meetings a Year

10th May 2017

The Mon State Chief Minister, Dr. Aye Zan, announced on 7th May that he would hold four public meetings every year to get input and build cooperation with voters in the State. He made the announcement at the first such meeting he has held, which focused on corruption and the illegal sale of public land. The meetings will be held in the Mon State capital, Mawlamyine.

"This is the first time I've had the chance to meet with the public in Mawlamyine, and I plan to do it four times a year to build consensus with the public," he said.

He added the public must be a part of the decision-making process for Mawlamyine and Mon State to be developed.

"We would like to meet him, but I think he needs to be very deliberate about the meetings; what information does he want to share and what does he want to learn. Often at these meetings politicians just talk and don't listen, so I want to know, will he be willing to listen?" said U Maung Maung Zaw Tun, a businessman from Mawlamyine.

U Maung Maung Zaw Htun added that if the Minister wants the state to be developed, he should come up with a theme and invite all the stakeholders. If there are extensive discussions with the stake-

holders, the meetings will yield benefits.

Dr. Aye Zan announced the upcoming meetings during a public gathering on May 7th at the State Hall in Mawlamyine. He has also held meetings in Chaungzon, Kyaikmaraw and Thanbyzayat townships.

This is not the first time that the chief minister made promises of transparency. Shortly after his appointment in early March, the Chief Minister promised to hold weekly press conferences to keep the media informed of his work. So far though, no such press conferences have been held.

(Ref: Mon News Agency <http://burmese.bnionline.net/>)

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Approximately 370 GAD Staff Transferred to State/Region Parliament Offices

13th May 2017

Three hundred and seventy-two staff of the General Administration Department (GAD) have been transferred to the State/Region Parliament Offices, it was announced by the Pyidaungsu Hluttaw Office in accordance with the Union Government.

According to the notification by the Pyidaungsu Hluttaw Office, the staff have been transferred according to their original ranks with the same salaries.

The transfer was carried out after

taking into the staff’s will into account as the parliaments need to be independent, according to an officer of the GAD.

Since some GAD staff who were already working at the parliament offices are now permanently transferred to the hluttaw offices, some political analysts and MPs commented that the capacity will improve.

“Pyithu, Amyotha, and Pyidaungsu Hluttaws have their own staff. In the previous term, often State/Region Parliaments Office staff were transferred after they had learned procedures at the parliaments. And the

newly arrived staff had to learn everything again. From now on, the parliaments can perform better,” said U Soe Thura Tun, a Pyithu Hluttaw MP (Kungyangon Constituency).

“A parliament will be more competent if run by its own staff. To me, the GAD staff at hluttaws were really good. However, loyalty might be questionable since their mother department was not hluttaw, but the GAD,” said U Ye Myo Hein of Tagaung Institute of Political Studies.

(Ref: 7daydaily - <http://www.7daydaily.com/story/95996>)

Photo News



A meeting of “the Kachin State Municipal Law Amendment draft” was held on 5th May, and the State Hluttaw Bill Committee members and government department officials attended the meeting.

(Ref: U Kyaw Kyaw Tun’s Facebook Page)

Short News

■ On 3rd May, the Second Kayah State Hluttaw held an emergency session (1/2017), during which two new members were added to the Complaint Letters Review Committee.

(Ref: Kayah State Hluttaw Facebook Page)

■ Bago lawmaker U Zaw Lin Htike (Thegon Constituency 2) attended “the Action Plan for National Education Strategic Plan” at the Pyay University on 11th May, which was presented by the Professor and the Associate Professors from three universities in Pray.

(Ref: Bago Region Hluttaw Facebook Page)