



NA ends final session with approval of national plans

The National Assembly (NA) has closed its final ordinary session after a five year term that saw the legislative body act in the public interest and for the benefit of the state.

The session, which ran from December 8 to 26, approved the amendment of the national constitution, or Constitution 2015, which was promulgated by President Choummaly Sayasone on December 15.



Ms Pany Yathotou delivers her closing remarks at the final session of the NA's Seventh Legislature.

The amended constitution states that the National Assembly is the highest state power, apart from the two other state powers - the executive and judicial bodies.

In her closing remarks, NA President Ms Pany Yathotou said the Assembly's approval of the constitution created a master law that would facilitate the continued development and improvement of state powers at every level.

"The constitution more clearly defines the position, mission, role, rights and obligations of each state body and government agency, and outlines methods for their coordination and mutual oversight. This will provide for a stronger right of public ownership in the process of creating a people's democratic state," she said.

The session also approved newly created laws - the Law on Provincial People's Assembly, Law on Anti-human Trafficking, Law on National Defence, and the Law on Civil Servants and Government Employees.

Amendments were made to existing laws - the Law on National Assembly, Law on Election of National Assembly and Provincial People's Assembly, Law on

Government, Law on Local Administration, Law on Taxation, Law on Government Investment, and the Law on State Budget.

The session urged the National Assembly, government, Office of Supreme People's Prosecutor, Supreme People's Court, State Audit Organisation (SAO), and local administrations to implement and enforce the constitution and related laws in accordance with their responsibility.

The final session also approved a report on the legislature's activities over the past five year term, and sounded out Assembly members' opinions on the draft of a National Assembly vision from now until 2030, a strategy for NA development over the next 10 years, and the NA's plan for the coming five years.

The National Assembly approved the audit of a final report on the implementation of the state budget for 2013-2014, and the implementation of NA Resolution No. 3 dated July 15, 2014, on addressing financial violations on the part of some budget sectors.

The report showed such violations had not decreased and the session asked the government to guide ministries and equivalent bodies at central and local levels, other budgetary units and state enterprises that had been audited to assume more responsibility for their deficiencies in line with SAO instructions, and to more strictly comply with the law.

The session also approved a report on the pilot development programme rolled out under the Sam Sang (Three Builds) directive, and praised government efforts to guide the initiative in 109 target villages in 52 districts.

The closing session initiated discussions on the vision for 2030 and the strategy on socio-economic development for the next 10 years, as well as the Eighth National Socio-Economic Development Plan and State Budget Plan for the next five years.

Reports on the Lao Satellite Project and Laos-China Railway Project were delivered at the session.

The Ministry of Industry and Commerce, Ministry of Information, Culture and Tourism, Ministry of Public Security, and the Bank of the Lao PDR reported on their work to address various public concerns. These included the protection of domestic production when Laos joins the Asean Economic Community, management of entertainment venues, crime, drugs, racketeering, and the lowering of the interest rate.

Finally, the closing session of the current legislature heard a plan on preparations for the election of the NA's Eighth Legislature and the formation of provincial people's assemblies.

The session called on all ministries, ministry-equivalent bodies, and local administrations at all levels to do their utmost to ensure the election was a success.

By Somxay Sengdara
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Vientiane Times Phonpao Village, Unit 32, Sisattanak District, P.O.Box: 5723 Vientiane, Lao PDR

Tel: (856-21) 336042, 336048, Fax: (856-21) 336041

Email: editor@vientianetimes.la

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