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President: Increase the fight against drug abuse



President U Win Myint inspects pamphlets yesterday at the ceremony to mark the International Day against Drug Abuse and Illicit Trafficking in Nay Pyi Taw. **PHOTO: MNA**

SPEAKING at the ceremony marking International Day against Drug Abuse and Illicit Trafficking in Nay Pyi Taw's Myanmar International Convention Centre-II yesterday morning, President U Win Myint emphasised increasing the momentum in the fight against drug abuse.

The President spoke about Myanmar's anti-drug operations, awareness-raising campaigns on the dangers of drug abuse and use of psychotropic drugs, the rehabilitation programmes and detoxification of drug users, conducting development programmes in states and

regions with drug plantations, future plans against drug abuse that are in line with his New Year speech, international cooperation, and safe ways to provide information on drug-related cases.

(The full text of the President's speech is on Page 6)

Afterwards, Vice President U Myint Swe conferred awards to the first prize winners in the short novel, article composition, and song competitions.

Next, a video was played showing the operations of the Central Body for the Prevention of the Danger of Narcotic

Drugs and Psychotropic Substances.

The President then toured the exhibits on display from the Central Body.

In 2017, authorities handled 9,554 drug cases, apprehended 14,000 individuals, and seized 1,256.1686 kg of opium, 570.6222 kg of heroin, 72,815,686 psychotropic tablets, 198.826 kg of cannabis, 450 kg of cocaine, 146.351 kg of crystal methamphetamine, 5,885 kg of dried caffeine, 3,901,000 tablets of pseudoephedrine, 1,107.4914 kg of the drug ICE, and 106.8826 kg of crushed powder.

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State Counsellor receives NDI's President



State Counsellor Daw Aung San Suu Kyi welcomes Mr. Kenneth Wollack, President of the U.S.-based National Democratic Institute, in Nay Pyi Taw yesterday. **PHOTO: MNA**

Daw Aung San Suu Kyi, State Counsellor and Union Minister for Foreign Affairs, received Mr. Kenneth Wollack, President of the National Demo-

cratic Institute (NDI), at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in Nay Pyi Taw at 10 am yesterday.

During the meeting, they cordially discussed

matters related to NDI's capacity building programmes and the importance of the rule of law.—Myanmar News Agency ■

Wide range of issues discussed for Union Peace Conference-21st Century Panglong

To prepare for the third session of the Union Peace Conference-21st Century Panglong, work committees held meetings yesterday in Nay Pyi Taw in the political, economic, social, and environmental sectors and also on security and farmland.

The meeting of the Political Sector Work Committee focused on protection of

rights of the ethnic minorities, democratic rights, basic human rights and equal rights for men and women. The Economy Sector Work Committee discussed an economic system and financial issues of the federal system, regional development works, basic principles for economy of a federal system and market-oriented systems. **SEE PAGE-2**

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Drugs destroyed in Yangon on Int'l Day against Drug Abuse and Illicit Trafficking

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Pyithu Hluttaw Speaker U T Khun Myat meets with President of National Democratic Institute (NDI) Mr. Kenneth Wollack in Nay Pyi Taw yesterday. **PHOTO: MNA**

Pyithu Hluttaw Speaker U T Khun Myat receives President of NDI

PYITHU Hluttaw Speaker U T Khun Myat received President of National Democratic Institute (NDI) Mr. Kenneth Wollack at the Pyithu Hluttaw Hall, Pyithu Hluttaw Building, in Nay Pyi Taw yesterday afternoon.

During the meeting, they discussed matters related to Myanmar's democratic transition, assistance for the Hluttaw process to strengthen and pass legislation, as well as capacity building for the Hluttaw repre-

sentatives and officials.

Pyithu Hluttaw Deputy Speaker U Tun Tun Hein and officials from the Pyithu Hluttaw office also attended the meeting. —Myanmar News Agency ■

Union Minister U Soe Win separately receives US Ambassador, country director of ADB

Union Minister for Planning and Finance U Soe Win received US Ambassador to Myanmar Mr. Scot Alan Marciel and delegation at 1 p.m. and later Country

Director of Asian Development Bank (ADB) Mr. Newin Sinsiri at 2 p.m. at Office No. 26 in Nay Pyi Taw yesterday.

During the meetings, they

discussed matters related to Myanmar-US bilateral economic cooperation and assistance of the ADB to Myanmar. —Myanmar News Agency ■

Amyotha Hluttaw Speaker Mahn Win Khaing Than visits Beijing

A DELEGATION led by Amyotha Hluttaw Speaker Mahn Win Khaing Than arrived in Beijing, People's Republic of China, yesterday morning.

The Amyotha Hluttaw Speaker and delegation were welcomed by member of National People's Congress of the People's Republic of China Mr. Dan Zhu Ang Ben and officials, Myanmar Ambassador to China U Thit Lin Ohn and officials from the Myanmar Embassy at Beijing International Airport.

The Amyotha Hluttaw Speaker and delegation then visited Creation of a small town in Zhongguancun, Beijing, where officials explained to them matters related to a new project creation and organic cultivation. Later, they visited

Huawei showroom in which officials from the Huawei company explained matters related to assistance in information and communication technology for rural and urban development in the short period, as well as support for communications and electricity generation. They then visited the Great Wall of China in Beijing.

At 6.30 p.m., the Amyotha Hluttaw Speaker met Vice Chairperson of the Chinese People's Political Consultative Conference (CPPCC) Mr. Wang Zhengwei at the Kyaukyuhtai Guesthouse.

The vice chairperson of CPPCC then hosted a dinner in honour of the Amyotha Hluttaw Speaker and delegation. — Myanmar News Agency ■



Amyotha Hluttaw Speaker Mahn Win Khaing Than meets with Vice Chairperson of the Chinese People's Political Consultative Conference (CPPCC) Mr. Wang Zhengwei in Beijing yesterday. **PHOTO: MNA**

Wide range of issues discussed for Union Peace Conference-21st Century Panglong

FROM PAGE-1

The participants of the Social Sector Work Committee discussed women, education, health care accessible by all, ethnic languages, literature, traditional culture and customs, national and cultural heritage, youth affairs, and consideration of social cohesion into the socio-economic development of ethnic people.

During the meeting of the Security Sector Work Committee, the participants discussed matters on establishing a standard army of world nations and security matters.

The Farmland and Environment Sector Work Committee discussed the definition of farmland, rights for ownership, land management, arrangements for protection and sustainability of the environment.



Members of the Union Peace Dialogue Joint Committee discussing the social sector. **PHOTO: MNA**

The meetings were attended by members of the Secretariat of the Union Peace Dialogue Joint Committee Lt-Gen (Ret) U Khin Zaw Oo, U Aung Soe, Maj-Gen Soe Naing Oo, U Zaw Htay, U Hla Maung Shwe, Pado Saw Tar Do Hmu, U Myo Win, U Sai Ngin,

Saw Mra Yazar Lin, Khun Myint Tun, U Myint Soe, U Naing Ngan Lin, Sai Kyaw Nyunt, Min Kyaw Zeyar Oo and Tar Hla Pe, members of the joint committee, representatives of the government, the Hluttaw and the Tatmadaw, representatives of ethnic organ-

izations and peace makers.

"Our discussion is at the stage of building understanding. The third session of the Union Peace Conference—21st Century Panglong will be held from 11 to 15 July. We resume the discussion about the security sector, which

had nearly stalled, as we were encouraged by political parties. We take pride in holding this discussion," said Tar Hla Pe.

Regarding the meeting on the political sector, Dr. Salai Lian Hmung Sakhong said they discussed facts to be submitted to the upcoming Union Peace Conference-21st Century Panglong.

"We have a plan to submit a compilation of points we had not agreed upon at the conference in May, 2017. We are also working to submit papers of the organizations which have not yet held political dialogues, though they have signed NCA (nationwide ceasefire agreement)," said Dr. Salai Lian Hmung Sakhong.

The meetings of the committees will be held until 28 June.—MM, Hmwe Kyu Zin (Myanmar News Agency) ■

President pledges to return confiscated farmland to farmers

Farmers should have their farmland returned to them or given proper compensation for land that cannot be returned, President U Win Myint said yesterday in his speech at the Ministry of Home Affairs in Nay Pyi Taw.

The President made the remark in his address to those attending the 6th meeting of the Central Committee for Reviewing Confiscated Farmlands and Other Lands.

Present at the meeting were the committee's chairman, Vice President U Henry Van Thio, Union Ministers Lt-Gen Kyaw Swe, Lt-Gen Sein Win, Dr. Aung Thu, U Khin Maung Cho, U Han Zaw, Union Attorney General U Tun Tun Oo, Nay Pyi Taw Council Chairperson Dr. Myo Aung, Chief Ministers from all fourteen states and regions, deputy ministers, permanent secretaries, department heads, and other officials.

The President said confiscated land must be swiftly returned to their rightful owners and squatters must be dealt with in accordance with the law. He called on the central committee, Nay Pyi Taw Council Chairperson and chief ministers to properly review confiscated land for the good of the nation and the public and follow legal procedures without delay.

(The President's full speech is displayed on page 10 in a separate article)

Next, central committee chairman Vice President U Henry Van Thio addressed the attendants, saying that a copy of the central committee's policies and 52 agenda items have been



President U Win Myint delivers speech at the meeting of Central Committee for Reviewing Confiscated Farmlands and Other Lands in Nay Pyi Taw yesterday. **PHOTO: MYANMAR NEWS AGENCY**

sent to similar committees in Nay Pyi Taw and states and regions. He said committee chairs should ensure proper reviews are made on the ground and to form subcommittees accordingly.

Afterwards, officials from Confiscated Land Review Groups (1), (2), (3), and (4) explained the field inspections conducted in states and regions and the completed and ongoing processes related to them. They also gave presentations about confiscated farmland returned and compensation given, response to appeals for compensation, and other field procedures.

This was followed by the central committee's joint secretary and the state and region

chief ministers explaining their processes, operations, and progress regarding confiscated land in their administrative areas.

Next, union ministers and the Union Attorney General, who

are all members of the central committee, presented and discussed their respective ministry's available support and the issues they were facing.

The Vice President then re-

plied to the presentations and explanations, gave guidance and instructions where necessary, and then concluded the meeting with a closing speech.—Myanmar News Agency ■

President: Increase the fight against drug abuse

FROM PAGE-1

Authorities conducted drug plantation cleansing operations between 1 October 2016 to 30 April 2017 and have destroyed 97.50 hectares in northern Shan State, 3,023.54 hectares in southern Shan State, 264.34 hectares in eastern Shan State, 28 hectares in Kachin State, 47.20 hectares in Kayah State, 28.03 in Chin State, and

47.13 hectares in Magway Region; a total of 3,535.74 hectares.

Among the attendees at yesterday's ceremony were Vice President U Myint Swe, Amyotha Hluttaw Deputy Speaker U Aye Thar Aung, union ministers, the Union Attorney General, the Nay Pyi Taw Council chairperson, Chief Ministers from States and Regions, deputy ministers, Hlut-

taw MPs, permanent secretaries, ambassadors and military attachés, representatives from UN organisations, NGOs and INGOs, members of the Central Body for the Prevention of the Danger of Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances and working groups on drugs, humanitarian groups, contest winners, and other officials.—MNA ■

Union Minister for International Cooperation U Kyaw Tin receives Mr. Giuseppe de Vincentiis, UNHCR Resident Representative

Union Minister for International Cooperation U Kyaw Tin received Mr. Giuseppe de Vincentiis, Resident Representative to UNHCR Myanmar, on 26 June 2018 at 14:00 hours at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Nay Pyi Taw.

During the meeting, they discussed matters related to the forthcoming visit to Myanmar of Mr. Indrik Ratwatte, Director of the Regional Bureau for Asia

and the Pacific of UNHCR, early implementation of the tripartite MoU signed between the Government of Myanmar, UNHCR and UNDP, steps to be taken for coordination and cooperation in repatriation and resettlement of displaced persons, and initiating pilot projects that can contribute to confidence building between the communities in Rakhine State.—Myanmar News Agency ■



Union Minister U Kyaw Tin meets with UNHCR Resident Representative Mr. Giuseppe de Vincentiis in Nay Pyi Taw yesterday. **PHOTO: MYANMAR NEWS AGENCY**

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ACTING CHIEF EDITORAye Min Soe,
dce@globalnewlightofmyanmar.com**EXPATRIATE CONSULTANT EDITOR**Mark Angeles,
markrangeles@gmail.com**SENIOR EDITORIAL CONSULTANT**

Kyaw Myaing

SENIOR TRANSLATORSZaw Min,
zawmin.gnlm@gmail.com
Win Ko Ko Aung,
kowink2aung@gmail.com**INTERNATIONAL NEWS EDITOR**Ye Htut Tin,
editor1@globalnewlightofmyanmar.com**LOCAL NEWS EDITORS**Tun Tun Naing (Editor),
intlnews@globalnewlightofmyanmar.com
Nwe Nwe Tun (Sub-editor),
nwenwe9131@gmail.com**TRANSLATORS**Khaing Thanda Lwin,
Hay Mar Tin Win,
Ei Myat Mon
Zaw Htet Oo
Kyaw Zin Lin
Kyaw Zin Tun**REPORTER**May Thet Hnin,
reporter1@globalnewlightofmyanmar.com
mayreporter.mm@gmail.com**PHOTOGRAPHER**

Kyaw Zeya Win @ Phoe Khwar

COMPUTER TEAMTun Zaw ,
Thein Ngwe, Zaw Zaw Aung,
Ye Naing Soe, Nyi Zaw Moe,
Hnin Pwint, Kay Khaing Win,
Sanda Hnin**EDITORIAL SECTION**(+95) (01) 8604529,
Fax — (+95) (01) 8604305**CIRCULATION & DISTRIBUTION**San Lwin, (+95) (01) 8604532,
Hotline - 09 974424114**ADVERTISING & MARKETING**(+95) (01) 8604530,
Hotline - 09 974424848
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Ayeyawady river water level falls from over 1,000cm at Mandalay harbour

By Khine Set Wei

The level of the Ayeyawady River at Mandalay harbour has declined slightly after a rapid rise during the monsoon, according to the Department of Meteorology and Hydrology.

The water level reached 1,034cm on 24 June. On the morning of 26 June, the level was at 992cm, down 42cm compared to 24 June.

"The river level has declined again. The upper Ayeyawady river water level did not increase significantly. There is rain in upper Myanmar; therefore, there is much water in lower Myanmar. The river water level rose in July and August last year," said U Kyaw Lwin Oo, director of Department of Meteorology and Hydrology (Upper Myanmar).

According to the water level record, the water level reached 643cm on 13 June, and down from 674cm on 3 June. The water level then recorded a slight increase at an average 20cm per day, beginning from 14 June. After 25 June, the water level dropped again.



Workers loading commodity bags at Mandalay harbour as the Ayeyawady River's water level is increasing recently. **PHOTO: KHINE SET WEI**

"The increase in the river water level was triggered by rainfall in upper Myanmar. The Meteorology and Hydrology Department forecast at that time said there would be less rainfall. Therefore, the river level is expected to not rise suddenly, as

of June. The Meteorology and Hydrology Department will issue a detailed weather forecast on 28 June, he added.

The total rainfall this week in Myanmar is 8.74 inches in Putao and 10.79 inches in Myitkyina. The river level has

increased owing to the heavy rainfall in upper Myanmar. The water level reached a dangerous level on 19 August 2017 at 4 p.m. On 1 August 2016, the water level reached a record high of 1,325cm, which exceeded the point of danger. ■

Gov't should reduce tax rate to promote tax system

By Nyein Nyein

THE government should give priority in promoting the tax system and increasing the number of taxpayers by reducing the tax rate, said U Ye Min Aung, vice chairman of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar Federation of Chambers of Commerce and Industry (UMFCCI).

"There are many things that need to be done regard-

ing the tax issue. We must give priority to encourage those evading tax to pay up. In other countries, the government reduces the tax rate to increase the taxpayers' population. It is not popular with businessmen or the public when the government increases the tax rate. Other countries look out for ways to increase the number of taxpayers. Therefore, our country should also follow suit," said

U Ye Min Aung.

After hearing the businessmen's complaints about taxes, the UMFCCI has formed a special team, which will submit a report to the government.

"Businessmen always share their difficulties. Most of them are related to taxes. Owing to taxes, some businessmen are facing the shutdown of their businesses," he added.

The UMFCCI has collected

the Myanmar Business Sentiment Survey 2018 in May to find out the current situation of local businesses. The survey showed that local businesses reported a steady decline in 2018, compared to the data for 2016. Business confidence has also dropped for the coming 12 months against the previous year. Entrepreneurs are losing confidence in their businesses owing to high taxation. ■

Thandaunggyi Women Group cultivates Arabica coffee

THE Thandaunggyi Women Group has begun to cultivate Arabica coffee on their farmland since 26 June.

The group planted the coffee with the aim of improving the lifestyle of women from Thandaunggyi township, Kayin State, as well as to sustain their women's group.

To be able to cultivate systematically, Saw Eh Mu Kappaw, an assistant officer from the township Agricultural De-

partment, demonstrated how to plant using the contour and the terrace systems.

"Currently, we have cultivated only Arabica coffee. We are planning to grow Arabica coffee in Thandaunggyi to become role model coffee cultivators. We have planned to raise 3,000 coffee plants this year. This project is being implemented jointly with the local cultivators. When we get profits, we will share with them," said



Thandaunggyi Women Group cultivating Arabica coffee on farmland. **PHOTO: TOWNSHIP IPRD**

Daw Mar Mar Cho, the person in charge of the Thandaunggyi Women Group. The launching of the coffee plantation was attend-

ed by officials from other invited departments and members from the Thandaunggyi Women Group.—Township IPRD ■



Farm worker sorts potatoes during harvest. PHOTO: MMAL

Authorities to control illegal potato imports from China

Authorities in Shan State will control the entry of illegal potatoes from China via the border trade areas, according to the Shan State government.

“Recently, the state government has been making efforts to cultivate good-quality potatoes and provide loans to local farmers to purchase agricultural machines through the installation system. Also, the state government will control the sale of illegal potatoes that are entering via the border trade areas,” said U Soe Nyunt Lwin, Shan State Minister for Planning and Economy.

The Shan State government met the Heho potato cultivation group on 25 May. At the meeting, the potato cultivators requested

the control of illegal potatoes that were entering from China. The Shan State agricultural department also requested to check the agricultural land quality.

The agricultural department is planning to take legal action against those selling low quality fake fertilisers and pesticides in Shan State, after an inspection in cooperation with the consumer affairs department.

Potatoes are cultivated in Taunggyi, Kalaw, Pinlaung, Pindaya, Ywangan, Nyaungshwe, Pekhonn, Hsihseng, Hopong, Yaksauk, Naungtayar, Loilem, Laikha, Nansang, Kunhing, Kyethi, Mawmai, Mong Hsu, Langkho, Mongnai and Mongpan in southern Shan State.—Zar Lin Thu (AMIA) ■

MIC attempting to speed up processing time of investments

By May Thet Hnin

THE Myanmar Investment Commission (MIC) is making efforts to speed up its processes, said U Aung Naing Oo, Secretary of the MIC.

Once accepted, the MIC reviews an investment proposal, reaches a decision within 60 days and issues a permit within 10 working days.

If accepted, the MIC reviews the application from enterprises to be endorsed and decides whether to approve or reject it within 30 days. The issue of endorsement is done within 10 working days.

Under the guidance of the MIC’s new Chairman U Thaung Tun, investment proposals will be reviewed and approved or rejected at the earliest, said U Aung Naing Oo.

“The new chairman urged the MIC to adopt a fast-track procedure, although the processing time is set for 60 days

for a permit and 30 days for an endorsement. Also, permits or endorsements will be granted as soon as possible, despite the stipulated 10 working days,” he maintained.

Additionally, the monthly MIC meeting will now occur twice a month. MIC will shorten the processing time and cut the unnecessary procedures that might cause delays.

Investors have to submit a proposal to the MIC, which will verify and approve it, and then the MIC will submit it to the ministries concerned to seek their approval. However, some investment proposals approved by the MIC are delayed by the respective ministries for certain reasons. To tackle this delay, the MIC is preparing standard operating procedures, which will set the exact period for the related ministries to issue permits for businesses already approved by it.

Besides this, the MIC will

release notifications, announcements and procedures by the second week of July for the Myanmar Companies Law, which will take effect on 1 August.

Although the MIC intended to receive US\$3 billion worth of foreign direct investments (FDI) within the six-month period (April to September 2018), only \$534.77 million worth of FDI was brought into the country as of June. The MIC is facing difficulties to reach the target in the coming three months. However, the target could still be met if heavy investments delayed by some ministries are approved.

“Foreign investors do not lose interest in investments, but there are some limitations,” U Aung Naing Oo noted.

The MIC has plans to promote the flow of foreign investments into the necessary prioritised sectors by cooperating with international commercial attachés. ■

Registered companies need to re-register within 6 months from 1 August: MIC

By May Thet Hnin

All companies are required to re-register within six months from 1 August, when the Myanmar Companies Law comes into effect, said U Aung Naing Oo, Secretary of the Myanmar Investment Commission (MIC).

“The re-registration will allow the companies to enjoy benefits and opportunities under the new Myanmar Companies Law,” he said.

The new Myanmar Companies Law has abolished the mandated system of submitting an authorised capital. Also, the requirements to establish a company, such as the Article of Association and the Memorandum of Association, have been removed. Besides companies are encouraged to re-register as they will be able to enjoy benefits through re-registration.

The Myanmar Companies Online (MyCO) registry system will also commence its services

on 1 August 2018, the same day the new Myanmar Companies Law takes effect. All registered companies and other entities under the Myanmar Companies Act 1914 and the Special Company Act 1950 will be required to re-register on the MyCO registry from 1 August 2018 to 31 January 2019, during the six-month re-registration period. The re-registration can be completed electronically online or in person at the offices of the Directorate of Investment and Company Administration, using the prescribed forms for re-registration, according to an MIC announcement.

Re-registration will ensure the company’s registration number and its tax identification number, issued by the Internal Revenue Department, are the same.

The MIC will accept registration fees online or via mobile. Besides re-registration, the reduction or increase in the

amount of share capital and a company’s name change can be done online. There will be a notification two months in advance for the submission of the annual report.

“It will take only 15 minutes to fill out the prescribed forms and any method can be used for the re-registration. If there are difficulties, they can request us to help with the registration process at the office, although they need to pay some service charges,” said U Aung Naing Oo.

The MIC will release the required notifications, rules and regulations by the second week of July, before the Myanmar Companies Law comes into effect.

The MIC was reshuffled on 16 June, with U Thaung Tun, Union Minister for Office of the Union Government, appointed as the new chair. He directed the speed up process of the MIC. ■

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It is required to enhance our efforts in the drug countering matters as the national priority

International Day against Drug Abuse and Illicit Trafficking was observed at the Myanmar International Convention Centre-II in Nay Pyi Taw yesterday with address by President U Win Myint. Following is the full-text of the address delivered by President U Win Myint.

Good Morning, Vice President, Union Ministers, Attorney General, Chief Ministers, Deputy Ministers, Parliamentarians, Ambassadors and Military Attaché, Representatives of UN entities and INGOs, Members of CCDAC, Social Organizations, Distinguished Guests, Ladies and Gentlemen,

Today, on behalf of the Government of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar, I would like to express my warmly welcome to you all, "Min Galar Par".

Today ceremony is the International Day against Drug Abuse and Illicit Trafficking, 31st time we have held this event since the UNGASS endorsed June 26 as the International Day against Drug Abuse and Illicit Trafficking in 1987. Similar events are also being held in other part of the world.

Distinguished Guests, Ladies and Gentlemen,

Today in the world, all governments are tackling the drug problem by various approaches based on different background history, culture, country growth and resources they owned, and the location and geographical situation.

However, the problem is significantly complicated with degrading of public health, social and basic economy including emergence of new psychoactive substances, likewise, the stability and rule of law have being undermined by transnational organized crimes and terrorist activities as the consequences of drug related issues.

2017 World Drug Report highlighted, more than 190,000 people were premature deaths from drug and drug related blood borne deceases prevalence such as HIV, hepatitis B and C and tuberculosis are also rising as the terrible impact of drug use.

Organized crime groups continue to use drug business as their primary source of funding and use more advanced technology. In term of new modus operandi committed by the groups, much more need to be done to use technology-led investigation and to intensify synchronized coordination among government

tal departments.

Distinguished Guests, Ladies and Gentlemen,

Myanmar is located between two largest chemical mass production countries as well as, shared border with the countries where the international drug market existed.

Myanmar is the country with the political background that has limited access to make sure fully effective law enforcement and rule of law interventions yet at the border and the areas controlled by insurgent groups due to the current political situation.

As I mentioned above, we are facing drug problems that is more relatively associated the geographical and political situations. The remote and under developed regions of Myanmar suffers from illicit opium cultivation, heroin and methamphetamine production and drug use problem.

In order to tackle drug problems, the successive governments made efforts against drug problems. Myanmar had signed three international drug control conventions, the drug laws also had been promulgated and the drug control authority established in compliance with the international conventions and the drug control projects have been implemented in various area of drug control.

There were 6 times of reform in Central Committee for Drug Abuse Control that was formed since 1976 and currently, the organization has been adapted by 16 committee members. Then ten working committees and Region and State committees, district, township, ward and village level committees have been restructured and upgraded their duty and function.

In regard to secure the life of opium farmers, to improve the livelihood of indigenous people lived in hilly region and to rehabilitate the people who use drug, we laid down the two strategies and three tactics and based on it, drug eradication programme has being carried out by 4 phases, basically divided by five years for



President U Win Myint delivers the address at the ceremony to mark the International Day against Drug Abuse and Illicit Trafficking **PHOTO: MNA**

one phase that will complete in .coming year 2019.

Therefore, recently government has adopted new drug control policy which is complied with the outcome document of 2016 United Nations General Assembly of Special Session on World Drug Problem in order to continue sustainable efforts on drug control interventions.

The new drug policy encompasses all aspects including supply reduction and alternative development aiming to reduction of opium cultivation and drug production; demand reduction and harm reduction to reduce the drug use; international co-operation; improving research and analysis sectors and finally respect to human rights; and the policy prioritizes focus towards the development of livelihood of all citizens by means of reducing level of drug problem.

Similarly, Government also reviewed the 1993 Drug Law and adopted the revised law in February 2018.

Distinguished Guests, Ladies and Gentlemen,

According to the 2017 UNODC report on opium poppy cultivation survey, the cultivation has been decreasing to 25% and production also was going down

to 14%, compared to the previous year.

In light of law enforcement endeavor to reduce the drug production and trafficking, the former Drug Elimination Department was streamlined to the Drug Enforcement Division (DED) in 2013. DED has launched 22 drug enforcement operations since the beginning of its tenure from 2013 to June 2018.

13640 drug cases have been detected by DED during the 2017 and up to May 2018 and seized drug and precursor chemicals is worth about 520000 millions kyats, has been disposed on fire in 2017.

The government makes effort in the rural development and to enhance livelihood of indigenous people under the national poverty alleviation programme in order to develop of opium poppy cultivation areas. Likewise, the Ministry of Border Affairs has been implementing rural development activities such as providing transportation infrastructure, health, education, land access, water resource and energy, and establishing television transmitting stations and religious infrastructure.

Likewise, the relevant ministries have been providing assistance to local farmers to estab-

lish the livestock and agriculture farms that would be adopted with local situation.

Furthermore, in cooperation with the UNODC, the project on alternative development and establishment of communal forest had provided to local community in the agricultural land use, establishment of coffee farmer cooperatives and forest management, teak plantation at the Loilin and Ho Pone townships.

In order to prevent the diversion of precursor chemicals into illicit drug production, the Ministry of Home Affairs formed the Supervisory Committee for Controlled Precursor Chemical under the CCDAC to supervise and monitor the storage, transportation, sale and distribution of precursor chemicals imported from other countries under existing rules and regulations.

Distinguished Guests, Ladies and Gentlemen,

Noting that mental and physical trauma can contribute to higher drug use, the Ministry of Health and Sport established 26 major drug treatment centers and 47 minor drug treatment centers throughout the country to enable systematic treatment for the drug use. In addition, 51 methadone centers have been established in targeted high risk townships under the Methadone Maintenance Therapy Program.

Apart from the center based treatment; it has been carrying out community based treatment and also undertaking one stop service programs to access all services in one place.

Furthermore, harm reduction programs have been complemented in cooperation with UNAIDS, INGOs and NGOs in order to reduce prevalence of HIV, Hepatitis B, C and blood borne diseases which came out as a consequence of injecting drug use.

The trainings for health care service providers have been conducted to improve capacity of treatment staffs, and at the same time, staffs are being dispatched to international seminars to exchange the best practices and lessons learned.

In relation to drug rehabilitation, mental and physical rehabilitation, vocational training and after care services have been provided to the patients after detoxification.

The Ministry of Social Welfare, Rescue and Resettlement has established 12 Rehabilitation Centers as the Centre based Rehabilitation, and provides vocational trainings and other rehab program in order to reintegrate into their community.

After reintegration into the community, CoC services are being delivered by the voluntary drug supervising associations in order to prevent relapse.

Preventive education is an effective way to reduce illicit drug use. Thus, knowledge on the dangers of drugs must be provided to students at the beginning of an early age. Accordingly, the Government utilizes both direct and indirect education programs, including delivery of crime mobile education by Myanmar Police Force to villages and wards, distribution of posters and banners, conducting exhibitions and competitions, provision of danger of drug curriculums in high school education, and training for teachers conducted by the Ministry of Education.

In order for the general public and students to gain more awareness on the dangers of illicit drugs, the Ministry of Information has created mobile libraries. In addition, Myanmar Radio and Television has been broadcasting television series, songs and public service announcements

on illicit drugs in English, Myanmar and other ethnic languages. Moreover, the general public and the youth are informed through educational material in printed media, including special articles, educational stories and comic strips.

In regard to the international cooperation, the government signed bilateral agreements with the countries in the region, Mekong Sub-region and BIMST-EC member countries to fight against of drug problem and also working with UN agencies including the international organizations.

Distinguished Guests, Ladies and Gentlemen,

As the drug problem ruins the human sectors concerned with health, social, development and peace and security, our ap-

proaches to tackle this problem should be synchronized with multi-sectorial aspects in balance and integrated manner.

It was found that the prevalence of drug use among the youth is being upward significantly; this is a matter about youth that drug reins the life of youth, who will be handed over our duties in the future. I would to inform you that it is required to enhance our efforts in the drug countering matters as the national priority.

I also encourage to Central Committee for Drug Abuse Control to strengthen the efforts in this field against drug.

In regard to drug users, we need to focus on the treatment, rehabilitation and reintegration programs; likewise, improving the quality and accessibility of treatment services is required

In light of suppression of drug trafficking, we also need to stress to take legal action with effective sentences to whom committed the drug related crimes including cultivation, production, distribution, corruption and money laundry.

Future tasks for fighting drug abuse and illicit trafficking

1. Improving cooperation with neighboring and international countries.
2. Cooperating with Ministry of Education, Ministry of Information, government agencies, private media agencies, and civil society organizations to disseminate the dangers of drug abuse to the public.
3. Conducting rehabilitation of drug users and reintegration into society by cooperating with philanthropic organizations, civil society organizations, and the public.
4. Creating drug free zones in schools and around youths with State and Region governments cooperating with students, parents, teachers, and civil society organizations.
5. Reviewing progress and operations carried out by regional, state, district, and township-level Drug Suppression Teams and providing support and changes where needed.
6. Performing drug prevention programs, regional development, creating legal economic opportunities in ethnic areas in accordance with the national reconciliation and peace process.
7. Swiftly distributing and announcing the contact information of the "Drug Abuse Reporting Department" for receiving information on drug producers and traffickers, and placing rules and regulations and security standards in place to ensure the safety of informants and preventing unintended disclosure of sensitive information.
8. Creating a swift chain of command for The "Anti-Narcotics Special Forces", formed under the Central Committee, to act on information provided on drug abuse and trafficking.
9. Individuals who provide information on or assist in apprehending drug abuse, production and trafficking cases will receive a reward from the Union Government, which is exempt from tax, and have their confidentiality maintained.

Office of the President Drug Abuse Reporting Department

"Safely report on drug use and abuse"

1. The President's Office has formed the "Drug Abuse Reporting Department" with executive order (187/2018) on 22-6-2018 so that the public may provide information relating to abuse of narcotic drugs and psychotropic substances, without fear of repercussions or threat to personal safety.
2. Anyone with information that can assist in preventing the dangers of narcotic drugs and psychotropic substances can contact the department's telephone, fax or email, shown below, during working hours.

Contact Info

Telephone - 067-590200
Fax - 067-590233
Email - antinarcotics@presidentoffice.gov.mm

to be prioritized.

As one saying that is "Prevention is better than cure", the prevention program should be designed with transferring broader knowledge among the public through the means of education and mobilization. Moreover, importantly, we need to educate the people that all individuals have to share the responsibility in countering the drug menace as national task.

In light of suppression of drug trafficking, we also need to stress to take legal action with effective sentences to whom committed the drug related crimes including cultivation, production, distribution, corruption and money laundry.

At the level of the state and region as well as district and township, I would like to encourage to establish the drug suppression teams comprising with the local authorities, civil society and the locals those interested to participate in drug suppression as deem as necessary.

It would be reduced the size of drug market if awarding system has been established and provided with applicable management toward the people who cooperate with authorities in drug suppression operations, that will be based on the amount of drug seizure and their performance.

It would be essential to comply with the provision of UN conventions and cooperate with UN member countries, international organizations, and regional organizations, local NGOs and public.

The leadership of State and Region Governments is important role when action plans are being implemented subsequent-

ly. The local government should take the leading role and utilize the strength of civil society organizations including people, local community with the balance and integrated manner in the implementation of whole process.

Similarly, as the unique coordination among governmental departments can gain achievement with the effective outcomes in the implementation, I also would like to encourage to form specific coordination mechanism either the ministries at the central level or within the local level.

The last not the least, we need to take into consideration for cooperation with peace groups on how can we work together with them in the drug control program including treatment, rehabilitation, prevention and education and law enforcement at the local level to central level, that is in conformity with the peace process in which included stressing drug control cooperation.

Distinguished Guests, Ladies and Gentlemen,

Finally, I would like to extend my sincere thanks to all of you for your presence here today, and the people from different organizations that have supported us to successfully mark this ceremony, government agencies, and all professionals and judges who assisted in the competitions of short stories, articles, poems, songs, photographs, computer posters, art, comic strips, posters, and computer graphics.

I would like to conclude my speech with the theme of this year for International Day against Drug Abuse and Illicit Trafficking "Listen FIRST" to help children and youth grow healthy and safe. ■

Tackle the drug problem in synchronization with multi-sectorial aspects

Because the drug problems in our country are generally associated with geographical and political situations, the remote and under-developed regions of Myanmar suffer adversely from illicit opium cultivation, heroin and methamphetamine production and the resulting drug use problem.

The prevalence of drug use among youth is increasing significantly. This is a serious matter that concerns the lives of the next generation to whom we will soon hand over the reins that will determine our future.

The drug problem has brought ill effects to health, social development and peace and security of the socio-economy of the people, and this problem should be tackled in synchronization with multi-sectorial aspects in a balanced and integrated manner.

We need to educate the populace knowing very well that all individuals have to share the responsibility in countering the drug menace, as it is a nationwide problem.

To root out the drug problems, we first need to take legal action with effective sentences for those who commit drug-related crimes including cultivation, production, distribution, corruption and money laundering.

With establishment of drug suppression teams in regions and states, local governments should take the lead role in drug suppression operations, with records kept on the amount of drugs seized and their overall performance.

The Central Committee for Drug Abuse Control, utilizing the strength of civil society organizations, individual people and local communities who are involved in a balanced and integrated manner in the implementation of the whole process, plays a critical role in fighting drug abuse and illicit trafficking.

The size of the drug market could be reduced if an award system was established and provided with applicable management authority for people who cooperate with authorities in drug suppression operations. The awards would be based on the amount of the drug seizure and their performance.

It would be essential to comply with the provisions of UN conventions and cooperate with UN member countries, international and regional organizations, local NGOs and the public.

Similarly, as the unique coordination among government departments can gain achievement with the effective outcomes in the implementation, we also would like to encourage the forming of specific coordination mechanisms, either in the ministries at the central level or at the local level.

We also need to take into consideration cooperation with peace groups on how we can work together in drug control programmes including treatment, rehabilitation, prevention, education and enforcement of the laws from the local level to the central level in conformity with the peace process, with emphasis on drug control cooperation.

We need to educate the populace knowing very well that all individuals have to share the responsibility in countering the drug menace, as it is a nationwide problem.

Waso proves that Buddhism is green

By Maha Saddhamma
Jotika Dhaja
Sithu, Dr. Khin Maung
Nyunt

THE world today is vexed by a multitude of problems caused naturally, artificially and a combination of both nature and man. One of the most serious and still unsolved issues is climatic disorder due to human over-use of natural resources and invention and use of nuclear energy regardless of its disastrous consequences. Human's belief that bountiful nature and the world's resources are inexhaustible have now proven wrong. Centuries of human over-use of natural resources without regard for conservation, reservation and maintenance the planet called the earth on which all living creatures have been living so long is now, as though taking revenge on us, is giving us red light that it would disappear unless timely wise action is taken to preserve it. In spite of international cooperation and efforts to take measure for correcting "Climate Disorder", no effective united action has been found or taken. Due to power-politics, trade war and nuclear rivalry, climatic change still remains a hard nut to crack.

Turning to the significance and implications of Myanmar current month Waso, the fourth month of Myanmar Lunar Calendar, corresponding to July, we may safely assert that "Waso" is one way of preserving nature, Earth planet and stabilizing Climatic changes. In other words, "Waso proves that Buddhism is green".

To brief the background history of "Waso" is as follows:

Nayone (June) is the beginning month of Myanmar rainy season (monsoon) and Waso (July) is the month of rain in full swing. All earth depressions and aquatic bodies are brimful with rain water. The entire natural environment comes out but fledged. Trees, plants, creepers, grasses etc. with flowers and fruits with bees and birds around them appear. In aquatic bodies, water lilies especially lotus of different kinds spring up giving food for watery crea-



People seen at Shwedagon Pagoda in Yangon on the Fullmoon Day of Waso in 2017. PHOTO: PHOE KHWAR

ture's fish, turtles and tortoises.

That is the start of Myanmar wet cultivation. Paddy, the staple crop plus other grains are grown in several acres of agricultural lands. The first task is ploughing the soil which makes the farmers busy the whole day.

Myanmar monks both ordained and novices are peripatetic. Though Satupyitsaya (Four basic needs - food, clothing, shelter and medicine) are well provided by the State (King, Government) and the public, monks and novices are bound by the disciplinary rules of Vinaya to go out to receive early morning meal from the public donors and partake it from the alms bowls, give over the left over to the animals, clean the bowls and return to their residing monasteries. They take lunch together at the monastery before noon time.

The rest of the day they devote to learning and meditation.

In their daily round of receiving early morning meal (အာရုံခံစား) peripertite monks and novices inadvertently (unknowingly, accidentally) step upon insects and other creatures coming out. Also they accidentally step on paddy or other crops springing up. Besides when farmers see monks and novices they stop their work to pay homage to them and to donate whatever they have ready such as vegetable and fruits. So unknowingly peripertite monks and novices disturb the busy farmers at work.

That matter was brought to the notice of living Buddha who realized that he must prescribe some rules and regulations to protect nature environment and farmers from inadvertent disturbances by peripertite monks and novices?

The whole growing period of three months Waso (July), Wakhaung (August) and Tawtha-

lin (September) was prescribed as Waso Rain Retreat or Buddhist Lent. During this period, monks and novices take Wa vows "to stay at the residing monasteries not to go out of its precincts and devote themselves to Buddhist studies and practices".

In the assembly hall of the monastery all resident monks and novices gather in front of the sacred altar on which Buddha Statues are placed. By turn, starting with the most senior monks (seniority not in terms of age but in terms of ordained years) takes the Wa vow in the following Pali language "Imasimim Vihare Imam some rules and regulations to protect nature environment and farmers from inadvertent disturbances by peripertite monks and novices?"

The whole growing period of three months Waso (July), Wakhaung (August) and Tawtha-

The meaning is: _

"I shall stay in this monastery during the three months of the rainy season."

For special or urgent reasons monks and novices can take leave of absence formally from the Abbot called "Wa pan" formal request for leave of absence not more than a week, such as to look after the sick aging parents or to attend their funeral etc. Without formal request for leave that monk suffers the punishment of wa kyo (wa broken). His ordained years are lost. Such kind of monk is not entitled to receive Kath-ein robe offered in the month of Tazaungmon (November). But as Myanmar monks and novices strictly adhere to the disciplines of Vinaya, there is hardly any case of wa kyo loss of ordained years.

Myanmar monasteries and precincts are clean and green, devotees always repair to them

on Sabbath days to take moral precepts, to listen to dhamma teaching or to practice meditation instructed, conducted or ministered by monks. They take with them their children or grandchildren to get a good grounding in Buddhist Culture, morals, and character training.

The writer of this article received monastic education in his younger days thanks to his grandmother. The first thing that attracts him to monastery was that he had playmates there who were novices of his age. With them he climbed trees, plucked fruits, gathered flowers, swam in the ponds in the compound, brought lotus blooms to offer at the shrines. But monks forbade not to overdo everything, plucking, gathering, swimming and not to play hard with the animals in the precincts such as dogs, cats, crows, doves, fowls etc. Monks never forbade singing of songs Buddha puja, Dhamma puja and Sangha puja and permit performances of musical bands and dances on the occasion of the celebration of religious festival days.

In his childhood years the writer had good and happy experience of monastic life. With his playmates who were mostly novices (Koyin Lay ဝိရုဇ်လေး) he did sweeping the compound, burning dry leaves, polishing wooden floors with coconut shells, washing and sunning robes, massaging old monks, brass-seeing bronze Buddha statues and filling fresh water into the drinking water pots. After reciting by heart to the teacher monks Parittas and other Buddhist scriptures non-stopped and flawlessly, he received as reward from the teacher monks bananas, coconuts, jack fruits, mangoes and jaggery (boiled and solidified palm juice) good for health. Most monasteries have such fruits and jaggery plenty. Sometimes novices and pupils were given herbal medicines to prevent sneezing, coughing or running nose.

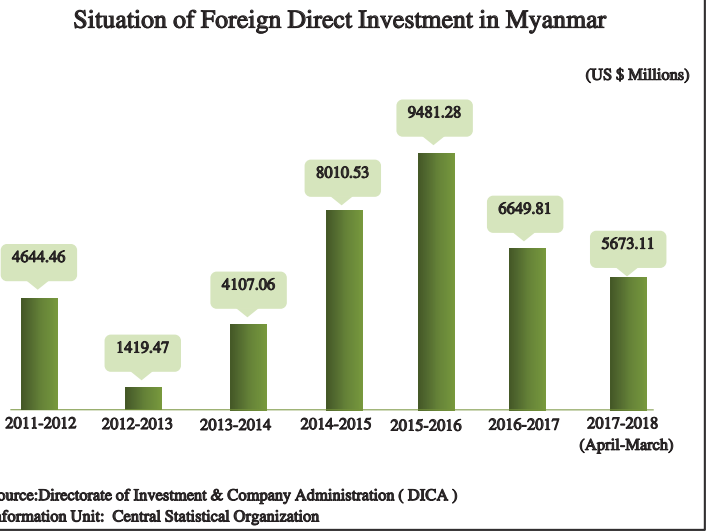
That sort of "Buddhist Cultural Heritage" ingrained in the heart and soul of the writer as well as his associates remains with them till they breathe their last. Even at the present old age, the writer could not resist the temptation to visit monastery, to participate in religious activities, ceremonies and all appertaining performing arts. When he feels stiff and stuffy, he goes to the monastery to rejuvenate in that green environment. So on this occasion of Waso month let us keep on our Buddhism as green as ever.

U Myint Swe presents credentials to President of Zimbabwe

U Myint Swe, Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar to the Republic of Zimbabwe, presented his Credentials to His Excellency Emmerson Dambudzo Mnangagwa, President of the Republic of Zimbabwe on 19 June 2018 in Harare.—MNA

Daw Ei Ei Khin Aye presents credentials to President of Timor-Leste

Daw Ei Ei Khin Aye, Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar to the Democratic Republic of Timor-Leste, presented her Credentials to His Excellency Mr. Francisco Guterres Lu' Olo, President of the Democratic Republic of Timor-Leste on 21 June 2018 in Dili.—MNA



Rain to increase in Bago Region, Kayin and Mon states

There is a continuation of increase of rain in Bago Region, Kayin and Mon states in next two days as monsoon is strong over the Andaman Sea and Bay of Bengal, according to the Myanmar Daily Weather Report issued by Department of Meteorology and Hydrology yesterday.

Forecast for Nay Pyi Taw and neighboring areas for today is one or two rain and the degree of certainty is 100 per cent whereas Yangon and neighboring areas is some

rain or thundershowers which may be heavy at times and the degree of certainty is 100 per cent and Mandalay and neighboring areas is isolated rain or thundershowers and the degree of certainty is 80 per cent.

Squalls with moderate to rough seas are likely at times off and along Myanmar Coasts. Surface wind speed in squalls may reach (35) m.p.h. Wave height will be about (7 - 9) feet in off and along Myanmar Coasts.—GNLM

More progress on returning farming

President U Win Myint attended and addressed the sixth coordination meeting of the Central Committee for Reviewing Confiscated Farmlands and Other Lands held at the Ministry of Home Affairs, Nay Pyi Taw, yesterday afternoon. Following is the unofficial translation of the President's speech.

Mingalabar. Central Committee Chairman, Vice President, Central Committee member Union Ministers, Chief Ministers and departmental officials.

The Republic of the Union of Myanmar is a country that is dependent on agriculture. Some 70 per cent of the country's population is working for a living in the agriculture sector. The lands that these people depend upon for livelihood were confiscated beyond the scope of law after the 1988 coup. In addition to this, these lands were not used for the benefit of the country. More lands were confiscated than used. Lands were not used as intended when it was confiscated. In order to develop the agriculture sector, the socio-economic situation of the farmers and to return the confiscated land to the farmers, the Union Government formed the Central Committee for Reviewing Confiscated Farmlands and Other Lands in 2016.

The Central Committee also formed Nay Pyi Taw and state/region committees at each level, and set up and implemented policies and work processes to review the matter of confiscated land. In addition to this, to resolve the difficulties encountered in the works conducted at the



President U Win Myint delivers the speech. **PHOTO: MNA**

ground level, the policies and work processes were amended according to the guidelines of the President and the State Counsellor. Accordingly, the Union Government approved and implemented 52 policies and work processes.

However, during the two-year period of the incumbent government, there were weaknesses in reviewing and assessing complaints, and delays in returning the confiscated lands back to the original owners. In some cases, the government released some land but the farmers didn't receive any.

Therefore, Chief Ministers who are the chairmen of the

Nay Pyi Taw and state/region committees need to effectively push towards achieving more progress. At the same time, the district, township, ward and village-tract committees have the duty and responsibility to comprehensively study and understand the set policies and work processes and conduct it accordingly.

On the part of the central committee, the central committee Chairman, Vice President (2), is reporting monthly to the President and the State Counsellor. There is a need to thoroughly review the cases of lands that could not be released back, as it is required to be used. The

review should ensure that things are done according to the set policies. There shouldn't be cases where the land confiscation is not in accordance with the law, the land has not been used to date and not released back yet. This is against the policies laid down and shouldn't happen. Therefore, all should follow the policies laid and conduct matters accordingly. Members of the Union Government and state/region governments have the special responsibility and duty to implement the Union Government's policies.

When I was sworn in as President on 30 March, one of the priority work sectors of the Union Government was to return the illegally confiscated farmlands, and provide compensations and reparations according to the law. Based on the assessment and findings of the review committees that includes the Hluttaw representatives as members, the relevant state/region governments need to conduct matters truthfully. The Central committee also need to take the comments and opinions of the state/region governments and decide matters expeditiously. The released lands should be returned without delay to the original owners, and the matter

of the unreleased lands should be effectively and speedily reviewed.

Necessary actions should be taken against those who are hindering or obstructing the review, release, return by the relevant committees and utilization by the rightful owners of the confiscated/released/returned land.

In conclusion, confiscated lands all over the country should be released back according to the policy. If it is not possible to release back the land, compensations and reparations should be provided. Works should be conducted effectively to release back the land under the name of the rightful owners. The released land shouldn't fall into the hands of those who are not entitled. Action should be taken according to the law and procedures set to clear illegal squatters on the released land. In conclusion, central committee members and Nay Pyi Taw Council Chairman and state/region Chief Ministers who were Nay Pyi Taw and state/region committee chairmen are to conduct their works according to the policies and work processes set by the Union Government to speedily return the confiscated land for the benefit of the country and the people. ■

55th Myanmar Gems Emporium continues for seventh day

By Myo Thu Hein

The seventh day of the 55th Myanmar Gems Emporium fetched 86.866 million euros through the sale of 818 jade lots yesterday.

Over 4,000 local and foreign merchants attended the sale, and a total of 1,150 jade lots from lot numbers 2,301 to 3,450 at a floor price of 4,000 euros and above were put on sale yesterday through the open tender system.

In the afternoon, the Myanmar Gems Emporium Central Committee held a ceremony to present certificates of honour to the foreign merchants who had attended the emporium 20 times and above at the Mani Yadana Jade Hall.

Members of the Myanmar Gems Emporium Central

Committee, Chairman of Myanmar Gems and Jewellery Entrepreneurs Association U La Phai Khunsar presented certificates of honour to the six foreign merchants who attended the event 20 times. The secretary of the Central Committee and Managing Director of Myanmar Gems Enterprise U Aung Nyunt Thein presented a foreign merchant who had attended the emporium 30 times and two foreign merchants who attended it 35 times with certificates of honour.

The jade lots of numbers 3,451 to 4,600 will be put on sale through the open tender system on 27 June, whereas lot numbers 4,601 to 5,750 will be on sale on 28 June and lot numbers 5,751 to 6,795 will be on sale on 29 June. ■



Merchants look at jade stones at the seventh day of the 55th Myanmar Gems Emporium in Nay Pyi Taw yesterday. **PHOTO: KYAW YE SWE**



Thura U Shwe Mann shakes hands with Italian Ambassador Mr. Pier Giorgio Aliberti in Nay Pyi Taw yesterday. **PHOTO: MNA**

Thura U Shwe Mann separately receives Italian Ambassador, President of NDI

CHAIRMAN of Pyidaungsu Hluttaw's Legal Affairs and Special Cases Assessment Commission Thura U Shwe Mann separately received outgoing Italian Ambassador Mr. Pier Giorgio Aliberti and National Democratic Institute's (NDI) President Mr. Kenneth Wollack in Nay Pyi Taw yesterday.

During the meeting with the Italian Ambassador, they discussed the continued support to Myanmar's democratic tran-

sition and promotion of bilateral relations.

In his meeting with NDI President, Thura U Shwe Mann said the NDI had provided much help in Myanmar's democratic transition and provided constant support to fully realise it. He said everyone should be cautious of the negative effects on Myanmar's democratic transition that can possibly arise from the situation in Rakhine. He said the UN and subsequent organisations

should provide assistance and understand the complex history of Rakhine State and the current situation. He emphasised that cooperation between Myanmar and Bangladesh is the key in solving the issues in Rakhine State.

Present at the meetings were commission members U Kyi Thar, U Nyi Tun, Dr. Daw Thida Oo, and other commission officials.—Myanmar News Agency ■

MNHRC calls for providing aid sufficiently to Kachin State IDPs

FOLLOW their trip to IDP camps in Kachin State, the Myanmar National Human Rights Commission issued a statement yesterday, calling on the Union Government to provide aid and assistance for the IDPs and to make appropriate arrangements for access to humanitarian assistance from local and foreign donors.

The team visited a Baptist church, a Roman Catholic church, and an Anglican church in Lang-gwa village of Mogaung Township, IDP camps located at the entrance of Mogaung, and Lawah and Line-naung Roman Catholic IDP camps located in Karmine township on 21 June and Jaw-ma-sup, Tan-phe-reh and Trinity IDP camps located in Myitkyina Township, and Winemaw zone IDP camp located in Wine-maw Township on 22 June.

The statement said the displaced villagers fled into the forest because they feared being hit by bombs that fell near their villages and because of a fear of clashes with armed organisations near their villages.

"Along the route of escape, they faced difficulties from a shortage of food and potable water; a shortage of medicines for sickness and diarrhea and not having enough shelters. Moreover, elderly persons and children were unable to walk due to malnutrition and had to be carried. Some pregnant women had to give birth in the forest and some newborn babies and

elderly persons died due to severe weather conditions," said the statement.

The statement quoted the villagers as saying that during the time they were hiding in the forest, there was a shortage of food, and villagers who went back to their villages to fetch food found out that their houses were destroyed.

In most of the IDP camps inspected by the Commission's team, villagers have been facing the difficulties including inadequate tents, lack of potable water, unclean water for bathing, risk of fire from improper kitchens, inadequate toilets, and difficulties for education of their children.

The MNHRC also called on Hluttaw Representatives, responsible persons from the government and responsible military officials responsible for the security of the region to visit such villages and establish security, building of trust and confidence, hillside cultivation and an environment in which citizens can live and move freely within the region, which can happen only if the skirmishes stop. As the citizens living in the villages, including elderly people, children, pregnant women and the disabled, are faced with the above-mentioned manifold problems, the Myanmar National Human Rights Commission would like to urge for the early realisation of the Union Peace Process, which the State is currently implementing.—MNA ■

Drugs destroyed in Yangon on Int'l Day against Drug Abuse and Illicit Trafficking

A LARGE amount of confiscated illegal drugs were burned yesterday in Hlinethaya Township in Yangon as part of a ceremony in observance of the 31st International Day against Drug Abuse and Illicit Trafficking.

Present at the ceremony were Yangon Region Hluttaw Speaker U Tin Maung Tun, Chief Justice of the Yangon Region High Court U Win Swe, Regional Hluttaw Deputy Speaker U Lin Naing Myint, Chairperson of the Yangon Region Body for Preventing the Danger of Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances and Regional Minister for Security and Border Affairs Col. Aung Soe Moe, ministers of region

government and official concerned, invited guests and students, and reporters from home

and abroad.

At the ceremony, Police Brig-Gen Win Naing said the drugs being destroyed were confiscated by police from Yangon, Taninthayi, Bago, Ayeyawady, Rakhine, Mon, and Kayin, by the No. (1) Border Security Force, and by the highway police force. Approval from the courts had been obtained before the destruction of the drugs, officials said.

Brig-Gen Win Naing said there were 25 types of drugs destroyed, worth a total of about Ks89,584.5122 million (approx. US\$66.36 million). He said that destroying the drugs was part of the national duty.—Myanmar News Agency ■

There were 25 types of drugs destroyed, worth a total of about Ks89,584.5122 million (approx. US\$66.36 million).



Seized drugs are being incinerated in Hlinethaya Township in Yangon. **PHOTO: GNLM/ PHOE KHWAH**

Ceremony to mark International Day against Drug Abuse and Illicit Trafficking held in Maungtaw

THE ceremony to observe International Day against Drug Abuse and Illicit Trafficking was held at No. 1 Basic Education High School in Maungtaw, Rakhine State, at 9 a.m. yesterday.

At the ceremony, U Ye Htut, Deputy Commissioner and chairman of Maungtaw district Committee for Drug Abuse Control, gave the opening speech.

Then, police Lt-Col Tun Myint Tun, district police head and vice chairman of Maungtaw district Committee for Drug Abuse Control, read the message sent by Central Committee for Drug Abuse Control Chairman and Union Minister for Home Affairs Lt-Gen Kyaw Swe.

Later, Maungtaw

District Committee for Drug Abuse Control member and Deputy District Law Officer U Hsan Win explained the legal knowledge related to drugs.

Then, Dr. Phyo Ko Ko Zaw explained the disorders resulting from drug use.

At the ceremony, officials from the district and township department awarded each students in basic education high schools, middle schools and post primary schools in Maungtaw who had competed in the art, cartoon, poster and essay competitions.

The ceremony was attended by officials from district and township departments, NGOs members, teachers, students and local guests.—Nay Win Tun (MMAL)

Ceremony to mark International Day against Drug Abuse and Illicit Trafficking held in Sittway

The ceremony to observe the International Day against Drug Abuse and Illicit Trafficking was held at U Oaktama hall in Sittway Town at 8 am yesterday.

At the ceremony, Rakhine State Minister for Security and Border Affairs Col. Phone Tint gave the opening speech. Then, State police Col Aung Myat

Moe, the police head, of the Rakhine State read the messages sent by Central Committee for Drug Abuse Control chairman and Union Minister for Home Affairs Lt-Gen Kyaw Swe.

The officials then awarded those who participated in the art, cartoon, poster, essay and computer drawing competitions.

Later, a video clip on drug abuse activities was shown.

State Hluttaw chairman and officials then looked around the drug education hall, which displayed the work of the winners of the art, cartoon, poster and essay competitions.

The ceremony was at-

tended by State Hluttaw Speaker U San Kyaw Hla, State Chief Justice of the State U Kyauk, State Hluttaw deputy Speaker U Mya Than and state ministers and officials from the state department, local guests, as well as members of the UN, INGOs, CSOs, teachers and students.—Tin Tun (IPRD) ■

Pyuntaza Township locals receive free eye care

Over 1,000 eye patients have been provided with free eye care services at the Sitagu Sakku Dana Hospital that was founded by the head of the Sitagu International Buddhist Academy Dr. Ashin Nyanissara starting on 22 June until 25 June.

A group eye specialists led by the chairman of the free eye care operation group from Sitagu

Missionary Prof. Dr. Mya Aung furnished eye care services to those who suffered eye diseases from Nyaunglebin, Kyaukdaga, Dikeoo, Shwe Kyin Townships and other regions.

This is the fourth time for the township to receive free eye care and a total of 1,404 patients were provided with eye care services and a total of 286 patients underwent



ophthalmological operations. Since the hospital has been established a total of 5,648 patients have received eye care

services and 1006 people underwent procedures to restore their vision.—Ye Myanmar (Nyaunglebin)/MDN ■

Gov't ready to help potential disaster victims

A meeting took place at the meeting room of the General Administration Department in Thanbyuzayet Township, Mon State yesterday, with an address by township administrator U Thein Htut.

The meeting was held with the intention of drawing the support from departmental officials

concerning the natural disaster management tasks since Thanbyuzayet Township is prone to natural disaster risks. Speaking at the meeting, the township administrator said that Thanbyuzayet Township is located in an area where natural disasters can occur any time, without warning. He also

stressed the need to focus on safeguarding government offices and ensuring security for them at the same time. Some wards and villages throughout the township may face possible floods in the rainy season if sea levels and torrential rains severely increase in the area.

The township disas-

ter management committee including respective departments is ready to assist local people in the disaster affected areas in rescue operations and provide necessary assistance to them if they receive information about natural disasters in a timely manner.—Kyaw Win (IPRD)/MDN ■

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Desperate search for 12 children trapped in Thailand cave

BANGKOK — Desperate parents led a prayer ceremony outside a flooded cave in northern Thailand where 12 children and their football coach have been trapped for days, as military rescue divers packing food rations resumed their search on Tuesday.

Hundreds of people have been mobilized to find the youngsters who went into the Tham Luang cave on Saturday and were trapped when heavy rains flooded its main entrance.

Anxious relatives camped out to perform traditional rituals, making offerings and reciting emotional prayers for their children's safe return.

"I asked for all God's wishes, but I'm certain in my heart that they will survive. They have been inside the cave before," the father of one of the young footballers said.

Some relatives waited at the cave's entrance near the Laos and Myanmar border, where huge crowds have gathered near stockpiles of water and food.

"My child, I'm here to get you now," one crying parent said, while another screamed: "Come home



Divers said they spotted footprints in one of the cave's chambers. PHOTO: AFP

my child!". The children, aged between 11 and 16, are thought to have retreated further into the tunnel as monsoon rains fell and flooded the cave, believed to be several kilometres (miles) long.

Rescuers found bicycles, football boots and backpacks at the entrance to the site on Monday, and divers said they spotted footprints in one of the cave's chambers.

Park officials, police and soldiers were dispatched on foot, while an aerial team was also being

mobilised to see if there was another entrance to the cave, according to an AFP photographer at the scene.

Navy divers equipped with oxygen tanks and food rations entered the cave early Tuesday in northern Chiang Rai province where rain continued to fall.

Rescue teams were also dispatched to light the inside of the cave and drain water from the site and an underwater robot was set to be dispatched to survey the area and help rescuers.

Interior Minister An

upong Paojinda said they were working around the clock to find the youngsters.

"We're working against time, but we're not panicking," he told reporters.

Forecasters said rains are expected to continue Tuesday, which could hamper rescue efforts.

Tham Luang cave is not hugely popular among foreign tourists because of its remote location but draws locals to worship at small Buddha statues inside.—AFP ■

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Dated: 27th June 2018

Big, mean and making the green: 'Jurassic' tops N America box office

NEW YORK — Huge, green and scary stomped on cute, young and funny this weekend as "Jurassic World: Fallen Kingdom" debuted at \$148 million to dislodge "Incredibles 2" from the top spot at the North American box office, sales data showed on Monday.

The dinosaur sequel — executive-produced by Steven Spielberg, who directed the original two movies — fell short of the then-record \$208 million opening by the last "Jurassic" film in 2015, according to industry tracker Exhibitor Relations.

Still, "Fallen Kingdom" has passed the \$700 million mark worldwide — despite tepid reviews like the suggestion by The New York Times that the film is little more than "a way for people with no other plans to grab some air conditioning."

The movie stars Chris Pratt and Bryce Dallas Howard as they try to rescue genetically recreated dinosaurs from a volcano-threatened island and

move them to — why not? — a sprawling California mansion.

Sliding to second, Pixar's "Incredibles 2" earned a respectable \$80.3 million as North American theaters continued to recover from last summer's downturn.

The film, about a quirky superhero family, raked in \$182 million in its debut weekend, a record for an animated feature in the US and Canada, easily surpassing the \$135 million debut of 2016's "Finding Dory."

The film tells the story of the Parr family — centered this time on matriarch Helen (Holly Hunter) as she battles to help bring the world's hiding superheroes back into the open. Husband Bob (Craig T. Nelson) is left at home in charge of their frighteningly talented but scarily unpredictable kids, and finds the homemaker's job more challenging than being a superhero. In third spot was Warner Bros.'s heist movie "Ocean's 8," at \$11.5 million.

The female-centric sequel

has Debbie Ocean (Sandra Bullock) assembling a gang of talented women (Cate Blanchett, Anne Hathaway, Helena Bonham Carter) to plan a seemingly impossible diamond heist from the Met Gala in New York.

Adult comedy "Tag," also from Warner Bros., came in fourth at \$8.3 million. It tells the story of childhood pals, led by Jon Hamm and Jeremy Renner, who keep up a game of tag for decades, sometimes at the oddest of moments.

Staying alive in fifth was "Deadpool 2," the R-rated superhero flick from Fox, at \$5.3 million. It stars Ryan Reynolds as the irreverent, foul-mouthed title character.

Rounding out the top 10 were:

"Solo: A Star Wars Story" (\$4.5 million)

"Hereditary" (\$3.6 million)

"Superfly" (\$3.4 million)

"Avengers: Infinity War" (\$2.6 million) "Won't You Be My Neighbor" (\$1.8 million)—AFP ■



Venezuelan conductor Gustavo Dudamel is known for his work encouraging low-income youth to learn music and perform in concerts. **PHOTO: AFP**

Venezuela's Gustavo Dudamel to lead youth concerts in Chile

SANTIAGO — Venezuela's Gustavo Dudamel will lead concerts on Thursday and Friday in Santiago with youth from Latin America and Europe to honour his late mentor Jose Antonio Abreu, who created a celebrated public music education programme for young people.

"This is the start of something that will last throughout one's life," said 37-year-old Dudamel, currently the music and artistic director of the Los Angeles Philharmonic Orchestra.

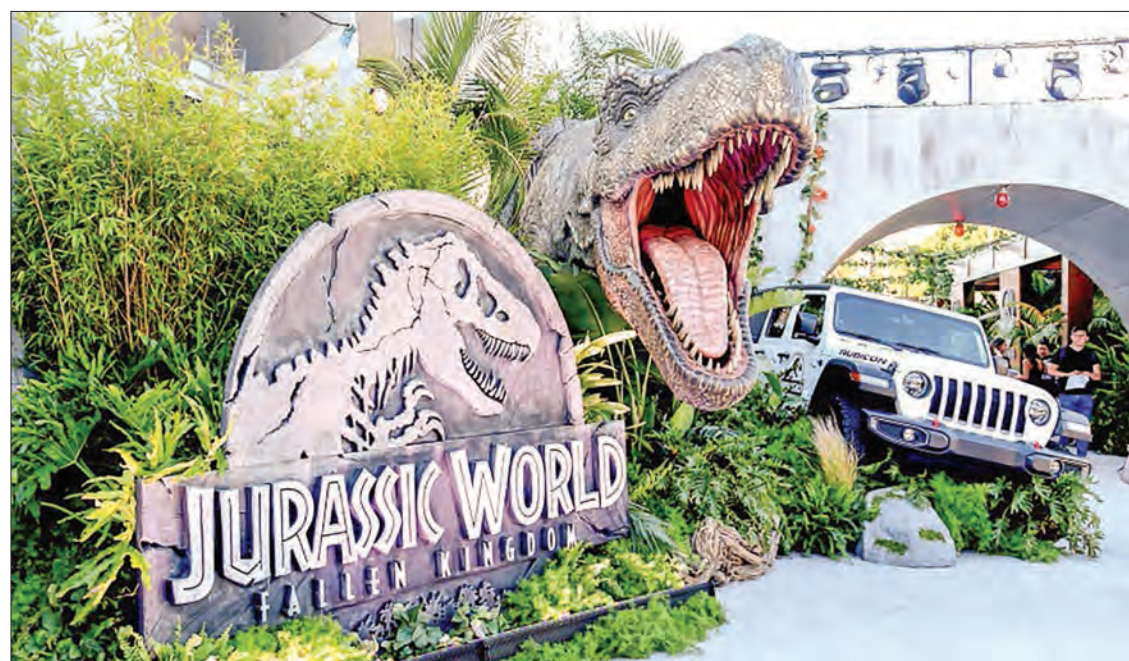
Abreu, also a Venezuelan, died in Caracas on 24 March at the age of 78.

The music programme he pioneered, the National System of Youth Orchestras of Venezuela, or "El Sistema," has been replicated in more

than 40 countries.

It seeks to provide low-income children music education to build confidence and rise out of poverty. Dudamel told reporters that the Santiago concerts will bring together members of Chilean youth orchestras with musicians from ensembles based in Vienna, Berlin, Los Angeles and Gothenburg, as well as two Venezuelan orchestras, Nacional de Venezuela and Simon Bolivar. For the performances, the conductor said he chose some of Abreu's favourite pieces, including Beethoven's Seventh Symphony and Tchaikovsky's Fourth Symphony.

Some 500 children from across Chile are also set to travel to Santiago to attend the second performance. —AFP ■



"Jurassic World: Fallen Kingdom" stomped the competition in its debut weekend at the North American box office. **PHOTO: AFP**

Freed Mill takes on police brutality at BET Awards

LOS ANGELES — Rapper Meek Mill, free after a controversial jail sentence, returned to the stage on Sunday with a vigorous attack on police brutality as he premiered a song at the BET Awards.

The awards of Black Entertainment Television, broadcast live from Los Angeles, recognize the best of African American music and film and the blockbuster "Black Panther" won Best Movie.

Mill was one of the night's most memorable performers as

he debuted his song "Stay Woke." The 31-year-old rapper in April won his freedom five months after a judge jailed him over violations of probation stemming from a 2008 arrest, a decision that triggered protests charging that it was overly harsh and racially biased.

Mill performed "Stay Woke" on a set designed as a street scene in his native Philadelphia — a neighborhood that is unkempt yet also full of life with children playing. Police swarm onto the

scene with force and a shot is heard. The song pauses and a little girl who was jumping rope is revealed to have been killed, her body then draped with an American flag. "How can I pledge allegiance to the flag / When they killing all our sons and dads?" Mill raps.

The singer Miguel contributes the chorus, which says, "Though it was designed for us to lose / Nothing, nothing, nothing's impossible / Believe it, we're still undefeated."—AFP ■

Rebel Wilson to star in and produce comic book adaptation 'Crowded'

LOS ANGELES — Actor-comedian Rebel Wilson has bought the rights to "Crowded", an upcoming Image Comics publication, and is planning to star in as well as produce the movie adaptation of the same.

According to the Hollywood Reporter, Wilson will develop the project and produce it via her Camp Sugar production banner.

"Crowded," written by Christopher Sebela and drawn by Ro Stein and Ted Brandt, is set in a near future where the world's economy is all job sharing and apps and where a crowdfunding platform that funds assassinations named

Reap is all the rage.

The story is set in motion when a woman named Charlie, leading a normal life, finds her world upside down when she suddenly becomes a target on Reap, with a multimillion-dollar bounty. She hires Vita, the lowest-rated bodyguard on the Dfend app.

The two have to work together to take down the aspirational assassins and find out who wants Charlie dead before the campaign's 30-day period concludes, or their lives are over.

Sebela will act as a consulting producer on the movie adaptation.—PTI ■

Japanese guests visit school library at Letpadan No. 2 Basic Education High School

Ms. Kyoko Ito, Coordinator of the Shanti Volunteer Association (SVA) from Japan, and party arrived at the school library of No. 2 Basic Education High School in Letpadan Township, Thayawady District, Bago Region, yesterday afternoon.

Ms. Kyoko Ito and party toured the library and encouraged the children and

teachers who have participated in measures for developing reading power at the library.

The Japanese guests then met with the Headmaster of No. 2 Basic Education High school of Letpadan Township and discussed the requirements of the school library.—Maung Shwe Win(P-yay) ■



PHOTO: MAUNG SHWE WIN(PYAY)

Damaged centuries-old Japanese porcelain on loan to Taiwan repaired

TAIPEI (China) — A damaged centuries-old porcelain plate on loan to Taiwan's National Palace Museum from a pottery museum in Osaka has been repaired, the two museums said on Monday.

Jasper Lin, director of the National Palace Museum, told a press conference that the repair of the 17th century Imari-style porcelain ware took about a year, with the two museums spending the first six months discussing how to repair the plate.

The Taiwanese museum then conducted tests and examinations of the object and began the repair work in the beginning of March and completed it at the end of last month.

"Now the porcelain ware is reborn and has a new life," Lin said. The centuries-old porcelain ware is among the 300 ceramic items on loan for three years to the southern branch of the National Palace Museum to celebrate the opening of its first branch in Chiayi County, southwestern Taiwan, in 2015.

Among them, 161 are Imari-style porcelain wares from Kyushu's Arita area, the cradle of porcelain manufacturing in Japan. In July last year, the plate was found cracked in three pieces inside a glass display box.

The incident, while sadden-



Tetsuro Degawa (R), director of the Museum of Oriental Ceramics, Osaka, shakes hands with Jasper Lin, director of Taiwan's National Palace Museum, in Taipei on 25 June, 2018. PHOTO: KYODO NEWS

ing, turned out to be an opportunity for the two museums to sign a sister-museum agreement in August last year to deepen exchanges and strengthen cooperation in preserving and promoting cultural relics.

Tetsuro Degawa, director of the Osaka museum, said that the object broke mainly due to

its age, a first for the museum's collection.

The incident taught him that everything has a life span, including porcelain ware. Nevertheless, the object was repaired in a "creative" way that Degawa said "breathed new life" into it and increased its original value. — Kyodo News ■

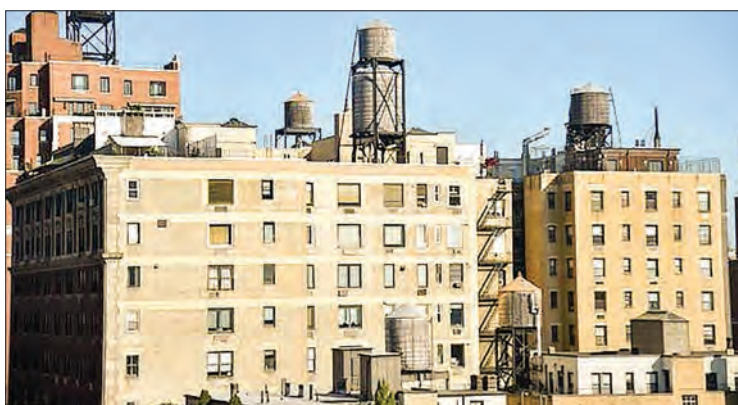
On NY's rooftops, old-style wooden water tanks hang tough

NEW YORK — They are part of New York's skyline and millions of people unknowingly depend on them: behold, the venerable rooftop water tank, made of plain old wood.

And forget about technology and innovation and all that. The tanks are more popular than ever in this city of skyscrapers.

Here, any building higher than six stories must be fitted to pump water to the roof for the higher floors, where it is stored in a tank. That's because the pressure in the city water system is too weak to get it up there. Gravity takes over for it to flow back downward. On this spring day, a tank-building foreman named Terrance Stokes and his crew are at work at a posh building on Lexington Avenue on Manhattan's Upper East Side.

In seven hours, they will take down one four-meter-high depository and replace it with a new one.



Water tanks can be seen atop buildings on New York's Upper East Side — they are a vestige of the past that endures. PHOTO: AFP

Their employer is Isseks Brothers, one of three companies that share the rooftop water tank market in the most populous American city. In total, there are around 10,000 tanks.

The tools they use have evolved a bit, but for the most part, a water tank is set up today the same way it was in 1890, when the Isseks brothers, immigrants from Poland, founded their

company. "That's the beautiful thing. It's so simplistic," said David Hochhauser, a co-owner of the firm. Wooden water tanks — which also serve as protection against fire — have lots of advantages over tanks made from other materials, even atop a 1,300-foot-tall (400-meter-high) building.

The cost is reasonable — between \$35,000 and \$100,000 — as compared to what a tank made

from fiberglass or steel goes for — double or triple that much.

They are also quicker to install — just one day as opposed to at least a week for the other kinds.

Not in any books

Up on the rooftops, Stokes is following in the footsteps of his father, who retired three years ago, and overseeing the work of a crew whose very specific skill is the company's main asset.

"It's a very dangerous job. At all times, you have to be aware of what you're doing," said Stokes, a native of St Vincent and the Grenadines in the Caribbean.

This particular building on Lexington Avenue is just nine stories high.

But Isseks Brothers has also installed tanks atop the old World Trade Center and the new one known as the Freedom Tower, which soars 1,776 feet into the air, as well as many other Big Apple

skyscrapers.

The team works pretty much non stop and by 3:00 pm, water is flowing into the tank. It leaks a bit but that's expected — it will take the Alaskan cedar used to build the tank two or three days to swell and become water-tight. The tank lasts around 25 years.

Isseks Brothers' supplier is the Hall-Woolford Wood Tank Company in Philadelphia, which provides it with the carefully cut boards that make up a water tank.

The 160-year-old supplier's workshop employs just seven people, and some of the machines are older than the people operating them. Nothing is automated. Everything is guided by the human eye.

"As far as getting it right, there is no book that can teach you that. It's from generation to generation, from one worker to the other," said manager Jack Hillman.—AFP ■

Three things we learned today at the World Cup

MOSCOW — Spain finished top of Group B on Monday despite being held by Morocco while Portugal took second place after a controversial draw with Iran.

Uruguay and Russia were both already through to the knock-out stages but the South Americans clinched top spot in Group A after beating the hosts 3-0.

Here, AFP Sport looks at three things we learned from the World Cup today:

Russia crash back down to earth

Russia were dealt a reality check by Uruguay and perhaps it will prove a timely one given they performed so brilliantly on the back of no expectation at the start of this tournament.

In the last 16, Spain will provide at least as tough a test as Uruguay, whose victory was perhaps a little flattering but, still, entirely comfortable.

Many will conclude Russia rode the wave of enthusiasm to beat two poor opponents but were found wanting against a better one and it will be up to them to prove that theory wrong



when they return to their favoured Luzhniki Stadium on Sunday.

Uruguay, meanwhile, have hardly set the world alight but they go through top with nine points out of nine. Portugal, their next opponents, will not have it easy.

VAR at its worst

Portugal scored one of the

finest goals of the competition so far, a bending strike from the outside of Ricardo Quaresma's right foot, and Iran equalised late on to seal a dramatic 1-1 draw.

But in between, this was a contest spoiled by a combination of a referee misusing the video assistant referee and players constantly begging for it.

Paraguayan official Enrique Caceres reversed his initial de-

cision and awarded Portugal a penalty that was not clear. He took too long to decide Cristiano Ronaldo did not deserve a red card for throwing an arm. And then he wrongly gave Iran a penalty for a handball by Cedric Soares.

Through it all, the players and managers were wagging fingers and drawing imaginary television screens, with the actual

football all-but forgotten. There has been enough in Russia to suggest VAR can be a success but in this game, its flaws were painfully exposed.

Good for Hierro, bad for Spain's backline

Spain's problems would seem to lie less with their coach Fernando Hierro, whose substitutions aided a late comeback against Morocco, than their defence, whose mistakes twice gave their opponents the lead.

Hierro, the last-minute replacement for Julen Lopetegui, was brave enough to bring off Diego Costa and David Silva for Iago Aspas and Rodrigo in Kaliningrad. Both were involved in the equaliser, which Aspas flicked home for a 2-2 draw.

Their problems, however, are not at the top end of the field but the back, where Khalid Boutaib scored after a mix-up between Sergio Ramos and Andres Iniesta, before Youssef En-Nesyri headed in from a corner. Spain had the finesse to make amends but tougher opposition are unlikely to be so generous.—AFP ■

France finish top ahead of Denmark after World Cup stalemate

MOSCOW (Russia) – France secured first place ahead of Denmark in Group C on Tuesday following a 0-0 draw in Moscow that could set up a heavyweight World Cup clash with Lionel Messi's Argentina in the last 16.

Didier Deschamps' side dominated possession but struggled to create any clear-cut chances against a determined Denmark, who will likely meet Croatia for a place in the quarter-finals.

France have scored just three times in three games in Russia, including a penalty and an own goal, and it was another disjointed display from one of the title favourites.

They will discover their opponents in the next round later on Tuesday, with Argentina needing to beat Nigeria in Saint Petersburg to stand a chance of qualifying.

Deschamps rested captain Hugo Lloris and Paul Pogba, with

the Manchester United midfielder a booking away from suspension, while Kylian Mbappe was also left out among six changes.

Marseille goalkeeper Steve Mandanda, 33, made his first appearance at a major tournament, having been an unused substitute at the last three European

Championships and the 2010 World Cup.

After much debate about the video assistant referee (VAR) following further controversy on Monday, it was inevitable any penalty area tussles would prompt strong appeals at the Luzhniki Stadium. —AFP ■



France's forward Kylian Mbappe (L) vies with Denmark's midfielder Thomas Delaney during the Russia 2018 World Cup Group C football match between Denmark and France at the Luzhniki Stadium in Moscow, on 26 June 2018. PHOTO: AFP

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Korea Republic		Germany
20:30 MST (27.6.2018)		
Mexico		Sweden
00:30 MST (28.6.2018)		
Serbia		Brazil
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Switzerland		Costa Rica
World Cup 2018 Results		
Spain	2 - 2	Morocco
IR Iran	1 - 1	Portugal
Australia	0 - 2	Peru
Denmark	0 - 0	France