

International Day Against Drug Abuse and Illicit Trafficking message by Union Minister for Home Affairs Lt-Gen Kyaw Swe

TODAY, being the International Day Against Drug Abuse and Illicit Trafficking, ceremonies commemorating the international day against drug abuse and illicit trafficking will be celebrated across the nations in the world.

Since the time when the United Nations General Assembly designated 26 June as the international day against drug abuse in 1987 regional prevention teams that have been fighting against narcotic and psychotropic drugs will observe their 31st anniversary celebration today.

With a view for the whole populace to be able to participate in the International Day Against Drug Abuse and Illicit Trafficking, starting from the year 1998, there have been annual competitions for short story, article, poem, song, photograph, computerized poster, freelance slogan writing and contests for painting, cartoon, poster and computerized painting for primary, middle and high school students. Counternarcotics agencies will present prizes to the winners during today's ceremonies.

The Central counter-narcotics committee formed regional teams that comprise NGOs, civil society groups, religious organizations and entrepreneurs at various levels, including the Nay

Pyi Taw Council, region, state, district, township, ward and village officials. Prizes will be presented to 107 prize winners out of above 3,500 public and student competitors that participated in the 21st competition held this year.

All over the world, drug problems have been handled in various ways based on the background of the respective governments, cultural development, availability of resources, location and geographical situation.

However, the problem is becoming bigger and more complex with the emergence of new drugs devastating the public's health, education and basic businesses while cross border crimes and terrorist activities are threatening regional stability and peace as well as rule of law.

According to World Drug report 2017 over 190,000 die before reaching a mature age due to drug usage and there is a rise in occurrence of drug related diseases such as HIV, hepatitis and TB.

Myanmar is facing the drug problem due to its geographical location while also facing opium cultivation problem and production of heroin and psychotropic drugs in remote inaccessible areas where development is lagging behind.

Successive governments were handling the drug problem by signing three drug related conventions as member country and were enacting laws, forming anti-drug organisations and drawing up plans in accordance to the conventions.

Under the national poverty reduction policy (strategy) the government is providing development assistance by constructing roads and bridges. The government also enhanced education, health, reclaimed farming land, promoted water projects and power plants and TV transmission stations and promoted the construction of new religious edifices in opium planting areas.

It is also arranging and supporting fish breeding suitable for the region and replacement crops for opium.

Treatment for drug addicts was also provided and 26 drug treatment clinics and 47 sub-clinics were opened and operated. 51 Methadone clinics were established in high drug use townships providing replacement therapy.

Arrangements are being made to conduct community-based one stop service works to drug addicts as well as medical service to the general public. At the same time efforts to reduce occurrence of HIV, hepatitis B

and C through shared usage of syringes are also being conducted.

Physical and mental rehabilitation of drug addicts and follow up care works for rehabilitated drug addicts to re-enter the society is being conducted through volunteer drug supervision teams formed by the rehabilitation department.

Early prevention is an effective tool against reducing drug usage, youth, students and the public are being educated directly of the danger of drugs through the Ministry of Education and the Ministry of Information using various methods.

As prevention is more effective than any treatment methods, preventive works through sharing of information and experience by rehabilitated drug users, information sessions targeted specifically for youths and vulnerable groups through news media, social media and face-to-face meeting programs need to be utilised.

The leading role of state/region governments in reducing the danger of drug is a vital requirement and state/region governments are to take up the leadership role and conduct it with the cooperative force of the public as well as civil society or

ganizations.

The Central Committee for Drug Abuse Control had also drawn up and enacted a new national drug control policy that is in accord with the suggestions of 2016 UN General Assembly Special Session on the World Drug Problem (UNGASS).

The new national drug control policy involves various sectors such as reduction of opium growing, manufacturing, and transport, providing alternative development programs, reducing drug usage and follow up problems, increasing international cooperation, research works and human rights oriented approaches that will reduce the drug problem and support the social development of the people.

At the same time, the Myanmar 1993 Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances Law was reviewed and an amendment to the law was enacted in February 2018 in support of the policy.

In accord with this year's motto, "Listen First" the International Day Against Drug Abuse and Illicit Trafficking, we hereby call on our people to listen to the concerns and needs of our youth and simultaneously support their development and health by reducing drug abuse. ■

(Unofficial Translation)

Union Minister Thura U Aung Ko accepts donations for Bogyoke Aung San biopic

CHAIRMAN of the Bogyoke Aung San's Biopic Development Committee Thura U Aung Ko, also the Union Minister for Religious Affairs and Culture, accepted donations for the biopic in a ceremony yesterday.

The list of donors include Daw Hla Kyi alias Daw Yi Yi Myint from Kyal Sin Nan Taw Gems & Jewellery Co. Ltd., who donated Ks5 million; Saya U Hla Tun, Thiha Thudamma Theingi Daw San San Wai and their son Maung Min Hlaing Phyto from Shan Pyo Mel Medicine family business, who donated Ks5 million; and U Thein Zaw

and Daw Thin Thin Lin from Thein Than Jewellery Emporium, who donated Ks2.5 million.

The Bogyoke Aung San's Biopic Development Committee received a total of Ks1.2497 billion (approx. US\$899,784) in donations for the biopic.

The committee received Ks847.2 million from the Bogyoke Aung San Biopic Realisation Group, Ks276 million from the first donation programme, Ks114 million from the second donation programme, and Ks12.5 million from yesterday's donation programme. —MNA ■

Union Minister for Border Affairs receives US Ambassador to Myanmar



Union Minister Lt-Gen Ye Aung meets with US Ambassador Mr. Scot Marciel in Nay Pyi Taw. PHOTO: MNA

UNION Minister for Border Affairs Lt. Gen Ye Aung received US Ambassador to Myanmar Mr. Scot Marciel at 11.30 a.m. on 25 June at the hall of the ministry in Nay Pyi Taw.

During the meeting, they exchanged views and cordially discussed matters relating to

the implementation of human resources development for the national races in the border areas, the progress made by the state government for the development of internal peace and reconciliation, providing necessary supplies for the displaced people in northern

Myanmar, the repatriation process of the displaced people in Rakhine State, the stability and development of Rakhine State, and the USAID to provide US \$50 million as a five-year project in the south eastern part of Myanmar. — Myanmar News Agency ■