

**INFORMATION****National Conference on “Cultural and Natural Heritage of North-Central Region: Preservation and Promotion”**

On 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> of July 2013 in Vinh city of Nghệ An province, Vietnam Academy of Social Sciences in collaboration with Nghệ An People’s Committee held a national conference on “Cultural Heritage and Natural Heritage of North Central Area: Preservation and Promotion values” with the participation of various state and government dignitaries, scientists from domestic academies, groups, sub – academies, and universities and there are approximately 80 papers received.

The provinces of the North-Central Region have many similarities in culture, history, and social, economic and natural conditions. These provinces have a rich and diverse natural and cultural heritage which already recognized by UNESCO as World Heritage: the Complex of Huế Monuments, Huế’s royal music, Phong Nha-Kẻ Bàng National Park, and Hồ Dynasty Citadel... In addition, and many other heritage sites have been recognized as Special National Heritage, for example: Nguyễn Du Commemorative Area, Lam Kinh Relic of Architecture and History, etc. Heritages are big resources of the country, there is a need to clarify, preserve, and make use of them effectively but responsibly for future generation. As the result, the usage of heritages should be advised in the

context of sustainable development while preserving and promoting their values.

The opinions and speeches at the Conference are focused on highlighting the diversity and unique of biographic and special cultural values in North-Central Region such as family culture (with its traditional fondness for learning and competitive examinations, and its success over the centuries in examinations). From these practical analysis of these heritages, the conference papers provided insight into the role of heritage preservation, restoration and promotion in the construction and development process of Vietnam today.

One of the most urgent tasks was to improve preservation activities and further promote the values of natural and cultural heritage by following heritage law, harmonizing the requirements of preservation and development, mobilizing local people for preservation work following the principle of ensuring legitimate benefits for local people and thus encouraging them to participate in this work, equipping local people and others involved in preservation work with basic preservation knowledge, and regularly monitoring preservation work as it proceeds. In conservation work, it is necessary to balance the promotion of natural and cultural values with economic benefits, using those values to serve and improve the spiritual and material life of local people and introducing Vietnamese culture and people to friends around the

world; however, these goals should not be pursued at all costs but should ensure the long-term conservation of the country's heritage for present and future generations. An important topic raised by researchers and managers at the conference was the role of regional affiliations in preserving and promoting the North-Central Region's heritage values.

THANH HÀ

### **International Conference on “Business and Human Rights”**

On 27<sup>th</sup> and 28<sup>th</sup> of June 2013 in Hanoi, the Vietnam Academy of Social Sciences in the collaboration with the Norwegian Center for Human Rights, University of Oslo, held a conference on “Business and Human Rights” with the participation of many scholars from America, Canada, United Kingdom, France, Norway, India, Indonesia, Myanmar, Israel, Azerbaijan... and representatives of policy planning offices, social organizations, businesses, universities and research institutions in Vietnam.

In the first session, general issues on business and human rights are mentioned, they are the social responsibilities of business: A number of theoretical issues; Identification of basic characteristics of human rights policies; Prevention of environment from serious damage: Looking forward to a model of cooperation between multinational enterprises and related countries...

In the second session contained two small groups, scholars from different countries shared their experiences and solutions of business and ensuring

respect for human rights. Actual analysis in many fields such as mining, construction, electric industry... from different countries showed that there is a need for businesses to carry out their social responsibility in ensuring respect for human rights. Besides that, scholars from different countries also contributed their solutions to deal with oil spill, nuclear problems... in terms of ensuring respect human rights.

In the third session, Vietnamese scholars presented their papers on the regulation framework and actual practices of corporate social responsibility of Vietnamese business recently. From these analyses, there are many issues relating to corporate social responsibility of Vietnamese businesses need to be concerned from ensuring the responsibility with workforce to environmental prevention issues.

As the result of the Conference, all participants agreed on:

- Business and human rights have a close relationship which is both harmony and conflict in terms of developing progress.
- Business and human rights is broader than social responsibilities and human rights.
- In order to have successful implementation of business and human rights, we need more solutions especially for policies, laws, public media...
- To ensure respect human rights is not only responsibility of the state but also the businesses and multinational enterprises.

TÚ AN

**International Scientific Conference:  
"Conservation and exploitation of  
valuable woodblocks of Bắc Giang Vĩnh  
Nghiem Pagoda"**

On 16<sup>th</sup> August 2013 in Bắc Giang, University of Social Sciences and Humanities (Hanoi National University), Bắc Giang Department of Culture, Sport and Tourism, Vietnam Buddhist Research Institute in Hanoi, and National University of Kaohsiung (Taiwan) held International Scientific Conference on "Conservation and exploitation of valuable woodblocks of Bắc Giang Vĩnh Nghiem Pagoda" with the participation of many representatives of State, government agencies, monks, scientists, researchers, and managers in Vietnam and Taiwan.

Woodblocks in Vĩnh Nghiem pagoda are awarded a World Documentary Heritage by UNESCO in Asia - Pacific, including the collection of 3.050 plates of "Kinh, Luật, Truyện" books in Han Nom contained many valuable values were carved during the late 19<sup>th</sup> century to early 20<sup>th</sup> century by old-monks of Vĩnh Nghiem pagoda. They are rich and valuable knowledge of Buddhist history, the religious thoughts, culture of the Trúc Lâm Buddhist Zen, literature, traditional customs and the history of Vietnamese language and Demotic scripts. By storing these old Nom font, the woodblocks of Vĩnh Nghiem pagoda played an important role of preserving Nom – a traditional font of Vietnam. Today, the Nom font on "Thien tong ban hanh" woodblock of Vĩnh Nghiem pagoda's woodblock are digitalized and used worldwide. Anyone studies,

researches Nom of Vietnam in the world is accessible to and using them to learn more about the unique value of Vietnamese culture in the past. In addition, according to the Han-Nom researchers, woodblocks of the Truc Lam Buddhist Zen in Vinh Nghiem pagoda contained valuable and huge meanings of personal philosophy, religious and beliefs, literature, art, and human education.

In the Conference, the advance experience preservation in the world, cultural heritages in Taiwan were mentioned, recommended, and exchanged. The most effective method to preserve woodblocks is to have professional, specialized, and technical units to protect the physical value of woodblocks; they need to be stored in relevant spaces; digitalized for protection and convenience; translated into Vietnamese and other languages for those care about woodblocks to be able to study the content of woodblocks;...Beside that, the necessity of editing and publishing books, introducing woodblocks' documents in Vinh Nghiem pagoda to researchers and public; to create the copies of Vinh Nghiem pagoda's woodblocks to display in specialized exhibition or events on World Memories of Vietnam; translating and searching for typical information, special details with historic and cultural meanings to Memorial Heritages in order to produce specialized and documentary films to introduce woodblocks of Vĩnh Nghiem pagoda; and digitalizing and uploading the information to the Internet...

About the exploitation of woodblocks in Vĩnh Nghiệm pagoda for religious tourism also discussed. Many researchers indicated that to develop the value of woodblocks, it is necessary to further strengthen international cooperation to work together, support each other in researching, exploiting valuable woodblocks of Vĩnh Nghiệm Pagoda.

*MAI LINH*

**Conference on: The implementation of international cooperation of sustainable employment in Vietnam – ILO, 2012-2016**

Recently, the Ministry of Labour – Invalids and Social Affairs in collaboration with International Labour Organization (ILO) held a Conference on “The Implementation of international cooperation on sustainable employment in Vietnam – ILO, 2012 – 2016” with the participation of many domestic and foreign representatives.

The Conference is to aim at spreading and implementing the international cooperation on sustainable employment and discussing the solution to improve the awareness of related parties for the cooperation from 2012 to 2016; the possibility of combining sustainable employment into the policies and regulations of Labour Law; the formation of networking between agencies who are responsible for executing laws and policies to promote sustainable employment in local regions.

At the Conference, representatives discussed the commitment to develop sustainable employment at international levels by approving the conventions of

ILO. At national level, all the countries agreed cooperative framework of promoting sustainable employment 2012-2016.

In the report of Ministry of Labour – Invalids and Social Affairs, after one year, the programme had effective analyses, data, strategies, and policies contribution to the development of labour market, sustainable employment; and create the conditions for enterprises, unofficial businesses to operate in a better business environment and expand the coverage of social security, to improve the relationship between representative organizations of employers and employees.

At the Conference, the participants indicated some shortages of the programme and also evaluated the strong points of implementation progress of sustainable employment programme in our country and recommended new and important contents to develop sustainable employment. The completion of regulations, policies and the improvement of labour standards, training, social protection, social security, and social talk are priorities; to adapt international standards aggressively and actively, to create conditions for enterprises to operate in better business environment, to access better services and working conditions for sustainable employment; to improve the partnership of the state, regions, and provinces/cities, to link the activities of Vietnam – ILO with ASEAN – ILO and to assign the responsibility of reporting major activities.

*TÚ AN*