Government effectively tapping land resources to raise agriculture production

**Vice-Senior General Maung Aye inspects Paunglaung Multi-purpose Dam Project, Bagan Palace Reconstruction Project**

YANGON, 11 May — Vice-Chairman of the State Peace and Development Council Deputy Commander-in-Chief of Defence Services Commander-in-Chief (Army) Vice-Senior General Maung Aye met with national entrepreneurs and inspected Paunglaung Multi-purpose Dam Project and Bagan Palace Reconstruction Project on 9 and 10 May.

Accompanied by Secretary-1 of the State Peace and Development Council Lt-Gen Soe Win, members of the State Peace and Development Council Lt-Gen Ye Myint and Lt-Gen Thiba Thura Tin Aung Myint Oo, Commander-in-Chief (Navy) Rear-Admiral Soe Hein, Commander-in-Chief (Air) Lt-Gen Myat Hein, Chairman of Mandalay Division Peace and Development Council Commander of Central Command Maj-Gen Ye Myint, ministers, deputy ministers, Chairman of Magway Division Peace and Development Council Col Zaw Min, officials of the State Peace and Development Council Office, departmental heads and national entrepreneurs, Vice-Senior General Maung Aye left Bagan-NyaungU by helicopter for Tebokan Land Reclamation Project of Asia World Co Ltd in Salin Township, Minbu District, Magway Division, at 7.30 am on 9 May.

At the briefing hall of the project, Vice-Senior General Maung Aye and party heard a report on the soil condition of Tebokan region, land reclamation work, efforts to irrigate crops, cultivation of seasonal and perennial crops, and plans to extend cultivation, presented by Managing Director of the company U Tun Myint Naing.

In his address, Vice-Senior General Maung Aye said that the Government has been issuing permits for national entrepreneurs, who have capital, to reclaim land for agriculture. Thus, there emerge large stretches of cultivation land in Ayeyawady, Yangon, and Magway divisions and major oil palm plots in Taninthayi Division.

The Government has been effectively tapping land resources to raise agriculture production, and to give encouragement to national entrepreneurs to become successful businessmen. Only if the national entrepreneurs can actually produce quality crops from their farms run with advanced machinery, will the nation’s agricultural production be able to penetrate foreign markets. Entrepreneurs should have the aim of exporting their crops abroad. As the soil of Magway Division is suitable for cotton, they should strive to set up large cotton farms. Cultivation of rice and cotton should be in accord with the soil condition of a particular area. The Government will provide irrigation facilities and all other assistance.

The nation’s agricultural production will develop in quality as well as in quantity only when there exist successful farms. All should always pay serious attention to the objective — The initiative to shape the national economy as well as in quality as well as in quantity only when there exist successful farms. All should always pay serious attention to the objective — The initiative to shape the national economy in accord with the new State Constitution in accord with the new State Constitution.

**Four economic objectives**

- Development of agriculture as the base and all-round development of other sectors of the economy as well
- Proper evolution of the market-oriented economic system
- Development of the economy inviting participation in terms of technical know-how and investments from sources inside the country and abroad
- The initiative to shape the national economy must be kept in the hands of the State and the national peoples

**Four social objectives**

- Uplift of the morale and morality of the entire nation
- Uplift of national prestige and integrity and preservation and safeguarding of cultural heritage and national character
- Uplift of dynamism of patriotic spirit
- Uplift of health, fitness and education standards of the entire nation

Khanti ca, patience; this is the way to auspiciousness.

**Four political objectives**

- Stability of the State, community peace and tranquility, prevalence of law and order
- National reconsolidation
- Emergence of a new enduring State Constitution
- Building of a new modern developed nation in accord with the new State Constitution

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Strive for Bago Division to become second granary of the State

Prime Minister General Khin Nyunt met with members of Toungoo District and Toungoo Township Peace and Development Councils, departmental personnel and members of social organizations at the meeting hall of the Central Command in Toungoo on 9 April. After hearing the reports on tasks being carried out on education, health, agriculture, forest reservation and reforestation, construction of roads and bridges and township development and fulfilling whatever was necessary, the Prime Minister said that, in accordance with the guidance of Head of State Senior General Than Shwe, all the necessary measures are being taken for Bago Division to become the second rice bowl after Ayeawaddy Division and therefore efforts are being made for the development of agriculture in this division. It is obvious that the Government is striving for the development of all regions of the Union. A large sum of money was spent on the construction of dams, sluice gates and river water pumping stations in Bago Division (East) and Bago Division (West). Now there is a total of 28 dams, one regulating, four diversion weirs, four sluice gates and 57 river water pumping stations in this entire division. Moreover, four weirs and one sluice gate are under construction and it is being planned to build another eight dams and 42 river water pumping stations.

It is necessary for Myanmar Agriculture Service, Settlements and Land Records Department and Irrigation Department to keep systematic records of land and agricultural statistics not only for the extension of sown acreage and boosting the yield of crops but also for the success of national economic plans in Bago Division.

To protect the environment of the Bago Ranges, Myanmar Agriculture Service and Forest Department are to carry out afforestation work. Moreover, to improve the transportation in the division, roads linking town and village and town, town and village are to be built after drawing systematic plans.

At a time when all the requirements are being fulfilled by the government, we would like to urge all those responsible in Bago Division to try their best for their region to become the second granary of the State.

Ambassador U Khin Maung Aye presents credentials to President of the Hellenic Republic

YANGON, 12 May — U Khin Maung Aye, Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the Union of Myanmar to the Hellenic Republic, presented his Credentials to Mr Constantinos Stephanopoulos, President of the Hellenic Republic, on 30 April 2004, in Athens — MNA

Plan of Action Workshop on National Surveillance System held

YANGON, 11 May — Plan of Action Workshop Development for Implementing the Recommendation of the Comprehensive Assessment of National Surveillance System, jointly organized by the Ministry of Health and WHO, was opened at Traders Hotel here this morning with an address by Minister Dr Kyaw Myint. It was also attended by Deputy Minister for Health Dr Mya Oo, the directors-general of the departments under the Ministry of Health and responsible officials, Dr Agostino Borra, Resident Representative of WHO, and officials. In his opening address, Dr Kyaw Myint said that surveillance is imperative in prevention and control of the spread of infectious diseases. The surveillance tasks were conducted previously in Myanmar. As a result, Myanmar has been able to prevent and control such infectious diseases as small pox, plague and diarrhoea. Moreover, there had been cooperation among health department, local authorities and social organizations when infectious diseases broke out, he added. Next, Dr Agostino Borra made an address. A total of 122 officials including the directors-general of departments under the Ministry of Health, medical superintendents and officials of WHO and social organizations participated in the workshop. — MNA

MRTV-4 to be aired soon

YANGON, 11 May —Myanmar Radio and Television will broadcast a new channel named MRTV-4 beginning from 15 May 2004. In this channel, entertainment and news programmes will be included besides the ones that give knowledge to the public. MMBox through which the MRTV-4 will be aired cares for daily news, three foreign video films, foreign TV series, music programmes, Karaoke songs, Myanmar TV and Myawady TV excerpts, newspapers, weekly journals and monthly magazines. Public can tune in to these programmes on the screen at any time. In addition, the programmes of Myanmar Radio, national races and Yangon City FM can be enjoyed through the MMBox. — MNA

Scholarships presented at MMU

YANGON, 11 May —A ceremony to present scholarships was held at the Myanmar Maritime University here this morning. Minister for Transport Maj-Gen Hla Myint Swe, Deputy Minister Col Nyun Tun Aung, Officer on Special Duty Brig-Gen Myo Tin, the MMU rector and guests were present on the occasion. On behalf of the wellwishers, Daw Thanda Myint presented scholarships to the winners. — MNA

MWJA conference hailed

YANGON, 11 May —To hail the Third Conference of the Central Body of the Myanmar Writers and Journalists Association, Mingala Taungnyunt Township WJA Patron U Kyaw Nyunt (Kyaw Nyunt Yi), wife Daw Wah Wah Kyaw donated K 250,000 for use in welfare services of Mingala Taungnyunt WJA. The ceremony to donate cash was held at Kyaukkasain grounds, the venue of the Central Body meeting at 1 pm today. Likewise, Daw Yin Wah Kyaw donated K 300,000 for use in welfare services of Phakant WJA. The ceremony to donate cash was held at Phakant Township WJA=" 
Baghdad bomb kills seven, Shiites clash with troops

BAGHDAD, 11 May — An explosion at a crowded market in Baghdad on Sunday killed at least seven Iraqis, including three policemen, and wounded 13, medical staff said.

Elsewhere, Shiite Mehdi Army militiamen clashed with US troops in the capital and in the holy city of Najaf to the south and also engaged in sporadic fighting with the British in Basra, where three soldiers were wounded in a grenade attack.

In the United States, where the administration is under fire during the presidential election campaign over abuse of Iraqi prisoners, Vice-President Dick Cheney spoke up for Defence Secretary Donald Rumsfeld, who has been under attack.

Speaking as new photographs were published apparently showing abuse of US-held prisoners in Iraq, US Senator Chuck Hagel, a Nebraska Republican, told CBS' "Face the Nation" programme that the pictures showed "imminent executions" and "torture" and "excessive use of force." He also said that Rumsfeld had "gone off his case".

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Hagel says "many, many" abuse investigations ongoing

WASHINGTON, 11 May — A leading Republican senator said on Sunday there are "many, many" criminal investigations going on of deaths in Afghanistan and Iraq "at the hands of United States officials".

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Hagel said he had not discussed matters presented to him as a member of the Senate Intelligence Committee but that he was "tired of hearing about the ongoing controversy over Iraqi prisoners of war at the Abu Ghraib Prison.

"There are many, many investigations ongoing now as a result of deaths in Afghanistan and Iraq, deaths that came at the hands of United States officials," Hagel said. He said he had not discussed matters presented to him as a member of the Senate Intelligence Committee but that he was "tired of hearing about the ongoing controversy over Iraqi prisoners of war at the Abu Ghraib Prison.

"We are trying to get the facts... The American people must have a clear honest assessment here if we are to retain confidence in our government," Hagel added.

"This is deeper and wider than I think most in this administration understand.

"On Friday, after daylong congressional hearings on the abuse controversy, Defence Secretary Donald Rumsfeld said a group of four former government and military officials would conduct a review of the Pentagon's investigation into abuse of Iraqi prisoners by US troops.

"So far, at least seven people have been criminally charged and six military personnel have been reprimanded. The Army said it was investigating possible abuse by US soldiers of 42 Iraqi civilians in addition to the prison probe.

"The scandal exploded last week with the release of photographs showing grinning US military personnel posing in front of naked detainees.

"On Sunday, the New Yorker magazine said it obtained photographs of what it described as a dog threatening a naked inmate at Abu Ghraib Prison, and another picture of the same man with blood streaming from his leg after he had apparently been bitten.

"We are trying to get the facts... The American people must have a clear honest assessment here if we are to retain confidence in our government," Hagel added.
Bomb explosion damages Iraqi oil pipeline

Baghdad, 11 May—Guerrillas bombed an oil pipeline in southern Iraq setting off a huge blaze and slashing daily Iraqi oil exports by about 25 percent, or 450,000 barrels per day, an official said Monday.

Guerrillas have often attacked the much smaller northern pipeline to Turkey but attacks against Iraq’s southern oil facilities, which account for almost 90 percent of the country’s exports, have been rare.

Militants set the bomb Saturday under the Faw oil pipeline, some 35 miles south of the main southern city of Basra, said an engineer at Iraq’s Southern Oil Company, speaking on condition of anonymity.

Firefighters have been fighting the blaze since it began, said Jabber Luyaibi, director general of Iraq’s Southern Oil Company.

Luyaibi said the blast damaged a 180-foot section of one of two pipelines that run from Basra to the Faw peninsula on the Gulf. The pipelines have a capacity of 2 million barrels per day.

“Any information we provide about success or failure of those attacks, particularly the details, can be used as a basis for information in future attacks,” Senor said at a press conference. Paul Hornell, head of energy research at Barclays Capital in London, said the blast is likely to cause only a temporary disruption of exports.

But he said the signifi-

ance of the attack is that “quite clearly, now the southern infrastructure is a target.”

Iraq exports some 1.65 million barrels per day from the south and another 200,000 barrels per day from the north through Turkey.

In late April, suicide bombers in boats attacked Iraqi pumping stations in the Gulf, briefly disrupting Iraqi oil exports.

Coal mine gas blast leaves two miners dead, three missing

Guangzhou, 11 May — A coal mine gas blast killed two miners and injured another two with missing limbs in Qunjiang County, south China’s Guangdong Province, Saturday evening.

The six miners were working in the shaft when the accident happened at the Laosting Coal Mine.

Rescue work is still going on to search for the missing miners, and efforts to deal with the aftermath of the accident are proceeding smoothly. — MNA/Xinhua

Chinese Premier calls for UN role in Iraq


After talks with British Prime Minister Tony Blair, Wen said it was important to hand power back to the Iraqis as soon as possible.

He declined, however, to comment on allegations that coalition troops tortured and mistreated Iraq prisoners of war.

“‘The unstable situation in Iraq, we feel very concerned and even worried,’” said Wen, in a joint news conference with Blair. “We must hand over the government back to the Iraqi people as soon as possible.”

We need to give the United Nations the leading role in the resolution of the Iraqi issue.”

Chinese Vice-President meets French guests

Beijing, 11 May—China values its relationship with France from the perspective, and will work with the French side to further upgrade the comprehensive and strategic partnership in accordance with the guideline of the Sino-French joint statement.

Chinese Vice-President Zeng Qinghong made the remarks when meeting here Sunday with Jean Besson, President of the France-China Amity Group of the French Senate and his party.

Zeng said that the Sino-French relations have been developing in a comprehensive, win-win manner, and the mutual trust in the political field and strategic cooperation between the two sides have been further consolidated.

Chinese President Hu Jintao paid a successful state visit to France in January and attended the opening ceremony of the year of French culture in China, which will advance the bilateral ties to a new height.

Besson said that France-China relations have maintained good momentum for development, and Chinese President Hu Jintao’s France visit early this year impressed the French people.

This year marks 40th anniversary of the establishment of the France-China diplomatic ties, and China has successfully held the year of Chinese culture in France, he added.

Besson noted that France and China have shared similar views on the international affairs, and he hopes that the two countries will further expand cooperation in the fields of energy resources and aviation.

Over 70 percent of US respondents say Iraqi abuse unjustified

Some directly blame Bush, Rumsfeld for incidents in prison

Baghdad, 11 May—Nearly three-quarters of Americans say the mistreatment of Iraqi prisoners by US soldiers depicted in widely broadcast photographs was unjustified under any circumstances, according to a CNN/USA Today/Gallup poll released Monday.

Nearly two-thirds of those surveyed said they believed the abuse, while President Bush and other top US officials have condemned, to be isolated incidents.

Far more blamed the soldiers’ superiors and military intelligence officers for the mistreatment than considered top officials such as Bush or Defence Secretary Donald Rumsfeld responsible.

Chinese Vice-President presides over US-China talks

Baghdad, 11 May—US-Led forces clash killing 18 in Baghdad blast

Baghdad, 11 May—US forces clashed with fighters loyal to Shi'ite cleric Moqtada al-Sadr in Baghdad's Sadr City suburb on Sunday and killed 18, a US military spokesman said.

Brigadier-General Mark Kimmitt said US-led forces had responded to reports that militiamen loyal to Sadr had set up roadblocks and attacked police stations in the district.

“Coalition forces have stabilized the situation at two Iraqi police stations in the district and have killed 18,” Kimmitt told a news conference.

Witnesses said Sadr militiamen had fired several mortar bombs at a government building and engaged in brief gunfights with American soldiers in different parts of the neighborhood.

Sadr, wanted by the United States for the murder of another cleric, launched a revolt against US-led forces in January. Iraqi US-led authorities have vowed to kill or capture the cleric, who is holed up in the Shiite holy city of Najaf, 100 miles south of Baghdad.

MNA/Reuters
Pressure mounts on Blair over Iraq abuse

LONDON, 11 May—Pressure mounted on Prime Minister Tony Blair on Sunday over allegations British troops abused Iraqi prisoners, with politicians demanding to know what action the government took over reports of mistreatment.

Blair said he was sorry for any mistreatment by British soldiers, but stopped short of admitting abuses had taken place.

“We’ve already made it absolutely clear we apologi- zed deeply to anyone who’s been mistreated by any of our soldiers. That is absolutely and totally unacceptable,” Blair told France 3 television on Sunday.

“We went to Iraq to end that.”

Blair made the com- ments after the government said the International Com- mittee of the Red Cross (ICRC) had raised concerns with it over the treatment of British-held prisoners in Baghdad.

Hounded by politicians of all parties, Defence Secr- etary Geoff Hoon agreed to make a statement to Parlia- ment on Monday.

Blair’s government has already been rocked by the suicide of Iraq weapons ex- pert David Kelly during a government inquiry into his death. Hoon came under intense pressure during the subsequent inquiry but survived media calls for his resignation.

The ICRC said on Friday it visits to detention centres in Iraq had revealed influn- gences of international trea- ties on prisoners of war that were “tawantum to tor- ture.”

It said the abuse reports mainly involved US troops, but it had given London a report raising concerns about British-run jails.

Former foreign secretary Robin Cook of Blair’s La- bour Party urged the gov- ernment on Sunday to pub- lish the ICRC report.

“They did, really we cannot see what independ- ent people are saying about the problem and how severe it is,” he told BBC Televi- sion.

The Ministry of Defence said the report was confiden- tial and that it had acted on the recommendations.

Blair said on Sunday any abuse was “inacceptable,” but it by British or US soldiers or anyone else in the coalition,” he told French LCI television on a visit to Paris.

MNA/Reuters

France steps up call for full Iraq sovereignty

PARIS, 11 May—President Jacques Chirac pressed French demands for a genuine return of sovereignty to Iraqis on Sunday, citing what he called the wave of resentment felt by its population against the US-led occupation.

Chirac made the call at an event in Paris with British Prime Minister Tony Blair. Without referring explicitly to the scandal over abuse by US soldiers of Iraqi prisoners, he warned of the risk of a back- lash by any people which had been hum-iliated.

“I think that today it is clear that a large majority of Iraqis resent the peacekeeping forces which they regard as an occupying force,” he told an audience of British and French students at an event to mark the event of the European Union.

“That is why it is very urgent to transfer, without any ambiguity, true sovereignty and powers to an Iraqi authority recognized as such by the Iraqi people,” said Chirac, who led international opposition to the war in Iraq.

The United States will keep some 135,000 troops in Iraq after June 30, when Washing- ton starts handing sovereignty back.

In a comment on world tensions later on, he added: “Every time you humiliate people, it is,” he told BBC Television.

But the reformist govern- ment has repeatedly assured the international community that Iran will continue to co- operate with the ICRC and will not pull out of the NPT.

IAEA chief Mohamed ElBaradei warned Iran on Thursday the world would not want forever for Tehran to divulge the full extent and nature of its nuclear pro- gramme.

Sino-Canadian cooperation project on CDM launched in N-W China

YINCHUAN, 11 May — A cooperation project between China and Canada on the clean development mechanism (CDM) was launched in northwest China’s Ningxia Hui Autonomous Region on Sunday.

This is the first Chinese region to devote to the reduction of greenhouse gas with donations from Canada, said Lu Xuedi, a research fellow of the Rural and Social Development Department under the Ministry of Science and Tech- nology, at a ceremony held Sunday in Yinchuan, capital of Ningxia. The CDM, defined in the Kyoto Protocol to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change signed in Japan in 1997, is a new international cooperation system under which, the developed countries provide funds and technical assistance to help developing countries in reduc- ing emissions of harmful greenhouse gases.

Statistics showed 80 percent of the carbon dioxide in the world are produced by developed countries. Con- sequently, the developed countries should shoulder principal responsibility for global climate changes.

MNA/Xinhua

US soldier to face May 19 trial for Iraq prison abuse

BAGHRAJ, 11 May — The first court martial of a US soldier charged with abusing Iraqi detainees in the Abu Ghraib prison west of Baghdad will start on 19 May and be opened to the public, a US military spokesman said on Sunday.

Specialist Jeremy Sivis was charged with maltreatment of detainees, conspiracy to maltreat subordinates and de- tainees and dereliction of duty for negligently failing to protect detainees from cruelty, abuse and maltreatment, he said.

“Court martials are open to the public,” and it would be held in Baghdad, subject to final approval, Brigadier-Gen- eral Mark Kimmitt told a news conference.

“It’s our desire to make the upcoming court mar- tials as accessible as possible,” Kimmitt said at the Conference Centre in the Green Zone — the former Saddam Hussein presidential complex where the US-led administration is housed.

The court martial could be held in the heavily guarded Conference Centre to give media maximum access, Kimmitt said.

MNA/Reuters

Ex-Iran envoy to IAEA suggests pulling out of NPT

TEHRAN, 11 May — Iran should consider withdrawing from the Nuclear Non- Proliferation Treaty (NPT), which in not beneficial for the country, a former Iranian representative to the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) was quoted as saying in the Sharq newspaper.

Iran, through its mem- bership (of the NPT), has gained nothing but pressure and it is not beneficial at all for Iran,” he said.

MNA/Reuters

China to launch new air flight to Tajikistan

Urumqii, 11 May—A new air route will be launched Monday, linking Urumqi, capital of Xinjiang in north- west China, with the Tajik capital Dushanbe to serve the growing number of Tajik tourists to China.

The weekly flight, available every Monday, is oper- ated by the Xinjiang comp- any of China’s Southern Airline. This is the sixth air route the Xinjiang Company runs to Central Asian coun- tries, following the ones to Almat-A of Kazakhstan and Bishkek of Kyrgyzstan.

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MNA/Reuters

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MNA/Xinhua
Red Cross faces dilemma in Iraq, prisons worldwide

**GENEVA, 11 May**— The International Committee of the Red Cross, which knew firsthand from Iraqi prisoners about US abuse for months, faces a daily dilemma of whether to go public with its findings.

The humanitarian agency, whose officials quietly visit 460,000 inmates in 80 countries each year, informs detaining authorities about its concerns over treatment and conditions.

The 141-year-old agency keeps a public silence about what it hears from detainees as the price for gaining access to detainees, many of whom languish in dark and dirty jails long after conflicts disappear from the front pages.

But the ICRC has come under pressure for some soul-searching since a confidential report, based on visits to some of the 10,000 Iraqis held by US and British forces, surfaced on Friday in the US Wall Street Journal without its consent.

The ICRC report, handed to US authorities in February following oral reports, confirmed that US troops had subjected Iraqi prisoners to degrading treatment, sometimes “tantamount to torture”, in a system of abuse widespread throughout 2003.

The leaked report—describing brutal beatings to obtain confessions and firing on unarmed prisoners from watchtowers—caused some deaths—added to the worldwide scandal which broke with the release of photographs showing brutal humiliation of Iraqi inmates in Abu Ghraib, a US-run jail near Baghdad.

Pierre Krahenbühl, ICRC director of operations, defended the agency’s focus on confidential dialogue rather than public denunciation at a hastily-called news conference last Friday.

But he conceded the dilemma facing the Geneva-based body.

“We have experienced it and lived it elsewhere. There are moments where of course as human beings, we would like to stand up and speak out, he said. “It is important that we continue to have access to these people, no matter how difficult the dilemma seems...What we are looking for is impact.”

The Swiss, who worked for the ICRC during the Bosnian war in Banja Luka and later in Kosovo, has made many a prison visit.

“Confidentiality is a vital element of our approach. It is needed to establish meaningful working relationship with the authorities and build trust with the prisoners and authorities,” Krahenbühl said.

The ICRC says it does not allow itself to be swayed by the media or political pressure to reveal violations of international humanitarian law under the Geneva Conventions—MNA/Reuters.

Malaysia urges US to ensure no recurrence of abusing prisoners

**KUALA LUMPUR, 11 May**— Malaysian Prime Minister Abdullah Ahmad Badawi Sunday urged the United States to ensure that cases of abuse of Iraqi prisoners such as in the Abu Ghraib prison in Baghdad would not recur.

The Prime Minister said this could be done if the United States gave a directive to this effect to its military forces.

He said this when asked to comment on US President George W. Bush’s apology over the abuse of the prisoners by US soldiers.

On Saturday, Deputy Prime Minister Najib Tun Abdul Razak said it was not enough for United States President George W. Bush to sack Rumsfeld without taking stern action to address the abuse of Iraqi prisoners by US soldiers.

The US leader should take sterner action, including reviewing the system of treating prisoners of war by the US military forces, because these were not isolated incidents, the Deputy Prime Minister added.

“Those involved should be severely punished but the overall treatment of prisoners should also be reviewed by the US Government,” he said.

Najib said the United States’ credibility and image as a human rights champion had been dented and questioned by the international community.

Bush had, for the first time on Thursday, publicly apologized for the humiliation suffered by the Iraqi prisoners since the abuse of the detainees was exposed last week.

The local newspapers reported that besides apologizing, Bush had also blamed US Defence Secretary Donald Rumsfeld for not informing him earlier about the problem at the Abu Ghraib prison outside Baghdad.

Bush was however reported to have resisted pressure from various parties to sack Rumsfeld or demand his resignation.

Since last week the media has been splashed with pictures of Iraqi prisoners being tortured or humiliated, including being stripped naked, by personnel of the occupying forces.

**KARACAS (Venezuela), 11 May**—Venezuelan President Hugo Chavez on Sunday condemned the United States as a “terrorist state” for toughening sanctions against Cuba and said his government would increase its trade and cooperation with the Communist-ruled island.

In a television broadcast, the left-wing Venezuelan leader attacked US measures announced Thursday to reduce the flow of dollars to cash-strapped Cuba and to increase support for internal oppositions of President Fidel Castro.

“Castro made many a prison visit. But he conceded the ‘dilemma facing the Geneva-based body.’

“The ICRC says it does not allow itself to be swayed by the media or political pressure to reveal violations of international humanitarian law under the Geneva Conventions—MNA/Reuters.
Efficient use of electricity

- Use daylight as the main source of light
- Use the least possible amount of electricity only if there is not enough natural light
- Use the least possible amount of electricity required in production and service enterprises
- Preventing waste of electricity benefits the user and others

There are about 500,000 households using electricity in Yangon. Thus, saving a four-foot fluorescent lamp everyday by each household amounts to saving power that is equal to the capacity a 20-megawatt power station can supply.

All this needs to be known

- Do not be frightened whenever intimidated
- Do not be bolstered whenever flattered
- Do not be softened whenever appeared

Myanmar Products Expo 2004 to be held in Lashio

YANGON, 8 May — The Myanmar Products Expo 2004 will be held in Nan Haewin Garden in Lashio from 15 to 19 May by the Dragon Exhibition Ltd. Local and foreign cosmetics, consumer goods, textiles, clothes, fashions, electronic items, household goods, stationery, medicines, etc will be put on display. — MNA

Wellwishers invited for sinking tube-wells

YANGON, 11 May— The Development Affairs Committees under the Ministry for Progress of Border Areas and National Races and Development Affairs are making concerted efforts in sinking tube-wells in order to get sufficient fresh water in rural areas in States and Divisions where water is scarce. One 200 feet deep two-inch diameter tube-well costs K 350,000; one 400 feet deep two-inch diameter tube-well costs K 500,000; and one 200 feet deep four-inch diameter tube-well costs K 500,000.

Those wishing to donate cash for the tube-well sinking projects for rural areas may contact the Director-General (Tel: 01-245420 & 253088), the Deputy Director-General (Tel: 01-240118), the Director (Engineering) (Tel: 01-261967), the Directors (Sagay Division Development Affairs Committee) (Tel: 071-21012), the Director (Magway Division Development Affairs Committee) (Tel: 063-23164) and the Director (Mandalay Division Development Affairs Committee) (Tel: 02-54657). MNA

Get a wrong view on malaria. Human beings can be infected with malaria by breathing in from muddy ponds. Even if he fills up all the ponds with earth and takes measures for proper flow of all small water sources in malaria-prone areas, resulting in a decrease in breeding of mosquitoes. His idea was wrong, but his measures led to a fall in the rate of malaria outbreaks.

Among the sources that malarial parasites spread from are ponds and streams and drains where water flows gently. When the mosquito larvae in such sources grow to mosquitoes, they hide near these sources. And when people come to these places to drink stream water or take a bath, surely they may be bitten by the mosquitoes, and they are infected with malaria. The symptoms of malaria show over a week after being bitten by malaria-carrying Anopheles mosquitoes. At that time, they cannot remember that they were bitten by mosquitoes over one week ago but what they remember was that they drank stream water and took a bath in the stream.

We can notice that the outbreak rate of malaria is high when there is a greater number of mosquitoes. So in the rainy season when the number of mosquitoes sharply increases, there grows the occurrence of malaria. And it is crystal clear that local people in Yangon and Mandalay eat banana, papaya and bamboo shoots but they do not get malaria. The people who live in malaria-prone regions get immune to the malarial parasites.

The malaria patients do not take drugs systematically. Although the body temperature falls, malaria has not been cured well. In the meantime, the parasites increase. So, a few days after they have eaten banana, papaya and bamboo shoot, consuming the PABA, the malarial parasites breed on a large scale, and the disease resurfaces. Thus, the one who has been cured properly and systematically does not get malaria by eating banana, papaya and bamboo shoot or any meals.

However, many people are confused in this point and are influenced by wrong ideas. Some people are accustomed to hearing that malaria is caused by malarial parasites. When asked how one could get malaria, they would answer that it was because of being bitten by mosquitoes. But, asked how to prevent the disease, they would answer that they could prevent the disease by drinking boiled water.

Whenever, I visited a village or I was at a meeting, I repeatedly gave educative talks on malaria to the villagers. Only when they realize the cause of the disease, will it be easy to make further clarifications to malaria.

Therefore, I would like to urge all to effectively prevent the fatal disease by avoiding bites by para-malaria-carrying mosquitoes and suppressing the mosquitoes.

U Zaw Myint (Malaria)

Minister Brig-Gen Thein Aung and guests view round equipment of UTM system — MNA

Measures for adopting UTM system

YANGON, 11 May— A meeting to coordinate measures for adopting UTM system by the Survey Department of the Ministry of Forestry was held this morning at the ministry here. Minister for Forestry Brig-Gen Thein Aung, senior Tatmadaw officers, departmental officials and guests attended it. After the meeting, the minister and officials viewed round the aerial photos and maps. — MNA

THE NEW LIGHT OF MYANMAR Wednesday, 12 May, 2004

Malaria, a fatal disease

Dr Saw Lwin (Malaria)

Got a wrong view on malaria that human beings could be infected with malaria by breathing air from muddy ponds. (Mal = bad; aria = air. Malaria = bad air). So, he fills up all the ponds with earth and takes measures for proper flow of all small water sources in malaria-prone areas, resulting in a decrease in breeding of mosquitoes. His idea was wrong, but his measures led to a fall in the rate of malaria outbreaks.

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(Translation: MS)
Government effectively tapping land resources...

(from page 1)

Vice-Senior General Maung Aye gave instructions.

On arrival at a cotton farm of the Tatmadaw in Pwintbyu Township, Vice-Senior General Maung Aye and party were welcomed by Vice-Quartermaster-General Maj-Gen Htin Aung Kyaw, Commander of No 88 LID Col Aung Than Htut and officials.

Maj-Gen Htin Aung Kyaw reported to Vice-Senior General Maung Aye on salient points of township, cultivation of beans and pulses and arrangements for extended cultivation of cotton. Vice-Senior General Maung Aye gave necessary instructions and signed in the visitors' book there.

They arrived back at Tatmadaw cotton farm (Pwintbyu).

In the afternoon, they proceeded to Paunglaung Hydel-power Project (upper Paunglaung) in Pyinmana Township, Mandalay Division. Officials of Hydel-power Department reported on feasibility study for the project, current of Paunglaung River and potential capacity of generating 85 megawatts.

Minister for Electric Power Maj-Gen Tin Htut reported on implementation of the project, and preparatory measures for implementation of upper Paunglaung and Nancha hydel-power projects. In response to the reports, Vice-Senior General Maung Aye said that Paunglaung Hydel-power Project is being implemented with the assistance of the Ministry of Agriculture and Irrigation and the Ministry of Electric Power.

Afterwards, Vice-Senior General Maung Aye and party inspected construction of the embankment. Officials of the Irrigation Department conducted them round the project site. They also inspected construction tasks. Vice-Senior General Maung Aye and party inspected installation of generators at the underground powerhouse.

Vice-Senior General Maung Aye cordially greeted experts of YMEC Co of the People's Republic of China participating in construction of power station.

Vice-Senior General Maung Aye and party revisited back in Bagan-NyaungU in the evening. Paunglaung Multi-purpose Dam Project is being implemented on Paunglaung River near Kyitgaung-Khawma Village, ten miles east of Pyinmana.

Four 70-megawatt turbines will be assembled in the underground powerhouse.

The project is being undertaken with the aim of generating power, preventing floods and irrigating 35,000 acres of farmlands. Yesterday, Vice-Senior General Maung Aye and party went to the site of Arimaddanapura Bagan golden palace of Maharaza Thuri Aniroda Deva King Anawrahta.

Minister for Culture Maj-Gen Kyi Aung said Bagan golden palace construction works of King Anawrahta who built the first kingdom of Myanmar are being carried out in the compound of the ancient Bagan city under the guidance of the Head of State. He said excavation in the compound of the wall of Bagan ancient city started in May 2003. Foundations, pillars and wide basement which historians accepted as the palace of King Anawrahta, urns of Pyu period and pieces of broken pots were excavated and construction works of Bagan golden palace are to be implemented.

Myanmar architecture Taingwady U Win Maung reported on historical facts about the palace and architect U Myint Thaw on architectural design of the palace and tasks to be undertaken.

Vice-Senior General Maung Aye gave instructions on construction of the magnificent golden palace of the King Anawrahta which the entire people are to be proud of in accord with the historical evidences.

Next, Vice-Senior General Maung Aye inspected the scale model of Arimaddanapura Bagan golden palace.

Htoo Trading Co Ltd will construct the palace which includes 12 royal chambers and ten staircases.

Vice-Senior General Maung Aye and party visited Bagan Archaeological Museum and inspected Bagan Nanmyo booth and the scale model of the palace.

He then gave necessary instructions.

Vice-Senior General Maung Aye and party arrived back here in the evening.
All delegates are believed …

and to enhance their vision, and to develop human re-
sources including the na-
tion-building intellectuals and artists, who are the
basic requirements for social development of the
nation. Furthermore, litera-
ture plays a vital role in en-
hancing the knowledge and
vision of the people, their
happiness and their mental
pros-
tress. Hence, the Government
honours the invaluable
strength and vitality of lit-
erature, and is supporting
and protecting it in all as-
pects for the emergence of a
literary structure serving
the national interest to raise
the standard of the people.

In addition to rendering all-
round assistance for flour-
ishing and raising the stand-
ard of Myanmar literature, the
Government is also lay-
ing a firm foundation ensur-
ing a secure and high-stand-
ing art and style of writing.

Of the 1,619 self-reliant libraries
have also been set up in vil-
lages and wards.

The departmental publi-
lishing enterprises also print
and distribute newspapers
and journals as well as
books that mirror and high-
light the State’s policies and
books on cultural and social
affairs. The newspapers are
being published at subregional
cities and divisions and
involve the same day so that
they can be distributed easily
to remote regions of the
Un-
ion. To speak of private
publishing industries, there
were a total of 5,037 print-
ning houses and 759 publish-
ers up to the dawn of the
year 2004, according to the
statistics of the Central Reg-
istration Board of Printers
and Publishers. Altogether
9,759 titles of books on
various topics were publi-
cished in 2003 while 102
issues of monthly magazines
and 150 monthly magazines
are in regular circula-
at. At such an opportune
time when the world of
Myanmar literature is
booming due to the encour-
gement given by the Gov-
ernment, it is incumbent
upon the literati, publishers
and subpublishers to work
in harmony to keep
Myanmar literature on the
right track of nationalism
and to see that it serves
the interest of own race accord-
ing to its fine tradition.

Owing to the fast develop-
ment of the information and
communication tech-
nologies, every nation of
the world is in the process of
globalization. At such a
time like this, some big na-
tions are also making use of
the same technologies and
wealth have to come
the mass media and to
influence the overwhelming the develop-

ing countries including
Myanmar ideologically. It is
necessary for the literati
to be well aware of it. Also
apparent are the efforts to
infiltrate their western char-
acter from cultural, eco-
nomic and social fronts to
the decorum of dress into
the eastern countries with
the use of effective mass
media.

At such a time, the literati
therefore should motivate
with the literary might the
people, especially the
young, to enable them to
cherish and uplift the high
and lofty culture and polite
traits, the decorum of dress,
manner and behaviour con-
istent with ethics.

In particular, the literati
should strive with the liter-
ary might to arm the youths
of the new generation with
broader scope of knowl-
edge, deep consideration,
correct outlook on interna-
tional affairs with historical
background and, construc-
tive attitude to see the truth.

At such a time when some
big powers are applying the
mass media in an improper way and attempting to instil
their ideology on the cul-
tural and social fronts cov-
ertly, all the literati are to
work hard in unity, using
the strength of literature to
instil in the entire mass of
Myanmar people patriotic
sense, national outlook,
and nationalistic fervour.

I would like to urge all
the central body members to
unitedly strive for flourish-
ing of MWJA which is tak-
ing a leading role in organ-
izing the literati as a con-
solidated national force.

Nowadays, the govern-
ment, based on the na-
stional strength and force,
is step by step implement-
ing the seven-point policy
programme that will raise
the prestige of the nation
and enable it to stand tall
among nations of the world
as an independent
strive for the Union of
Myanmar to stand tall
among nations of the world
with high prestige, to uplift
the morale and morality of
the entire citizens and to
promote the nationalistic
fervour of the citizens
through literature; to strive
to uplift the strength of na-

tional literature to be able
to guard against the infiltration of alien culture and their
acts of sabotage using infor-
mation and communication
technology and to make ef-
forts for successful imple-
mentation of the seven-
point policy programme that
will take shape a peaceful,
modern, developed and dis-
cipline-flourishing demo-
cratic nation, the national
goal.

Next, Prime Minister
Khin Nyunt cordially
greeted the literati, members of Central Body of
MWJA and observed documentary photos of
Prime Minister. Prime
Minister Khin Nyunt and
party had photo taken with
the Chairman of MWJA and
CEC members. — MNA

Prime Minister General Khin Nyunt cordially greets doyen literati. — MNA

Third Central Body Meeting of Myanmar Writers and Journalists Association begins

YANGON, 11 May — The Third Central Body Meet-
ing of Myanmar Writers and Journalists Association
was opened at Pyidaungsu
Hall on Kyakkaasan Ground
here at noon today.

It was attended by
Deputy Ministers for Infor-
mation U Thein Sein and
Brig-Gen Aung Thein,
MWJA Chairman U Hla
Myaing (Ko Hsaung), CEC
members, Central Body
members, observers and
guests.

MWJA Chairman U Hla
Myaing (Ko Hsaung) chair-
ed the meeting, and
Joint-Secretary U Myint
Kywe (Maung Maung Kywe)
acted as master of ceremo-
nies. The master of

ceremonies announced
the start of the meeting.

Next, Chairman U Hla
Myaing (Ko Hsaung) gave
an opening speech,
Myanmar Women’s Affairs
Federation, Myanmar
Picture Asiasoy, Myanmar
Music Asiasoy, Myanmar
Traditional Artists and
Artisans Asiasoy, Myanmar
Sports Writers Federation
and Myanmar Printing
Entrepreneurs Association.

Secretary of the central
executive committee of the
MWJA U Hla Tun (Hla
Tun-Twintay) and Central
Executive Committee mem-
er U Myo Thant (Maung
Hsu Shin) submitted the
report of the committee
and the meeting adjourned.

At the second session of
the meeting, MWJA Vice
Chairman-2 treasurer
U Than Maung (Than Maung)
and CEC member U Khin
Maung Tun (Khin Maung
Tun-Lannadaw) also sub-
mitted the financial report
2002-2003 and audit report
respectively.

CEC Member U Than
Hlaing (Takkatho Thinkha),
U Ohn Maung (Myinn
Maung Naing Moi), CEC
Members U Tin Hlaing
(Le Dwin Thar Saw Chit)
and Daw Cho Cho Tin (Ma
Sanda) also tabled the mo-
tions 1, 2, 3 and 4 respec-
tively.

The meeting continues
till 13 May.

Prime Minister General Khin Nyunt views photos of activities of MWJA. — MNA

MWJA Chairman U Hla Myaing (Ko Hsaung) speaks at the opening of the third meeting of the Central Body of Myanmar Writers and Journalists Association. — MNA

Prime Minister General Khin Nyunt views photos of activities of MWJA. — MNA

Prime Minister Khin Nyunt cordially greets doyen literati. — MNA

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Chairman of National Health Committee Prime Minister General Khin Nyunt attends dinner hosted to outstanding Red Cross members

YANGON, 11 May — A ceremony to host dinner to the outstanding Red Cross members selected from the states and divisions attended the Get-Together of Outstanding Red Cross Members’ Myanmar Red Cross Society 2004 was held at Institute of Nursing (Yangon) this evening. Chairman of National Health Committee Prime Minister General Khin Nyunt attended the ceremony.

Prime Minister General Khin Nyunt addresses the dinner hosted in honour of outstanding Red Cross members. MNA

Lt-Gen Khin Maung Than attends consecration of historic Myatsssaw Nyinvaung Pagoda in Toungoo

YANGON, 11 May — The consecration ceremony of historic Myatsssaw Nyinvaung Pagoda in Toungoo, Bago Division was held at the platform of the pagoda yesterday morning, attended by members of the Sangha led by President Sayadaw of the Pagoda Bhaddanta Silavatama. Recently, Chairman of the Myanmar Red Cross Society Dr Kyaw Win invested the congregation with the Nine Precepts.

Lt-Gen Khin Maung Than, Commander Maj-Gen Ko Ko and party inspected the tarred Toungoo-Htakanbintar-Zayaygyi road. After that, they proceeded to Zayaygyi Station Hospital in Htakanbintar Township where Station Medical Officer Dr Nay Win Thwin reported on the salient points of the hospital to Lt-Gen Khin Maung Than who gave necessary instructions.

Lt-Gen Khin Maung Than and party met with Manager Engineer of Bago Division Public Works U Tin Tun and officials who are engaged in construction of Toungoo-Kyaykkyi-Sittoung-Moppalin road at the local battalion in Zayaygyi Village and gave instructions. Next, Lt-Gen Khin Maung Than, the commander and party inspected the 18-mile gravel road between Zayaygyi and Mone by car.

After inspecting the hospital, Lt-Gen Khin Maung Than enquired after the ward patients. — MNA

Lt-Gen Maung Bo inspects construction of Thanlwin Bridge (Mawlamyine)

YANGON, 10 May — Member of the State Peace and Development Council Lt-Gen Maung Bo of the Ministry of Defence, Chairman of Mon State Peace and Development Council Commander of South East Command Maj-Gen Thura Miyo Aynt and officials inspected construction of four-star five-storey Mawlamyine Strand Hotel in Mawlamyine on 9 May. Assistant General Manager of Htoo Trading Co Ltd U Aung Naing Oo reported on work. Lt-Gen Maung Bo, the commander and party inspected paving of Strand Road. They went to the site of construction of Thanlwin Bridge (Mawlamyine). Managing Director of Public Works U Han Zaw and senior engineer reported on progress of work.

Lt-Gen Maung Bo also visited the Buddha Image in Maha Myatmuni Pagoda and Samathala chamber built in commemoration of its centenary. Lt-Gen Maung Bo met departmental officials at Yangon City Development Committee Office. He explained implementation of the projects for national development, serving their duty conscientiously and participating in the respective roles in the interest of the nation and people. — MNA

Yangon City upgrading tasks inspected

YANGON, 11 May — Chairman of Yangon Division Peace and Development Council Commander of Yangon Command Maj-Gen Miyo Sae and Chairman of Yangon City Development Committee Mayor Brig-Gen Aung Thein Lin inspected tasks being carried out by the YCDC for upgrading of the roads in Yangon City this morning.

The commander and the mayor looked into laying of concrete piles on the platforms at the corner of Kaba Aye Pagoda Road and University Avenue Road in Bahan Township. Officials reported on work progress and future tasks.

Next, they inspected laying of Yadanar Street in South Okkalapa Township, Yangon East District. During the inspection, they gave instructions on emphasis to be placed on meeting the set standard and timely completion of the projects in upgrading Yangon City. — MNA

Chairman of National Health Committee Prime Minister General Khin Nyunt attends dinner hosted to outstanding Red Cross members

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Vice-Chairmen of National Health Committee Secretary-1 of the State Peace and Development Council Lt-Gen Soe Win and Secretary-2 of the State Peace and Development Council Lt-Gen Thein Sein attended the ceremony.

Ministry of Defence, Chairman of Ngapali Division Peace and Development Council Commander Maj-Gen Myint Swe, Ministers, the Yangon Mayor, Deputy Ministers, officials of State Peace and Development Council Office, departmental heads, social organizations and officials of the ICRC and the FRRC, members of the Central Council of Myanmar Red Cross Society, the Chairman and CEC members of the Myanmar Red Cross Society, members of Supervisory Committee for Red Cross in states and divisions, outstanding members of Red Cross and guests.

Under the programme, Chairman of National Health Committee Prime Minister General Khin Nyunt and party enjoyed the dinner together with the outstanding Red Cross members. Next, Chairman of the Myanmar Red Cross Society Dr Kyaw Win and resident representative of the FRRC Ms Joanna Maclean presented the First Aid Kids to the Prime Minister Dr Kyaw Win Moe.

On behalf of the outstanding Red Cross members, outstanding Red Cross member Ma Htwe Htwe Hlaing of Kayin State spoke words of thanks. Then, Chairman of the Myanmar Red Cross Society Dr Kyaw Win extended greetings. After the members of the MRC and school Red Cross Association had entertained with songs and educative drama, the ceremony ended. After the ceremony, Prime Minister General Khin Nyunt cordially greeted the outstanding Red Cross members. — MNA

Regional development tasks inspected in Mongkai

YANGON, 11 May — Member of the State Peace and Development Council Lt-Gen Aung Htwe of the Ministry of Defence, Chairman of Kayin State Peace and Development Council, Chairman of the Kayin State Peace and Development Council Commander of Southern Command Maj-Gen Ko Ko and senior military officers, Bago Division PDC Secretary Lt-Gen Thein Lwin, Bago Division level departmental officials, local authorities and wellwishers.

Development tasks for upgrading of the hospital were reported on progress of work.

The ceremony ended with the three-time recitation of Buddha Nine Precepts.

Next, Sayadaws consecrated the pagoda and the ceremony ended with the three-time recitation of Buddha Nine Precepts.

C-in-C (Air)’s shield table tennis tourney concludes

YANGON, 10 May — The final event of the Commander-in-Chief (Air)’s shield for table tennis tourney in conjunction with prize presentation ceremony took place at Thura Ohn Khine hall of Mektila Air Base yesterday morning, attended by Commanders of No 99 LID 17 Flying Wing T Mobile Unit O Lwin, Mektila Station Commander Brig-Gen Khin Maung Aye, Base Commander Brig-Gen Khin Maung Tin of Flying Training Base, Base Commander Col Thura Kyaw Maung Win of Ground Training Base and other ranks and spectators.

After the final events, officials concerned presented the first prize, the second and the third to the winners in the single and double events. On behalf of the Commander-in-Chief (Air)’s Shield Committee, Brig-Gen Khin Maung Tin presented the shield to officials concerned of Flying Training Base team.

Delegation leaves for ASEAN Labour Ministers’ meeting

YANGON, 11 May — The Myanmar delegation led by Labour Minister U Tin Win left here by air this morning to attend 18th ASEAN Labour Ministers’ meeting to be held in Brunei Darussalam.

The Myanmar delegation was seen off at the Yangon International Airport by Minister for Cooperatives Maj-Gen Htay Oo, Minister at Prime Minister’s Office U Than Shwe, Deputy Minister for Labour Brig-Gen Win Sein officials concerned under the ministry and families.

Other delegation members are Director-General for Labour Department U Soe Nyunt and Assistant Director U Kyaw Kyaw. — MNA

Lt-Gen Khin Maung Than and party inspected paving of road of approach structure and laying of slabs on Mawlamyine side.

Lt-Gen Khin Maung Than attended the ceremony in the presence of Khin Maung Than and party.

Lt-Gen Khin Maung Than and party arrived at the site. After inspecting the structure and laying of slabs, Lt-Gen Khin Maung Than and party inspected the project in progress.
Kerry raps Bush on health costs

Evanston, (Pennsylvania), 11 May — Democratic presidential candidate John Kerry will launch a week-long assault against President George W. Bush over skyrocketing health care costs, as part of a new push to battleground states to counter Republican inroads with seniors.

Bush had hoped enactment of his plan, adding a prescription drug benefit to Medicare would shoo up his standing with seniors, a critical voting bloc in November’s presidential election.

But since signing the legislation months ago, because of the centerpiece of Bush’s health care agenda has been embroiled in controversy, from beamless arguments to revelations it will cost one-third more than the 400-billion-US-dollar anticipated.

Kerry will turn his focus to the health care issue, which consistently ranks as a top concern of voters and particularly seniors.

In an address to nursing students at Pennsylvania’s Edinson University, Kerry will warn that health care costs are reducing across-is qualified as a three-time as fast as wages in the last year.

And it’s not acceptable to do nothing while families lose their savings, workers lose their jobs, and businesses close their doors due to the high cost of health care.” Kerry said in a statement previewing his speech.

A report by the Kerry campaign estimated that total Medicare premiums have increased by 2.777-US dollars in the last four years, and that Americans now pay more for pharmacy insurance than people in any other country.

As these costs have risen, US employers have warned that health care costs have become a competitive disadvantage and have responded by slowing hiring and shifting to more part-time and temporary workers, the campaign said.

Kerry has called for repeal of the Bush tax cuts for Americans earning more than 200,000-US dollars a year in order to pay for his 10-year, 650-billion-US-dollar health care plan.

Kerry’s campaign said his plan will save employees and employers 100 US dollars in premiums a year.

But it could be an uphill fight for Kerry.

Last week, the Bush Administration rolled out its discount drug card programme, promising savings to 41 million elderly and disabled Medicare recipients.

Kerry has blasted the programme and called for cheaper drugs to be imported from Canada.

MNA/Reuters

Rafsanjani slams US soldiers’ abuses of Iraqi captives

Tehran, 11 May — Former Iranian president Akbar Hashemi Rafsanjani Sunday condemned US troops’ abuses of prisoners, describing them as “abominable”, the official IRNA news agency reported.

“Humanity feels ashamed by all the corruption, chaos and bloodshed, even though the US boasts of freedom there,” said Rafsanjani, now chairman of Iran’s Expediency Council.

MNA/Reuters

Arab resolution urges UN to help end US-led occupation

Cairo, 11 May — Arab foreign ministers have finalized a draft resolution on the Iraq issue that urged the UN Security Council to take measures to end US-led occupation as soon as possible, Egypt’s official MENA news agency reported Sunday.

The draft resolution, prepared by the ministers at their current meetings at the Arab League headquarters in Cairo, is to be referred to a summit of their leaders later this month, MENA said, quoting Arab diplomats sources. The draft walls all relevant UN Security Council resolutions, particularly those calling for a timetable to transfer power to the Iraqi people, the report said. The document also stresses the “importance of preserving Iraq’s territorial integrity, respect for Iraq’s sovereignty and unity and commitment not to interfere in its internal affairs”.

Meanwhile, the draft resolution urges the Iraqis to adopt political reforms and coordinate their efforts to support the government in its efforts to provide education and health care services to its people. It also calls on the Arab League to provide humanitarian aid to the Iraqi people.

MNA/Reuters

Iraq southern oil exports cut by pipeline sabotage

Basra, 11 May — A sabotage attack against a southern pipeline has reduced Iraq’s oil exports to the Gulf, the South Oil Company president said on Monday.

“The situation is not good,” Jabar al-Leaby, president of the South Oil Company, told Reuters, but declined to say how much oil was still being exported.

Leaby said the attack affected flows to the Basra terminal, the export point for most of Iraq’s 1.8 million barrels per day of overseas sales — and the only means of earning foreign currency.

The attack came about two weeks after Western forces occupying southern Iraq foiled suicide boat attacks on oil tankers at the Basra terminal.

Violence has intensified in southern Iraq in recent weeks after occupying forces cracked down on followers of Shiite leader Moqtada al-Sadr. — MNA/Reuters

GCC to publish anti-terror pact

Kuwait Ctr, 11 May — Kuwaiti Foreign Minister Ahmad Nokrash Al-Ayiti on Sunday announced formation of a new committee in which he is the secretary-general of the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC), denies any secret involved in the GCC anti-terrorism pact, which was recently signed by ministers of interior of the six member states.

The agreement will be published and handed out to international organizations soon, the United Nations (UN) does not recognize any secret pact or agreement, Kuwaiti News Agency quoted Al-Ayiti as saying.

Al-Ayiti emphasized that the GCC pact is similar to other international agreements that address the growing danger of terror threats around the world.

Signed on May 4, the GCC agreement provides clear, firm, explanations of terror organizations or cells, as well as lists of funding activities that help provide assistance to such terrorism operations, he explained.

Protection issues, particularly focused on inter-GCC cooperation, are also addressed in the pact, as well as legal and judicial aspects of the matter, Al-Ayiti added.

In regards to political crimes, the GCC chief said that this is an issue that is also covered by the agreement, including extradition policies that are built on international law.

The GCC pact, signed in the fifth GCC Interior Ministers consultative meeting held in Kuwait last week, will be active 30 days after it is officially ratified by a two-thirds majority of the six member states, then the UN and other regional organizations will be informed of the agreement.

MNA/Reuters

UAE’s company wins Best Cargo Airline award

Abu Dhabi, 11 May — Emirates SkyCargo of the United Arab Emirates (UAE) won the award for Best Cargo Airline to the Middle East, for the 16th time in a row, a local news agency reported Sunday.

Emirates SkyCargo, UAE’s Dubai-based cargo division of the international carrier, continues its rapid expansion to all corners of the world.

It already has launched five new routes in 2004, with more to come in the next few months, and increased the size of its Boeing-747 freighter fleet to five.

Emirates SkyCargo now serves a truly global network of 76 destinations in 54 countries, including 21 destinations with its freighter aircraft. It is rolling out an eight-route expansion across five continents in 2004.

MNA/Reuters
NZ sets up ministerial task force to focus on China relations

Wellington, 11 May — New Zealand has established a ministerial task force to build on recent breakthroughs in economic links with China, Foreign Minister PhilGoff announced Monday.

“There have been some positive developments in recent months, such as the agreed framework opening the way for free trade negotiations with China in early 2005; talks on a closer Economic Partnershipwith Thailand; and ASEAN/Economic Ministers calling for a free trade agreement with New Zealand and Australia,” Goff said in a statement.

“We also have a study underway on how to achieve closer relations with India, and New Zealand is gearing up for the 2005 World Expo in Aichi, Japan,” said Goff, who is now in Japan on a three-day visit.

He said it was important that New Zealand took full advantage of these developments. “It will be the Task Force’s job to coordinate work being done across government on relations with China, and to develop a suitable policy framework that takes the private sector’s interests into account as well.”

The Task Force will also follow up the seriously Asia initiative, which was organized by the Asia 2000 Foundation and launched by Prime Minister Helen Clark last August with the aim of identifying priority goals and practical actions to energize New Zealand’s links with Asia.

“Asia’s importance to our future continues to grow. We need to go on the front foot and develop our skills and networks in Asia, and we need to make sure we are adequately informed and organized to take advantage of the rapid changes occurring in this dynamic region,” Goff said.

MNA/Xinhua

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CLAIMS DAY NOTICE
MV GEE HONG VOY NO (409)

Consignees of cargo carried on MV GEE HONG Voy No (409) are hereby notified that the vessel will arrive on 12-5-2004 and cargo will be discharged into the premises of M.I.T.T where it will lie at the consignee’s risk and expenses and subject to the byelaws and conditions of the Port of Yangon.

Damaged cargo will be surveyed daily from 8 am to 11.20 am and 12 noon to 4 pm upto Claims Day now declared as the third day after final discharge of cargo from the vessel.

No claims against this vessel will be admitted after the Claims Day.

SHIPPING AGENCY DEPARTMENT MYANMA PORT AUTHORITY AGENT FOR: M/S EAGLE CORPORATION Phone No: 256908/378316/376797

CLAIRNS DAY NOTICE
MV HIBISCUS VOY NO (078)

Consignees of cargo carried on MV HIBISCUS Voy No (078) are hereby notified that the vessel will arrive on 12-5-2004 and cargo will be discharged into the premises of M.I.P where it will lie at the consignee’s risk and expenses and subject to the byelaws and conditions of the Port of Yangon.

Damaged cargo will be surveyed daily from 8 am to 11.20 am and 12 noon to 4 pm upto Claims Day now declared as the third day after final discharge of cargo from the vessel.

No claims against this vessel will be admitted after the Claims Day.

SHIPPING AGENCY DEPARTMENT MYANMA PORT AUTHORITY AGENT FOR: M/S PREMIER SPECTRUM Phone No: 256908/378316/376797

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Win Mu Tin, M.A., H.G.P., D.B.L for AstraZeneca UK Limited P.O. Box 60, Yangon Dated: 12 May, 2004

S Korea develops mid-air missile firing technology

SEOUL, 11 May — South Korea developed a technology that fires a guided missile in mid-air after vertically ejecting it from a launching pad, a local state-run defence agency said Monday.

Thus, South Korea became the second nation to develop the “cold-launch” technology after Russia, Shim Woo-jee, a principal researcher at the Agency for Defence Development, was quoted by South Korean Yonhap news agency.

The technology is mainly aimed at reducing flames at the time of blast-off to keep enemy forces from detecting the launching site, Shim said in a Press briefing.

MNA/Xinhua

The best time plant a tree was twenty years ago.

The second best time is now.

Vietnam to export more coffee in second quarter

HANOI, 11 May — Vietnam is expected to export 315,000 tons of coffee worth 140 million US dollars in the second quarter of this year, year-on-year rises of 30 per cent and 20 per cent, respectively.

The expected rise is based on the increasing demand for coffee in many countries, including Vietnam’s key coffee importers such as the European Union (EU), the United States and Japan, said the country’s Ministry of Trade on Monday.

This year, 500,000 hectares of coffee trees, mainly Robusta, in Vietnam are forecast to yield more than 700,000 tons of coffee beans which has been exported to 59 countries and territories. The country shipped 329,000 tons of coffee worth 220 million US dollars in the first four months of this year, up 35.4 per cent in volume and 28.6 per cent in value.

Vietnam exported 352,000 tons of coffee to the EU, accounting for 47 per cent of its export volume, and 109,000 tons of the product to the United States, or 14.6 per cent of its total, last year.

MNA/Xinhua
China becomes world’s second largest radio broadcasting market

PARIS, 11 May — China has become the world’s second largest radio broadcasting market with more than 10,000 broadcasters for the 1.3 billion people in 340 million families, next only to the United States, according to a recent rating by Nielsen Media Research.

The rating reveals half of China’s population aged above 15 listen to radio broadcasts every day. In the Chinese capital Beijing, nearly 50 per cent of the residents listen to the radio for 14.5 hours a week on average.

In its biggest city Shanghai, 93 per cent of the population tuned in to programmes for an average 14 hours a week. The figure is close to that of other international metropolises such as Sydney and Singapore, according to Nielsen.

Radio broadcasting has remained an important means of communication and advertising in China despite the strong impact of the Internet and television, according to the company’s rating.

Radio broadcasting is the most popular programme provided by local radio stations, as well as the growing number of private car owners in China who often tune in to radio for information and music and such entertainment programmes during their car rides.

News broadcasting is the most popular radio programme in Beijing and Shanghai, and the Nielsen Media Research rating shows the road traffic news of Beijing Communications Radio and the morning news of Shanghai People’s Broadcasting Station draw the largest number of listeners in the two cities respectively.

As China opens wider its media sector in line with its World Trade Organization commitment, more international broadcasters will be encouraged to enter the Chinese market, Nielsen predicts.

Nielsen Media Research’s listener rating is a new service in China and is conducted once a quarter. The rating, which assesses station audiences, is the most comprehensive and detailed, and has become available in several large cities in the northern, eastern and central regions and will extend to 35 cities by the end of this year.

In another development, Nielsen Media Research’s audience rating, a service that was launched in China’s interior regions in 1994, is now available to televisions in 56 cities.

In an ambitious plan to enhance its presence in the Chinese market, the company will extend its audience rating service to more than 100 cities and to cover 75 per cent of the domestic TV advertising market by the end of 2004, says Mark Grunert, executive director of the company’s China arm.

Putin urges international efforts to rebuff terrorism

MOSCOW, 11 May — Russian President Vladimir Putin on Sunday called on the international community to jointly rebuff international terrorism, Interfax reported.

Putin made the call when addressing participants of a grand military parade at the Red Square celebrating the 59th Anniversary of the Soviet Union’s victory over the Nazi Germany in the World War II.

“The world community’s task is to ‘give a worthy rebuff to the terrorists and rid the world of this plague’, Putin said.

“We have no right to turn a blind eye on the Nazi swastika and the fascism that is still spreading in the world, or to the fact that no less a terrible evil — international terrorism — is added to them and is causing death and destruction,” Putin was quoted as saying.

While Putin spoke to soldiers, veterans and senior officials, a bomb planted at the VIP seats in a stadium in the Chechen capital of Grozny exploded during a Victory Day celebration.

In his speech, Putin also congratulated World War II veterans for their glorious victory over Nazi Germany 59 years ago, saying their heroics feats brought peace.

Libyans protest US criticism of HIV trial verdict

BENGHAZI, 11 May — Libyan protesters burnt the US flag in the coastal city of Benghazi on Sunday after Washington criticized a death sentence imposed on six foreign medics for infecting children with HIV.

The five Bulgarian nurses and a Palestinian doctor were condemned to death after they were convicted of deliberately infecting 426 children with the virus that causes AIDS. Washington called Thursday’s verdict “unacceptable”.

After the verdict, they were convicted of deliberate infection with the virus that causes AIDS in Libya after the scandal of the Abu Ghraib Jail and then in a second pains of family after the Gaddafi’s regime.

“America is humiliating us everywhere as Arabs and Muslims.”

The six foreign medics plan to appeal. They say they were scapegoats rather than admit the virus was caused by unhygienic standards and that their convictions were based on two confessions given under torture.

More than 40 of the infected children have died since the nurses were detained in 1999. The European Union has also condemned the verdicts, fueling speculation in Bulgaria that the medics might be pardoned by Libyan leader Moammar Gadhafi, who is keen to mend ties with the West.

The Libyan Government said on Friday that America had “no authority anymore to talk about human rights” after the Iraqi prisoner abuse scandal.

Police kept a low profile as the protesters burnt the US flag in front of the Italian consulate. Local officials say Libya is in charge of security interests in Benghazi.

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Pakistan welcomes Vajpayee statement on peace process

ISLAMABAD, 11 May — Pakistan on Sunday welcomed Indian Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee’s commitment to pursuing the peace process with Islamabad to its logical end.

“We do welcome Prime Minister Vajpayee’s reiteration of his commitment to the dialogue process as well as his expression of the hope that the comprehensive dialogue process at the official and ministerial levels could culminate to a summit,” Pakistan Foreign Office spokesman Masood Khan was quoted as saying by the official media.

“A rally in the north Indian town of Ludhiana in Punjab on Saturday, Vajpayee had vowed to take the Indo-Pakistani peace initiative to its logical end. He had also said that India was keen to resolve all problems with Pakistan through talks provided it stopped sponsoring terrorism.

“Khan, however, termed incorrect” reports attributed to some quarters in India that Pakistan sponsored terrorism to prevent votes for the PPP in the upcoming elections. The PPP Foreign Office spokesman Masood Khan was quoted as saying by the official media.

“Pakistan, Indian officials, will be interested in reconstructing Pakistan’s old temples. Michel Tranet, Under-secretary of State of the Ministry of Culture and Fine Arts, told Xinhua: “I would like to admire for their care and discipline in repairing the temple”.

MNA/Xinhua

Kenyan President calls for people to plant more trees

NAIROBI, 11 May — Kenyan President Mwai Kibaki has called for his fellow people to plant more trees. Speaking on Tuesday at the Presidential Tree Planting Day, which falls on 8 May, Kibaki said Kenya needs to increase its forest coverage to prevent desertification and protect the water catchment areas for increased productivity on the farms, the PPS said in a Press release.

He told the Ministry of Environment to ensure availability of tree seedlings to Kenyans at reasonable price.

The President also encouraged farmers to plant more trees

MNA/Xinhua

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**SPORTS**

Newcastle’s Champions League hopes fade

**LONDON,** 11 May— Newcastle United’s hopes of grabbing fourth place and a Champions League qualifying slot were severely dented when they were held to a 1-1 home draw by relegated Wolverhampton Wanderers on Sunday.

Newcastle, knocked out of the Uefa Cup semifinals by Olympique Marseille on Thursday, need to win their final two Premier League games — at Southampton on Wednesday and at Liverpool next Saturday — to finish fourth.

They trail Liverpool by five points and could even miss out on fifth and a Uefa Cup place as they are also two behind Aston Villa, who host Manchester United in their final game.

The result also made mathematically certain that Wolves would be relegated after one season in the top flight.

Newcastle led after 38 minutes when Lee Bowyer converted a Shola Ameobi cross but Wolves claimed a deserved equalizer in the 70th minute when Roman substitute Wael Gana pounced on a loose ball to shoot low into the corner from the edge of the box.

Ajax clinch 29th title with victory over NAC Breda

**AMSTERDAM,** 11 May— Ajax Amsterdam clinched their 29th Dutch title after beating NAC Breda 2-0 on Sunday to leave last season’s champions PSV Eindhoven six points adrift with only one match remaining.

Ajax have 77 points and PSV 71 following their 3-2 victory overADO Den Haag. Feyenoord, 4-1 winners at RBC Roosendaal are third on 65 points.

Ajax’s success this season can be traced back to December when they were eliminated from the Champions League, leaving them with only the domestic title to play for.

The final league match before the winter break at Twente Enschede gave coach Ronald Koeman a lot to think about after his side lost 2-0.

Long-term injuries to Steven Pienaar and Zlatan Ibrahimovic forced Ajax to enter the transfer market, especially in the days before the Winter break.

Inter close on Champions League qualifiers

**MILAN,** 11 May— Inter Milan’s hopes of Champions League football next season were given a major boost with a 1-0 victory over Parma in Serie A’s penultimate round of games — at Southampton on Wednesday and at Liverpool next Saturday — to finish fourth.

Gianluigi Buffon’s absence and the injury time three minutes into injury time after Marcello Lippi’s side had dominated.

The result also made mathematically certain that Wolves would be relegated after one season in the top flight.

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Late Giuly strike keeps Monaco’s title hopes alive

**MONACO,** 11 May— Monaco captain Ludovic Giuly scored a last-gasp goal to hand Olympique Marseille a 1-0 defeat and keep the principality team’s Ligue 1 title hopes alive on Monday.

Giuly, his team’s saviour countless times this season, pushed the ball home three minutes into injury time after Marcello Lippi’s side had dominated.

The somehow fortuitous victory allowed the Champions League finalists to stay in second place on 71 points, two points behind leaders Olympique Lyon with three games left.

The other two Ligue 1 title contenders won on Saturday. Lyon 2-1 at Metz and Paris St. Germain, now third one point behind Monaco, beating Stade Rennes 1-0 at the Parc des Princes.

UEFA Cup finalists Marseille had been one-man down since the 86th minute after striker Dider Drogb was taken off the pitch on a stretcher with a groin injury.

Monaco qualified for the Champions League final on Wednesday when they drew 2-2 at Chelsea while Marseille beat Newcastle 3-2 on Tuesday as an example of freakish fortune between two talented teams boosted by their fine showings at European level.

Maradona could receive medical attention in Uruguay

**MONTEVIDEO,** 11 May— Argentine football legend Diego Armando Maradona might receive medical attention in neighbouring Uruguay because almost every clinic in Buenos Aires allegedly refused to take him, Uruguay's Press said.

Dailies posted Saturday that Maradona would “very probably” receive a treatment in the Spanish Association medical centre, in the world famous Punta del Este beach resort, 140 kilometres east of the capital Montevideo.

Belgian top scorer Pieroni to join Auxerre

**BRUXELLES,** 11 May — Excelsior Mouscron have agreed to transfer their Belgian striker Lucio Pieroni to AJ Auxerre of France, the Belgian First Division club said.

The two clubs reached agreement on Friday on a fee of 1.5 million euros for Pieroni, top scorer in the Belgian First Division with 26 goals, and is due to sign a four-year contract with Auxerre next week.

Mr Pieroni’s agent Eric Depireux said: “We also had contacts with Southampton and Sampdoria but their offers were even less interesting.”

Neftchi clinch Azeri league, cup double again

**BAKU,** 11 May— Neftchi Baku beat Samkir 1-0 after extra time in the Azerbaijan Cup final on Sunday to clinch their second league and cup double.

Samir Abbasov scored the 104th-minute winner from close range to give Neftchi their third trophy in four days.

Neftchi edged Samkir to win their third league title on Wednesday. Samkir, who won back-to-back league titles in 2000 and 2001, finished second.

It was the second successive cup final between the two teams. Neftchi were declared the winners in 2002 after Samkir walked off the pitch in protest at a controversial penalty call.

Azerbaijan was suspended the following season. Neftchi also beat Samkir in the 1999 final in a penalty shoot-out after a scoreless 120 minutes.

Emerson hat-trick puts Reds second in J-League

**TOKYO,** 11 May— Brazilian striker Emerson netted his second hat-trick in three weeks on Sunday to give Urawa Reds a 3-0 win at Albirex Niigata and second place in the J-League.

The 2003 J-League Player of the Year took advantage of poor defending from promoted Albirex, completing his hat-trick with a breakaway goal nine minutes from time in front of 41,000 in rain-drenched Niigata.

Urawa, managed by former German World Cup winner Guido Buchwald, improved to 17 points from nine first-stage matches but still trail leaders Jubilo Iwata by seven points.

Albirex, J-2 champions last year, dropped to the bottom of the table on six points.

Jubilo file Gamba Osaka 2-0 at Expo Stadium thanks to second-half goals from forward Ryochi Maeda and Brazil's Rodrigo Gualter on his return from suspension.

Champions Yokohama F-Marinos won 3-1 at home to erratic Tokyo Verdy to go third behind Urawa on goal difference.

But Yokohama, who have a game in hand on the clubs above them, needed injury-time goals from substitute Yukihiro Sato and South Korean striker Ahn Jung-hwan at International Stadium.

Elsewhere, Cerezo Osaka climbed off the foot of the First Division with a 2-1 victory at Shimizu S-Pulse in a bad-tempered match which included 13 yellow and two red cards — both for Cerezo players. JEF United Ichihara slipped to fourth on 15 points after being held 1-1 by visiting Nagoya Grampus Eight.

**Inter**

One of the top teams in the world, **Inter Milan**, could be set for a big change in the near future. The club has announced that they will be selling some of their key players in order to raise funds for their transfer budget. Among those being considered for transfer are **Christiano Ronaldo** and **Zlatan Ibrahimovic**.

**Ajax**

The Dutch giants, **Ajax Amsterdam**, have clinched their 29th Dutch title after beating NAC Breda 2-0 on Sunday. The victory leaves them with only one match remaining in the league.

**Newcastle United**

The English club, **Newcastle United**, have been dealt a major blow in their bid to qualify for the Champions League next season. They were held to a 1-1 draw by relegated Wolves, leaving them adrift of the top four.

**Monaco**

Monaco’s hopes of winning the Ligue 1 title were boosted last weekend when they drew 2-2 with leaders Olympique Lyon. The result means that they remain two points behind the leaders with only three games left.

**Uruguay**

Diego Armando Maradona, the Argentine football legend, has reportedly been offered medical treatment in Uruguay. The former Napoli and Barcelona forward has not played in the country's league for several months.

**Brazil**

Brazilian striker Emerson, a key player for Urawa Reds, scored a hat-trick against Albirex Niigata to keep his side in second place in the J-League. He is now one of the leading players in the league.
WEATHER

Tuesday, 11 May, 2004

Summary of observations recorded at 09:30 hours MST:

During the past 24 hours, weather has been mostly cloudy in upper Sagaing Division and Kayah State and rain or thunder showers have been widespread in Mon State and Tanintharyi Division, scattered in Kachin State, Yangon and Ayeyawady Delta and isolated in the remaining areas. The networth of amounts recorded were Thani (19 inches) and Paco (1.57 inches). Day temperatures were (3°C) below normal in Yangon Division, (5°C) below normal in Tanintharyi Division, (3°C) to (4°C) above normal in Shan State, Sagon, Mandalay and Bago Divisions, (7°C) to (6°C) above normal in Chin State, Magway and Ayeyawady Divisions and about normal in the remaining areas. Significant day temperature was (4°C) in Magway.

Maximum temperature on 10-5-2004 was 32.0°C (89°F). Minimum temperature on 11-5-2004 was 23.5°C (74°F). Relative humidity at 9:30 MST on 11-5-2004 was 96%. Total sunshine hours on 10-5-2004 was 4.1 hours approx. Rainfall on 11-5-2004 was 3mm (0.12 inch) at Yangon Airport, 30mm (1.18 inches) at Kaba-Aye and 30 mm (1.2 inches) at Kaba-Aye and 11mm (0.43 inch) at central Yangon. Total rainfall since 1-1-2004 was 59 mm (2.31 inches) at Yangon Airport and 87 mm (3.4 inches) at Kaba-Aye and 90 mm (3.54 inches) at central Yangon. Maximum wind speed at Yangon Airport (Kaba-Aye) was 01 knots (1 mile per hour) from the South. Maximum temperature in Magway at Kaba-Aye was 3.1 knots (1 mile per hour) from the South.

Rain frequency is cloudy in Amdan Sea Central and South Bay and partly cloudy elsewhere in the Bay of Bengal. Rainfall on 11-5-2004 was widespread in Kayah State and Tanintharyi Division, scattered in Kachin, Shan, Kayin States, upper Sagaing, Ayeyawady and Bago Divisions and isolated in the remaining areas. Degree of certainty is (80%) State of the sea: Seas will be slight to moderate in Mon State and Ayeyawady Divisions. Outlook for subsequent 2 days: Advance of Southwest Monsoon are likely to southern Mon State areas. Forecast for Yangon and neighouring area for 12-5-2004: Some degree of certainty is (80%) Forecast for Mandalay and neighouring areas: 25-30 knots of isolated rain or thunder showers. Degree of certainty is (60%).
All delegates are believed to attend forthcoming National Convention which will lead the Union to stable, firm future

Government supporting and protecting invaluable strength and vitality of literature for emergence of a literary structure serving national interest to raise standard of people

Central Body of MWJA holds third meeting

YANGON, 11 May—The third meeting of Central Body of Myanmar Writers and Journalists Association was held at the Pyidaungsu Hall in Kyaikkasan Grounds, this morning, with an address by Prime Minister General Khin Nyunt.

Also present were Secretary-1 of the State Peace and Development Council Lt-Gen Soe Win, Secretary-2 Lt-Gen Thein Sein, Chairman of Yangon Division Peace and Development Council Commander of Yangon Command Maj-Gen Myint Swe, the ministers, the chief justice, the auditor-general, the Yangon mayor, the deputy ministers, officials of the State Peace and Development Council Office, heads of departments, Chairman of MWJA U Hla Myaing (Ko Hsaung), CEC members, literati, officials of social organizations, delegates, observers and guests.

Joint Secretary of MWJA Dr Tin Tun Oo acted as master of ceremonies. In his address, Prime Minister General Khin Nyunt said:

At present, the Government has been giving encouragement for further effectiveness and firmness of the national strength and power, while striving in all sectors for the nation and people to stand tall among the world countries with high national pride and dignity.

First, I would like to say that the efforts of all the literati to preserve and uplift the fine traditions and effective power of literature, that can help raise the national strength, with national spirit, is good outcome of the expeditious endeavours to firmly build the national strength.

As now is the time all the national people are joining hands and making self-reliant efforts for progress and prosperity of the nation and the race and for protecting and raising the national interest on the international front, we will be able to realize our visions only if we can maintain and promote national vigilance and strength.

Moreover, the flourishing of good spiritual foundations such as the spirit to cherish and build the nation, the spirit to prevent the Union from collapse, and the spirit to protect and cement national unity is the essential national strength that must be built for firmness and perpetuation of the nation, the people and the Union.

In this regard, literati must accept the duty to always strive with the power of the pen for all the literary forces of the nation to unitefully stand under the banner of the MWJA and to vitalize the national spirit of the entire mass of people of the country. Men of letters must accept the fact that literature has greater influence and impact upon all the sectors encompassing the spiritual and physical build-up of the country and has the constructive power to serve the interest of the nation.

The Government has already upheld the conviction that literature has the power to promote the entire people’s education standard, uplift the moral standard, perpetuate the traditions and culture and national character, to promote the intellectual level of all the national races.

Vice-Senior General Maung Aye and wife Daw Mya Mya San pay homage to the Ahketsettawya Pagoda in Minbu (Saku) Township, Magway Division. — MNA

Prime Minister General Khin Nyunt addresses the third meeting of the Central Body of Myanmar Writers and Journalists Association — MNA

Vice-Senior General Maung Aye and wife visit Mann Shwesettaw Pagoda

YANGON, 11 May—Vice-Chairman of the State Peace and Development Council Deputy Commander-in-Chief of Defence Services Commander-in-Chief (Army) Vice-Senior General Maung Aye and wife Daw Mya Mya San, accompanied by Secretary-1 of the State Peace and Development Council Lt-Gen Soe Win and wife Daw Than Than Nwe, members of the State Peace and Development Council Lt-Gen Ye Myint andLt-Gen Tha Thura Tin Aung Myint Oo, Commander-in-Chief (Navy) Rear-Admiral Soe Thein, Commander-in-Chief (Air) Lt-Gen Myat Hein and Chairman of Mandalay Division Peace and Development Council Commander of Central Command Maj-Gen Ye Myint and their wives, the ministers and their wives and officials, paid a visit to the Mann Shwesettaw Pagoda in Minbu (Saku) Township, Magway Division.

In his address, Prime Minister General Khin Nyunt said:

Vice-Senior General Maung Aye inspected tasks for all-round renovation of the pagoda and gave instructions to the officials concerned: Vice-Senior General Maung Aye made cash donations to the pagoda. Vice-Senior General Maung Aye and wife and party signed in the visitors’ book.

Next, Vice-Senior General Maung Aye and wife and party visited the Maha Myat Muni Buddha Image in Mann Settaw Koekhangyi Prayer Hall.

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