Prime Minister addresses coordination meeting on promotion and implementation of Myanmar-Thai economic cooperation

YANGON, 16 May—A coordination meeting on promotion and implementation of Myanmar-Thai economic cooperation was held at Zeyathiri Beikman here at 4 pm today with an address by Prime Minister General Khin Nyunt.

Also present on the occasion were ministers, the Chairman of Yangon City Development Committee the Yangon Mayor, deputy ministers, officials of the State Peace and Development Council Office, heads of department and officials.

Prime Minister General Khin Nyunt, in his address, said that the meeting is to coordinate matters related to promotion and implementation of Myanmar-Thai economic cooperation.

Promotion of Myanmar-Thailand economic cooperation is one of agreements reached at the Summit Meeting on Economic Cooperation Strategy of Cambodia, Laos, Myanmar and Thailand held in Bagan, Myanmar in 2003.

The summit meeting promoted economic cooperation among Cambodia, Laos, Myanmar and Thailand, cooperation in trade and development sectors and discussed matters related to creating mutual interest among the four nations.

In addition, the summit meeting discussed matters related to narrowing the development gap among the four nations.

(See page 9)

National Convention Convening Commission holds Meeting No 10/2004

YANGON, 16 May—The National Convention Convening Commission held its Meeting No 10/2004 at Anawrahta Yeiktha of Nyaungshapin Camp in Hmawby Township at 4 pm today.

Present on the occasion were Chairman of National Convention Convening Commission Secretary-2 of the State Peace and Development Council Lt-Gen Thein Toe, Chairman of National Convention Convening Work Committee U Aung Toe, Chairman of National Convention Convening Management Committee Maj-Gen Lun Maung and members of the commission.

The chairman of the National Convention Convening Commission gave instructions on completion of preparations for successfully holding the National Convention on 17 May, arrangements for convenience of delegates to be able to attend the convention and fulfilment of requirements in health, food and accommodation of the delegates.

Secretary of the Commission Brig-Gen Kyaw Hsan then reported on completion of preparatory tasks for holding the Convention.

Chairman of National Convention Convening Work Committee U Aung Toe briefed them on matters related to the discussions of the Convention.

Chairman of National Convention Convening Management Committee Maj-Gen Lun Maung also reported on accommodation, health, food and welfare of the delegates, followed by a round of discussions.

Later, Lt-Gen Thein Toe gave necessary instructions and the meeting concluded at 5:30 pm. — MNA

Welcome the National Convention.
Monday, 17 May, 2004

**Perspectives**

**For boosting production of ten major crops**

The government has laid down five rural development tasks for rural development and upgrading the standard of national people and central-level organizations have been fulfilling requirements.

The government is also providing necessary assistance which contributes towards progress of education and health of rural areas, better transport and availability of water for rural development.

Prime Minister General Khin Nyunt and party attended the opening of Taidaw U Bo Yangon Matriculation Examination Primary School and Mya Kyawng Taung BEPS of Zokthok Model Village in Bilin Township on 8 May morning and unveiled the stone inscriptions of the buildings.

The Prime Minister inspected Gweidanhe Sluice Gate in Bilin Township being implemented under the leadership of Kyai Khithihsaung Sayadaw. On completion, the project will have a capacity to benefit some 1,200 acres of arable land.

The Prime Minister held a meeting with local authorities, departmental officials and members of social organizations in BEHS of Zokthok Model Village. The Prime Minister said that the Government has introduced ten major crops for ensuring development of economy of rural regions. Therefore, township officials in the fields of agriculture are to provide necessary assistance such as disseminating agricultural methods and distributing quality strains for successful realization of the objectives.

Council of Ministers' officials are to make field trips right down to the grassroots level so as to fulfill the requirements for development of rural regions in their townships and improvement of living standard of local people.

As the respective committees have been formed to carry out rural development tasks, the township level departmental officials are to make concerted efforts towards right leadership and proper management.

In addition, for region's development, the departmental officials are to enlist the strength of social organizations formed in every township.

Therefore, through the four agricultural methods laid down by the Head of State, measures are to be taken for boosting per acre yield of the ten major crops for ensuring greater development of rural areas and elevating the living standard of rural people.

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**Seminar on Promotion of National Education launched**

**YANDON, 16 May—** The opening of the Seminar on Promotion of National Education (Mandalay) (2004) took place at the Education College in Mandalay yesterday morning.

It was attended by Mandalay Division Peace and Development Council Chairman Central Command Com- mander Maj-Gen Ye Myint, Minister for Education U Than Aung, Mandalay City Development Committee Chairman Brig-Gen Yan Thein, local authorities, officials and members of social organizations.

The commander said that the government is pursu- ing the National Education Promotion Plan step by step to ensure an education system that contributes towards de- velopment of the nation and the people, to enable the students to catch up with international level science and technology, to polish and elevate national character, tra- ditions, culture and customs, and to bring about a con- stant studying society. Respective departmental officials, education staff and teachers are to play the main role in reviewing steps and tasks of the national education pro- motion plan and discussing future tasks, he said. The government education promotion plan launched in 2000-2001 academic year has been completed successfully this year, and the exhibition to mark accom- plishment of the four-year national education promotion plan has been opened starting yesterday, he said.

Teacher-centred teaching method has been turned into interactive teaching system and there have emerged multimedia teaching classrooms, learning centres and re- source centres, resulting in betterment of education sector and narrowing down the gap of opportunity to pursue education between urban and rural areas, he said.

The minister also delivered a speech. The commander and the minister cordially greeted those present and inspected laboratory equipment that the Education Planning and Training Department distributed to basic education schools in 2002-2003 academic years. The seminar continues till 18 May. — MNA

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**Commander, Ministers meet industrialists in Sagaing, Mandalay Divisions**

**YANDON, 16 May—** The meeting to coordinate development of industrial zones was held in the town hall in Myaung, Sagaing Division, yesterday morn- ing.

Present were Chair- man of Sagaing Division Peace and Development Council Commander of North-West Command Maj- Gen Tha Aye, Chairman of Myanmar Industrial Devel- opment Committee Min- ister for Industry-1 U Aung Thaung, Myaung Industrial Zone in-charge Minister for Transport Maj-Gen Hla Myint Swe, Joint-Secretary Deputy Minister for Indus- try-2 Lt-Col Khin Maung Kyaw, chairman of Zokthok, Shwebo and Myaung Ind- ustrial Zones and members of the industrial zone man- agement committees.

Speaking on the oc- casion, Minister Aung Thaung said that year 2004/ 2005 was designated as Indus- trial Sector Development Year. As such, industrial en- trepreneurs are urged to par- ticipate with might and main in development of the industrial sector. Only then will it be possible to de- velop the industrial sector and the sector develop.

Since the industrial zones were established begin- ning 1995, the number has increased to 19. Indus- trial management commit- tee members and industri- alists are not to be satisfied with the ordinary develop- ment and they should expel- dite momentum of develop- ment. The industrial man- agement committee mem- bers and industrial entrepre- neurs, on their part, are to cooperate to build factories. In so doing, they are re- quired to case out construc- tion method set standard for timely completion. At the same time, they should train the employees to be some skilled workers.

Next, Minister Maj- Gen Hla Myint Swe and Deputy Minister for Indus- try-2 Lt-Col Khin Maung Kyaw gave instructions on active participation in development of the industrial sec- tor. The industrialists from Sagaing, Shwebo and Myaung industrial zones reported on their sectors.

The commander also in- structed to realize the good- will of the government and actively participate in develop- ment of the zones.

Afterwards, the min- isters inspected Win Thura Shop in Monywa. The commander and the ministers proceeded to Myaung Industrial Zone and inspected manufactur- ing of trailers of cycle, four- wheel mini-tractors and tractors.

On arrival at Myaung Industrial Zone Heavy Factory Construction Project, the commander and the ministers gave instruc- tions on growing of toddy- palm, tamarind trees, rain trees and Thitseint trees (Belleric myrobalan) in the environs of the project site. In the afternoon, Commander Maj-Gen Ye Myint, Minister U Aung Thaung and Deputy Minis- ter Lt-Col Khin Maung Kyaw met the chairman and members of industrial zone management committee and industrialists at Kanaung Hall in Pyigyudagon Town- ship Industrial Zone. Min- ister U Aung Thaung said that as the plan was laid down to upgrade Mandalay, Monywa and Taunggyi (Ayeyawady) industrial zones out of all industrial zones in line with the guidance of the Head of State, industrial entrepre- neurs, on their part, are to actively take part in implementation of the plan as soon as possible.

Chairman of Manda- lay District Peace and De- velopment Council Chair- man of Industrial Zone Su- pervisory Committee Lt-Col Maung Maung reported on progress of the zone. Those present reported on require- ments and Minister U Aung Thaung attended to the needs. The commander said that the government encour- ages development of the in- dustrial zones. As such, the entrepreneurs are to coop- erate for materialization of the project as soon as possible. Later, they in- spected sites for building the foundry, press machine, forge, heat treatment plant and machine shop.

On 16 morning, Minister U Aung Thaung met factory managers of Mandalay and Sagaing Di- visional at Kanaung Hall of Mandalay Brewery. — MNA

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**Teachers of night schools honoured**

**YANDON, 16 May—** A ceremony to honour teachers who taught voluntarily at night schools organized by Yangon Division Maternal and Child Welfare Association, during 2003-2004 academic year, which were opened by Ahlon Township Maternal and Child Welfare Association, Yangon West District, was held in Ahlon Township hall this morning. Present on the occasion were Chairman of Yangon Division Peace and Devel- opment Council Commander Maj-Gen Myint Swe and wife, Patron of Supervisory Committee for Yangon Division MCWA Daw Khin Thet Htay, No 3 Military Region Council Commander Col Tint Hsan, Secretary of Yangon Division Peace and Development Council Lt-Col Myint Kyi and members, members of panel of patrons of Division MCWA, Head of Yangon Division Health Department Dr Hla Myint, chairman of District Peace and Development Councils, chairman of Township PDCs, members of MCWA and teachers. Patron of Yangon Division MCWA Daw Khin Thet Htay spoke on the occasion. Then, Daw Khin Mya, President of Ahlon Township MCWA presented reports on members for enabling night schools to be opened under the arrange- ments of Yangon Division MCWA. Next, tenth standard student from the night school, Maung Ko Ko Aung who sat for the matriculation examination of 2003-2004 academic year expressed his thanks. Next, Commander Maj-Gen Myint Swe and wife and Dr Hla Myint respectively presented certificates of honour and souvenirs to a total of 31 teach- ers. After the ceremony, Commander Maj-Gen Myint Swe and wife and party viewed documentary photos on activities of Ahlon Township MCWA displayed at township hall. — MNA

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**People’s Desire**

- Oppose those relying on external elements, acting as stooges, holding negative views
- Oppose those trying to jeopardize stability of the State and progress of the nation
- Oppose foreign nations interfering in internal affairs of the State
- Crush all internal and external destructive elements as the common enemy
Bomb explodes at Iraq army recruiting centre

KARBALA, 16 May — American troops fought militia loyal to radical cleric Muqtada al-Sadr on Saturday in the southern city of Karbala, but the city of Najaf was relatively quiet following intense clashes a day earlier.

Guerrillas fired a mortar round at an Iraqi army recruiting centre in the northern city of Mosul, killing four people and injuring 19 hospital officials said. The shell landed in a crowd of people who were waiting to sign up for the military. Guerrillas have previously targeted police and army recruiting centres in an effort to undermine Iraqi involvement in the US-led coalition.

The US military announced the deaths of five soldiers: three from wounds suffered in rebel attacks on Friday, one in a vehicle accident and one from "natural causes."

On Saturday, an explosion was heard near the headquarters of the US-led coalition in Baghdad. Sirens wailed briefly. There was no report of casualties.

South of Baghdad, a soldier died from injuries received during a mortar attack on Friday, and another soldier died on the same day in a sniper ambush. Near Basra, north of Baghdad, a soldier died and another was injured in a car bomb attack.

Early Friday, a military vehicle overturned during a patrol south of Baghdad, killing a soldier. A fifth soldier died of natural causes Friday in the capital, the military said.

As of Friday, 775 US service members have died since the beginning of military operations in Iraq last year, according to the Department of Defence. Of those, 565 died as a result of hostile action and 210 died of non-hostile causes.

Also Saturday, fighting ebbed in the southern city of Nasiriyah, where guerrillas believed loyal to Sadr had attacked the local coalition headquarters. Two Filipinos guards suffered shrapnel wounds. Shooting lasted all night until early morning around the coalition building, where some international staffers and four Italian journalists were trapped inside, said coalition spokesman Andrea Angeli, who was among those in the building.

== Internet ==

Iraqi newspaper urges Rumsfeld to resign

BAGHDAD, 16 May — Major Iraqi newspaper urged US Defence Minister Donald Rumsfeld to resign in an editorial Saturday, joining the international outcry for him to step down over the Abu Ghraib prisoner abuse scandal.

"Because no Danish soldiers were involved, the episode was not reported back home," said Gade, promis- ing to find out why the report was not followed up and to keep track of the British investigation in Fride.

The US military an- nounced the deaths of five soldiers: three from wounds suffered in rebel attacks on Friday, one in a vehicle accident and one from "natural causes."

"The unbelievable torture applied to prisoners in Iraq has rendered the world speechless, " Castro said. Castro’s younger brother and designated political successor, Raúl Castro, marched in uniform at the head of a contingent of Cuban army generals and officers.

In a move criticized as pandering to Cuban voters in Florida, Bush decided to limit visits by Cuban Americans to Cuba, a vital injection of cash for Cuba’s battered socialist economy.

Workers and students wearing red shirts and sol- diers and military cadets in uniform marched waving small Cuban flags along Ha- vaina’s waterfront past the American diplomatic mission, shouting slogans against US President George W. Bush.

"Bush, you fascist, there is no aggression that Cuba cannot resist," they chanted during the six-hour march or- ganized by the government. It was one of its largest rallies in years.

Three officials said 1.2 million people marched to repudiate Bush, "you fascist, there is no aggression that Cuba cannot resist," they chanted during the six-hour march organized by the government. It was one of its largest rallies in years.

Near the southern city of Amarah, a British patrol was ambushed and a firefight erupted.

In the northern city of Mosul, guerrillas fired a mortar round at an Iraqi army recruiting centre, killing four people and injuring 19, hospital officials said. The shell landed in a crowd of people who were waiting to sign up for the military. Guerrillas have previously targeted police and army recruitment centres in an effort to undermine Iraqi involvement in the US-led coalition.

Shooting subsided in Nasiriyah after an all-night battle around coalition headquarters between Shiite militiamen and Italian forces.

Five more GIs die in Iraq

BAGHDAD, 16 May—The US military reported the deaths of five soldiers on Saturday: three from wounds suffered in rebel attacks on Friday, one in a vehicle accident and one from "natural causes."

American troops fought militia loyal to radical cleric Muqtada al-Sadr on Saturday in the southern city of Karbala, where the clashes were less intense than they had been.

The city of Najaf was reported to be relatively quiet following intense fighting around one of the Shiites' holiest shrines.

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President Castro leads mass protest against Bush

HAVANA, 16 May — President Fidel Castro led hundreds of thousands of Cubans in a mass protest in Havana on Friday against new steps taken by the United States to squeeze Cuba’s economy and topple its Communist government.

Workers and students wearing red shirts and sol- diers and military cadets in uniform marched waving small Cuban flags along Ha- vaina’s waterfront past the American diplomatic mission, shouting slogans against US President George W. Bush.

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In the northern city of Mosul, guerrillas fired a mortar round at an Iraq...
Sistani aide asks US forces, militia to quit Najaf

BEIRUT, 16 May — An aide to top Shiite cleric Grand Ayatollah Ali al-Sistani called on Friday US forces and militiamen of cleric Moqtada al-Sadr to cease fighting and leave the holy Iraqi city of Najaf.

Ayatollah Mohammad Baqer al-Mohri, Kuwait-based aide to Sistani, said the fighting was spreading fast and he feared for holy sites and for Sistani’s life.

“The fighting is getting closer to the house of the Grand Ayatollah. We fear that his life will be in danger,” he told Reuters by telephone.

We ask the coalition forces and (Sadr’s) Mehdi militia to quit the holy city Najaf,” he said. He urged US forces not to violate the sanctities of Najaf or damage its shrines and cemetery where religious clerics were buried.

US forces intensified their war against Sadr on Friday, sending tanks into Najaf’s vast cemetery to blast guerrilla positions among its ancient tombs for the first time.

Explosions and gunfire rocked the city, with much of the fighting apparently around the main police station, less than a mile from some of the holiest Shiite shrines.

Mohri said most of Sadr’s men were not from Najaf and they should leave. He said US forces wanted to arrest or kill Sadr, whose offices he said were close to Sistani’s house.

“We heard reports that Imam Ali’ shrine was violated and this breached all red lines,” he added.

US commanders have said they will try not to enter holy sites, including the Imam Ali shrine where Sadr has taken sanctuary. But they said this week the “illegal militia” must be disbanded and their presence was threatening the city after more than a month of fighting across southern Iraq.

MNA/Reuters

Former British detainees tell Bush of Guantanamo abuse

LONDON, 16 May — Two Britons freed from the US military base in Guantanamo Bay have told President George W Bush that they suffered abuse similar to that inflicted on Iraqi prisoners at the Abu Ghraib prison, the British Guardian newspaper reported Friday.

In an open letter to Bush, Shaillal Rashid and Azif Iqbal accused US military officials of deliberately misfiring bullets.

Official says Iraq abuse hurt MP’s reputation

FORT LEO NDWOOD, 16 May — The reputation of the Army’s military police has been “sullied” because of abuses at Iraq’s Abu Ghraib prison, but core standards have not changed, the Army’s top military police trainer said Friday.

Brig Gen Steve Curry, who runs the MP school at Fort Leonard Wood, insisted those standards include the humane and respectful treatment of prisoners — a message repeated throughout the day as the Army posted its training programme for Iraqi-bound MPs.

About 180 private are currently in their 14th week of a 17-week military police training programme.

leading the public about procedures at Guantanamo, where about 600 detainees are held without trial, the paper said.

Rashid and Iqbal, who were freed in March after being arrested in Afghanistan and held without charge for more than two years, alleged in the letter that heavy-handed treatment was systematic.

“From the moment of our arrival in Guantanamo Bay, we were deliberately mistreated and degraded by methods we now read US officials denying,” the paper quoted the letter as saying.

According to the report, Iqbal and Rashid have issued repeated allegations of abuse at the camp since their release in March. But their previous claims were dismissed by the US Embassy in London.

MNA/Althawia

South Korean demonstrators oppose troop dispatch to Iraq

SOUTH KOREA, 16 May — Opposition to a government decision to send troops to Iraq flared here as South Korean President Roh Moo-Hyun returned to office to face the sensitive issue.

Don’t send our boys into harm’s way for an unjust war, read a banner as some 200 people, including human rights activists and leftist students, chanted slogans opposed to the planned troop deployment outside the US embassy in central Seoul Saturday. They urged the government not to join with the US to resist US pressure and reject “the humiliation” of sending troops to the war-torn country.

Hundreds of riot police with shields surrounded the protesters to bar their way to the heavily guarded US diplomatic compound.

The protest lasted an hour before the protestors broke up peacefully. There were no arrests or injuries.

An opinion poll by the independent Hankyoreh daily indicated that reported mistreatment of Iraqi prisoners by US troops had stoked opposition to South Korea’s decision to send more than 3,000 troops to Iraq.

The survey published Saturday showed 64 percent of respondents believe the government should call off the troops dispatch, up from 52 percent a month earlier.

The percentage of those who believe the government should abide by its commitment to sending the troops fell to 30 percent from 59 percent.

Roh, suspended from office for two months, was reinstated Friday after the Constitutional Court rejected a parliamentary vote to impeach him.

South Korean opposition parties plan to vote against the troop dispatch bill next week.

Philippine workers quit Iraq over security fears

MANILA, 16 May — About 600 Filipinos working at a US military camp in Iraq have quit their jobs after one of their countrymen was killed in a mortar attack, a Philippine official said on Friday.

A South Korean protestor holds an image showing US soldiers’ abusing Iraqi prisoners at a rally against the US-led war in Iraq in Seoul, on 14 May, 2004. — Internet

Shiite fighters attack coalition Hqs in Iraqi town

BAGHDAD, 16 May — Shiite militiamen attacked the office of the US-led civilian administration in the southern Iraqi town of Nassiriya on Friday, firing at least five rocket-propelled grenades, an official in the building said.

Andrea Angeli, spokesman for the coalition in Nassiriya, said Italian troops and Filipino security guards traded fire with the militiamen, who had earlier occupied the governor’s office in the town, 235 miles southeast of Baghdad.

He said he was among around 20 international staff trapped inside the building, along with four Italian reporters. He had no infor-mation on any casualties.

Italian troops are responsible for security in Nassiriya, where there have been sporadic clashes with militiamen loyal to rebel cleric Moqtada al-Sadr, who launched an uprising against occupying troops last month.

Angeli said the battle erupted around 7 pm (1500 GMT) and was still going on more than an hour later.

Earlier on Friday, groups of militiamen, some carrying rocket-propelled grenades, stormed the governor’s offices in the centre of Nassiriya and took it over.

Others gathered around the main bridge over the Euphrates in the centre of the town and outside a nearby police station in small pick-up trucks.

MNA/Reuters

200 peacefully protest Iraq war

SEATTLE, 16 May — More than 200 demonstrators gathered peacefully in downtown Seattle Friday to protest the war.

May Minessi, a fourth- and fifth-grade teacher at the School of Seattle in the Central District, said she had always been against the war. “There’s no real reason for us to have gone in the first place.”

But the recent disclosure of photos showing the degradation and torture of Iraqis at Abu Ghraib prison outside Baghdad caused a physical reaction, said Minessi, 24, a daughter of Italian parents.

“Honestly, when I saw them, I had to turn away,” she said. “I couldn’t eat or do anything else for the rest of the day.”

They carried signs such as “The Iraqi Children Cry Too For Peace” and “How Many Lives Per Gallon?”

Some motorists honked their car horns in support. No jeers could be heard.

The peace movement in Seattle had lost some traction after the beginning of the Iraq war, some inside the group have claimed. But this rally, and other recent events, could be indicators that the movement is gaining some renewed momentum.

Internet

Shiite Iraqis raise his gun as hundreds of others shout anti-US slogans in the Sadr City district in Baghdad, Iraq, on 14 May, 2004. — Internet

The Philippines — a stalwart ally of Washington — has confirmed a Filipino citizen was killed in the attack on the US military camp at Balad, north of Baghdad, on Tuesday night.

The US military said five were also wounded. It did not specify their nationalities.

An estimated 3,000 Filipinos are working as civilian contractors in Iraq, including about 1,360 at the Camp Anaconda in Balad.

The workers who left their jobs would be folded into the United Arab Emirates by their employer, should it do Prime Projects Inc, and will be repatriated to Manila, the Philippine official said. Repatriation expenses will be deducted from the workers’ salaries, the official said.

MNA/Reuters
Italy condemns prisoner abuses in Iraq

ROME, 16 May — The Italian Government issued a statement on Friday condemning the abuses against Iraqi prisoners committed by American forces and stressing that it had been unaware of the mistreatment until the scandal exploded.

The statement, issued after a Cabinet meeting, said the government “severely condemned” the abuse episodes and wanted to see the perpetrators “justly punished.”

“The Cabinet indignantly rejects accusations of co-responsibility or reticence with regard to these shameful and despicable acts,” the statement said.

It underscored that the abuses had been committed by members of the Armed Forces of “other countries in the coalition.”

All parties, except former Prime Minister Silvio Berlusconi’s Forza Italia, backed the Socialist’s move, which was their first major policy decision after their upset victory in a general election in March.

The PP government firmly backed the coalition by sending 1,300 troops for the US-led invasion of Iraq and contributed to the central role Spain had played in the lead-up to the conflict.

The senator from Massa and Cozzile, who made a special trip to Capitol Hill for a private viewing, blamed lack of training, the rapid deployment of troops in jobs for which they were unprepared and failure to apply the Geneva Conventions for creating the climate for abuse.

“All those pictures told me that these were a group of people ran amok,” Kerry said.

Kerry, a decorated Vietnam War veteran, said he learned in early training to quote the Geneva Conventions and that “it sure helps to have other people who believe that it is important to live up to them.”

Western allies press US to give Iraqis real power

WASHINGTON, 16 May — Major powers challenged the United States on Friday to transfer real power to Baghdad at the June 30 handover of sovereignty by giving Iraqis control over their security forces and influence US military decisions.

France, which last year blocked UN approval of the US invasion, said Washington must give up control over local forces and a US ally with troops in Iraq, said a new government must have a say over American troop tactics. In a nod to Iraqi authoritarians, Secretary of State Colin Powell said the United States would withdraw its troops if the interim government made such an unlikely demand. —MNA/Reuters

Spain’s Parliament backs Iraq troop withdrawal

MADRID, 16 May — Spain’s Parliament backed the Socialist Party’s decision to withdraw Spanish troops from Iraq in a vote on Thursday.

All parties, except former Prime Minister Jose Mar{\aa}a Aznar’s Popular Party (PP), backed the Socialists’ move, which was their first major policy decision after their upset victory in a general election in March.

The PP government firmly backed the US-led invasion of Iraq and contributed to the coalition by sending 1,300 troops for humanitarian tasks despite widespread opposition to the war.

In Thursday’s vote, the 141 PP lawmakers opposed the move, while the Socialists of Jose Luis Rodriguez Zapatero and all the other smaller parties — totaling 186 votes — voted in favour.

Defence Minister Jose Bono said on Wednesday that the Spanish withdrawal was happening faster than expected and could be complete next week, Spanish newspapers reported. That would be ahead of the May 27 date the government had set.

782 US military killed in the Iraq war

BAGHDAD, 16 May— Guerillas and US troops battled across Iraq as talk of Shiite minority in northern Iraq on Friday when they opened for fire on their convoy, Turkey’s state-run Anatolian news agency said.

The agency said Mustafa Kemal Yazicii, the Iraqi Turkmens Front’s representative in the city of Kirkuk, and his driver were killed in the attack on Friday morning in the town of Tuz Khurmatu near Kirkuk.

Anatolian said there was a report that US soldiers had opened fire on the convoy. Yazicii was the party’s candidate for the post of mayor in Kirkuk in municipal elections last year.

Kirkuk, which sits on some of Iraq’s richest oil reserves, is divided between Arabs, Kurds and Turkmens who all lay claim to the city. —MNA/Reuters

Experts worry about indoor air pollution in developing countries

TIANJIN, 16 May — Statistics show that indoor air pollution has doubled over the past 15 years in surveyed cases in some developing countries and regions like China and India, according to a visiting Danish environment expert.

Each day about 5,000 people die of indoor air pollution, P. Ole Fanger, an expert from the Technical University of Denmark, said here Thursday at an ongoing international seminar on architecture and urban environment.

Some 30 environmental experts attended discussions on “green” or environmentally friendly architectural and urban environment issues like indoor environment and urban environment. They came from over 10 Chinese and foreign universities including those of Denmark, Japan, South Korea and the United States.

Fanger said that in many developing countries and regions, indoor environment has become worse because of polluted gases arising from cooking, toilet use and furnishing which are posing serious threats to human health.

Moreover, modern buildings have become more tightly closed for the purpose of energy efficiency, which therefore reduces ventilation.

He added that poisonous gases may leak from upholstery materials, modern office equipment and home electrical appliances, leading to the worsening of indoor pollution.

People who inhale the gases may feel dizzy, fatigued and weary and thus become less efficient at work.

A person spends about 90 per cent of his or her life indoors and is subjected to a large amount of unclean gas.

Zhu Neng, an environmental expert of Tianjin University, suggested people be conscientious and active in increasing ventilation, the best way to improve indoor environment.

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Kerry says people ran amok in Iraqi abuse scandal

WASHINGTON, 16 May— Democratic challenger John Kerry said on Friday images of abuse at a US-run Iraqi prison showed “people ran amok” and accused President George W Bush of alienating US allies with “stiff-arm” tactics.

Despite what he called the depraved pictures of violence and sexual humiliation at the Abu Ghraib Prison, Kerry said the Bush Administration probably would be better off releasing them to the public and taking responsibility rather than having them leak out “in dribbles and drabs.”

The senator from Massa and Cozzile, who made a special trip to Capitol Hill for a private viewing, blamed lack of training, the rapid deployment of troops in jobs for which they were unprepared and failure to apply the Geneva Conventions for creating the climate for abuse.

“All those pictures told me that these were a group of people ran amok,” Kerry said.

Kerry, a decorated Vietnam War veteran, said he learned in early training to quote the Geneva Conventions and that “it sure helps to have other people who believe that it is important to live up to them.”

Tomkin party official killed in Iraq

ISTANBUL, 16 May— Gunmen shot dead a senior party member from the Turkmen minority in northern Iraq on Friday when they opened for fire on their convoy, Turkey’s state-run Anatolian news agency said.

The agency said Mustafa Kemal Yazicii, the Iraqi Turkmen Front’s representative in the city of Kirkuk, and his driver were killed in the attack on Friday morning in the town of Tuz Khurmatu near Kirkuk.

Anatolian said there was a report that US soldiers had opened fire on the convoy. Yazicii was the party’s candidate for the post of mayor in Kirkuk in municipal elections last year.

Kirkuk, which sits on some of Iraq’s richest oil reserves, is divided between Arabs, Kurds and Turkmens who all lay claim to the city. —MNA/Reuters

Polluted drinking water poisons Iraqis

BAGHDAD, 15 May — More than 300 Iraqis in Mada’in, one of the southern districts of Baghdad, were poisoned by polluted drinking water, said Azuman newspaper Thursday. During the past few months, many cases of poisoning took place because of the polluted drinking water, which resulted from people throwing poisonous wastes in the drainage and rivers, said the local newspaper.

“The drinking water that we use in our houses from the river of Dijala is full of polluted materials from the sewers and industrial wastes,” said Hameed Hussam, chairman of the municipality of the city. He added international organizations are distributing drinking water to the residents of the area and the mosques used the loudspeakers to urge people not to use regular water tabs for drinking. Many of Iraq’s cities, especially the southern ones, are suffering the problem of polluted drinking water, which led to the spread of some epidemics, especially among children. —MNA/Reuters

A US Marine from the 1st Battalion, 5th Marine Regiment, takes a low position after hearing gunfire in Karadari, Iraq, on 13 May, 2004. —Izvesta

An armed Iraqi fighter takes up position in the centre of Karbala, 110km south of Baghdad, Iraq, on 13 May, 2004. —Izvesta

MNA/Reuters
Images of Iraq

An Iraqi man tries to extinguish a burning barricade at the entrance to the suburb of Sadr City, Baghdad, Iraq, on 15 May, 2004.

Iraqi firefighters battle a burning storage depot following a mortar attack in the Abu Ghraib suburb of Baghdad, on 15 May, 2004.

Civilians rush a wounded Iraqi man into a local hospital in the holy city of Najaf on 14 May 2004.

Iraqi civilians flee as sporadic clashes erupted between militiamen loyal to wanted cleric Moqtada Sadr and US forces in the city of Najaf, south of Baghdad, on 15 May, 2004.

Iraqi men are seen through a bullet hole as they survey damaged shops, in the centre of the city of Najaf, on 15 May, 2004.

A map showing roadside bombings in the northern Iraq city of Mosul on 7 May, 2004.

An Iraqi man who was wounded in mortar attack which killed four people is treated at the hospital in Mosul, on 15 May, 2004.

Iraqis rush a wounded Iraqi man into a local hospital in the holy city of Najaf on 14 May 2004.
Border and rural area developments

### Water supply in rural areas

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sr</th>
<th>State/Division</th>
<th>Project implemented</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Sagaing Division</td>
<td>1166</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Magway Division</td>
<td>750</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Mandalay Division</td>
<td>2268</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Water is being supplied to the villagers through tubewell in Nyaungbinkan Village, NyaungU Township, Mandalay Division.

### Communication in border areas

<table>
<thead>
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<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
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<td>Retransmission Station</td>
<td>97</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Post Office</td>
<td>47</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Telephone Station</td>
<td>80</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

To disseminate knowledge to the rural public, TV retransmission station was built in Konggyan region of Shan State (North).

### Health care services in border areas

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sr</th>
<th>Subject</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Station Health Centre</td>
<td>82</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Rural Health Centre</td>
<td>29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Rural Health Branch</td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Local national people living in Kokang region, Shan State (North) are provided health care services at Chinshwehaw Hospital.

A post office built in Alon Station of Monywa District for the convenience of local people.

A Traditional Medical Centre built in Myaung, Sagaing Division to provide health care services to local people.
Paying serious attention on development of rural areas and national races

by T. Htu

Nowadays, emphasis is being laid on ensuring equitable development of all parts of the Union with a view to further cementing national solidarity. The State is making earnest efforts for harmonious development of all regions of the Union after laying down the 24 special development regions projects, the five rural development tasks and the border areas development project.

Shweli Hydro-electric Power Project is being implemented on Shweli River near Manet Village, 17 miles south-west of Namkham Township, Shan State (North). The 531-foot long and 154 feet high concrete gravity dam and 33-foot diameter and 850 feet long tunnel with 33-foot diameter and 3.12 miles long tunnel with 23-foot diameter will be built.

The Shweli hydro-electric power project site in Namkham Township, Shan State (North).

With the generation capacity of 400 megawatts and it will generate 3,022 kilowatt hours a year. The electricity generated from the project will be supplied to Shan State (North) through 66-kv high-tension cables. A grid including 230-mile long double high-tension cable line from Shweli to Mandalay will be built to supply power to other regions.

The Shweli hydel power project is one of the instances showing the Government's serious attention to the development of national races in border areas. At the same time, the State is giving priority to the implementation of rural development tasks — ensuring smooth and secure transportation in rural areas, enabling rural people to obtain clean water; enhancing education standard of rural people; stepping up health care facilities of rural people and bringing about economic development of rural people.

Apart from other rural development endeavours, low-cost rural housing projects are being implemented in accordance with the guidance of Head of State Senior General Than Shwe.

With the gaining of momentum in endeavours for developing national races and rural people, the nation will prosper certainly.

Rural development facilities inaugurated

YANGON, 16 May — Director-General of the Development Affairs Department under the Ministry for Progress of Border Areas and National Races and Development Affairs Col Myo Myint attended the opening ceremony of a gravel road leading to the Government Technological College in Meiktila Township, Mandalay Division on 14 May morning. The road is 4056 feet long and 12 feet wide.

Next, the director-general inspected sinking of tubewells by the Township Development Affairs Committee in outskirt of Meiktila.

The director-general first attended the opening ceremony of a tubewell in Kyigon village. The 2-inch tubewell is 210 feet deep and it can supply 1500 gallons of water per hour. Now, 355 people of 85 households in the village are having sufficient clean water. The director-general next inspected the sinking of tubewell in Aungtha village. It is being sunk to the depth of 200 feet and at completion, 702 people of 240 households in the village can have sufficient water.

The director-general next inspected sinking of tubewell in Chantshay village. The tubewell gets water at the depth of 215 feet. Now the tubewell with the capacity of supplying 1.200 gallons of water per hour is providing water to 340 people of 59 households in the village. Col Myo Myint also inspected sinking of tubewell in Talingon village. The tubewell there with the capacity of 1.200 gallons per hour is 210 feet deep and it is providing water to 102 people of 21 households in the village.

— MNA
Prime Minister General Khin Nyunt inspects renovation of Maha Pasana Cave

YANGON, 16 May — Accompanied by officials of the State Peace and Development Council Office, Prime Minister General Khin Nyunt arrived at Maha Pasana Cave on Thiri Mingalar Kabayase Hill here this morning where they were welcomed by Yangon Division Peace and Development Council Chairman Yangon Command Commander Maj-Gen Myint Swe, Ministers, the Yangon mayor, Deputy ministers and officials.

First, the Prime Minister and party paid homage to Sitagu International Buddhist Academy Chancellor Inter-national Theravada Buddhist Missionary University Hon-orary Professor Agga Maha Pandita Maha Dhamma Kahkta Bahujana Hitadara Bhaddanta Dr Nanissara explained the city, measures are being made to enable Yangon City to possess characteristics of international level cities after forming the City Housing Project Supervisory Committee made up of high-ranking officials, he said.

Now, under the supervision of the committee, national construction entrepreneurs, architects and engineers including departments, and Myanmar Construction Entrepreneurs’ Association, Myanmar Engineering Society and Myanmar Architects Association are participating individually or in groups in tasks for upgrading of Yangon City, he noted.

The Supervisory Committee for Construction of High-rise Buildings is providing necessary assistance to systema-tize in implementing the city housing projects, to meet set standard and to ensure fine and strong facilities, he said. At such an opportune time, the seminar “Tall Buildings: A Challenge for Myanmar Architects & Engineers”, part of technological development task of Myanmar Architects Association, will contribute much towards emergence of mushrooming high-rise buildings and skyscrapers in the nation, he said.

The BOC College launched in 1954 had been teaching architecture to the students, and 2004 is its golden jubilee, he said. The successful holding of this seminar is endowed with full national essence for it will help national architects and engineers build modern skyscrapers as activities to mark its golden jubilee in order to set a milestone in Myanmar architecture, he said.

Architecture has been prominent in the nation since the beginning of Myanmar’s cultural history. So, today’s architects are still amani with the beautiful architecture of the time of King Anawrahta, founder of the First Myanmar Empire, such as Buddha images, pagodas, stupas, monaster-

In the meantime, arrangements are being made for cooperation in implementing development infrastructures including transportation.

Therefore, at a time when progress has been made in cooperation in all aspects between the two nations those present are to discuss matters related to promoting and implementing cooperation which serves mutual interest, he said.

Next, Minister for Foreign Affairs U Win Aung reported on measures taken sector-wise after laying down programmes on Myanmar-Thailand economic cooperation under Bagan Summit & Economic cooperation.

Afterwards, Minister for Industry-1 U Aung Thaung reported on holding discussions on matters related to investment in Myanmar and cooperation between the two coun-
tries in industrial sector under Ayeayawady-Chao Phraya- Mekong economic cooperation strategy in meeting with Deputy Prime Minister Chavalit Yongchaiyudh, Minister of Industry Mr Phinij Jurusombat and Chairman of Investment Board Mr Soe Phohtein of Myanmar and business- men during his visit to Thailand from 3 to 7 March 2004. This was followed by a general round of discussions. The meeting ended with the concluding remarks by Prime Minister General Khin Nyunt.—MNA

Prime Minister urges …

(from page 16)

Major cities including Yangon have greatly developed in a short time. Now there are modern buildings, religious edifices such as pagodas, stupas, monasteries and private rest-houses, modern condominiums, world-class manage-

Among the arrangements for constructing high-rise and modern buildings systematically in an attempt to upgrade Yangon to a world-class city, measures are being made to enable Yangon City to possess characteristics of international level cities after forming the City Housing Project Supervisory Committee made up of high-ranking officials, he said.

Now, under the supervision of the committee, national construction entrepreneurs, architects and engineers including departments, and Myanmar Construction Entrepreneurs’ Association, Myanmar Engineering Society and Myanmar Architects Association are participating individually or in groups in tasks for upgrading of Yangon City, he noted.

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Industry-2 Minister inspects factories, workshops in Padaung

YANGON, 16 May — Minister for Industry-2 Maj-Gen Saw Lwin went to No 1 Agricultural Equipment Factory (Hsinte) in Padaung Township on 14 May morning.

The minister inspected manufacturing and assem-bling of KND5B diesel engines, 12-inch pumps and Ayeyar-wadi power tillers. Next, the minister also inspected comple-
tion of the generator workshop and the electric meter workshop.

On 15 May morning, the minister arrived at No 2 Automobile Factory (Hbono) in Padaung Township. He met supervisors and explained annual boost of produc-tion of the ministry, functions of the factory for 2004-2005 financial year, target and production.

Next, the minister inspected and surveyed DS-70 diesel engines to be installed in TE-21 trucks and gave necessary instructions.—MNA

Nursery Market Festival continues

YANGON, 16 May — The Nursery Market Festival continued at Myay Padeitha Park in Bahan Township here today with the aim of providing necessary assistance to growers and attracting the public to be interested in agri-culture, horticulture, livestock breeding and vegetable farming. —MNA
Lt-Gen Khin Maung Than inspects construction tasks in Pathein, attends opening of Bio-technology Development Centre

YANGON, 16 May — Member of the State Peace and Development Council Lt-Gen Khin Maung Than of the Ministry of Defence, accompanied by Chairman of Ayeayawady Division Peace and Development Council Commander of South-West Command Maj-Gen Soe Naing and members, arrived at the poultry farm of the command and the chicken distribution camp yesterday morning after attending the state-arranging ceremony for building Myaungmya (Pantawaddy) Bridge in Pathein. At the briefing hall, farm in charge Lt-Col Tin Myo Tint reported on kens and number of chickens being bred at the farm, running of hatchery and distribution of chickens. Next, Lt-Gen Khin Maung Than gave necessary instructions and inspected the farm and hatchery. Then, Lt-Gen Khin Maung Than and party headed for Pathein University, Viced-Chairman of the University, Dr Katsuhiko-Ando of the National Institute of Technology and Evaluation and guests. First, Rector U Cho explained the purpose of opening of the centre. Ayeayawhwa Co Chair- man U Teza, the donor of the centre building, handed over documents related to the building to Director-General of the Higher Education Department (Lower Myanmar) U Saw Lwin. Dr of Katsuhiko-Ando gave an honorary speech and presented a gift to the rector. Afterwards, Director-General U Saw Lwin spoke words of thanks, and the first session of the ceremony ended. At the second session, Lt-Gen Khin Maung Than formally opened the Bio-technology Development Centre. Then, the commander, the director general and the rector formally opened the centre by cutting a ribbon. To hail the opening of the centre, Lt-Gen Khin Maung Than planted a Glang tree. Lt-Gen Khin Maung Than and party then viewed round the centre. After that, Lt-Gen Khin Maung Than and party proceeded to the project site for the construction of the Pathein Bridge being imple- mented by Public Works, the Ministry of Con- struction. At the briefing hall, Lt-Gen Khin Maung Than heard reports by officials on progress in construction of the bridge and construction of the embankment with the use of gravel and gave necessary instructions. Then, Lt-Gen Khin Maung Than and party viewed the construction of the road linking between Kani and Chaungtha by car. They went to Kayakkhungyi (Palaung) and met with the Social organization members. At the end of the time, Lt-Gen Khin Maung Than and party visited Sulaimani Pagoda and Lawka Nanda Aungdawmu Pagoda in Kani Village. — MNA

Lt-Gen Khin Maung Than inspects development of Myaungmya District

YANGON, 17 May — Member of the State Peace and Development Council Lt-Gen Khin Maung Than of the Ministry of Defence, accompanied by officials of the State Peace and Development Council Office and departmental officials, left here by car on 14 May morning. On arrival at Pandine Village in Htantabin Township, they were welcomed by Chairman of Myaungmya District Peace and Development Council Commander of South-West Command Maj-Gen Soe Naing and officials. Accompanied by the commander and party, Lt-Gen Khin Maung Than proceeded to Bo Myat Tun Bridge in Katongon Township. In the briefing hall, officials reported on maintenance of the bridge and prevention of bank erosion. The commander gave a supplementary report. Lt-Gen Khin Maung Than inspected measures being taken for prevention of bank erosion at the bridge. Next, they went to the site of 1,000-acre of fish-breeding project being carried out by South-West Command in Mogok-Decodok area in Myaungmya Village in Einme and Pantanaw Townships. Lt-Col Tin Myo Tint reported on digging of 250 acres of fish ponds, breeding of fish and building of the ice factory. Lt-Gen Khin Maung Than attended to the requirements and inspected comple- tion of digging 250-acre of fish ponds. The 1,000-acre of fish-breeding project will be implemented 16 months later. A total of 250 acres will be dug in the first year, another 250 in the second year and 500 in the third. Diggings of 250 acres of ponds was completed on 30 April. At Mayangunu Bridge across Thayetkon Creek in Einme-Myaungmya Road, Lt-Gen Khin Maung Than also heard reports on buildings of the bridge by officials. The bridge will be 240 feet long and 24 feet wide and it is of reinforced concrete. In Kwingale Village, they heard reports on building of Gyonong Bridge on Einme Creek and choosing of the axis by officials. At Naungyoe Hall in Myanmar, Lt-Gen Khin Maung Than met departmental officials and social organization members. Chairman of Myaungmya District Peace and Development Council Lt-Col Kyi Htut Win briefed them on geographical condition, education, health, economic matters, con- struction works and agriculture and livestock breeding. The commander gave a supple- mentary report. Next, Lt-Gen Khin Maung Than inspected requirements of the Department of Labour. At the local battalion in Wamhsin Village, Mongnaung, Shan State (South), on 12 May morn- ing, accompanied by Chairman of South State Peace and Development Council Commander of Eastern Command Maj-Gen Khin Maung Myint and officials, Lt-Gen Aung Htwe inspected building of Kholann-Wamhsin-Mongnaung-Mongshu Road between mile post 20 and 21. Construction in-charge Col Tha Aung and Senior Engineer U Myint Thet reported on work done. At mile post 18 on the road, Col Tha Aung reported on quarry and building works. Lt-Gen Aung Htwe fulfilled the requirements. Next, Col Tha Aung and officials briefed him on production of gravel and building of the road. The commander reported on building of Kholann-Wamshin-Mongnaung-Mongshu Road, arrangements for production of gravel, use of heavy machinery, fuel and tar, plan to build 46-mile Laikha-Mongnaung Road and 27-mile Pakhi-Mongshu Road, progress of 16-mile Keshi-Namhpok Road and requirements. After giving necessary instructions, Lt-Gen Aung Htwe attended to their needs. — MNA

Lt-Gen Aung Htwe inspects progress of building Kholan-Wamhsin-Mongnaung-Mongshu Road

YANGON, 16 May — Member of the State Peace and Development Council Lt-Gen Aung Htwe of the Ministry of Defence met officers, other ranks and families of the battalion in Wamhsin Village, Mongnaung, Shan State (South), on 12 May morn- ing. Accompanied by Chairman of Shan State Peace and Development Council Commander of Eastern Command Maj-Gen Khin Maung Myint and officials, Lt-Gen Aung Htwe inspected building of Kholan-Wamhsin-Mongnaung-Mongshu Road between mile post 20 and 21. Construction in-charge Col Tha Aung and Senior Engineer U Myint Thet reported on work done. At mile post 18 on the road, Col Tha Aung reported on quarry and building works. Lt-Gen Aung Htwe fulfilled the requirements. Next, Col Tha Aung and officials briefed him on production of gravel and building of the road. The commander reported on building of Kholann-Wamshin-Mongnaung-Mongshu Road, arrangements for production of gravel, use of heavy machinery, fuel and tar, plan to build 46-mile Laikha-Mongnaung Road and 27-mile Pakhi-Mongshu Road, progress of 16-mile Keshi-Namhpok Road and requirements. After giving necessary instructions, Lt-Gen Aung Htwe attended to their needs. — MNA

Lt-Gen Maung Bo tours Palaw, Myeik

YANGON, 16 May — Member of the State Peace and Development Council Lt-Gen Maung Bo of the Ministry of Defence, together with Chairman of the Tamitnhany Division Peace and Development Council Commander of Coastal Region Command Brig-Gen Ohn Myint, on 13 May morning inspected Dawei-Myeik Road and communication stations and staff quarters at Palaw Township. Afterwards, Lt-Gen Maung Bo met with departmental staff, social organiza- tions and townselders at the township hall. At the meeting, officials concerned reported on agriculture tasks in the region. After hearing reports, Lt-Gen Maung Bo urged the departmental officials to cooperate with local people in implementing the transportation, education and health tasks. He also attended to the needs. Afterwards, Lt-Gen Maung Bo and party inspected building of Bokechan-Daw-Myeik new bypass and Papyin Bridge on Dawei-Myeik Road. The commander gave a briefing hall of the bypass construction project near Daw Village, an official concerned reported on building tasks. Next, Commander Brig-Gen Ohn Myint and Deputy Chief Engineer U Ye Myint Swe and Superintendent Engineer U Chit Pan gave a supplementary report. Lt-Gen Maung Bo yesterday attended the ceremony to enshrine religious objects into the reliquary and erect pivot of the Maha Theikhihazaya Pagoda built on Sandlewat Hill in Mynam. It was also attended by Commander Brig-Gen Ohn Myint, Minister for Live- stock and Fisheries Brig-Gen Maung Maung Thein and senior military officers, and local people. At the ceremony, Lt-Gen Maung Bo and officials presented religious objects and offerings to the Sayadaws and Sayadaw Abhidhaja Maharagupta Abhidhaja Aggama Suddhimaetum Kiththa U Htun Swe and tasked the members of the Sangha. Later, cash donation ceremony was followed. At the ceremony, wellwishers donated cash amounted to K 59,824,677 through Lt-Gen Maung Bo, Brig-Gen Ohn Myint and Brig-Gen Maung Maung Thein. — MNA

Commander inspects tax-free markets

YANGON, 16 May — Chairman of Yangon Division Peace and Development Council Commander of Yangon command Maj-Gen Myint Swe, accompanied by mili- tary region commanders and officials inspected tax-free markets here this morning. Next, the commander and party inspected the shops of ministries, YCDC, Yangon Command and companies in Pantaya, Hanhawady, Kamantha, Nawadyaw, Yankin and Tamway tax-free markets. Next, the commander gave necessary instructions and fulfilled the needs of dealers and purchasers. — MNA

Labour Minister back from Brunei Darussalam

YANGON, 16 May — The Myanmar delegation led by Minister for Labour U Tin Win ended its visit to Brunei Darussalam by air this evening after attending the 18TH ASEAN Ministers’ Meeting in Brunei Darussalam. The minister and party were welcomed back at Yangon International Airport by Minister at the Prime Minister’s Office U Than Shwe, Minister for Cooperatives Maj-Gen Huy Os, Deputy Minister for Labour Brig-Gen Win Sein, departmental officials of the ministry and families. Members of the delegation, Director-General U Soe Nyunt of the Labour Department, Adviser U Aye Ngwe and Assistant Director U Kyaw Kyaw also arrived back here on the same flight. — MNA
ICTs: Leading the way to sustainable development
Message from Mr Yoshio Utsumi, Secretary-General of International Telecommunication Union

It is often said that if you don’t like the way the world is, you should change it. Fortunately, many of the things we do not like about our world — poverty, ignorance, hunger — could all be changed through better communications. This belief was shared by the 11,000 delegates, including nearly 50 Heads of Government and 80 ministers and vice-ministers who attended the first phase of the World Summit on the Information Society (WSIS) in Geneva last December.

The Summit was organized by ITU to ensure that social and economic development, which is increasingly driven by information and communication technologies (ICT), will result in a more just, prosperous and equitable world. It is this promise that lies at the heart of our information society and it is the reason we have chosen to celebrate the 139th anniversary of the founding of ITU with the theme ICTs: Leading the way to sustainable development.

Reliable and affordable communications can be used effectively as part of a toolbox for addressing global problems. ICTs alone may not feed the hungry, eradicate poverty or reduce child mortality, but they are an increasingly important catalyst that spurs economic growth and social equity. ICTs allow for more efficient agricultural production, diversity and distribution. They offer the possibility of delivering basic health services to those in need residing in areas with little or no access to healthcare facilities. They can extend the reach of educators allowing them to bring knowledge to the most remote corners of our planet.

Access to information technology can boost the creation of small companies and groupings of artisans in the poorest and most isolated areas of the world and help them join the mainstream of national and even global markets. Information technology makes it possible to leapfrog poor infrastructures so that distance from markets is no longer a drawback and poor distribution channels a thing of the past.

ICTs can also be extremely effective in improving governance. They give a voice to people who have been isolated, or have been invisible and silent, allowing them to speak without regard to their gender and where they live.

Given their enormous power to improve people’s economic, social and cultural well-being, ICTs must be at the centre of any development strategy.

The global commitment of world leaders at the Summit is no doubt a historical recognition of the importance of ICTs in addressing many of the major social, political and economical problems. But the successful outcome of the first phase of the Summit is only the start of a longer process. We now need to transform the vision and plans adopted in Geneva into concrete action. And above all, we need to enlist the long-term commitment of all stakeholders to ensure that ICTs truly lead the way to sustainable development. — MNA

ASEAN+3 agree to further financial, monetary cooperation, structural reforms
Jct: (South Korea), 16 May — Finance ministers from the ASEAN+3 countries held their 7th meeting here Saturday and agreed to further promote financial and monetary cooperation and structural reforms in the region.

The ministers from the 10-member Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) and China, Japan and South Korea agreed that growth was supported by accommodative monetary and fiscal policies in many countries, which contributed to further strengthening in domestic demand.

In a joint statement, the ministers, who are here attending the joint meeting of the Asian Development Bank, noted that continued efforts to accelerate corporate and financial restructuring, fiscal consolidation and improved investment climate have also led to a more conducive economic environment.

In this regard, the ASEAN+3 countries have contributed positively as additional source of growth to global economic recovery, the statement said. The ministers agreed to undertake further review of the Chiang Mai Initiative (CMI) to explore ways of enhancing its effectiveness.

Under the CMI, a total of 16 Bilateral Swap Arrangements worth 36.5 trillion US dollars have been signed among the members in the region as of April 2004.

They said six groups have made substantial progress under the Asian Bond Market Initiative (ABMI).

Such efforts will contribute significantly to the development of deeper and more liquid regional bond markets that will assist in the efficient allocation of the large pool of savings in Asia to fund productive investment in the region, the statement said.

The ministers also stressed the important role of information exchange in the development of regional bond market. As one of the measures to promote this, the Asia Bond Online Website was officially launched immediately after the ministers’ meeting.

The ministers welcomed China’s offer to continue with training courses and seminars on the regional economy and financial cooperation, as well as the technical assistance provided by the Japan-ASEAN Financial Technical Assistance Fund for participating members and the assistance by South Korea and Malaysia in the area. The ministers agreed to hold further discussions on further regional financial cooperation in Istanbul, Turkey, in 2005.

MNA/Kimshua

AIDS cases: 200,000 new cases in four months
AIDS cases

AIDS cases in Myanmar rose by 200,000 in the four months to the end of April, the Myanmar AIDS Network said.

AIDS cases in the Myanmar has risen from 348,000 last year to 548,000 this year, said Mr Soe Htun Taw, national liaison officer at the MENA.

The government was aware of the HIV and AIDS epidemic in the country and had been doing everything possible to combat it, he said.

AIDS cases in Myanmar had reached 348,000 last year, and 548,000 this year.

Mr Soe Htun Taw said that 130,000 people were HIV-positive, and 130,000 were positive for the killer virus.

AIDS cases were also rising in the four months to the end of April.

AIDS cases were rising in the four months to the end of April.

Toxic red tide spreads off East China
Beijing, 16 May — A toxic red tide has blanketed the equivalent of more than 1.3 million soccer fields of sea off eastern China, threatening marine and human life, state media said on Saturday.

The tide is caused by plankton reproducing itself in large quantities due to nutrients provided in part by sewage and industrial waste.

The Vice Minister at the State Environmental Protection Administration, Pan Yue, warned people about eating fish from the area off Zoushan in Zhejiang Province, the China Daily said. “It might cause damage to humans because the red tide contains paralyzing toxins,” he said.

“The phenomenon, though colourful in appearance, is very dangerous because it can lead to the death of aquatic life and therefore cause damage to the fishing industry.”

MNA/Reuters
ADVERTISEMENTS

BANGladesh to adopt national plan for disabled

DUSKA, 16 May — The Bangladeshi Government will soon adopt a national plan for the development of disabled people, reported the official Bangladesh News Agency on Thursday.

Prime Minister Begum Khaleeda Zia announced the plan earlier this week, when attending a function organized by the Ministry for Social Welfare, the Prime Minister stressed the need to integrate the backward section of society with mainstream development through special programmes.

She said while there was no single plan for the development of disabled before, the present government has formed a task force with 14 ministries for the welfare of disabled, under which a national plan would be formulated.

She also said the issues of disability and disabled people are being given importance in the ‘Enjoyment and Safety’ Reduction Strategy Paper of the country.

Instead of being burden to society, the disabled people can turn into assets through adequate training and care, said the Prime Minister.

She expressed hope that the development partners would come forward for successful implementation of the programmes for them.

MNA/Xinhua

Swede in hot water for towing Russian submarine

STOCKHOLM, 16 May — A Swedish captain has landed in legal hot water, twice, for towing a Russian submarine, now used as a museum attraction.

Captain Stig Martin Sjöberg — whose surname means sea mountain — was arrested by the Swedish Coast Guard while towing the 75-metre (250-foot) 1950s Whiskey Class Soviet sub in the Kalmar Strait off the east coast of Sweden.

Sjöberg, 48, ran afoul of Swedish maritime regulations after he admitted in court that his diesel electric sub could dive to 280 metres and had six torpedoes. His sister vessel U-117 is well known in Sweden: in 1981 she ran aground outside the Swedish naval base in Karlskrona.

Sjöberg’s sub is now moored, awaiting sale with a 230,000 euros price tag, said shipbroker Magnus Wadell.

There is, however, no happy end for Sjöberg. The Coast Guard caught him again towing the submarine — whose engines no longer function — and he will be charged a second time.

MNA/Reuters

ADB head says economic cooperation on move in Asia

JEN (South Korea), 16 May — The regional cooperation and integration in Asia that have pushed the region’s rapid growth in the last two decades are on a stage toward new levels, said ADB chairman鲜田喜明 Friday.

“Steps are now afoot to take economic cooperation and integration in Asia to new levels,” said Tadashi Chino, President of the Asian Development Bank (ADB), at the opening of the (South) Korea Day Seminar, which was part of the major events coinciding the 37th ADB Board of Governors annual meeting in Jeju, a southwestern island of South Korea.

He said, in a relatively short period of time, ADBias launched several important initiatives to build greater resilience to external shocks.

The initiatives, including peer review and policy dialogue, reserve pooling and sharing and regional bond market development, he said, “could potentially become key instruments in ensuring sustained integration and growth in the future.”

In the area of peer review and policy dialogue, the ASEAN+3 Information Policy Dialogue, the ADB’s well established, and for the regional reserve sharing, there is the Chiang Mai Initiative, he said.

For the first time, concrete steps are being taken at the regional level to complement individual country efforts, under ASEAN+3 (the Association of Southeast Asian Nations and China, Japan and South Korea) and various other groups.

He said the ADB’s long term strategic framework to support poverty reduction in the region, the ADB has supported various regional cooperation projects, investing in infrastructure, the exchange of information and experiences, promotion of policy dialogue, and strengthening of institutions and regulations.

Meanwhile, Hoon-Jai Lee, South Korean Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Finance and Economy, in a key speech at the event, said “it’s quite encouraging to see that Asian countries are making some progress in the area of financial cooperation”. He noted that the Chiang Mai Initiative would help in crisis prevention and management, providing liquidity to countries experiencing a temporary shortage of foreign currency.

The development of the Asian bond market will help increase the regional investor base and mobilize regional savings, as well as reduce dependency on and vulnerability to outside capital flows, he added.

MNA/Reuters

Germans hope for gold rush after nugget find

BERLIN, 16 May — Thousands of Germans are expected to descend on the eastern region of Thuringia this summer for the region’s streams to descend on the eastern region of Thuringia this summer for the region’s streams.
Chinese Vice-Premier holds talks with Singaporean Deputy PM

BEIJING, 16 May — Chinese Vice-Premier Wu Yi held talks with visiting Singaporean Deputy Prime Minister Lee Hsien Loong in Beijing Friday and jointly presided over the first conference of the bilateral cooperation joint committee between the two countries.

Wu said that since China and Singapore established diplomatic relations 14 years ago, heads of the two states have made unremitting efforts to maintain healthy and stable development of the bilateral relations.

Wu said the Chinese Government always attaches great importance to bilateral ties with Singapore. In 2002, heads of the two states reached important consensus on cooperation in four key areas including high technology, western development of China, green growth promoted by China and talents exchange and training.

To promote all-round cooperation between China and Singapore, the two governments established a bilateral cooperation joint committee. Wu said that China and Singapore have not only set a clear goal of bilateral cooperation, but also established an improved mechanism to promote the cooperation.

Wu said highly of Sin- gapore’s becoming a country of the Association of South-East Asian Nations (ASEAN) to acknowledge Singapore’s market economy status. She said China and Singapore have become important trade partners for each other. In 2003, bilateral trade between the two countries reached nearly 20 billion US dollars’ worth. Wu expressed her belief that with the joint efforts of the two countries, the bilateral trade volume will surely exceed 50 billion dollars.

Wu said the Chinese side welcomes Singaporean guests to participate in the 14th development forum of China’s old industrial bases like north-east China, and also welcomes Singapore to attend the first Sino-ASEAN summit to be held in this November in Nanning, provincial capital of south China’s Guangxi Zhuang Autonomous Region.

Wu said China also welcomes Singapore to join the China-Thailand zero tariff arrangement on vegetables and fruits, which was implemented on October 1, 2003.

The Chinese side is willing to cooperate with Singapore in promoting the establishment of a free trade zone between China and ASEAN, and discussing ways to further improve the zero tariff trade between China and Singapore.

The Singaporean side also welcomed participation in China’s development of the western areas and the old industrial bases like north-east China, said Lee.

He expressed the hope that both sides will hold further discussions on modifying the bilateral agreement of avoiding dual tariff, and strengthen cooperation in the two countries in November.

Audi to establish production base in Thailand

BANGKOK, 16 May— Famous German carmaker Audi will use Thailand as its production base for export market in the region. Audi AG’s managing director for the Asian Pacific region Jorg Hofmann met Industry Minister Pinij Jarusombat here Thursday, stating the company’s aim to invest in a Thai plant owned by its local partner, the Yontrakit Group, the Thai News Agency reported Friday.

Being a luxury car unit of the Volkswagen Group, the company plans to produce 7,000-8,000 Audi A4 and A6 models per year. Deputy Industry Minister Vachira Phanchet was quoted by the agency as saying that Audi chose Thailand as the second production base in Asia after China due to the Thai Government’s policy on turning the kingdom into “Detroit of Asia”.

It is hoped to be granted tax privileges by the Board of Investment of Thailand (BOI), and to be benefited from free trade deals signed by Thailand and other countries.

He said the top car maker would be allowed to pay only zero to five import tax under the ASEAN Free Trade Agreement (AFTA) when it uses 40 per cent auto parts produced in the 10-nation group.

Study says breastfeeding cuts cardiovascular risk

LONDON, 16 May—Breastfeeding reduces the risk of a heart attack or stroke later in life and could prevent hundreds of thousands of deaths each year, researchers said on Friday.

Babies who are breastfed suffer fewer childhood infections and allergies and are less prone to obesity. British scientists have now shown that breastfeeding and slow growth in the first weeks and months of life has a protective effect against cardiovascular disease.

“Diets that promote more rapid growth put babies at risk many years later in terms of raising their blood pressure, raising their cholesterol and increasing their tendency to diabetes and obesity — the main risk factors for stroke and heart attack,” said Professor Alan Lucas of the Institute of Child Health in London.

“Evidence suggests that the reason why breastfed babies do better is because they grow more slowly in the early weeks.”

Lucas said the effects of breastfeeding on blood pressure and cholesterol later in life are greater than anything adults can do to control the risk factors for cardiovascular disease, other than taking drugs. “My provisional estimate suggests that hundreds of thousands of deaths in the Western world could be prevented by breast-feeding,” he said in an interview.

“Obviously more could be prevented if the uptake in breastfeeding was even higher.”

An estimated 17 million people die of cardiovascular disease, particularly heart attack and strokes, each year, according to the World Health Organization.

Lucas and his colleagues compared the health of 216 teenagers who as babies had either been breastfed or given different nutritional baby formulae. They reported their findings in The Lancet medical journal. The teenagers who had been breastfed had a 14-per-cent lower ratio of bad cholesterol and lower concentrations of a protein that is a marker for cardiovascular disease risk.

The researchers also found that, regardless of the child’s weight at birth, the fatter the infants grew in the early weeks and months of life, the greater their later risk of heart disease and stroke.

Vietnam imports more Chinese steel

HANOI, 16 May—Up to 59,037 tons of Chinese finished steel were imported into Vietnam through the Chua Ve Port in northern city of Hai Phong in the last two months. The increasing amount of Chinese steel imports, which is partly due to the recent governmental decision to cut down import taxes on finished steel to zero per cent, equals to the local demand for construction steel coils in a month, local newspaper Labour reported on Friday.

Higher steel imports and lower demands are forcing local steel makers to scale down their production. They have planned to operate at 60 per cent of their capacity to produce nearly 850,000 tons of steel between now and the end of July, said the Vietnam Steel Association (VSA).

To deal with the situation, the VSA has proposed the government to increase import tariffs on steel products from China and other ASEAN countries. The ASEAN Free Trade Agreement (AFTA) requires members of the Association of South-East Asian Nations (ASEAN) to 10 per cent and those from non-ASEAN members to 20 per cent.

Philippine Q1 farm output records highest growth in 15 years

MANILA, 16 May—The Philippines agricultural output recorded a 8.2-per cent year-on-year growth in the first quarter, the highest rate in 15 years due to the government’s efforts to increase food production and improve farm productivity.

The total value of agricultural production in the first quarter increased by 13.8-per cent year-on-year to 192 billion pesos (3.43 billion US dollars), more than double the 6.7-per cent growth a year earlier, the Philippine Government said Friday.

Philippine Agriculture Secretary Luis Lorenzo said the growth in the farm and fisheries sector was achieved despite the dry weather in the period. “We are now seeing the fruits of the various programmes we have put in place to increase production and productivity,” he said in a statement.

With the sector’s consistent growth during the past three years, we have been able to extricate ourselves from the boom-and-bust cycle that characterized our agriculture sector in the past.

Lorenzo said that all sub-sectors recorded improvement, with fisheries posting the highest growth rate of 20.94 per cent largely due to a surge in aquaculture output, particularly in seaweed production in the southern island of Mindanao.

The crops sub-sector, accounting for half of the total farm production value, posted an 8.6-per cent increase in the first quarter this year from a 14-per cent growth a year earlier.

A newly emerged adult cicada flies its wings on a tree in Arlington, Virginia, on 12 May, 2004. Starting this week, across much of the eastern United States, from Georgia north to southern New York and as far west as Illinois, the cicadas will emerge from their 17 years of sucking on tree roots underground to engage in a two-week orgy of calling, mating, laying eggs and then dying. — Reuters
FA, Premier League will not block Thai Liverpool bid
London, 16 May — The English Football Association (FA) and the Premier League will not block Thailand’s billionaire Prime Minister from buying a stake in Liverpool, spokesmen for the two ruling bodies said on Friday.

Thaksin Shinawatra, a former telecoms tycoon, has said his odds of winning a stake in the Premier League club are “better-than-even” after Liverpool’s board re-buffed a rival bid from British businessman Steve Morgan.

“There is nothing in our regulations to prevent such a bid from going ahead,” an FA spokesman said.

The Premier League, administrators of England’s top-flight division, said it did not comment on speculation but a spokesman told Reuters: “The Premier League is a global phenomenon and as such we can hardly be surprised that it attracts foreign investment.”

Valencia’s Brazilian player Ricardo Oliveira, left, heads the ball beside Villarreal’s Argentinian Fabricio Coloccini and Roger Garcia during their Spanish league soccer match in Villarreal, Spain, on 14 May, 2004.

England supporters want Shearer at Euro 2004
London, 16 May — England fans are calling for Newcastle United striker Alan Shearer to come out of international retirement and partner Michael Owen at Euro 2004, according to a survey on Friday.

The 33-year-old, who has insisted he would not go back on his decision to retire after Euro 2000, was the fans’ first choice as Owen’s partner with 34 per cent of the vote.

Teenage forward Wayne Rooney, who is expected to be England coach Sven-Goran Eriksson’s choice, came second with over 25 per cent, followed by Alan Smith (11) and Jermain Defoe (10).

Emile Heskey, replaced by Rooney as Eriksson’s preferred partner for Owen but still expected to go to Portugal, only managed fifth place with 8 per cent of the vote.

Shearer hit 30 goals in 63 appearances for England, eventually becoming captain, but also faced media criticism in the latter stages of his international career.

His decision to focus on Newcastle has paid dividends for the club, with 22-goal Shearer lying second behind Thierry Henry of Arsenal in this season’s Premier League top scorers list.

The nearest English striker in the list, aside from Owen on 15 goals, is Southampton’s James Beattie with 14. Eriksson names his squad on May 17 for the tournament in Portugal, where England face holders France, Switzerland and Croatia in the group stage.

The survey was carried out by England sponsor Nationwide and polled nearly 40,000 fans using 75 official club websites.

Luis Enrique to bid farewell to Barcelona
Madrid, 16 May — Midfielder Luis Enrique will make the final appearance for Spanish giants Barcelona hosting Racing Santander this weekend, club president Joan Laporta said on Friday.

Laporta’s announcement was the first official confirmation that the 34-year-old former Spanish international will not renew his contract, which expires at the end of the season.

“The club will be organizing a tribute that the player will also benefit from,” the club said on its official website.

“We are a good, better-than-even position,” Thaksin told reporters in Bangkok after Liverpool directors said Morgan’s bid was “not attractive”.

If the bid succeeded, the Thais would seek a role in the club’s business, he said.

“Our proposals involve linking to local communities but at the other end of the scale they are listed companies and people will trade in their shares.”

Thaksin is offering about 100 million US dollars for a 30-per-cent stake in the Premier League club.

“I would say it is now 51.49 in our favour. We are in a good, better-than-even position,” Thaksin said.

American tycoon Malcolm Glazer, who owns the Tampa Bay Buccaneers in the NFL team that owns Manchester United, also has shares in the Old Trafford club.

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Valencia’s Brazilian player Ricardo Oliveira, left, heads the ball beside Villarreal’s Argentinian Fabricio Coloccini and Roger Garcia during their Spanish league soccer match in Villarreal, Spain, on 14 May, 2004.
Monday, May 17, 2004

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Prime Minister urges architects to revitalize high standard of Myanmar architecture, to promote it in combination with modern technology

Seminar on Tall Buildings: A Challenge for Myanmar Architects and Engineers held

YANGON, 16 May — A Seminar on Tall Buildings: A Challenge for Myanmar Architects and Engineers sponsored by Myanmar Architects Association was held at Myanmar Information and Communication Technology Park in Hline Township this afternoon, with an address by City Housing Project Supervisory Committee Chairman Prime Minister General Khin Nyunt.

Also present were Secretaries I of the State Peace and Development Council Lt-Gen Soe Win, Chairman of Yangon Division Peace and Development Council Commander of Yangon Command Maj-Gen Myint Swe, ministers, the Yangon mayor, the deputy ministers, officials of City Housing Project Supervisory Committee, officials of Myanmar Architects Association, construction entrepreneurs, architects, engineers, resource persons and observers.

First, Vice-Chairman of Myanmar Architects Association U Sai Yi Leik extended greetings. Next, the Prime Minister delivered a speech saying that relying on strength of intellectuals and intelligentsia, the Government is making efforts for greater development of the Union of Myanmar in combination with the constructive scientific results of changes in science and technology.

It is heartening to note that there have been better results for the nation as all the scholars from different fields are endeavouring for dissemination of science and technology, he said. It is very appropriate to hold Myanmar Architects Association-sponsored architectural seminar which is vital for national development to mark golden jubilee of the association, he said. It is true that the seminar will be useful for the nation and for development of architecture and construction tasks, he said.

Now the government is encouraging all sectors for development of the nation, uplift of socio-economic life of the people and improvement of social standard, he said. In so doing, government is systemically building economic and development infrastructures such as irrigation networks, hydel power projects, major roads and bridges, international airports and international seaports.

At the same time, in order that Yangon city and other cities to possess the characteristics of international standard which is essential in urban development, the government is making arrangements for emergence of modern buildings, infrastructures with the standard of international management and services, modern gardens and department stores of international standard and is implementing clean, pleasant and systematic housing projects, he said. (See page 9)

Prime Minister Khin Nyunt views scale model of Cyber Tower. MNA

Prime Minister Khin Nyunt and party inspect all-round upgrading of environs of Yangon City Kandawgyi Gardens. MNA

Cash and kind donated to hail National Convention

YANGON, 16 May — Hailing the National Convention, which is going to be held on 17 May, wellwishers donated cash and kind at the meeting hall of the National Convention Convenging Work Committee at Nyaungshinpya Camp in Hmaukby Township this morning.

At the ceremony, Managing Director of Myanmar Optic Co Ltd U Soe Paing presented 2,000 leather handbags worth K 3.9 million; U Kyaw Nyunt (Kyaw Nyunt Yi) and Daw Wah Wah Kyaw K 500,000, General Manager Dr Aung Thein of Nibban Electric & Electronics 64 sets of Nibban 2-in-1 TV antennas worth K 1,032,639 and U Myat Thin Aung Thiri Thudhamma Theinpi Daw Khin Myint Myint ten Star 21-inch TVs worth K 1.1 million. National Convention Convenging Management Committee Chairman Maj-Gen Lun Maung accepted the donations.

NCCMC Vice-Chairman Maj-Gen Than Huy, National Convention Convenging Decorations Sub-committee Chairman Maj-Gen Thet Tun, Invitation and Accommodation Sub-committee Chairman Brig-Gen Myo Myint and officials also attended the ceremony. MNA

National Convention Convenging Management Committee Chairman Maj-Gen Lun Maung accepts 2,000 handbags worth K 3.9 million donated by Myanmar Optic Co Ltd. MNA

The National Convention is the concern of all our national races.