Prime Minister attends ceremony to honour Tipitakadhara Tipitaka Kovidha Sayadaws

YANGON, 23 May—A ceremony to honour Tipitakadhara Tipitaka Kovidha Ashin Indaçariya and other members of the Sangha who had emerged from Tipitaka Nikaya Missionary Upathaka Group established by Venerable Mingun Sangha who had emerged from Tipitaka Nikaya Missionary Tipitakadhara Ashin Indapala and other members of the Tipitakadhara Tipitaka Kovida Ashin Indapala attended by Prime Minister General Khin Nyunt.

Also present on the occasion were Vice-Chairman of the State Sangha Maha Nayaka Committee Agga Maha Pandita Agga Maha Sadhammajotikadhaja Thayet Sayadaw Bhaddanta Kesara, Secretary Abhidhaja Maha Rattha Guru Abhidhaja Agga Maha Saddhammajotika Magway Sayadaw (See page 9)

Prime Minister General Khin Nyunt offers provisions to Tipitakadhara Tipitaka Kovidha Ashin Indapala. —mna.

YANGON, 23 May—A coordination meeting regarding Myanmar Maritime University of the Ministry of Transport and Myanmar Aerospace Engineering University of the Ministry of Science and Technology was held at Zeyathiri Beikman Hall on Konmyinttha this morning, with an address by Chairman of Myanmar Education Committee Prime Minister General Khin Nyunt.

Present on the occasion were Commander-in-Chief (Navy) Rear-Admiral Soe Thein, Commander-in-Chief (Air) Lt-Gen Myat Hein, the ministers, the deputy ministers, senior military officers, officials of the State Peace and Development Council Office, rectors of Myanmar Maritime University and Myanmar Aerospace Engineering University, Pro-rectors and officials.

In his address, Prime Minister General Khin Nyunt said Myanmar Maritime University and Myanmar Aerospace Engineering University were established in accord with the guidance of Head of State Senior General Than Shwe. In three years, tasks including construction of the buildings of both universities, supply of related equipment and teaching aids and financial and academic matters were implemented, he said.

He said Myanmar Maritime University was opened with magnificent buildings in Thilawa in Thanlyin. Myanmar Aerospace Engineering University is being built in Meiktila. Construction of some buildings were completed and some courses were opened there, he added.

He said committees were formed for compilation of curriculum of international standard, appointment of sufficient qualified and well-experienced instructors and supply of modern teaching aids and reference books.

He said tasks on sending faculty members for further studies, cooperation with similar universities and giving part-time lectures at the university by scholars from abroad are being undertaken for producing technicians of international standard.

He said both universities are infant ones and there are much left to be done to become better universities. He spoke of the need for the two ministries (See page 9)
For ensuring water supply in rural areas

The number of Myanmar’s population stands at over 53 million and rural people make up 70 per cent of the total population. Agriculture is not only the main economy of the State but also the livelihood earner of the rural public.

To strengthen the national economic life and raise the living standard of rural people, Head of State Senior General Than Shwe has given guidance to implement the five rural development tasks, namely, better transportation, ensuring water for agriculture purpose and ensuring potable water in rural areas, raising the education standard in rural areas, providing better health care services and development of agriculture and livestock breeding tasks in rural areas.

In accordance with the guidance, the five rural development tasks are being implemented throughout the country with might and main. The five rural development tasks are the basis for national development and of these tasks, ensuring water for agriculture purpose and potable water is of vital importance.

To supply water sufficiently for agriculture purpose, the Government has been building dams and reservoirs to meet the water needs for agriculture purpose, the Government has been spending on building of 159 dams which benefit over 2.1 million acres of farmland and these facilities also provide potable water to the people.

Out of the five rural development tasks, Development Affairs Committees under the Ministry for Progress of Border Areas and National Races and Development Affairs are implementing projects for supplying potable water in rural areas.

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Out of the five rural development tasks, Development Affairs Committees under the Ministry for Progress of Border Areas and National Races and Development Affairs are implementing projects for supplying potable water in rural areas.

Tube-wells have been sunk for ensuring potable water in rural areas where water is scarce and now, it can be seen that wellwishers also contribute towards these projects.

Projects for supplying water have also been implemented in 1166 villages in Sagaing Division, 750 in Magway Division, 2268 in Mandalay Division, 285 in Kayin State, 27 in Kayah State, 236 in Kayin State, 76 in Chin State, 159 in Taninthayi Division, 512 in Bago Division, 597 in Bago Division (West), 288 in Mon State, 386 in Rakhine State, 466 in Yangon Division, 235 in Shan State (South), 227 in Shan State (North), 196 in Shan State (East) and 1442 in Ayeyawady Division.

We firmly believe that with the active participation of wellwishers under the leadership of the State, water supply tasks in rural areas are meeting with success.

Loation delegation leaves
YANGON, 23 May — The five-member delegation led by Mr Thong Sing Thama Mavong, member of Politbureau of People’s Revolutionary Party of Lao People’s Democratic Republic and Mayor of Viennaste, left here for home by air this morning. The Loation delegation was seen off at Yangon City International Airport by Yangon City Development Committee Vice Mayor Col Maung Pa, YCDC Colonel Myint Aung, Joint Secretary U Aung Soe, officials, Ambassador of LPDR to Myanmar Mr Chamthavy Bodhisamine and embassy staff.—MNA

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

Don’t Smoke

Rural tubewell opened in Sagaing Township

YANGON, 23 May — The opening ceremony of the tubewell donated by Col Hla Aung and family together with Sagaing Township Development Affairs Committee was held at Magyigon Village in Tintek Village-tract yesterday morning.

It is learnt that the group coordination meeting of labour group delegates and other invited group delegates of the NC will be help in Nyaunghnapin Camp, Hmawby Township on 24 May.—MNA

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Towards neo-colonialist

The big Eagle
Don’t come mooching as if Loving the hen with brood We all know the hard truth.

Nwai Cho (Trs)

National Convention delegate groups compile papers

YANGON, 23 May — The delegate groups to the National Convention are making group discussions and start compilation of papers for formulating basic principles for the Executive. Legislative and Judiciary that are to be included in drafting the State Constitution over the clarification of the National Convention Convening Work Committee in Nyaunghnapin Camp, Hmawby Township today.

The NC delegates are practicing in physical exercises, playing tennis, weigh-lifting, walking and playing billiards for their health in groups or individually starting this morning.

It is learnt that the group coordination meeting of labour group delegates and other invited group delegates of the NC will be help in Nyaunghnapin Camp, Hmawby Township on 24 May.—MNA

MNA

Delegates to National Convention meet in group discussions.—MNA

Vocalists entertain with song to the National Convention delegates at Nyaunghnapin Camp.—MNA

MNA

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MNA
Bill Clinton attacks Bush over Iraq

“There are so many people who suspect our motives”

WASHINGTON, 23 May—Bill Clinton said yesterday that the UN, not America, should be taking Iraq towards democracy, and that George Bush erred in forcing UN weapons inspectors and Co-operation and ensuring democracy benefited the world’s poor would help combat terrorism. Mr Clinton was speaking to a 1,000 or so Brazilian business and political leaders at the inauguration of an institute set up by the former Brazilian president Fernando Cardoso.Internet

Protesters hurl petrol bombs at British Embassy in Iran

TEHERAN, 23 May—Demonstrators hurled petrol bombs and stones at the British Embassy in Teheran for the third time in less than a week on Friday to protest the presence of Western forces in Iraq, witnesses said.

The petrol bombs landed outside the embassy, which has become the focal point for anti-war protests in Iran in recent days, the witnesses said.

A crowd of about 500 protesters gathered outside the embassy after tens of thousands chanting “Death to America” and “Death to Britains ruled the front of the official’s house, and police fired shots to disperse distraught bystanders who scuffled with them.

Abdul-Jabar Youssef al-Shahedi, the deputy minister in charge of security, was slightly injured in the forehead and right arm, said Hassan Hadi, a Health Ministry official. “I expect he will leave the hospital in a short time,” Hadi said.

Al-Shahedi is a member of the Shiite Muslim Dawa party, which lost a prominent member this week in another fatal car bombing. On Monday, the president of the Iraqi Governing Council, the former Iraqi leader Hamid al-Maliki, was killed along with at least six other people near the headquarters of the US-run coalition in the capital. Also Saturday, the military said a US soldier was killed and three others were wounded in an attack on their vehicle south of Baghdad, and a Marine died in a non-hostile incident. It said the soldiers’ vehicle was “ambushed by a vehicle-borne improvised explosive device” in Mahmoudiyah, 20 miles south of Baghdad. The statement did not say when the attack occurred.

Two of the injured soldiers were evacuated to a combat hospital. The third wounded soldier returned to duty after treatment. All the casualties were from the US Army’s 1st Armored Division. The military also said the Marine, assigned to the 1st Marine Expeditionary Force, died Friday near Camp Fallujah, west of Baghdad, while “conducting security and stability operations.”

In Najaf, south of Baghdad, fighting broke out Saturday between US forces and the militia of anti-US cleric Muqtada al-Sadr near the judiciary’s police directorate and the governor’s office. But there were no reports of fighting in Kerbala, another holy city where the two adversaries have engaged in intense battles in recent days. — Internet

Lebanon Shiites say ready to die for Iraqis

BEIRUT, 23 May—Tens of thousands of Lebanese Shiites in white shrouds marched in Beirut on Friday in a collective show of their willingness to die in defence of holy shrines in US-occupied Iraq.

Clenching their fists and chanting “Death to America, death to Israel,” a white sea of men, women and children swept across the streets of a mainly Shiite Beirut suburb in a drive to show off strength by the Shiite Muslim Hizbollah guerrilla group.

Hizbollah chief Sheikh Hassan Nasrallah, addressing the crowd, demanded US forces leave Kerbala and Najaf, the holiest Shiite cites in Iraq, and said Muslims and Arabs were facing the same enemy: the US, Britain and Israel. “Today, we must fully understand that the battle is one, the enemy is one and that we are facing one camp, the American-Israeli camp,” Nasrallah, also wearing a white shroud under his cleric’s robe, said.

“Iraq is not limited to Najaf and Kerbala but we call on American troops to leave Najaf and Kerbala to stop the escalation into something bigger.”

Carrying yellow Hizbollah flags, many demonstrators flocked to Beirut from across Lebanon, some on foot. Sunni and Shiite Muslims cleric, some Iraqis and Palestinian refugees also took part in the march, witnesses said.

Sunday Times says Britain blasts US military tactics in Iraq

LONDON, 23 May—A leaked memo from Britain’s foreign ministry blasts “heavy handed tactics” by the US military in Iraq and soldiers “abuse of prisoners,” the Sunday Times newspaper reported.

London has been Washington’s most staunch ally throughout the conflict, but the paper said the memo “blows apart” Prime Minister Tony Blair’s public insistence that there are no differences between Britain and the United States over strategy.

The paper reported the memo said under the heading “Problems”: “Heavy-handed US military tactics in Fallujah and Najaf some weeks ago have fueled both Sunni and Shiites opposition to the coalition and lost us much public support inside Iraq.”

It added: “The scandal of the detention of detainees at Abu Ghraib (prison) has sapped the moral authority of the coalition, inside Iraq and internationally.”

“The Foreign Office refused to comment on the report on Saturday night.

The government has repeatedly denied that London and Washington differ on Iraq policy but Blair’s main political opponent said this week the prime minister often voiced disquiet in private and urged him to bring the debate into the open.

Blair “seems to take the view that any advice he offers on US policy must be made in private and any disagreement kept secret,” opposition Conservative leader Michael Howard wrote in Thursday’s Independent newspaper.

However, Blair later told his ministers he would never publicly air disagreements with Washington over policy in Iraq for fear it would damage troop morale. Internet

A British soldier secures the site where a home made bomb was found and defused in the Iraqi southern city of Basra. Senior British officials have criticised the US for its ‘heavily-handed’ tactics in Iraq, it was reported recently. — Internet

USA soldiers survey a destroyed car after a car bomb attack in Baghdad, on 22 May, 2004. The suicide car bomb attack killed at least five people on Saturday and wounded a senior Interior Ministry official, five days after the head of Iraq’s Governing Council was assassinated in a similar bombing. Internet

Najaf, the holiest Shiite cit-
37 deaths of detainees in Iraq, Afghanistan probed

WASHINGTON, 23 May—The US army has investigated the deaths of 37 detainees in US custody in Iraq and Afghanistan since August 2002, including eight pending cases that have been ruled possible homicides, Pentagon officials said.

The latest figures represent an increase over the 25 death cases reported earlier this month by senior army officials.

Of nine pending death cases under active investigation, all but one involved deaths that medical examiners declared to be homicides. A senior military official, speaking on condition of anonymity, said “they involved suspected assaults of detainees either before or during interrogation sessions that may have led to the detainee’s death.”

“I must emphasize that as used by a medical examiner, (homicide) is a neutral term that neither indicates nor implies criminal intent,” he said.

In the ninth case, the death was believed to be the result of natural causes, the official said. Six of the nine cases occurred in Iraq, and three in Afghanistan.

The Pentagon also released 23 death certificates of detainees who died in Iraq and Afghanistan, including nine suspected homicides.

Among the causes of death listed were “multiple gunshot wounds with complications,” “blunt force injuries and asphyxia,” “blunt force injuries complicated by compromised respiration,” “closed head injury with a cervical spine injury and subdural hematoma,” “asphyxia due to strangulation,” “multiple blunt force injuries complicated by probable rhabdomyolysis,” and “pulmonary embolism due to blunt force injury to the legs.”

Released Iraqi prisoners tell of abuse

BAQOUBA, 23 May—US soldiers forced female detainees at Abu Ghraib to serve male prisoners meals after the men had been stripped bare and beaten, according to new accounts of psychological abuse described by those freed from the notorious prison.

One man, who identified himself only as Ghazwan, was among 454 detainees released Friday from the American-run prison at the centre of an abuse scandal. He was held with his father and brother for nine months and said he spent six in “heavy quarantine.”

“They were psychologically torturing us, especially in the heavy quarantines. They were abusing us inside these quarantines by beating us and forcing us to take off all our clothes. They were forcing detained women to distribute food to us while we were naked,” said Ghazwan.

Public nakedness, especially in the presence of women, is considered especially degrading in sexually conservative Arab societies.

Following the revelations of abuse, US officials have said they plan to cut the facility’s population in half. A US official said there are now roughly 3,700 remaining detainees there.

Investigation into the abuse will “go to the top,” the US military has said.

Other prisoners released Friday said their treatment improved after pictures of naked prisoners being sexually humiliated came to light.

US soldier found guilty of deserting Iraq unit

FORT STEWART (Georgia), 23 May—A US soldier who said he saw prisoners being abused in Iraq was convicted of desertion on Friday for failing to return to his unit after taking leave to the United States last year.

Staff Sergeant Camilo Mejia, a member of the Florida National Guard, was sentenced by an eight-member military panel to the maximum penalty of one year in prison and a bad conduct discharge. His pay was reduced by two-thirds to 795 US dollars a month.

Mejia, a nine-year US Army veteran, was deployed to Iraq early last year and took a two-week furlough to the United States in October. He was gone for five months before surrendering to Army officials in March. He has filed an application for conscientious objector status.

Anti-war protesters in London call for Iraq pullout

LONDON, 23 May—Anti-war protesters dressed as soldiers and pretending to torture hooded “prisoners” have taken to the streets of central London calling for the immediate pullout of British and American troops from Iraq.

Hundreds of demonstrators on Saturday condemned the abuse of Iraqi prisoners by US troops at Baghdad’s Abu Ghraib prison during a rally under the banner “End the Torture.” Police estimated up to 1,200 protesters marched peacefully along the River Thames, then past Downing Street to Trafalgar Square.

“We are protesting about the shocking abuses in Iraq and call for the withdrawal of the illegal aggressor forces,” Kate Hudson, chair of the Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament (CND), said in a statement.

The number of protesters was far smaller than a demonstration in central London on March 20 which saw about 25,000 take to the streets.

Speakers at Saturday’s event included London Mayor Ken Livingstone, who called for US President George W Bush to be prosecuted as a war criminal.

Prime Minister Tony Blair has come under increasing fire at home over worsening violence in Iraq and reports of abuse of Iraqi prisoners. He defended the US-led overthrow of Saddam Hussein in a speech this week and said he would not “cut and run” from Iraq.
New images amplify abuse at Iraq prison

WASHINGTON, 23 May — In a collection of hundreds of so-far-unreleased photographs and short digital videos obtained by The Washington Post, US soldiers are shown physically and emotionally abusing detainees at Iraq’s Abu Ghraib Prison, the newspaper reported on Friday.

The new pictures and videos go beyond the photos previously shown in the media, displaying a variety of abusive techniques and US soldiers appearing to fight in abuse of detainees at the US-run prison near Baghdad, the newspaper said.

Photos and videos from Abu Ghraib were presented to Army investigators in January. The images began surfacing publicly last month, severely damaging the US reputation in the Arab world. A segment of video showed a prisoner handcuffed to the outside of a cell door, slamming his head into the green metal, the newspaper said. An image on the newspaper’s web site showed a soldier wielding a baton as a hooded detainee covered in a brown substance stood in a hallway with his arms outstretched and ankles cuffed together. Another photo showed a prisoner in an orange jumpsuit reclining on a snarling dog, it said.

But in one photo a soldier is seen cocking his fist as he holds a hooded detainee in a headlock amid a pile of several detainees.

MNA/Reuters

Spanish journalist held by Shiites in Najaf

Najaf (Iraq), 23 May — A Spanish radio journalist has been held in the Iraqi city of Najaf by a Shiite group linked to rebel cleric Moqtada al-Sadr, state radio reported on Friday.

State radio said its correspondent Fran Sevilla, who reported the Spanish troops’ withdrawal from their base at Diwaniya earlier on Friday, was unharmed but his telephone was about to be confiscated.

“He was intercepted by a group of militants of the Shiite leader al-Sadr. He phoned to say where he was, in a mosque in Najaf, and that they were going to take away his phone,” state radio editor Javier Arenas told the radio. “He is physically fine but all political and diplomatic means are being used to free him.”

The radio said Prime Minister Jose Luis Rodriguez Zapatero had “set in motion diplomatic moves to free him as soon as possible.”

Earlier on Friday Sevilla reported from Diwaniya that the last of the Spanish troops had left their base and were on their way to Kuwait. He said he was the last Spaniard left in the south-central Iraqi city.

MNA/Reuters

Anti-Bush tirade wins top award in Cannes

Cannes, 23 May — US director Michael Moore’s Fahrenheit 9/11, a savage indictment of President George W Bush’s handling of Iraq and the war on terror, won the top award at the Cannes film festival on Saturday.

The Oscar-winning director, overwhelmed by the standing ovation given to his Palme d’Or best film award, said: “I want to make sure if I do nothing else for this year that those who have died in Iraq have not died in vain.”

Moore was the big winner on a night otherwise dominated by Asian films, which took three top prizes.

The best actress award was a surprise, going to 14-year-old Japanese actor Yagura Yuuyi for his captivating performance in Nobody Knows, about four children abandoned by their mother in Tokyo to fend for themselves.

The best director award went to China’s Maggie Cheung for her role as a woman trying to kick a drug habit and win back her son in Clean, by French director Olivier Assayas.

The Grand Prix went to ultra-violent Korean film Old Boy, the story of a man imprisoned for 15 years who must find out who captured him and why.

France also enjoyed two awards. Agnes Jaoui and Jean-Pierre Bacri won the best screenplay award for Jaoui’s film Comme une Image, the tale of a 20-year-old desperate for love and attention from her callous, father.

French director Jean-Pierre Jeunet was named best director for Ailies, about a man going back to Algeria from France to find his roots.

MNA/Reuters

Chinese actress Maggie Cheung (news), poses with the best actress award for the film ‘Clean,’ during a photo call following the award ceremony of the 57th Film Festival in Cannes, on the French Riviera, on 22 May, 2004. —Internet

Al-Sadr tells militia to keep fighting

Kufa (Iraq), 23 May — Rebel cleric Moqtada al-Sadr, whose fighters are battling US troops in Iraq’s holiest Shiite cities, told supporters during his Friday sermon they should keep fighting even if he was killed.

“Don’t let my death end your resistance. Continue and God will give you victory,” Sadr told worshipping in Kufa near Najaf, where witnesses said clashes broke out between US forces and fighters from Sadr’s Mehdi Army militia.

“All forces of the Mehdi Army are forces of righteousness and lovers of resistance and fighters against injustice,” he said.

Sadr, wanted in connection with the murder of a rival cleric last year, has been holed up in Najaf since his uprising began but regularly travels to Kufa for Friday prayers.

MNA/Reuters

Shiite, Sunni united against US

Najaf (Iraq), 23 May — Under the dome of the Imam Ali shrine in Najaf, guerrilla Salah Jbouri says it makes no difference whether he fights America in the spiritual centre of Shia Islam or in his Sunni hometown of Fallujah.

“The Muslim who wants to defend his country’s honour doesn’t care if the battle is in Najaf or in Fallujah. We are fighting the same enemy,” said Jbouri, a Sunni fighter standing outside the Imam Ali shrine, one of the holiest mosques in Shiite Islam.

With an Arab headdress that hides his face and an AK-47 assault rifle slung over his shoulder, Jbouri is clad in typical anti-American guerrillas’ gear. But even without his face cover, it is impossible to tell if he was Sunni or Shiite.

Iraqis, who had taken pride in rising above their sectarian differences, found themselves split into Shiites and Sunnis after the US-led forces toppled Saddam Hussein.

The split appeared to deepen as guerrillas from the Sunni triangle began attacking US forces, raising Shiite fears that Saddam loyalists were trying to win back power for the Sunnis that dominated the country for decades.

But the line dividing the two communities say defence of their country and their Muslim faith now comes before any sectarian division, a split they blame the US occupiers for aggravating.

“The occupiers came to demolish Islam. We are one people and will fight until we raise the banner of Islam over Iraq,” said Haider Hussein, a Shiite commander of Jbouri’s. ‘Keep fighting even if I am killed. Something unheard of just weeks ago.

Fighters from Sadr’s Mehdi Army militia say volunteers from mainly Sunni cities of Ramadi, Fallujah andMosul are now fighting alongside recruits from cities across southern Iraq, where Shiites are dominant.

They say they are among thousands of volunteers who have come to Najaf and Kerbala to wage jihad (holy war) against the Americans.

“In Fallujah there were fighters from the Shiites and now in Najaf there are Sunnis fighting alongside the Mehdi Army,” said Kazem Assadi, commander of a group of Sadr fighters in Kerbala.

MNA/Reuters
Iraqis pass by a shattered window of a car in the Baghdad suburb of Al Sadr City, Iraq, on 16 May, 2004.

Smoke from a battle between US troops and militants in Kerbala on 20 May 2004.

Images of Iraq

Iraqi men walk past a destroyed building in the city of Kerbala, on 21 May 2004, as clashes continued with US forces in the area.


An injured Iraqi boy stands next to the bed of his wounded mother in a hospital in Iraq’s southern city of Basra on 23 May, 2004. At least one Iraqi civilian was killed and four others from the same family were injured when a mortar landed on their house in Iraq’s second largest city of Basra.

TV Image shows Iraqis removing belongings of the bridegroom after US helicopters fired on what survivors say was a wedding party in the remote desert area near Mogr el-Deeb, 600 km west of Baghdad, 20 km away from the Syrian border, on 20 May, 2004. The attack killed more than 40 people, most of them women and children.

Iraqi men walk past a destroyed building in the city of Kerbala, on 21 May 2004, as clashes continued with US forces in the area.
Border and rural area developments

Kyappy Basic Education Middle School (Branch) seen in Pakokku Township, Magway Division.

In the past, people living in Takawet region, Shan State (North) had to rely on ferries to cross the Thanlwin river. To overcome the natural barrier, the government has built Thanlwin Bridge (Takawet) and now, people can cross the river easily using the bridge.

Rural health care centre in Kadaingdi village, Papun Township, Kayin State, provides health care services to the rural people residing in the area.

With peace prevailing throughout the country, people living in border areas are now able to run their business with peace of mind. The photo shows magnificent Mongla market built in Mongla region.
Foundations for flourishing of democracy

U Phyo

It is mentioned in books on political science that democracy was introduced by Greek philosopher Pericles circa 400 BC. In the East, today’s democracy was practised by Leedhsaw people in Vessali of Vijaya National Region during the time of Lord Buddha in 6th century BC. Altogether 7,707 princes and counsellors of Vesali assembled and elected one of them to govern the country, it was mentioned in the Mahayana Sutras. The essence of today’s democracy is the people’s freedom, equal rights and being administered by the people. A great deal of clarity of the system is needed to define it. The point is that it is the ism focused on man. It is the ism of laying emphasis on man. Lord Buddha too said it is hard to be a human being. Myanmar society has 365 different tribes. So, they are the people of Britain could not be more than that of Conservative. It might be due to the fact that the two opposition parties won 1,477,233 votes against Conservative Party but gave support to Labour Party won 5,381,443. The number of those who were with the status of opposition. At that time, Conservative be seen that those who were against AFPFL was 214,131 altogether 1,879,991 votes against AFPFL and thus, it can out of 3,545,851 throughout the country. There were vote for him or her. AFPFL won the multiparty election thumbs up by ignoring the fact that the majority did not this case is that 10,000 voters can win when 90,000 each of ten candidates obtains about 10,000 votes. The separation or combined. Generally, majority democracy is used in holding elections. As a constituency with 100,000 voters, let’s say each of the candidates about 10,000 votes. This winner can win by a small margin. It shows that over 10,000 votes win about 90,000 votes. What is awkward in this case is that 100,000 voters can win when 90,000 votes do not cast votes. The winning candidates will get thumbs up by ignoring the fact that the majority did not vote for him or her. AFPFL won the multiparty election held in 1956 in Myanmar and formed a government. In other words, due to the weaknesses in practising democracy, AFPFL had an opportunity to form a government without winning the votes of majority. At that time, AFPFL won the election with 1,665,860 votes out of 6,000,000 throughout the country. Thus, the winner altogether 1,879,991 votes against AFPFL and thus, it can be seen that those who were against AFPFL was 214,131 more than those who support the party. and cardinal virtues are flourishing in naturally in harmony with democracy. In practising democracy or the ism focused on man, the most popular system is majority rule. In electing the leader and making decision on the policy, it is not necessary to put to the vote when there is a consensus. However, the case of a consensus is rare. Generally, people differ in many things. So, it is practised to put to the vote and to compete in the election. Thus, the essence of today’s democracy is the people’s freedom, equal rights and being administered by the people. Generally, people differ in many things. So, it is practised to put to the vote and to compete in the election. Thus, it would be most regrettable. This is food for thought.
Prime Minister General Khin Nyunt offers robes to Secretary Sayadaw Bhaddanta Kumara.— MNA

Prime Minister attends …

(from page 1)
Examination Ovaçaaryazi Committee Mawlamyine Webyan Monastery Sayadaw Abhidhaja Maha Rattha Guru Bhaddanta Vijayabhivamsa and members, Pro-Rector of International Theravada Buddhist Missionary University Agga Maha Pandita Dr. Kumarahbhivamsa and members of the Sangha, patron Sayadaw of Tipitaka Nikaay Missionary Upatthaka Group, Tipitakadhara Tipitaka Koviya Sayadawds and monks who had passed the 56th Tipitakadhara Selection Examination, Chairman of Yangon Division Peace and Development Council Commander of Yangon Command Maj-Gen Myint Swe, ministers, deputy ministers, senior military officers, officials of the State Peace and Development Council Office, departmental heads, the Chairman of Tipitaka Nikaay Missionary Upatthaka Group (Central) and members, the chairman of Tipitaka Nikaay Missionary Upatthaka Group (Yangoon) and (Mandalay), disciples and guests. First, Thitha Thuadhamma Manojathadha Hsinmin U Tin Shwe and party ushered in the Sayadaws to the designated places.

Secretary Sayadaw Bhaddanta Kumara administered the Five Precepts. Chairman of Tipitaka Nikaay Missionary Upatthaka Group (Central) U Aye Pe (Reid) supplicated on the purpose of honouring the members of the Sangha.

Next, Prime Minister General Khin Nyunt offered robes and provisions to the Magway Sayadaw. Afterwards, the commander, the ministers and senior military officers donated provisions to the Sayadaws. — MNA

PM urges faculty members…

(from page 1)

which take charge of both universities to make efforts for development of the universities with momentum, and for related ministries and committees to provide necessary assistance. He said the two universities are very important because they will produce technicians needed in the making of an industrialized nation in the future. Arrangements have been made for the graduates of the universities to take part in nation-building tasks.

He urged officials and faculty members to make concerted efforts to realize the objectives of the State, to possess the characteristics of international universities, to produce highly qualified technicians in accordance with the universities established by the government with lofty aims.

Next, Minister for Transport Maj-Gen Hla Nyunt Swe reported on academic and management matters and staff affairs of the university, first phase and second phase constructions, future tasks, dispatching teachers abroad for further study, communication with international organizations, arrangements for upgrading the institute of marine technology into the Myanmar civil aviation university, diplomas to be conferred and law matters.

Next, Deputy Ministers for Transport U Pe Thun and Col Nyan Tun Aung, Rector of MMU U Thein Tun reported on lecturing of teachers at home and abroad with the use of modern teaching and learning aids for producing outstanding technicians in the nation and requirements.

After that, Deputy Minister for Science and Technology U Nyi Hla Nge reported on courses conducted and number of students, academic and management matters, conducting courses for faculty members by guest professors from abroad, fulfillment of modern teaching and learning aids, publications and lab equipment, construction of Myanmar Aerospace University and requirements.

Minister for Science and Technology U Thaung gave a supplementary report.

Next, Commander-in-Chief (Navy) Rear-Admiral Soe Thein, Commander-in-Chief (Air) Lt-Gen Myat Hein, Maj-Gen Aung Hiang of the Ministry of Defence, ministers and deputy ministers and departmental heads gave suggestions on Myanmar Maritime University and Myanmar Aerospace University.

After hearing reports, Prime Minister General Khin Nyunt attended to the needs and made concluding remarks, saying that according to the reports of officials at different levels it can be assessed that objectives at different levels can be fulfilled to a certain extent as Myanmar Maritime University and Myanmar Aerospace University were in existence for about three years.

The two universities were established with the aim of fulfilling the national objectives and in accord with the guidance of the Head of State and subjects contributing to the State as well as to the emergence of an industrial nation are being taught at the institutions. Therefore, officials at different levels are to make continued efforts for the emergence of highly qualified technicians in line with the national objectives.—MNA
Lt-Gen Ye Myint inspects progress in building Myittha Bridge (Kalewa). — MNA

Lt-Gen Ye Myint unveils stone inscription of Panmon Creek Bridge in Kalay. — MNA

Lt-Gen Ye Myint delivers an address at the opening ceremony of Panmon Creek Bridge in Kalay. — MNA

Donate blood
Maj-Gen Saw Lwin inspects factories in Indagaw industrial zone

YANGON, 23 May — Minister for Industry-2 Maj-Gen Saw Lwin, accompanied by Deputy Minister Lt-Col Khan Maung Kyaw and officials, inspected Indagaw Industrial Zone in Bago Division this afternoon. Managing Director of Myanmar Automobile and Diesel Engine Industries U Soe Thein reported on production of auto parts for jeeps, TE trucks and purchase of raw materials. Managing Director of Myanmar Agricultural Machinery Industries Co Ltd Myo Tint reported on production of power tillers in cooperation with private industrialists, and Project Director of Myanmar Machine Tool and Electrical Industries U Win Tint on test production of aluminium wires, availability of raw materials and the requirement of aluminium wires for Myanmar Electric Power Enterprise. The minister gave instructions on supply of raw materials, cooperation with private industrialists and quality control of aluminium wires. Director of Myanmar Automobile and Diesel Engine Industries U Thwin Myint Maung then reported on teak plantation in the zone. Advisor to Directorate of Myanmar Industrial Planning U Than Hut and Managing Director of Myanmar Industrial Construction Services U Ye Tun reported on measures undertaken for factory projects. The minister inspected workshops and factories in the zone. MNA

Film delegation arrives

YANGON, 23 May — A 4-member study group led by Secretary-General of Film Association the People’s Republic of China Mrs Lieu Xiuwen arrived here by air this afternoon for exchange and cooperation in the movie field between the two countries.

Director of Myanmar Motion Picture Enterprise U Thein Aung and officials of the Chinese embassy welcomed the delegation at Yangon International Airport.

The delegation visited the Myanmar Motion Picture Historical Museum on Winkaba Street, Bahan Township and met with officials of the Myanmar Motion Picture Association. MNA

New Fresh Up Gel toothpaste introduced

YANGON, 23 May — The new Fresh Up Gel toothpaste was introduced at Sedona hotel in Yangon at 2 pm today, attended by officials from Myanmar Dental Association, mediamen, artists, sale representatives, officials from Fresh Up company, staff and guests. Brand Manager of the company Daw Moe Myint Tha extended greetings and Managing Director Dr Tun Min explained salient points of the toothpaste. MNA

Chinese Tibet Mountaineer Expedition leaves for K-2

ISLAMABAD, 23 May — Chinese Tibet Mountaineer Expedition (CTME) comprising 10 members left for K-2 on Saturday to start the third attempt for Chinese on the world’s second highest peak.

The expedition, arranged by China-Tibet Mountaineering Association (CTMA) in collaboration with Alpine Club of Pakistan, marks the golden jubilee celebrations of K-2’s first ascent. Two Italian explorers succeeded to ascent the peak as the first time of human being on July 31, 1954. — MNA/Xinhua

Philippine government mulls more crude production from Malampaya

MANILA, 23 May — The Philippine Department of Energy (DOE) is studying the possibility of extracting more crude oil from the Malampaya field off the western island province of Palawan for domestic use amid a looming global oil crisis.

Although the oil produced from Malampaya is not sufficient enough to cover for all our petroleum needs, we might consider looking at it as one of the options to ease the burden of the rising world crude prices,” Energy Undersecretary Emmanuel de Dios was quoted by Saturday’s Philippine Star as saying.

The Government is using the natural gas from Malampaya to power up not only generating plants but also compressed natural gas-outlets.

Aside from these, the energy official said the DOE is currently exploring all alternative sources of energy especially those from renewable energy sources such as wind, solar and geothermal, according to the newspaper Star.

Shell Petroleum Exploration B.V. (SPEX), the main operator of the 4.5-billion-US-dollar Malampaya oil development project, has been continuing its efforts to drill more oil in the field, and is planning to drill five to six more oil wells within the area.

MNA/Xinhua
Japan’s oldest man dies at 109

**Tokyo, 23 May — Japan’s oldest man, Kameni Nakamura, died of senility Thursday at a hospital in Okinawa Prefecture at the age of 109.**

Born at the village of Chinen in 1894, Nakamura had lived on farming until 70 years old. He became Japan’s oldest man at 108 following the death of 114-year-old Yukichi Chuangui last September.

When about 90, dialect-speaking Nakamura started to learn standard Japanese to better communicate with his grandchildren.

Japan is listed as one of the countries with longest average lifespan. According to government data, its female average lifespan in 2003 topped all other countries at 85.23 years old, while that for male was 78.32 years old.

After the death of Nakamura, the oldest Japanese man is now Minsho Ozawa, also 109, of Yamamushi Prefecture, while the country’s oldest woman is Ura Koyama, 113, who lives in Fukuoka Prefecture, according to government data. — MNA/Xinhua

South Africa outlines war on AIDS, poverty

**Cape Town, 23 May — South Africa’s President Thabo Mbeki unveiled a raft of policies on Friday to fight poverty and AIDS in the continent’s biggest economy and boost a growth rate which lags urgent emerging markets.**

The ruling African National Congress, which won a landslide victory in the country’s third elections last month, has pledged to spend 100 billion rand (14.82 billion dollars) over the next five years to halve an unemployment rate of 30 per cent by 2014.

Mbeki said the government would spend more to provide housing and clean water for South Africa’s poor majority, and ensure that the country’s railway and port infrastructure — seen as a key impediment to growth — was dramatically upgraded.

He also addressed the thorny subject of HIV/AIDS, saying that 53,000 people would be on its newly rolled out drug treatment plan for the epidemic — which infects an estimated one in nine South Africans — by March 2005.

Mbeki said his government would ensure administered prices set by government bodies did not fuel inflation, which is within the government’s three to 6 per cent target range.

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Dengue fever cases expected to rise in Philippines

**Manila, 23 May — The number of dengue cases are expected to rise in the central Philippines with the early onset of the rainy season, a local health official said Thursday.**

Dengue fever patients were tested positive for dengue fever from January to April this year, which was the period of the year when the disease is most virulent, a seven-year-old child who died, the Philippines News Agency quoted Iloilo City Health Officer Engr. Cesar Baronda as saying.

Baronda observed that in 2003, there were 93 positive dengue cases and only one fatality. Health officials predicted that aedes aegypti mosquitoes, which carried the virus, would be highly active, because they find stagnant waters as their breeding grounds.

Baronda advised the people in the area to keep their surroundings clean and be vigilant against the onslaughts of these mosquitoes which usually attack during daytime as the city health office was also accepting requests for fogging operations.

Baronda said his office was putting on closer watch over certain communities in areas in the region which have a record of dengue cases to the past, adding that dengue could be prevented if people change their life habits and keep their surroundings clean. — MNA/Xinhua

FAO Director-General praises China’s success in food security

**Beijing, 23 May — China’s fight against hunger has been a great success, said Jacques Diouf, Director-General of the Food and Agricultural Organization of the United Nations here Thursday at the outgoing 27th FAO Regional Conference for the Asia and the Pacific.**

“...we are encouraged by the fact that China is feeding one quarter of the world’s population only with 7 per cent of the world’s arable land,” said Diouf when interviewed by reporters.

He attributed China’s success to the priority the Chinese Government had given to agriculture and its huge investment in the sector. China has been giving priority within agriculture to irrigation. So far 50 per cent of its arable land has been built with irrigation facilities and China’s target is to increase one per cent of irrigable arable land each year.

In addition, policies have been adopted in China to avoid deforestation along the banks of major rivers, which helped cut water erosion, silt accumulation and floods risks. Diouf noted that China’s agriculture still faces some problems. The income differences between urban areas, and between the coastal and inland areas, led to migration of the rural population to urban and coastal areas of the country.

China will also face increasing food demand with its high GDP growth, especially in high-quality food, said Diouf. Besides, the country will also face the consequences of becoming a member of the WTO and the international market which is distorted.

Japan eyes bill to strengthen Premier’s role in emergency

**Tokyo, 23 May — Japan’s ruling and opposition parties have agreed to start preparing for a new legislation which would give more commanding power to the prime minister on the occasion of military or terrorist attacks, the Yomiuri Shimbun reported Friday.**

The envisioned bill would define an armed attack, large-scale terrorism and large-scale natural disasters as emergency situations that could have serious impact on the nation’s security and the safety of its people, the paper quoted party sources as saying.

Accordingly, the Prime Minister would be able to take command of the Self-Defense Forces (SDF) and administrative bodies based on his own judgement without having to consult with the Cabinet, the sources said.

The bill moves forward in terms of Premier’s author- ity on handling emergent events compared with a similar legislation last June.

Japan’s pacific Constitution denies the right of belligerency of state. But fresh legislation has kept rolling out to enhance the ma- nagement of the SDF.

The Lower House passed Thursday a set of seven contingency bills featuring measures of facilitating coopera- tion with the US troops and operation process when under attacks. — MNA/Xinhua

HK, Kenya sign air services agreement

**Hong Kong, 23 May — Hong Kong signed here Friday an air service agreement with Kenya.**

Hong Kong Secretary for Economic Development and Labour Stephen Ip John and Nairobi’s Michuki, Minister for Transport and Communica- tions of the Republic of Kenya signed the agreement Friday.

“The Air Services Agree- ment signed today provides a framework for the establishment of air links between Hong Kong and Kenya. It opens a new ch- ance for the development of air services between the two places,” said Ip at the signing ceremony.

He said, since last Sep- tember, local people and overseas tourists have been able to enjoy the good services of the Kenya Airways, which has become one of the 70 international airlines operating at the Hong Kong International Airport, serv- ing Hong Kong and Nairobi with three direct services every week.

Ip said the bilateral trade between Hong Kong and Kenya rose by 20 per cent over the previous year and the number of Kenyan visitors to Hong Kong reached 97,000 in 2003 by 42 per cent dur- ing the same period.

At present, Kenya Air- ways is providing three weekly direct passenger ser- vices between Hong Kong and Nairobi, the capital city of Kenya. — MNA/Xinhua

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Heat death roll inches to 50 in India’s Amritsar

NEW DELHI, 23 May—Mercury Friday shot up to 46.5 degrees Celsius in India’s holy city Amritsar as heat wave gripping north India claimed 11 more lives, pushing the death roll from the scorching weather close to 50.

The Press Trust of India reported that nine people succumbed to Wednesday evening to soaring mercury in Uttar Pradesh where Arga, Allahabad and Kanpur sizzled at 45 degrees Celsius. Acute power and water crises in many areas in Uttar Pradesh have so far made 38 people succumb to blazing heat.

Two heat-related deaths were reported in Rajasthan, where mercury hovered around 44 degrees Celsius in Churu, Dholpur, Sawai Madhopur and Jaisalmer.

Heat wave continued unabated in Punjab, Haryana and Chandigarh with mid-day temperatures settling several notches above normal in the plains. Amritsar in Jammu and Kashmir recorded 46.5 degrees Celsius, eight degrees above normal, Ludhiana at 45.9 degrees and Patiala at 44.4 degrees.

Chandigarh reeled at 43.8 degrees Celsius, five degrees above normal. — MNA/Xinhua

Substance abuse linked to a quarter of violent crimes

LONDON, 23 May — People with serious drug and alcohol abuse problems are linked to about a quarter of all violent crimes but this could be avoided with better treatment, scientists said on Friday.

They found that 16 percent of crimes such as murder, robbery, assault and rape in Sweden between 1988-2000 were committed by people who had been discharged from hospital for alcohol misuse and 10 percent were associated with drug abusers.

“It is likely you will find the same sort of figures in Western Europe and North America,” Seena Fazel, of the University of Oxford, said in an interview.

Fazel and Martin Grann, of the Karolinska Institute in Stockholm, studied the country’s national crime register and compared it with hospital discharges of people diagnosed with alcohol and drug misuse and psychoses.

Few countries, apart from Scandinavian nations, have such detailed population-based registers which are needed to conduct such a study.

In addition to alcohol, abuse of amphetamines and opiates such as heroin, and use of multiple drugs were linked to the most violent crimes.

“There needs to be more integration between the criminal justice system and mental health services because of this close association between crime and people who leave hospital with drugs and alcohol problems,” Fazel said, after his findings in the British Medical Journal.

“Using resources to treat people with these problems could be cost effective in terms of crime reduction,” he added. In Britain alone, drug related crimes cost the criminal justice system about 1 billion pounds (1.8 billion US dollars) annually.

Fazel suggested that opportunities for treatment should be considered if a person with a history of alcohol or drug abuse has been convicted of committing a violent crime. “Probation officers and mental health professionals should continue to work more closely,” he added. — MNA/Reuters

11 killed, dozens unconscious due to heat wave in Pakistan

ISLAMABAD, 23 May—At least 11 people have been killed and dozens have become senseless in southern Pakistan’s Sindh Province due to severe heat wave in the past few days, according to the local news agency News Network International.

Sindh Province is in the grip of horrible heat wave, due to which the death toll has risen to 11, the news agency quoted a local official as saying Friday.

The prices of ice and soft drinks have gone up with the rise of temperature, the official said. People were becoming ill and the clinic and hospitals were full of patients, the official said.

On Friday, the temperature in southern Pakistan’s city Jacobabad was recorded as 51 degrees Centigrade while over 49 in the city of Khokhla.

During the talks that Khair held with Chinese Premier Wen Jiabao Thursday, they set a goal of enhancing all-round trade and economic cooperation in all spheres to double trade volume by 2010, that is, to reach 10 billion US dollars.

In the trade talks Khair said this is a modest goal. “The economies of Vietnam and China are complementary and the export and import fee is very low since they are neighbours. I can say that the goal will be reached before 2010.”

Since Vietnam began its reform in the 1980s, It has drawn more than 3,000 foreign-invested projects involving over 50 billion US dollars. However, China’s investment is merely 300 million US dollars.

“This is not suitable to the capacity of Chinese enterprises,” Khai said. “Chinese has a strong economy and its entrepreneurs are very competitive. I hope more Chinese entrepreneurs will invest in Vietnam.” — MNA/Xinhua

Vietnamese companies see fruitful cooperation with China
Sukur double gives Turkey 3-1 win over Australia

SYDNEY, 23 May — Hakan Sukur scored twice in seven minutes to give Turkey a 3-1 win over Australia in the first of their two friendly internationals on Friday.

Turkey blew a golden chance to grab an early goal when Barcelona midfielder Okan Buruk dispossessed Vince Grella and threaded the ball through to Tuncay Sanlı. The Fenerbahce striker charged into the Australian box but his shot was parried by Middlesbrough goalkeeper Mark Schwarzer. The Turks were able to dominate possession in the early stages but their frustration to get the ball in the back of the net boiled over and Emre Belozorglu, Rostislav Recher and Australia’s Brett Emerton were yellow-carded after a brief scuffle.

Emerton provided Australia with their first real chance midway through the first half when he turned in a chance to grab an early goal but the Australians levelled immediately when the ball fell to Parma midfielder Bulent Korkmaz. Turkey opened the scoring three minutes into the second half when he scored from a free kick. Schwarzer looked to have made it low-drive under control but the ball hopped just as he was about to smother it and slid under his arms.

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Turkey almost levelled the match against a depleted Australian side but had to work hard for their win. They opened the scoring in the 41st minute when France’s Gregory Havret teed off during the second half of a 4-1 defeat by Stade Rennes.

The league leaders are three points ahead of PSG and have an unassailable goal difference.

Olympique Lyon will clinch their third consecutive title when they entertain lowly Lille at home on Sunday.

The league leaders are three points ahead of PSG and have an unassailable goal difference.

FIFA finally signs anti-doping declaration

PAARS, 23 May — Soccer’s governing body FIFA finally agreed to the world anti-doping code on Friday, ending a two-year hiatus which threatened the participation of the world’s most popular sport at August’s Olympic Games.


“This is a historic day for sport and the battle against doping in sport,” Pound told the Congress. “This is a major step forward.”

“This is the end of it, football will now be part of the Olympic Games. It is just up to FIFA now to incorporate this into their own process, but this is the end of debate and I am delighted.”

Rogge said: “I have been to many weddings and you hope the bride and groom will be happy. I am sure this marriage between FIFA and WADA will be a long one and produce good children.”

All sports have to sign up to WADA’s code if they want to take part in the Athens Games. Only cycling has now to sign. Earlier this week it seemed that soccer, which has been part of the Olympic Games since 1908 with the exception of the 1932 Games in Los Angeles, could be dropped from the programme.

The issue of what FIFA terms “individual case management” — dealing with each case on its merits rather than subscribing to automatic two-year bans — has held up the agreement.

WADA also wanted to retain the right to appeal to the Court of Arbitration for Sport (CAS) if it disagrees with any FIFA ruling. This has also provided a sticking point but, according to both sides, these issues are now solved. — MNA/Reuters
Prime Minister Khin Nyunt pays homage to Padamya Myetshin Buddha Image on upper terrace of Shwedagon Pagoda. — MNA

Prime Minister attends coord meeting of Leading Committee for All-round Perpetual Renovation of Shwedagon Pagoda

YANGON, 23 May — The Leading Committee for All-round Perpetual Renovation of Shwedagon Pagoda held the coordination meeting at ancient Buddha Images Tazaung of the pagoda at 2 pm today, attended by Patron of Leading Committee Prime Minister General Khin Nyunt.

Also present on the occasion were Chairman of Yangon Division Peace and Development Council Commander of Yangon Command Maj-Gen Myint Swe and members of the Leading Committee, officials of the State Peace and Development Council Office, departmental heads and members of the pagoda boards of trustees.

The Chairman of the Work Committee reported on renovation of the prayer halls at northern archway and southern archway, Gandakuti building, the prayer hall at western archway, the prayer hall for offering flowers, water and oil, Bawdimandaing Prayer Hall, Daw Dagon Khin Khin Lay Prayer Hall and other prayer halls, extension of car parking space at the Southern Archway, other renovation and greening tasks and construction of rest houses.

Next, member of the Shwedagon Pagoda Board of Trustees U Kyee Myint and officials reported on regular renovation works being carried out at the pagoda.

The Prime Minister gave instructions on renovation of the pagoda without harming ancient cultural works and maintenance of the religious buildings. Then the meeting came to a close with the three-time recitation of Buddha Sasnam Ciramtitthatu.

After the meeting, the Prime Minister paid homage to Padamya Myetshin Buddha Image kept in the upper terrace. Afterwards, the Prime Minister paid homage to Tipitakadhara Tipitaka Kovida Ashin Eindapala and Tipitakadhara Ashin Indacariya at the reception hall and offered provisions to them.

The Prime Minister then inspected renovation of the prayer halls.

Altogether 183 major bridges built across the nation

Panmon Creek Bridge opened in Sagaing Division

YANGON, 23 May — Panmon Creek Bridge, which was built by the Construction Group 11 of the Public Works on Kalay-Gangaw Road near Natchaung Village in Kalay Township, Sagaing Division, was opened this morning with an inauguration speech by Member of the State Peace and Development Council Lt-Gen Ye Myint of the Ministry of Defence.

The inauguration ceremony was also attended by Sagaing Division PDC Chairman Commander of North-West Command Maj-Gen Tha Aye, Minister for Construction Maj-Gen Saw Tun and senior military officers, responsible officials and local people.

First, Lt-Gen Ye Myint spoke on the occasion.

Lt-Gen Ye Myint said the 220 feet long Panmon Creek Bridge is on Kalay-Gangaw Road in Sagaing Division. He quoted Head of State Senior General Than Shwe as saying that transport is vital for development of the country and better transport brings about economic and social development. Roads and bridges are being built for narrowing the development gap and for closer relations among the regions. He said strategy was laid down and roads and railroads linking all parts of the Union are being built in accord with the guidance of the Head of State. Altogether 183 bridges which are 180 feet and above were built — 170 by Public Works, six by Myanmar Railways and seven by military engineering unit. It was difficult to reach regions in north-west of Myanmar and Gangaw and Kalay regions on west bank of Ayeyawady and Chindwin Rivers in successive periods and there was less development in economic and social sectors, he said.

He said in the time of the Tatmadaw government, Kalay-Gangaw Railroad, Kalay-Gangaw Road and Gangaw-Hakha Road were built and Myittha and Kabani Bridges were also constructed in order to reach Magway, Sagaing and Mandalay Divisions easily.

After completion of the Panmon Creek Bridge, people can go to Kalay and Chin State in a short time and regional and forest products can be transported easily. Regions on Gangaw-Kalay Road will develop soon, he added.

After the briefing hall of Shin Upagutta Lake, the Prime Minister heard reports by FMI Co Managing Director U Soe Myint on renovation of the lake and the building in which the statue of Shin Upagutta is kept and gave necessary instructions. Later, the Prime Minister inspected the renovation tasks. — MNA

With hands linked firm around the National Convention.