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

Development of a township constitutes development of rural regions in the township
Prime Minister General Khin Nyunt inspects development in Thegon, cultural heritage in Shwedagon

Prime Minister General Khin Nyunt and party proceeded to Basic Education High School, Hsinmyeehswe, Thegon Township. At the holy place, they paid homage to Agga Maha Pandita Agga Maha Saddhamajotikadhaja Mahabuddhikahtika Bahujanahitadhara Sitagu Sayadaw Dr Ashin Nansara and members of Sangha. Afterwards, Chairman of Myanmar Education Committee Prime Minister General Khin Nyunt attended the opening of multimedia classrooms at Hsinmyeehswe Basic Education High School.

Also present on the occasion were members of the State Peace and Development Council Lt-Gen Khin Maung Than, Chairman of Bago Division Peace and Development Council Col Hla Min, officials of the State Peace and Development Council Office, departmental heads, local authorities, members of social organizations, donors, teachers and students. (See page 9)

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

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

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

Prime Minister General Khin Nyunt presents documents related to 10-hp generator to an official of Hsinmyeehswe BEHS on 29-5-2004.— MNA
Tobacco Control and Poverty

Today, 31 May 2004, is the World No-Tobacco Day. On this day, ceremonies to mark the World No-Tobacco Day are held across the globe under the auspices of the World Health Organization with the aim of stimulating actions to enable the people to realize the danger posed by tobacco.

The theme of this year’s World No-Tobacco Day is “Tobacco Control and Poverty”. Tobacco consumption is the main cause for poverty of families with low-income. Many studies conducted in the area of tobacco use revealed that the poor are more likely to use tobacco in various forms.

The habit of smoking is closely intertwined with income, living standard and educational qualification of a certain person. Use of smokeless tobacco that is chewing betel with tobacco is common in Myanmar and now, the number of people using smokeless tobacco is higher than that in the past.

Nowadays, fires to be put out in betel is preserved in various forms which come from neighbouring countries and their prices are more higher. Moreover, the risk of causing cancer become greater.

According to the findings of a study, smokers are spending more than (6%) in smoking products and (9%) on betel with tobacco. For those who are both smoking and using tobacco with betel, the expenditure on tobacco is as high as (15%) of their daily income.

Tobacco can worsen poverty among users and their families since tobacco users are at much higher risk of falling ill and impose additional cost on health care. At the national level, costs of tobacco use include increased health care costs, loss of productivity and environmental damage.

Myanmar is trying its best to control tobacco. Dissemination of education on health hazards is being made widely through media.

Myanmar became a proud signatory to the Framework Convention on Tobacco Control, the first public health treaty, in October 2003 and ratified the Convention on the 20th of April 2004 and it was the 11th Party to the Convention. We would like to urge all the people to avoid the habit of smoking and chewing betel with tobacco at a time when international community is recognizing Myanmar efforts for controlling tobacco.

People’s Desire

- Oppose those relying on external elements, acting as stooges, holding negative views
- Oppose those trying to jeopardize the 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

Dry day inspection teams check Tatmadaw and departmental vehicles

YANGON, 30 May—Chairman of Dry Day Supervisory Committee Min Oo Myint and Vice-Chairman MIN AUNG THU inspected dry day inspection teams which were checking Tatmadaw and departmental vehicles today.

The chairman and party went to Thiri Myaung driving training school of MYPF in Ward 36, Dagon Myothit (North) Township at 10:15 am. Police Lt-Col Aung Naing briefed them on training of the course. Driving of vehicles following the traffic safety rules are being conducted in the course.

The dry day inspection teams checked dry day offenders’ driving license, school tax bill and wearing of uniform in the Tatmadaw and departmental vehicles and breaking of traffic safety rules at main points of Yangon City today.

Dr Ye Naing Win presents best performance award to Ye Mann Oo (Aung San Stadium Training Camp). MNA

Junior Karatedo Tournament 2004 concludes

YANGON, 30 May—Under the leadership of the Ministry of Sports, organized by Myanmar Karatedo Federation, sponsored by Lloy Hein Co Ltd, the final events of junior karatedo tournament 2004 in conjunction with prize presentation ceremony was held in Aung San Gymnasium this morning.

It was attended by officials of Sports and Physical Education Department, members of Myanmar Women’s Sports Federation, President of MKF Police Col Khin Maung Tun (Retd) and executives, Chairman of the Organizing Committee for the tournament Dr Ye Naing Win and members, officials of Lloy Hein Co Ltd and fans.

Officials of SPED and executives of MKF presented prizes to winners individually. Next, DAW L. KHIN YI of MWSF presented best player award to Khine Su Htwe (Aung San Stadium Training Camp) in U-12 girls’ event; Director of Ruby Dragon Co Ltd U San Lwin to Min Hein Khant (Aung San Stadium Training Camp) in U-12 boys’ event; member of panel of patrons of MWSF Daw Tin Tin Mya to Ei Thunza Khine (Aung San Stadium Training Camp) in U-15 girls’ event; Dr Ye Naing Win to Aung Khant in U-15 boys’ event. Leading patron of MWSF Daw Aye Aye to Zar Ni Wint (Hero Club) in U-20 women’s event and Police Col Khin Maung Tun (Retd) to Nyan Lin Phyo (Aung San Stadium Training Camp) in U-20 men’s event.

Former selected Myanmar karatedo athlete Dr Ye Naing Win presented best performance award to Ye Mann Oo (Aung San Stadium Training Camp) in U-12 boys’ event. — MNA
Three US Marines killed in action in Iraq

BAGRAM, 30 May — Three US Marines were killed in action today in Anbar province west of Baghdad, the US military said.

The US military reported two other service member deaths today — one soldier from the Stryker Brigade who died from non-hostile causes in northern Iraq and a soldier from the 81st Brigade Combat Team who was killed on Tuesday in a mortar attack south of Baghdad.

Nine soldiers were wounded in the mortar attack, a military statement said. — Internet

Guards report abuse at other prisons in Iraq

WASHINGTON, 30 May — There’s evidence that inmates were abused in several US prisons in Iraq, but not just at Abu Ghraib.

That was the prison outside Baghdad where photographs have shown US soldiers tormenting detainees.

According to transcripts and investigative interviews, several US guards say they saw military intelligence operatives encourage the abuse of inmates at four other prisons. Those include a Marine detention camp and three Army facilities.

At the Camp Whitehorse, guards were told to keep prisoners of war standing for 50 minutes out of each hour, for up to 10 hours. Intelligence operatives would then question them.

Testimony of such tactics at a Marine camp raises the question of whether coercive techniques were standard procedure for military intelligence operatives throughout Iraq. — Internet

Ancient Iraqi trade route is headache for Marines

FALLOJA, 30 May — The ancient road that once brought luxuries from Andalusia, sandals from Morocco and turbans from Damascus to the sultans of Baghdad is now a highway littered with bomb casings and burned-out trucks.

As a key supply route for the US-led occupation, it is also a major headache for US Marines trying to prevent “IEDs” — improvised explosive devices, or roadside bombs — from bringing their convoys to a halt.

Explosives hidden in a soft drink can, plastic bag or dead animal and strapped to a simple detonator have become one of the US military’s deadliest enemies.

Defensive operations are mostly suspended around the flashpoint city of Falluja after a truck ended weeks of clashes between US troops and insurgents there.

But Marines still spend much of their time inspecting suspicious vehicles for fear they might hide a bomb.

“My primary job is to keep an eye on traffic,” said Lance Corporal Joe Fankhouser, 21, lying on his stomach in 110-degree Fahrenheit heat (43 degrees Cel- sius), pointing his machine gun at traffic from a sand dune.

“I came to fight insurgents, and I’m the traffic police.” During one recent patrol, Marines in combat gear stopped their convoy at least six times in one hour to inspect trucks and comb the central reservation. They also removed a dead dog, crouching around it with guns drawn.

Last week guerrillas detonated a bomb inside a truck as a US convoy drove by, killing two soldiers.

“Sir, I think this dog is just dead. It doesn’t seem to be an IED,” said 22-year-old Corporal Jeremiah Turner, of San Marcos, California. The soldiers push it over the bank so that other patrons will not stop for it. — Internet

Saudi Arabia not to join G-8 meet

DUMALI, 30 May — Saudi Arabia has become the second US Arab ally after Egypt to shun next month’s G-8 summit where Washington is unveiling a disputed Middle East reform plan, with Tunisia and Qatar also uncertain to attend.

Foreign Minister Saud al-Faisal told Friday’s Arab daily al-Hayat that his country “did not have any intention” of taking part in the meeting on June 8-11 in the United States.

The kingdom has criticized Washington’s “Greater Middle East Initiative” and once close ties have been strained since the September 2001 attacks which were blamed on al-Qaeda and carried out mainly by Saudis.

Egypt has already turned down a US invitation to the summit because of the reform plan, and has said Tunisia and Qatar are also unlikely to go, though neither has confirmed this.

Many Arabs have criticized the initiative, designed to counter militant Islam with political and social changes, for seeking to impose reform from abroad and for failing to address key regional issues such as the Arab-Israeli conflict.

Egyptian Foreign Min-
ister Ahmed Maher said on Monday Arab identity should not be “dissolved” into a wider region under the American plan.

The White House said on Monday President George W. Bush had invited the leaders of Afghanistan, Bahrain, Jordan, Yemen and Algeria to the summit at Sea Island, Georgia.

But a day earlier, Lon-
don-based al-Hayat quoted diplomatic sources in Washington as saying invitations had been sent to Saudi Arabia, Egypt and Morocco too.

Jordan’s King Abdullah, Yemeni President Ali Abdullah Saleh and Bahrain’s King Hamad bin Isa al-Khalifa — whose countries are all close US allies — are expected to attend.

— MNA/Reuters

Vietnam Airlines offers great airfare discount

HANOI, 30 May — Vietnam Airlines has just launched a promotion campaign, offering an airfare discount of 13.2 per cent to passengers on flights between the country’s Ho Chi Minh City and over 80 major European cities.

The fare of return tickets from Ho Chi Minh City to European cities via Paris, including Copenhagen, Amsterdam, Barcelona, Berlin, Hamburg, Frankfurt, Brussels, and London, was lowered to 738 US dollars from 850 dollars on May 20, said Vietnam Airlines on Friday.

However, the reduction, which lasts till July 31, is applied to only those who stay in the cities for 7-30 days.

The national flag carrier, which currently has a fleet of 35 airplanes, plans to carry 5 million passengers, including 2.4 million foreigners this year. It served 4 million passengers and 74,000 tons of cargo last year.

— MNA/Xinhua

Five killed in clashes with US forces in Najaf

NAJAF, Iraq, 30 May — Five Iraqis were killed and 14 wounded in clashes between US troops and Shiite militia men in the holy city of Najaf and in nearby Kufa on Friday, hospital sources said.

An official at the hospital in Kufa said three people had died in gunfire and mortar shelling in the town, while eight were wounded. In Najaf, three miles southwest of Kufa, two were killed and six were hurt, hospital staff said. There was no immediate word on casualties from the US military.

US forces and militiamen loyal to rebel Shiite cleric Moqtada al-Sadr struck a tentative truce on Thursday, but fighting broke out again early on Friday, the Muslim holy day.

Sadr, who has led an uprising against US forces throughout southern Iraq for the past two months, said he would disarm his militia and withdraw from Najaf as long as US forces also withdrew.

The agreement, struck via local clerics with no direct involvement of the US military, also involved US authori ties holding off arresting Sadr in connection with the murder of a rival Shiite cleric in April last year. — MNA/Reuters

Three US Marines killed in action in Iraq

The Marines were as signed to the 1st Marine Expeditionary Force, which is responsible for security in a wide area from just west of Baghdad to the borders of Syria and Jordan.

A military statement on the deaths gave no further details, citing security.

Earlier today, Iraqi wit nesses reported attacks on military convoys near two towns in Anbar province - Fallujah and Ramadi - and a large explosion in the area of Fallujah.

However, it was not

A Pakistani boy holds a placard during a protest against the US-led occupation of Iraq in Karachi on 28 May, 2004. — Internet
Mubarak wraps up Russia visit, calls for end of Iraq occupation

MOSCOW, 30 May—Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak called for an end to the US-led occupation of Iraq as he completed a three-day visit to Moscow at the invitation of his Russian counterpart, Vladimir Putin.

China, Malaysia to further bilateral relations

BEIJING, 30 May— Chinese Premier Wen Jiabao put forward a five-point proposal for enhancing the relations between China and Malaysia during his talks with visiting Malaysian Prime Minister Abdullah Ahmad Badawi here Friday.

The proposal includes:
— Maintaining high-level exchanges of visits to promote stable and healthy development of Sino-Malaysian ties;
— Furthering the all-round good-neighbor relations between the two countries within the framework of the strategic partnership between China and the Association of the South-East Asian Nations (ASEAN);
— Pushing forward the cooperation on agriculture, high technology, resources and infrastructure, and expand trade between the two countries;
— Strengthening the traditional bilateral friendship and the exchanges between the youth in particular;
— Promoting cooperation in regional and international affairs and the cooperation in East Asia within the mechanism of the ASEAN plus China, Japan and South Korea (10+3) to help establish a just and reasonable international relations, where he received an honorary degree, the ITAR-TASS news agency reported. He and Putin, whom he has invited on a return visit to Egypt, agreed Friday on the need for genuine sovereignty for the interim Iraqi government that is to take over at the end of June.

Mubarak on Saturday also called for greater cooperation between Egypt and Russia, where he was making his third official visit, accompanied by several ministers and businessmen, since taking office in 1981.

Both countries are seeking to resurrect the stalled Middle East peace plan, of which Russia is a co-sponsor, and Mubarak said he thought Moscow should play a “leading role” in the process, advocating an independent Palestinian state with Jerusalem as its capital, ITAR-TASS said.

The Egyptian leader also said he favoured Russia’s membership in the Organization of the Islamic Conference (OIC), where Moscow is seeking observer status.— Internet

Smoking ‘even worse’ than thought

WASHINGTON, 30 May— The habit affects the whole body and causes many diseases. Smoking is now thought to be the cause of a range of diseases previously not linked to health.

The US Surgeon General Richard Carmona, in a report published on Thursday, said smoking could lead to cancer, acute myeloid leukemia and stomach cancers. “We have known for decades that smoking is bad for your health, but this report shows that it’s even worse,” Dr Carmona said.

“The toxins from cigarette smoke go everywhere in the blood flows. I am hoping this new information will help motivate people to quit smoking and convince young people not to start in the first place,” he said.

The report coincides with a study from the US Centre for Disease Control and Prevention showing that in 2002, 22.5% of US adults described themselves as smokers down slightly from 2001. Smoking kills an estimated 440,000 Americans a year, Carmona said.

He said men who smoke cut their lives short by 13.2 years on average and female smokers lose 14.5 years.

“We have known for decades that smoking is bad for your health, but this report shows that it’s even worse.”

Smoking costs the country $157 billion each year— $75 billion in direct medical costs and the rest in lost productivity. The poor and less educated continue to be the biggest smokers, and more efforts need to be directed at these groups to encourage them to quit smoking.”

Dr Carmona said.

He said efforts need to be stepped up to help people kick the habit, including quitlines and assistance programmes.

Some groups said the government needed to get much tougher on the tobacco industry.

States should raise tobacco taxes and ban all smoking in public places,” American Heart Association chief executive officer M Cass Wheeler said.

An Iraqi family moves back into their house in Najaf, Iraq, after fighting calmed down, on 28 May, 2004.— Internet

Mortar attack near US Baghdad HQ wounds four

BAGHDAD, 30 May— A mortar bomb landed about 400 metres (yards) from the headquarters of the US-led administration in Baghdad on Saturday, wounding four people, Iraqi police said.

The four were employees queueing at a security checkpoint to get into the Iraqi Housing Ministry, a police officer said. The US military had no immediate comment.

Guerrillas regularly attack the headquarters, housed in a large compound known as the “Green Zone” in central Baghdad, with mortar rounds, but not all of them hit their target.

This week a car was blown up by a bomb planted on a street leading to a main entrance to the Green Zone, killing a British security guard and a British employee of the US-led administration.

Earlier this month, a car bomb attack at another entrance to the Green Zone killed several people, including the head of the US-appointed Iraqi Governing Council.

US officials have said they expect an upsurge in violence as a June 30 deadline approaches for a handover of power to an Iraqi interim government.— Internet

Most UK deaths in Iraq were caused by blunders

BAGHDAD, 30 May— Two thirds of all British troop deaths in Iraq have been the result of accidents, car crashes, wrongly discharged firearms, friendly fire and ill health.

Only 19 of the 59 British dead have been killed by an Iraqi bomb or bullet.

A Sunday Herald investigation has uncovered a web of command failures, equipment shortages, disregard for safety, faulty kits and poor training which has led to British soldiers needlessly dying.

The deaths include:
— A soldier who was buried alive because he dug a trench too deep.
— Two SAS men who died after allegedly getting drunk on New Year’s Eve and driving their jeep into a wall in Baghdad.
— An exhausted soldier who shot himself in the head while trying to unjam a gun.
— At least four soldiers killed in ambushes because they were driving in civilian cars with no armour.
— Two pilots who died as a result of British planes being fitted with computer systems which failed when they were supposed to identify the UK jet as friendly to American missile batteries.

More British soldiers have been killed in action since President Bush declared the war over in May last year than during the so-called “combat phase”.

Before May 2003, seven died; between May and now, 12 have died in combat.

Every military death that does not result from enemy fire is investigated by a board of inquiry set up by senior officers and held behind closed doors. So far only a handful have concluded. One found that a Royal Marine had been killed by other marines, another came to no “definitive conclusion”.

Nicholas Gardiner, the coroner conducting most of the military inquiries, said the inquiries were taking longer to complete. Questions have also been raised by former high-ranking soldiers about the inquiries’ thoroughness and adequacy.

Cuba likens Iraqi prisoner images to Hitler crimes

GUADALAJARA (MEXICO), 30 May— Photographs and video of Iraqi prisoners abused by US troops are the most shocking images seen since the days of Hitler, the Cuban Government said on Friday. “Since the dark days of Hitler... humanity has not observed images of such emotional impact,” said a government statement issued at a summit of European and Latin American leaders.

“Millions and millions of people have been horrified by the brutal sadism” reflected by photos and video from the Abu Ghraib Prison near Baghdad.— MNA/Reuters

A US soldier holds a mortar fragment after an attack in central Baghdad on 29 May, 2004. The mortar bomb landed about 400 yards from the headquarters of the US-led administration in Baghdad on Saturday, wounding four people, Iraqi police said.— Internet

Iraqi government that is to take over at the end of the June
Japanese deaths in Iraq highlight PM political risk

Tokyo, 30 May — The deaths of two Japanese journalists in Iraq could deepen public divisions over Tokyo’s troop dispatch and highlight a political risk for the government ahead of a July election, analysts said on Friday.

But some predicted that the incident might not damage Prime Minister Junichiro Koizumi’s public support all that much, as the journalists had travelled to Iraq of their own accord.

The Iraq driver of the two freelance journalists said both were killed in a rocket-propelled grenade attack on their vehicle south of Baghdad, according to the hospital where the incinerated bodies were taken on Friday.

Newspapers splashed reports of the attack on veteran war correspondent Shinuake Hashida, 61, and his nephew, 33-year-old Kotaro Ogawa, on their evening edition front pages and TV programmes gave the incident heavy coverage throughout the day.

The deaths, which have yet to be confirmed in Tokyo, would be the third and fourth of Japanese citizens in Iraq since the US-led invasion last year and the first since Koizumi sent troops to help rebuild Iraq.

Two Japanese diplomats were killed in November when their car was attacked near Saddam Hussein’s hometown of Tikrit.

“The irony is that it’s not official Japan, but private Japan that gets killed,” said Jesper Koll, chief economist at Merrill Lynch in Tokyo.

“For Koizumi, that is less of a national issue.”

Koizumi’s popularity rates rose about 10 points to above 50 per cent in media surveys this week after last Saturday’s “Pyongyang Summit,” at which North Korea agreed to let five children of Japanese abducted decades ago be reunited with their parents in Japan.

A close ally of the United States, Japan has sent about 550 ground troops to Iraq on a non-combat mission that is its riskiest military operation since World War II.

Critics say the deployment violates Japan’s pacific Constitution and that worsening security in southern Iraq has raised questions about whether it still meets the requirement of a law limiting troop activities to “non-combat zones.”

Japanese politicians have been divided over whether to dispatch forces and support the US-led military operation.

While Koizumi has defended the deployment, a lawyer for the family of one of the kidnapped Japanese has called on the government to withdraw the forces and work with the United Nations rather than go it alone in its war on terror.

EU, Latin America condemn US prison abuse in Iraq

Guadalajara (Mexico), 30 May — European and Latin American leaders condemned the abuse of Iraqi prisoners by US troops on Friday and pushed Washington to work with the United Nations rather than go it alone in its war on terror.

Despite initial opposition from Britain, dozens of leaders at a summit in Mexico agreed to condemn the sexual abuse and humiliation of inmates by American soldiers at the notorious Abu Ghraib Prison south of Baghdad.

Videttes and photographs of the abuse have battered US President George W Bush’s election-year approval ratings, alienated public sentiment in the Arab world and led even allies in the US-led coalition in Iraq to join protests.

“We declare our horror at recent evidence of the mistreatment of prisoners in Iraqi jails. These abuses against language, against International Law, the European Union, Latin American and Caribbean leaders said in a declaration at the end of their one-day summit.

Latin American nations had promised a stronger language in condemning what they said was the torture of Iraqi inmates, but the EU blocked those efforts.

A bitter dispute over how strongly to condemn the US economic blockade against Cuba foiled efforts to present the summit as a success story of two regions working together on international issues.

The leaders did agree, however, to push for a reform and stronger United Nations to lead the way in resolving conflicts instead of allowing individual nations to act alone — a pointed reference to the United States, a world remaining superpower.

“Multilateralism is an imperative of our times,” said French President Jacques Chirac, a leading European opponent of the Iraq war.

“One needs only to observe the threat that failed states carry for the world’s equilibrium or the deadlocks entailed by unilateral action,”

German Chancellor Gerhard Schroeder, in a dig at the United States, said security could not be defined purely in military terms and the United Nations needed strengthening.

MNA/Reuters

Fischer against any western troops in Iraq

Berlin, 30 May — German Foreign Minister Joschka Fischer said on Friday there should be no Western troops in Iraq and restated his opposition to a NATO presence there.

“I am of the firm opinion that Western troops under any circumstances will be seen as occupiers,” Fischer told the German Parliament during a debate on the Middle East.

Iraq was therefore no place for NATO and deployment of its troops would endanger the alliance, he said.

Germany was a vocal opponent of the US-led war in Iraq and has signalled it would not press reluctant NATO partners to agree on a role for the alliance in stabilizing Iraq after the handover of sovereignty on June 30.

Fischer did not say whether the United Nations resolution on Iraq that member nations are discussing should contain a date for the withdrawal of the US-led force.

German Chancellor Gerhard Schroeder has rejected a proposal to limit the mandate for foreign forces to January, saying it was too early to discuss a withdrawal given the current turmoil. He has also said he would like to see troops from Islamic nations in Iraq. — MNA/Reuters

Iraqi politician tells harrowing ambush tale

Baghdad, 30 May — A leading Iraqi politician who survived an ambush by gunmen that may have killed her son blamed American troops on Friday for spiralling violence gripping the country.

Iraqi Governing Council member Salama al-Khafaji said she was returning to Baghad from the sacred city of Najaf, where she had gone to pray for an end to bloodshed, when her three-car convoy was met by fire on Friday.

“We went to pray for an end to American violence and then we faced violence from the other side,” she told Reuters in an interview in her Baghdad home.

“What the Americans are doing is breeding violence from the other side. This is provocation. Violence breeds violence. The American military violence must stop.”

Khafaji, who was also in Najaf to negotiate an end to clashes between US troops and Shiite militiamen, came under fire after blocked roads forced her convoy down an agricultural road in the bandit-ridden town of Yusufiya, south of Baghdad.

A car suddenly appeared and opened fire. The vehicle carrying her 17-year-old son and her three bodyguards rolled over four times into a sandy riverbank, she said.

One bodyguard who was rescued by Iraqi police died in hospital of his wounds and two other guards were injured.

Her son jumped into the river and tried to swim away. Khafaji said she was still awaiting word on his fate. Aides to other Council members said he had been killed.

“One of my bodyguards was hiding behind sugarcane. He told me he heard the gunfire at the car and said, ‘This belongs to a Governing Council member.' They opened fire on the car again.”

“If my son died he is a martyr. I will not mourn his death until the violence in Iraq ends.”

Khafaji, from Iraq’s majority Shiite community, was appointed to the council after the killing of another member, Akila al-Hashimi, in Baghdad last September.

A former dentist, she said she now devotes much of her time to women’s groups and working against violence in Iraq.

Khafaji said the area where she was ambushed was especially dangerous because it is inhabited by Iraqi guerrillas loyal to toppled president Saddam Hussein.

“When we were travelling through the area and I heard the shots fired I asked God to help me. To those who were trying to do. I experienced the violence we are trying to stop,” she said.

MNA/Reuters

Protesters, police clash at British Embassy in Teheran

Teheran, 30 May — About 300 protesters charged police cordon outside the British Embassy in Teheran on Friday, angry about the occupation of Iraq by British and US troops.

About 250 police repelled the crowd, striking several men with batons and pushing them aside with riot shields, a Reuters reporter at the scene said.

“Our swear by the martyrs’ blood we will kill (British Prime Minister Tony) Blair,” the crowd chanted.

“That is a rubbish bin, throw your rubbish into it,” jeered protesters, unleashing a hail of firecrackers and stones, breaking several windows in the embassy.

Police arrested a demonstrator fleeing from the head. Another clutched a gushing head wound and one was laid out by a blow to his back.

Protesters were wearing black shirts, in accordance with a call from Supreme Leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei who declared a day of mourning for those killed in the occupation of Iraq. Britain’s Embassy has drawn the brunt of Iranian anger about damage to Shiite Muslim holy shrines in southern Iraq. — MNA/Reuters

An armed militiaman takes position in the centre of Najaf, during clashes between US forces and Shiite militiamen, on 25 May, 2004. The inner gate of the shrine, leading into the tomb of Imam Ali Ibn Abu Talib, was hit by a projectile. — Internet

The afternoon of car bomb explosion is seen near Karma Hotel, Jadriyeh district, Baghdad, Iraq, on 25 May, 2004. — Reuters
Images of Iraq

A burning vehicle is seen in Baghdad. US troops traded fire with guerrillas on 27 May, 2004 after a roadside bomb was detonated beside an American convoy on a Baghdad highway, and at least one Iraqi was killed and seven were wounded.

Iraqi Shiites seen through a bullet ridden vehicle window in the suburb of Sadr City, Baghdad, Iraq, on 26 May, 2004.

An Iraqi man checks a burnt area in the city of Kufa, on the outskirts of Najaf. Thirteen Iraqis were killed and 33 injured in fighting between the militia of radical Shiite cleric Moqtada Sadr and US soldiers in Najaf on 26 May, 2004.

An Iraqi wife sits next to her husband who was injured in recent clashes between Shi'ite militia and US forces in the city of Najaf on 28 May, 2004.

Three Iraqis were killed and 18 others wounded, including a senior police officer, when a car bomb exploded at Balad Ruz, 75 kilometres (about 45 miles) northeast of Baghdad, on 26 May, 2004.

Father of four-year old Ali Hussein comforts son who was wounded in a US air strike over Najaf on 28 May, 2004.

An Iraqi mother cries while holding her three-year-old son, after her house was destroyed in a US air strike over Najaf on 28 May, 2004.

An Iraqi walks past a damage car after overnight fighting in Najaf, Iraq, on 26 May, 2004.
Border and rural area developments

Government Technological College (Panglong) in Loilem, Shan State. — PHOTO: MNA.

Rural houses as the one shown in the photo are being built for easing the shelter needs of the village people. — PHOTO: PBANRDA.

An artesian well at Kyundaw village in Taungdwingyi Township. — PHOTO: PBANRDA.

The inauguration of Mongseik-Kaunghsai section of Shwenyaung-Namhsan Rail Road in Shan State (South). — PHOTO: MNA.
Peaceful Myanmar
Het Khung

The other day, I met with a friend, a diplomat of a foreign mission. As he is also a police official, he has crime control and security outlook. “How do you see our country. Do you find it peaceful?” “That’s the point. Whatever the remarks of others may be. I like the country. There is nothing to worry about me in the country. I find it peaceful. One day, I stopped my car on the street in front of my office, with key in the keyhole, and forgetting to lock the doors. I also left my wallet and papers in the car. Only when I searched my car key the next morning, did I remember that I had left them all in the car. I was worried. But, I found my car and everything inside it intact. In our country, if you forget something for a minute, it will be gone forever. “Don’t be so sure of yourself. We also have crooks in our country. There are thieves who steal cars or parts.” There may be few such incidents. As crime rate is high, our country is not an exception. When compared with many other countries in terms of security and stability, Myanmar is the best place to live in. Before I came to Myanmar, I learned about the country. But while I heard from others was based on hearsay reports. So, I was worried to go to the country. I was under the influence of hearsay reports. There may be many people who are afraid to visit Myanmar as they have heard the hearsay reports. “Tell me about your experience during your home visit on leave.” “I got one month leave, after working for a year Community peace and the rule of law is getting worse within a year in our country. Crime rate is rising. Murders, rapes and robberies are on the rise. A lot of children are abducted or murdered. Travelling is not safe. We have to worry about our children. “During my holidays, a workshop on security of diplomats was held in a country lying near Afghanistan. As soon as I entered the airport of that country, I found the situation tense, and saw security guards were everywhere. I felt uneasy. At the meeting I watched demonstrations on how to prevent and respond to a terrorist act. I felt as if I was at a meeting that did not concern me. I know that no one can even plot a terrorist act in Myanmar.” The worst that was while I was there someone broke into my room at the hotel, and stole all my jewelry. In the city, non-governmental employees were carrying guns for security. Imagine, how dangerous it would be, if the civilians, without undergoing military training, are carrying guns. I missed Myanmar. So, I had to tell my relatives and friends about the objective conditions of Myanmar and that it was different from what they had heard, and that it was a peaceful nation to live for the rest of one’s life.” “Thank you for your view.” “No, I have to thank your Government for ensuring safety for me and the Myanmar Police Force for the rule of law. As I am also a police officer, I know the extent of the duty of a police force. The two main responsibilities of a police force are to protect the people and serve the public interest. They are the duties of all the police members regardless of their race, religion and nation. The MPF is also dutifully performing the two main tasks. The Head of States has given guidance to the MPF to ensure the rule of law fully and security for the people till they can sleep at night without any anxiety. We are trying hard to realize this end. We should not be content with our present situation. The public participation is important for the successful implementation of the task. Police alone cannot do the job.” My friend nodded and smiled. People take peace for granted in the war are living in peace. Peace cannot be restored overnight. It has to be restored only after sacrificing lives and blood and exerting efforts and perseverance. Those who try to restore peace must have endurance and patience as they will face slanderous criticism. They will have to face hindrances and difficulties. Every country that achieves peace has to overcome all these difficulties and hardships. Some would like to destroy peace to serve selfish purpose. But the only result is the loss of peace and prosperity, and their desires are not met. For example: lack of peace and the burning anger in the Middle East, the sufferings of the people of Afghanistan, resulting from the acts of persons who say that they want to help the Afghans; and the tears and blood of the Iraqi people living in hellish situation because of the invaders who destroy their nation. These are the incidents of the present era. When we study their situations with sympathy, we understand the value of peace more. My friend has already seen and felt peace and stability of Myanmar. But I do not think he has felt the real essence of peace and stability of Myanmar. If he finds the real peace and happiness of Myanmar of the Theravada Buddhist faith, he will accept the indisputable fact that Myanmar is the most peaceful and stable country not only in Asia, but also in the world.

(Translation: TMT) Myanmar Alin, Kyemon: 29-5-2004
Development of a township …

Under the programme, the opening of bronze plaque bearing “Myanmar Education Goal” and “Education Motto” was held at Hsinmyeehswe Basic Education High School.

First, those present saluted the State Flag and the band played the National Anthem. Next, Headmistress Daw Hla Hla Myint and Chairman of School Board of Trustees U Thant Zin Myint formally opened the multimedia teaching centre. The Prime Minister unveiled the signboard of the centre. Next, the Prime Minister and party viewed students learning at the rooms of the centre. They also inspected the art room and domestic science room. They viewed performance of the students at the art room.

At the opening ceremony, Headmistress Daw Hla Hla Myint reported on installation of modern teaching aid at the centre and thanked the wellwishers including Sayadaw Dr Ashin Ñanissara for their donations.

Vice-Chairman of School Board of Trustees U Han Tin reported on efforts for opening of multimedia teaching centre. Prime Minister General Khin Nyunt presented a TV, a computer and a generator for Hsinmyeehswe BEHS to the Headmistress. Chairman of Bago Division Peace and Development Council (West) Col Hla Min also presented a TV to the Headmistress.

Chairman of Myanmar Education Committee Prime Minister General Khin Nyunt delivered a speech. He said it was a significant day for Hsinmyeehswe. Although it is just a small town in Thegon Township, outstanding figures turned out during Myanmar’s independence struggle.

Moreover, he said, the town produced famous Sayadaws, literati and artists and it was a well-known town in Myanmar’s independence struggle and in the history of literature, culture and arts.

He said he and party came to Hsinmyeehswe to attend the opening of multimedia teaching centre and to fulfill the requirements for regional development including five rural development tasks.

The Prime Minister said he was pleased to see active participation of local people. He said efforts are being made for equitable development of states and divisions, border areas and inner regions, urban and rural areas, hilly and plain regions under the leadership of the government. With these efforts, patriotism and national solidarity spirit got strengthened.

He said he found that students had demonstrated their skills with active strength. He wished that the school would produce intellectuals and intelligentsia to serve the interest of the nation. Next, the Prime Minister and party posed for photos with members of the school board of trustees, teachers and students.

A ceremony to donate cash and kind for the school was held at Mttaungungone Dhammayan. The Prime Minister and party took the Five Precepts from Thitagu Thegon Sayadaw Dr Ashin Ñanissara. They presented offertories to members of the Sangha.

The Prime Minister presented 10 HP generator to the school board of trustees and oxygen machine to the station doctor.

The Prime Minister accepted K 500,000 each donated by Thitagu Sayadaw and U Tin Win-Daw Phyu Phyu Win for the fund of the school, 10 HP generator for Hsinmyeehswe station hospital and hospital equipment worth K 1.7 million by Managing Director of Asia Tawwin Special Clinic Dr Myat Thu and Dr Khin Cho Oo.

The Prime Minister presented certificate of honour for the donation of K 8 million to U Han of Thitagu Missionary Board. Thitagu Thegon Sayadaw presented certificate of honour for donation of a generator and an oxygen machine worth K 1.3 million to the Prime Minister.

Next, the Prime Minister accepted K 6.7 million by wellwishers. Next, the Prime Minister expressed gratitude. Sittagu Sayadaw Dr Ashin Ñanissara delivered a sermon, followed by sharing of merits gained.

On arrival at Hsinmyeehswe Station Hospital, the Prime Minister and party inspected patient wards, operation theatre, medical store and lab. Officials conducted them round the hospital.

The Prime Minister fulfilled the requirements of the hospital. Afterwards, they proceeded to Thitagu Township Hospital where they were welcomed by Medical Superintendent Dr Daw Win, surgeons and nurses. The Prime Minister and party inspected the medical store.

After hearing reports on health care service by the Medical Superintendent, the Prime Minister attended to the needs. The Prime Minister and party saw over patient wards, operation theatre, dental section and X-ray room.

(See page 10)
Development of townships ...

(from page 9)

In the hall of Thegon Monastery, General Khin Nyunt and party arrived at the ancient historical ordination hall by U Naing Win in April. At present, he provided more assistance for regional development.

As the better transport plays a vital role in development of the region and township, the government is striving with might and main for achieving more and more development in their region and township.

Development of the township means improvement of rural regions in the area. Development of the rural areas will contribute towards progress of the township. Therefore, the government laid down and is striving with might and main for carrying out five rural development tasks.

So, township officials should go down field trips to rural regions and to perform uplift of living standard of the rural people and gaining of success in the five rural development tasks.

Next, the General presented a computer and TV set each to respective school heads of Thegon, Padigon, Inna and Wetpok BEHSs through the Township Education Officer. Afterwards, General Khin Nyunt and party proceeded to Shinhlainggu Pagoda in Hsinmakyat Village, Shweauding Township. First, they inspected Thegon-Padigon-Wetpok road section by car.

National Health Committee Chairman Prime Minister General Khin Nyunt and party inspected Inma Station Hospital.

Afterwards, General Khin Nyunt and party arrived at the ancient historical ordination hall in Phoe Thein Monastery Religious area in Shweauding Township.

At the Shwenattaung Monastery, General Khin Nyunt and party paid homage to Sayadaw Bhaddanta Khema卡拉. Next, Sayadaw Bhaddanta Khema卡拉 explained the history of the ordination hall and all-round renovation of it.

Next, the Prime Minister supplicated that the ordination hall will be renovated by the Department of Archaeology of the Ministry of Culture and well-wishers without losing its original style.

Next, Assistant Director U Naing Win of the Department of Archaeology reported on condition of the ordination hall, Buddha images and antiquities in it.

Afterswards, General Khin Nyunt and party proceeded to Shinhlainggu Pagoda in Hsinmakyat Village, Shweauding Township. First, Plant Manager of the Shweauding Textile and Finishing Plant U Zaw Win Maung reported on history of Shinhlainggu Pagoda and its environs, and excavation.

Next, Prime Minister General Khin Nyunt and party paid homage to Buddha image in Shinhlainggu Pagoda. Afterwards, the merit sharing ceremony of the religious buildings in Shinhlainggu Pagoda compound was held at Dhammayon near the pagoda. The ceremony was attended by members of Sangha led by Sitagu Sayadaw Dr Ashin NaniSSara, Prime Minister General Khin Nyunt and party, Chairman of Bago Division Peace and Development Council Commander Maj-Gen Ko Ko, Chairman of Bago Division (West) Peace and Development Council Col Hla Min, members of the division/township Peace and Development Councils, social organizations and well-wishers.

First, the congregation received the Five Precepts from Sayadaw Dr Ashin NaniSSara. Next, Members of Sangha recited the paritas. Next, Prime Minister General Khin Nyunt and party presented offerings to the Sayadaw.

Next, Col Hla Min presented a photo of Shinhlainggu Pagoda to Prime Minister General Khin Nyunt. Next, Staff Officer U San Thin Hlaing of the Religious Affairs Department read out the donations — 27.5 acres of land for Shwepyi Nyein Aye Dhamma Yeiktha by Director of the Ministry of Sports U Nyan Tun-wife Daw Win Ma Ma and families; K 32 million for all-round renovation of the pagoda by well-wishers; K 2.5 million for construction of Sitagu building by Managing Director of Myanma Foodstuff Industries Lt-Col Soe Hlaing-Daw Ni Ni and families; K 4 million for building of the prayer hall by U Tin Aung-(Daw Tin Hmy) of Aunglan; K 31.5 million for construction of Ngweyadanapan building by U Aung Kyi-Sud-dhamma Theingi Daw Yin Kywe of Shweauding; K 2.4 million for building ordination hall by U Zaw Min-Daw San San Aye of Shweauding and renovation of an ancient pagoda, south of Shinhlainggu Pagoda by Daw Ein Pyae and family in Yangon.

Afterswards, Sitagu Sayadaw Dr Ashin NaniSSara delivered a sermon and the congregation shared the merits gained. The ceremony came to an end with three-time recitation of Buddhist Sasanam Ciram Tittatha. Afterwards, Prime Minister General Khin Nyunt and party went to Yadana Manaung Monastery in Pyay and paid homage to Shwebyainga Sayadaw Abhidhaja Agga Maha Saddhamma Jotika Bhaddhata Vijabala.

The Prime Minister and party arrived back here in the evening.

MNA
Guantanamo interrogators sent to Iraq last summer

New York, 30 May—Interrogation experts from the Guantanamo Bay naval base were sent to Iraq last fall and played a major role in training US intelligence teams at the Abu Ghraib Prison, The New York Times reported on Saturday.

Citing senior military intelligence officials, the Times reported that the teams from Guantanamo Bay, Cuba, operated with broad latitude in questioning “enemy combatants” from the US war on terror and then played a central role at Abu Ghraib through December, when the worst abuses of prisoners were occurring.

Photographs shown around the world of naked prisoners stacked in a pyramid or positioned to simulate sex acts at the prison near Baghdad that had shocked Americans and posed a serious setback to US efforts to stabilize Iraq.

The Times said the teams were sent to Iraq for 90-day tours at the urging of Major-General Geoffrey Miller, then head of the Guantanamo military tribunals, and in Afghanistan were wrongly applied in Iraq, including at Abu Ghraib, which was covered by the Geneva Convention.

Fay and his 29-member team conducted scores of interviews in Iraq, Europe and the United States over the past month, the Times said, and he was expected to brief Lieu-tenant-General Ricardo Sanchez, the top US commander in Iraq, on his findings in the next week, a senior Army official said.

The Times quoted a senior military official in Iraq as saying five interrogation teams, or about 15 interrogators, analysts and other specialists, were sent in October from Guantanamo by the US command in Iraq “for use in the interrogation effort” at Abu Ghraib. A Washington defense official said only three teams were sent, the paper added—MNA/Reuters

Russia, Denmark appeal to Bush on Iraq

WASHINGTON, 30 May—Russia and Denmark appealed to President George W. Bush on Friday to allow full sovereignty to the interim Iraqi Government and the White House said it was open to changes in the draft of a UN resolution on Iraq.

European governments want strict guidelines on the status of US forces in Iraq in the text of a UN resolution that is to endorse the new Iraqi Government due to take power from the US-led coalition on June 30.

Their concern is that US forces would be operating outside the control of the Iraqi interim government.

Washington is unwilling to let American military forces be commanded by Iraqis but has promised they will work in “close partnership” with Iraqi security forces.

White House Spokesman Scott McClellan said despite concerns expressed by key allies, US officials believed there was strong support in general for a UN resolution. “I think everybody recognizes that there will be some refinements and adjustments made along the way. That’s part of the process,” he said.

Bush spoke by phone to Russian President Vladimir Putin about the resolution, two days after discussing it with the French, and a senior administration official said that “we would come up with an arrangement that would enable us to help the Iraqi people secure their country, so that their country can move toward elections”. Bush also held Oval Office talks with Danish Prime Minister Anders Fogh Rasmussen, who came to Washington saying he would urge Bush to ensure the Iraqi interim government gets real power, including military decision-making ability.

“We need a transfer of full sovereignty to an Iraqi government, an Iraqi government which will be provided with all the signs and principles of a sovereign government,” Rasmussen said with Bush at his side in remarks to reporters. —MNA/Reuters

Bangladeshi state-run sugar corporation incur heavy loss

DHAKA, 30 May—The state-run Bangladesh Sugar and Food Industries Corporation is likely to incur about one billion taka (17.2 million US dollars) loss during the current fiscal year ending June 2004.

Sources of the corporation said Saturday that the government had given about 750 million taka (12.9 million US dollars) as subsidy to the corporation during the period to run its loss making concerns.

The loss of the corporation would be around five billion taka (86 million US dollars) from 1995-96 fiscal to the current financial year.

It is learnt that all the 15 sugar mills under the corporation have turned into loss making concerns due to mismanagement, government-imposed policies and drastic fall in production. The corporation had produced 120,000 metric tons of sugar in the current fiscal year against the target of 220,000 metric tons of sugar. The failure of the corporation to produce sugar as per target has caused huge economic losses.—MNA/Xinhua

Iranian governor, 9 others killed in helicopter crash

TUMSAR, 30 May—A second Eman, governor of Iran’s northwestern province of Qazvin, and at least nine others on board a helicopter were killed in a crash Saturday afternoon, the official IRNA news agency reported.

The helicopter came down near Mollam-Kalaye north of Qazvin at 15:00 (1030 GMT), killing Emani and one of his deputies as well as several others while returning home after inspecting the mountainous district of Roudbat Alamout, where was the worst hit in the Friday earthquake. Among the dead were also Qazvin provincial police chief, an armoured division chief of the province, a state television reporter as well as two officers at the Qazvin Governor’s Office and three crew members.

According to sources at the governor’s office, four bodies have been identified and the cause of the crash is still under investigation. A strong earthquake measuring 5.5 degrees on the Richter Scale hit northern Iran Friday afternoon, leaving at least 24 dead, including three in Qazvin.—MNA/Xinhua

Don’t smoke

Four bodies found, 14 still missing in central China flood

ENSHI (Hubei), 30 May—Four bodies were retrieved while 14 persons remained missing as of 10 pm Friday, one day after a disastrous flood took place central China’s Hubei Province.

The sudden flooding broke the cofferdam of the Dalongtan Reservoir in Enshi City at 5.49 pm Thursday, sweeping away four construction workers and a mini-bus carrying 12 children, a teacher and a driver.

The local government mobilized more than 500 policemen, together with over 5,000 officials and citi-ens for the rescue opera-

The bodies retrieved include those of three children, and rescuers said they believed the mini-bus was disemboweled as they had found two wheels.

Rescue works and search for the missing are still underway. The reservoir was still under construction when rainstorms on Wednesday and Thursday in the upper reaches of the Qingshan River, a tributary of the Yangtze River, brought tor-

The dam site recorded a flash rainfall of 28 milli-

THE NEW LIGHT OF MYANMAR Monday, 31 May, 2004 11
Trade cooperation with China has not reached full potential

Beijing, 30 May—“Economic and trade cooperation between Malaysia and China has not reached its full potential, although it covers a wide range of areas,” visiting Malaysian Prime Minister Abdullah Ahmad Badawi said here Friday.

Badawi announced the opening of the Showcase Malaysia in China Exhibition, which is one of the important events of Badawi’s China tour.

Products and services from 84 Malaysian companies are on display in the exhibition, ranging from electronic and electrical products, food and beverage and palm oil-based and rubber-based products to services such as education, tourism and the health care.

Addressing the opening ceremony, Badawi said friendly relations between Malaysia and China has enjoyed steady development since the forging of diplomatic ties between Malaysia and China 30 years ago.

In the past 30 years, economic and trade cooperation between the two sides has also scored great achievements, he said.

Thirty years ago, trade volume between China and Malaysia was only about 160 million US dollars, while it has now reached 20.1 billion US dollars, according to the statistics from the Chinese Ministry of Commerce.

Badawi said “high quality Malaysian commodities have a huge market in Asia, Middle East, Europe and the United States.”

Malaysian commodities are expected to have a market in China, with China as one of the most important trade partners of Malaysia, he said. “Malaysian companies hope to join hands with their Chinese counterparts to explore more opportunities,” he added.

Malaysian Minister of International Trade and Industry Rafidah Aziz said the Showcase Malaysia in China Exhibition is one of the events organized to commemorate the 30th anniversary of the establishment of diplomatic relations between Malaysia and China.

It is also held in conjunction with Badawi’s official visit to China, she added. “It is an exhibition aimed at enhancing awareness among the people in China, especially the business community, of the products and services that can be sourced from Malaysia,” she said.

She also expressed her hope that this exhibition will contribute to the strengthening of trade and economic relations between the two countries.

The exhibition is jointly organized by the Malaysian Embassy to China and the China Council for the Promotion of International Trade.

HK launches operation against illegal on-line auction activities

Hong Kong, 30 May — Hong Kong police arrested nine persons in an operation against illegal on-line auction activities, according to Press release Friday.

The operation code named “Peace-maker” was mounted with a view to curtailing the increase in the number of sale of concert tickets at an excessive price on some on-line auction websites.

Following a two-week investigation, officers attached to the Technology Crime Division of the Commercial Crime Bureau identified a number of on-line auctioneers suspected of having pushed up the price of a concert tickets by postings as other account holders making false bids against genuine bidders.

Inquiries revealed that the original prices of the concert tickets ranging from 12.82 US dollars to 48.71 US dollars were unscrupulously pushed up to a level of 76.92 US dollars to 256 US dollars.

The officers raided nine locations throughout Hong Kong Friday morning, resulting in the arrest of three men and six women aged between 19 and 43 for offences including fraud, criminal damage and access to computer with criminal intent.

They are still being detained for further questioning.

AIDS is a national concern.

 Geneva, 30 May — The G-20 alliance of developing countries on Friday unveiled an alternative plan to ease a deadlock in world farm trade talks which puts most of the onus on rich states in the sensitive area of tariff cuts.

The group, which is led by Brazil, India and South Africa, has rejected a joint EU-American proposal on tariffs as being too soft on rich countries and too hard on the poor.

In its proposal, which will be on the table when negotiators meet in Geneva next week for farm negotiations, asks relatively little of developing countries, who would not have to open their markets to imports in products they decide are too sensitive.

“We consider this position a positive contribution to the talks,” said Brazil’s ambassador to the World Trade Organization Luis Felipe Sestas Correa, who acted as spokes- man for the group.

Reform of farm trade lies at the heart of WTO negotia- tions to lower barriers to business across the globe, the so-called Doha Round, and trade experts are racing to com- plete outline accords before the summer break.

With the European Union signaling willingness to remove one potential obstacle to a deal by agreeing to discuss ending export subsidies, and with work well advanced on the question of the huge domestic subsidies rich states lavish on farmers, the main stumbling block has been import duties.

After rejecting the EU-US blueprint, the G-20 of- fered to come up with an alternative before the next formal round of farm talks, which are scheduled to be- gin in Geneva on June 2.

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G-20 trade alliance puts tariff cut onus on rich

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MNA/Reuters

Relief teams scramble as Caribbean flood toll grows

Port-au-Prince (Haiti), 30 May—Rescue workers rushed to overflowing water tanks, chlorine tablets and first-aid kits on Thursday to a remote Haitian town struck by floods, that killed an estimated 2,000 people on the Caribbean island of Hispaniola.

Across the border in the Dominican Republic, author- ities prepared for an aerial fogging to prevent disease in hard-hit Jimani, a town where flood waters crashed through in the night and killed hundreds of men, women and children, dumping some of their bodies into a lake full of crocodiles.

The toll in Haiti stood at about 1,660, while 350 bod- ies had been recovered in the Dominican Republic, mostly in Jimani, near the Haitian border.

Foreign troops sent to Haiti after a rebellion in Feb- ruary had to be ordered to leave, providing helicopter flights to aid agencies trying to reach survivors isolated when floods washed out roads across southeastern Haiti.

MNA/Reuters
Flights between China, Europe to increase in summer

BEIJING, 30 May—Flights between China and European nations will increase in the upcoming summer season.

From June 1, KLM will operate daily direct flights from both Beijing and Shanghai to Amsterdam, and then provide connecting flights to other European nations. The two daily flights make KLM the third largest European airline in China.

From June 10, Air France will operate daily flights from Guangzhou to Paris. The eight-hour flight, connecting to the second largest city in China with the French capital, has attracted many foreign airlines after Beijing and Shanghai.

By the end of May, Austrian Airlines will increase to six weekly flights from Beijing to Vienna. Its unique location linking Western and Eastern Europe will provide easy access for Chinese passengers to the 10 new EU member nations.

Ukraine Airlines has opened its first direct flights linking Kiev and Beijing. China Southern will launch flights from Shanghai via Beijing to Amsterdam.

Experts said the exchanges between China and European nations in economy, trade, culture and education were the impetus behind the growing demand for aviation growth. When a bilateral tourism agreement between China and the EU takes effect late this year, the growing number of Chinese tourists to Europe will even stimulate the rise of flights on European routes.

MNA/Xinhua

Crime rate in Bangladesh slightly declines

DHAKA, 30 May—The rate of incidents of murder, dacoity and robbery in Bangladesh slightly declined in April compared to the previous month.

The News Nation Saturday quoted statistics supplied by the police headquarters as saying that a total of 321 persons were murdered in April while some 346 persons were murdered in the previous month.

A total of 17,448 persons were murdered across the country with a population of 130 million during last five years between 1999 and 2003.

A total of 85 incidents of robbery were recorded across the country in April against 79 in March.

National Planning Minister M Safiur Rahman on Friday warned that would start in 2005 and the first phase will be operational in 2010. The the third largest European airline in China.

Dubai to spend $6b on infrastructure

ABU DHABI, 30 May—The Municipality of Dubai in the United Arab Emirates (UAE) will invest more than six billion US dollars on infrastructure-related projects in the medium term, the Gulf News daily reported Friday.

An official at Dubai Municipality said approximately 500 million dollars will go for roads and bridges, 300 for drainage and irrigation, and 700 for general projects.

Dubai’s existing roadnetwork stretches 10,000 kilo-metres. It is under continuous expansion and development with over 20 new major projects, including an eight-lane road to the airport and a new 12-lane bridge across the Dubai Creek.

A total of 4.5 billion dol-lars has been allocated for a mega project of light rail transit (LRT) in Dubai city, which will stretch 70 kilo-metres with 55 stations.

Construction will start in 2005 and the first phase will be operational in 2010. The

Germany demands lower mobile phone rates for children

BERLIN, 30 May—The German Government wants mobile phone companies to introduce lower mobile phone tariffs for children, according to a report.

Consumer Protection and Agriculture Minis-ter Renate Kuenast has written to mobile phone companies, asking them to reduce costs for young users by blocking some expensive services, The Berliner Zeitung newspaper reported Thursday.

Kuenast said she was concerned about the rising rates of indebtedness among young children and teenagers.

The annual budget exceeds 350 million dollars, with approximately 90 per cent allocated to infrastructure development, the official was quoted as saying.

WHO to launch “World No Tobacco Day”

GENEVA, 30 May—The World Health Organization (WHO) said here on Friday that this year’s campaign for World No Tobacco Day on May 31 will be launched with the theme “Smoke Free Childhood.”

The slogan explains the inextricable link between tobacco and poverty, and how the use of tobacco, especially by poorer people who consume this product the most, can harm their already precarious eco-nomies and income, the WHO said.

Every 6.5 seconds one person dies and many others fall ill or suffer diseases and disability due to tobacco use,” said WHO Director-General Lee Jong-wook.

“Tobacco is a preventable risk factor which makes a huge impact on our health and well-being, as well as our environment and economies,” he said. Studies across the world show that it is the poorest countries who tend to smoke the most in both developing and developed countries, and are nearmost of the disease burden.

One study conducted in 1994 estimated that tobacco use results in an annual global net loss of 200 billion US dollars, a third of which in developing countries.

The WHO noted that progress in this area is still spreading, especially in developing countries where 84 per cent of the smokers live.

China’s TV stations ordered to launch children’s channel

BEIJING, 30 May—China has ordered all its provincial-level TV stations to launch a special channel catering for children by the end of 2006, according to the State Administration of Radio, Film and Television (SARTF).

The TV stations are required to produce and broadcast excellent cartoons, movies, TV plays, educational programmes, entertainment and exercise programmes suitable for young viewers on the new channel, the SARTF said, calling the move “a big event” that will bring ben-efts to future generations.

According to the third step plan, one-third of China’s provincial TV stations are ordered launch their children’s channel by the end of this year.

CCTV, China’s Central Television Station, launched a special programme catering for young people on December 28, 2003.

The Communist Party of China (CPC) and the central government have shown great concern about the na-tion’s youngsters.

On March 22 this year, the CPC Central Committee and the State Council issued a package of proposals on improving the ethical, ideolo-gical and moral standards of children and young peo-ple across the country.

Cyprus, Bulgaria sign health agreement

NICOSIA, 30 May—Cyprus and Bulgaria signed here Thursday an agreement for cooperation in the fields of health and medical science.

The agreement was signed by Cyprus Minister of Health Constantina Akkedidou and her Bulgarian counterpart Slavcho Chardarov Bogov, cur-rently on the island for an official visit.

Under the agreement, the two countries’ cooperates in the field of education, technology, ex-change of experience, infor-mation and experts.

It also provides for di-rect contacts between medi-cal institutions, national medical centres, hospitals
Thistle have submitted an application to join the Premier League next season after

Inverness submit ground-share plan to Premier League

many of their supporters are

600,000 pounds (547,800 costs between 300,000 and

Johnstone on May 15.

They have discussed the move with fans
to bring their stadium up to

Premier League rules dictate clubs must have

10,000 seats.

Caledonian Stadium holds only 6,000 fans with 2,280 seats.

Caley’s board have dismissed the move with fans and shareholders since

climbing the First Division title by point from Clyde with a 3-1 home win over St.

Aberdeen on match days.

Local media reports suggested the move was not allowed.

The resulting violent protest
tests eventually forced the

package to Turin.

History could be repeated

should top players, especially

leave there will be uproar.

Roma president Francesco Sensi, already struggling
to deal with the club’s heavy debts, is likely to face
the ire of the supporters.

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Yangon, 30 May — Member of the State Peace and Development Council Lt-Gen Ye Myint of the Ministry of Defence inspected extension of Mindat-Matupi Road from mile posts 83/5 to 86.

Afterwards, they went to extension of Mindat-Matupi road section being carried out by Road Construction Special Group-12. Lt-Gen Ye Myint saw over construction of the retaining walls for prevention of landslide. At mile posts between 76 and 77, they inspected digging of drains and building of the shoulder of the road by Tamadawmen of the local battalion and presented food staff to them. Next, Lt-Gen Ye Myint and party carried out extension of the road from mile posts 83/5 to 86.

Lt-Gen Ye Myint saw over the bridge and gave instructions on maintenance works to be carried out. At Lemyo Bridge across Lemyo River, they saw over the bridge and condition of the river. They also looked into extension of the road from Lemyo Bridge to Matupi.

Mindat-Matupi Road, 102 miles long, comprises two miles and seven furlongs tarred road section, 71 miles and two furlongs gravel road section and 27 miles and seven furlongs earth road section. Due to landslides in the past, transportation could not be performed in the rainy season and jeeps can use the road in the two-day trip in summer. Nowadays, four Road Construction Special Groups of Public Works are building the extension tasks with the use of 64 heavy machines and only nine miles and two furlongs long road section left to be extended. As they have been building the retaining walls, conduits and gravel roads, heavy vehicles can go from Mindat to Matupi Road within 6-8 hours. Local people from 28 villages can use Matupi-Mindat Road.

NC Delegates start compiling papers and take physical exercises

Yangon, 30 May — The delegates of national races to the National Convention discussed and read papers state- and division-wise at the respective venues on the clarification of the National Convention Work Committee regarding the detailed basic principles for the sharing of power over legislation, executive and judiciary to be included in drafting the State Constitution at the Camp this morning and afternoon.

Meanwhile, NC delegates were taking physical exercises such as walking, playing tennis, weight-lifting, playing golf and billiards at gymnasium in groups or individually.

The meetings of representatives-elect group, delegates of labour, delegates of intellectuals and intelligentsia, delegates of State service personnel and other invited delegates are to be held at Nyaunghnapin Camp in Hmaubw Camp today.

Vocalists present songs to delegates to the National Convention to the accompaniment of Myanmar Athan modern music troupe at Nyaunghnapin Camp.

Deputy Minister arrives back

Yangon, 30 May — Myanmar delegation headed by Deputy Minister for Forestry Brig-Gen Tha Aye Matupi Theyn arrived back here by air yesterday evening after studying timber market, Exhibition and parket factory in the People’s Republic of China from 23 to 29 May.

The delegation was welcomed back at the Yangon International Airport by Minister for Forestry Brig-Gen Tha Aye Matupi Theyn, heads of department and families. — MNA

Song and music entertained to NC delegates

Yangon, 30 May — The Entertainment and Welfare Sub-committee of National Convention Convening Management Committee presents entertainment programmes to NC delegates at the gymnasium at Nyaunghnapin Camp in Hmaubw Town today starting from 7 pm.

Yesterday evening, NC delegates were entertained with the songs of Myanmar Athan vocalists together with Myanmar Athan Modern Vocalists present songs to delegates to the National Convention to the accompaniment of Myanmar Athan modern music troupe at Nyaunghnapin Camp.

With hands linked firm around the National Convention.