Brahmacariyañca, chastity; this is the way to auspiciousness.

The National Convention is the concern of all our national races.
Try utmost to build a new nation through stability and peace

The national goal of the Union of Myanmar is emergence of a peaceful, modern and developed nation. The government is implementing the policies in conformity with current situations, while laying infrastructures for building up a new nation.

After its assumption of the State’s responsibilities, the government gave the top priority to prevalence of law and order and restoration of peace and tranquillity. Progress could be made through peace talks with armed groups and a bid to resolve armed conflicts that troubled the nation for over 40 years. Seventeen armed groups had built trust and understanding with the government, resulting in prevalence of stability and peace in border areas.

Patron of the Union Solidarity and Development Association Chairman of the State Peace and Development Council Commander-in-Chief of Defence Services Senior General Thein Sein attended the opening of Myanmar and International Studies Course No 6 and Special Refresher Course No 7 held at the USD A Training Centre in Hmawby Township on 9 June. The Senior General in his address said that the work programmes ranging from peace and stability of the nation to fulfilling the fundamental needs of the people have been carried out with the internal strength. The government’s basic policy for national development is to ensure equitable progress in all parts of the nation, he noted. Thus, 24 development zones have been set up in the country to launch development undertakings as necessary. The basic requirements of the rural areas, home to the majority, are being fulfilled, he said.

Prevalence of law and order, national economic growth and development of human resources play the most fundamental role in transforming the nation to a modern and developed one.

Now, peace and stability have been restored across the nation. And firmly joining hands, the entire people have been making concerted and combined endeavours for development of the nation in all spheres. Implementation of the development projects is in full swing in the whole nation, and the entire national people on their part are to make attempts with added momentum for translating the national goal into reality. Therefore, the entire people are urged to always value and appreciate the essence of stability and peace and to try their utmost to build a new nation in accord with the State’s future policy programmes in the interest of the nation and the people.
Multinational force patrol attacked in Iraq

Baghdad, 11 June 2004 — The Polish-led multinational security force in central Iraq says one of its patrols came under attack today south of Baghdad.

A spokesman said the troops were patrolling near the city of Al-Hilla when they were attacked with rocket-propelled grenades shortly after midnight. The attackers fled after the patrol returned fire.

There were reports of clashes between supporters of radical Shiite Muslim cleric Moustada al-Sadr and US forces today in Baghdad. One fighter was reported killed and several wounded in sporadic fighting in Al-Sadi City, a Shi’a neighbourhood.

Also today, the US military said US soldiers have foiled a new sabotage attempt against a pipeline in northern Iraq.

Iraqi Interim Prime Minister Iyad Allawi yesterday said that Iraq lost more than $200 million over the past seven months due to separate attacks on its pipeline network.

China, Hungary sign six cooperation documents

BUDAPEST, 11 June— China and Hungary signed six cooperation documents here Wednesday to strengthen their economic ties and to boost bilateral trade.

Chinese President Hu Jintao, who arrived here Thursday morning, and his Hungarian counterpart Madl Ferenc witnessed the signing of the documents on education, culture, the opening of new air routes between Beijing and Budapest and on the sales of bus parts produced in Hungary.

China and Hungary will jointly open a bilingual school in Budapest, teaching both Chinese and Hungarian, according to an agreement signed by ministries of education of both countries. Another agreement, signed by the China Hainan Airlines and the Hungarian airlines, has set that from August 2, the China Hainan Airlines will fly three flights each week between Beijing and Budapest.

Hu and Madl signed a joint statement themselves after they held an hour-long talks, saying both nations will establish a relationship of “friendly and cooperative partnership.”

President Madl described Hungary’s first state visit to Hungary, the first in 10 years, as an “important event” in bilateral relations.

Despite their differences, both countries have the common wish to develop “a new type of cooperative ties”, he said.

The Chinese President said the relationship between China and Hungary, which established full diplomatic relations 55 years ago, has entered a new stage.

Hu proposed that the two countries increase top-level exchanges, explore new ways of economic cooperation and step up cooperation in culture, education, environmental protection, science and technology.

“China welcomes Hungarian firms to participate in China’s development of its western areas and the rejuvenation of the old industrial belts,” he said. “Hungarian companies are also welcome in the construction of projects for the Beijing 2008 Olympiad and the WorldExpo 2010 in Shanghai.”

On international issues, the Hungarian President said China has been an active force in maintaining world peace and stability as a permanent member of the UN Security Council.

And Hu responded that China and Hungary can have better coordination on many international arenas like the UN and other international bodies.

US study says kids often overdose headache medicine

Vancouver (British Columbia), 11 June— Children who suffer frequent headaches may be using far more over-the-counter pain relief medicine than parents realize, according to a study released on Thursday.

Researchers who studied 680 children between the ages of six and 18, found more than 20 per cent were overusing pain relief medicines, according to the report released at the American Headache Society annual meeting in Vancouver.

“I’ve been astounded by the large numbers of kids using over-the-counter medications five or six times a week, some times 15 to 20 times per week,” David Rother, the study’s lead researcher said in a statement.

One in five children in the study overused medications, which is defined as taking more than three doses of pain relievers per week for more than six weeks, according to the study by the Cleveland Clinic in Ohio.

The researchers found about one in seven of the children and adolescents did not tell their parents about the heavy medication use, often because they did not realize they should be consulted. — MNA/Reuters

Britons punish Blair over Iraq in election

London, 11 June— Britons angry over the Iraq war handed Prime Minister Tony Blair a humiliating electoral reverse, with local poll results on Friday showing his ruling Labour Party coming third behind the main opposition parties.

Senior government figures and analysts agreed the Iraq war and ensuing instability during the US-led occupation had taken its toll, with election returns amounting to a drubbing for Blair in his seventh year in power.

“There is clearly a very strong protest vote,” Cabinet Minister Tessa Jowell told BBC television. “Iraq is certainly a factor but it is only a factor. The results from Thursday’s local council polls — to be followed by London Mayor results on Friday night and European Parliament results on Sunday — will inevitably renew speculation about Blair’s leadership. But most analysts still expect him to take Labour to a third general election victory in 2005 despite the damage from Iraq and Blair’s alliance with President Bush.

With 82 of 166 councils up for grabs having reported by early Friday, Labour had lost a net 211 seats, closing in on the overall net loss of 400 or more, which analysts had said would be a serious blow for Blair.

Schröder doubts UN resolution will bring Iraq stability

Saint Symphos (Georgia), 11 June—German Chancellor Gerhard Schröder expressed doubts Thursday whether a new UN Security Council resolution on Iraq’s sovereignty would bring stability to the war-torn country.

“The resolution is a political basis, is an attempt, to improve the chances of stabilising Iraq,” Schroeder said on the sidelines of the Group of Eight summit in the US state of Georgia.

“Whether that attempt can succeed is an open question. I am not optimistic about this,” he said, after travelling to Saint Symphos from nearby Sea Island, where the summit is being held, by helicopter to speak to reporters.

The UN Security Council unanimously adopted Tuesday a US-British proposed resolution on Iraq’s legal and political framework after the occupation administration under Paul Bremer hands over power on 30 June.

On the chances of bridging Iraq’s various religious and ethnic differences, Schroeder said: “this will be a very tough road.”

He said that while much optimism had been expressed about Iraq during the G8 summit, not even the United States and Britain were saying “everything is wonderful”.

He said his meeting with King Abdullah II of Jordan had shown that even leaders in the region “also have fears that things could become even more difficult than one or the other might have imagined.”

Schröder said talks on what further role NATO could play in Iraq did not include the idea of sending Alliance troops to replace the US-led forces there.

British man finds body in fridge while making tea

London, 11 June— British police have launched a murder inquiry after a man found his daughter-in-law’s dismembered body in his son’s fridge while looking for milk, police and newspapers said on Thursday.

London police said a body had been discovered in the southwestern suburb of Kingston-upon-Thames late on Tuesday, and police sources confirmed it was crammed into a fridge.

“The Sun” newspaper said the man had let himself into his son’s detached house when he found nobody at home, and was making a cup of tea when he discovered the Korean-born victim wrapped up in plastic bags.

“They seemed like such a nice couple,” neighbours were quoted as saying. — MNA/Reuters

Internet
Car bomb explodes near US convoy in Baghdad

Baghdad, 11 June—A car bomb exploded near a US convoy on a Baghdad highway Friday, but it was not clear if there were any American casualties, Iraqi police said.

“It ran out of his car and left in another one. Then the car exploded when an American convoy passed by,” policeman Amjad Mohammed told Reuters at the scene.

There were no Iraqi civil casualties, but we don’t know if any Americans were hurt.”

US military vehicles sealed off the six-lane highway cutting through the Sadiya, a residential district in western Baghdad. The US military had no immediate comment.

Iraqi witness Abu Ahmed said he had noticed a man spending a long time appearing to try to repair a gray Mercedes at the roadside before being picked up by another man in an Opel saloon. “A few minutes later, there was an explosion,” he said.

Insurgents frequently target US convoys with roadside bombs, car bombs, land mines or rocket-propelled grenades.

The US military said Friday an American service member had died of wounds sustained in an attack in eastern Baghdad on Wednesday. That raised the US combat death toll in Iraq to 606 since the start of last year’s invasion.

Internet

Congress says India has no proposal to send troops to Iraq

New Delhi, 11 June—The ruling Congress today said there was no proposal before the government to send Indian troops to Iraq.

Seeking to set the record straight in the context of confusion created by a statement of External Affairs Minister Natwar Singh in India that the US military vehicles sealed off six-lane highway cutting through the Sadiya, a residential district in western Baghdad. The US military had no immediate comment.

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Internet

National poll gives Kerry solid lead

Washington, 11 June—Democrat John Kerry has a solid lead over US President George W Bush among voters nationwide, according to a Los Angeles Times poll on Thursday that cited widespread unease over the country’s direction, Iraq policies and the economy.

Kerry, the US senator from Massachusetts, led by 51 per cent to 44 per cent nationally in a two-way matchup, according to the poll of 1,230 registered voters taken from Saturday to Tuesday.

In the figures dropped with independent Ralph Nader in the mix, Kerry drew 48 per cent in a three-way race and Bush 42 per cent, the poll showed.

Bush campaign strategist Matthew Dowd challenged the poll results as tilted in favour of the Democrats. “It is a mess,” he told ABC News. “Bush is leading independents by three, ahead among Republicans by a larger margin than Kerry is ahead among Dems, and we are down by seven.”

Outrageous.

In the Los Angeles Times poll, majorities disapproved of Bush’s handling of the economy and of Iraq, despite encouraging news on both recently. Fifty-six per cent of respondents said America “needs to move in a new direction” because Bush’s policies have not improved the country.

However, in an indication of the race’s volatility, the newspaper’s polling in three fiercely contested states shows the Republican can президент with a double-digit advantage.

National, 54 per cent of respondents disapproved of how Bush was handling Iraq, while 44 per cent approved his performance. On the economy, 54 per cent did not approve of the job Bush was doing while 43 per cent did, the survey showed.

The newspaper poll said Bush was stronger on his overall job approval rating — with 51 per cent approving to 47 per cent disapproving — but he still lacked the big mark for the president on the war against terrorism and virtually unanimous support from Republi cans and others who consider them selves conservative.

The Times’ nationwide poll has a margin of error of plus or minus 3 percentage points, while that of the state polls is 4 percentage points.

MNA/Reuters

Survey shows most British women want to change their lives

London, 11 June — Most British women wanted to change their lives, a survey published on Thursday showed.

The Female Lifestyle Sur vey, carried out by healthmagazine TopSante, suggested that 81 per cent of the surveyed women wanted to change their lives. 67 per cent felt like they were on a treadmill and would like to change their lives. 79 per cent said they lived in a stress zone. 86 per cent had a perfect body, according to the poll, was the quest for a perfect body.

Three-quarters of women thought their life would be better if they were happy with their body and 26 per cent said they prepared to go under the knife to improve their looks — 5 per cent of women under 38 already have.

The magazine’s editor MarinaGask said: “The have it all‘ dream has turned into a do or die‘ appeal.”

One of the top causes of the female blues, according to the poll, was being the quest for a perfect body.

A recent WHO survey found that out of 178 coun tries, only 39 have access to 100 per cent voluntary, regulated and unpaid blood, which WHO considers the safest source of blood.

In our work to increase access to treatment for people living with HIV/AIDS around the world, safe blood is a crucial part of our prevention and care strategy, said Lee Jong-wook, WHO’s di rector-general.

In countries which rely on paid-for blood and family replacement donations, prevalence of transfusion transmissible infections such as HIV, Hepatitis B and C and syphilis is much higher than in countries with full voluntary, unpaid donations, said WHO.

Although little progress has been made in low and middle-income countries on the whole, some have been very successful in addressing the issue, it said.

South Africa and Zimbabwe, at the onset of the AIDS epidemic, sought new strategies in the 1980s to ensure that their blood supply was safe, it said.

One such strategy is Zimbabwe’s Pledge 25 initiative, in which school leavers pledge to give blood 25 times by the age of 25. They also vow to lead healthy lives to ensure safe blood supply for patients.

Zimbabwe’s HIV infection rates among blood don ors fell from 4.45 per cent in 1990 to 0.61 per cent in 2003, demonstrating the success of the Pledge 25 concept.

This year’s World Blood Donor Day will be commemorated on Monday in Johannesburg, South Africa, with the theme “Blood, a Gift for Life”.

The public, particularly young people, should make responsible choices, main tain a healthy lifestyle, and give blood regularly, said WHO. — MNA/Reuters
Coalition’s Iraqi staff live in fear

BAGHDAD, 11 June—Irqs employed by US-led coalition forces say they fear for their lives as guerrillas turn their deadly aim away from the occupying troops and towards the locals working for them. Death threats are common for Iraqis working at this US military base where a suicide car bomb killed two people and injured more than 30 as staff lined up for work on Tuesday.

“I received two letters,” the worker added. “I’m a teacher but there are no jobs for us. If I get a chance, I will leave directly.” One translator, a former university teacher said she was afraid to mingle with her own people.

“It’s very difficult to hire local translators because they’re scared,” said the woman, “Hanan.”

“I feel scared to go out. I bought a dress with a veil which covers my hair and everything but still they could recognise my features because I have been on Diyala television.” Public affairs officer Lieutenant Marshall Jackson said US forces found it very hard to recruit translators for the base, which has only seven interpreters for 1,700 personnel.

“Translators are a problem. They get threatened a lot by insurgents who don’t want to help the Americans,” he said. “A lot of translators live here on base—it’s a lot safer.”

Other military sources said life was growing more dangerous for Iraqis with insurgents shifting the focus of their attacks towards the local population, most notoriously against dignitaries promoted by the coalition.

Ezzedine Salim, then head of Iraq’s interim leadership, was killed by a suicide blast outside the coalition’s Baghdad headquarters on 17 May.

Chinese auto company to set up plant in East Java

JAKARTA, 11 June—China’s automotive company Great Wall Motors (GWM) plans to set up a car manufacturing plant in East Java in a joint venture with Indonesia’s state-owned heavy equipment maker PT Bharata, according to a senior official at the Ministry of Industry and Trade.

Director-General of Metal, Machinery, Electronics and Miscellaneous Industries Subagyo said on Wednesday that the venture would initially focus on manufacturing cheaper multipurpose vehicles (MPVs) with a price tag of below 100 million rupiah (around 10,793 US dollars) per unit.

Subagyo said the value of the investment involved “trillions of rupiah” (hundreds of millions of US dollars), and that GWM expected to start the project at the end of this year.

“After entering the market with MPVs, they might launch pick-ups,” he was quoted Thursday by The Jakarta Post as saying. He said that a memorandum of understanding between the two companies was expected to be signed in August during a visit to China by Minister of Industry and Trade Rini MS Soewandi.

Subagyo said GWM might use Indonesia as its base for expansion to other Southeast Asian countries.

GWM is a holding company specializing in the manufacture of pick-up trucks in China, with an annual production of 100,000 units, and claiming to hold a more than 50 per cent domestic market share.

GWM exports 3,000 units annually to the Middle East, West Asia, North Africa and South America according to its website.

Industry analyst Subagyo Sargo said that there was still ample room for new players to enter the domestic car market considering the relatively low ratio of car ownership in the country.

Subhri said the car ownership ratio in Indonesia was about one car for 35 people.

In Malaysia, the ratio is 1:8, while in Thailand it is 1:15.

According to data from the Association of Indonesian Automotive Manufacturers (Gaikindo), new car sales reached 354,482 units last year, a 12-per-cent increase from the previous year’s 217,763.

Stanley Chu, chairman of Adsale Exhibition Services Ltd. and the organizer ofITE HK, said, “Tourism is now one of the most important economy drivers in Hong Kong. I believe that the success of ITE HK will further contribute to the blossoming of the travel industry and related sectors.”

Around 500 exhibitors from China’s Mainland, Taiwan and Hong Kong and foreign countries participate in the Expo. They include 70 tourism offices, and others from airlines, hotels and travel agents. Peru, Indonesia, Malaysia, Thailand and Bhutan are newcomers.

It also gathers 500 hosted buyers and other individual buyers from more than 30 countries and regions.

Apart from the usual “New Travel Destination/Product Presentation”, a “Trade Forum on MICE (meetings, incentive, convention and exhibition) Market” was held at the first day. Tour operators from Hong Kong and the Mainland exchanged information in the forum and explored joint working opportunities in the MICE market.

ITE HK 2004 lasts till June 15. The first two days of the show are tailored for trade visitors while the latter two days, Saturday and Sunday, are open to public.

Iraqi health workers complete training programme in Jordan

AMMAN, 12 June—Twenty-five Iraqi health workers concluded their first training programme here as part of a World Health Organization (WHO) scheme to develop the Iraqi nursing sector, local newspaper Jordan Times reported on its web site Thursday.

The health workers were trained in the Jordan University of Science and Technology (JUST) under an agreement between the university and the WHO, according to Linda Haddad, dean of the nursing faculty at JUST.

Under the agreement participants would be trained on updated academic capabilities and reforming the nursing and midwifery education system in Iraq. She said, adding the initial phase of the training included evaluating the nursing education programmes.

Participants discussed their needs for improving the quality of nursing education in their country and took an active part in designing an effective curriculum, according to the report.

The trainees were members of the Iraqi ministries of health and higher education, state universities and institutions. The dean said the four-month period needed to be extended because the development process in the nursing system still requires more time and effort. The JUST has designated a centre to collaborate with the WHO, which conducts activities and training in the field of nursing, the report said.

Import, Export, Commodity Fair ends with big deals in Kunming

KUNMING, 11 June—Foreign trade and economic cooperation agreements in involving more than 2.06 billion US dollars were signed at the five-day Kunming Import/Export Commodity Fair, that concluded here Thursday.

The total included 939 million dollars’ worth of imports and sales between the province with nearly 20 countries and regions.

Local exports, mainly phosphorus chemicals, non-ferrous metals, farm and sideline products, bio-pharmaceuticals, and tobacco, reached 547 million dollars.

And the main local imports, valued at 392 million dollars, are machinery, equipment, ore and steel.

The province signed 431 million dollars of commercial contracts and export/ import contracts with the 10 ASEAN nations, a big rise compared with the 2003 fair.

The province also introduced 1.07 billion dollars of contractual overseas investment for 52 local projects, which are mainly involved in energy, transportation, road construction, mineral resource development and urban infrastructure improvement.

Russia not to send troops to Iraq

MOSCOW, 11 June—Russia “does not plan sending its servicemen to Iraq”, Foreign Ministry spokesman Alexander Yakovenko said.

“The situation with security in the country remains complex, and the Russian Foreign Ministry believes inexpedient the return of specialists of Russian companies there. They can return only when necessary conditions will be created,” Yakovenko said.

As for Iraq’s debts, he said the “problem must be solved in the Paris Club”. Yakovenko said the last resolution of the UN Security Council, contained a “point about the condu- cion of an international conference on Iraq, but preparation of it is not going so far”.

“Russia considers such forum useful for maintaining relations of Iraq’s new government with neighbours and hopes that it will take place,” he said.—Internet

International Travel Expo HK 2004 opens

HONG KONG, 11 June—The 18th International Travel Expo (ITE HK 2004) opened here Thursday.

The Expo is the largest travel market in Asia and the only international tourism trade exhibition in the region and is co-organized by the Hong Kong Tourism Board and the Hong Kong Convention & Exhibition Centre (HKCEC). The Expo is held in cooperation with the World Tourism Organisation (UNWTO).

The four-day annual travel fair is a key media platform to promote Hong Kong’s tourism image, according to its website.

The 2004 Hong Kong International Travel Expo will be held from June 11 to 14.

ITE HK is the largest travel fair in the region and the only international travel fair under the flag of the World Tourism Organisation (UNWTO).

China is the largest source of importers and exporters, and its tourism market is the fastest growing in the world. According to the World Tourism Organisation, the Chinese tourism market is expected to be the largest in the world within the next few years.

ITE HK is the largest travel fair in the region and the only international travel fair under the flag of the World Tourism Organisation (UNWTO).

The main profit-making role of the fair is to achieve a cumulative turnover of more than 100 million US dollars over three days.
**Report says use of dogs at Iraq prison was authorized**

WASHINGTON, 12 June — US intelligence personnel ordered military dog handlers to use unmuzzled dogs to intimidate detainees at Iraq’s Abu Ghraib Prison, The Washington Post reported on Friday, citing sworn statements from handlers provided to military investigators.

A military intelligence interrogator also told investigators that two dog handlers at the prison were “having a contest” to see how many detainees they could make voluntarily urinate out of fear of the dogs, the Post said, citing statements obtained by newspaper.

Six US soldiers face possible courts martial and one has already been jailed for a year because of the abuses at Abu Ghraib, where photographs have shown detainees being sexually humiliated, physically tormented and threatened with dogs.

Two Army dog handlers assigned to Abu Ghraib, Sergeant Michael Smith and Sergeant Santos Cardona, told investigators that military intelligence personnel asked them to bring their dogs to the prison interrogation sites numerous times to help question detainees in December and January, the Post reported.

According to the report, Smith and Cardona said they complied with the requests because they believed the tactics had been approved by Colonel Thomas Pappas, the military intelligence officer in charge of the prison. At the cell blocks, they allowed their dogs to menace detainees, the Post said they told investigators.

At the behest of interrogators, Smith said, in some cases he would bring the barking dog to within six inches of terrified prisoners, the Post reported. The officer in charge of the military intelligence-run interrogation centre at the prison had to approve the use of dogs in interrogations, according to a military intelligence memo obtained by The Washington Post.

There is no explanation in the memo of what parameters would have to be in place or what the dogs would be allowed to do, the report said.

Neither Smith nor Cardona have been charged in connection with the abuse at Abu Ghraib.

MNA/Reuters

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**Ministers of 23 Asia Pacific countries to meet in Jakarta**

JAKARTA, 12 June — Jakarta will host the annual gathering of foreign ministers from the ten-member Association of South-east Asian Nations (ASEAN), followed by a series of meeting with their counterparts from 13 dialogue partners scheduled for 29 June through 2 July.

The ASEAN Ministerial Meeting (AMM) will take place on 29-30 June to finalize the plans of action for the attainment of the ASEAN Community in 2020 agreed during the ASEAN Summit in Bali last October, Foreign Affairs Ministry spokesman Marty Natalegawa told a news briefing Friday.

ASEAN groups Brunei, Cambodia, Indonesia, Laos, Malaysia, Myanmar, Singapore, Thailand, the Philippines and Vietnam. The meeting will seek ways to enhance ASEAN’s role in international community, including how to win the observer status in the United Nations as an entity, Marty said. The AMM will bring the theme of “Serving for Full Integration of ASEAN: A Prosperous, Caring and Peaceful Community.”

During the Bali Summit, ASEAN leaders agreed that the integration would lean on three main pillars, namely the ASEAN Economic Community, the ASEAN Security Community and the ASEAN Socio-Cultural Community.

Marty said the AMM has been mandated to approve the plans of action for the security community and the socio-cultural community before being endorsed by the next ASEAN Summit in Vietnam in November. On July 1, ASEAN foreign ministers will meet their counterparts of China, Japan and South Korea, which have been increasingly cooperating with the regional grouping in recent years, primarily on the economic fronts.

On the following day, ASEAN foreign ministers will meet ministers or their representatives from Australia, Canada, China, North Korea, India, Japan, Mongolia, New Zealand, Papua New Guinea, Russia, South Korea, the European Union and the United States.

The 22 countries and the European Union will hold the 11th meeting of the ASEAN Regional Forum (ARF), which was established in 1994 as a forum of the 22 countries, have shared many similarities in various fields.

He hoped that the Sino-Syrian traditional relations would be put forward through mutual communications.

MNA/Xinhua

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**Syria attaches importance to relations with China**

DAAMASKUS, 12 June — Syrian Prime Minister Mohammad Naji Otri stressed here Thursday that Syria attached importance to relations with China.

Ori made the remarks while meeting with Li Meng, Vice-President of the National Committee of the Chinese People’s Political Consultative Conference (CPPCC).

Ori told the Chinese guests that Syria was giving the first priority to relations with China while seeking to develop all-round relations with various countries.

For his part, Li said China and Syria, both are developing countries, have shared many similarities in various fields and always supported each other on the international arena.

He hoped that the Sino-Syrian traditional relations would be put forward through mutual communications.

The two sides also exchanged views on the regional and international issues of common concerns.

Li Meng leading the CPPCC delegation arrived here Tuesday evening for a two-day good-will visit at the invitation of the Progressive National Front of Syria.

MNA/Xinhua

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**Arab men posing as TV crew arrested in Baghdad**

BAGHDAD, 11 June — Four Arab men posing as journalists were arrested this week when explosives residue was detected on them as they tried to enter the Baghdad headquarters of the US-led administration, a senior US Army officer said.

The officer, a top security official in the compound which hosts news conferences given by senior US and Iraqi officials and houses the US Consulate, said explosives were found in the men’s hotel room after the arrests on Sunday.

They were posing as employees of an international television company and carried fake identification cards and were trying to drive a van into the compound when they were arrested, he said.

MNA/Reuters

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**Teheran rejects G-8 statement on Iran’s nuclear programme**

TEHERAN, 11 June — Iran on Thursday dismissed a statement by the Group of Eight (G8) on its nuclear activity as “irrational and unrealistic,” the official IRNA news agency reported.

“The Islamic Republic has practically demonstrated its full commitment with regard to the non-proliferation of nuclear weapons and safeguards,” Hamid-Reza Asifi, spokesman of Foreign Ministry, was quoted as saying.

Iran’s broad and transparent cooperation with the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) confirms this, added Asifi. The G-8 issued a statement on Iran’s nuclear programme on Wednesday, saying that the group “deplores” Iran’s alleged delays, inadequate disclosures and lack of cooperation with the IAEA inspectors.

Asifi said, “These stances are irrational and contradict the realities.”

MNA/Xinhua

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MNA/Xinhua

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**Two dead, 18 missing as tornado hits Philippines**

MANILA, 11 June — A tornado ripped through a town in the central Philippine, destroying hundreds of homes and killing at least two people, the national disaster agency and the Coast Guard said on Thursday.

A dozen residents from the coastal town of Diagu on Leyte Island were reported missing.

The tornado, which lasted 35 minutes on Wednesday morning, destroyed about 900 houses, leaving one elderly man dead and four people wounded, agency officials said.

“We are still assessing the damage on the ground,” said Edna Rola of the National Disaster Coordinating Council.

She said 30 fishing boats were reported missing.

One fisherman died and six were missing on the nearby island of Samar when waves from the storm ripped up the coastal town of Cagayan de Oro.

MNA/Reuters

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MNA/Xinhua

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**Syria attaches importance to relations with China**

DAAMASKUS, 12 June — Syrian Prime Minister Mohammad Naji Otri stressed here Thursday that Syria attached importance to relations with China.

Ori made the remarks while meeting with Li Meng, Vice-President of the National Committee of the Chinese People’s Political Consultative Conference (CPPCC).

Ori told the Chinese guests that Syria was giving the first priority to relations with China while seeking to develop all-round relations with various countries.

For his part, Li said China and Syria, both are developing countries, have shared many similarities in various fields and always supported each other on the international arena.

He hoped that the Sino-Syrian traditional relations would be put forward through mutual communications.

The two sides also exchanged views on the regional and international issues of common concerns.

Li Meng leading the CPPCC delegation arrived here Tuesday evening for a two-day good-will visit at the invitation of the Progressive National Front of Syria.

MNA/Xinhua

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**Two dead, 18 missing as tornado hits Philippines**

MANILA, 11 June — A tornado ripped through a town in the central Philippine, destroying hundreds of homes and killing at least two people, the national disaster agency and the Coast Guard said on Thursday.

A dozen residents from the coastal town of Diagu on Leyte Island were reported missing.

The tornado, which lasted 35 minutes on Wednesday morning, destroyed about 900 houses, leaving one elderly man dead and four people wounded, agency officials said.

“We are still assessing the damage on the ground,” said Edna Rola of the National Disaster Coordinating Council.

She said 30 fishing boats were reported missing.

One fisherman died and six were missing on the nearby island of Samar when waves from the storm ripped up the coastal town of Cagayan de Oro.

MNA/Reuters
New and fast developments throughout Myanmar

Chinshwehaw Hospital in Kokang region, Shan State (North) built for providing health care services for people living in the region.— PBANRDA

Rail-cum-road Kabani Bridge built across Manipur River between Kalay and Gangaw Townships.— MNA

The Kyonhtaw Sluice Gate in Paung Township, Mon State.— MNA

Border and rural area developments

A school building constructed in Kewhtin village, Kyakto Township, Mon State.— MNA

The opening ceremony of a rural tube-well in Zawgyi village, Singaing Township, in progress. — PBANRDA
Those who don’t show their face — 54

Pauk Sa —

The big and ugly task of some foreign radio stations, including the BBC and the VOA at present is to broadcast special slanders in an inferior way to obstruct the National Convention, that is in progress to draw a constitution for the future nation. I will now explain briefly a news report the BBC had broadcast under the title “An interview with U Kyaw Zan Tha on the National Convention and the situation of Myanmar” on 22 May 2004 at 8.15 pm.

In the interview, the BBC said that Myanmar was experiencing economic hardships, and the fail to follow the education standard; that the schools were built within the former paddy fields outside the towns; that there was the inadequate number of teachers; that some military officers were seeking means to send their children abroad to continue their studies; that it seemed that the people found the Nation Convention boring; and that it was believed that as if an outbreak of any unrest was impossible in Myanmar, it might happen only under the effective leadership and organization of a certain party. These were the lies aired by the notorious BBC with its ill intent for Myanmar and the purpose of creating the unrest.

The over-bearing men and women staff of the organization of a certain party. These were the lies aired by the notorious BBC with its ill intent for Myanmar and the purpose of creating the unrest. I felt confused to hear it. The people following and handing down to newcomers. They are shamelessly betraying the national cause, acting without any sincerity, they dare not enter the country to face the challenge of the people who are creating them? What kind of masters have taught them the true value of their intellectual level is not high enough to understand the fact.

In the interview, U Kyaw Zan Tha said that he felt that the people who had been disappointed with the National Convention. Such a statement is so aberrant that it will be ridiculed by every quarter in the country. But the BBC staff dared to tell it. The people are not disappointed with the National Convention. Only the BBC staff and the destructive elements from inside and outside the nation including Myanmar expatriates and refugees, who wish to disturb and stop the National Convention, are disappointed.

They are evil-minded persons as they wish to make things worse. Unlike the situation in 1988, Myanmar people at present are enjoying peace, stability, security and economic development. Thus, they oppose any act to cause unrest in the nation, and have already made a firm determination to crush such an act in accord with the People’s Desire. — To crush all internal and external enemies as common enemy. But without understanding the objective situation, the BBC staff are wickedly trying to act as big organizers, searching the best means to create unrest in Myanmar. Their actions under the guise of democracy will bring great sufferings to Myanmar people.

Another ridiculous lie he said was that his friends in Myanmar asked him the way to send their children abroad for educational purposes. In reality, the case was so simple: all parents wish to see their children educated abroad. But he lied that the parents wished to send their children abroad as the education level was low in Myanmar. In reality, he has become so abnormal that he even fails to consider the gratitude he owes to the nation those persons to say that the standard of education is falling as the schools are built in the paddy fields outside the towns.

The growing population of Myanmar has reached over 52 million at present, up from round about 40 million in 1988. Thus, new towns have been built, and the institutions of higher learning have to be built at spacious places far away from crowded areas. Shame on you, BBC staff of the Myanmar programme, if your intellectual level is not high enough to understand the fact.

The BBC also said that the schools were built in the paddy fields outside the towns; that it seemed that the people found the National Convention, that is in progress to draw a constitution for the future nation, up from 32 in 1988. The truth is that there is no starvation and no economic development. Thus, they oppose any act to disturb and stop the National Convention, if your intellectual level is not high enough to understand the fact.

As the radio stations like the BBC and the VOA are always launching slanderous attacks against Myanmar without any sincerity, they dare not enter the country honestly. They come to Myanmar without the sense of understanding what is Myanmar. In reality, he has become so abnormal that he even fails to consider the gratitude he owes to the nation.

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Thanks to transport …  
(from page 1)

Monywa-Yagyig-Kalewa motor road and bridges which are of paramount importance for the regions on the west bank of Chindwin river are the results of combined efforts of the Tatmadaw and departmental personnel. In other words, they are the fruitful results of concerted efforts of the State, the people and the Tatmadaw.

Nowadays, it has been a four-hour drive from Monywa to Kalewa. As a result, one can travel comfortably from Kalewa to Mandalay. This will contribute to socio-economic development of the peoples of 55 villages in Kani and Mingin Townships. Therefore, the main roads and bridges are the good heritage of the future generations. The countless benefits will contribute much to regional development and development of border areas.

The people of Kani and Mingin regions who had to rely only on waterways of Chindinw in the past can now be able to travel from one place to another using motor roads. With better transport, urban and rural regions that are adjacent to the main road will see further development.

In addition, 36-mile long Mawlaik-Kalewa road is being built and people from Mawlaik region will be able to travel to Monywa region through Myittha bridge conveniently. Indeed, the Myittha Bridge, the Mawlaik-Kalewa road and big and small bridges along it are important transport infrastructures as regards development of Chin State, Monywa and western bank of River Chindwin, Kalay and Kalaywa regions as well as rural development. In addition, these facilities are beneficial to India-Myanmar border trade and they surely contribute towards further strengthening the national unity. Such transport facilities are important for strengthening national unity, ensuring rural and border developments and developing trade and business undertakings. In accordance with the guidance of Head of State Senior General Than Shwe, roads and bridges are built here and there to narrow down the development gap between one region and another throughout the nation. More roads and bridges are under construction too. He said Public Works built 172 bridges including Myittha Bridge, Defence Services Engineering Unit seven, Myanmar Railways six totaling 185 bridges. There were 21,483 miles of motor roads in 1988 and now there are 56,695 miles of roads including tarred, gravel and earth roads and the ones built by Development Affairs Committee and other organizations.

He said 12 major bridges including Myittha Bridge, Monywa and Hsinbyushin Bridges across Chindwin River and Mu River bridge were built in Sagaing Division. Due to these bridges west bank regions of Chindwin River will develop soon. With the development of State economy, infrastructures for transport were built one after another on self-reliance basis spending a large sum of money. Roads and bridges can be built because of better economic conditions and better transport brings about better economy.

At the same time, he said, investments on agricultural sector were made without delay for economic progress. Dams and river water pumping stations were built and underground water tapping projects were implemented to become Sagaing Division as a granary of upper Myanmar. Efforts are being made for extension of cultivation acreage and boosting per acre yield through new methods, he said.

Net cultivation acreage in Sagaing Division increased from 2.8 million acres to 3.9 million acres and cultivation acreage of various crops also increased up to 6.4 million acres. Cultivation acreage of paddy rose from over 1.2 million to 1.8 million acres. There are now surplus of 40 million baskets of paddy in the division. He said concerted efforts are to be made to produce surplus of 80 million baskets of paddy for the regions in upper Myanmar and Chin State.

He said it is important for Sagaing Division to boost production of agriculture, livestock breeding and industry. Year after year, making use of better foundations on economic, social and transport sectors created by the State. There are good prospects for development in the division. Water resources that can generate hydro-electric power exist along Chindwin River. On completion of Chindwin Valley development projects, production and living standards of the people in Sagaing Division will rise again, he said.

The government on its part is making endeavours for equal development of states and divisions and this means handing down better results of political, economic, social and transport sectors to posterity of Myanmar, he said.

He stressed the fact that the government is making efforts for the good of citizens with genuine goodwill. He pointed out that at a time when the State is building a modern developed nation, some big and small nations are putting pressure on the country politically and imposing economic sanctions. At such time, all the citizens have to work hard in unity for regional and national development based on its own strength and they are to safeguard the perpetuation of the State based on patriotism and the Union Spirit for the perpetuity of the Union, he said.

He urged them to be well aware of the instigations to break up national solidarity among the national peoples resorting to various means and to remove such danger.

In conclusion, he said it is very convenient to travel easily to all the regions in the Union including Sagaing Division and Chin State with the help of new roads and bridges. He urged all national races to strive to become a modern developed nation, to make efforts for enabling the Union to stand tall as a great nation and to maintain the roads and bridges for durability.

Next, Minister for Construction Maj-Gen Saw Tun made a speech. He said that Myittha Bridge (Kalewa) is the 12th bridge. It is a suspension bridge built of iron frames. The bridge was built of reinforced concrete approach bridges and of main suspension bridge installed with iron frames based on reinforced concrete foundation. The 1,320 feet long bridge has 26 feet wide and four feet high pedestrian ways. Its clearance is 500 feet wide and 14 feet high. It can withstand 60-ton loads.

The bridge has two unusual parts different from other bridges. The first is that the towers were built as A shape by connecting tops of them installed with cables of the main bridge. The second is that the concrete road was built on concrete tiles laid on the bridge.

In the past, vehicles including bicycles and motorbikes had to pass through the bridge with great care. Now, all big and small vehicles can drive on the bridge safely.

Local people residing on Myoma, Kyabhn, Mingyi and other villages along Monywa-Ahlon-Yargyi-Monywa-Kalewa Road can easily travel from one place to another. Similarly, local people in Palawza and Nansalein villages can enjoy better transport of Mawlaik-Kalewa Road to go to Monywa or Chin State from Kalewa. Transport of local products can be made to all States and Divisions through Myittha Bridge (Kalewa). Local-made vehicles assembled at Kalay Industrial Zone can easily be transported to the main land as well as products from Pakokku and Monywa Industrial Zones to Kalay Zone through the bridge.

In addition, Kalay-Tamu Bridge can benefit development of border trade between Myanmar and India. Therefore, the bridge is important for building Asia-ASEAN Highway. Thanks to opening of the bridge, over 760,000 people residing in Kalay District of Sagaing Division and Falam District in Chin State will promote better relationship among them. The commander expressed gratitude on the occasion. A local from Kalewa Township expressed gratitude to the government for building of Myittha Bridge (Kalewa). Prime Minister General Khin Nyunt delivered a speech on the occasion. In his speech, the Prime Minister said that in spite of heavy rain, locals attended the ceremony and it indicated enthusiasm and unity of the people.

Thanks to the facility, the river-crossing one, local people in Chin State and its environs can keep in touch with those in other regions in convenience in a short time.

Now, the government has built a transport network which covers the entire nation. So, it can be said that all the regions of the Union have got closer. Thanks to these transport facilities, the people can finally enjoy higher living standard with strong economy in the near future.
Thanks to transport ...

In addition to transport facilities which can raise socio-economy of the people and fortify national solidarity, the government is building universities and colleges essential for human resource development, hospitals for higher health standard of the people and dams, reservoirs and water pumping stations for the economic sector where necessary the length and breadth of the nation, aiming at ensuring equitable progress of all parts of the nation, narrowing down the development gap between urban and rural regions, elevating the living standard of the people and enabling the Union home to the national races to stand tall in perpetuity.

The government exerted construction experiences and modern technology in implementing the bridge project to ensure a strong and fine one. It reflects the State’s consideration and care to the region.

United and collaborative endeavours of the people under the leadership of Head of State Senior General Than Shwe are yielding new roads and bridges one after another along with restoration of peace and stability and prevalence of law and order and greater economy of the people.

Employing these good infrastructures, the government is putting the State’s seven-point programme motion for better future of the Union and emergence of a peaceful, modern and developed nation. The first of the seven steps — reconvening of National Convention — is now in progress. In conclusion, the General urged the people.

Lt-Gen Maung Bo gives instructions on project safety and quality control according to schedule. — MNA

Lt-Gen Maung Bo presents trophy to first-prize winning team in direct paddy sowing competition in Myeik Township. — MNA

Rail Transportation Minister inspects Parami overpass

YANGON, 12 June— Minister for Rail Transportation Maj-Gen Aung Min, accompanied by Deputy Minister U Pe Than, Managing Director of Myanmar Railways U Min Swe and officials, this morning inspected the site of Parami overpass being carried out by Myanmar Railways under the Ministry of Rail Transportation and viewed the initial installation of 57-foot truss beam between piles 9 and 10. The minister gave necessary instructions.

Lt-Gen Maung Bo inspected progress in building No 2 Myeik Circular Road. In the briefing hall, Staff Officer U Khin Maung Bo of Myeik Town-ship Development Affairs Committee reported on construction of Shanchaung Shweda section of the No 2 circular road.

At the office of Myeik University construction site, Pro-Rector U Khin Maung Cho and engineers reported on facts about the university, construction of the main building, lecture halls and staff quarters.

On arrival at Myeik General Hospital, Medical Superintendent U Tun Lwin, specialists, doctors and nurses welcomed them. Lt-Gen Maung Bo inspected the patient ward. They proceeded to Myeik Midwifery Training School of Medical Science Department. In-charge of the school Daw San San Seint reported on matters related to the training school. Next, Lt-Gen Maung Bo presented K 400,000 to the funds of the training school to incharge Daw San San Seint and K 100,000 for purchase of a generator to Division Health Officer Dr Sae Woe.

They toured Myeik Basic Education High School Nos 3, 2 and 1 and inspected multimedia class-rooms at the schools. At the hall of BEHS No 1, Lt-Gen Maung Bo met school heads and teachers of the schools in Myeik. After hearing reports by Myeik District Education Officer U San Lwin, Lt-Gen Maung Bo gave necessary instructions.

Work Committee for Myanmar Industrial Development, sub-committees meet

YANGON, 12 June— A coordinating meeting between the Work Committee for Myanmar Industrial Development and sub-committees was held at the hall of Ministry of Industry-2 yesterday afternoon. Present on the occasion were Chairman of Work Committee for Myanmar Industrial Development Minister for Industry-2 Maj-Gen Saw Lwin, Deputy Minister for Industry-1 Brig-Gen Kyaw Win, Deputy Minister for Industry-2 Lt-Col Khin Maung Kyaw, Deputy Minister for Labour Brig-Gen Win Sein, Deputy Minister for Science and Technology Dr Chan Nyein and chairmen of sub-committees and guests. First, the minister made an address. After hearing reports on measures taken by the chairman of the sub-committees, he fulfilled the requirements.

Next, the meeting came to an end with concluding remarks of the minister. — MNA
World Bank urges Indonesia to revive investment climate

JAKARTA, 12 June — Investment in Indonesia will remain in the doldrums unless clear signs are given to investors that various problems detrimental to the business climate here are being addressed, the World Bank has warned.

Andrew Steer, World Bank country director in Indonesia, said on Thursday investors should already realize that the complexity of the problems was too deep to be resolved overnight, but what they wanted to see was signs of a clear path towards improvement.

“Investors don’t yet have confidence that this country is moving clearly in a certain direction,” Steer was quoted Friday by The Jakarta Post as saying.

“Investors are not expecting solutions to these problems overnight, but they do not have confidence that the problems are being addressed,” he added.

The country’s business climate has become worse with investors shying away from the country and picking instead other nations in the region as their investment destination.

As investment, particularly much-needed foreign direct investment (FDI), remains in the doldrums, it is depriving the country of its economic engine.

The economy consequently, has been forced to rely largely on domestic consumption and exports which has resulted in only modest economic growth — 3 per cent to 4 per cent in the past several years.

The unfavourable investment atmosphere, due in large part to the weak legal system and corruption, has made Indonesia less competitive in terms of investment compared to other countries.

Steer said Vietnam has emerged lately as a favoured investment destination in the region, as it pertain to the legal system.

Air Asia leads low fare fillip in Macao

MACAO, 12 June — Malaysia’s Air Asia brought the low fare war to Macao on Thursday by offering the country’s 10,000-seat at 149 patacas (about US$19) one way in a fillip to tourism.

The airline will operate its new service from Macao to Bangkok.

Ticket booking of the two-hour flight began available Thursday as the company announced here that the launch of the new route is on July 5. “Air Asia sees Macao as a touristic attraction. It is as it is positioned as the gateway to Hong Kong and South China,” said Tony Fernandes, group chief executive officer of Air Asia.

He said that Air Asia chose Macao over Hong Kong and other cities as its regional hub close to the projected market of China’s main island and Shanghai, a leading investment workers finally bagged a large-format home-improvement, cutting the price of this year.— MNA/Xinhua

Hong Kong bags elusive croc after seven-month hunt

HONG KONG, 12 June — Hong Kong conservation workers finally bagged an elusive crocodile on Thursday after it evaded and embarrassed some of the world’s top croc hunters for months.

The reptile, thought to have been brought in illegally as a pet and later released in a river in the city’s rural New Territories, had swam into a trap after a seven-monthhunt involving everything from chicken heads to bamboo poles.

“Yes, we’ve got it,” a spokesman for the Agriculture and Fisheries Department said on Thursday.

The 5-foot animal, named “Croc Croc Chan” after the family that first spotted it in October, became a media star in a city better known for its gleaming skyscrapers and nightlife.

Hong Kong’s Guangdong Province, itself a major wetland park, an official at the Agriculture and Fisheries Department told a news conference.

Home Depot to “decorate” China

BRISTOL, 12 June — The US do-it-yourself retailer Home Depot, the leading home decoration merchandiser provider in the world, is setting its sights on China’s estimated 50 billion-US-dollar home-decoration market by opening a development office in the country, according to information released here Thursday.

Bill Patterson, the newly-appointed head of the Home Depot Asia division, says about 70 per cent of home-improvement spending in China is on decorating new homes, and that gives Home Depot a solid growth opportunity in its strength in merchandise and services geared toward the home interior decoration.

China’s annual GDP stands at about 1.5 million US dollars and its population and personal property are increasing gradually. It is estimated that China’s home-decoration market is rising by 20 per cent annually.

Previously, Home Depot had set up purchasing centres in Shenzhen, a major south city in China’s Guangdong Province, and Shanghai, a leading industrial and commercial city of China. Bill Patterson said Home Depot sees China as a large untapped market because there are so few large-format home-improvement stores and a relatively limited competitive landscape.

Established in 1978, Home Depot, the second-largest retailer in the United States, registered a net profit of 1.1 billion US dollars in the first quarter of this year.— MNA/Xinhua

 Philippine rubber exports rise in first 4 months this year

MANILA, 12 June — The Philippine rubber exports rose 43 per cent year-on-year to 11 million US dollars in the January-April period from 7 million dollars due to higher demand, the National Statistics Office said Friday.

The Philippines took advantage of the high world price of rubber at around $100,000 dollars per metric ton, said Basilda Ho, chairperson of Philippine Rubber Industries Association.

A duty of 10 per cent applies to such rubber products as pneumatic tyres and footware.

MNA/Xinhua
Mount Awu volcano erupts again

JAKARTA, 11 June — Mount Awu volcano on Indonesia’s Sangihe island of North Sulawesi province erupted again and ash up to 3,000 metres into the sky on Thursday, performing another major eruption this week.

“Around 5.29 am this morning, the Awu volcano hurled stones, rocks and other volcanic materials from its crater,” Agus Sohlin, a volcanologist at the nearby monitoring post in Tahuana of the region, was quoted by local internet media as saying.

Tahuana is the main town on Sangihe, a small island of 22,000 people off the North Sulawesi Province, 2,610 kilometers northeast of the Indonesian capital Jakarta. It is located just south of the Philippines’ Mindanao Island.

A number of smaller eruptions and aftershocks followed the major eruption Thursday.

Sohlin said Thursday’s eruption caused no injuries because the majority of the villagers living in the zones of Awu’s slopes had already been evacuated.

Donate blood

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Cambodia to publish first provincial newspaper

PHnom Penh, 11 June — Regional newspaper, Somme Thmoey (New Writing), for Cambodia’s four main provinces will be launched on June 24.

“It is the first time and very important that Cambodia has the regional newspaper,” Pen Bona, Editor-in-Chief of Somme Thmoey, told Xinhua on Thursday.

“Local people in four provinces will be able to read the news about their own provinces. This is good,” Bona said. He said the circulation of the paper will be 1,000 copies for each province of Siem Reap, Sihanoukville, Kampong Cham and Battambang.

“We start up with these provinces because they are big and have many potential readers. We will do more in other provinces when the project is successful,” he said.

Somme Thmoey, which is sponsored by Asia Foundation’s Fund, will be published in Khmer language weekly, covering politics, business, finance, economy, entertainment and tourism.

But it will come out only in every two weeks for June 2004. The 16-page newspaper will be sold for 1,000riel (about 0.25 US dollar) per copy.

According to Bona, 200,000 millions US dollars have been spent on this project. He said that he hoped the project would be success and could be continued.

Cambodia has about 200 newspapers, which are Phnom Penh, according to Bona. — MNA/Xinhua

UEA among countries with lowest “AIDS” cases

ABU DHABI, 11 June — The United Arab Emirates (UEA) is among countries with the lowest number of HIV/AIDS cases, the Khaleej Times reported on Thursday.

“A report by the World Health Organization (WHO) showed that the spread of HIV/AIDS in the Arab region has been relatively low, which stood at some 600,000 cases, said the report.

55,000 HIV/AIDS cases were infected in 2003 and about 45,000 reported deaths, it added.

However, the UAE should break its silence on the issue of AIDS and chalk out constructive awareness campaigns to curb the spread of the killer virus, Talib Haider, an information official of the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) in Abu Dhabi office, told the newspaper.

He said that he hoped the project would be success and could be continued.

The multiethnic social fabric of UAE is characterized by high rates of people mobility, increasing unemployment and drug use makes it quite vulnerable to the killer disease with all possible risk of an accelerated spread of the epidemic, said Haider.

The scope to halt the HIV/AIDS still exists in UAE and the issue requires our immediate response as building awareness is the only means to prevent the epidemic, the UN official added.

As part of its commitment to fight the disease, the UNDP, UNICEF, UNAIDS and WHO in collaboration with the Executive Board of the Health Ministers’ Council of the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) will hold a multi-sectoral workshop on leadership for an early response to HIV/AIDS in the Gulf Countries on June 26-27 in Manama, Bahrain. — MNA/Xinhua

Thailand auctions 3,000 crocodiles seized in drug bust

BANGKOK, 11 June — More than 3,000 crocodiles seized from a suspected drug kingpin went under the hammer on Thursday in the first auction of reptiles confiscated in Thailand’s war on drugs.

“It’s quite a strange auction because they are crocodiles,” Justice Minister Pongthep Thepkaniyanjana said at a farm south of Bangkok where buyers checked out the snapping beasts held in nearly 30 fenced ponds. “We auctioned them because they are property related to the narcotics trade,” Pongthep told Reuters Television.

Some 9,200 crocodiles and 100,000 catfish were among the most exotic items seized by authorities in a crackdown on the country’s notorious drugs trade last year.

Drug dealers often laundered their illicit wealth through legitimate businesses using crocodile, ostrich and fish farms, and jewelry shops.

There were only three bidders and they paid 5.8 million baht (143,000 US dollars), well below the 10 million baht authorities had hoped to earn to defray the cost of keeping the crocs. — MNA/Reuters
S Korean military demands much increased budget for 2005

SEOUL, 12 June — The South Korean Defence Ministry said Friday it has requested 24.4 trillion won (18.3 billion US dollars) for next year’s budget, up 13.4 per cent from this year.

The request came several days after the United States said it would slash about one-third of its 37,500 troops stationed in South Korea by the end of next year, sparking security concerns in its major Asian ally.

The ministry said in a statement on Friday it requested the Ministry of Budget and Planning to approve its budget proposal, which includes a set of arms buildup projects such as the deployment of an airborne reconnaissance system and an advanced version of Patriot missiles.

The proposed budget also includes introduction of F-15K fighter jets,KF-16 jets, K1A1 armoured vehicles, Aegis-equipped destroyers and C4I, or joint Command, Control, Communication, Computer and Intelligence system, it said.

The expanded budget represents 2.9 per cent of the nation’s gross domestic product, the ministry said.

South Korea and the United States are on the final stage in negotiating details of US troops relocation in the Asian country.

They had earlier agreed to move Yongsan Base which has some 8,000 US military personnel out of Seoul and redeploy the 12,000 US 2nd Infantry Division based near the inter-Korean border to Pyeongtong, some 70 kilometres south to Seoul in the coming years.

With the realignment of the US Forces Korea (USFK), South Korean military should shoulder more defence responsibility. — MNA/Reuters

“Doggie, speak” has new meaning in language study

WASHINGTON, 12 June — A clever border collie that can fetch at least 200 objects by name may be living proof that dogs truly understand human language, German scientists reported on Thursday.

The dog, named Rico, can fetch a newly introduced object when asked, even if he has never heard the name of the object before, the researchers say.

The findings, reported in the journal Science, may not surprise many dog owners. But they are certain to re-ignite a debate over what language is and whether it is unique to humans.

“We wonder what prevents animals from speaking. The limitations are not their capacity to hear or understand,” Julia Fischer of the Max-Planck Institute for Evolutionary Anthropology in Leipzig told a news conference in Berlin.

Rico’s abilities seem to follow a process called fast mapping, seen when young children start to learn to speak and understand language, they report. Fast-mapping allows children to form quick and rough hypotheses about the meaning of a new word the first time they hear or see it.

The 10-year-old dog, who has won some 8,000 games, has also been studied by researchers in the United States, South Korea and Japan.

“A hi-tech car at a technology fair in Hanover, Germany. Scientists are seeking to protect drivers from their own mistakes. — INTERNET

A menu from the final first class dinner aboard the Titanic has sold at an auction for 88,500 dollars. — BIV/Reuters

UNCTAD warns of failure to reduce poverty in LDCs

SAO PAULO (Brazil), 12 June — Least developed countries (LDCs) are likely to become “the major locus of extreme poverty in the world economy by 2015” if without a strong link between trade and poverty reduction, the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) has warned.

Most LDCs undertook deep trade liberalization in the 1990s and received some degree of preferential market access from developed and developing countries, but trade liberalization plus enhanced market access does not necessarily equal poverty reduction, the report said.

UNCTAD attributed the failure to weaker linkages between trade and economic growth than in the more advanced developing countries. Civil conflicts in some of the LDCs have also been associated with immissimerizing trade, it said.

The Geneva-based UN body said a more effective link between international trade and poverty reduction could help prevent LDCs from being further marginalized in a globalized world.

It suggested in the report that actions be taken on three fronts:

— a two-way mainstreaming of both trade and development within national poverty reduction strategies;
— increased and effective international financial and technical assistance for developing domestic production and trade capacities;
— and an enabling international trade regime.

UNCTAD also called for phasing out of agricultural support measures by developed countries, endorsing of new international policies to reduce vulnerability to negative commodity price shocks, opening market to LDCs complemented by new supply-side preferences, and enhancing South-South cooperation in the field of trade and investment.

Fifty countries in the world are currently listed by the United Nations Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) as LDCs, of them 10 are in Asia, 34 in Africa, five in Oceania and one in Latin America. ECOSOC reviewed the LDCs list every three years. — MNA/Xinhua

China to clean up illegal web sites

BEIJING, 11 June — China will start soon a nationwide crackdown on illegal or unauthorized web sites, in a bid to create a clean information environment for the healthy growth of youngsters, according to the Ministry of Information Industry Thursday.

The ministry will cut off the connection of illegal web sites to servers, strengthen management on information at on-line BBS and chatting rooms, and set up a database for IP addresses in the clean-up campaign, said Minister Wang Xudong.

“In order to block charging channels of illegal web sites, the ministry will also check and standardize fee collection of some telecommunication companies, who take in payment of unhealthy information for these web sites,” Wang said.

Telecommunication companies are also encouraged to support family users with technologies to filter out harmful information and with services to guarantee clean online environment.

Wang acknowledged that the Internet, as an outcome of the modern information and technological development, has played an active role in promoting China’s economic growth, social progress and enhancement of people’s living standards.

“But slack management has led to rampant spread of violent and pornographic information in the Internet, which can easily poison minors’ mental health,” he said.

He noted that the ministry is developing related software to detect the online game industry to a sound and positive growth, hoping to provide youngsters a colourful and healthy online environment for amusement and relax.

China improves management over on-line information

BEIJING, 11 June — China started a special web site Thursday for people to report illegal and unhealthy on-line information in a bid to create a better cultural environment for juveniles.

According to the guide on the web site, any Chinese citizen who found illegal or unhealthy information on line can report the web site, which must be in China, to the web site of net.China.cn.

The report’s rights would be well protected and the work of the web site was started as part of the efforts to build Internet into an important cultural environment around juveniles, said Cai.

The tenet of the web site is to “report illegal information, protect public interest,” the guide said.

Internet has been developing very fast since it came into China ten years ago. By the end of this year, China is expected to have nearly 100 million netizens, said Cai.

A Sotheby’s expert holds ‘Titanic’ moments, including a menu, to make 2000. A menu from the final first class dinner aboard the Titanic has sold at an auction for 88,500 dollars. — MNA/Reuters

Tom Cruise, Sylvester Stallone to carry Olympic torch

LOS ANGELES, 12 June — Hollywood stars Tom Cruise and Sylvester Stallone will carry the Olympic torch when it arrives in Los Angeles next week on the 78,000-kilometre global relay, officials said here.

The pair will be joined by US comedian Ellen DeGeneres as celebrity torchbearers for the Los Angeles leg of the 2004 Olympic Torch Relay on Wednesday.

The Torch relay’s commercial sponsor in the United States, South Korea’s Samsung Electronics America, said the stars were picked because of the example they set to people.

Stallone said he hoped that “one of my greatest contributions is helping others learn about the importance of fitness and a healthy lifestyle.”

MNA/Xinhua

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MNA/Xinhua
Greek hit by new wave of injuries

Porto, 11 June — Greek chances of causing an upset in the opening Euro 2004 Group A match against Portugal on Saturday have been hit by a new spate of injuries.

With expectations high after qualifying for the tournament top of their group, the Greeks have been plagued by injuries since leaving Athens two weeks ago.

Leading striker Demis Nikolaidis returned to training on Wednesday after a nagging calf problem and goal getter Antonis Nikopolidis, central defender Traianos Dellas and midfielder Vassilis Lakis are the latest additions to the injury list.

Nikopolidis, who kept a clean sheet in six successive qualifying matches, has a shoulder problem, while the towering Dellas has a back injury.

"We expect him to play on Saturday and that is why we are all over him to get him fit," team doctor Charis Christopoulos told reporters.

Van Nistelrooy relishes chance to show true colours

Lisbon, 11 June — Ruud van Nistelrooy will finally get the chance to show his true colours in a major tournament when he leads the Dutch attack at Euro 2004.

The Manchester United striker has survived a spat with Netherlands coach Dick Advocaat, various tactical experiments and a long-running rivalry with Patrick Kluivert to earn his belated opportunity on the big stage.

At the age of 27, van Nistelrooy is in his prime and having finally usurped Kluivert he will hope to repeat his prolific club form in his country's orange jersey.

Van Nistelrooy missed Euro 2000 through injury and the Netherlands failed to qualify for the last World Cup, so no player at the tournament in Portugal is more anxious to make up for lost time.

"I am very excited and I am looking forward to this," he told UEFA's web site. "For me it is a fantastic feeling to have now preparing myself and the team for this first big tournament. The lucky forward has scored more than 100 goals in three seasons with Manchester United but only 14 in 33 internationals, a modest record compared to Kluivert's 40 strikes in 79 games.

The pair share a birthday but never gelled as an attacking partnership with Kluivert enduring a mediocre season at Barcelona, Advocaat decided the time was right to give van Nistelrooy his big chance.

Van Nistelrooy's failure to translate his club form to the international arena frequently frustrated him, most notably when he was substituted in a Euro 2004 qualifying defeat by the Czech Republic.

As he left the field the striker kicked over a water bottle and expressed his displeasure to Advocaat in no uncertain terms.

Advocaat dropped van Nistelrooy for disciplinary reasons but could not afford to ignore his claims long-term, and he returned to score a hat-trick in a 6-0 victory over Scotland.

"I believe that van Nistelrooy is the best choice for the team," Advocaat said.

"He has proved in the past that he can score at the top level. Ruud is a real match player."

Van Nistelrooy will get an opportunity to take revenge on the Czechs in a Group D match on June 19 but before that the Dutch face a heavyweight opening game against Germany.

Van Nistelrooy is itching to get started and is undaunted by the responsibility he carries after ending Kluivert's eight-year reign as the number one Netherlands striker. — MNA/Reuters

Bolton end interest in Rivaldo

Lisbon, 11 June — Bolton Wanderers have finally given up on their audacious chase to bring Brazil's Rivaldo to the Premier League.

"I think that as far as we are concerned the Rivaldo situation is finished," chairman Phil Gartside said on Wednesday. "I am very excited and I am looking forward to this," he told UEFA's web site. "For me it is a fantastic feeling to have the ability to get the striker kicked over a water bottle and expressed his displeasure to Advocaat in no uncertain terms.

Advocaat dropped van Nistelrooy for disciplinary reasons but could not afford to ignore his claims long-term, and he returned to score a hat-trick in a 6-0 victory over Scotland.

"I believe that van Nistelrooy is the best choice for the team," Advocaat said.

"He has proved in the past that he can score at the top level. Ruud is a real match player."
THE NEW LIGHT OF MYANMAR   Sunday, 13 June, 2004


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WEATHER

Saturday, June 12, 2004
Summary of observations recorded at 09:30 hours MST: During the past 24 hours, rain or thunder- showers have been scattered in Kachin, Rakhine, Kayah and Mon States, Mandalay, Magway and Yangon Divi- sions and widespread in the remaining areas with locally heavyfall in Mandalay Division and isolated heavyfall in Magway Division. The noteworthy amounts of rainfall recorded were Loksaw (2.64 inches), Meiktila (2.48 inches), Mawlaik (2.34 inches), Kalewa (2.09 inches), Mkyitarta (2.05 inches), Mindat (1.97 inches), Pakokku (1.77 inches), Mandalay (1.65 inches) and Maubin (1.61 inches).

Maximum temperature on 11-6-2004 was 31.0°C (87°F). Minimum temperature on 12-6-2004 was 20.7°C (69°F). Relative humidity at 9:30 hrs MST on 12-6-2004 was 85%. Total sunshine hours on 11-6-2004 was (3.7) hours approx. Rainfall on 12-6-2004 was 31mm (1.22 inches) at Yangon Airport, 31mm (1.22 inches) at Kaba- Aye and 24mm (0.95 inch) at central Yangon. Total rain- fall since 1-1-2004 was 668mm (26.24 inches) at central Yangon, 545mm (21.46 inches) at Kaba-Aye and 866mm (33.91 inches) at central Mandalay. Maximum wind speed at Yangon (Kaba-Aye) was 15 mph from Southeast at 12:38 hours MST on 11-6-2004.

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Mandalay forecast: Low pressure area over coastal regions in S-E Asia has moved over the upper South China Sea. The system is expected to follow the coast of Southern Vietnam. On Monday, the system will move into Southwest Bay. Gusty to strong wind will occur along Myanmar coast.

Forecast for Yangon and neighbouring area for 13-6-2004: Some rain or thundershowers. Degree of certainty is (60%).

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Sunday, June 13
Tune in today:
8.30 am Brief news 8.35 am Music: Showme/Robyn 8.45 am Perspectives 8.45 am Music: Don’t close your eyes (Kox) 8.55 am National news/ Slogan 9.05 am Music: I feel love (Venezia) 9.10 am International news 9.15 am Music: Wild at heart (Modiffs) 1.30 pm News/Slogan 1.40 pm Story for children - The woodcutter and intelligent elephant maker 1.50 pm Song for children 9.00 pm Weekly news review 9.10 pm Music 9.15 pm Article 9.25 pm Let’s improve English through Songs: Latest Hits! Adapted originals 4.45 pm News/Slogan 16.00 pm RPT

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**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

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**Lt-Gen Maung Bo attends coord meeting to build Myeik-Taninthayi-Bokpyin Road**

**Yangon, 12 June**—Member of the State Peace and Development Council Lt-Gen Maung Bo of the Ministry of Defence attended the coordination meeting on construction of building Myeik-Taninthayi-Bokpyin Road held at the hall of Coastal Region Command Headquarters on 9 June.

Present were Chairman of Taninthayi Division Peace and Development Council Commander of Coastal Region Command Brig-Gen Ohn Myint, Deputy Minister for Construction Brig-Gen Myint Thein, senior military officers, officials of the State Peace and Development Council Office and departments concerned.

Tanimthyi Division Superintending Engineer U Ba Wan reported on progress in building Myeik-Taninthayi-Bokpyin Road and completion of Myeik bypass. Chief Engineer (Road) U Kyaw Tint on upgrading of the roads, construction of conduits and availability of gravel and Chief Engineer (Mechanical) U Aung Min on distribution of heavy machinery on respective road sections. The deputy minister gave a supplementary report. The commander reported on use of heavy machinery, fuel and gravel.

Lt-Gen Maung Bo gave instruction on Myeik-Taninthayi-Bokpyin Road to be completed in December to emerge a 14 feet wide gravel one for public use all the year round, fuel matters, production of gravel and supervision for construction of the road to meet set standard.

Next, he met local authorities and departmental officials at the same venue. The commander reported on progress of the division. Officials also submitted their respective reports. After hearing the reports, Lt-Gen Maung Bo gave necessary instructions.—**MNA**

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**Coord meeting on calculation of urban and rural GDP**

**Yangon, 12 June**—The Planning Department under the Ministry of National Planning and Economic Development held the coordination meeting for calculating Rural and Urban GDP at the meeting hall of the department on Theinbyu Road this afternoon. Present on the occasion were the Minister for National Planning and Economic Development U Soe Tha, the Director-General and the Deputy Director-General of Planning Department, directors and deputy directors and officials.

Next, the minister gave instructions upon tasks to be carried out in calculating GDP by the value of the horticultural crops of the regions and to take help of local authorities if necessary. The meeting was attended by 120 employees from States and Divisions and will be continued to 15 June.—**MNA**

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**NC delegates tour Yangon**

**Yangon, 12 June**—Members of the panel of chairmen of delegate groups and delegates to the National Convention visited Botataung Pagoda and visited the Defence Services Museum and Hlawga Wildlife Park this morning.

Accompanied by officials of the Invitation and Accommodation Sub-committee, members of the panel of chairmen and delegates to the National Convention went to Botataung Pagoda where they were welcomed by Chairman of Port Township Peace and Development Council U Maung Maung Kyi and members of the pagoda board of trustees.

In the Nan U Buddha Image Tazaung, members of the pagoda board of trustees U Khin Sse extended greetings and U Khin Maung Win and U Aung Hsu explained history of the hair relic of the Lord Buddha and the pagoda and all-round renovation tasks and history of the Nan U Buddha Image. Next, members of the excursion group presented K 122,720 to members of the excursion group. Director U Khin Maung Kyi and members of the pagoda board of trustees.

**Minister for National Planning and Economic Development U Soe Tha attends meeting to calculate urban and rural GDP of Planning Department**

**Yangon, 12 June**—Minister for National Planning and Economic Development U Soe Tha attended meeting to calculate urban and rural GDP of Planning Department this afternoon.—**SPED**

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**Delegates of National Convention visit Defence Services Museum**

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**With hands linked firm around the National Convention.**