The National Convention is the concern of all our national races.
Work in concert with the Government for all-round development of the nation

Although the production of paddy in Myanmar is adequate for domestic consumption, it is not sufficient enough for export. Out of the Middle East, South-East Asia, Myanmar has the highest per capita consumption of rice. Therefore, it is necessary for us to try to increase per-acre yield as well as extending sown acreage to be able to export rice.

As the Kalay Region of Sagaing Division is the gateway to Chin State and it is contiguous to India, it is a strategic region for the Union of Myanmar. Moreover, having favourable conditions for agriculture, it can produce enough rice and thus surplus food needed for Chin State.

In his meeting with members of District and Township Peace and Development Councils, departmental personnel, townswellers and entrepreneurs at the Aung San Hall in Kalay, Sagaing Division on 11 June, Prime Minister General Khin Nyunt said that it is necessary for farmers and responsible personnel in agricultural field to cooperate with one another to increase agricultural production. It is also necessary systematically record statistics on sown acreage and per-acre yield, he added. And he urged the farmers and all those responsible to put their energies into their work to be able to extend the sown acreage up to 2 million so that the Sagaing Division will become the granary of Upper Myanmar.

Only with increased production will the economic life of the people be elevated. Therefore, township-level officials are required to go on field trips to villages and make sure that rural development tasks are systematically implemented. As a township is the most fundamental administrative level, township-level officials ought to throw themselves into the task for agricultural and rural development.

The Government has been building such infrastructures as irrigation facilities, roads and bridges, hospitals and clinics, and schools, colleges and universities for all-round development of the nation. We would like to call on the entire nation to work in concert with the Government in all the national endeavours.

Appointment of Ambassador of Israel agreed on

YANGON, 18 June — The Government of the Union of Myanmar has agreed to the appointment of Mrs Ruth Schatz as Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the State of Israel to the Union of Myanmar in succession to Mr Yaacov Avraham.

Mrs Ruth Schatz was born in 1950. She attended the Hebrew University of Jerusalem and obtained B.A degree in Political Science and Arab Studies. She served in the military from 1968 to 1970. She joined the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in 1974 and has served in various capacities at the Ministry and at the Israeli Embassy in Singapore and at the State-General in Houston. She is currently serving as Minister-Counsellor in the Egypt Department of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

She is married and has 3 children. — MNA

Film entertainment for NC delegates

YANGON, 17 June — The Entertainment and Welfare Subcommittee of the National Convention Convening Management Committee is organizing entertainment programmes for delegates to the National Convention daily at the gymnasium of Nyaungshapin Camp. Yesterday evening, the delegates were entertained with a film entitled “Maya Yahta” (Train of tricks) starring Lwin Moe, Nanda Hlaing, Tun Eindra Bo and Kyi Le Le Oo. — MNA

Boilers breeding course opened

YANGON, 17 June — The opening of the boilers breeding course No 1 of the Ministry of Livestock and Fisheries jointly organized by the Livestock Breeding and Veterinary Department and Myanmar CP Livestock CoLimited was held at the LBDV in Insein Township this morning. Present on the occasion were Minister for Livestock and Fisheries Brig-Gen Maung Maung Thein, Deputy Minister U Aung Thein, departmental heads, General Secretary of Myanmar Livestock Breeding Federation Dr Zaw Win Myat, officials of Myanmar CP Livestock Co and entrepreneurs.

The Minister delivered a speech. Vice Chairman of Myanmar CP Livestock Co Mr Nutha Krit explained the purpose of the course. The Minister and Mr Nutha Krit formally opened the training centre.

A total of 20 trainees from departments and enterprises and livestock breeders are attending the 14-day course. — MNA

Cash and kind donated to storm victims in Rakhine State

YANGON, 17 June — Wellwishers in Yangon donated cash and kind valued at over K 22.5 million for relief measures at the Ministry of Social Welfare, Relief and Resettlement this morning.

On behalf of the wellwishers Dr Kyaw Thein explained the purpose of the donation. Next cash and kind were donated by Dr Kyaw Thein of Rakhine Thahaya Association donated K 8.1 million; U Zaw Aye Maung representing Alpène Co, purified water worth K 2 million; U Myo Swe of Rakhine welfare society (Japan), 647 rice bags worth over K 3.2 million; Daw Yin Yin of Rakhine women’s association, over K 4 million; Daw Kharg Kharg Zan of Sittwe College Old Students Association, 320 mosquito nets worth over K 1.2 million; Chairman Zaw Win Myat Oo of Myaybon Township Association (Yangon), 300 blankets worth over K 2.4 million and Daw Nu Mra Zan of Rakhine Literature.

Myanmar Gazette

YANGON, 17 June — The State Peace and Development Council has appointed the following persons as heads of service organizations shown against each on probation from the date they assume charge of their duties.

Name

Appointment

(a) U Ye Phone Myint

Managing Director

Myanmar Jute Enterprise Department of Human Resources

Myanmar Ministry of Agriculture and Irrigation

(b) Col Aung Win

Director-General

Department of Human Resources

Department of Human Resources

Ministry of Construction

ASEAN Radio quiz on 2 July

YANGON, 17 June — Under the “ASEAN in Action” project being implemented by MRTV, the monthly radio quiz on ASEAN have been held. The ASEAN radio quiz for the month of June will be held at 10 am on 2 July. Those wishing to participate are to report at MRTV not later than 9:30 am that day. Handsome prizes and allowances will be given, it is learnt. — MNA
Three US soldiers among 14 killed in Iraq attacks

RAMADI, 16 June—Nine people were killed, including four foreigners, and 10 were wounded when a vehicle was targeted in a blast on Wednesday in the restive town of Ramadi in western Iraq and three US soldiers were killed in a rocket attack in the city of Balad, officials said.

“We have the bodies of five Iraqis and four foreigners,” said Mohammed Jalal, a doctor in the neighbouring town of Fallujah, 50 kilometres west of Baghdad. “In addition, 10 injured Iraqis were admitted to our hospital.”

The US military said that three US soldiers were killed and 25 people were wounded, including two foreign civilians in a rocket attack in Balad, 75 kilometres north of Baghdad. A military spokesman said air and ground forces responded to the suspected location from which the attack was launched. The deaths rose to 613 the number of US soldiers killed in action since the US-led invasion of Iraq in March 2003, according to numbers from the Pentagon.

One Iraqi was shot dead and two foreign contractors wounded in a gunbattle when a convoy of several cars was ambushed near Baghdad airport, a senior military official said Wednesday.

Elsewhere, the head of security for oil fields in Kirkuk has been assassinated, Al Jazeera television reported on Wednesday. The television quoted Iraqi police as saying Ghazi Talabani was killed. It gave no further details.

Radical Iraqi cleric Muqtada al-Sadr on Wednesday told all members of his Mehdi Army militia who are not from Najaf to leave the city.

The announcement came a day after Iraq’s new President Sheikh Gazi al-Yawar said Sadr could join national politics if he is found innocent of murder charges and agrees to disband his Mehdi Army militia.

“Members of the Mehdi Army who have agreed to make sacrifices are asked to return to their regions” of origin, said a brief statement from the cleric published in Najaf. 160 kilometres south of Baghdad.

Saboteurs blew another hole in a main Iraqi southern oil export pipeline on Wednesday, further damaging the network after two sabotage attacks earlier in the week that brought oil exports to a halt. It was uncertain when exports would resume. — Internet

AfrIca, G-8 to work on plan for continent development

JOHANNESBURG, 16 June — African and developed countries would make a joint plan by next year to transform broad commitment to the continent’s development into concrete action, the executive of Africa’s growth plan said Tuesday.

While all agreed that current levels of development aid were insufficient to address African underdevelopment, no clear commitments were on the table, Wiseman Nkuhlu, chairman of the secretariat of the New Partnership for Africa’s Development (NEPAD), said in Pretoria.

Such details would be discussed by representatives of the NEPAD steering Committee and the Group of Eight industrialized nations (G-8), Nkuhlu was quoted as saying by the South African Press Association (SAPA).

A plan to be devised from the talks would be submitted to decisionsmakers early next year, Nkuhlu said. It is expected to outline how much money will be needed to achieve stated goals of addressing unemployment, poverty, hunger and disease such as HIV/AIDS. Nkuhlu was briefing reporters on the outcome of talks between six African leaders and the G-8 summit in the United States last week. He said he was optimistic about progress made in the discussions attended by the presidents of South Africa, Nigeria, Ghana, Senegal, Algeria and Uganda.

Reducing African indebtedness and unequal world trade opportunities were among the concerns raised by the leaders, Nkuhlu said.

Another worry highlighted was the lack of assistance for developing countries to manufacture their own products from raw materials rather than exporting capital and jobs to the developed world.

IAF to phase out “MIG-21” trainer aircraft

NEW DELHI, 16 June — Indian Air Force (IAF) will phase out its remaining 828 US troops killed since beginning of military operations in Iraq last year

BAGHDAD, 16 June—As of Wednesday, June 16, 828 US service members have died since the beginning of military operations in Iraq last year, according to the Defense Department. Of these, 609 died as a result of hostile action and 219 of non-hostile causes. The British military has reported 58 deaths; Italy, 18; Spain, eight; Bulgaria and Poland, six each; Ukraine, four; Slovakia three; Thailand, two; Denmark, El Salvador, Estonia, Latvia and the Netherlands have reported one each. Since May 1, 2003, when President Bush declared that major combat operations in Iraq had ended, 609 US soldiers have died—505 as a result of hostile action and 194 of non-hostile causes, according to the military.

The latest deaths reported by the US military:

Three US soldiers were killed Wednesday in a rocket attack on a US logistics base near Balad. — Internet

Another pipeline struck in Iraq; security chief killed

BAGHDAD, 16 June—Gunmen struck at the heart of Iraq’s economic livelihood Wednesday, blasting a major pipeline to halt vital oil exports and killing the top security chief for the northern oilfields.

A rocket slammed into a US logistics base near Balad, 50 miles north of Baghdad, killing three US soldiers and wounding 25 other people, including two civilian workers, the military said.

Elsewhere, radical Shi’ite cleric Moqtada al-Sadr ordered his militiamen to leave the holy cities of An Najaf and Kufa unless they live there, fulfilling a key aspect of an accord meant to end fighting between his fighters and US troops.

An explosion before dawn Wednesday damaged a pipeline carrying crude oil from Iraq’s southern fields to the Basra oil terminal in the Persian Gulf. Iraqi engineers had diverted crude shipments to that pipeline after another was bombed two days ago.

“Due to the damage inflicted on the two pipelines, the pumping of oil to the Basra oil terminal has completely stopped,” said Samir Jassim, spokesman of the state-owned South Oil Co. “Exports have come to halt.”

Exports were halted last month through Iraq’s other export avenue—the northern pipeline from Kirkuk to Ceyhan, Turkey—after a May 25 bombing, Turkish officials said.

Gunmen killed Ghazi Talabani, the official in charge of protecting the northern oilfields, in an ambush in Kirkuk. General Anwar Amin of the Iraqi Civil Defence Corps said three gunmen attacked Mr Talabani’s car after his bodyguard briefly left the vehicle in a crowded market.

The bodyguard was wounded. Mr Talabani was the third Iraqi official slain since Saturday. — Internet

Iraq oil pipeline repairs to take 7-10 days

LONDON, 17 June—Repairs to one of Iraq’s main southern oil export pipelines will take seven to 10 days following sabotage attacks overnight, an Iraqi industry official said on Tuesday.

Separately, shipping agents said exports from Iraq’s Basra terminal on the Gulf had ground completely to a halt after having been reduced to less than 500,000 barrels per day earlier in the day. Normally the terminal handles up to 1.7 million bpd.

“Nothing is loading and nothing is being received at the terminal,” said one official. Industry sources said a second export pipeline did not appear to be damaged, but may have been shut for security checks.

Oil Minister Thamir Ghadhban earlier told Reuters that there had been two sabotage attacks in the south and it was not immediately clear whether they were against the same or different pipelines. — MNA/Reuters

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Oil Minister Thamir Ghadhban earlier told Reuters that there had been two sabotage attacks in the south and it was not immediately clear whether they were against the same or different pipelines. — MNA/Reuters
New Halliburton whistleblowers say millions wasted in Iraq

BAGHDAD, 16 June—New testimony from former Halliburton workers and congressional auditors released in Washington, DC, this week has revealed millions of dollars worth of wasteful practices, major over billing and virtually no oversight of the company’s work to support the US invasion and occupation of Iraq in March 2003.

Under an agreement for logistical support for Operation Iraqi Freedom, Kellogg Brown and Root (KBR), a Halliburton subsidiary, has received $4.5 billion for activities in Iraq and Kuwait since the invasion, including more than $3 billion to import fuel and repair oil fields.

The full contract may eventually be worth as much as $18 billion.

In testimony submitted to members of Congress, one truck driver explained in depositions how taxpayers were “busy” while doing virtually nothing.

William Reed, director of the Pentagon’s Defence Contract Audit Agency (DCAA), also released a report to Congress which attended a hearing at the Government Reform Committee in the House of Representatives.

“There are serious problems, they still exist, and they are exacerbated in a wartime climate.”

The DCAA, according to General Accounting Office, the investigative arm of the Congress, told members of Congress who attended a hearing at the Government Reform Committee in the House of Representatives.

The UNICEF launches student surveys in Africa

UNICEF launched on Tuesday a child-to-child survey of the 121 million children in Africa who are not attending school.

In the survey, teams of schoolchildren would interview out-of-school children to find out why they were not enrolled. Reporting their results, they would call on communities and governments to place education for all at the top of their list of priorities, according to a Press release issued on the eve of the Day of the African Child.

“We want this project to start a chain reaction, whereby the children and their teachers will not only identify those out of school, but will also commit to getting them enrolled and helping them succeed.”

UNICEF Executive Director Carol Bellamy said in the Press release.

Statement of UNICEF Executive Director Carol Bellamy.

Two Lebanese taken hostage in Iraq

BEIRUT, 16 June — Kidnappers in Iraq have taken two more Lebanese men hostage and are demanding a ransom for their release, in a Foreign Office official in Beirut said on Tuesday.

They are to be held at Celle, near Hanbury in Germany, where the accused are based, the paper said.

British military chiefs said there would be as much transparency as possible during the proceedings, which would open to the public.

“We want this project to start a chain reaction, whereby the children and their teachers will not only identify those out of school, but will also commit to getting them enrolled and helping them succeed.”

UNICEF Executive Director Carol Bellamy said in the Press release.

“The chain reaction would begin at the local level, with international humanitarian laws, particularly the 1949 Geneva Convention, stressing the need for the occupation forces to respect the civil and religious liberties of the Iraqis and preserve their cultural, religious and historical heritage.”

New Zealand pledges to work for security in APR

WELLINGTON, 17 June — New Zealand has pledged to work closely with other nations to ensure security in the Asia-Pacific Region.

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Singapore to shorten full-time national service to two years

SINGAPORE, 16 June — Singapore will cut its full-time national service from the current two-and-a-half years to two years, becoming effective in December this year.

“We will also increase the number of schools that students can choose from, and we will work with the Ministry of Education to ensure that students are well-prepared for the transition.”

Singapore Prime Minister Goh Chok Tong said in a speech.

Statement of Singapore Prime Minister Goh Chok Tong.

An Iraqi police officer passes a destroyed police vehicle after an overnight attack on a police station in the town of Sulman Pak, south-east of Baghdad, on June 16, 2004. — Reuters
US general was told to treat Iraqi prisoners “like dogs”

LONDON, 16 June — A US general once in charge of the Abu Ghraib Prison in Iraq has told the BBC that a US military intelligence official told her last autumn that Iraqi prisoners should be treated “like dogs”.

US Major-General Geoffrey Miller, the current head of the US prisons in Iraq, said Iraqi prisoners “are like dogs, and if you allow them to believe at any point that they are more than a dog then you’ve lost control of them.” US one-star general Janis Karpinski told the BBC in an interview broadcast on Tuesday.

Karpinski was in charge of the military police unit that ran US prisons in Iraq when Iraqi prisoners were abused by US troops in the Abu Ghraib Prison, also told the BBC that she had been made scapegoat for the abuse which was ordered by others.

The US Army investigators ruled that Karpinski paid too little attention to the prison’s operations and did not act strongly enough to discipline her soldiers. However, she was only suspended but not charged with any crime.

“I was absolutely sickened by those images. And I could not even fathom a guess as to what happened to these people to make them go so far away from what they have been trained to do so,” Karpinski said.

“But I will say I know my military police personnel... well enough to know they believed they were following instructions from a person authorized to give them instructions.” Karpinski added, stressing that interrogations at the Abu Ghraib were not under her command but were run by a military intelligence unit.

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Thailand has no plans to pull out troops from Iraq

BANGKOK, 16 June — Thailand will start moving its military equipment out of Iraq from July and expects all 451 of its medical and engineering personnel to be back home by September, the military said on Tuesday.

But the Armed Forces Supreme Command said in a statement an emergency plan was in place to evacuate the troops, stationed at a base in the city of Kerbala, 60 miles south of Baghdad, if their security was threatened. “The supreme commander has approved Special Task Force 976 to return home after finishing their one-year term. It is a relocation under the normal situation,” the statement said.

The costs of relocating equipment and Thai troops, whose one-year mission is due to end on September 20, would be borne by the United States, it said — MNA/Reuters

Sabotage halts Iraqi oil exports

DUBAI, 17 June — Iraqi oil exports have ground to a halt after twin sabotage attacks this week on two key pipelines feeding vital crude terminals in the south.

An Iraqi oil official told Reuters on Wednesday it was unclear when exports, which were running at more than 1.6 million barrels per day (BPD), would resume.

“There are no exports from Basra oil terminal or Khor al-Amaya and it is unclear when they will restart,” he said by telephone from Baghdad.

“Both pipelines feeding the terminals have been destroyed.” The attack was the second incident since 8 May, when saboteurs blew up Iraq’s southern export network. The attack was clearly targeted at the oil terminal, which was the only one in Basra, and Khor al-Amaya, the official said.

The officials who were in charge of the sabotaged pipelines, one 42-inch and the other 48-inch, fed crude from storage tanks to terminals at Basra and Khor al-Amaya. The official said one line was blown up late on Monday and the other was attacked around noon on Tuesday.

Russia signs agreements on visa regimes with France, Italy

MOSCOW, 16 June — Russia signed agreements with France, Italy on using visa regime for certain groups of their citizens on Tuesday, Russian news agencies reported.

Under the agreements, visas regulations will be eased for students, individuals taking part in cultural and education exchanges, parliamentarians and other types of officials.

The agreements foresee an increased issue of long-term, multi-entry visas for the groups and shorter processing times. Russian Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov, who signed the agreements with French and Italian ambassadors to Russia, expressed the hope that the signing of the documents would promote negotiations on visa issues with all EU countries. — MNA/Reuters

Three tiger cubs are displayed by zookeepers after their birth at the zoo of Pessac, south-eastern France. — Internet

Iraqi police said on Wednesday that gunmen killed Ghazi Talabani, a senior official in Iraq’s North Oil Company, dealing another blow to the industry.
Images of Iraq

A crowd of Iraqis rush to the scene of a car bomb attack in the centre of the Iraqi capital of Baghdad on 14 June, 2004.

Iraqi rescuers carry a wounded man from the rubble of a building demolished by a car bomb in central Baghdad on 14 June, 2004.

A crowd of Iraqis rush to the scene of a car bomb attack in the centre of the Iraqi capital of Baghdad on 14 June, 2004.


Iraqis rush to the scene of a car bomb attack in the centre of the Iraqi capital of Baghdad on 14 June, 2004.

An Iraqi man walks through a police station that was destroyed in an explosion in Yusufiyah, Iraq, on 11 June, 2004.

Onlookers gather at the scene of a car bomb in a main shopping area of Baghdad on 14 June, 2004.

A lone Iraqi throws a stone at a burning vehicle as others search the debris of a building at the scene of a car bomb in a main shopping area of Baghdad on 14 June, 2004.
New and fast developments throughout Myanmar

The youth development training school in Kengtung, Shan State (East) has been built for the development of nationalities in border areas. — PRANIDA

Monywa-Kalewa Road, reflects the goodwill of the Tatmadaw Government. — MYANMA ALIN

An artesian well at Kyundaw village in Taungdwingyi Township. — PRANIDA

Kachin State Development Affairs Committee built 5,100 feet long Mongna rural road in Waingmaw Township. — PRANIDA

Nantmaung Creek Bridge in Momeik, Shan State (North). — MNA

Border and rural area developments
Winners in competitions to mark ... (from page 1)

second and Daw Thet Thet Thin the third and five persons won the consolation prizes.

In the poem contest, the first prize went to U Thaung Win (Maung Ni Hnin Kyaw, Kyauktan), the second to U Khin Maung Tun (Min Thway Nwe-Zigon) and the third to Saw Eindra Thet Maung and consolation prizes went to five winners. Tin Maung Hlaing stood first in the song, Fo Kyo, Aung Chit Min second and Chit Wai Wai Kyaw third and five consolation prize winners.

Ma Nilar Shoon Lett of Dagon BEHS No 1 won the first prize in the under-10 painting contest, Maung Kaung Htet Kyaw of Tamway BEHS No 18 the second and Ma Nway Yadana Tun of Institute of Education Practising School the third together with five consolation prize winners.

In the 10-15 painting contest, Ma Khin Chan Myaw Thu of Institute of Education Practising School secured the first prize, Maung Zin Ko Ko of Aldon BEHS No 4 the second and Ma Khaing Myat Myo Tun Lin of Institute of Education Practising School the third and five students were consolation prize winners.

In the 15-20 painting contest, Ma Khin Chan Myaw Thu of Institute of Education Practising School secured the first prize, Maung Zin Ko Ko of Aldon BEHS No 4 the second and Ma Khaing Myat Myo Tun Lin of Institute of Education Practising School the third and five students were consolation prize winners.

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In the 15-20 painting contest, Ma Wint Phyu Hwe of Yanakin BEHS No 2 bagged the first prize, Maung Aung Moe Soi of Hninthei BEHS No 2 the second and Maung Ye Hnin Aung of Dagon BEHS No 1 the third. Five students won consolation prizes.

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Victorious Myanmar equestrian team honoured

YANGON, 17 June—A ceremony to honour victorious Myanmar equestrian team in Malaysian National Equestrian Competition held in Penang, Malaysia, from 3 to 6 June produced an exciting event at the Hotel on Wardan Street in Lanmadaw Township yesterday evening, attended by Chairman of Myanmar Olympic Committee Minister for Sports Brig-Gen Thura Aye Myint. Also present on the occasion were Vice-Chairman of MOC Deputy Minister for Information Brig-Gen Aung Thein and members, officials of the Ministry of Sports, members of the Leading Patrons of Myanmare Sports Federation, executives of Myanmar and LG, members of Federation, the manager, the coach and athletes.

The minister spoke on the occasion. Next, Manager U Nyin Kyaw recounted experience. Afterwards, the host, Mayor and six girls of Myanmar team bagged two gold, two silver and one bronze, K 100,000 to Ma Aye Thi Tar who won one gold, K 70,000 to Ma Aung Thu Aung who secured one silver and K 50,000 to Ma Su Su Pale who won one bronze. On behalf of the winners, Ma Ei Thet Mon expressed gratitude.

On the other hand, dinner was held in their honour. Over 100 athletes participated in the competition. Of them, one boy and six girls of Myanmar team bagged two gold, three silver and two bronze. — MNA

OPEC to ask other producers to raise oil output

JAKARTA, 17 June—OPEC will seek help from producers outside the cartel to raise global oil supplies and cool high prices, which have held stubbornly above 35 US dollars a barrel, president Purnomo Yugiantoro said on Wednesday.

Purnomo said he would send letters to Russia, Angola, Mexico and Oman to request they pump more crude oil. “They have spare capacity to increase production,” Purnomo, who is also Indonesian Oil Minister, told reporters. He did not give any details or timeframe. Oil prices were briefly spooked higher again on Tuesday after saboteurs attacked two oil pipelines in Iraq, bringing the country’s crude supplies to a virtual halt. US crude touched 38.40 US dollars a barrel after news of the Iraqi blasts. The country, a member of OPEC, had been exporting an average 1.6 million to 1.7 million barrels a day (BPD) from the southern oil terminal Basra and about 200,000 bpd from the northern Kirkuk oilfields. Fears that militants would strike at oil facilities in the Middle East have helped stoke prices higher this year. Robust economic growth and strong oil demand, especially in the United States and China, have left little room in the supply chain for any disruption in a major producer.

The Organization of the Petroleum-Exporting Countries agreed earlier this month to increase formal supply limits by two million BPD from July 1 and another two million from August 1 to stop a run-up in oil prices to the highest levels in 21 years above 42 US dollars a barrel. Tanker tracking consultancy Petrollogistics reckons OPEC’s 10 core members will lift supplies by 800,000 bpd in June, before the increase of formal limits next month. Iraq was excluded from OPEC’s quota system following its invasion of Kuwait in 1990 and subsequent UN trade sanctions. — MNA/Reuters

Motorola, Samsung, LG emerge as producers of China’s new handsets

BEIJING, 17 June—China United Telecom (China Unicom), the world’s third biggest mobile telecommunications carrier, said Wednesday three mobile phone handsets produced by Samsung and LG were selected as China’s first dual SIM card mobile phones. These models are Moto A860, Samsung SCHW109 and LGW800, all boasting of cutting-edge manufacturing technology and design to offer high-quality portable devices to go abroad for business. Citing as an example, the manager said Moto A860 is fitted with a 1.2 million pixel micro-camera, and its data can be transferred to a computer or via versa. Users of the new handsets carrying both GSM and CDMA SIM cards will be able to switch between GSM and CDMA networks, and enjoy roaming service in countries where only one of the networks is available. As for prices, the manager said they are more competitive than the high-end mobile phones with a single SIM card on the market, and China Unicom will release low-end dual SIM card phones in the future. But he declined to give more information. China Unicom said last month it planned to release in mid-July mobile phone handsets with dual-band technology that shares data and voice service between GSM and CDMA users. — MNA/Xinhua

Libyan delegation seeks investors in S Korea

SEOUL, 17 June—A delegation of Libyan business and government officials arrived in South Korea on Wednesday to seek investors for a number of petrochemical and telecommunications projects, the South Korean news agency Yonhap reported.

Nuri Rameadan Al Jera, head of Libya’s state-owned General Company for Chemical Industry, said: “We hope many South Korean firms can take part in a three-billion-US-dollar petrochemical plant development project being pursued by the Libyan Government.”

The plant is just one of the estimated 45 billion dollars’ worth of energy development and telecommunications projects that Libya is pushing for, reported Yonhap.

Many South Korean companies, including state-run Korea Electric Power Corp and Samsung Corp, have shown a high level of interest in the projects. The US-imposed sanctions on Libya in 1986 left much of Libya’s energy industry undeveloped.

Since the United States eased economic sanctions against the African country last year, the Libyan Government has been appealing for foreign investment in order to revive its economy. — MNA/Xinhua

Pakistan, India agree on steps to curb narcotics

ISLAMABAD, 17 June—India and Pakistan agreed on Wednesday on ways to work together to stop cross-border drug smuggling, notching another small step forward in confidence building between the South Asian rivals. India’s top anti-narcotics commissioner headed the talks in Pakistan’s capital, the first after seven-year hiatus, as a success.

Pakistan’s anti-drug trafficking of illicit narcotics drugs across the border from both sides and we had a very good meeting,” M K Singh, Director-General Narcotics Control Board of India told reporters at the end of the two days of talks.

“We identified the problems and also reached to certain conclusions, how to go about it, how to handle our future operations. It was a successful meeting,” it remains to be seen whether the two governments can strike a similar upbeat note when their foreign secretaries meet in New Delhi at the end of this month.

It will be the first high-level talks between the two nuclear rivals since the Congress Party formed a government in New Delhi, following a shock election win over former prime minister Atal Behari Vajpayee’s Hindu nationalists.

Vajpayee had revived the peace process a year after the two countries teetered on the brink of their fourth war in 2002. But Pakistan’s leaders now have to get to know India’s new faces. — MNA/Reuters

S Korea to hold rice talks with several countries

SEOUL, 17 June—South Korea will hold a series of talks with seven other countries in June or July, the Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry said Wednesday.

It will hold the second round of talks on rice market openings with China in Beijing on Friday and with the United States in Geneva next Tuesday, the Agriculture Ministry said.

The ministry also said South Korea will hold separate rounds of similar talks with seven other countries, including Thailand, Australia, India and Pakistan later this month or next month.

At stake is the extension of South Korea’s right to bar most imports of rice, an increase in the import quota or a shift to a tariff system, according to the ministry.

Lee Jae-gil, Seoul’s top diplomat for Doha Development Agenda (DDA) negotiations, is the head of the delegation on the rice market talks.

The delegation is composed of officials from the Agriculture, Finance and Foreign ministries, as well as private experts. Ministry official said Seoul is giving top priority to push for an extension of its right to bar most imports of rice to provide continued protection to local farmers, reported the South Korean news agency Yonhap.

South Korean negotiators are basically focusing on a continuation of the special treatment of rice as stipulated in a 1994 multi-lateral agreement on agriculture, they said.

Under the WTO’s 1994 Uruguay Round agreement, South Korea was given a grace period of 10 years to enjoy special treatment regarding rice imports. Thus, the government is to complete negotiations on the nation’s rice market with WTO member states by the end of this year. — MNA/Xinhua

S Korean financial groups urged to join forces to avoid crisis

SEOUL, 17 June—South Korean President Roh Moo-hyun on Wednesday urged the nation’s financial institutions to join forces to avoid another financial crisis, the president’s new agency Yonhap said.

“Financial institutions gained as they pursued solutions to problems on an individual basis rather than approaching things with a sense of national crisis when the (1997) financial crisis erupted,” Roh said during a meeting with a group of chief executive officers of private and state-run financial institutions. — MNA/Xinhua

Making the right noises in the fight against drugs, notably heroin and mor- phine, is easier than to sustain it as the value and volume of the trade between the two countries, according to officials, is not very high. But it still depends on stronger political ties.

Khaled Latif, top official at the Ministry of Narcotics Control in Pakistan, said agencies from both sides agreed to meet regularly and exchange and share information.

“Relations between Pakistan and India are improving and similarly relations between the organizations are improving,” Latif said.

“This will strengthen our network to break the net-work of smugglers.” — MNA/Reuters
Khatami blasts draft IAEA nuke resolution

TEHRAN, 17 June— Iran may resume uranium enrichment if a draft resolution rebuking it for inadequate cooperation with UN inspectors is approved, President Mohammad Khatami said on Wednesday in his toughest warning so far to the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA).

"If this resolution passes, Iran will have no moral commitment to suspend uranium enrichment," Khatami told reporters after a Cabinet meeting.

Iran says it wants to enrich uranium to provide fuel for future nuclear power reactors. But Washington and many European states fear Iran could use enrichment technology to produce bomb-grade material.

Under intense international pressure to come clean about its nuclear activities, Iran agreed last year voluntarily to suspend uranium enrichment. But it has always said it could resume enrichment whenever it saw fit.

Khatami described the draft resolution prepared by Britain, Germany and France as "very bad" but said Teheran may scale back cooperation with UN inspectors in retaliation.

Iran, which says its nuclear aims are entirely peaceful, insists it has cooperated fully with IAEA inspectors and has called for its nuclear case to be closed.

20th Meeting of ASEAN National Tourism Organizations

5th Meeting of ASEAN, China, Japan and Korea National Tourism Organizations

3rd ASEAN-India Tourism Consultations

Taunggyi, Union of Myanmar

30 June — 1 July, 2004

Aussie scientists devise new system to diagnose bone infection

Canberra, 17 June— Australian scientists have devised a new system which needs only 10 minutes instead of a day currently to identify bone infection, known as osteomyelitis.

Under the current method, which needs a day, blood is taken from the patient and mixed with a radioactive tracer outside the body and then re-injected into the patient’s body. An X-ray examination will be followed finally.

The new system, called Lenkoscan, was devised by the Australian Nuclear Science and Technology Organization (ANSTO).

Lenkoscan teaches five steps to diagnose osteomyelitis, which can destroy the joints to stiffen or destroy the bone if left untreated.

Australian Associated Press Tuesday quoted ANSTO as saying that the risks of cross-contamination are significantly reduced by injecting the agent directly into the patient’s blood instead of mixing it outside the body. Patients also need not endure the needle twice.

"It takes about 10 minutes to administer, followed by a two-hour wait for Lenkoscan to around the body before taking the scan and finally about 30 minutes to an hour for a diagnosis," he said.

Domestic violence inflicts most serious harm to Aussie women

Canberra, 17 June— Domestic violence inflicts the most serious damage to health of Australian young and middle-aged women, a new research shows.

Physical and sexual abuse leads to more illness and kills more women aged under 45 than any other recognized health problems, according to the research published on Wednesday in The Australian, one of Australia's leading newspapers. More than one million Australian women have experienced domestic violence, said the research, conducted by Vichale, a government-funded and privately run foundation.

The release of the study came just weeks after the federal government launched a 14-million-US-dollar campaign against domestic violence.

The study shows that mental illness is the greatest health problem faced by abused women, accounting for 60 per cent of the burden of disease caused by domestic violence, followed by suicide and illnesses associated with smoking.

Depression, anxiety, and chronic pain are also among the many health problems faced by women exposed to violence, according to the study, which the paper said is the first of its kind in the world.

Kuwaiti Interior Ministry bans smoking in all its buildings

KUWAIT CITY, 17 June— Kuwait First Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Interior Sheikh Nawaf Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah issued an order Tuesday, banning smoking in all buildings and administrative offices of the ministry.

A Press release was quoted by Kuwait News Agency as saying that the ministerial order came in accordance with the Cabinet's decree and Law No 15 for 1995 on com-bating smoking.

The order stipulates that smoking is banned in all buildings, authorities, administrative offices, vehicles, ships and vessels of the ministry, as well as all other security sites for all employees.

Sected areas in the buildings will be designated for smoking, it added.

Nissan lines up eight new models for GCC

ABU DHABI, 17 June— Japanese carmaker Nissan expects to achieve its sales target of 100,000 vehicles per year in the Gulf countries by September 2005 by launching a string of new models and increasing investment, a local web site reported Tuesday.

Eight new models are lined up for launch this year, excluding the two already launched.

The turnouts of the 10 new models will increase investment in staff, showrooms and other retail outlets, according to Shigeru Tsubaki, managing director of the company’s Middle East unit.

Speaking after the launch of the new Nissan Altima on Monday, Tsubaki was upbeat about prospects for the new car in the United Arab Emirates (UAE) and across the region.

UAE is one of the largest vehicle importers in the Middle East, and 118,212 vehicles were imported in 2003. These included 62,770 passenger cars, 31,596 four-wheel drives, 16,485 light commercial vehicles, 5,364 heavy commercial vehicles, and 1,997 MPVs.

MNA/Reuter
Malaysians to play more effective role to curb crimes

KUALA LUMPUR, 17 June—The Malaysian government would introduce a law to allow the citizens to play a more effective role in efforts to curb crimes including snatch thefts, Prime Minister Abdullah Ahmad Badawi said Wednesday.

"To stop the rise of crime and to beef up the legal provi-
sions to authorize the citi-
ses to take action against
them, we have to encourage them to extend their assistance to the po-
lice to curb crimes," the Prime Minister said in his comments on the reported
cases of snatch thefts which are becoming rampant.

Recently several women died after they were
attacked by snatch thefts in
some parts of the country.
The incidents have triggered
off an uproar in the coun-
y.

The Prime Minister
told Bernama, local news agency, that the citizens must
discuss the matter more spe-
cifically with the Cabinet and the 11th ministerial session of the Attorney-General’s Chambers to draft the proposed law to be ta-
bled in Parliament as soon as possible.

Abdullah said that the incident where a snatch
thief suspect was assaulted by several people in Klang
took place after the al-
leged offense showed that public anger was at its
height.

He said that it reflected the awareness of the respon-
sibility of the public in help-
ing to reduce the incidence
of crime.

However, the public in
tackling crimes like
snatch thefts, should not
be the ones to face the
consequences, he said.

Public awareness in
crime is a positive develop-
ment but it must be pursued
beyond the scope of the
law. They can hand over
the case to the police in accord-
ance with the process of the law in the country," he said.

Nissan satisfied with cooperation
with Chinese partner

SAN FRANCISCO, 17 June—Nissan, one of the world’s major automakers, expressed satisfaction Tuesday over its cooper-
a tion with China’s third larg-
est automaker, the Dongfeng Motor Co Ltd.

“We have a strong co-
operation (with our Chinese
partner). The joint venture is very
successful,” Toshiyuki Shiga, senior vice-president of
Nissan, told reporters ahead of the joint venture’s first
anniversary.

Shiga, who is here to
attend a Nissan-sponsored
media program, also voiced support for some ad-
justments recently made by
the Chinese Government in
the auto industry. He said some
macro-control measures, es-
specially those designed to
prevent the economy from overheating, could help
make China’s economic growth sustainable and en-
sure a more favourable envi-
ronment for foreign invest-
ment.

Nissan, striving to seek
a foothold in the fast-grow-
ing Chinese auto market,
entered a 50-50 joint ven-
ture with Dongfeng in July
2003. The move has created
the largest international au-
tomotive partnership in
China with a total joint in-
vestment of 6.7 billion Chi-
nese yuan (about two billion
US dollars).

As a result, Nissan sold
about 300,000 cars in China
in 2005, including commer-
cial vehicles produced by
Dongfeng. The number rep-
sents a 35-per-cent in-
crease over the previous year.

Shiga under an ambitious
mid-term business plan, Nissan plans to double the joint
target sales of passenger and commercial ve-
hicles to 62,000 units by 2007. The company also plans to
double its revenue and achieve a double-glo-
oping profit by 2007.

Seeking a greater share of
the highly competitive auto market in China, Nissan
has also planned to intro-
cude six new models to the
Chinese market in the next few years, including the
Nissan Sunny which has al-
ready been launched.

During the ongoing
Beijing Motor Show, Nissan unveiled its latest se-
ries models including the 3.5-litre V6 Teana, or
Tian Lai in Chinese, which means “the beautiful sound
of nature”.

The new sedan, with its
elegant styling, luxurious
interior and refined driving
performance, is designed for
successful and sophisticated
customers and could be a strong competitor to its peers
such as the popular Audi V6.

The Teana will be built
by Dongfeng at its Xiangfan
plant in Hubei Province and
go on sale across China in
fall through Dongfeng’s pas-
senger vehicle dealer net-
work. — MNA/Xinhua

Lula calls for establishment of
global anti-hunger fund

SÃO PAULO (Brazil), 17 June—Brazilian President
Luiz Inacio Lula da Silva said here on Tuesday that
a global fund should be estab-
lished as soon as possible to
counter prevailing hunger in
developing countries, particu-
larly in the least developed
countries (LDCs).

Lula said he made the
proposal on Monday during
a meeting with UN Secre-
tary-General Kofi Annan, who was here to attend
the 11th ministerial session of
the United Nations Confer-
ence on Trade and Develop-
ment (UNCTAD).

Although anti-hunger
efforts were engaged in the
Millennium Development
Goals (MDGs) at the Mil-
leum Summit, develop-
ing nations have not seen
concrete measures in the fol-
low-up actions, Lula told a
Press conference.

The advanced industri-
alized countries only paid lip
services to MDGs and about
800 million worldwide are
still suffering starvation, he
said. The combat against
hunger has become a central
issue to mankind today and
the international community
must build a harmonized and
effective approach to tackle
the problem, the President
achieved a double-globe-
ally anti-hunger fund should
be used to provide not only
food aid, but also agri-
cultural technologies to poor
countries. Talking about the
so-called Doha Round of the
World Trade Organization
(WTO) negotiations, Lula
said the current international
trading system is largely in
favour of rich nations and
new WTO rules must take
account poor countries’

In face of developed
nations’ reluctance to make
concessions in WTO talks,
developing countries in
South America have forged
close trade links with their
Asian and African counter-
parts, he said, adding that
only when trade among de-
veloping countries is en-
sified, could their positions
in WTO talks be improved
and a fairer international
trading system established.

— MNA/Xinhua

Wellwishers invited for sinking tube-wells

YANGON, 17 June—The Development Affairs
Committee under the Min-
istry for Progress of Border
Areas and National Races and Development Affairs of the
Agreement to give out
efforts in sinking tube-wells
in order to get sufficient
fresh water in rural areas
in states and divisions
where water is scarce.

One 200 feet deep two
inch diameter tube-well costs K 250,000; one 400
feet deep two-inch diameter tube-well costs K 500,000;
and 200 feet deep four
inch diameter tube-well
K 500,000.

Those wishing to do-
MNA
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- Graduate with Good Computer Skill in Windows (Word, Excel & Page Maker)
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**Knowledge of Pulses & Beans will be an advantage**

- Only short-listed candidates suitable for the post may send their resumes by fax to 212161, 212205, 223399

**Last date of application: Friday 18-06-04.**

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**SYRIAN MEDIA HAILS**

**Sino-Syrian relations**

**DAMASCUS, 16 June** — Syrian President Bashar al-Assad’s forthcoming visit to China shows that the Sino-Syrian relations are “always very strong” and the two peoples have been “quite active” in strengthening their cooperations, the official Syrian Damascas Radio said Tuesday.

The imminent visit is part of the President’s efforts to boost Syria’s role in the international arena and to strengthen its relations with other countries to win their support to the Arab right, the radio said.

China has always supported the Arab issues and insisted on implementing relevant UN resolutions to realize a just and comprehensive peace in the Middle East, it stressed. “China has defended Syria at the United Nations Whenever it was under hostile campaigns,” the radio said, referring to China’s supportive positions to the Syrian initiatives of freeing the Middle East from weapons of mass destruction.

Syria’s stance of defending China’s rights and unity is, at the same time, appreciated by Beijing, the radio pointed out. Syria’s permanent UN representative in 1971 was one of those who strongly supported the resolution of restoring China’s seat at the United Nations as a legitimate representative of the Chinese people, it said. —MNA/Xinhua

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**EU mulls new scientific publishing system for research**

**BRUSSELS, 16 June** — The European Commission (EC) launched a study Tuesday on the economic and technical evolution of the scientific publication markets in Europe, the results of which will be available in 2005.

It is aimed at determining the conditions required for optimum operation of the sector and assessing the extent to which the EC can help to meet those conditions.

The study will deal with all the main topics of the current public debate, such as the future of printed scientific reviews, the risks associated with increases in the price of publications in terms of access to information for researchers, the possibility of research access to research findings for all, according to a Press release issued by the executive body of the 25-member European Union (EU).

“The way in which the scientific publishing market is organized has implications. Scientific publications not only serve to disseminate research results, they also constitute a tool for evaluating the quality of research teams,” Philippe Busquin, European commissioner for research, was quoted as saying.

The future of scientific publishing has been at the centre of EU discussions for several years, leading to the adoption in October 2003 of the Berlin Declaration calling for open access to knowledge. —MNA/Xinhua

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**INDONESIAN ENERGY FIRM GETS MAJORITY STAKE IN AUSTRALIA’S NOVUS**

**JAKARTA, 16 June** — Indonesia’s energy firm PT Medco Energi Internasional has secured a controlling stake in Australia’s Novus Petroleum Ltd after a major increase of its holdings. Medco was higher than its rival bidder, the Australian-based PetroChina, which raised its bid on April 22 to 341 million dollars from its previous offer to buy the Sydney-based company.

Shareholders who accepted the offer included 13 per cent of Novus shareholders had thus far accepted its 1.90 Australian dollars per share offer to buy the Sydney-based company.

**CHINA FORWARDS PROPOSAL TO ADDRESS DISTORTIONS IN INT’L TRADE**

**SAO PAULO** (Brazil), 16 June — Various distortions in the existing international trading system are hampering the development of most developing countries, Chinese Assistant Minister of Commerce Yi Xiaozhun said here on Tuesday.

“Is the shared aspiration and responsibility of the international community to take full advantage of the opportunities and to cope effectively with the challenges brought about by globalization,” said Yi, who is also the head of the Chinese delegation to the 11th session of the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD).

Yi, on behalf of the Chinese Government, proposed the following four points to address the problems in the multilateral trading system:

- Firstly, in the process of globalization, diversified national conditions of each country must be respected, and developing countries should be assisted to benefit from the growth of the world economy and to participate actively in the decision-making and rule-making in the global economic affairs.

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Experts urge to establish law on world heritage protection

BEIJING, 17 June — Chinese experts have urged accelerating legislation on world heritage protection, seeing more damage done to historic sites during the country's rapid economic growth and its urbanization trend.

Zhang Tinghao, a deputy to the National People's Congress (NPC), attributed the frequent damage to the lack of laws.

Since 1982, China has listed 99 cities as "historic cities", but most of them are losing their distinctive ancient features in dynamic urban reconstruction and real estate development. Ruins and ancient streets still risk being demolished at any moment.

"China has no law on historic cities, and their protection still relies on relevant laws for city planning and cultural relics, which actually have little to do with historic cities that are especially short of contents on protecting ancient residential houses," said Zhang Xinjian, an official with the Ministry of Culture.

C. Stephen Hsu, professor with the China University of Political Science and Law, considered it imperative for China to establish a clear and efficient management mechanism, which includes a professional, united organ acquainted with international conventions and other countries' experiences, under the framework of a special world heritage protection law.

Currently, the heritage protection still involves many sectors in China. The State Administration of Cultural Heritage has a world heritage department, the Ministry of Construction owns an office in charge of landscape and scenic spots, and the Ministry of Education also sets up a national commission for Education, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), whose functions overlap with each other.

"The lack of special laws and decentralized administration often delay the settlement of many problems due to complicated procedures and slow feedback," Hsu said.

HK SAR provides fund for research on infectious diseases

HONG KONG, 17 June — The Hong Kong Special Administrative Region Government on Tuesday granted 25 million Hong Kong dollars (3.2 million US dollars) to the Chinese University of Hong Kong (CUHK) for carrying out a portfolio of clinical trial studies to the public health research in emerging infectious diseases such as SARS.

The 25-million-Hong-Kong-dollar grant to CUHK will support a portfolio of research spanning five years that is expected to produce results from a minimum of 30 research projects.

The Research Fund for the Control of Infectious Diseases (RFICD) had so far committed a total of 35.5 million Hong Kong dollars (7.3 million US dollars) for various research studies in Hong Kong and the Mainland.

Big heroin trafficking ring detected in Vietnam

HANOI, 17 June — Vietnamese police have recently cracked down on a trans-provincial heroin trafficking ring which supplied half of the drug consumed in the country's Ho Chi Minh City.

They arrested 20 people and confiscated 20.3 kilograms of heroin, along with one automobile, 14 motorcycles and 16 mobile phones between April and June, local newspaper Sauong Liberation reported Wednesday. The ring has two independent branches, one led by Tran Xuan Ha, born in 1981, and Hoang Long, born in 1972, and the other led by Tran Hung Cong. born in 1965. All of the three men are from central Nghe An Province.

They transported over 1,000 cakes of heroin, or more than 350 kilograms of the drug, from Nghe An and other central bordering provinces to Ho Chi Minh City between mid-2001 and mid-2004. Wholesale prices of a cake of 1,000 kilograms, worth 6,700-7,300 US dollars, but retail prices can reach up to 10,000 dollars.

The ring, hiding its origin, was uncovered, the wholesale price nearly doubled, which means that it held a heroin market share of up to 50 per cent in Ho Chi Minh City, local police said.

Medical journals may force disclosure of bad trials

WASHINGTON, 16 June — Editors of the leading medical journals are considering a proposal that would make drug companies disclose trials that shed unfavorable light on their products, The New York Times reported on Tuesday.

The leading US doctors' group, the American Medical Association, also called for disclosing all medical studies to the public.

Editors at the journals, including the Lancet and the New England Journal of Medicine, declined to discuss the New York Times report but confirmed it was accurate.

"There is nothing false in the story," said a spokesman for the influential New England Journal.

"Many medical groups also sponsor conferences for sharing research. But researchers are often part of a web of links to the drug industry. Research is expensive and often the only way to fund it is with a drug company's help. Then the question arises of whether a company is in a position to influence either the results, or at least which results get published."

According to the Times report, the International Committee of Medical Journal Editors is considering a proposal that would require drug makers to register clinical trials in a public database when they are started.

That way, publishers and the public can check to see if results are submitted on schedule, or look for a pattern of companies quietly dropping trials that do not have the hoped-for outcome.

A lady racegoer wears a large brimmed pink hat at Royal Ascot in Berkshire, southern England, on 16 June, 2004. The five-day society and sporting event is a highlight on the British social calendar, with Britain's Queen Elizabeth attending most days. — Internet

Lizard-smuggling foreigners heavily fined in S Africa

JOHANNESBURG, 17 June — One Indonesian and two Japanese were fined 320,000 rand (49,000 US dollars) by a South African court Tuesday for trying to smuggle 37 endangered lizards.

The three were arrested with live Armadillo girdled lizards at the Cape Town International Airport on May 14, two days after they arrived in the country as tourists, the South African Press Association reported.

Vietnam to promote exports in 2nd half of this year

HANOI, 17 June — Vietnam will promote its exports in the last six months of this year, focusing on products with large export turnovers and those with high export growth rates.

The items include sea food, textiles, garments, footwear, woodwork, bicycles, and electric wires and cables, and their major destinations are the European Union, Japan and the United States, according to the Ministry of Trade on Wednesday.

The goods are either produced by large, labour intensive enterprises or face no obstacles in foreign markets regarding strict quotas, high tariffs, and technical barriers, it said.

Vietnam, which is expected to ship abroad products worth of 11.55 billion US dollars in the first half this year, a year-on-year increase of 16.9 per cent, aims to increase export turnovers of 21.85 billion dollars in 2004, up from 19.8 billion dollars in 2003.

A lady racegoer wears a large brimmed pink hat at Royal Ascot in Berkshire, southern England, on 16 June, 2004. The five-day society and sporting event is a highlight on the British social calendar, with Britain's Queen Elizabeth attending most days. — Internet

Lebanese woman could be world's oldest

SHIYATTA, 16 June — A Lebanese woman who has documents saying she was born in 1877 — making her at least 126 years old — could be the oldest person in the world.

Hamiida Musulmani, frail and wrinkled but still working on her family's farm in south Lebanon, showed Reuters this week a document from Lebanon's 1932 census which lists her birth year as 1877.

She feels well, she said, but complained of failing sight.

Local officials said her papers were authentic, although they date from a year when she would already have turned 55.

If the census papers are accurate, Musulmani would now be four years older than the oldest person officially documented — a French woman who died seven years ago at the age of 122.

Musulmani comes from a Shi'ite Muslim farming family. Documents show her husband Ali was born in 1890, which would have made him 13 years younger than his wife. He died in 1960.

Musulmani said she had stopped growing many years ago. Though her family grows and dresses tobacco, she does not smoke. "I only eat what I grow," she said. "I am fine, it is only my eyes that cannot see properly.

She says she has about 100 descendants, the youngest of whom is 10 months old.

The leading US doctors' group, the American Medical Association, also called for disclosing all medical studies to the public.

Editors at the journals, including the Lancet and the New England Journal of Medicine, declined to discuss the New York Times report but confirmed it was accurate.

"There is nothing false in the story," said a spokesman for the influential New England Journal.

"Many medical groups also sponsor conferences for sharing research. But researchers are often part of a web of links to the drug industry. Research is expensive and often the only way to fund it is with a drug company's help. Then the question arises of whether a company is in a position to influence either the results, or at least which results get published."

According to the Times report, the International Committee of Medical Journal Editors is considering a proposal that would require drug makers to register clinical trials in a public database when they are started.

That way, publishers and the public can check to see if results are submitted on schedule, or look for a pattern of companies quietly dropping trials that do not have the hoped-for outcome.
Beckham to frame Zidane’s shirt

LOSTON, 17 June — David Beckham plans to frame the shirt worn by Zinedine Zidane when the French captain scored his two injury-time goals to sink England 2-1 at Euro 2004.

However, Beckham, the England captain, will wait until his Real Madrid teammate has time to sign the shirt.

Recalling the scene after Sunday’s final whistle, Beckham told reporters: “We said a few things in Spanish and swapped shirts... He had a smile to say ‘that’s the way it goes’.”

Asked what he would do with the shirt, the England skipper said: “I’ll frame it and put it in my house. You have great memories of a great player and memories are good.

You always look back on things and sometimes it’s good to have disappointing memories so you can look forward to the better ones ahead of you.”

Paying tribute to Zidane’s attitude to the game, Beckham said: “He loves playing and loves learning, he works as hard in training as he does in matches and that’s what is good to see about players like that. They don’t just do it in games... I’m proud to be in the same team as him.”

Both men faced the responsibility of taking a penalty on Sunday. Beckham’s was brilliantly saved by Fabien Barthez but Zidane, blazing past his David James to secure an improbable victory in the final seconds.

Unfazed by having missed a spot-kick which could have given England a match-winning 2-0 lead, Beckham said he would be happy to keep taking them — even if he kept missing.

“Nothing will defeat me. That’s the way I look at things,” he said. “Even if I miss the next four or five penalties, then I’ll step up and take one. I’m not sure people would want me to do it again.

“Maybe if I’d taken four and missed four, then I’d let someone like Frank Lampard take it instead — maybe I wouldn’t have any choice.”

Beckham is now focusing on Thursday’s Group B game against Switzerland at the Coimbra and channelling the players’ fury at having let a priceless victory against the European champions slip away.

“Throughout the game the players, new, are happy to take it instead — maybe I wouldn’t have any choice.”

Russia out

BERLIN, 17 June — Portugal resurrected their Euro 2004 hopes and ended those of 10-man Russia with a 2-0 victory on Wednesday but will still need to beat neighbours Spain in their final group game to advance to the quarterfinals.

The keeper got a fair touch with his feet but, seemingly inadvertently, touched the loose ball with his arm and was shown an immediate red card by Norwegian referee Terje Hauge.

However, Portugal still found themselves forced to defend. Goalkeeper Ricardo was happy to punch out a stinging shot by Andrei Karyaka 10 minutes after the restart and only a brilliant tackle by Carvalho denied Alexander Kerzhakov a clear path to goal.

The scores seemed to spark Portugal into life and Luis Figo thought he had scored when he finished a superb passing move with a firm low shot only for substitute keeper Vaischeslav Malafeeyes to brilliantly touch it on to a post.

But Rui Costa finally made sure of the victory when he knocked the ball home after a cross from fellow substitute Cristiano Ronaldo in the 89th minute.

—— MNA/Reuters

Thailand manager, coach quit after North Korea defeat

BANGKOK, 17 June — Thailand manager Tawatchai Saikulaj and head coach Carlos Roberto Carvalho have quit after the team’s 4-1 defeat by North Korea in a World Cup qualifier last week. “I feel sadness and regret because I love football and I have been trying to do my best, but I disappointed the Thai people. I need to be punished,” Tawatchai told Reuters on Wednesday.

Brazilian Carvalho, who took over from Englishman Peter Withe last September, will return to the national Under-21 team he coached before his promotion.

Prime Minister Thaksin Shinawatra criticized the team following last Wednesday’s loss which left Thailand third in Asian zone Group Five with three points from seven games. United Arab Emirates top the group with seven points.

—— MNA/Reuters

Portugal still alive, Russia out

BERLIN, 17 June — Portugal resurrected their Euro 2004 hopes and ended those of 10-man Russia with a 2-0 victory on Wednesday but will still need to beat neighbours Spain in their final group game to advance to the quarterfinals.

The relief felt by the crowd and players was almost palpable after the suffering in Porto last Saturday and the home side took control from then on.

Deco sent a volley over the bar, Pauleta was inches away from connecting with a Henrik Larsson-style diving header and defender Ricardo Carvalho sent a header over the bar.

Though they dropped off the pace later in the half, the result was effectively decided in the 45th minute when Ovchininkov raced from his line to face Pauleta as the forward chased an eminent back pass.

—— MNA/Reuters

Frings to join Bayern Munich from Dortmund

BERLIN, 17 June — Germany’s international midfielder Torsten Frings will join Bayern Munich from Borussia Dortmund.

Bayern spokesman Markus Hoervick was quoted by Germany’s SID news agency on Wednesday confirming a report in Bild newspaper that they had agreed a deal with Dortmund for Frings, who scored for Germany in their 1-1 draw against the Netherlands at Euro 2004 on Tuesday.

No details about the transfer fee were published but Bild said the figure was 10 million euros (12.14 million US dollars) and Frings would sign a three-year contract.

The newspaper said Dortmund was selling Frings because of financial problems linked to early exits from the Bundesliga and UEFA Cup last season.

Dortmund finished sixth in the Bundesliga missing out on a place in next season’s UEFA Cup competition.

Frings, 27, is Bayern’s third major signing for next season, after Brazilian defender Lucio joined from Bayer Leverkusen and striker Vahid Hashemian arrived from Villarreal.

Bayern, who finished second in the league behind Werder Bremen, are also due to sign Andreas Georteiz from TSV 1860 early to a medical next week.

—— MNA/Reuters

Spain’s Fernando Morientes (R) shoots the ball past Greece’s goalkeeper Antonios Nikopolidis (top) to score, as Tomas Delis (L) and Costas Katatsimnas (on ground) watch, during their Euro 2004 Group A soccer match at the Bessa Stadium in Porto on 16 June, 2004.

—— INTERNET

Spain’s Fernando Morientes (R) shoots the ball past Greece’s goalkeeper Antonios Nikopolidis (top) to score, as Tomas Delis (L) and Costas Katatsimnas (on ground) watch, during their Euro 2004 Group A soccer match at the Bessa Stadium in Porto on 16 June, 2004.
YANGON, 17 June — Member of the State Peace and Development Council Lt-Gen Khin Maung Than of the Ministry of Defence on 15 June met with officials concerned at Pyay and gave instruction on matters relating to extended cultivation of monsoon paddy and land reclamation.

Also present were Chairman of Bago Division PDC Commander of the Southern Command Maj-Gen Ko Ko, Bago Division (West) PDC Chairman Col Hla Min and departmental officials.

Head of Bago Division Land Records Department U Chit Swe reported on tasks being undertaken and departmental officials concerned reported on future work programmes. Lt-Gen Khin Maung Than gave necessary instructions and filled requirements. He met local farmers. The Pogadoe embankment is 8 miles long and it has a sluice gate. By having the embankment, farmers in Thaha navyon, Pogado, Ngaprya Chaung, Ywinnk and Hinku Wathit villages in Bilin village-tract can protect their cultivated fields from flood and undertake double and multiple cropping. Lt-Gen Khin Maung Than urged them to strive for extending sown acreage and increasing output of paddy. They can now put 2,700 acres under paddy. It is very beneficial to the rural economic development.

Lt-Gen Khin Maung Than and party proceeded by car to Myanmar Myint Co's integrated farm in Letpadan Township, Thayawady District. At the briefing hall of the farm, Project Director U Thet Zaw of the company reported on integrated farming, land reclamation, plan targets and future work programmes. Lt-Gen Khin Maung Than gave instructions on extending cultivation of monsoon paddy and winter crops. Myanmar Myint Company has extended the cultivation of monsoon paddy and winter crops. Lt-Gen Khin Maung Than and party inspected the farm and gave necessary instructions.

Lt-Gen Khin Maung Than and party officered at Pyay Township Peace and Development Council Chairman U Myint Swe reported on irrigated areas and job opportunities for the locals with the use of charts. Lt-Gen Khin Maung Than gave necessary instructions. Afterward, Lt-Gen Khin Maung Than met local people cordially. He said while the Government is making necessary instructions and fulfilled requirements. He met local farmers. The Pogadoe embankment is 8 miles long and it has a sluice gate. By having the embankment, farmers in Thatha navyon, Pogado, Ngaprya Chaung, Ywinnk and Hinku Wathit villages in Bilin village-tract can protect their cultivated fields from flood and undertake double and multiple cropping. Lt-Gen Khin Maung Than urged them to strive for extending sown acreage and increasing output of paddy. They can now put 2,700 acres under paddy. It is very beneficial to the rural economic development.

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Later, Lt-Gen Khin Maung Than and party left there by car and arrived back in Yangon in the afternoon. — MNA