Prime Minister General Khin Nyunt receives guests from WIPO

YANGON, 28 June — Prime Minister of the Union of Myanmar General Khin Nyunt received Deputy Director General Mr Geoffrey Yu of World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO) at Zeyathiri Beikman here at 8.30 am today.

Also present at the call were Minister for Commerce Brig-Gen Pyi Soe, Minister for Foreign Affairs U Win Aung, Director-General of Government Office U Soe Tint and Director-General of Protocol Department Thura U Aung Htet. — MNA

Plenary Session of the National Convention continues

YANGON, 28 June — The Plenary Session of the National Convention continued today at Pyidaungsu Hall in Nyaungshapin Camp, Hmautby Township at 9 am today. At the plenary session, proposal papers of the delegate group of representatives-elect regarding the detailed basic principles to be laid down for power sharing in legislative, executive and judicial sectors to be included in framing the National Convention were read out.

Present at the plenary session were Chairman of the National Convention Convening Commission Secretary-2 of the State Peace and Development Council Lt-Gen Thein Sein and commission members, National Convention Convening Work Committee Chairman Chief Justice U Aung Toe and members, National Convention Convening Management Committee Chairman Auditor General Maj-Gen Lun Maung and members, chairman of various subcommittees and officials, delegates of the Kayin Democracy and Unity Party, National Unity Party, Union Kayin League, Union Pa-O National Organization, Mro or Khami National Solidarity Organization, Lahj National Development Party and Wa National Development Party, representatives-elect of the National Unity Party and Mro or Khami National Solidarity Organization, independent delegates, national race delegates, peasant delegates and worker delegates of Kachin State, Kayah State, Kayin State, Chin State, Mon State, Rakhine State, Shan State (South), Shan State (North), Shan State (East), Sagaing Division, Taninthayi Division, Rangoon Division, Magway Division, Mandalay Division, Yangon Division, Bago Division, Ayeyawady Division, intellectuals and intellectuals of the State Peace and Development Council Office, the President’s Office, the Pyithu Hluttaw Office, the Government Office, the Supreme Court, the Attorney-General’s Office, the Auditor-General’s Office, the Multiparty Party Democracy General Election Commission’s Office, Civil Service Selection and Training Board, Yangon City Development Committee, Mandalay City Development Committee and ministries, other invited delegates, representatives of peace groups from Shan State (North) Special Region-1, Shan State (North) Special Region-2, Shan State (North) Special Region-3, Shan State (East) Special Region-4, Shan State (North) Special Region-5 (KDA), Shan State (South) Special Region-6, Shan State (North) Special Region-7, Kachin State Special Region-1, Kachin State Special Region-2, Kayah State Special Region-1, Kayah State Special Region-2, Kayah State Special Region-3, Kayah State Special Region-4, Kayah State Special Region-5, Kayin National Democratic Party (KNPP) Dragon Group, Kayin National Progressive Party (KNPP) Splinter, Hpa-an, Kayin National Unity and Solidarity Organization (Ka Ma Sa Nya), Shan State Nationalities People’s Liberation Organization (Ya La La Pha), New Mon State Party, Democratic Kayin Buddhist Association (DKBA), Haung-thaw Special Region Group, Nyechinchanay Myohit Group of Hpa-an Township of Kayin State which exchanged arms for peace, Shan State National Army, the group led by U Saw Tun Oo of Rakhine State, Homein Region Welfare and Development Group, Shwepyiay (MTA) Group, Manpa Regional Militia Group, Mon Armed Peace Group (Changuchi Region), Mon (Splinter) Nai Sawk Chan Group and Arakanese Army (AA).

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PERSPECTIVES
Tuesday, 29 June, 2004

Try to meet the needs and wishes of local people

The Government has been striving on all fronts for the Union of Myanmar to become as developed as other nations in the world and to be able to exist as long as the world is. Human resource development is the key to the national development and so the Government has given top priority to it.

Head of State Senior General Than Shwe, on one occasion, gave guidance on human resource development. He said that development of some border areas was faster than that of the regions in the inner part of the nation, that it was necessary to keep the momentum of development and that all the necessary measures should be taken to raise the living standard of the local people and to eradicate poverty. Special attention should be given to human resource development especially in the border areas, he added.

In accordance with the guidance of the Head of State, new basic education schools are being opened and the existing ones upgraded. Moreover, more and more colleges, degree colleges and universities are being opened and 3-R campaigns carried out in the remote areas.

Chairman of the Work Committee for Development of Border Areas and National Races Prime Minister General Khin Nyunt met the students who had obtained arts and science degrees from Yangon and Mandalay Nationalities Youth Resource Development Degree Colleges of the Ministry for Progress of Border Areas and National Races and Development Affairs and AGTI engineering diplomas in the Diamond Jubilee Hall on 27 June and gave words of advice to them.

In his address on the occasion, the Prime Minister said: this is the third of the ceremonies that have been held every year to celebrate the graduation and assignment of duties to students who have successfully completed the courses of the Nationalities Youth Resource Development Degree Colleges. This demonstrates clearly that the avowed goal of the State is to develop human resources and undertake capacity building in the border areas by opening up opportunities for pursuit of higher education for youths of the national races and nurturing them to become intellectuals, professionals and technicians.

In the 2003-2004 academic year, Yangon and Mandalay Degree Colleges produced 72 professionals and technicians.

Showroom and service centre opens

Yangon, 28 June — A ceremony to open Showroom and Service Centre of Nibban Electric & Electronics was held at No 111 Boywe Street, Latha Township yesterday morning, where owner of Nibban Electric & Electronics U Thein Kyi and Dr Than Htike formally opened the signboard.

Next, Showroom and Service Centre was opened by owner U Thein Kyi and Vice-President U Zaw Min Win of Union of Myanmar Federation of Chambers of Commerce and Industry. Antennas, inverters, regulators, safeguards, chargers are available in the show room and service centre.

833 gem merchants arrive

Yangon, 28 June — A total of 833 gem merchants- 464 of 176 foreign companies and 369/125 local ones have already arrived the special sales of jade and gems 2004 being held at Myanmar Gems Mart on Kaba Aye Pagoda Road. Present at the special sale were 372 Chinese jewellers of 150 companies from China, 72 of 18 Thai companies, 15 of 4 companies of Singapore, 2 of 2 American companies, 2 of 1 Indian company, 1 of Japanese companies. The arriving gems merchants inspected jade and gems shown in special sales from 9 am to 5 pm. Jade lots will be sold through tender and competitive systems.

833 gem merchants arrive

Yangon, 28 June — The Entertainment and Welfare Subcommittee of the National Convention Convening Management Committee is organizing entertainment programmes for delegates to the National Convention every day starting from 7 pm in the gymnasium of Nyaungshin Min Naung. Yesterday evening, the delegates were entertained by ‘MRTV Modern Music Band’. Among the audience were Vice-Chairman of the National Convention Convening Commission Minister for Electric Power Maj-Gen Tin Htut, Secretary Minister for Information Brig-Gen Kyaw Htun, Chairman of the Management Committee Auditor General Maj-Gen Lwin Maitri and members and officials.

MRTV Modern Music Band sang the song, “La-young-hma-la-tho-pa” composed by Tekkatho Myat Thu in honour of the National Convention.

Next, vocalists Kyaw Kyaw Htoo, Nwe Dali Lin, Alex, May Kha La, Tu Tu, Mi Mi Win Phay, May Ywet Wa, Yadana Oo and one Thin Pa sang the songs to the accompaniment of MRTV Modern Music Band. The delegates also took part in the entertainment.

Vice-Chairman of the National Convention Convening Commission Minister for Electric Power Maj-Gen Tin Htut, Yangon Division Representative of National Races Delegate Group to National Convention Dr Khin Shwe (Zaykaba) and Auditor-General Maj-Gen Lwin Maitri presented cash awards to the music band and performers.

Minister for Commerce Brig-Gen Pyi Sone makes a speech at the Workshop on Implementation of Agreement on Technical Copyright.

Commerce Minister attends opening of workshop

Yangon, 28 June — An opening ceremony of Workshop on implementation of agreement on technical copyright was held at Grand Plaza Parkroyal Hotel on Alanya Pagoda road this morning. It was attended by Minister for Commerce Brig-Gen Pyi Sone. Present on the occasion were Minister for Science and Technology U Thaung, Minister at Prime Minister’s Office Maj-Gen Thein Swe, Deputy Director-General of World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO) Mr Geoffrey Yu and officials, officials of the Ministry of Commerce and invited persons. First, Minister for Commerce Brig-Gen Pyi Sone made an opening speech. Deputy Director-General of WIPO Mr Geoffrey Yu extended greetings which brought the ceremony to an end.

A total of 36 trainees of ministries and organizations are taking part in the workshop which will continue tomorrow.

Vice-Chairman of National Convention Minister for Electric Power Maj-Gen Tin Htut, Secretary Minister for Information Brig-Gen Kyaw Htun, members and delegates enjoy entertainment presented by MRTV Modern Music Band.

“MRTV Modern Music Band” entertains NC delegates

Yangon, 28 June — The Entertainment and Welfare Subcommittee of the National Convention Convening Management Committee is organizing entertainment programmes for delegates to the National Convention every day starting from 7 pm in the gymnasium of Nyaungshin Min Naung. Yesterday evening, the delegates were entertained by ‘MRTV Modern Music Band’. Among the audience were Vice-Chairman of the National Convention Convening Commission Minister for Electric Power Maj-Gen Tin Htut, Secretary Minister for Information Brig-Gen Kyaw Htun, Chairman of the Management Committee Auditor General Maj-Gen Lwin Maitri and members and officials.

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NATO chief says trans-Atlantic ties impossible to return to pre-Iraq war status

"""STAMBUL, 27 June — Secretary-General of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) Jaap de Hoop Scheffer said today that it is impossible for the trans-Atlantic ties to return to the pre-Iraq war status.

He made the remarks at the conference of the German Marshall Fund before the opening of NATO summit meeting scheduled for 28-29 June.

"Last year was, by any standards, a tough year for trans-Atlantic relations and for the Alliance. The controversy over Iraq pitted European countries against each other. It created major frictions across the Atlantic," he said.

However, he said that the situation is markedly different.

"When I admit to a certain sense of relief, it is not because I am somehow hoping that we could safely return to the trans-Atlantic status quo ante, pre-Iraq. This is impossible, he stressed.

He said that both sides of the Atlantic Ocean should create a new trans-Atlantic security consensus by projecting stability, new military capabilities, recognition of the European Union as a genuine security actor and engagement in North Africa and the broader Middle East.

The summit meeting of NATO, first after the military alliance’s last round of enlargement, will mainly focus on NATO transformation, its relations with third parties and NATO’s role in reconstruction of Iraq.

France opposes US Iraq plan

BAGHDAD, 28 June — NATO struggled to overcome old divisions over Iraq yesterday, with France still blocking plans for the alliance to play a major role in training Iraq’s new armed forces.

Despite public talk of agreement on the training mission, it was clear that the 36 members of the alliance had very different views on where the training would be carried out, whether it would be carried out under NATO auspices and how many personnel would be involved.

The dispute came as a new hostage crisis was emerging in Iraq apparently involving a US marine. Al-Jazeera broadcast a videotape showing what it said was a marine of Pakistani origin held hostage in Iraq.

The TV station said the group demanded the release of all Iraqis "in occupation jails" or the man would be killed.

In Istanbul, the 26 NATO heads of state attended a formal dinner in an Ottoman-era palace on the banks of the Bosphorus, keen to portray a united front.

NATO’s secretary general, Jaap De Hoop Scheffer said there was a "new momentum in transatlantic security cooperation", and he suggested that the unilateralism of the Bush administration and conservatives who had derided NATO’s usefulness was dead. "Those US unilateralists who thought that the United States didn’t really need allies have come to realise that the US not only needs allies but also the alliance," he said.

US President, George Bush, was clearly reading from the same script. "We are going to work together to help make sure that NATO is configured militarily to meet the threats of the 21st century," Mr Bush said when he arrived in Istanbul. But behind the scenes, diplomats worked feverishly to thrash out a deal on the training of Iraq’s armed forces, with the detail of the plan still in the air.

Mr De Hoop Scheffer, said yesterday: "I cannot give you details on numbers as yet. NATO is going to do training. Training is essential. It can be both inside and outside the country."

The differences centre on whether NATO should train Iraqi officers inside the country under an alliance flag, or limit its role to training outside Iraq and acting as a clearing house for national efforts.

French officials said it would be a job for allies, not the alliance as a whole, and there would "no NATO flag" in Iraq.

In another blow, NATO defence ministers postponed a decision yesterday to set new targets to ensure that their armed forces can deploy and sustain themselves on far flung missions. — Internet

Syria debates imposing sanctions on US

BAAGHDAAD, 27 June—Syrian legislators have begun debating a draft law that would prohibit trade dealings with American companies in response to US sanctions imposed on the Arab country last month.

Inaam Abbas, a lawmaker who read out the draft law to Parliament on Sunday, said the initiative was "in response to the calls of the Arab people to boycott US products due to the unjust policies that the US espouses toward the Arab and Islamic nations."

The draft bill, introduced by independent lawmaker Muhammad Radwan Al-Masri, holds the signatures of 127 members of the 250-seat Parliament. "Due to the actions of the United States that do not affect currently operating companies or already concluded business agreements."

Josef Swaid, an independent lawmaker from the National Syrian Party, told reporters the law would not affect currently operating companies or already concluded business agreements.

Swaaid said the door of dialogue with the US is not closed. "Even if the law is passed, dialogue will stay on and relations could be reassessed and put once again on the right course."

Internet

Malaysian minister urges ASEAN private sector to be more proactive

KUALA LUMPUR, 27 June—A Malaysian minister Saturday urged the private sector in ASEAN to be more proactive in pursuing business activities in the region rather than depending solely on the government.

"It is clear from the trade missions to the three ASEAN nations that the private sector still very much expects the governments to carry out the works in order for them to get more benefits," Minister of International Trade and Industry Rafidah Aziz told reporters here.

Rafidah just ended her three nation tour to Vietnam, Thailand and Indonesia, member states of the Association of South-East Asian Nations (ASEAN). ASEAN, now grouping 10 countries in the region, was set up in 1967 to boost regional cooperation.

Rafidah said while the ASEAN governments were trying to set up the structure and platforms for cooperation between the private sectors in the region, what more important was that the ASEAN companies themselves took a proactive stance in their efforts to identify their trade and joint business partners.

She said there were many mechanisms through which the private sector could expand as well as obtain their market information of the region, such as through the new Malaysia-Thailand Chambers of Commerce (MTCC), Indonesia-Malaysia Business Council (IMBC) and the ASEAN Business Council.

However, Rafidah said that there was a need for ASEAN governments to cut down on bureaucracy and other problems faced by the private sector due to old or outdated regulations or laws that could no longer be applied. "The ASEAN governments also need to pay more attention to regulations that result in higher costs for the private sector," she said.

The ASEAN leaders signed the Declaration of ASEAN Concord II last year, which lays down the pillars for the ASEAN single community by 2020. — MNA/Xinhua

Foreign investment in Vietnam up in first half

HANOI, 27 June— As of June 20, Vietnam has attracted foreign direct investment (FDI) of nearly 1.47 billion US dollars in the first half of this year, a year-on-year rise of 11.4 per cent.

In the period, the country lured over 754.3 million US dollars of fresh investment from 259 newly-licensed projects, and 711.1 million US dollars of additional capital from 106 operational projects, said the Ministry of Planning and Investment on Friday. — MNA/Xinhua

The draft bill Al-Masri said the law was also a result of America’s "unlimited bias" toward Israel, the killing and destruction in Iraq and the Syria Accountability Act.

In May, US President George Bush banned all US exports to Syria except for food and medicine and barred Syrian flights to and from the US after long-standing complaints that Syria "was supporting terrorism and undermining US efforts in Iraq."

The sanctions were based on the Syria Accountability Act, a law passed last year that calls for sanctions against Syria for its alleged support of terrorism. Syria denies the US claims and says the sanctions are political.

Joesph Swaid, an independent lawmaker from the National Syrian Party, told reporters the law would not affect currently operating companies or already concluded business agreements.

Swaaid said the door of dialogue with the US is not closed. "Even if the law is passed, dialogue will stay on and relations could be reassessed and put once again on the right course."

Internet
Kidnapped US Marine faces Iraq beheading

Baghdad, 28 June—Iraqi TV showed a blindfolded man in military uniforms being led out by armed men. The US commander in Iraq called on security forces to act immediately to release the US Marine. The US military否认 it was a Marine, but an American kidnap victim denied it.

Impact on Iraq’s finances

Iraqi TV broadcast a voice saying the US had released the Marine and that the incident would not affect the peace transition. Analysts said it would create financial troubles for the US-led military operation.

IMF head, Singapore leaders hold talks

SINGAPORE, 27 June—The International Monetary Fund (IMF) Managing Director Rodrigo de Rato on Friday discussed with Singapore leaders global and regional issues. In my meetings, we had wide-ranging discussions on global and regional issues, including the possible risks to the strong recovery now underway, and the part that Asian regional financial cooperation.

Vietnam’s crude oil export rises

HANOI, 27 June—Vietnam is estimated to export 9.7 million tons of crude oil worth $2.4 billion US dollars in the first six months of this year, up 12.6 per cent in volume and up 20 per cent in value against the same period last year. It was understood that all revenues will be paid into a central fund.

Malaysia’s tourists arrive up in January-April

KUALA LUMPUR, 27 June—Malaysia recorded 5,245,100 foreign tourists between January and April this year, up 7.3 per cent over the same period last year, Malaysia National News Agency reported on Friday.

American killed in attack on Australia plane in Iraq

CANBERRA, 27 June—A US contractor was killed in an attack on an Australian transport aircraft in Iraq, Australia’s defence force said Monday.

Iraq billions of cash unaccounted for

Baghdad, 28 June—Discrepancies are highlighted in the handling of $20bn (£11bn) generated from Iraq’s oil and other sources since war ended last year. But, according to the Lib Dems, there is a shortfall of up to $3.7bn (£2.0bn) between the amount of oil revenue earned and the money paid into the DFI by the CPA. Iraq’s oil resources generate billions of dollars each year and both studies insist it is not known how that money has been spent.

Australian troops still on duty in and around Iraq and it is shaping up as a key issue before a close-run election expected within months. Howard wants the troops to remain until the job is done but Latham, who opposed the US-led war in Iraq, has vowed to bring them home by Christmas if he wins the election.
Irish Prime Minister tells Bush Europe abhorred Abu Ghraib abuse

NEWMARKET-ON-FERGUS (Ireland), 27 June — Europeans were appalled by the abuse of Iraqi prisoners at the Abu Ghraib Prison, Irish Prime Minister Bertie Ahern told US President George W Bush on Saturday.

“President Bush is very much aware of the abhorrence that the people of Ireland and of Europe felt at the abuse of Iraqi prisoners by coalition forces,” Ahern said in a statement after holding bilateral talks with Bush.

Images of US soldiers humiliating and abusing Iraqi prisoners at Iraq’s Abu Ghraib jail earlier this year dealt a severe blow to stated US aims of winning Iraqi hearts and minds after the war to oust former president Saddam Hussein.

Ahern, whose country holds the rotating presidency of the European Union, was hosting Bush at an EU-US summit, and he said Iraq was high on the agenda. “It is vital that we move forward together in the coming days as the transfer of sovereignty approaches,” he said.

The United States is due to hand over sovereignty in Iraq to the Baghdad government on 30 June.

Ahern also raised the issue of treatment of prisoners in Guantanamo Bay, a US base in Cuba where hundreds of prisoners suspected of belonging to or having links with the former Taliban regime in Afghanistan are being held without charge.

MNA/Reuters

US military fired on in Najaf

NAJAF, 27 June — A US military convoy on Saturday came under fire from Shi'ite militiamen in the Iraqi city of Najaf where a truce was agreed earlier this month after weeks of fighting, residents said.

The convoy of Humvees and trucks was shot at as it travelled on the outskirts of the holy city, 100 miles south of Baghdad, where US forces spent weeks putting down a rebellion by Shi'ite militiamen.

There were no immediate reports of any casualties or damage in the exchange of fire. The US military said it had no information.

Militiamen loyal to rebel Shi'ite cleric Moqtada al-Sadr took over the centre of Najaf, home to Shi'ite Islam's holiest shrine, in April but relinquished control to Iraqi police as part of a ceasefire struck earlier this month.

However, some renegade militiamen are still hiding out in the city and have occasionally shot at US military convoys moving on the periphery of the town. — MNA/Reuters

Iranian police blame US, Britain for flow of Afghan drugs

TEHERAN, 27 June — Iran's police blamed Britain and the United States for bumper poppy crops in Afghanistan that are enflaming social problems in the Islamic Republic where more than two million people are drug addicts.

Iranian forces marked the UN International Day Against Drug Abuse and Illicit Trafficking in Teheran on Saturday by blowing up a huge mound of seized drugs topped with a picture of a bat-like monster with blood-red eyes.

They chanted “Death to America” as the contraband exploded.

“We hold America and Britain responsible for this situation... Americans are in charge of Afghanistan's security and Britons are responsible for fighting drugs there,” said anti-narcotics commander Mehdi Abuee.

Iran is the main route for Afghan drugs heading West.

The police announced they reckoned at least 120,000 acres of Afghan farmland were under poppy cultivation, adding this was unprecedented in the country’s history.

MNA/Reuters

Schroeder says Germany will not budge on Iraq troops

BERLIN, 28 June — Chancellor Gerhard Schroeder said on Sunday Germany would not budge on its refusal to send troops to Iraq, but does not expect that to become a contentious issue at the NATO summit in Istanbul on Monday.

Speaking to journalists in Berlin before boarding a plane to Istanbul, Schroeder said the transatlantic row over the Iraqi war belonged in the history books and that all NATO states were interested in improving stability and democracy in Iraq.

"There’s no change — there will be no German soldiers in Iraq," Schroeder said.

"I've said that from the start and that will be the position that we’ll be taking in Istanbul." — MNA/Reuters

3.5 kilos of cocaine seized at Sydney Airport

CANBERRA, 27 June — Australian police have seized 3.5 kilos of cocaine at Sydney Airport and arrested a 25-year-old man on charges of drug trafficking.

Australian Federal Police said Friday that the man arriving Thursday on a flight from Los Angeles was selected for a baggage examination. The drug was found in his bag.

He appeared in the Central Local Court in Sydney on Friday and will appear at the court again on 18 August.

The maximum penalty for drug trafficking in Australia is a fine of $25,000 US dollars and/or life imprisonment.

MNA/Xinhua

US Army soldiers raid a section of Abu Ghraib, on the outskirts of Baghdad, Iraq, while searching for weapons on 26 June, 2004. — internet

UN urges stronger policies to prevent spread of drugs

VIENNA, 27 June — The United Nations on Friday urged all the countries in the world to join hands and introduce stronger policies to prevent the spread of drugs.

“Stronger prevention and treatment policies are needed throughout societies,” as the “current levels of illicit drug use, together with the health consequences and criminal activities associated with it, are clearly unacceptable”, said Antonio Costa, executive director of the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC).

Costa made the remarks while presenting the World Drug Report 2004 at a press conference in Moscow.

“Although the large majority of the world population remains untouched by illicit drug use, the youth in particular, and Governments need to do much more to prevent abuse, and to assist those who are already affected,” he added.

“Especially worrisome is the spread of HIV/AIDS among injecting drug users. The weight of law enforcement has to concentrate on drug traffickers, while our help and compassion must go to those who have been victimized by the evil merchants,” he said.

In his opinion, poverty and weak governments facilitated trafficking, and sensationalism and exclusion caused abuse, which has a negative impact both on individuals and the functioning of societies as a whole.

“Drug control priorities therefore need to be placed firmly into the mainstream of a country’s socio-economic agenda,” the UN official stressed.

According to the drug report, some 185 million people around the world — approximately 3 per cent of the global population — have used drugs at least once during the previous 12 months.

The most widely abused drug substance is cannabis, with more than 150 million people using it at least once a year, followed by the amphetamine-type stimulants, said the report.

While calling for more attention to fight drugs, Costa admitted that there are some “encouraging results,” such as a slowdown in the spread of drug abuse.

“After the significant growth of drug abuse in the past half century, the spread of drugs in the world has slowed down,” he said.

Less than one adult out of 30, or 5 per cent of the world population aged 15 to 64, has used illicit drugs in the past 12 months, said Costa. — MNA/Xinhua

An Iraqi man waits while US Army soldiers search his home for weapons during a raid in Abu Ghraib, on the outskirts of Baghdad, Iraq, on 26 June, 2004. — internet
Political parties attacked in Iraq’s Baquba

BAGHDAD, 28 June—The offices of Iraq’s two major political parties in the central northern city of Baquba were attacked on Saturday, leaving at least four people killed.

The third floor of a building housing the office of Iraqi National Accord, the party to which Iraqi Prime Minister Iyad Allawi belongs, was blown up by explosives, reports said.

A spokesman from Allawi’s office in Baghdad had no word on the extent of damage or type of casualties caused in the incident.

Shortly before the explosion, around 20 armed men crashed into an office of the Supreme Council for the Islamic Revolution in Iraq, another major Shi’ite political party, killing four people including three security guards.

A suicide bomber was gunned down before he was able to detonate the explosives tied to his body, sources said.

The pair of attacks took place two days after a group purportedly led by terror master Abu Mussab Zarqawi attacked a police station and a government office in the city, 60 kilometres northeast of Baghdad. More than 10 policemen and two US soldiers were killed in the fighting.

Saturday’s attacks were mounted almost simultaneously with another car bomb attack at a Kurdish regional government building in Arbil, northern Iraq.

Mahmoud Mohammed, Culture Minister of the Kurdistan Democratic Party, was wounded, and one of his bodyguards was killed, said Qatar based al-Jazeera channel.

— MNA/Xinhua

Iraqi minister says Arab firms will have priority

CAIRO, 28 June—Iraq’s new interim government will give priority to companies from Arab countries when awarding contracts for reconstruction work, Iraqi Housing and Construction Minister Omar al-Damluji said on Sunday.

Damluji arrived in Cairo from Lebanon on Sunday for talks with Egyptian Government and company officials about their possible participation in Iraq’s reconstruction programme.

“We will give Egyptian and Arab companies priority to carry out reconstruction contracts in Iraq as part of our desire to cooperate with any state in this field,” he told reporters.

Iraq’s Interim Government will also place a priority on employing Iraqi workers to reduce unemployment, he added.

Egyptian companies, with the exception of mobile phone operator Orascom Telecom, have been reluctant to participate in Iraq’s reconstruction, citing uncertainty about the status of Iraq’s Governing Council, which dissolved itself on June 1.

The Egyptian Government has not yet established full diplomatic relations with the interim government which took the council’s place. Officials say Egypt is waiting to see what happens on and after 30 June, the date set by the United States for the planned handover to the interim government.

— MNA/Reuters

Chinese farmers’ paintings to be exhibited in France

CHONGQING, 28 June—A total of 400 print works of Chinese farmers, or pictures printed from an engraved or etched plate, will be exhibited early July in Toulouse, France, a local official said on Sunday.

It is part of the ongoing “Chinese Culture Year in France”, said Gui Huayong, director of the Farmers Print Academy of Qijiang County, Chongqing Municipality in southwest China.

Gui has been busy these days in preparing the print works. Print art by farmers in the county started to bloom in the 1980s, reflecting mainly life of local villagers with unique ruralism.

Since 1984, print works from Qijiang farmers have been sent for exhibitions in major Chinese cities and in more than 10 countries including Britain, Canada, Japan, Italy and the United States.

The county was honored as home for modern Chinese folk painting by the Chinese Ministry of Culture.

— MNA/Xinhua

Thousands of Cubans protest US measures against island

HAVANA, 27 June—More than 10,000 Cubans gathered Saturday at Tribuna Abierta, in the central province of Sancti Spiritus’ Jatibonico Municipality, to protest measures announced on 6 June, which usually takes place at weekends.

Washington’s decision to harden the economic, financial and commercial blocade unilaterally adopted against the island some 40 years ago.

US President George W. Bush decided to disburse $29 million US dollars in the next two years to launch measures aiming to reduce the money remitted by Cuban emigrants to their families in the island, and other actions seeking to drown the national economy and promote a rebellion.

Participants also expressed support for the position voiced by Cuban President Fidel Castro last June 21, when he warned that a war against Cuba could never be won by the invading power. They urged for justice for five Cubans convicted in the United States for allegedly acting against the country’s national security.

— MNA/Xinhua

An Iraqi woman and her children leave their home as US troops from the First Infantry Division enter the building during search for weapons in Baquba, Iraq, on 26 June, 2004. — INTERNET

Attack on US plane in Iraq kills one

BAGHDAD, 28 June—A US C-130 transport plane was hit by gunfire after takeoff from Baghdad airport on Sunday and one person aboard was fatally wounded, the US Army said.

“It was a tragic day,” a US spokesman said.

The aircraft was wounded which caused the aircraft to divert back to Baghdad International Airport for medical treatment,” the spokesman said.

US spokesman Brigadier General Mark Kimmitt said in a statement. “The individual later died.”

The attack marked the first time since the fall of Saddam Hussein that guerrillas have mounted a deadly attack on a fixed wing plane taking off or landing at Baghdad’s Airport.

In January a US Air Force C-5 cargo jet carrying 63 passengers and crew was hit by ground fire and made a safe emergency landing.

Last year a DHL cargo plane also made an emergency landing after being hit by ground fire.

— MNA/Reuters

Vietnam’s blood supply decreases

HANOI, 27 June—Vietnam’s blood reserves is decreasing to dangerously low level, with daily blood donations down by nearly half this month, partly due to Euro 2004.

“Half a month ago, there was a long line of people waiting to sell blood, but once the soccer tournament began, only a few came in to donate each day,” Vietnam News on Friday quoted Nguyen Anh Tri, director of the National Institute of Haematology and Blood Transfusion, as saying.

Euro 2004, which has lured lots of local soccer fans and students who are busy studying for the upcoming university entrance exam or on summer vacations are possible causes of the fall in blood donor numbers, he said.

Blood sellers account for some 60 per cent of the institute’s blood supply, while student volunteers make up the rest.

The institute’s blood reserve has dropped to 150 blood units or 37.5 litres, while it requires an average of 150 blood units every day to serve patients at the institute and 20 other hospitals.

Major hospitals in the capital of Hanoi need around 1,000 units of blood in reserve for emergencies.

The shortage of blood will improve slightly after Euro 2004 finishes and when students return to university and charity programmes in August, Tri said, adding that the state should make blood donation compulsory for every citizen.

Vietnam needs around 380,000 litres of blood annually, but the institute has only 22.50 per cent of the figure, he concluded.

— MNA/Xinhua

Japanese and South Korean peace activists, one holding a portrait of Kim Sun-il, the South Korean hostage beheaded by militants in Iraq, hold a candlelight rally near Shinjuku railroad station in Tokyo simultaneously with a candlelight vigil held in Seoul, South Korea, as his body returned home on 26 June, 2004. — INTERNET
New and fast developments throughout Myanmar

Heavy machinery were used to construct 8 miles 3 furlongs Aungheik-Seiktha road in Maubin Township, Ayeyawady Division. — PBANRDA

Maipan hydro-power station was built to the east of Monghsat, Shan State (East) to supply electricity to local people. — MYANMA ALIN

A drilling machine at work to sink a tubewell in Muse, Shan State (North). — PBANRDA

To promote the education standard of the rural areas, new schools have been opened throughout the nation. Photo shows new school building built in Linyin Village, Sagaing Township, Sagaing Division. — MYANMA ALIN
Plenary Session of the National Convention...

Before the plenary session, Chairman of the Commission Secretary-2 Lt-Gen Thein Sein and Commission members, Chairman of the Work Committee Chief Justice U Aung Toe and Work Committee members, Chairman of the Management Committee Auditor-General Maj-Gen Tun Maung and Management Committee members and NC delegates signed the attendance registers in Pyidaungsu Hall where the National Convention Convening Committee is being held and at the Recreation Centre.


Chairman (Meeting) U Than Aung of the National Convention Convening Work Committee acted as master of ceremonies and Deputy Director U Aung Kyi asco-master of ceremonies. The master of ceremonies announced the start of the meeting with the permission of the chairman as there were 1,067 delegates out of 1,088 listed, accounting for 98.07 per cent. Next, the Delegate Group of Representatives read out proposals concerning detailed basic principles to be laid down for sharing of power in legislative, executive and judicial sectors to be included in writing the State Constitution.

First, Representatives-elect of the National Unity Party U Thet Wai of Constituency-2 of Waikma Township, Ayeawady Division, submitted the proposal to the Chairman.

Next, Representatives-elect of Mro or Khami National Solidarity Organization U San Tha Aung of Constituency-2 of Kyauktaw Township, Rakhine State, presented the proposal of their party in two parts. U San Tha Aung and Independent Representatives-elect U Tin Tun Maung of Constituency-2 of Mingaladon Township, Yangon Division, read the proposal. The plenary session went into recess at 9.35 am.

At 10.5 am, the plenary session resumed. The Delegate Group of Representatives-elect read the proposals concerning detailed basic principles to be laid down for sharing of power in legislative, executive and judicial sectors to be included in writing the State Constitution. Independent representatives-elect delegate Dr Mu Huan of Thantlang Township, Rakhine State, presented the proposal of their party in two parts. U Tin Win of Constituency-2 of Mindat Township, Rakhine State, read out his proposal. Today's plenary session ended at 12.45 pm.

The plenary session of the National Convention continues tomorrow at 9 am. — MNA

YANGON, 28 June — Minister for Labour U Tin Winn left here by air this evening to attend the inauguration of the Philippine President to be held on 30 June in the Philippines on behalf of the Head of State.

The minister was seen off at Yangon International Airport by Minister for National Planning and Economic Development U Soe Tha, Minister for Cooperatives Maj-Gen Huy Oo, Deputy Minister for Labour Brig-Gen Win Sein, officials of the Ministry of Labour and families.

Head of Office of the Ministry of Labour U Aung Ko also accompanied the minister. — MNA
Ceremony to convey Inlay PhaungdawU Buddha images and ancient Buddha images to be held

YANGON, 28 June — Arrangements to convey Inlay PhaungdawU Buddha images and ancient Buddha images to the Sankyaungdaw will be discussed in conjunction with the ceremony to honour 40 members of Sangha who passed Government Pathanambyan Exam at the Zabu Aye Monastery. (Program-2) organised by UMFCCI Training Centre on Bo Sopnet Street

Minister U Aung Thaung inspects installation of machine parts at Pwintphyu Textile Factory project, Magway Division. — MNA

Minister for Culture Maj-Gen Kyi Aung lays gem casket at ceremony of laying three Kyahngan pillars for construction of Arimadana Purapa Bagan golden palace held

YANGON, 28 June — A ceremony to lay three Kyahngan pillars was held at the site for construction of Arimadana Purapa Bagan golden palace in ancient Bagan city on 27 June. Present were Minister for Culture Maj-Gen Kyi Aung, Deputy Minister Brig-Gen Soe Win Maung, Director-General of Department of Archaeology U Nyunt Han, Chairman of Nyuang U Dis- sub-factory, Winthuza shop (Pakkiki) and sales. The minister went to Thainsoe (Bellaricmyrobul) oil factory in Seikphyu Town- ship, Magway Division. He inspected production of Thainsoe oil, bottling and sort- ing. In the long run, the factory can produce 50-60tons a day. The minister met officials at Pwintphyu Textile Mill Project. He discussed civil and engineering works, fix- ing working hour and others. He then presented fruit basket to technicians of Jinnin Machinery Import and Ex- port Corporation of the Peo- ple’s Republic of China. The minister inspected installation of machines and cooling system in the main building of the factory.

Ceremony to lay three Kyahngan pillars for construction of Arimadana Purapa Bagan golden palace

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International Trade Course concludes

YANGON, 28 June —In- ternational Trade Course (Program-2) organised by Union of Myanmar Federa- tion of Chambers of Com- merce and Industry con- cluded at UMFCCI Training Centre on Bo Sopnet Street

Completion certificates of International Trade Course pre- sented by members of Educational Work Committee. — MNA

Petroleum, gas, petro-chemicals production discussed

YANGON, 28 June — Depute Minister for Energy Brig-Gen Than Htay met fac- tory manager and officials of Mann oilfield in Minbu on 25 June and discussed produc- tion of petroleum, natural gas and petro-chemicals. The deputy minister inspected pro- duction of well No 655. The deputy minister met officials of No1 fertilizer plant. The minister expressed thanks to the PhaungdawU Buddha images and ancient Buddha images to be held...
“Economic development through stability” and “Emergence of a modern developed nation” are the two national goals, with which emphasis is placed on the efforts to boost the country’s economy through the invitation of local and foreign technocrats. At the same time, incentive is being given to the involvement of national entrepreneurs in these measures.

The transport sector plays a crucial role in economic development of the country. So does the marine transport service, which includes the export and import tasks of the country almost cent per cent. Yangon Port is the biggest and most strategic port in the marine transport service.

Since the introduction of the market economic system after 1988, the construction of modern ports in the country became essential so as to handle export and import undertakings. The Ministry of Transport has since been taking measures for the development of ports in cooperation with local and foreign business organizations on a profit-sharing basis.

Newly-emerged wharves along Yangon river are Botahtaung No 1 Inland Container Terminal, jointly-constructed by Myanma Port Authority and Allied Container Services Pte Ltd of Singapore; Myanmar Integrated Port Ltd (MIPL) operated on BOT system; Myanmar International Terminals Thilawa (MITT); Ahlon Wharf Nos 1 and 2 operated by Asia World Port Management Co Ltd owned by Myanmar national; and Myanmar Industrial Port operated by Myanmar Maritime Entrepreneurs Co Ltd. The scenery of Yangon Port has also changed for the better.

Machinery at work seen at the Ahlon wharf of Asia World Port Management Co Ltd.

Ahlon Wharf Nos 1, 2 and 3 that will emerge as modern ports

Ahlon wharves Nos 1 and 2 being operated by Asia World Port Management Co Ltd.

Containers being loaded onto and unloaded from a foreign vessel at No-2 Ahlon wharf.

Efficient use of fuel

* Saving one gallon of fuel per car per month will save the nation one US dollar
* Thus, a total of 455,822 cars in Myanmar can save US$ 5.5 million in a year
* The amount, US $ 5.5 million, can build a major bridge across Ayeyawady River

People’s Desire

* Oppose those relying on external elements, acting as stooges, holding negative views
* Oppose those trying to jeopardize stability of the State and progress of the nation
* Oppose foreign nations interfering in internal affairs of the State
* Crush all internal and external destructive elements as the common enemy

All this needs to be known

* Do not be frightened whenever intimidated
* Do not be bolstered whenever flattered
* Do not be softened whenever appeared

The Plenary Meeting of the National Convention in progress. — MNA

The Plenary Meeting of the National Convention in progress. — MNA

Maj-Gen Tin Htut presents a cash award to Daw Tin Tin Mya. — MNA

Maj-Gen Lun Maung presents a cash award to an official. — MNA

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More foreign-capital insurers to enter China

Bruegel—With the speeding of China's opening to the outside world, more foreign capital insurers will enter the China market, which will deepen the cooperation between China's insurance industry and the world capital market, said a senior Chinese official.

"China's insurers can raise money from international market via listing and explore ways to invest in global market with their own money," said Wu Dingshi, chairman of the China Insurance Regulatory Commission.

Mubarak takes first steps back after operation

Carlo, 28 June—Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak on Sunday took his first steps since a slipped disc operation in Germany and is in excellent health, said the German government. The move will relax his charge of treatment.

Mubarak, 76, had the operation on Saturday after a six-day wait in Munich and then spent the night in the recovery room.

"The President had a good night last night and he is in excellent health," Heinrich Michael Mayer of Munich's Orthopaedic Centre told Egyptian state television.

"This morning we were able to take President Mubarak back to his normal room. He got out of bed and took some steps in his room," said the doctor, speaking through an interpreter.

Mayer is the head of the spine unit at the centre where Mubarak has spent the last week because of his back problem.

China stresses research, training in psychological warfare

Beijing, 28 June—China's Armed Forces have stepped up research and training in psychological warfare as part of their efforts to increase the national defence capability, according to military sources.

The People's Liberation Army Daily, the mouthpiece of the Armed Forces, and newspapers published by headquarters of various military command areas, have published reports on ways to improve psychological warfare.

The regulation issued recently by the Central Military Commission on political work of the People's Liberation Army contains articles on publicity warfare, psychological warfare and legal means in wars against invasion.

China has set up psychological warfare units within various major military command areas, and established institutes of psychological warfare in military schools.

The country's first group of officers trained in psychological warfare have joined the Army, Navy and Air Force.

HK Housing Department steps up anti-mosquito measures

Hong Kong, 28 June—The Housing Department announced Saturday that it has enhanced anti-mosquito measures.

Deputy Director of Housing Lau Ka-shing said that about 800 staff would be mobilized to carry out preventive and control measures in all public rental housing estates, commercial properties and construction sites with the approach of the wet summer season.

He said a four-member Anti-Mosquito Special Cleansing Squad has been set up in all public rental housing estates to carry out daily inspection of flower pots, drains, roof gutters and surface channels to prevent accumulation of water.

"The squad will also conduct regular patrol of common areas to check stagnant water collected at discarded tyres, tree holes, bamboo stumps, leaf axils, empty lunch boxes, bottles, cans and buckets which can be turned into potential mosquito breeding grounds," Lau said.

Refresher talks and seminars will be organized for front-line staff, contractors and property management companies to promote awareness of the danger of mosquitoes. Inspection guidelines and checklist will be given out to front-line staff, he added.

Through regular Estate Management Advisory Committee meetings and newsletters, tenants will be urged to stay vigilant. Newspaper supplements will be arranged appealing for concerted efforts in eliminating mosquito breeding places.

To further drive home the anti-mosquito message, educational programmes will be arranged with collaboration of estate primary schools aiming to inspect potential mosquito breeding black spots in public housing estates.

China willing to improve int'l cooperation on heritage protection

Suzhou, 28 June—China is willing to improve international cooperation on heritage conservation and make due contributions to the protection of world heritages, Chinese Culture and Tourism Councillor Zhin Zhihui said here Monday.

In a speech at the opening ceremony of the 23rd Meeting of the Task Force on Heritage Conservation and the International Cooperation on Heritage Protection, Chen said China has established a broad and profound partnership on heritage conservation with many countries, international agencies, especially with the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO).

Citing the protection of Cambodia's Angkor Wat as an example, Chen said at the initiation of the UNESCO and invitation of the Cambodian Government, China has joined the renovation project of the Chao Say Thevedra of Angkor Wat. China's efforts have been highly praised by the Cambodian Government and international organizations.

She noted that the Chinese Government has always held that the diversity of the world's civilization and culture should be honored, different historical and cultural traditions should be respected and the world heritage should be well preserved.

"The conviction of the 28th session proves once again that the mutual respect, dialogue and cooperation among different culture and civilizations are of crucial importance to the peace and development of the world," she said.

In addition, she said throughout the years, UNESCO has made outstanding contributions to the protection of world heritages through extensive international exchanges and cooperation.

"China wishes to join hands with all countries and relevant international agencies to make unremitting efforts to protect the cultural and natural heritages for the benefit of the future generations," she said.

5 Japanese firms to launch satellites in 2008

Tokyo, 28 June—Itochu Corp, Jat Corp and three other Japanese companies plan to jointly launch Japan's first commercial Earth observation satellites in 2008, the first in Asia, a Japanese business newspaper reported Saturday.

The group, which also includes Suzuki Data Corp, Imageline Co and NEC Toshiba Space Systems Ltd, hopes to gain a foothold in the commercial satellite imaging market, the Nihon Keizai Shimbun said, adding that it plans to launch two such satellites in 2008 or later.

Government-affiliated entities in Japan have launched multiple satellites to observe weather-related phenomena, but a country's civil satellite industry has been limited to communications and broadcasting fields, it said.

The five firms will establish a jointly held company in August with an initial capital base of 200 million yen, the newspaper said.

China plans to launch two such satellites in 2008 or later.

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Drought-hit Australia plans to save ailing rivers

Canberra, 27 June— Australia announced on Friday a national plan to save major rivers from the worst drought in 100 years, which will see a reduction in water for irrigations, a system of tradeable water rights. Drought-gripped Australia is the world’s highest user of water per person despite being the driest inhabited continent.

Environment experts warn more than a quarter of Australia’s rivers are in danger of drying up and stringent restrictions on water use now extend nation-wide.

At the core of the 10-year water plan is a strategy to save the nation’s longest river system, the Murray-Darling, which runs north-south through four states and is the lifeblood of Australia’s most important farmlands.

“This has been a tremendous day for the future of the Murray and Darling rivers, which stretch for 5,142 km, shipping 30 billion Australian dollars a year worth of water supply in this country,” Prime Minister John Howard told reporters, after Australia’s national and state governments agreed to the 500-million-Australian-dollar (350-million-US-dollar) plan.

Australia is one of the biggest global farm exporters, exporting 30 billion Australian dollars a year worth of water supply in this country. Prime Minister John Howard told reporters, after Australia’s national and state governments agreed to the 500-million-Australian-dollar plan. (350-million-US-dollar) plan.

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15 killed as lightning strikes Chinese gamblers

**BEIJING, 28 June**—Lightning strikes in eastern China killed at least 15 gamblers as they sat under trees playing mahjong and other games, newspapers said on Sunday.

About 30 residents of Duqiao, in the coastal province of Zhejiang, had gathered beneath the trees on Saturday when the lightning hit, the City Express newspaper reported.

**Mystery hero dog captures Toronto’s imagination**

**TORONTO, 28 June**—It could be Elvis or it could be Dante but the search is on to find a dog that police say prevented a killing spree in the city this week.

The country’s national newspapers ran front-page stories on Friday speculating on the identity of the mystery dog in coverage that ranged from cute to deadly serious.

Police say a Canadian man, whose car was packed with 6,000 rounds of ammunition, rifles and a machete, planned to kill as many people as possible in a tony east Toronto neighborhood on Wednesday.

They say the man’s intention was to make sure he was sent to prison and never let out.

But he changed his mind at the last minute, and later gave himself up to police after a friendly dog came up to play with him in a park and melted his heart. “I think it’s wonderful, (the dog) was like an angel,” said Barbara Wilson, manager of Three Dog Bakery which is located near the park.

“We’re still trying to find the dog because our bakery would like to present the dog with a basket of goodies to say thank you and I think the dog deserves a lot more than that.”

The betting is on Elvis Presley, a black border collie who was on the front page of the National Post on Friday and featured prominently in other papers.

Elvis and his owner were in the east-end park at the right time and reports that he was carrying a Frisbee in his mouth fits his description.

“There’s no other dog that runs around with a Frisbee in its mouth,” a neighbour said. “There’s no other dog that runs around with a Frisbee 24 hours a day.”

His owner is not so sure — Elvis usually runs up to women and men, she told another newspaper — but is happy to collect accolades for her pet.

“I would like to think it’s Elvis because it would make me feel prouder but I don’t know,” Dragana Brighton said.

Other names being cast include Mattey, who never met a person she did not like according to park regulars, and the more disconcerting but equally softhearted Dante.

Dante, a part husky, part Australian shepherd, was also seen in the park late Wednesday, playing with a man. — **MNA/Reuters**

**Soaring thermal power worsens China’s acid rain pollution**

**BEIJING, 28 June**—China’s environmental watchdog warned here Friday that booming thermal power plants may worsen China’s acid rain pollution if their sulphur dioxide emission is not well controlled.

Pan Yue, vice-director of the State Environmental Protection Administration (SEPA), made the remark when reporting to the Press the crackdown against the Guiyang thermal power plant in the southwestern province of Guizhou, which had put the newly-built power set into use without the desulfurization equipment.

“Thermal power plants discharge a large proportion of the country’s total sulphur dioxide emission. If their emissions are not well controlled, the acid rain pollution will probably worsen.” Pan said.

Although China’s power production and generation capacity reached the second on place of the world by the end of 2003, they still cannot satisfy the soaring economy’s appetite for energy.

Reportedly China will suffer from severe power shortage this summer. There are already 24 provinces and municipalities which set limits on industrial and civil use of electricity. Thermal power plants, accounting for 74 per cent of total power supply, spring up to fill the gap. — **MNA/Xinhua**

**Congressman says US imposes new limits on scientists**

**WASHINGTON, 28 June**—The US Government is making it harder for scientists to speak to their global colleagues and restricting who can attend an upcoming major AIDS conference, a US congressman charged.

Representative, Henry Waxman said he has a letter showing that the Health and Human Services Department has imposed new limits on who may speak to the World Health Organization.

Under the new policy, WHO must ask HHS for permission to speak to scientists and must allow HHS to choose who will respond. “This policy is unprecedented. For the first time political appointees will routinely be able to keep the top experts in their field from responding to WHO requests for guidance on international health issues,” the California Democrat wrote in a letter to HHS Secretary Tommy Thompson.

“This is a raw attempt to exert political control over scientists and scientific evidence in the area of international health,” Waxman wrote. — **MNA/Reuters**

**EU, US sign agreement on satellite navigation systems**

**CO CLARE (Ireland), 28 June**—The European Union and the United States Saturday agreed on a cooperation agreement between the European and US satellite-navigation systems following several years of negotiations.

The two sides were due to sign the agreement between Galileo and the Global Positioning System (GPS) during the EU-US summit which is to be held in Dromoland Castle, a luxurious hotel in mid-western Ireland.

US Secretary of State Colin Powell, Irish Foreign Minister Brian Cowen, whose country is currently holding the rotating EU presidency, and EU Commissioner Loyola de Palacio were expected to be present at the signing ceremony.

The Galileo programme, a joint European Commission and European Space Agency Initiative, represents the first global satellite positioning and navigation system designed specifically for civilian use worldwide.

Based on a constellation of 30 satellites orbiting at an altitude of 24,400 kilometers, Galileo will feature full interoperability with GPS and the Russian Glonass systems, which are originally designed for military use.

While GPS is available to civil users since the 1990s, Galileo is intended to be operational by 2008.

It is estimated that Galileo will create more than 150,000 jobs in Europe alone. The first test satellite would be launched by the end of 2005 followed by the launch of four satellites for in-orbit validation purposes, according to a factsheet published by the European Union on the occasion of the EU-US Summit.

**Scientists say Mars had lot more water than thought**

**LOS ANGELES, 28 June**—Mars had a lot more water than NASA scientists originally envisaged but they have yet to work out how much, and why it dried up, Mars mission members said on Friday.

Explorations by the robotic rover Opportunity inside a stadium-sized crater on Mars have turned up more evidence of the salt-like mineral sulfate — and much farther down the crater than scientists had expected.

“There is a lot more salt down there than we originally thought. That means that there was a lot more water involved in doing this then we originally thought,” principal science investigator Steven Squyres told a news conference at NASA’s Jet Propulsion Laboratory in Pasadena, California.

“I don’t think we’ve got compelling evidence for what I would call an ocean in the sense of it being a very, very deep body of water. Everything we see is compatible with very shallow water, wetting and drying, a small amount of water to wade around in and then maybe it evaporates away,” he said.

Opportunity and its twin rover Spirit, in the fifth month of a scheduled three-month Mars mission, have already exceeded NASA hopes. In March, Opportunity uncovered geologic evidence near its landing site on the barren terrain that the area was once “drenched” in water.

JPL scientists controlling the robots have since sent Opportunity down another crater and are trying to find how far down the traces of sulfate extend. — **MNA/Reuters**

**A sculptor puts the finishing touches to his sand sculpture of two women in Kiev, on 26 June, 2004. A sand sculpture festival opened on Saturday in the Ukrainian capital and more than 20 sculptors participated in the event. — Internet**

A computer image shows three satellites that will form part of the Galileo navigation system. The United States and the EU signed a cooperation accord to ensure compatibility between their rival satellite positioning systems. — **Internet**
Two-goal Baros takes over as top scorer
Porto (Portugal), 28 June— Czech striker Milan Baros became the leading goalscorer at Euro 2004 on Sunday with two superb second-half strikes in a 3-0 quarterfinal victory over Denmark.
Baros, with five goals, moved ahead of England’s Wayne Rooney and Dutch forward Ruud van Nistelrooy, who have claimed four goals in the tournament.
For me to have five goals after the quarterfinals — well, if you had told me that before I came here I wouldn’t have believed you,” he said.
“Just the most important thing is that we are through to play Greece in four days’ time and that is going to be a very big and very difficult game for us.”
Rooney has no chance to add to his tally since England were eliminated in the quarterfinals by the hosts but van Nistelrooy has already set his sights on the final.
Baros’ goals came inside two minutes midway through the second half against Denmark and he is the only player to have scored in each game his team have played at the tournament.
He is now one match away from equaling French playmaker Michel Platini’s record of scoring in five consecutive European Championship matches set in 1984. Platini ended with nine goals.
Jan Koller put the Czechs ahead before Baros made it 2-0 in the 63rd minute, lifting the ball over the advancing Danish keeper Thomas Sorensen after Pavel Nedved had picked out his run with a perfectly delivered pass.
Another great goal followed, this time from European Footballer of the Year Pavel Nedved, set up Baros, second goal which the striker blasted home with great confidence from inside the box.
“We were both beautiful goals but the first was more important because it made it 2-0 for us, and we knew that probably do it,” Baros said.

Scolari orders chicken soup for Portugal

ACERTE (Portugal), 28 June— Portugal coach Luiz Felipe Scolari has urged the jubilant Portuguese to keep their feet on the ground following their dramatic quarterfinal win over England at the European Championship on Thursday.
Scolari, who won the 2002 World Cup with his native Brazil, has reached the target he set before the tournament — reaching the quarterfinals.
Scolari has told reporters. “They will not train today but it is perfectly possible to win the title.
A win against Spain will not be enough. We need to win by two or three goals.”
After a goalless first half, Jan Koller’s header put the Czechs on course for a fourth successive victory which set up a semifinal against Greece at the same Dragao Stadium on Thursday.
Greece, who upset France 1-0 in their quarterfinal, will have to find another goal to halt the Czech juggernaut, which is threatening to take them all the way to their second European title following their success in 1976 as Czechoslovakia.
After a tight first half of few chances, the Czechs burst into life early in the second when Koller powered home a header from a Pavel Nedved corner in the 49th minute.
The goal was the result of poor defending, as the tallest man in the tournament was left unmarked and able to rise and choose his spot from 10 metres.
Baros, who had scored a goal in all three group games, then took centre stage. In the 63rd minute, the forward ran on to a perfect Poborsky through ball and chipped past the advancing Thomas Sorensen for an exquisite goal.
Two minutes later Pavel Nedved set him on his way and after driving forward to the edge of the box he lashed a fierce shot past the despairing keeper to take him to the top of the Euro 2004 scoring charts with five goals.
The double strike knocked the stuffing out of the Danes, who had competed strongly in the first half without forcing Czech keeper Petr Cech to make a save and were similarly toothless in the second.
The Czech Republic’s victory takes their European Championship winning run to a record-breaking five.
The Euro 90 runners-up also beat Denmark in their last group game four years ago.
It also continued their dominance over the Danes, making it 12 wins, six draws and just one defeat in 19 meetings.

French papers lament end of golden generation
Paris, 28 June— France’s 1-0 defeat by Greece in the Euro 2004 quarterfinals was a “Greek tragedy” which sounded the death knell for a generation of players, French newspapers said on Saturday.
“Indefensible,” was the one-word headline on the front page of sports daily L’Equipe. “Pitiful,” was Liberation’s assessment of the performance of the former world and European champions.
“Blues are as black as night, they showed no desire, no effort, no collective talent,” L’Equipe wrote in its lead story.
“Apart from two or three players of genius, they don’t have much to offer any more. Maybe, it’s time to wipe the slate clean.”
The popular daily Le Parisien agreed.
“France’s failure means the end for a whole generation of players, the golden generation which won the World Cup in 1998 and the European championship in 2000,” it wrote.
L’Equipe soccer correspondent Vincent Duluc said: “Les Bleus gave the impression of not having the mark of their disorganization and impotency.”
“The defending champions lost their title. On their overall performance, they got what they deserved.”
Goalkeeper Fabien Barthez and central defender Lilian Thuram were the only players awarded above average marks by L’Equipe, 6.5 and 5.5 out of 10 respectively.
Playmaker Zinedine Zidane, for many years the leading light of French soccer, received a four, the lowest mark.

Scolari orders chicken soup for Portugal
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Scolari, who won the 2002 World Cup with his native Brazil, has reached the target he set before the tournament — reaching the quarterfinals.
Scolari has ordered chicken soup for Portugal for Wednesday’s semifinal against Portugal to look forward to.

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Rainfall on 28-6-2004 – nil at Yangon Airport, -0.08 inch at Kaba-Aye and -0.04 inch at central Yangon. Total rainfall since 1-1-2004 was 1236mm (48.66 inches) at Yangon Airport and 1140mm (44.88 inches) at Kaba-Aye and 1187mm (46.73 inches) at central Yangon.

WEATHER
Monday, 28 June, 2004
Summary of observations recorded at 09:30 hours MST: During the past 24 hours, weather has been partly cloudy in Chin State, Mandalay and Magway Divisions and rain has been isolated in lower Sagaing Division and scattered to widespread in the remaining areas with isolated heavyfalls in Kachin and Mon States.

The noteworthy amounts of rainfall recorded were Machanbaw (7.32 inches), Mawlamyne (3.78 inches), Thaung (3.22 inches).

Maximum temperature on 27-6-2004 was 26.0°C (78.8°F). Minimum temperature on 28-6-2004 was 19.8°C (67.6°F). Relative humidity at 9:30 hrs MST on 28-6-2004 was 92%. Total sunshine days on 27-6-2004 was nil. Rainfall on 28-6-2004 was nil at Yangon Airport, 0.08 inch at Kaba-Aye and 0.04 inch at central Yangon. Total rainfall since 1-1-2004 was 1236mm (48.66 inches) at Yangon Airport and 1140mm (44.88 inches) at Kaba-Aye and 1187mm (46.73 inches) at central Yangon. Maximum wind speed at Yangon (Kaba-Aye) was 12 mph from the south at 14:00 hours MST on 27-6-2004. Sea breeze activity was observed along the Bay of Bengal. Forecast valid until evening of the 29-6-2004: Rain or thundershower will be isolated in lower Sagaing, Mandalay and Magway Divisions, scattered in Mon, Chin, Kayah States, upper Sagaing Division and widespread in the remaining areas. Degree of certainty is (100%). State of the sea: Squalls with moderate to rough seas are likely at times off and along Myanmar Coasts. Surface wind speed in squalls may reach (35) to (40) mph.

Outlook for subsequent two days: Strong monsoon. Forecast for Yangon and neighbouring area for 29-6-2004: Some rain or thundershower of moderate degree of certainty is (80%). Forecast for Mandalay and neighbouring area for 29-6-2004: Possibility of isolated rain or thundershowers. Degree of certainty is (40%).
Work coordination meeting of National Convention Convening Commission, Work Committee and Management Committee held

YANGON, 28 June — Work coordination meeting (15/2004) of the National Convention Convening Commission Work Committee and Management Committee was held at the meeting hall of Ana Wrahta Yeiktha in Nyaungmyapin Camp, Hmaubaw Township, this afternoon.

Present at the meeting were Chairman of the National Convention Convening Commission Secretary-2 of the State Peace and Development Council Lt-Gen Thein Sein, Vice-Chairman of the NCCC Minister for Electric Power Maj-Gen Tin Htut, Secretary of the NCCC Minister for Information Brig-Gen Kyaw Htun and members. Chairman of the Work Committee Chief Justice U Aung Toe and members, Chairman of the Management Committee Auditor-General Maj-Gen Lun Maung and members.

Joint Secretary-2 of the commission Director-General of the Pyithu Hluttaw Office U Myint Thein and others who attended.

Chairman of the NCCC Minister for Defence, Lt-Gen Khin Maung Than and party went to the demonstration of paddy cultivation using direct seeding for high yield.

Col Hla Min, Col Khin Zaw Oo of Inma Station and Bago Division (West) Peace and Development Council Commander of the Southern Command Maj-Gen Ko Ko, Chairman of Bago Division (West) Peace and Development Council Col Hla Min, Col Khin Zaw Oo of Inma Station and departmental officials, on 25 June morning inspected preparations for monsoon paddy cultivation on either side of Pyay-Padaung Road.

At Taungbwe Village in Padaung Township, they inspected the demonstrations of cultivation methods including modern cultivation method and direct seeding method by the staff of the Myanma Agriculture Service. Afterwards, Lt-Gen Khin Maung Than met local farmers and urged them to learn the modern cultivation methods for high yield.

Next, Lt-Gen Khin Maung Than and party viewed the demonstration of paddy cultivation using direct seeding method. Lt-Gen Khin Maung Than and party went to local battalion in Padaung and met officers, other

(See page 9)

Commander attends harvesting of summer paddy in Phekhn Township

YANGON, 28 June — A ceremony to harvest summer paddy and to distribute seeds for cultivation of monsoon paddy was held in Moebye Village in Phekhn Township in Shan State (South) on 25 June. Present were Chairman of Shan State Peace and Development Council Commander of Eastern Command Maj-Gen Khin Maung Myint, Deputy Minister for Agriculture and Irrigation Brig-Gen Khin Maung, Brig-Gen Myo Lwin of Phekhn Station, Col Myint Oo of Loskaw Station, local authorities and local people.

Director of Agricultural Research of the Ministry of Agriculture and Irrigation Daw Khin Than Nwe reported on harvesting of Shweyinaye paddy. Deputy Minister Brig-Gen Khin Maung gave a supplementary report.

Commander Maj-Gen Khin Maung Myint spoke on the occasion. Chairman of Ruby Dragon Co U Nay Win Tun reported on distribution of paddy seeds of Shweyinaye paddy.

The commander presented 2,000 baskets of paddy seeds to Chairman of Kayah State Peace and Development Council Col Myint Oo. Deputy Minister Brig Gen Khin Maung and officials presented paddy seeds to the respective managers of Myanmar Agriculture Service.

The commander inspected the harvesting of paddy. Per acre yield from model farm is 147.53 baskets of paddy. The cultivation target in the southern Shan State is over 600,000 acres. — MNA

Lt-Gen Khin Maung Than meets with local people of Taungbwe Village in Padaung Township. — MNA

Lt-Gen Khin Maung Than inspects direct seeding methods demonstration in Padaung

YANGON, 28 June — Member of the State Peace and Development Council Lt-Gen Khin Maung Than of the Ministry of Defence, accompanied by Chairman of Bago Division Peace and Development Council Commander of the Southern Command Maj-Gen Ko Ko, Chairman of Bago Division (West) Peace and Development Council Col Hla Min, Col Khin Zaw Oo of Inma Station and departmental officials, on 25 June morning inspected preparations for monsoon paddy cultivation on either side of Pyay-Padaung Road.

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With hands linked firm around the National Convention.