YANGON, 1 Aug—Prime Minister of the Union of Myanmar General Khin Nyunt attended the First BIMST-EC Summit at the Thai Ministry of Foreign Affairs in Bangkok, Thailand, at 9.30 am on 31 July.

Present on the occasion were Prime Minister of Bangladesh Begum Khaleda Zia, Prime Minister of Bhutan Lyonpo Jigmi Yoeser Thinlay, Prime Minister of India Dr Manmohan Singh, Prime Minister of the Union of Myanmar General Khin Nyunt, Prime Minister of Nepal Mr Sher Bahadur Deuba, President of Sri Lanka Madame Chandrika Bandaranaike Kumaratunga, Prime Minister of Thailand Mr Thaksin Shinawatra, Minister for Foreign Affairs U Win Aung, Deputy Minister U Khin Maung Win, ministers, deputy ministers, ambassadors and high-ranking officials of BIMST-EC countries and guests.

At 8.30 am, high-ranking officials of BIMST-EC countries arrived at the Thai Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the venue of the summit.

Next, Prime Minister General Khin Nyunt and other heads of government of BIMST-EC countries arrived at the Thai Ministry of Foreign Affairs where they were welcomed by Thai Prime Minister Mr Thaksin Shinawatra.

Afterwards, the First BIMST-EC Summit commenced at the Vithes Samonsorn Hall on the first floor of the Building of Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

Thai Prime Minister Mr Thaksin Shinawatra delivered an opening address. Next, the Prime Minister of Bangladesh, the Prime Minister of (See page 8)
Strengthening relationship between Myanmar and Thailand

The State Peace and Development Council is striving in all fields for the Union of Myanmar to keep abreast of the nations of the world. Nowadays, rapid changes in the international order and economy have been taking place in the international sphere and at such a time, it is necessary to closely cooperate in the economy and trade sectors among neighbouring and regional countries. Myanmar is paying serious attention to promoting friendship and cooperation in economy and trade with neighbouring countries, ASEAN countries and BIMST-EC countries.

Myanmar and Thailand share over 1,300 miles long border and they are also members of ASEAN and BIMST-EC. Moreover, their faith and cultural traditions are the same.

At the invitation of Prime Minister of Thailand Mr Thaksin Shinawatra, Prime Minister of the Union of Myanmar General Khin Nyunt attended the first BIMST-EC Summit held on 30 and 31 July in Bangkok, Thailand.

Prime Minister General Khin Nyunt, together with heads of government of BIMST-EC member countries, called on King of Thailand His Majesty Bhumibol Adulyadej at Klangwon Palace in Hua Hin on 30 July. The Prime Minister also met his Thai counterpart Mr Thaksin Shinawatra at the latter’s office.

During the meeting, Prime Minister General Khin Nyunt said that progress of relationship between Myanmar and Thailand is encouraging and the two countries are cooperating in all sectors, especially cooperation in narcotic drugs control and elimination is most satisfactory. Myanmar Prime Minister General Khin Nyunt also expressed thanks for assistance provided by Thailand in the development projects of Myanmar. Thai Prime Minister Mr Thaksin Shinawatra said that Thailand wishes to cooperate with Myanmar in generating electricity, transportation and constructing deep sea port and that both nations will continue to collaborate in ensuring further cementing relations and boosting economy of the two sides.

Promoting friendship and cooperation between Myanmar and Thailand means serving the interests of peoples of the two countries. We believe that as relationship between Myanmar and Thailand is encouraging and the two countries are cooperating in all sectors, the friendship and relationship between the two countries will surely be fostered.

Breastfeeding Week commences

YANGON, 1 Aug — A ceremony to present prizes to hospitals and townships acknowledged as Baby Friendly Hospital Initiative and Baby Friendly Home Delivery, organized by the Ministry of Health was held at the hall of the Institute of Nursing in Bogyoke Aung San Street this morning, with an address by Minister for Health Dr Kyaw Myint.

Also present on the occasion were Deputy Minister for Health Dr Mya Oo, President of Myanmar Materials and Child Welfare Association Dr Daw Khin Win Shwe, Vice-President Dr Daw Tin Lin Myint, directors-general, deputy directors-general and officials of the departments under the ministry, resident representatives of UN agencies, officials of NGOs, heads of health departments at division/state and township levels who won prizes, health staff and guests.

First, Health Minister Dr Kyaw Myint made a speech on the occasion, saying that the World Breastfeeding Week has been launched since 1992 in all parts of the world and so has been in Myanmar yearly. The movement of Thirteenth Breastfeeding Week 2004 in Myanmar commenced today.

The aims of the World Breastfeeding Week are — to stress the importance of breastfeeding of the baby during the first six months from birth and to find ways and means for mothers to realize this importance and breastfeed their babies until six months old. The Ministry of Health, on its part, is laying down a series of projects and implementing them to enhance health standard of the entire people in accordance with the guidance given by the National Health Committee. The movement of breastfeeding week is also a project to promote the health standard and its implementation has started since 1993 January. A total of 339 hospitals have been acknowledged as Baby Friendly Hospital Initiative and 117 townships as Baby Friendly Home Delivery. One motto is selected for holding the World Breastfeeding Week every year and this year’s motto is Exclusive Breastfeeding: the Gold Standard, Safe, Sound, Sustainable. Breast milk is a gift of nature and it is the most suitable for a child. It contains antibodies which prevent common diseases of humans. Breastfeeding means the baby is to be fed only the breast milk, and not any other food or liquid. Breastfeeding Week will be launched continuously from 1 to 7 August.

The minister urged health staff to cooperate with health related ministries, NGOs and local people for successful realization of breastfeeding project.

Next, resident representative of UNICEF Ms Carroll C Long made a speech on the occasion. Minister Dr Kyaw Myint, Deputy Minister Dr Mya Oo, President of MMCWA Dr Daw Khin Win Shwe, resident representative of UNICEF Ms Carroll C Long and directors-general of the ministry presented prizes to winners of Baby Friendly Hospital Initiative and Baby Friendly Home Delivery through the responsible personnel.

After the ceremony, Minister Dr Kyaw Myint and President of MMCWA Dr Daw Khin Win Shwe cordially greeted those present.
**Two Turkish drivers taken captive**

Baghdad, 31 July—Turkish company, Kahramanli, told to quit Iraq within 48 hours

An Iraqi resistance group allegedly linked to Abu Musab al-Zarqawi has captured two Turkish drivers and threatened to behead them unless their employer, a Turkish company, stopped working in Iraq.

Aljazeera TV aired a video on Saturday of the two men crouching in front of a group of masked resistance fighters standing in front of a Tawhid and Jihad group banner.

The company, Kahramanli, was given 48 hours by the group to halt its operations in Iraq.

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**Kadhafi opposes Saudi troops proposal**

Tripoli, 1 Aug — Libyan leader Moamer Kadhafi said on Friday he was opposed to a Saudi proposal to send an Arab or Muslim force to strife-torn Iraq. “Arab or Muslim forces should be sent only if the occupation forces pull out and are replaced by forces authorised by the United Nations,” said Kadhafi in comments published by the Jana official news agency.

— Internet

**India to help countries to set up maritime forces**

New Delhi, 1 Aug — Chief of India’s Coast Guard said Friday several countries, including Malaysia and Sri Lanka, have sought India’s help in setting up maritime forces to patrol their coastlines and prevent crimes at sea.

“We are interacting with all our neighbours, from Japan to the Maldives, for framing modalities to counter terrorism, piracy and pollution and for search and rescue operations,” the Indo-Asian News Service quoted Vice-Admiral Suresh Mehta, the Coast Guard director-general as saying.

“People are looking up to us to help them set up their Coast Guard forces. Malaysia took inputs from us two years ago and it will set up its Coast Guard next year. Sri Lanka, which is also setting up its Coast Guard, is looking up to us,” Mehta was speaking to reporters along with Defence Minister Pranab Mukherjee, shortly after the latter visited the Coast Guard headquarters here for a briefing.

“The Coast Guard chief and his senior staff gave Mukherjee a detailed presentation on the force’s modernisation, fleet expansion plans and areas of concern,” said a statement.

Mehta also briefed Mukherjee about a few issues under consideration, including the setting up of a hotline between the Coast Guard and Pakistan’s Maritime Security Agency, the introduction of the International Ship and Port Security Code last month and recruitment plans to make up for shortage of manpower.

The Coast Guard, formed in 1978, is responsible for guarding India’s coastline of over 7,000 kilometres and its exclusive economic zone.

— MNA/Xinhua

**At least nine Iraqis killed in Fallujah clashes**

Baghdad, 31 July — At least nine Iraqis were killed and 16 others injured in fierce clashes between US forces and gunmen overnight in Fallujah, west of Baghdad, a doctor said on Friday.

Ahmed Abdullah, a doctor at Fallujah general hospital, said some of the wounded were in a serious condition after the fighting, which residents said lasted several hours and destroyed houses and factory buildings in the east of the city.

An hospital doctor said 10 people had died in the fighting, which largely took place in an industrial area.

Calls of “God is great” echoed from mosques as US aircraft and tanks attacked, residents said.

A US military spokesman said on Thursday Iraq security forces and US Marines had clashed with guerrillas and had called in an airstrike on a target in eastern Fallujah.

He said guerrillas had attacked a US position with mortars, rocket-propelled grenades, machineguns and small arms.

US forces responded with tank and artillery fire.

After fierce clashes in Fallujah in April that killed hundreds of Iraqis, US forces withdrew from the city and handed over security to an Iraqi force.

Critics say the city has since become a safe haven for guerrillas and kidnappers.

In recent months US forces have attacked buildings in the city they say were being used by militants linked to al-Qaeda ally Abu Musab al-Zarqawi.

— MNA/Reuters

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**Dhaka rejects Riyadh plea for troops to Iraq**

DHAKA, 31 July — Bangladesh has rejected a recent Saudi Arabian request to send troops to Iraq, a foreign office spokesman in Dhaka said on Saturday.

Saudi Foreign Minister Saud al-Faisal recently had an informal meeting in Riyadh with diplomats from seven Muslim countries including Bangladesh, Egypt, Morocco, Algeria and Tunisia and requested the envoys to consider sending troops to Iraq, the Foreign Office sources said.

The diplomats, including that of Bangladesh, responded negatively to the request and suggested that the issue be raised at forums like the Organization of the Islamic Conference and the Arab League, the Foreign Office sources claimed.

“We have time and again said that we will not send our troops unless under the command of the United Nations,” the foreign ministry spokesman in Dhaka said on Saturday. “There is no reason to change the stance yet.”

— Internet

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**US MIA operations to resume in Vietnam**

WASHINGTON, 31 July — The American effort to account for its soldiers declared missing in action (MIA) in the Vietnam War will resume in Vietnam’s Central Highlands this fall, the Pentagon said in a statement on Thursday.

An agreement to restart the search for MIAs, including excavations at sites suspected to contain bodies of the servicemen, was secured on Wednesday after a meeting between visiting Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defence for POW/Missing Personnel Affairs Jerry Jennings and provincial leaders in Pleiku, the capital of Gia Lai Province of Vietnam, the Pentagon said.

Jennings described the resumption of MIA operation in Vietnam as “a very positive step.”

Under the agreement, the US and Vietnamese experts will meet in September and US investigators will then contact local government officials to discuss the operations.

Operation to find MIAs were halted three years ago.

Of the 1,855 Americans missing from the Vietnam War, about 110 are thought to be in the Central Highlands area.

— Internet
Pakistan decides not to send troops to Iraq

Islamabad, 31 July — Pakistan has decided in principle not to send its troops to Iraq even if formally asked by the United Nations or the Iraqi interim government, reliable political sources told Dawn on Saturday.

The ruling circles of the capital are in a state of shock over the unfortunate death of two Pakistani nationals at the hands of militants in Iraq.

The issue of sending troops to Iraq was discussed between Prime Minister Chaundhry Shujaat Hussain and President General Pervez Musharraf before the former’s latest visit to Iraq, the sources said, was based on the popular sentiment of the people who feel being troops of a Muslim country, the Pakistani soldiers should not be put into a situation where they were likely to confront the citizens of another Muslim country. The government has also conveyed its decision in principle and taken most of the mainstream opposition parties, including religio-political ones, into confidence over the issue.

A strategy has been evolved to give the message to the outside world that since no consensus is possible on the question of sending troops the government is not in a position to oblige the US and its allies.

Under the opposition, the proposition has been encouraged to keep up the pressure on the authorities and a number of opposition leaders have started a regular campaign against the idea of sending troops to Iraq.

It is said to be under the same strategy that the government and the opposition passed a joint resolution in the National Assembly calling for a consensus before taking any decision on sending troops to Iraq.

Deadline ends for hostages; Kuwaiti firm to quit Iraq

New Delhi/Dera!, 1 Aug — As the extended deadline passed off last night without any reports of untoward happening on the fate of three Indian hostages in Iraq, the Iraqi negotiator said the captives’ Kuwaiti employer has agreed to withdraw from the country, an indication that the talks are progressing in a positive manner.

With the hostage drama continuing for the 11th day on Saturday, efforts to seek release of Antaryami, Tilak Raj and same time, CNN Turk said. As the extended deadline passed off last night without any reports of untoward happening on the fate of three Indian hostages in Iraq, the Iraqi negotiator said the captives’ Kuwaiti employer has agreed to withdraw from the country, an indication that the talks are progressing in a positive manner.

With the hostage drama continuing for the 11th day on Saturday, efforts to seek release of Antaryami, Tilak Raj and another Turkish driver, Abdulcelil Bayik, was killed by the guerillas at the time, CNN Turk said.

Television pictures showed relatives visiting Dayar, a father of seven, at his home in Cizre near the Iraqi border.

The body of another Turkish driver killed in Iraq by guerillas was brought back to Turkey this week. Cemal Uğur was taking supplies to US forces in Iraq when he was killed by militants outside Baghdad, his brother told Reuters. He had been missing for more than two months.

Scores of foreign workers in Iraq, including several Turkish truck drivers and construction workers, have been kidnapped by guerillas since April. Some hostages have been released, but others have been murdered. MNA/Reuters

Indian protesters display anti-US placard while demanding the release of Indian hostages in Iraq during a demonstration in the central Indian city of Bhopal, on 31 July, 2004. —Internet

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Indian protesters display anti-US placard while demanding the release of Indian hostages in Iraq during a demonstration in the central Indian city of Bhopal, on 31 July, 2004. —Internet

Turkish driver held hostage in Iraq arrives home

Istanbul, 1 Aug — A Turkish truck driver held hostage in Iraq for 12 days has arrived home in southeast Turkey, having been released after pledging never to return to Iraq, CNN Turk television said on Saturday.

Guerrillas seized Mehmet Dayar as he drove in a convoy carrying fuel for US forces in the northern Iraqi city of Mosul earlier this month. Another Turkish driver, Abdulcelil Bayik, was killed by the guerrillas at the same time, CNN Turk said.

Television pictures showed relatives visiting Dayar, a father of seven, at his home in Cizre near the Iraqi border.

The body of another Turkish driver killed in Iraq by guerrillas was brought back to Turkey this week. Cemal Uğur was taking supplies to US forces in Iraq when he was killed by militants outside Baghdad, his brother told Reuters. He had been missing for more than two months.

Scores of foreign workers in Iraq, including several Turkish truck drivers and construction workers, have been kidnapped by guerrillas since April. Some hostages have been released, but others have been murdered. MNA/Reuters

India says developing nations should get fair deal at WTO talks

Bangkok, 31 July — Indian Prime Minister Manmohan Singh has said that developing countries should get a “fair deal” at the tough WTO negotiations at Geneva to make globalization “sustainable, more inclusive and equitable.”

The group of 20 developing countries which include India, Brazil, China, Egypt and South Africa has been working to “remove distortions in the international trade in agriculture caused by massive subsidies in the developed world and to ensure a fair deal for developing countries in these negotiations through effective special and differential treatment,” Singh said in an interview.

The G-20 was established in August 2003 ahead of the Cancun Ministerial of the WTO to counter the US-proposal on agriculture which was heavily loaded to the benefit of the developed countries to the detriment of the developing countries.

The group has since taken a tough stand on agriculture which has ensured that EU-US did not have its way on the agriculture negotiations so as to protect the livelihood concerns of millions of subsistence farmers in the developing countries.

The group has been a major force in achieving unity of purpose amongst developing countries and works closely with other developing nations groups, like the Africa Group and the Least Developed Countries.

“Fair globalization to be sustainable, it should be more inclusive and equitable,” Singh said.

Singh said as one of the fastest growing economies of the world, India was doing everything it could to become an active partner in promoting economic cooperation and integration within the region. India is part of Asia and it would, therefore, seek active cooperation with Southeast Asian countries and beyond. The United Progressive Alliance Government, which assumed power in the country months ago, would further engage with the world economy and continue with economic reforms. — MNA/PTI

Powell, Ridge express great regret over Chinese citizen

Beijing, 31 July — In an apparent bid to mollify China, both US Secretary of State Colin Powell as well as Homeland Security Secretary Tom Ridge have expressed regret and promised a thorough probe over the treatment meted out to a Chinese businesswoman by American security officials.

Powell promised in a letter to his Chinese counterpart Li Zhaoxia that the US Government would thoroughly investigate the beating case of a Chinese citizen Zhao Yan according to US laws, the Chinese media reported Friday.

He said he was deeply disturbed when he learned of the mistreatment of the 37-year-old Chinese citizen underwent at the hands of US Customs and Border Protection officers. Zhao was hit by an officer of the US Customs and Border Protection at Niagara Falls on the US-Canadian border last week.

Powell informed Li that the accused officer, Robert Rhodes has been suspended from his post and detained on charges of felony assault, pleading that the US Government would continue its thorough investigation.

Separately, Ridge also expressed “great regret” over the incident. Xinhua news agency reported.

In a telephone call to Lan Lijun, Charge d’Affaires of the Chinese Embassy, Ridge described the beating of the Chinese businesswoman as “a horrible incident” which was “totally unacceptable” and expressed infinite regret to the Chinese Government and people.

George Fernandes, India’s Defence Minister and Convener of the then ruling National Democratic Alliance, was also twice strip-searched at Dulles Airport in Washington in early 2002 and in the middle of last year. — MNA/PTI

Internet

Internet
Iraqi police say the job is now perilous

Baghdad, 1 Aug — Being an Iraqi police officer used to be a safe, cushy job that sometimes required chasing down pickpockets and car thieves, but left plenty of time for tea.

Since the fall of Saddam Hussein, however, guerrillas armed with automatic weapons, mortars and car bombs have made law enforcement one of Iraq’s most hazardous occupations.

“It used to be prestigious. People respected us, criminals were afraid of us,” said 1st Lt. Anujal Mohammed, a 26-year-old detective at al-Bayaa police station, Baghdad’s largest. “Today it’s the opposite: It’s we who are afraid.”

Guerrillas see police as collaborators with US-led forces, who are struggling to restore order. They’ve blown up police stations all over the country, sometimes disguised as cops. They’ve gunned down officers in drive-by shootings as they left home for work, and they’ve battered police stations with mortars and rocket-propelled grenades. From April 2003 to May 2004 alone, 710 Iraqi police were killed out of a total force of 130,000 officers, authorities said. Meanwhile, police say, an officer’s death was nearly always of natural causes.

Last month’s handover of sovereignty to an interim Iraqi government has brought little change.

A truck bomb Wednesday targeted a police recruiting center in Baqouba, 35 miles northeast of Baghdad, where hundreds of job applicants were gathered. It killed 70 people.

“We’re being targeted all the time,” said Mohammed, his face scarred from a car-bombing that destroyed the al-Bayaa station in October, killing 15 Iraqis and one US soldier.

On 19 July, the two-story station was hit again by an explosives-packed fuel tanker. Nine died, including an officer. About 70 of al-Bayaa’s 200 officers were wounded.

Police complaints they’re ill-equipped. The al-Bayaa station has just eight flak jackets, and lacks vehicles, arms and ammunition, said 1st Lt. Riyad Ahmed Ali, 24, a stocky jail guard.

“Police only patrol in vehicles with bulletproof glass,” Mohammed said. “This will help but it won’t stop them.” Khalaf said of the two previous car-bombings. “We’re waiting for the next.”

Indians advised to defer visits to Iraq

New Delhi, 31 July — The India Government advised Thursday its citizens to travel to Iraq in consideration of the serious security situation in that nation.

In view of the seriousness of the current security situation in Iraq, the government of India advises its citizens to defer their visit to that country for the time being, the Indo-Asian News Service cited the External Affairs Ministry as saying.

The advisory came as negotiations for the release of three Indians taken as hostages in Iraq continued for the ninth day, against the backdrop of intensified bombings by resistance groups.

On Wednesday, at least 68 people were killed and over 50 others wounded in a suicide car bomb attack in the southern town of Baqouba in Iraq. More than 5,000 Indians are estimated to be working in Iraq, — MNA/Xinhua

“Tourist Police” for overseas visitors to New Delhi

New Delhi, 31 July — New Delhi will soon have “Tourist Police” to protect overseas visitors from harassment and cheating, the Indo-Asian News Service (IANS) reported Thursday.

Dozens of security personnel are being deployed at the city’s nine most popular tourist spots and the Indira Gandhi International Airport in New Delhi, IANS quoted a senior police official as saying.

“Each team will have a policeman who is fluent in English and with a pleasant personality, who will interact with the tourists,” the officer said.

The police teams will have brochures on tourist places, auto-rickshaw and taxi fare charts and a detailed map of Delhi, information on important commercial places and emergency numbers.

The idea is to help foreign tourists who know very little about Delhi. The Tourist Police units will go a long way in providing safety to tourists, the officer added.

In addition to a communication set-up of their own, to be set up soon, Tourist Police will have communications gadgets linked to the local area wireless network. In case a foreigner faces any trouble in the capital, the police control room will alert the tourist police unit about the incident and it will take charge of the situation, the officer said.

The new measure has come out four months after the murder of tourist Dawn Emilie Griggs near the Indira Gandhi International Airport by a taxi driver that she had hired at the airport.

“Deeply disturbed” India issues fresh appeal to Iraqi captors

New Delhi, 31 July — India has said it was “deeply disturbed” by the threat held out by the captors of Indian hostages in Iraq to kill one of them on Friday and issued a fresh appeal for their release as they were not working for “occupation forces” in the West Asian country.

“We have seen reports about one of the Indian hostages in Iraq being threatened by a person wielding an automatic weapon. We are deeply disturbed by this development,” Junior Minister for External Affairs E Ahamed told reporters on Thursday, after a nearly four-hour meeting of Crisis Management Group (CMG) set up by the government to deal with the hostage crisis.

Ahamed said the Indian Government continued to make all efforts to secure early and safe release of the three Indian nationals held hostage in Iraq and the Indian Embassy in Baghdad renewed its appeal Friday evening for the release of the hostages.

“The embassy in a statement made it clear that the three abducted Indians were “poor people who went to Kuwait seeking employment and were not working for the occupation forces in Iraq”, Ahamed said the Indian Government ‘shared the concern and anxiety of family members’ of the three hostages and said the CMG was monitoring the developments round the clock.

“We have called for the early release of the hostages so that they could reunite their families in India. We have also clarified that they would not return to Iraq,” Ahamed said.

The appeal is being widely circulated and has been communicated to Sheikh Hizam Al Dulaimi, the negotiator with the abductors, who has conveyed that he is assisting in the resolution of the issue out of humanitarian considerations.

“Government of India is making all possible efforts to bring this unfortunate incident to an early conclusion. This being a sensitive issue, we have avoided public comment on these efforts,” Ahamed said.

Prime Minister Mammo- dh Singh and External Af- fairs Minister K Natwar Singh, who are in Bangkok for the BIMST-EC (Bangladesh, In- dia, Myanmar, Thailand Sri Lanka - Economic Coopera- tion) summit are being in- formed about developments on a regular basis, he added.

MNA/TPI

Vietnam wants stronger ties with China’s Guangxi

HANOI, 31 July — In the context of good and drastic development of the Vietnam-China relations, Vietnam would like to broaden and deepen its economic and trade ties with China’s Guangxi, a senior government official said here on Friday.

“We want to seek measures to boost the ties so that Guangxi will become a bridge, an entrance of the co- operation between China and ASEAN members the Asso- ciation of Southeast Asian Nations (including Vietnam),” Vietnamese deputy Prime Minister Ve Khoan said while receiving a delegation led by Li jianao, vice governor of the Guangxi Zhuang Autono- mous Region. MNA/Xinhua
Serious attention paid to agricultural development
Secretary-2 attends completion of paddy cultivation for 2004-2005 in Yangon Division, direct seeding competition

YANGON, 1 August—A ceremony to mark completion of paddy cultivation for 2004-2005 in Yangon Division, division-level direct seeding competition and ceremony to present outstanding awards for agricultural produce in 2003-2004 were held on 25 acres of paddy fields—11 acres of farmer U Aung Aung, 7 acres of farmer U Aung Soe and 7 acres of farmer U Myat Thein—on Yangon circular road at West Matil Village in Hlegu Township, Yangon North District this morning, attended by Secretary-2 of the State Peace and Development Council Lt-Gen Thein Sein.

In the ceremony where Chairman of Yangon Division Peace and Development Council Commander of Yangon Command Maj-Gen Myint Swe, Deputy Minister for Agriculture and Irrigation Brig-Gen Khin Maung, Vice-Mayor Col Maung Pa, officials of the SPDC office, departmental heads, farmers from Dagon Myothit Townships representing Yangon East District, Kyimyindaing Township representing Yangon West District, Kyauktan, Thongwa, Thanlyin, Twantay, Kungyangon and Kawhmu Townships representing Yangon South District, Shwepyitha, Hlinethaya, Mingaladal, Hindabund, Hmaubwe, Hlaikkyi and Taikkyi Townships representing Yangon North District, entrepreneurs and guests.

First, Secretary-2 Lt-Gen Thein Sein delivered an address. He said: In Yangon Division, altogether 1.145 million acres have been put under monsoon paddy against the target of 1.2 million acres and thus 95.43 percent of paddy cultivation has been completed. All the cultivable land in Yangon Division have been put under paddy and only wetland areas were left to be put under paddy. It is heartening to see that in this monsoon cultivation season, the wetland will be put under paddy to meet the target. Although paddy cultivation has been completed, farmers are to make continuous efforts till the harvest time.

The economy of the State depends on development of the agriculture sector. Therefore, development of agriculture as the base and all-round development of other sectors of the economy as well is one of the four economic objectives out of 12 objectives of the State. Thus, all are to pay serious attention to development of the agriculture sector.

It is pivotal to build an industrialized nation for national development. Therefore, the government has established industrial zones throughout the nation for industrial development and provided necessary assistance to them. Moreover, to gain technical know-how and for human resource development, universities and colleges have been opened to produce intellectual and intelligentsia.

Under the current circumstances of the State, efforts are being gradually made to transform the conventional farming into mechanized one and use of farm machinery may be witnessed throughout the country. Using the farm machinery from the time of broadcasting seeds to the time of harvest will save time, labour and cost and thus it is necessary to use more farm machinery. A look at the agricultural production of the State shows that in 1962-63 about 1.2 million acres were put under monsoon paddy and its yield was about 400 million baskets. In 1982-83, altogether 12.9 million acres of land were put under paddy and its yield was 680 million baskets. In 2001-2002, altogether 13 million acres were put under monsoon paddy and 2 million acres under summer paddy and its yield was 1050 million baskets. In 2003-2004, altogether 13.43 million acres were put under monsoon paddy and 3.1 million acres under summer paddy and the yield was 1156 million baskets. As the State has set the target of yielding 100 baskets per acre, it is necessary to use qualified agricultural methods, to grow quality strains, to use organic and inorganic fertilizers, and to extend sow acreage.

In the hilly regions of Shan State, quality strains that can yield 180 baskets per acre have been used and thus in the plain region also, it is necessary to use quality strains that are suitable to the regions. For the development of the agriculture sector, dams and reservoirs and river water pumping stations have been built and underground water tapping projects implemented. With the effective use of water supplied from these facilities, efforts are to be made to boost agricultural produce. For equitable development of the regions in the Union, border areas and national races development projects, projects for 24 development regions and rural area development projects are being implemented. As the rural areas are places where majority of the population reside and its main business is farming, emphasis is to be placed on economic development of rural Townships, rendering the living standards and quality of life higher. Thus, all are to strive for development of the livestock breeding tasks.

In Yangon Division, 1145264 acres have been put under monsoon paddy against the target of 1200080 and thus 95 percent of land have been put under monsoon paddy. Moreover, 878256 acres of land have been put under timely (Yaytaw Moetaw) monsoon paddy cultivation against the target of 877436 acres and thus it has exceeded the target. The remaining 54816 acres will be put under paddy later.

In Yangon Division and set the target to yield 70 baskets per acres to produce 84 million baskets this year, he elaborated. Local authorities in cooperation with experts are to make efforts to realize the goal. Moreover, local authorities are to pay attention to using inorganic and organic fertilizers, he added. Moreover, farmers are to make efforts for ensuring greening of 30-mile radius of Yangon International Airport, he stressed.

Afterwards, the chairmen of Yangon South, North, East and West Districts presented reports on completion of paddy cultivation in 2004-2005 to Commander Maj-Gen Myint Swe. Later, Secretary-2 Lt-Gen Thein Sein and party viewed round the pilot plot of growing quality strains, breeding of azola, modern transplanting methods, direct seeding plot, thriving field that was put under paddy by using direct seeding by machines, paddy transplanting, broadcasting fertilizers and producing EM bokashi fertilizer.

Next, the Secretary-2, the commander, the deputy minister, the vice-mayor and party released the fingers into the paddy fields followed by the ceremony to present outstanding awards for agricultural produce in 2003-2004. Secretary-2 Lt-Gen Thein Sein presented outstanding award for excellent performance in the agriculture sector on the World Food Day 2003-2004 to the chairman of Hlegu Township Peace and Development Council. Commander Maj-Gen Myint Swe presented third prize in central level monsoon paddy production on World Food Day 2003-2004 to Kyauktan Township through the Chairman of the township PDC. Deputy Minister Brig-Gen Khin Maung presented third prize for summer paddy cultivation to Htanbin Township and Vice-Mayor Col Maung Pa outstanding award for cultivation of beans and pulses to Thongwa Township. Officials presented outstanding farmers awards to U Hla Win of Kyauktan Township for excellent performance in monsoon paddy cultivation, U Aye Han of Kayan Township for excellent performance in cultivation of green gram, U Khan Nyein of Kyauktan Township for excellent performance in cultivation of sunflower. Thongwa Township won third prize in crop cultivation, Kyauk Township the second and Taikkyi Township the first. The third prize full for repayment of bank loans for monsoon paddy was won by Twantay Township, the second to Thongwa Township and the first to Hlegu Township. Hlegu Township also won a prize for repayment of bank loans for summer paddy. Next, prize presentation for direct seeding competitions was held. In the competitions, Taikkyi Township won consolation prize and Hmaubwe Township, the third. Commander Maj-Gen Myint Swe presented the second prize in the competitions to Kyauktan Township and Secretary-2 Li-Gen Thein Sein, the first prize to Hlegu Township. The chairman of District PDCs presented certificate of honour to those who rendered assistance to the ceremony. In this competition held today, a farmer can put 3 acres of land under paddy per day by using direct seeding machine. After the ceremony the Secretary-2 and party viewed exhibition booths.

In Yangon Division, 1,145,264 acres have been put under monsoon paddy against the target of 1,200,080 and thus 95 percent of land have been put under monsoon paddy. Moreover, 878,256 acres of land have been put under timely (Yaytaw Moetaw) monsoon paddy cultivation against the target of 877,436 acres and thus it has exceeded the target. The remaining 54,816 acres will be put under paddy later. —MNA
**A milestone in Myanmar’s dental medical field**

**Dr Ba Myint**  
(Institute of Dental Medicine, Yangon)

It is a heartening success story in which the dental science field of Myanmar can take pride. In fact, Myanmar dentists led by Prof Dr U Ko Ko Maung had successfully carried out such operations on two patients. Nowadays, equal progress has been made not only in oral and maxillo surgery but also in other dental medical sectors.

Maung Zeya Aung, 18, a sophomore specializing in dental medicine of Singapore, was interested in the case of Maung Zeya Aung and requested to join the surgeons in operating the patient’s jaw. Then, fibro-optic endoscope was borrowed from the hospital and Anaesthetist Dr Daw Kyi Kyi San and the Singaporean doctors co-operated in making intubation for the patient. As the Oral and Maxillo Surgical Unit is well facilitated, the operation was performed smoothly. It took four hours and after the operation, the patient could open his mouth. It is a heartening success story in which the dental science field of Myanmar can take pride. In fact, Myanmar dentists led by Prof Dr U Ko Ko Maung had successfully carried out such operations on two patients. Nowadays, equal progress has been made not only in oral and maxillo surgery but also in other dental medical sectors. Therefore, it is obvious that progress has been made in the research work of Myanmar Dental Medicine. With the aid of Myanmar dentists and experts, she had also been able to present her paper at the Oral Pathological Conference held in Brazil in 2002 and her findings were also printed in the International Journal of Oral Medicine and Pathology in 2003. This being the case, the dental medicine, during the past ten years, has been making progress in all spheres with the assistance of the Government and under the supervision of the Ministry of Health.

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In the field of Myanmar Dental Science, progress has been made not only in preventive, curative, rehabilitative and esthetic measures but also in research on dental and oral complications. Local dentists and experts conducted research on dental and oral health in Myanmar and presented their papers abroad yearly. Myra Elliotte of Singapore was interested in the case of Maung Zeya Aung and requested to join the surgeons in operating the patient’s jaw. Then, fibro-optic endoscope was borrowed from the hospital and Anaesthetist Dr Daw Kyi Kyi San and the Singaporean doctors co-operated in making intubation for the patient. As the Oral and Maxillo Surgical Unit is well facilitated, the operation was performed smoothly. It took four hours and after the operation, the patient could open his mouth. It is a heartening success story in which the dental science field of Myanmar can take pride. In fact, Myanmar dentists led by Prof Dr U Ko Ko Maung had successfully carried out such operations on two patients. Nowadays, equal progress has been made not only in oral and maxillo surgery but also in other dental medical sectors. Therefore, it is obvious that progress has been made in the research work of Myanmar Dental Medicine. With the aid of Myanmar dentists and experts, she had also been able to present her paper at the Oral Pathological Conference held in Brazil in 2002 and her findings were also printed in the International Journal of Oral Medicine and Pathology in 2003. This being the case, the dental medicine, during the past ten years, has been making progress in all spheres with the assistance of the Government and under the supervision of the Ministry of Health.

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Maung Zeya Aung before and after the operation
Myanmar stands ready to work...

(from page 1)

Bhutan and the Prime Minister of India gave speeches.

Afterwards, Prime Minister of the Union of Myanmar General Khin Nyunt delivered an address. He said: First of all, on behalf of my delegation and on my own, I would like to congratulate you on your assumption of the Chairmanship of the BIMST-EC Summit Meeting. I am convinced that under your experienced and able leadership, the meeting will be successful. Allow me also to extend our sincere appreciation and gratitude to you, Mr Prime Minister, and through you to the Government and the people of Thailand for the warm hospitality and the excellent arrangements made for the Summit. It is, indeed, an honour and a pleasure for me to take part in today’s historic meeting to exchange views on how to further strengthen our cooperation. I would like to take this opportunity to extend our heartfelt congratulations and a very warm welcome to our two new members, Kingdom of Nepal and Kingdom of Bhutan. We are of the view that their membership in the organization will not only promote greater economic cooperation among BIMST-EC Member States but also enhance greater contacts and better understanding among the peoples of this region. In this regard, Myanmar stands ready to work closely with our two new members in order to achieve our desired goal. The Bangkok Declaration which gave birth to our organization stated that to create an enabling environment for rapid economic development and implement specific cooperation projects which are supportive as well as complementary to national development plans of the Member States. Accordingly, six areas of cooperation have been identified and through these areas of cooperation, we have further strengthened and developed our economic ties.

Tourism, one of the sectors of cooperation identified under BIMST-EC, holds great prospect for the region. The development of tourist industry can contribute to poverty alleviation by creating new economic opportunities and rising income in rural areas. In this regard, Myanmar welcomes the launching of “Visit BIMST-EC Year 2004”.

Myanmar is a cultural destination popularly known as “the Land of Pagodas”. Apart from being known as “the Land of Pagodas’, Myanmar also offers a variety of tourist attractions such as its rich culture, nature endowed with tropical forests, unspoiled beaches and snow capped mountain ranges, world famous gems such as rubies and jade and handicrafts. While promoting and developing our tourist industry, we also continue to preserve our cultural heritage. Promoting transportation linkages among the Member States will help to expedite trade, tourism and people to people contact. In addition, transport linkages within the grouping can strengthen regional economic growth and integration and of cementing the bonds based on cultural and historical affinities.

Myanmar together with Thailand and India are discussing on a cooperative endeavour to construct a highway from Moreh in India to Mae Sot in Thailand through Bagan in Myanmar known as the “India-Myanmar-Thailand Trilateral Highway Project”.

In the transportation linkages sector, in addition to linkages by highways, we also need to find ways to facilitate our maritime transportation network. In this regard, Myanmar presented the “Development of the Dawei Deep Sea Port Project” to the Sixth BIMST-EC Ministerial Meeting held in Phuket. The Dawei-Nyaw Byin International Deep Sea Port will not only be to the economic benefit of Myanmar and Thailand but will also greatly facilitate trade and commerce of freight forwarders and exporters within the region. The Free Trade Area for the BIMST-EC region is appropriate and timely because BIMST-EC is an important link between South-East Asia and South Asia. We are convinced that the Free Trade Area will act as a stimulus to the further strengthening of economic cooperation among Member Countries. The Free Trade Area for BIMST-EC will also help to lower costs, increase intra-regional trade and investment, and increase intra-regional efficiency.

I would like to take this opportunity to express our appreciation to the Member States of BIMST-EC for allowing us to continue our role as the lead country in the energy sector. During six years as the lead country, we have kept our commitments, organized, and convened Committee of Experts/Officials Meetings regularly. We have also established committees, task forces and finalized the Terms of Reference (TOR) for the energy sector committee. Here, I would like to acknowledge that the achievement made so far in the energy sector has been through cooperation and coordination among the BIMST-EC countries. We are encouraged that during the short span of over seven years of existence, BIMST-EC has seen considerable progress in the identified areas of cooperation. Some of the achievements we have thus made so far include signing of the Framework Agreement on Free Trade Area under Trade and Investment Sector and launching of the “Visit BIMST-EC Year 2004” under Tourism Sector. We should also be aware of the fact that although there is progress in some sectors of cooperation, there are other areas where we still need to make greater efforts. It is our firm belief that to become a genuinely effective forum to bring progress and prosperity to our people, BIMST-EC must be more action-oriented as well as result-oriented. In this endeavour, Myanmar pledges to cooperate and work together with all its members to achieve the desired goal.

Afterwards, the Prime Minister of Nepal and the President of Sri Lanka gave addresses, and the opening ceremony concluded. After the opening ceremony, heads of government of BIMST-EC Member States had documentary photos taken. — MNA
PM General Khin Nyunt attends Retreat ...

— Recognize the need to enhance inter-regional tourism through such strategies as joint marketing of intra-BIMSTEC tourism packages, exchange of visits and information as well as sub-regional tourism cooperation. — Agree to task their Foreign Ministers with the responsibility of coordinating overall BIMSTEC cooperation.

Afterwards, they decided to hold the next BIMSTEC Summit in India on 2006. After the retreat, Prime Minister General Khin Nyunt and Heads of Government of BIMST-EC Member States had lunch at the hall on the second floor of the Ministry of Foreign affairs Building.

After the luncheon, Thai Prime Minister Mr Thaksin Shinawatra cordially saw off heads of government of BIMSTEC Member states on their departure for respective hotels. Prime Minister General Khin Nyunt and party arrived at the Peninsula Hotel at 2.15 pm.

Before their departure from the hotel, the wife of the Myanmar Ambassador and the wife of the Military Attaché, staff of the Myanmar embassy and families bade farewell to Prime Minister General Khin Nyunt and party. Next, the Prime Minister and party went to Bangkok International Airport. At the special lounge, Prime Minister General Khin Nyunt cordially greeted Thai Deputy Prime Minister Thammarak Issarangura, the Thai Ambassador to Myanmar and officials. Afterwards, Prime Minister General Khin Nyunt and the Thai Deputy Prime Minister exchanged souvenirs.

Member countries also agree to coordinate their diverse strengths in the tourism sector to derive maximum benefit from our natural, cultural and historical attractions, and recognize the need to enhance inter-regional tourism through such strategies as joint marketing of intra-BIMSTEC tourism packages, exchange of visits and information as well as sub-regional tourism cooperation.

FMIs of BIMST-EC countries attend working luncheon & coordination meeting

YANGON, 1 August— Minister for Foreign Affairs U Win Aung attended the luncheon and coordination meeting of Ministers for Foreign Affairs of BIMST-EC member states at the Vithes Samonson room of the building of Thai Ministry of Foreign Affairs in Bangkok, Thailand at 1.30 pm on 30 July.

Present on the occasion were the Foreign Affairs Ministers of BIMST-EC member states and senior officials.

First, they were served with luncheon at the Vithes Samonson room in Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Thailand. Afterwards, they together posed for documentary photos. Next, the coordination meeting continued. — MNA
Prime Minister General Khin Nyunt attends Waso robes offering ceremony at Tipitaka Maha Gandayon Monastery in Kaba Aye

YANGON, 1 Aug — Prime Minister General Khin Nyunt attended the Waso robes offering ceremony at Kaba Aye Tipitaka Maha Gandayon Monastery in Mayangon Township at 3 pm today. Also present on the occasion were State Ovaçañarîya Upa Okkathâ of Shêkîkêy Nîkâya Maha Nâyaka Joint Susanañâng Abhidiñâja Maha Rathâ Gûrī Shêkîkêy Nhîrîmanta Sântuûkyueng Sûrayadâ Bhaddânta Rajîñâñâñhîvûsman and members of the Sangha, Presiding Nâyaka of the monastery Tipitakadhârâ Dhamma-bhandagarika Agga Maha Pandita Abhidiñâma Pâli Paragû Sûrayadâ Bhaddânta Sûmangalalankanâra (PhD) and Sûrayadâ, Chairman of Yangon Division Peace and Development Council Commander of Yangon Command Maj-Gen Myint Swe, ministers, the mayor, deputy ministers, officials of the State Peace and Development Council Office, departmental heads and wellwishers.

Sayadâ Bhaddânta Rajîñâñhîvûsman administered the Five Precepts. Members of the Sangha recited Parîtas.

Next, Prime Minister General Khin Nyunt, the commander, the ministers, the mayor and the deputy ministers donated Waso robes and alms to the Sayadâs.

Administration Sûrayadâ of the Maha Gandayon Monastery Maha Ganthavâçaka Pandita Bhaddânta Kâvidhâja supplicated on arrangements for presenting prizes to winner monks of the monastery in Dhammaçarîya and Pahtamabyan examination in 1365 and for honouring the lecturer Sayadâ and the deputy lecturer Sayadâ of the Kaba Aye Tipitaka Maha Gandayon Monastery.

Yangon Division Religious Affairs Department Staff Officer U San Thinn Hlaing read out the list of wellwishers to the fund— K 1 million donated by Thin Thudhamma Manîjotadhâra Dr Tha Yin Myat-Tihâ Thudhamma Theïnghî Daw Nwe Nwe Aye, daughter Ma Chaw Su Myat; K 500,000 each by U Ohn Zaw-Daw Aye Hla Win; K 300,000 by Twantay Ashin Indaka, mother Daw Hla Sein and family; K 200,000 each by U Tun Tun Oo-Daw Mar Mar and family; and Dr Naing Htut Aung-Daw Hla Htwe. Later, Sayadâ Bhaddânta Sûmangalalankanâra delivered a sermon and the Prime Minister and the congregation shared merits gained. — MNA

Prime Minister General Khin Nyunt offers Waso robes to a Sayadâ at the ceremony. — MNA

Prime Minister inspects upgrading of Yangon Kandawgyi Gardens

YANGON, 1 Aug — Prime Minister General Khin Nyunt this morning inspected upgrading of Yangon Kandawgyi Gardens.

On arrival at the Agricultural Museum in Education Zone in Kandawgyi Gardens, the Prime Minister was welcomed by ministers, deputy ministers, officials of the State Peace and Development Council Office, heads of department and officials of respective zones.

The Prime Minister presented the third prize for monsoon paddy cultivation to the Kyauktan Township PDC chairman. (News on page 6)— MNA

Construction of Elephant Plaza, Fresh Water Fish Garden, for display of crocodiles and pet fish, Central Forest Zone, a restaurant and Water Plaza and Recreation Zone were inspected.
Prime Minister General Khin Nyunt formally opens the steel door at the Mahazeya Atula Marazein Buddha Image. — MNA

PM General Khin Nyunt attends opening of Natlan passage and steel door at Mahazeya Atula Marazein Buddha Image

YANGON, 1 Aug — Prime Minister General Khin Nyunt attended the opening of Natlan passage to Mahazeya Atula Marazein Bronze Buddha Image and steel door in conjunction with the archway of the Image in Bahan Township this morning.

Also present on the occasion were ministers, the Yangon mayor, deputy ministers, the deputy commander, senior military officers, officials of the State Peace and Development Council Office, departmental heads and authorities, members of the pagoda board of trustees and wellwishers.

Minister for Religious Affairs Brig-Gen Thura Myint Maung, Chairman of All-round Renovation Committee for the Buddha Image No 3 Military Region Commander Col Tint Hsan and wellwisher U Tun Aye formally opened the Natlan Passage to the Image.

Afterwards, Prime Minister General Khin Nyunt pressed the button to open the steel door at the image. Then, the Prime Minister sprinkled scented water on it.

The Prime Minister offered gold foils to the Image. Next, the Prime Minister and party offered flowers, water, lights and joss sticks to the Image in Gandakuti Taik.

At the merit sharing ceremony, State Ovadaçariya Shwekyin Nikaya Upa Okkathā Maha Nayaka Joint Shwekyin Sasanaibaing Abhidhāja Maha Rathāa Guru Shwehintha Thirimanta Sankyayaw Sayadaw Bhaddanta Rajindabhivamsa, Vice-Chairman of the State Sangha Maha Nayaka Committee Abhidhāja Maha Rathāa Guru Abhidhāja Agga Maha Saddhamma-jotikā Bahan Aungnye-bonsan Monastery Sayadaw Bhaddanta Patindabhivamsa and members of the Sangha.

Sayadaw Bhaddanta Rajindabhivamsa administered the Five Precepts. Members of the Sangha recited Parittas.

Next, the Prime Minister offered Waso robes and alms to the Shwekyin Nikaya Joint Sasanaibaing Sayadaw and the Vice-Chairman Sayadaw.

Similarly, the ministers, the deputy ministers and departmental heads donated provisions to the Sayadaws.

Minister for Religious Affairs Brig-Gen Thura Myint Maung accepted K 4,640,550 donated by ACE Construction Co Ltd Managing Director U Tint Hsan-De Hlay Hlay Hnye; K 4.1 million by U Tint Aye-Daw Ni Ni Win of No 7, Yuzana Street, Mingala Taungnyunt Township; K 1 million by U Myo Win of Steel Brothers Co; K 1 million by U Ye Chan-Daw Yu Tin Moe and family; K 700,000 by U Bo Gyi-Daw Than; K 600,000 by Teingyar U Than Hla; K 500,000 by Daw Lun Huy; K 200,000 by Daw Tint Tint; K 150,000 by U Kyaw Myint-Daw San San; K 100,000 by U Than Gyoung-Daw Tin Sein; K 200,000 by U Hlaing Yi-Daw Mya Ngwe; and K 3,194,850 by wellwishers.

Next, Sayadaw Bhaddanta Patindabhivamsa delivered a sermon, and the Prime Minister and the congregation shared merits gained.

The Prime Minister performed the ritual of golden and silvery showers to mark the successful completion of the ceremony. Wellwishers are invited to donate gold foils to the Buddha Image.

At Shwedagon Pagoda, the Prime Minister went around the pagoda and cordially conversed with pilgrims. The Prime Minister offered flowers, water, lights and joss sticks to Razamuni Buddha Image near northern stairway and paid homage to the image. The Prime Minister planted a moonseed vine sapling at north-east corner of Shwedagon Pagoda.

Similarly, the ministers, the deputy ministers and departmental heads donated provisions to the Sayadaws.

The Prime Minister offered flowers, water, lights and joss sticks to Padamyar Myetshin Buddha Image upper terrace of the pagoda.

Prime Minister General Khin Nyunt plants a moonseed vine (Usinonumanu) sapling at north-east corner of Shwedagon Pagoda platform. — MNA

Wellwishers invited for sinking tube-wells

YANGON, 1 Aug— The Development Affairs Committees under the Ministry for Progress of Border Areas and National Races and Development Affairs are making concerted 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 one 200 feet deep four-inch diameter tube-well costs K 500,000.

Those wishing to donate cash for the tube-well sinking projects for rural areas may contact the Director- General (Tel: 01-245420 & 253988), the Deputy Director-General (Tel: 01-240118), the Director (Engineering) (Tel: 01-291967), the Directors (Sagin Division Development Affairs Committee) (Tel: 071-21012), the Director (Magway Division Development Affairs Committee) (Tel: 063-23164) and the Director (Mandalay Division Development Affairs Committee) (Tel: 02-54657).
**ADB grants to help China finance SMEs**

**Japan donates food to Lesotho**

**Chinese spend $30b on weddings each year**

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**INVITATION FOR TENDER**

No. 004/POL/2004-2005

Sealed Tenders from eligible suppliers are invited for the supply of Engine Oil SAE 50, API (CI/CS) (OR) (C/CS/C), (Fer Diesel Engine). Prices are to be quoted in Myanmar Kyats Yangon.

(a) Tender Documents are available at the office of Procurement & Stores Department, Head Office, Road Transport, No. 375, Bogyoke Aung San Street, Yangon, Myanmar, Commencing on the 18th August 2004.

(b) Tender will be closed on 16th August 2004 at (16:00) hours.

(c) The Road Transport Reserves the right to reject any or all Tenders without furnishing reasons.

(d) Detailed information will be available at the office of the Procurement & Stores, Department or Contact Phone Nos. (01-252574) (01-376549)

**MANAGING DIRECTOR**

**ROAD TRANSPORT**

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**UN body launches network to fight bird flu**

**Kerry expresses support for stem cell research**

**ADB**

**grant to help China finance SMEs**

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**Japan donates food to Lesotho**

JOHANNESBURG, 31 July—Japan has provided Lesotho with a donation of about one million US dollars which has been used to buy food aid in the kingdom.

Boston, 31 July—US Democratic presidential candidate John Kerry expressed support on Thursday for stem cell research that could help cure such diseases as Parkinson’s, diabetes, Alzheimer’s and AIDS.

“I am not here to make a political speech, and the topic... should not, must not, have anything to do with partisanism,” said Ron Reagan, a critic of President George W Bush’s position on stem cell research.

Ron Reagan, son of late Republican president Ronald Reagan, urged support for research on embryonic stem cell that could help cure a number of diseases, in a speech on Tuesday at the convention that opened on Monday.

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**Chinese spend $30b on weddings each year**

Beijing, 31 July—Chinese spend a total of 250 billion Yuan (nearly 10 million US dollars) on wedding ceremonies each year, with nearly 10 million couples getting married nationwide, ranking 90,000 in Beijing alone, the latest statistics of China’s Ministry of Civil Affairs showed.

The huge wedding ceremony market has boosted the development of more than 40 related sectors, including photo studios, jewellery, restaurants, tourism, apparel and furniture and even cars, apartments, banks, insurance, said Xu Ruixin, president of the China Social Work Association.

“It has become a new industry full of business opportunities and with great prospects,” Xu said.

Although the “wedding economy” has developed fast and pushed the growth of many other related sectors, Xu meanwhile suggested newlyweds be rational in wedding consumption.

“The wedding economy should develop in a rational, reasonable and healthy way,” Xu said.
NASA satellite may find ice on hottest planet

CAPE CANAVERAL, Fla. — A satellite that heads off to Mercury, the hottest planet in the solar system, on Monday has NASA scientists buzzing because it is expected to journey there and find, of all things, ice.

The Messenger (MErcury Surface, Space ENvironment, GEochemistry and Ranging) spacecraft takes off three decades after the last time NASA took an up-close look at Mercury, where the temperature at noon is just a shade under 900 degrees Fahrenheit (482.22 Celsius).

This September 1974 NASA illustration shows 'Mariner 10' orbiting planet Mercury. NASA plans to launch a new spacecraft, baptized Messenger, to the mysterious planet closest to the sun.— MNA/Reuters

The spacecraft takes off three decades after the last time NASA took an up-close look at Mercury, where the temperature at noon is just a shade under 900 degrees Fahrenheit (482.22 Celsius).

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Two thirds iron and as dense as a planet the size of Earth, although it is much smaller, scientists say. Mercury is slightly larger than the Earth’s moon, "Did Mercury start off more Earth-like, then lose its rocky exterior?" asked Sean Solomon of the Carnegie Institute of Washington and principal scientist for the Messenger mission. Both long exposure to solar winds or some giant impact might account for that, he said.

Scientists make mad cow prion lab for first time

WASHINGTON, July 31 — Researchers have for the first time made a prion in the laboratory and used it to demonstrate that misfolded proteins are indeed the sole cause of mad cow disease, the US and German scientists reported on Thursday.

The research, published in the journal Science, also may help open the way to treatments for the currently untreatable and incurable family of prion diseases, which include not only mad cow but an uncommon Creutzfeld Jakob disease, and a related human form of CJD caused by eating mad cow-infect blood.

Our study demonstrates that misfolding a natural segment of the normal prion protein is sufficient to transform the protein into infectious prions, said lead researcher Giuseppe Legname at the University of California San Francisco. Scientists from the Heinrich-Heine Universitat in Dueseldorf, Germany also took part in the study.

The researchers created a synthetic prion by using bacteria to grow prion fragments and then folding them into larger prion structures. They injected these into the brains of mice bred to be susceptible to transmissible spongiform encephalopathy, such as bovine spongiform encephalopathy, a severe type of blood cancer. The molecule, identified as chlorogenic acid, coded-in sb-101 throughout the three-year hush-hush study, came as a chance discovery while the team was conducting immuno-modulatory studies on betel leaf and its effect on human cell lines.

"We found that chlorogenic acid induced programmed cell death in human cancer cells transplanted in experimental nude mice," immunologist and team leader Santu Bandopadhayay told PTI here on Friday. The 12-member team, comprising IICB Director and cell biologist Prof Samir Bhattacharya, drug designer Chhabinath Mandal, medicinal chemist Bikas Pal, animal scientist Aditya Konar, haematologists Dilip Bhattacharya and Upal Chaudhuri and a number of laboratory aides, has applied for US and global patents for the molecule.

India provides Rs 18.45m grant to Nepal for nursing campus

KATHMANDU, July 31 — India will provide 18.45 million rupee grant assistance to the government of Nepal for construction of a nursing campus in central Terai Region. A memorandum of understanding was signed between Government of Nepal and the Embassy of India, Kathmandu, to this effect on Thursday, according to Indian Embassy sources.

The grant assistance will be utilized for constructing the Nursing Campus in Janakpur. The implementation of the project would go a long way in improving education for the people in the district of Dhanusha, an embassy release said. — MNA/PTI

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Molecule in betel leaf holds cancer drug promise

KOLKATA, July 31 — A group of scientists in this eastern Indian city have claimed to have made a major breakthrough in cancer studies when they struck upon a molecule in betel (paan) leaf that targets and kills leukemia cells and holds the promise of becoming the world’s first herb-based, cheap therapeutic drug for blood cancer.

A multi-disciplinary team from Council for Scientific and Industrial Research’s premier lab Indian Institute of Chemical Biology (IICB) here is ecstatic over the serendipitous find since it is just one of prohibitively expensive drug currently available worldwide for the treatment of Chronic Myelogenous Leukemia (CML), a severe type of blood cancer.

The molecule, identified as chlorogenic acid, code-named sb-101 throughout the three-year hush-hush study, came as a chance discovery while the team was conducting immuno-modulatory studies on betel leaf and its effect on human cell lines.

"We found that chlorogenic acid induced programmed cell death in human cancer cells transplanted in experimental nude mice," immunologist and team leader Santu Bandopadhayay told PTI here on Friday. The 12-member team, comprising IICB Director and cell biologist Prof Samir Bhattacharya, drug designer Chhabinath Mandal, medicinal chemist Bikas Pal, animal scientist Aditya Konar, haematologists Dilip Bhattacharya and Upal Chaudhuri and a number of laboratory aides, has applied for US and global patents for the molecule.

The pathbreaking work, to be published in the journal Blood in October, has been given a verbal go-ahead for immediate multi-centric human trials in the country by Director General of Indian Council of Medical Research (ICMR) Dr N K Ganguly, the team disclosed.

India, Pakistan offer help to Bangladesh in tackling massive floods

Dhaka, July 31 — India and Pakistan have expressed sympathy for flood-affected people of Bangladesh and offered all possible assistance to tackle the situation as the water levels showed signs of receding across the country on Friday.

Prime Minister Manmohan Singh, in a letter to his Bangladeshi counterpart Khaleda Zia, has conveyed his deep sympathies to the government and Bangladesh people at the grave loss of life suffered and the extensive damage inflicted by floods.

"We know the people of Bangladesh will face this disaster with courage and fortitude. As neighbours and friends, the people of India stand ready to assist the people of Bangladesh in this hour of need," Singh said in his letter, the Daily Star newspaper reported.

Pakistani President Musharraf telephoned Zia on Thursday and offered to assist the calamity-hit people and wanted to know the situation.

Zia thanked both the leaders, saying an assessment of the needs due to the losses caused by the worst floods since 1998 was underway, the report said. So far 400 people have lost their lives in the severe floods which hit the southeast Asian nations, reports said. More than 30 million of the country’s 130 million population have been hit, even as experts today said there were signs that the water was receding across Bangladesh.

Meanwhile, water-borne diseases, specially diarrhoea, were spreading as flood waters started to recede, health officials said. — MNA/PTI

Scientists make mad cow prion lab for first time

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The research, published in the journal Science, also may help open the way to treatments for the currently untreatable and incurable family of prion diseases, which include not only mad cow but an uncommon Creutzfeld Jakob disease, and a related human form of CJD caused by eating mad cow-infect blood.

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Barcelona wait for Real Madrid approval on Eto'o bid

MADRID, 31 July—Barcelona have made Real Mallorca an improved offer for African Player of the Year Samuel Eto'o and are waiting on approval from arch-rivals Real Madrid for the deal to go through.

Real Madrid co-own the rights to the Cameroon striker with Mallorca and have seven days to decide whether to accept a 50 per cent share of the Barca bid, reported to be 22 million euros (26.51 million US dollars), or to buy out the player's contract in full.

Barcelona had an offer for Eto'o turned down by the clubs last week but Mallorca, at least, are now ready to do business.

"This is important in economic terms for Real Mallorca," the club said on their web site on Friday. "It's lower than the offers we have from other two clubs but those proposals have not been accepted by the player. It has been decided to pass the offer on to Real Madrid to resolve a situation that has become untenable."

Barcelona have already signed seven players for the new season, including Swedish striker Henrik Larsson, but club president Joan Laporta wants to add Eto'o to the squad. — MNA/Reuters

French fans want Zidane to stay

PARIS, 31 July—Almost two thirds of French people want Zinedine Zidane to keep playing for his country until the 2006 World Cup, according to a poll published on Friday.

While defenders Marcel Desailly and Lilian Thuram announced they were retiring from international football after Euro 2004, 62 per cent of those polled would like the Real Madrid playmaker to continue while 29 per cent think he should call it quits.

French daily Le Parisien which published the poll said Zidane had already decided to bid farewell to Les Bleus.

But new French manager Raymond Domenech said on Thursday he had no prejudice against France's old guard and that Zidane had not told him he wished to end his career with the national team. — MNA/Reuters

Norwegian striker Karadas signs for Benfica

LUNEN, 31 July—Norway striker Araz Karadas Thursday signed a four-year contract with Portuguese league powerhouse Benfica, the Lisbon club's web site said.

Portuguese media reported Benfica had paid around 1.5 million euros for the 22-year-old forward, who has won three caps for Norway.

"I am very happy, this is a dream come true. I want to help Benfica to achieve the Portuguese title and to the best possible job at the Champions League," Karadas told newspaper A Bola Thursday.

Karadas started his career in 1999 with Braaen, where he stayed until 2001, joining Rosenborg that same year. — MNA/Aحلول

Answers for yesterday's crossword puzzle

South Korea's Seol Ki Hyeon (R) kicks the ball away from Iran's Hossein Ka'Abi during their Asian Cup quarterfinal match in Jinan, capital city of Shandong province, on 31 July, 2004. Iran won 4-3 to advance to the semifinals. — Reuters

Celtic sign Camara in British record loan deal

GLASGOW, 31 July—Scottish champions Celtic have completed the signing of Senegalese striker Henri Camara in a British record loan deal from English First Division side Wolverhampton Wanderers.

The 27-year-old is Celtic's first signing of the close season and will bolster the Glasgow club's squad for the defence of their Premier League title and Champions League campaign.

"Media reports suggested Celtic paid Wolves 1.7 million pounds (3.08 million US dollars) to sign Camara on a season-long loan deal and they will have the option to make the move permanent," said Celtic manager Martin O'Neill.

"I am pleased to welcome Henri to the club," said O'Neill. "He will be a welcome addition to the squad and if things go well for him here we'll have the option to buy him at the end of the season."

"I can't wait to get started," said Camara, who helped his country reach the last eight at the 2002 World Cup Finals. —Reuters

Baron Williams knocks out Tyson

LOUISVILLE (Kentucky), 31 July—Unheralded Briton Danny Williams produced one of the biggest upsets in the history of boxing when he knocked out former world champion Mike Tyson in the fourth round of their heavyweight fight on Friday.

Tyson dominated the opening round but Williams hit back with several crunching blows and slowly began to take control against the 38-year-old American.

Williams, 31, landed with a stream of thunderous rights in the fourth before sending Tyson to the canvas after two minutes 51 seconds. Referee Dennis Alfred halted the count to usher Williams back to his corner before stopping the fight as a groggy Tyson could barely get to his feet.

"I showed I am a warrior," said Williams to US television. "He hurt me for a few seconds in the first round but I came back and boxed him smart."

"I was sure I was gonna win. I knew I had the capability of beating him," said Williams, however, said he expected Tyson to ask for a second crack at him. "I know he's gonna want a rematch," said the Briton.

Tyson came charging out at the start of the contest with a flurry of punches which sent Williams reeling. But Williams rallied in the second, swapping blows with his opponent and landing several rights to Tyson's head.

Williams was twice cautioned by Alfred in the third round, the first time for hitting after a break and opening a slight cut over Tyson's right eye, and the second for an apparent low blow.

But he continued to engage Tyson in several close-in battles, trading punches with the former champion for most of the round.

Williams took over in the fourth and, with a shocked crowd of 17,273 mostly Tyson fans looking on, pounded the American into the ropes late in the round.

On the undercard, Laila Ali, fighting in her famous father Muhammad's hometown, maintained her unbeaten record by stopping super middleweight Monica Nunez in round nine.

Liverpool granted permission to build new stadium

LONDON, 31 July—Liverpool were granted planning permission to build a new 60,000-capacity stadium by the city council on Friday.

Liverpool's web site said councillors gave their approval after inspecting the site of the proposed development in nearby Stanley Park on Friday.

The club, who submitted their planning application last October, are keen to move to a new stadium as Anfield, their home since 1892, has a capacity of only 45,362.

A larger stadium would give them more financial muscle alongside rivals Manchester United, Arsenal and Chelsea.

Under the plans the current Anfield Road stadium site would be transformed into a public plaza surrounded by apartments, offices, bars and restaurants and a hotel.

The new stadium, which Liverpool hope will open in 2006, will retain the Anfield name. The club plans to invest 30 million pounds (45.1 million US dollars) in the project with the money borrowed against future ticket sales. — MNA/Reuters
Ministry of Sports, FIBA Asia and Myanmar Basketball Federation, concluded with Prof Dr Sein Myint, General Secretary U Maung Maung Myint and others present.

Aye Myint delivers an address at the opening of the Junior Snooker Competition, jointly sponsored by Myanmar Billiard & Snooker Federation and Sein Wuthmon Company at Asia Plaza in Yangon on Sunday.

Minister for Sports Brig-Gen Thara Aye Myint delivers an address at the closing ceremony of the FIBA Asia Referees’ Clinic. — MBF

Course for basketball referees concludes

YANGON, 1 Aug — The FIBA Asia Referees’ Clinic, 2004, jointly sponsored by Ministry of Sports, FIBA Asia and Myanmar Basketball Federation, concluded with ceremony at Youth Training centre in Thawwunna here at noon today. Myanmar Olympic Committee Chairman Minister for Sports Brig-Gen Thara Aye Myint, MBF President Prof Dr Sein Myint, General Secretary U Maung Maung Myint and others were present at the ceremony. — MNA

WEATHER

Sunday, 1 August 2004

Summary of observations recorded at 09:30 hours MST: During the past 24 hours, weather has been partly cloudy in Magway Division, rain or thundershowers have been isolated in Sagaing, Mandalay, Yangon and Ayeyawady Divisions and scattered in Rakhine, Kayah States and Bago Division and widespread in the remaining areas with isolated heavyfalls in Kayin, Kayin and Mon States and Tanintharyi Division. The noteworthy amounts of rainfall recorded were 7.17 inches, Patao (4.84 inches), Dawei (3.93 inches) and Hpa-an (3.27 inches).

Maximum temperature on 31-7-2004 was 29.5°C (85°F). Minimum temperature on 1-8-2004 was 21.2°C (70°F). Relative humidity at 9:30 hrs MST on 1-8-2004 was 96%. Total sunshine hours on 31-7-2004 was 0.04 hour approx.

Rainfall on 1-8-2004 was nil at Yangon Airport, Kaba-Aye and central Yangon. Total rainfall since 1-1-2004 was 1684 mm (66.30 inches) at Yangon Airport and 1663 mm (65.47 inches) at Kaba-Aye and 1657 mm (65.24 inches) at central Yangon. Maximum wind speed at Yangon (Kaba-Aye) was 5 mph from Southwest at 15:25 hours MST on 31-7-2004.

Bay inference: Monsoon is strong in Andaman Sea and moderate elsewhere in the Bay of Bengal.

Forecast valid until evening of 2-8-2004: Rain or thundershowers will be widespread in Kayin, Shan, Kayin and Mon States and Tanintharyi Division, scattered in Chin, Kayah and Rakhine States and Yangon, Kayah and Ayeyawady Divisions and isolated in the remaining areas with likelihood of isolated heavyfalls in Mon and Kayin States and Tanintharyi Division. Degree of certainty is (100%).

State of the sea: Sea will be moderate in Myanmar waters.

Forecast for Yangon and neighbouring area for 2-8:2004: One or two rain or thundershowers. Degree of certainty is (80%). Forecast for Mandalay and neighbouring area for 2-8:2004: Likelihood of isolated rain or thundershowers. Degree of certainty is (60%).

Flood Bulletin (Issued at 1 pm on 1-8-2004)

The water levels of Ayeyawady River at Aunglan and Pyay are about (3) ft above the danger levels. The water levels may fall below the danger levels during the next five days commencing noon today. The water level of Ayeyawady River at Hinthada will not change markedly above the danger level during the next three days commencing noon today. The water levels of Chindwin River at Mawlaik, Kalewa and Monywa are about one foot above the danger levels. The water levels may fall below the danger levels during the next two days commencing noon today. The water level of Thanlwin River at Hpa-an is slightly above the danger level. The water level may fall below the danger level during the next four days commencing noon today.
Prime Minister General Khin Nyunt attends the Informal Meeting of Heads of Government of BIMSTEC member countries in Bangkok, Thailand. — MNA

PM General Khin Nyunt attends Retreat of Govt of BIMSTEC member countries

Maters on tourism, agriculture, energy, water supply, development of traditional medicines, prevention against violence, poverty alleviation discussed

Member countries agree that the grouping shall henceforth be known as BIMSTEC or the Bay of Bengal Initiative for Multi-Sectoral Technical and Economic Cooperation.

YANGON, 1 Aug—Prime Minister of the Union of Myanmar General Khin Nyunt attended the Informal Meeting of heads of government of BIMSTEC Member States held on the first floor of Buakaw Room of the Thai Ministry of Foreign Affairs at 11 am yesterday.

Also present on the occasion were Prime Minister of Bangladesh Begum Khaleda Zia, Prime Minister of Bhutan Lyonpo Jigmi Yoeser Thinlay, Prime Minister of India Dr Manmohan Singh, Myanmar Prime Minister General Khin Nyunt, Prime Minister of Nepal Mr Sher Bahadur Deuba, President of Sri Lanka Mrs Chandrika Bandaranaike Kumaran, Minister for Foreign Affairs U Win Aung, Deputy Minister U Khin Maung Win, ministers and deputy ministers of BIMSTEC member states.

They cordially discussed matters related to regional tourism, agriculture, energy, water supply, development of traditional medicines, prevention against violence and poverty alleviation.

Next, they approved the BIMSTEC Summit Declaration. The Declaration mentions that the Heads of Government of BIMSTEC member countries:

—Agree to take all possible steps including timely completion of the Free Trade Area negotiations for realization of the full potential of BIMSTEC trade and investment, taking into account the special needs of individual member countries.

—Agree to focus on specific areas of cooperation, including but not limited to trade & investment, transport & communications, tourism energy, human resources development, agriculture, fisheries, science & technology and people-to-people contact.

They also agree to explore the expansion of BIMSTEC cooperation into the areas of culture, education, public health, rural development, environment, ICT and biotechnology.

(See page 9)

Thai FM calls on General Khin Nyunt

YANGON, 1 Aug—Foreign Minister of Thailand Dr Sutakirat paid a courtesy call on Prime Minister of the Union of Myanmar General Khin Nyunt at Room No 3609 of the Peninsula Hotel in Bangkok yesterday morning. Also present on the occasion together with Prime Minister General Khin Nyunt were Minister for Foreign Affairs U Win Aung and Deputy Minister U Khin Maung Win. After the meeting, the Prime Minister and the Thai Foreign Minister exchanged gifts. — MNA

Thai FM calls on Myanmar Prime Minister General Khin Nyunt at Peninsula Hotel in Bangkok. — MNA

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(See page 9)