Senior General Than Shwe sends felicitations to Singapore

YANGON, 9 Aug — On the occasion of the 39th Anniversary of the National Day of the Republic of Singapore which falls on 9 August 2004, Senior General Than Shwe, Chairman of the State Peace and Development Council, has sent a message of felicitations to His Excellency Mr S R Nathan, President of the Republic of Singapore. — MNA

PM inspects progress in construction of religious buildings in Bago

Waso robes offering ceremony held at Kyakhatwaing Monastery

YANGON, 8 Aug — Prime Minister General Khin Nyunt attended the Waso robes offering ceremony of Kyakhatwaing Monastery in Bago this morning.

Present on the occasion were Presiding Nayaka Sayadaw of the Kyakhatwaing Monastery Abhidhaja Maha Rattha Guru Abhidhaja Agga Maha Saddhamma Jotika Bhaddanta Jotipala and members of the Sangha, Member of the State Peace and Development Council Lt-Gen Khin Maung Than of the Ministry of Defence, Chairman of Bago Division Peace and Development Council Commander of Southern Command Maj-Gen Ko Ko, the ministers, the deputy ministers, senior military officers, departmental officials, social organizations and wellwishers.

At the ceremony, Sayadaw Bhaddanta Jotipala administered the Nine-Precepts to the congregation. Next, the Prime Minister supplicated on the aggregation. Earlier, the Prime Minister General Khin Nyunt offered eight requisites and alms to Kyakhatwaing Pariyatti Monastery Presiding Nayaka Sayadaw Bhaddanta Jotipala. — MNA

Insane.

It is known that the Waso robes offering ceremony was held in conjunction with the cash donation ceremony for paving Khamhebyin-Nibban road and for presenting Sasaniakra Award, he said adding that he was pleased to see that the Sayadaw was not still satisfied with his outstanding performance in religious field and he was making earnest efforts in the interest of the State and the people regardless of his age.

With the sponsorship of the Sayadaw, Satdanyadana Bridge, Thirizeya Bridge, Pylon Chantha road and park were built at Nibban Pyilon Chantha road linking Khamebyin and Thanatpin-Kayan-Thongwa road is now being upgraded from an earth road to a gravel one.

He expressed his pleasure to witness the active participation of disciples of the Sayadaw in making donations. (See page 15)

Endure.

Although the Kyakhatwaing Sayadawgyi is at the age of 84, he has been making energetic efforts in discharging duties in the interests of the Sasana and the nation. It is most honourable considering such virtues as generous donations, diligence, wisdom and determination of the Sayadaw who has been making relentless efforts regardless of his age.

Emergence of the State Constitution is the duty of all citizens of Myanmar Naing-Ngan.
The entire people plays a very important role in building the nation. Next, the minister met local people at Myagon Village BEPS in Gwagyi Village-tract and explained rural development tasks.

The Secretary Member donated K 50,000 for finishing the school building and school stationery to officials. U Aye Thein of Aye Aye Min Thein (Mandalay) Construction Co and wife Daw Moe Sanda Tun donated K 4.5 million for building Myitkyo Village library. Volunteers donated the plot for the village library. Aye Aye Min Thein Co, a local company, will build the library. On completion, the Ministry of Information will provide books, furniture and staff to the library.

Next, the minister met local people at Pyayon Village BEPS (Mindat) and gave necessary instructions.

**Mid-Year Gem Empo in Oct**

YANGON, 8 Aug — The Mid-Year Myanmar Gems Emporium will be held in October 2004. Those wishing to participate in it may contact the Myanmar Gems Enterprise from 1 August to 30 September 2004 to have their gems tested and the floor prices fixed. The MGE has been making arrangements in cooperation with respective enterprises and departments for sales and export of gems of entrepreneurs in accordance with GTC Systems in the interests of the State and gems entrepreneurs. — MNA

**Dry Day inspection teams supervised**

YANGON, 8 Aug — Vice-Chairman of the Dry Day Supervisory Committee Minister at the Prime Minister’s Office Maj-Gen Thein Swe and the committee members Deputy Minister for Construction U Tin Swe, Deputy Minister for Hotels and Tourism Brig-Gen Aye Myint Kyu, Deputy Minister for Energy Brig-Gen Than Hna, Vice Adjutant-General Brig-Gen Hla Shwe, Director-General of the Myanmar Police Force Brig-Gen Khin Yi, Lt-Col Aung Thu of the Quartermaster-General’s Office, Command of No 1 Provost Unit (Air) Major Hla Myint Oo, Commander of Yangon Division Wireless and Traffic Police Force Police Li-Col Aung Naing and officials this morning and evening supervised the dry day inspection teams which were checking the use of vehicles of Tatmadaw and departments concerned at the main points of Yangon City. The inspection teams checked dry day pass, driver’s licence, wheel tax and wearing of uniforms and violation of traffic rules. — MNA

**USDA Secretariat member Minister for Information Brig-Gen Kyaw Hsan delivers an address in meeting with rural people at Myitkyo village BEHS in Waw Township. — MNA**

Information Minister tours Bago District

YANGON, 8 Aug — Minister for Information Brig-Gen Kyaw Hsan carried out information and rural development tasks in villages in townships of Bago Division yesterday.

First, Minister for Information Brig-Gen Kyaw Hsan met heads and staff of Information and Public Relations Departments in Bago, Nyangshwe, Kyaukme, Moathu, DaikU, Thanlpin and Kwa divisions of Bago District and instructed them to realize the aims of the Ministry of Information and 10 objectives of IPRD for 2004-2005, to place emphasis on opening of self-reliant libraries in all villages, to distribute newspapers to the villages, to enjoy TV programmes in rural area and to carry out tasks of the mobile library in every village of respective townships once a year. At 10 am, the minister inspected Waw Township IPRD and gave necessary instructions.

In the afternoon, Member of the Secretariat Minister for Information Brig-Gen Kyaw Hsan went to Myitkyo Village in Waw Township and met local people at Myitkyo Village BEHS. After reports by local authorities, Brig-Gen Kyaw Hsan delivered an address, saying that the government is striving day and night for development of the nation and the people. Nowadays, the government has fulfilled all the requirements in agriculture, livestock breeding, transport, education, health, power supply, etc which are essentials for the nation and the people. So, the people are to make concerted efforts for achieving success in five rural development tasks. And, the entire people should uniteously with the government in implementing the seven-point future programme of the State for ensuring emergence of a peaceful, modern, developed and discipline-flourishing democratic nation. At present, one portion of the National Convention, which is the first step of the seven-point future programme, has been convened successfully. However, internal and external elements are trying to disturb implementation of the programme including convening the National Convention with the use of various methods. But progress will be made if the government and the people exert concerted efforts. Therefore, cooperation of the entire people plays a very important role in building the nation. Next, the minister presented K 100,000 for the Myitkyo BEHS, school stationery and various kinds of books for the library to officials. Afterwards, Director-General U Chit Naing of IPRD presented K 50,000 for the school; U Aye Thein, on behalf of brothers and sisters of Aye Aye Min Thein (Mandalay) Construction Co, K 300,000; and Managing Director U Thein Myint of Aye Aye Min Thein (Mandalay) Construction Co and wife Daw Moe Sanda Tun, K 4.5 million for building Myitkyo Village library. Villagers donated the plot for the village library. Aye Aye Min Thein Co, a local company, will build the library. On completion, the Ministry of Information will provide books, furniture and staff to the library.

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**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

**For perpetual existence of the Union**

The Government is striving day in, day out for equitable development of regions in the Union and raising the living standard of all the national people residing in the country.

On 4 August, Prime Minister General Khin Nyunt met with members of District and Township Peace and Development Councils, departmental personnel, townsenders and members of social organizations at Pyithaya Hall in Pakokku.

On the occasion, the Prime Minister heard reports presented by officials and fulfilled the requirements in regional development, education and health sectors. The Prime Minister said that Head of State Senior General Than Shwe designated Pakokku as the capital of the region on the western bank of Ayeyawady River and gave guidance on upgrading Pakokku to a city complete with characteristics of a city, and that accordingly, high-ranking officials have toured Pakokku and its surrounding areas occasionally to carry out development undertakings.

Altogether 15 hospitals including 50-bed, 25-bed, 16-bed, station hospitals plus the 200-bed hospital have been built in Pakokku District to provide health care services to local people.

In the education sector, a magnificent university is in the process of being built in Pakokku and so are Pakokku Government Computer College and Pakokku Government Technological College.

Pakokku is a region in which cotton thrives, so the government is implementing Pakokku Textile Factory Project and it will be opened soon. For agricultural development in the region, dams and water pumping stations have been built and more irrigation facility projects are being implemented in the region. For better transport in the region, the Government is implementing Pakokku-Mindat-Matupi-Yayzwa-Haka road.

Kyaukku Airport, the gateway to Chin State, was commissioned into service recently and Pakokku airport is under construction and it is nearing completion.

With the concept that only then all the national races living in states and divisions enjoy equitable development, will there be flourishing of Union Spirit and the spirit of national solidarity among them, the Government has been paying serious attention to regional development projects.

The entire people are therefore to be convinced of this concept and to perform their duties with zest and zeal for ensuring perpetual existence of the Union and strong economy of the nation, while living unitedly in accordance with the national policies of the government.
Three US servicemen killed in Iraq

Baghdad, 7 Aug — Assailants in Iraq killed three US servicemen, one in the capital and two in the south of the country, the US command said Saturday.

Two Marines from the 1st Marine Expeditionary Unit were killed on Friday “as a result of enemy action” in Najaf province, south of the capital, the military said in a statement.

In western Baghdad, an guerrilla fired a rocket-propelled grenade at a patrolling US vehicle, killing one soldier, the military said.

The names of those killed were withheld pending notification of next of kin.

Iraq shut Al Jazeera Baghdad office for a month

Baghdad, 7 Aug — Iraq interim government ordered Qatar-based Al Jazeera satellite television network to close its Baghdad office for one month on Saturday, a move criticized as unjustifiable by the channel.

Prime Minister Iyad Allawi, confirming the decision at a news conference, said a commission had been monitoring Al Jazeera for the past four weeks to see whether it was inciting violence and hatred, and that the decision had been taken “to protect the people of Iraq.”

“It’s regrettable and we believe it’s not justifiable,” Al Jazeera spokesman Jihad Ballout said. “This latest decision runs contrary to all the promises made by Iraqi authorities concerning freedom of expression and freedom of the press.”

Iraqi police officers went to the station’s Baghdad office late on Saturday and armed with Jeanine staff before locking the newsroom.

Iraqi Interior Minister Falah al-Najibi said this week that Arabic satellite channels were encouraging kidnappings by showing images of hostages threatened with execution.

Another government official at the press conference said the station had “encouraged criminals andgangsters” in Iraq.

Al Jazeera’s Ballout denied the charge.

“We are not a political organization that is for or against anybody. We display what happens on the ground as objectively as possible and in a balanced way,” he said.

Malaysian FM urges ASEAN members to set up studies centres

KUALA LUMPUR, 8 Aug — Foreign Minister Syed Hamid Albar of Malaysia Saturday urged ASEAN members to set up ASEAN Studies Centres in their respective countries to provide better understanding on the uniqueness of the grouping.

Such a centre to encourage research and studies on ASEAN (Association of South-East Asian Nations) was close to be materialized in a Malaysian university, the minister told a news conference in sideline of the National Colloquium on ASEAN here.

ASEAN, now grouping all the 10 South-East Asian Nations with a combined population of 350 million people, was established in 1967 to boost peace and regional cooperation.

Syed Hamid said that the centre would cover areas like language as well as the sociological and cultural aspects of the member countries.

The minister hoped that other ASEAN members would take the cue from Malaysia to establish a similar centre in their respective countries.

There is definitely a need for the people of ASEAN to have better knowledge about each other,” he said.

The three-day colloquium, which began Friday, is attended by local officials and specialists on ASEAN matters.

Syed Hamid said that the participants at the colloquium had provided useful suggestions and input for Malaysia’s preparations to host the 11th ASEAN Summit next year.

“We need to get feedback on how they see and view ASEAN. We need to identify the double activities which Malaysia could promote during our chairmanship (of ASEAN next year),” he said.

Syed Hamid said that useful suggestions and input from the colloquium would be compiled in a report and later presented to the Cabinet for approval.

US soldier admitted abuse of Iraqis

FORT BRAGG, (North Carolina), 7 Aug — The female US soldier, who outraged the Arab world by being photographed holding an Iraqi prisoner on a leash, admitted she “stepped on” inmates and said no one ordered her to abuse prisoners, a criminal investigator testified on Friday.

Private First Class Lynndie England, seen in a series of photographs that determined whether England should stand trial.

The pregnant, 21-year-old is charged with 19 counts of prisoner abuse, including committing indecent acts and disobeying orders. She faces up to 38 years in prison if convicted.

She told Stewart that Special Charles Graner, another of the seven soldiers charged in the abuse at Abu Ghraib, was the father of her child. Stewart said.

In earlier testimony, a US soldier testified that Abu Ghraib was “hell”, a dangerous place with rarely well-trained guards and short on basics like clothes and soap for prisoners.

England’s lawyers used the testimony to paint a disturbing picture of turmoil at the notorious jail near Baghdad. Sergeant Hydrue Joyner, a member of England’s 372nd Military Police Company, said “the whole prison system was corrupt.”

TN Petro’s SE Asia project to go on stream by early 2006

CHENNAI, 7 Aug — Tamilnadu Petroprodcuts Ltd (TN Petro), an undertaking based in the southern Indian state of Tamil Nadu, is setting up linear alkyl benzene (LAB) projects in Southeast Asia and Middle East.

The project in Southeast Asia is likely to go on stream by early 2006, A Muthiah, chairman, TN Petro, told shareholders at the company’s 19th annual general meeting here on Thursday.

“The company is aggressively working to seize opportunities to commission LAB projects in Southeast Asia and Middle East, the first of which is likely to go on stream by early 2006,” he said.

In the face of weak monson and acute water shortage in the country, Muthiah said TN Petro is planning to set up a sea water desalination plant at Ennore Port in Tamil Nadu to augment water supply for uninterrupted running of these units.

During the last fiscal, the failure of monsoon and acute water shortage had affected the company’s working.

“The series of measures being implemented by the company will usher in good prospects for TN Petro,” he said.

Muthiah said the rise in prices of raw materials such as kerosene, benzene, light oil and propylene besides overcapacity in LAB will continue to put pressure on its margins. Muthiah said during the quarter ended June, TN Petro has achieved capacity utilization in all its three divisions viz., linear alkyl benzene (LAB), epichlorohydrin (ECH) and caustic soda.

Turkish Co leaves Iraq after kidnapping

BAGHDAD, 7 Aug — A Turkish company decided to pull out of Iraq after television broadcast a video Saturday purportedly showing a kidnapped Turkish truck driver in Iraq pleading with colleagues to stay out of the country.

Meanwhile, Jordan said a businessman had escaped his Iraqi captors and returned home. In Lebanon, the father of two brothers kidnapped while taking electric generators to Iraq appealed for their release, saying they were not working for the Americans.

In Afghanistan on Friday.

The Turkish company Atahan Logistik decided to pull out of Iraq after the video of its employee was shown in the video Saturday, according to a statement released by Hasan Tarhan, a partner in the company.

"Because of the events, our company announces that we have stopped all activity within the borders of Iraq and that we declare that we shall not be taking part in any transportation," in Iraq, the statement read.

"All we hope is that our driver, Tahsin Top, is released as soon as possible and is quickly returned to his country," it said.

In the video, shown on Turkish television, a visibly unharmed man sits on the floor as two masked, black-clad men hold rifles to his head. A man sitting next to him reads a statement in Arabic. An employee was shown in the video Saturday, according to a statement released by Hasim Top of NTV television — unless his company left Iraq within 48 hours.

"We firmly adhere to the basic principle of 'peaceful reunification of the Motherland and one country, two systems' and the eight-point proposal for developing the relations across the Taiwan Straits," said Zhang.

"With the efforts of people on both sides of the Taiwan Straits, the exchange and cooperation between the two sides of Straits have been further deepened. This is the trend of developing relations across the Taiwan Straits, and it is favourable to the peaceful reunification of China and to the peace, prosperity and stability of the Asia-Pacific Region and the whole world," said Zhang.

China Peaceful Reunification Forum held in HK

HONG KONG, 8 Aug — More than 200 scholars and celebrities from the Chinese Mainland and overseas attended the China Peaceful Reunification Forum held here on Friday.

Zhang Keji, president of China Peaceful Reunification Association, said at the forum that the association was founded by 23 democratic parties and people’s organization of the Chinese Mainland 16 years ago. Now it has developed all over the world with more than 130 similar organizations setting up in over 80 countries and regions.

Chinese people both at home and abroad are making concerted efforts to push forward the peaceful reunification of China, said Zhang, also vice-chairman of the National Committee of the Chinese People’s Political Consultative Conference (CPPCC).

Eight soldiers from US-led Afghan force wounded

KABUL, 7 Aug — Suspected Taleban militants wounded eight soldiers from US-led forces in Afghanistan on Friday in two separate attacks, firing rocket-propelled grenades on a convoy and setting off a bomb near a military vehicle.

A statement from the 18,000-strong US-led force in Afghanistan said the first attack took place near the Das Chohan District of Zabul Province, scene of regular attacks by remnants of the ousted militia. Taleban and Islamic militants have waged a "jihad," or holy war, on foreign forces and the US-backed government in Kabul, and have stepped up attacks on US and foreign forces.

Taliban members targeted a 10-vehicle military convoy with rocket-propelled grenades, wounding five troops from the US-led force. The soldiers fired back at the assailants, forcing them to flee.

Of the casualties, three have returned to duty and two are in stable condition.

Foreign Ministry official Youssel Mahmoud told the Bahrain News Agency his ministry had asked its embassy in Washington to query US officials about the condition of Juma al-Dossary after a report by the Bahrain Centre for Human Rights (BCHR).

The BCHR report, quoting information recently freed from the US naval base in Cuba, said al-Dossary was repeatedly beaten by US soldiers, who slammed his face into the floor and broke his nose.

Annan says insecurity still hinders UN activity in Iraq

UNITED NATIONS, 7 Aug — UN Secretary-General Kofi Annan said Friday that staff security remains the overriding constraint for all UN activity in Iraq.

"The acting UN Security Coordinator assessed the risks to UN personnel in Iraq as being in the high to critical category," the UN chief said in his third report to the Security Council.

He said that in the absence of a significant improvement in the overall security situation, the world body must continue to incorporate into all plans and activities a set of special measures, which include enhanced Minimum Operating Security Standards (MOSS).

The measures should also include a strengthened security management structure, additional training for all staff members and a requirement for protection by dedicated Armed Forces.

Annan introduced the set of standards immediately after an independent panel of experts found in its report that the lack of awareness and security measures were the main cause for the deadly bombing almost a year ago in Baghdad which killed Annan’s Special Representative and 21 other UN workers.

Bahrain to query US on alleged torture of detainee

Manama, 7 Aug — The Gulf kingdom of Bahrain said on Friday it would formally ask its close ally the United States to investigate allegations US troops tortured a Bahraini detainee at Guantanamo Bay.

Foreign Ministry official Youssef Mahmoud told the Bahrain News Agency his ministry had asked its embassy in Washington to inquire about the report — on torturing a Bahraini national at Guantanamo Prison — which killed Annan’s Special Representative and 21 other UN workers.

The Britons, young Muslims who were detained in Afghanistan in 2002, were the latest released detainees to allege abuse.

"The Bahrain Embassy in Washington has been instructed... to send an official memorandum to the US Secretary of State to inquire about the report... on torturing a Bahraini national at the Guantanamo Prison," Mahmoud told the agency.

Dossary is believed to be mentally ill. There are some 250 Bahrainis, including Dossary, held in Guantanamo for more than two years without trial.

A group of international lawyers visited Bahrain, the headquarters for US Navy’s Fifth Fleet, last month as part of a trip that took them to other Arab countries to prepare a lawsuit on behalf of the Guantamano prisoners.

The inmates in Guantanamo are suspected of fighting with the Taleban in Afghanistan or supporting al-Qaeda. The United States has released allegations that prisoners were beaten and abused.

30 Iraqi civil officials conclude training in Jordan

AMMAN, 7 Aug — Thirty Iraqi civil officials from ten ministries have concluded a two-week training in Jordan, the official Petra news agency reported Friday.

The training, which was launched in February, is sponsored by the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and financed by the European Commission. It consists of a series of 20 courses on various fields such as management, purchase and project management.

Earlier last month, some 75 Iraqi civil servicemen concluded the same courses. More than 600 Iraqi civil officials were expected to go on the training as part of the IMF’s programme to develop their capacities.


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Italian troops clash with Shiite militia in Iraq

NAFISSIYA (Iraq), 7 Aug — Italian forces clashed with Shiite militia fighters in the southern city of Nassiriya early on Friday and tensions were still high, an Italian military spokesman said.

In more than a dozen attacks that began shortly after midnight (2000 GMT Thursday), militia loyal to rebel Shiite cleric Moqtada al-Sadr fired rocket-propelled grenades, mortars and light arms at Italian patrols, key installations such as a power plant and an Iraqi police base, the Italian Army said.

It has been an extremely tense night and we are maintaining maximum alert,” Captain Ettore Sarli, chief spokesman for Italian forces in Nassiriya, told Reuters. “An Italian task force has control of the centre of Nassiriya and its bridges, and we are seeking mediation with the militia via the government of the city,” he said.

The militia claimed to have destroyed at least four Italian armoured trucks in the fighting. Sarli confirmed various attacks on Italian patrols, but said there was no indication so far that four military vehicles had been destroyed.

Over the past 48 hours, fighters loyal to Sadr have clashed with US and British forces in the southern holy city of Najaf, in the Sadr City neighbourhood of Baghdad and in the southern city of Basra, all Shi’ite-dominated areas.

Sadr’s militia, which is called the Mehdi Army, also claimed to have attacked British forces in the southern city of Amara, but that could not be independently confirmed.

Italian forces in and around Nassiriya, 235 miles south of Baghdad, have fought sporadically with militia loyal to Sadr over recent months. About 2,700 Iraqi troops are based in the city, the bulk just outside the city.

A British military spokesman said in a Friday prayers sermon broadcast live on state radio. "It has been an extremely difficult period for all Iraqis," said Ayatollah Ali Khamenei, said Washington figures show.

The accident happened at 10 am in Xiaowangou Coal Mine in Hejin City when 20 miners were working underground. Five of them have been rescued by Press time, said the provincial bureau of supervision on coal mine production safety. The bureau was informed of the accident at 3:30 pm and immediately sent a rescue team to the scene. The cause and details of the accident are still unknown, according to the bureau. — MNA/Xinhua

An Iraqi civilian asks for the right to pass while American soldiers made their way in to the wards of al Sheala hospital during a raid looking for wounded Mahdi army fighters in a west Baghdad neighbourhood in Iraq on 6 Aug, 2004. — INTEXT

Iraqi fighters attack British troops in Basra

BASRA (Iraq), 7 Aug — Clashes between British troops and fighters loyal to a radical Iraqi Muslim cleric broke out on Friday evening in the southern city of Basra, a Reuters witness said.

He said residents took shelter as British troops fought with members of the Mehdi militia in the centre of the city. Automatic weapons fire echoed from the area, along with the sound of mortars or rockets, he said.

A British military spokesman said the clash occurred when a British foot patrol came under attack near the Basra office of radical Shiite cleric Moqtada al-Sadr.

She said it was unclear if there were any casualties, adding the patrol later withdrew from the area. Battles have raged in several Iraqi cities in the past two days between fighters from Sad’s Mehdi army and foreign forces.

The fighting appears to have shattered a two-month-old ceasefire between US forces and the Mehdi militia.

FDI in India increases 71% in first quarter of 2004

NEW DELHI, 8 Aug — Foreign Direct Investment into India in the first quarter of 2004 increased by 71 per cent to 50.76 billion rupees as compared to 29.68 billion rupees in the same period last year.

The cumulative approval of FDI between 1991 and March 2004 was 2,924.53 billion rupees (78.26 billion US dollars) and total inflows were 1,492.15 billion rupees (36.62 billion US dollars), according to the annual report of the Department of Industrial Policy and Promotion, Ministry of Commerce and Industry.

In rupee terms overall implementation rate was 51.02 per cent and in dollar terms it was 46.79 per cent. The increase in FDI has kept pace with growth in industrial production, domestic investment and investment by Foreign Institutional Investors (FIIs).

The Index for Industrial Production (IPP) grew 6.9 per cent in 2003-04 as compared to 5.7 per cent in 2002-03 and 2.7 per cent in 2001-02. — MNA/PTI

India’s Finance Minister asks states to improve governance

NEW DELHI, 7 Aug — Indian Finance Minister P. Chidambaram on Friday favoured a national model on the basis of best practices adopted by various states in different sectors to improve delivery system in the country.

“We are capable for much better governance. Yet we tend to fail in governing the country,” Chidambaram said addressing the India Today conclave on ‘State of the States’ here.

Citing the excellence of delivery systems in certain states — education in Kerala, public distribution system in West Bengal, healthcare and food for work in Maharashtra — he said there are lessons to learn from these states and extrapolate this to evolve a national model to improve the overall delivery system in the country.

“There has not been any churning of the ranks of state leaders in terms of overall development,” he regretted, and added that states which were doing well continue to do so while laggards continue to remain at the bottom of the ladder.

But Chidambaram was happy to note that some churning was taking place in infrastructure development in backward states. — MNA/PTI
Iraqi shop owners walk through the burnt remains of commercial stalls left after a fire tore through the outdoor market during clashes between fighters loyal to radical Shiite cleric Muqtada al-Sadr and US forces in Najaf, Iraq, on 7 August, 2004.

An Iraqi hotel worker stands behind shattered glass after a Baghdad hotel came under attack by mortar fire overnight, on 6 August, 2004.

Smoke rises over Iraqi city of Najaf as battles rage between Shi'ite militiamen and their US Marine and Iraqi security forces foes on 6 August, 2004.

Doctors tend to Wassan Nassir, 14, who was hit twice by bullet fire during clashes between al Mahdi army fighters and US soldiers in the wards of al Sheala hospital, in a west Baghdad neighbourhood in Iraq on 6 August, 2004.

Iraqi men look at a trail of blood on the hospital floor left by patients injured during the second day of clashes between al-Sadr militants and US forces in the city of Najaf, Iraq on 6 August, 2004.

Iraqi civilians flee from their homes with their belongings to look for a safer place during the second day of clashes between US army and Iraqi National Guards with al-Mahdi army fighters loyal to radical Shiite cleric Muqtada al-Sadr in the city of Najaf, Iraq, on 6 August, 2004.
People living in Haka of Chin State are now enjoying TV programmes broadcast from TV retransmission station built in the region. — KYEMON

Microwave Station in Loikaw, Kayah State, serves the people for their convenience in communication. — MNA

Communication facilities built for the people

TV retransmission station in Kyaunggon, Ayeyawady Division helps raise the knowledge of local people. — KYEMON

TV retransmission station built in Konggyan region of Shan State (North). — KYEMON
Prime Minister General Khin Nyunt inspects progress in construction of religious buildings...

(from page 16)
The Prime Minister inspected the Palace and gave necessary instructions.

In the afternoon, the Prime Minister and party inspected building of Tampaloha Maha Buddha Image near Yangon-Bago Union Highway in Bago.

At Dhamma Lankara Buddha Rakkhita Monastery, they donated provisions to Sayadaw of the monastery Abhidhaja Agga Maha Saddhammajotika Bhaddanta Visuddha.

In the briefing hall of Tampaloha Maha Buddha Image construction site, Chief Engineer (Architect) U Thant Zin of Public Works, Deputy Chief Engineer (Project) U Nyunt Maung Huan and Myanmar handicraft technician U Ye Kyaw reported on progress in building Gandakuti Tazaung and the archway.

The Prime Minister gave instructions on installation of Myanmar handicraft of the style in Hanthawady period and attended to the needs. Later, the Prime Minister inspected construction of the Buddha image and the Gandakuti Tazaung.

Prime Minister attends merit-sharing...

(from page 16)
K 1.08 million by Daw Kyin Shwe (Panpaung Traditional Medicine House), U Hla Kyaw (Shwe Linyon Thimgan), Maung Than Myint, family of U Haik Yon-Daw Htwe, U Tin Aung-Daw Yamin Myint and U Thein Han-Daw Khin Nyunt; and K 1 million by Dr Kyi Lwin-Daw Hla Hla Kyin (Chan Aye Clinic), U Win Soe-Daw Thida, U Aye Thein-Daw Yi Yi Myint and family of Shaing Hok.

Prime Minister General Khin Nyunt, Lt-Gen Khin Maung Than, Commander Maj-Gen Ko Ko and the ministers accepted the donations. Next, Sayadaw Bhaddanta Jagara Bhavamsa delivered a sermon and the ceremony concluded with the three-time recitation of Buddha Sasanam Ciram Thitthatu.

The Prime Minister inspected the scale model of Lopyae Aye Chantha Pagoda to be built in the compound of Sobhana Rama Shweminwun Sasana Yeiktha (Bago). Officials reported on the construction tasks. Later, the Prime Minister and party left there by car. — MNA
Stakes driven to build Gandakuti Building for Ancient Buddha Image at Kyaunggyi Monastery in Kyimyinda Township

Under the auspices of the State Peace and Development Council Commander-in-Chief of Defence Services Senior General Than Shwe and wife Daw Kyang Kyang, the mayor and the deputy commander accepted K 1 million of Senior General Than Shwe and wife Daw Kyang Kyang; K 2 million donated by Yangon Division Peace and Development Council; K 18 million by Control Committee (Highway); and U Kyaw Min and family; K 500,000 each by Bandoola Transport Co Ltd; U Kyaw Htin-Daw Tin Tin Maw; U Nyunt Htay-Daw Nilar Shwe; U Myat Thin Aung-Daw Khin Myint Myint; and U Win Myint of UMFCCI; K 300,000 by U Aung Zaw Myint Dr Daw Myat Myat Ohn Khan; K 200,000 each by U Hnin Sein-Daw Mya Nyein; Yangon North District All Bus Lines Control Committee; U Tin Hla-Daw Aye Aye Kyi; and wellwishers of Kyimyinda Township.

Next, the commander, the ministers, the mayor, and U Kyaing San Shwe drove stakes and sprinkled scented water on them. The commander put the gem casket in the centre of the foundation and laid the cornerstones. Likewise, the ministers, the mayor, U Kyaing San Shwe and officials laid cornerstones at the designated places. Then, they put the stone plaque at the foundation and sprinkled scented water on it.

Aftwards, they drove stakes for U Paññinda Kyaung of the monastery and performed the rituals of golden and silver showers. The Sayadaws.

THE NEW LIGHT OF MYANMAR Monday, 9 August, 2004 9
Under the aegis of Kokang peace group, the road was constructed as an earth road in 1989-90 fiscal with the use of the border area development funds. It was upgraded to a gravel one by Shan State Regional Work Committee from 1993-94 fiscal and was completed in 1999-2000 fiscal. A large sum of funds were spent in the upgrading of the road to a gravel one.

Kokang is the first region in which the State implemented border area development tasks. The same thing can be said of Laukkai-Kongyan road, which is 42 miles from Kokang and was the first road ever to be constructed as part of Kokang region development.

By the time peace and stability reigned the whole region from May 1989, local national races had to enjoy the fruitful results of regional development apart from tranquility.

The construction of Takaw-et-Lwepanlon motor road started from 1 April 1995 and was opened on 12 February 2002. The project and their spare parts, and further supply of stone crushes. Likewise, Deputy Minister Brig-Gen Than Tun and Director-General Col Than Swe also paid constant visits to the project and gave instructions and supervision.

On completion of the project, it will take a matter of seven hours to reach Lashio from Wa region. In addition, Panshan and Mandalay can be reachable in a day in any season. Furthermore, travelling can continue comfortably from Mandalay to other states and divisions as well. The road will become a link between one region and another, serving as a tool that strengthens national unity and pro-motes the socio-economic life of Wa brethren through frequent contacts.

Kalewa-Mawlai Road

Located on the west bank of the Chindwin River, Kalewa and Mawlai had a rough earth road straddling between them in the past. However, it was unreliable since it was a deadend road. As it was so, the Chindwin River, which was the one and only watercourse on which Mawlaik dwellers had to depend, was a troublesome one, knowing that a motor road that can be built as a link Kalay and Kalewa towns from Mawlaik needed constructing, Head of State Senior General Than Shwe, in his tour of Sagaing Division in 1992, gave guidance on construction of Kalewa-Mawlai Road as an all-weather road. To construct the road as quickly as possible in line with the guidance, the Ministry of Border Areas and National Races and Development Affairs took charge of the project.

In the past, Kalewa-Mawlai road was 12 feet wide; sitting between two hillocks. Some parts of the road were suitable only for carts and travellers on foot. Therefore, a new axis had to be found, and preliminary measures were taken for construction of a 18-foot-wide earth road and a 12-foot-wide gravel road.

The axis search was started on 21 March 2003, and the No 916 Field Battalion (Engineering) took charge of the construction of earth road. Altogether 36 miles of the road was completed on 21 March 2004. In addition, the extension of the road to the boundary section of the one was also completed in the first week of June 2004.

Kalewa-Mawlai Road is 36 miles long. And 6 miles and four furlongs of the road have been completed as measures to lay gravel. The Division Development Affairs Committee in cooperation with local battalions took charge of the construction of the road.

Apart from construction of roads, bridges are also being built. Thus, a large number of commodities and economic boom among them.

It is safe to say that Kokang is the first region in which the State implemented border area development tasks.

Mawlaik will also have access to Kalewa, Kalay, Tamu and Monywa by land, which will result in swift flow of commodities and economic boom among them.

Laukkai-Kongyan Road

According to his instructions, the Ministry of Progress and National Races Development and also Prime Minister General Khin Nyunt, in his tour of the Eastern Command from 22 to 26 February 2000, pointed out that Homein lies in a strategic place between the border area and the Thanlwin River, and therefore construction of gravel and earth roads should be carried out as necessary.

Under the Japan-Myanmar bilateral friendship programme, 6 miles and two furlongs of Laukkai-Tashwehlan section of 42 miles of Laukkai-Kongyan road were tarred under the supervision of Kazuhiko Tsuchiya of Engineers International of Japan. And that section was put into service on 6 December 2002. Measures are under way to tar the remaining section of the road.

Homein-Tatsumeit Road

While I was in Homein in 1996, the former axis of the road was Taunma-Point 3775-Maymyo-Namlin-Homein. Small motor boats were in trouble when the Thanlwin River swelled.

Chairman of the Work Committee for Border Areas and National Races Development and also Prime Minister General Khin Nyunt, in his tour of the Eastern Command from 22 to 26 February 2000, pointed out that Homein lies in a strategic place between the border area and the Thanlwin River, and therefore construction of gravel and earth roads should be carried out as necessary.

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Waso robes offering ceremony of State Peace and Development Council Office held

YANGON, 8 Aug — The Waso robes offering ceremony of staff of the State Peace and Development Council Office was held at Aletawya Sanpya Monastery on Dhammazedi Road in Bahan Township this morning, attended by Secretary-2 of the State Peace and Development Council Lt-Gen Thein Sein. Also present on the occasion were Chairman of Yangon Division Sangha Nayaka Committee Agga Maha Ganthavācaka Pandita Bhaddanta Gandhamaṇḍapītak and members of the Sangha. Director-General Lt-Col Pe Nyein of the State Peace and Development Council Office, departmental heads, advisers, staff families, guests and wellwishers.

The Aletawya Sanpya Monastery Sayadaw administered the Five Precepts. Members of the Sangha recited Parittas. Next, the Secretary-2 donated Waso robes and alms to the Sayadaw. Similarly, Director-General Lt-Col Pe Nyein, departmental heads, staff and wellwishers offered Waso robes and provisions to members of the Sangha. The Aletawya Sanpya Monastery Sayadaw delivered a sermon followed by sharing of merits. After the ceremony, the Secretary-2, the Director-General, officials and staff offered ‘soon’ to the Sayadaws. — MNA

Tatmadaw families, wellwishers present provisions to monasteries, nunneries in Dagon Myothit, Bahan Townships

YANGON, 8 Aug — Families of Tatmadaw (Army, Navy and Air Force) and wellwishers presented provisions to 16 monasteries and two nunneries in four Dagon Myothit Townships in Yangon East District at a ceremony held at Five Nikaya Pitakat Thonpon Sarthintaik in Dagon Myothit (South) this afternoon, attended by Secretary-2 of the State Peace and Development Council Lt-Gen Thein Sein. Also present were members of the Sangha led by Presiding Nayaka Sayadaw of Five Nikaya Pitakat Thonpon Sarthintaik, Agga Maha Pandita Bhaddanta Kaljana, nuns, Chairman of Yangon Division Peace and Development Council Commander of Yangon Command Maj-Gen Myint Swe, Minister for Commerce Brig-Gen Pyi Sone, the Chief of Staff (Navy), senior officers of the Ministry of Defence, Chairman of Yangon East District Peace and Development Council Lt-Col Maung Maung Shwe, members of local authorities and wellwishers.

The Secretary-2, the commander, the minister and guests took the Eight Precepts from Sayadaw Bhaddanta Kaljana. The Secretary-2 and party presented offertories to the Sayadaw.

Next, Joint Adjutant-General Brig-Gen Hla Shwe, Chief of Staff (Navy) Captain Nyan Tun and Col Air Staff Lt-Col Nay Win presented offertories to the Sayadaws. Officials of Yangon Division Peace and Development Council, YCDC, the Union of Myanmar Economic Holdings Ltd and departmental heads presented offertories to the Sayadaws.

The Secretary-2 accepted K 4.2 million donated by wellwishers and the commander, the minister and officials also accepted K 16,633,090. Next, Sayadaw Bhaddanta Kaljana delivered a sermon, followed by sharing of merits.

Families of Tatmadaw (Army, Navy and Air Force) and wellwishers donated 384 bags of rice, 148 viss of edible oil, 296 viss of coffee, 1,459 viss of iodized salt, 270 tubes of tooth paste, 5,842 boxes of various kinds of traditional medicines and K 16,633,090.

Similarly, families of Tatmadaw, wellwishers and provisions to 23 monasteries and seven nunneries in Bahan Township and Hninzigon Home for the Aged at Mingala Market Dhammaṇyagan Sayadaw Home for the Aged, Bahan Township, this evening.

The Secretary-2 and party took the Eight Precepts from Vice-Chairman of the State Sangha Maha Nayaka Committee Abhidhaja Maha Raththa Giri Abhidhaja Agga Maha Saddhammaṇḍatik Aungmye Bonsakyaungtaik Sayadaw Bhaddanta Panindaṭhavācaka and presented offertories to the Sayadaws. — MNA

PM General Khin Nyunt sends felicitations to Singapore

YANGON, 9 Aug — On the occasion of the 39th Anniversary of the National Day of the Republic of Singapore which falls on 9 August 2004, General Khin Nyunt, Prime Minister of Myanmar, has sent a message of felicitations to His Excellency Mr Goh Chok Tong, Prime Minister of the Republic of Singapore. — MNA

FM U Win Aung sends felicitations to Singapore

YANGON, 9 Aug — The Government of the Union of Myanmar has given agreement to the appointment of Mr Nobutake Odano as Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of Japan to the Union of Myanmar in succession to His Excellency Mr Yuki Miyamoto. Mr Odano was born in 1948. He passed the Diplomatic Service Examination in 1969. He graduated from Keio University, Faculty of Economics, and joined the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in 1970. Since then, he had served in various capacities in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, and at Japanese Embassies in the United Kingdom, the Federal Republic of Germany, the Union of Myanmar and the Republic of Korea and at the Japanese Consulate-General in Sydney, Australia. Mr Odano has been serving as Chief of Protocol in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs since 2002. Mr Nobutake Odano is married.

Appointment of Ambassador agreed on

YANGON, 8 Aug — The Government of the Union of Myanmar has given agreement to the appointment of Mr Nobutake Odano as Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of Japan to the Union of Myanmar in succession to His Excellency Mr Yuki Miyamoto. Mr Odano was born in 1948. He passed the Diplomatic Service Examination in 1969. He graduated from Keio University, Faculty of Economics, and joined the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in 1970. Since then, he had served in various capacities in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, and at Japanese Embassies in the United Kingdom, the Federal Republic of Germany, the Union of Myanmar and the Republic of Korea and at the Japanese Consulate-General in Sydney, Australia. Mr Odano has been serving as Chief of Protocol in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs since 2002. Mr Nobutake Odano is married.

Cash and kind donated to Myawady TV

YANGON, 8 Aug — Yangon Entertainment Co Ltd donated Audio Visual Miter and cash to Myawady TV Unit and introduced on live broadcasting of English Premier League at Myawady Ballroom of the Traders Hotel yesterday evening. It was attended by Col Nyo Win of the Ministry of Defence and Senior Military Officers, correspondents, mediamen and guests.

After General Manager U Thei Cho Oo of Yangon Entertainment Co Ltd had extended greetings, sports writer U Khin Maung Hway explained facts about the English Premier League and so did U Kyi Tha (Pwekyakhaikhin).

Next, Commandant Lt-Col Chit Swe accepted K 800,000 donated to Myawady TV Unit by board of directors of Yangon Entertainment Co U Hla Win and expressed his thanks and officials replied to the queries raised by those present. — MNA

Shwesaryan Open Golf Championship to be held

YANGON, 8 Aug — The first leg of Myanmar Golf Tournament 2004, Shwesaryan Open Golf Championship, will be held on a grand scale in Shwesaryan Golf Resort from 12 to 15 August this year.

Before the first leg, Q School for the golfers will be held in Shwesaryan Golf Resort. Mandaly on 9 and 10 August and Han Event Management has made arrangements on transport for the golfers.

The tournament was mainly sponsored by Roththams of Pall Mall Cigarettes, Shwe Sein Metal Co Ltd and the co-sponsored were Air Mandalay, Tiger Beer, Alpine Drinking Water, Hoo Trading Co Ltd, KM Golf Centre, Cartuma, Tour Stage, Srixon, Wilson, Grandslam (Munsing Wear), Accel International Co Ltd (Canon), Sedona Hotel (Mandaly) and Sunfar Travels & Tours. — MNA

Drive safely
Arroyo appreciates good relations with China

MANILA, 7 Aug—Philippine President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo on Friday expressed appreciation of the good relations between China and the Philippines, citing China’s role in regional security and economic security.

The United States, Japan, and China will continue to be a determining factor in regional security and economic security in Asia, Arroyo said at “The President’s Night” at the Manila Overseas Press Club while answering questions from Press.

“And China, therefore, represents one of the most important neighbours for the Philippines, apart from having been an economic power in the world, globally,” Arroyo said.

She said the Philippines appreciates the very good relations with China. “Since China joined the World Trade Organization, we have enjoyed a very robust increase in our exports, we have enjoyed a surplus in our bilateral trade with China.”

“We have enjoyed also a tremendous amount of assistance of China, especially for agricultural modernization, our hybrid rice,” she added. Arroyo also cited the North Rail project, which China is financing, as one of the most important projects she ought to carry out in her full six-year term to decongest Metro Manila.

Arroyo said the relationship between China and the Philippines is very fruitful economically, in addition to the old political and cultural ties the Philippines has been enjoying in decades.

MNA/Xinhua

India’s foreign trade policy to make exports competitive

New Delhi, 7 Aug—India’s new foreign trade policy to be unveiled this month end will revise schemes to make India’s exports competitive to achieve higher growth of over 16 per cent annually.

“We will revise schemes to make export incentives WTO compatible besides making Indian exports more competitive,” Commerce Minister Kamal Nath told reporters here on Friday. —MNA/PTI

UN appeals for $82m as aid to drought-affected Kenya

New York, 7 Aug—The UN has issued an international appeal for $82 million US dollars to provide immediate aid to 2.3 million drought-affected people in Kenya, warning that number could swell by another million if rains fail again this year.

“We are facing a crisis on a massive scale which will spiral out of control at great human cost if we do not act now,” UN World Food Programme (WFP) Country Director Tesema Negash said.

“For many Kenyans, two poor seasons in a row will spell disaster if they do not receive assistance on time,” Kenyan President Mwai Kibaki said.

“Many Kenyans, two poor seasons in a row will spell disaster if they do not receive assistance on time,” Kenyan President Mwai Kibaki said.

The best time to plant a tree was 20 years ago. Second best time is now.
WFP unveils colour-coded “Hunger Map”

UNITED NATIONS, 7 Aug — In an effort to highlight major global hunger emergencies in real-time, the United Nations World Food Programme has unveiled a colour-coded Internet map.

Posed on the Rome-based agency’s web site, the “Hunger Map” charts the geography of hunger hotspots around the world with red indicating high levels of undernourishment, orange, moderate levels and green, extremely low levels.

“It is also designed for use as an education tool in schools,” WFP Executive Director James P. Morrison said. “The WFP Hunger Map puts them on the map.”

WFP first plotted the geographical coordinates of hunger in printed form four years ago, but this is the first online version with real-time updates linked to background information on WFP operations in individual countries.

UN says Bangladesh will need a year to recover from floods

UNITED NATIONS, 7 Aug — Bangladesh will need at least a year to recover from the devastating floods that have caused massive damage to its land and economy with tens of millions of people facing grave food shortages, waterborne diseases, a badly mangled infrastructure and extremely poor prospects for the next rice crop, the UN has said.

“We are still working out exact numbers in each sector, but it is already clear that the country will need a lot of support to get back on its feet,” Acting Resident Representative of the United Nations Development Programme Douglas Casson Coutts said.

The UN is preparing a comprehensive plan to assist the South Asian nation in overcoming the impact of the floods, which have killed 592 people and affected some 30 million others, nearly a quarter of the population.

UNDP is expected to seek funds from donors next week.

As the floodwaters recede, the full extent of the damage and the consequent challenges of rebuilding houses, roads, schools and public services is emerging, Coutts said.

He stressed that with more than 60 per cent of the national work force dependent on agriculture to survive, rural population will need substantial assistance just to get back to where it was before the monsoon season.

He noted that floods in April destroyed much of the national rice crop. A second set of floods in mid-July then wiped out people’s house- hold savings and other sources of nutrition.

“We are seeking not only to help the country get back on its feet, but also to assist the government in developing the environmental and social protective measures the nation needs to withstand the monsoon seasons to come,” he said.

MNA/PTI

Thailand vows to fight human trafficking

BANGKOK, 7 Aug — Thai Prime Minister Thaksin Shinawatra vowed on Friday to get tough with human traffickers, saying they would be hunted down like narcotics dealers or murderers.

Thaksin told a seminar on human trafficking his government would spend an extra 500 million baht (12.1 million US dollars) of funds from a state-run lottery to combat the criminal networks thought to trade worldwide around 700,000 women and children a year. “I would like to see related laws amended and while we are waiting, we will treat this like we have dealt with narcotics, meaning we will regard the addicted as victims and will prosecute the traffickers,” Thaksin said. A paper discussed at the seminar said Thai police handled 24 cases of women and children being trafficked in the first half of 2004, up from 25 cases in the whole of 2003. Of the 24 cases pursued by police this year, only 11 have come to trial. The paper said about one-third of about 700,000 women and children traded around the world a few years ago came from South-east Asia. “Thailand has been the origin, the transit, as well as the destination of human trafficking, especially that involving women and children,” said Deputy Prime Minister Purachai Piamsomboon.

Some obstetricians believe babies who are not born as soon as possible, but new research suggests it may be better to wait.

“On average hanging a bit longer improves brain development,” Professor Jim Thornton, of the University of Nottingham in England, said in an interview.

In a study of 588 premature babies in 13 European countries, Thornton and his colleagues looked at the rate of disability among children who were born at less than 31 weeks. Disabling brain impairment was identified and those whose birth was postponed by an average of 4.5 days.

There was no difference in the death rates among the two groups but the disability rate at two years old in the death rates among the two groups but the disability rate at two years old was 8 per cent among babies born at 28 weeks gestation and 4 per cent in the group that was delayed too long here is a risk of cerebral palsy and other problems.

A kangaroo and its joey in Australia. An Australian woman attacked by a brought kangaroo in the national capital said she was lucky to be alive.

MNA/Reuters

Delay in premature births cut risk of disability

LONDON, 7 Aug — Delaying the birth of premature babies by just a few days can prevent brain damage and disability, researchers said on Friday.

About 90 per cent of babies born at 28 weeks gestation survive, he added.

Deciding the optimum time of delivery for a baby that is not thriving in the womb can be a difficult decision for doctors because premature babies have a higher risk of suffering from respiratory ailments, cerebral palsy and other problems.

But if delivery is delayed too long here is a risk of disability.

“Assessing the well-being of the foetus remains one of the most vexing challenges in obstetrics,” said David Grimes of public health organization Family Health International. But he added the research will help ensure that foetuses in peril are born at the optimum time. — MNA/Reuters
Japan's national soccer team players celebrate after the Asian Cup final match in Beijing on 7 Aug, 2004. Japan beat bitter rivals China 3-1 to win the Asian Cup for the third time Saturday. The Japanese also won the Asian Cup in 1992 and 2000. — MNA/Reuters

Manchester United in poor shape for start of season

MANCHESTER (England), 7 Aug— Manchester United manager Alex Ferguson is concerned his team are “not in the best shape” with several key players missing before the start of the Champions League campaign and the Premier League kickoff.

United play Arsenal in the Community Shield on Sunday before facing Dinamo Bucharest in the first leg of their Champions League third round qualifying tie next Wednesday.

They open their Premier League campaign at Chelsea on August 15.

“We're not in the best shape,” Ferguson told sports reporters Friday. “We have seven players out for the game on Wednesday, in Cardiff. It's a blow, so hopefully we will get through Sunday's game without any more hiccups.”

Striker Ruud van Nistelrooy became the latest casualty with a hernia problem that requires surgery. The Dutch international who scored 20 league goals for United last season, could be out for a month after sustaining the injury in a match against PSV Eindhoven on Tuesday.

“It is a blow and it was a shock for us,” Ferguson said. “It was his first game back and we have to think whether seven days was enough training for him before playing a match. It's very disappointing, and I'm just hopeful that with (Alan) Smith and (Louis) Saha as my partnership I have them both fit.”

Brazilian Kleberson, Ole Gunnar Solskjaer and Liam Miller are all injured, while Cristiano Ronaldo and Gabriel Heinze are preparing for this month's Athens Olympics with Portugal and Argentina respectively.

Defender Rio Ferdinand is on month suspension for failing to take a drugs test does not end until next month.

Ferguson hopes midfielders Paul Scholes and Darren Fletcher will be match-fit in time for the Champions League game and they will start against Arsenal at the Millennium Stadium in Cardiff.

Solksjær will have another knee operation on Saturday and Ferguson was optimistic it would clear up the injury that forced the Norwegian striker to miss most of last season.

MNA/Reuters

Manchev stuns China to win Asian Cup

BEIJING, 8 Aug— Holders Japan overcame bitter rivals China 3-1 in a highly-charged final to win the Asian Cup for the third time on Saturday.

Chinese fans vented their fury at the final whistle after Japan scored twice in a controversial second half.

Koji Nakata had given Japan a 2-1 lead in the 65th minute with a hotly-disputed goal, the midfielder bundling in a Shunsuke Nakamura corner though replays showed he had used his hand.

Koji Tamada added a fine solo goal in injury time to give the scoreline a flattering ring for Japan after a tense-filled match laced with political and historical overtones.

The Japanese also won the Asian Cup in 1992 and 2000.

“It was important to keep calm in an atmosphere like this against the host team,” said Japan coach Zico.

MNA/Xinhua

Jaap Stam in focus as Manchester United players prepare for trip to Turkish capital

STOCKHOLM (Sweden), 7 Aug— Manchester United players prepare for their trip to Istanbul on Sunday for their UEFA Champions League group stage match against Besiktas.

The Red Devils are hoping to bounce back from their 4-2 defeat to Real Madrid last week.

United are currently fifth in the Premier League after losing 1-0 to Chelsea on Monday.

MNA/Reuters

Daiwei double seals third place for Iran

BEIJING, 7 Aug— Ali Daei grabbed two late goals as Iran beat Bahrain 4-2 to finish third at the Asian Cup on Friday despite finishing with nine men in another bad-tempered game.

The 35-year-old striker scored twice in the last 10 minutes, once from the penalty spot, marking his final Asian Cup game by taking his tally to 97 goals in 129 internationals.

Temperatures flared in injury time, however, as midfielder Mehdi Mahdavikia was sent off for Iran along with Bahrain midfielder Talal Yusuf for their part in a 20-man brawl. Iran, who were decimated by three suspensions in the group stage, had already lost substitute Arash Borhani, dismissed for a wild tackle in the 72nd minute.

The three-times champions were also shown two red cards in the semis, when they were beaten on penalties by hosts China.

Ali Karimi again provided the spark for Iran against a valiant Bahrain side, who lost 4-3 to holders Japan in the semis.

Karimi scored one goal and earned an 80th-minute penalty for Iran, who won the Asian Cup in 1968, 1972 and 1976. — MNA/Reuters

Anand wins Dortmund after four years

DORTMUND (Germany), 7 Aug— India’s Viswanathan Anand once again proved he was the king of the Rapid chess variation as he recorded an emphatic victory over Braingames champion Vladimir Kramnik of Russia to win the Dortmund Sparkassen chess tournament 2004 here.

Having drawn the two games under normal time control and the first of the tiebreaker stage, Anand gave no chances to Kramnik and attested to the statement that when it comes to rapid chess, the rest of the world still has a lot to learn. With this victory, Anand became the only unbeaten player in this year’s edition and also ended his Dortmund woes.

It may be recalled here that Anand had finished joint second in the last edition of the event here after a bad start while in his outing previous to last year’s, the Indian stalwart had finished at the bottom of the tables in the upper hand. The tactics flew out of the position in tandem but the Indian was unimpressed.

The game took a decisive turn in the middle game after both players had castled on opposite flanks and Kramnik’s kingside was severely weakened.

Anand was almost on autopilot once he gained the advantage and parted ways.

MNA/Reuters

Answers for yesterday’s crossword puzzle

U N D O U R A B L E
A R A B I A
O L V O N G
S P U N N O S E D
A R A M W R E N
I O A N T O P I R I N
D V I N K O M
P R O S T O N O P
T O O N D N I N E
C R A N O S
I L L A V E R
S L A N R O P E N
K I M M I N E R
I E A B R E D
N I T T W A R E
S P E A R S

US Olympic basketball team to play in Istanbul

ANKARA, 7 Aug.— The US Olympic basketball team comprising NBA players is expected to come to Istanbul Saturday for two exhibitions matches against Turkey, Anatolia news agency reported on Friday.

Looking to re-establish the US as the world’s dominant basketball power, the “Dream Team” will play their last two training matches against Turkey ahead of the Olympic Games in Athens, Greece. The Dream Team will travel from Belgrade to Istanbul after their Friday night’s exhibition match against world champions Serbia and Montenegro.

MNA/Xinhua

Japan’s Takashi Fukunishi (3rd L) tries to score against China during their Asian Cup final soccer match in Istanbul on 7 Aug, 2004. Japan beat bitter rivals China 3-1 to win the Asian Cup for the third time Saturday.

INTERNET

Japanese national soccer team players celebrate after the Asian Cup final match in Beijing on 7 Aug, 2004. Japan beat bitter rivals China 3-1 to win the Asian Cup for the third time Saturday. The Japanese also won the Asian Cup in 1992 and 2000. — MNA/Reuters
8:05 am
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2:00 pm
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8:30 am
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8:45 am
9:00 am
9:16 am
9:25 am
9:30 am
5:00 pm
10:30 pm
4:30 pm
12:00 pm
6:00 pm
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6:00 pm
1:15 pm
Lunch time music
Music: Babay is
Rainfall on 8-8-2004
– 88 mm (3.46 inches) at Yangon Airport
– 66 mm (2.60 inches) at Kaba-Aye and
– 58 mm (2.28 inches) at central Yangon.
Total rainfall since 1-1-2004: 1869 mm
(73.58 inches) at Yangon Airport and 1857
mm (73.11 inches) at Kaba-Aye and 1853 mm
(72.95 inches) at central Yangon.

WEATHER
Sunday, 8 August 2004
Summary of observations recorded at 09:30 hours
MST. During the past 24 hours, rain or thundershowers
may have been isolated in Kathin, Kayah States, lower Sagaing
and Magway Divisions, scattered in Shan, Kayin States,
upper Sagaing, Mandalay and Bago Divisions and wide-
spread in the remaining areas with locally heavyfalls in
Ayeyawady Division, isolated heavyfalls Rakhae State,
Bago and Tanintharyi Divisions. The noteworthy amounts
of rainfall recorded were Pathein (5.75 inches), Myaung
Mya (4.25 inches), Dawei (4.13 inches), Vanggu (3.19
inches), Sittwe (3.15 inches) and Yay (2.91 inches).

Maximum temperature on 7-8-2004 was 301°C (86°F).
Relative humidity at 9:30 hrs MST on 8-8-2004 was 100%
Total sunshine hours on 7-8-2004 was 0.3 hours approx.
Rainfall on 8-8-2004 was 58 mm (2.28 inches) at Yangon
Airport, 56 mm (2.60 inches) at Kaba-Aye, 58 mm (2.28
inches) at central Yangon. Total rainfall since 1-1-2004
was 1869 mm (73.58 inches) at Yangon Airport and 1857
mm (73.11 inches) at Kaba-Aye and 1853 mm (72.95
inches) at central Yangon. Maximum wind speed at
Yangon (Kaba-Aye) was 12 mph from West at 09:30 hours
MST on 8-8-2004.

Bay inference: Monsoon is strong in the Bay of
Bengal. Forecast valid until evening of 9-8-2004: Rain
or thundershowers will be isolated in Kayah State, lower Sagaing
and Magway Divisions, scattered in Shan, Kayin States,
upper Sagaing, Mandalay and Bago Divisions and wide-
spread in the remaining areas with likelihood of isolated
heavyfalls in Rakhae, Mon and Kayin States, Yangon,
Ayeyawady and Tanintharyi Divisions. Degree of certainty
(90%).

State of the sea: Squalls with rough seas are likely at
times off and along Myanmar Coasts. Surface wind speed
in squall may reach (35) to (40) mph. Outlook for
subsequent two days: Likelihood of decrease of rain in
Northern Myanmar areas.

Forecast for Yangon and neighbouring area for
9-8-2004: Likelihood of isolated rain or thundershowers.
Degree of certainty is (100%). Forecast for Mandalay
and neighbouring area for 9-8-2004: Likelihood of iso-
lated rain or thundershowers. Degree of certainty is (60%).

Flash Bulletin
(Issued at 11:00 hrs MST on 8-8-2004)
The water level of Thalwin River at Hpa-an is about
the danger level. The water level may remain above the
danger level during the next (3) days commencing noon
today.
PM inspects progress ...

(from page 1)

A white elephant emerged at the Nibban Village in the time of King Bodawpaya. The name of the elephant was given as Nibbana Paccaya Nagaraja under the name of the village. Till now, there have been historic milestones regarding the white elephant at the village.

Although he is at the age of 84, the Sayadaw has been making energetic efforts in discharging Sasana duties and serving the interests of the State. It is most honourable considering such virtues as generous donations, diligence, wisdom and determination of the Sayadaw who has been making relentless efforts in the interest of Sasana and the State regardless of his age, he said and wished the Sayadaw to live over one hundred years to be able to continue to serve the interest of Sasana and the State.

The Prime Minister and party inspected building of Naungdawgyi Myathalyaung reclining Buddha Image in Bago. They paid homage to the Image. The Prime Minister offered prayers and a sermon, followed by sharing of merits. After wards, the Prime Minister cordially met those present.

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