Prime Minister General Khin Nyunt and party went to the construction site for the renovation of the pagoda. At the project, Col Zaw Min reported on tasks being undertaken for the renovation of the pagoda. Donations received and spending other renovation tasks being carried out at Shweintaung, Yadanaung, Shweyungdaw and Ponya pagodas in the town.

With respect to the renovation of Aungmyin Zeya Pagoda, U Than Aye, Assistant Engineer of the No 1 Agricultural Machinery Factory (Sinde) under the Ministry of Industry, also reported on brick foundation works, progress in construction of the first, second and third terraces, and maintenance works for other pagodas. After hearing the reports, Prime Minister General Khin Nyunt added some requirements to the renovation tasks being implemented. Next, wellwishers donated cash to the funds for the renovation of Aungmyin Zeya Pagoda. Donations made on the occasion were K 4,863,670 by Magway District PDC, K 8,830,857 by Pakokku District PDC, K 11,139,401 by Thayet District PDC, K 2,486,500 by Minbu District PDC, K 8,999,578 by people of Taungdwingyi Township, K 1 million by Brig-Gen Myint Zaw and Daw Aye Aye Win, K 900,000 each by U Tint Swe and Daw Htay Htay Win family of Yangon and U Thida Aung and Daw Zin May Aye family of Taungdwingyi, K 140,000 by Lt-Col Win Swe and Daw Khin Win Naing family, K 1.1 million by No 2 Basic Education Department (Head Office, Upper Myanmar), K 100,000 by U Khine Htoo and Daw Thin Thin Khine family of Yangon, K 550,000 by U Myat Lwin and Daw Myat Myat Soe family of Yangon, K 1 million each by Daw Khin Swe Yu and family of Magway Division PDC, K 5 million by the Ministry of Communications, Posts and Telegraphs, and K 10 million by entrepreneurs of Yangon.

Member of the State Peace and Development Council Lt-Gen Ye Myint and ministers accepted the donations, which amounted to K 61,320,060. (See page 8)

Prime Minister General Khin Nyunt meets local authori­ties, departmental officials, social organization members and local people in Taungdwingyi on 14-8-2004.— MNA

Ancient silver coins, beads, eathen pots and artefacts of Pyu period excavated from Beikthanoe City, Taungdwingyi Township. (News on page 16) — MNA

Emergence of the State Constitution is the duty of all citizens of Myanmar Naing-Ngan.

Officials and farmers in Taungdwingyi Township urged to make concerted efforts for development of regional agricultural services after making good use of better opportunities and results created by government.

Agriculture being boosted on account of adequate supply of irrigation water

Prime Minister General Khin Nyunt inspects renovation tasks of pagodas in Taungdwingyi, meets departmental officials

YANGON, 15 Aug — Prime Minister General Khin Nyunt and his entourage, accompanied by Magway Division Peace and Development Council Chairman Col Zaw Min, arrived at Taungdwingyi yesterday, where they were welcomed by local authorities, departmental officials and members of social organizations.
Regional development through cooperation between service personnel and people

Plans for regional development, boosting the production of agricultural, livestock breeding and other businesses and raising the living standard of the entire people to be implemented by departmental concerned have been laid down by the Government. With the concept that departmental officials are responsible for serving the interests of the people, they are to coordinate and cooperate to realize the goal.

Prime Minister General Khin Nyunt, on 13 August, met with members of Thayet District and Township Peace and Development Councils, departmental officials, members of local organizations and townsenders and gave necessary instructions on the needs in education, health, and regional development tasks.

On the occasion, the Prime Minister said that cooperation makes administrative machinery effective and dynamic and that regional development tasks are to be undertaken with the participation of the people and social organizations. Officials can win the trust of the people by serving the latter’s interests. Mutual cooperation between departmental concerned and the people will surely bring about the benefits of the people. Strength of the departments, the people and social organizations are to be combined unitedly for regional development and public interest.

In Magway Division, regional development undertakings including building of hospitals and schools have been carried out by the State to promote the socio-economic life of local people. In the interests of the people, officials concerned are to effectively use the infrastructures built by the State.

Development of a region mainly relies on management, perseverance and goodwill of respective township level departmental officials. Hence, only when the departmental officials make combined endeavours through coordination among the departments or sector-wise committees, will respective regions make greater progress. In particular, those responsible are to make field trips down to respective rural areas to attend to the needs of local residents in accordance with the five rural development tasks for ensuring all-round development of these areas. In the drive for regional progress, measures are to be taken for effectively enlisting the strength of social organizations and fulfilling the requirements of local residents.

We would like to call on all departmental officials concerned and social organizations to make collective efforts for achieving greater progress in the respective townships, wards and villages.

PERSPECTIVES

Regional development through cooperation between service personnel and people

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People’s Desire

* Oppose those relying on external elements, acting as stooges, holding negative views on national interest
* 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

Ambassador U Kyi Thein accredited to Ireland

Yangon, 16 Aug — The Chairman of the State Peace and Development Council of the Union of Myanmar has appointed U Kyi Thein, Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the Union of Myanmar to the Republic of Ireland, concurrently as Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the Union of Myanmar to the Islamic Republic of Iran. — MNA

Ambassador U Ohn Thwin accredited to Nigeria

Yangon, 16 Aug — The Chairman of the State Peace and Development Council of the Union of Myanmar has appointed U Ohn Thwin, Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the Union of Myanmar to the Republic of South Africa, concurrently as Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the Union of Myanmar to the Federal Republic of Nigeria. — MNA

Pakistan delegation arrives

Yangon, 15 Aug. — A delegation led by Li Gen Farig Waseem Ghazi of National Defence College of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan arrived here by air at 9 am today. The delegation was welcomed at Yangon International Airport by Deputy Commandant of National Defence College Brig-Gen Than Maung, senior officers of the Ministry of Defence, Pakistani Ambassador to Myanmar Mr Muhammad Nawaz Chaudhry and officials. The delegation visited Shwedagon Pagoda in the evening and made cash donations there. — MNA

Rave Myanmar Snooker Junior Championship on 16-22 Aug

Yangon, 15 Aug. — A trial for the Rave Myanmar Snooker (Senior & Junior) Championship 2004, organized by Myanmar Billiards and Snooker Federation, was held in Yangon, Mandalay, Pathein, Mawlamyine and Taunggyi as of 1 August. After the trial, 16 players in the junior class were selected. They were: Thittha Win, Sai Htwe, Moe Aung Thu and Naing Lin Thu of Yangon, Tin Maung Oo, Win Min and Aye Min of Mandalay, Aung Ko Ko Oo, Aung Ko Oo and Kyaw Kyaw Lin of Pathein, Ye Win, Than Soe and Than Htay of Mawlamyine and Zaw Min Hkaik, Kyaw Moe and Zaw Htwe of Taunggyi.

The first round matches in junior class snooker event will be held at Game City of Yangon Zoological Gardens on 16 August, Asia Plaza on 38th Street on 17 August and Game City on 18 August at 10 am and 1 pm daily. The quarter-finals will be held on 19 August, the semi-finals on 20 August, the third place match on 21 August and the final on 22 August. The first prize winner can win K 400,000, the second prize winner K 200,000 and third prize winner K 100,000. And, K 30,000 each will be presented to remaining 13 players. — MNA

Mid-Year Gem Empo in Oct

Yangon, 15 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 arrangement 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

Ambassador U Soe Win presents credentials to Governor-General of New Zealand

Yangon, 16 Aug — U Soe Win, Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the Union of Myanmar to New Zealand, presented his Credentials to Her Excellency the Right Honourable Dame Silvia Cartwright DBE, Governor-General of New Zealand, on 3 August 2004, in Wellington. — MNA

Mya Yeik Nyo Royal Golf driving range upgraded

Yangon, 15 Aug — After making undertaking tasks for a long time, the Mya Yeik Nyo Royal driving range was opened this morning. All-round upgrading works were carried out inclusive of toilets, bathrooms and changing of decorations. It is now kept open from 2 pm to 9 pm daily. — MNA

Don’t smoke

Dinner hosted to Canadian volleyball team

Yangon, 15 Aug. — The Canadian volleyball team named Athletes in Action which had played a goodwill match with Myanmar Volleyball Federation selected team was hosted to a dinner at Karaweik palace here Sunday evening. Present on the occasion were Minister for Sports Brig-Gen Thura Aye Myint, Yangon City Mayor Brig-Gen Aung Thein Lin, officials and guests. — NLM

Myanmar Volleyball Federation President U Tun Myint presents a souvenir to Mr Dave Johns, leader of AIA team at the dinner. — NLM

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Iraq shuts down main oil pipeline in south

"BRITAIN, 14 Aug — Iraq has shut down its main oil export pipeline in the south, after intelligence indicating that Shiite militants might attach infrastructure, an Iraqi official said Saturday.

"The situation in Basra is bad. Management ordered the pipeline shut late yesterday (Friday)," said an oil official of Iraq's Southern Oil Company, who declined to give his name.

"He added that "very few people showed up to work again today. The feeling is it is not wise to challenge Sade's followers," referring to the "uprising" in central and southern Iraq by Mehdi Army militia led by anti-US cleric Moqtada al-Sadr.

A spokesman of the Southern Oil Company confirmed that "the production has been stopped since the start of the crisis and now we have stopped pumping too through the pipeline."

"On Monday, the company halted production following threats by Sade supporters to blow up the vital oil infrastructure in the south if the US troops did not stop their strike on Sadr's militia in Najaf.

"The flows of oil from the offshore terminals were running through another smaller pipelines at a rate of one million barrels per day, said the company's official.

"The crude exports from Basra's two main offshore terminals were slashed in half, costing the government at least 30 million dollars a day in lost revenue."

Fighting set to resume in Iraq's Najaf, talks fail

By Nasser, 14 Aug — US and Iraqi forces were poised to resume fighting rebel Shi'ite militia in the holy city of Najaf after peace talks aimed at ending an uprising that has killed hundreds collapsed Saturday.

Iraq's national security adviser Mosaffa al-Rubaie told a news conference in Najaf that the embattled US-backed interim government had given up trying to reach back to the city. He said Najaf that the embattled US adviser Mowaffaq al-Rubaie after peace talks aimed at ending an uprising that has killed hundreds collapsed Saturday.

"It is with deep sorrow and regret that I announce the failure of efforts to end the crisis in Najaf peacefully. Our goal was to spare more blood, preserve security and for the militias to lay down their arms," Rubaie said.

"The Iraqi interim government is resuming military clearing operations to... establish law and order in this holy city," Rubaie said.

Saturday night, residents said the city was tense, although fresh hostilities had yet to resume. An uneasy truce has held in Najaf since Friday, when US troops and tanks loosed their nose around the Imam Ali Mosque and an ancient cemetery where Sadr and his followers have holed up. The firebrand cleric has vowed to fight to the death.

Najaf's 10-day conflict has ignited fighting in seven other cities and mass street protests that threaten to undermine the authority of Prime Minister Iyad Allawi barely seven weeks since he took power from US-led occupiers.

Thousands of protesters from other parts of southern Iraq have streamed to Najaf and joined Sadr in the Imam Ali Mosque, the holiest Shi'ite Islamic site in Iraq. Peace talks failed on the eve of a national conference aimed at advancing Iraq's stuttering transition to war democracy.

A Sadr aide blamed Allawi for the collapse.

Jordan opposition urges Muslim leaders to oppose US-led forces in Iraq

Amman, 14 Aug — Jordan's Islamic opposition issued a religious edict demanding that Muslim leaders oppose the US-led military presence in neighbouring Iraq.

Sharia (Islamic law) insists that freeing Muslim land from enemy occupation is a duty for all Muslim leaders and their peoples," the Islamic Action Front said in a statement.

"All those who take part in the occupation or offer any support to it commit the greatest of sins and betray God, His Prophet, the land of Islam and its holy places," the statement said.

"It is a crime to assist the Crusader forces who have occupied Iraq and encouraged corruption, immorality, crimes and torture, and violated Islamic holy sites.

"It is totally forbidden to provide food or any other assistance to the occupation forces in Iraq," the statement said.

"Islamic leaders should instead provide moral and logistical support to the resistance."

The IAF, political wing of the Muslim Brotherhood, holds 17 of the 110 seats in parliament, and is Jordan's main opposition group.

Russia calls for new approaches on settling Iraq crisis

Moscow, 14 Aug — A senior Russian diplomat said Friday that other approaches on solving Iraq crisis are needed.

"The deteriorating situation in Iraq clearly demonstrates that the world community should have probably relied on other approaches to dealing with that country," Deputy Foreign Minister Yury Fedotov was quoted by Interfax news agency as saying.

"Before the UN Security Council passed Resolution 1546, Russia was calling for a stable model of a transitional period in Iraq relying on a broad national dialogue," he said.

"Such dialogue would trigger a national reconciliation process and involve all influential political groups, in particular opposition groups, in resolving the situation in the country," the diplomat said.

"Regrettably, another decision was made. What we face now are side-effects of a process that could have been more positive," he said.

Fedotov also reiterated Russia's proposal to convene an international conference on Iraq. This proposal may be resurrected now that the situation in Iraq is deteriorating," he said.

Air travellers face chaos at Britain's major airports

London, 14 Aug — Air passengers are facing possible travel chaos at London's Heathrow and Gatwick airports as British Airways' check-in staff voted Friday to strike in a row over pay.

The GMB union said 53 per cent of its about 3,000 members at the airline backed industrial action. Turnout was 48 per cent.

It said they had no wish to disrupt the plans of holiday-makers and other travellers at the height of the tourist season but talks had dragged on for months.

Two other unions, the Transport and General Workers' Union (TGWU) and Amicus, are also involved in the pay row.
**US to pull 70,000 troops from Europe, Asia**

President George W Bush will unveil the realignment in a speech on Monday to the Veterans of Foreign Wars in Cincinnati, Ohio, said the officials, who spoke on condition of anonymity.

"The President is going to make an announcement about a major initiative to reduce the burden on our forces overseas," said one of the US officials.

The officials confirmed a report in the Financial Times of a total reduction of about 70,000 troops in US deployments overseas. The British newspaper, citing people briefed on the plan, said two-thirds of the reductions would be made in Europe, mostly in Germany.

There are more than 100,000 US troops in Europe, including about 70,000 in Germany, and another 100,000 in the Pacific Region and Asia. About 150,000 troops are stationed in Iraq and Afghanistan.

A senior Administration official travelling with Bush in Portugal, Oregon, said the President "will be discussing next week how the United States will structure its military capabilities to meet the threats of the 21st Century with new technologies and new capabilities."

"It's important not that our military posture reflect the Cold War but the new threats of the 21st Century," said the senior official.

"Like the official travelling with Bush, officials in Washington refused to provide details, beyond saying there would be a "fairly significant reduction" in forces."

"This is not a diminished commitment to our allies or our responsibilities in the world," said another official.

The US military announced earlier this year that it was removing about 12,500 of the 37,000 troops stationed in South Korea for decades and sending many of them to Iraq or Afghanistan. One US official said, however, some of those troops could be returned to South Korea.

"Germany is definitely a place where there will be a major re-arrangement," said an official.

"Pentagon officials have been studying US commitments overseas for more than two years in an initiative to rearrange the ponderous deployments of US forces adopted in the Cold War and make the American military more mobile in the new war on terrorism."

**Forbes magazine in UN-Iraq oil plan**

United Nations, 14 Aug --- A Swiss company, whose role in the UN oil-for-food programme in Iraq has come under scrutiny as part of a corruption inquiry, on Thursday denied any wrongdoing and said it was cooperating with investigators.

Geneva-based Cotecna Inspection SA, which in December 1996 awarded the UN contract to monitor Iraqi oil imports under the programme, said in a statement that it was "in full compliance with the contract and according to the best practices in the industry."

"We are fully aware of the UN inquiry and we are working with the United Nations in order to comply with congressional requests for information."

A subpoena issued on August 4 by the US House Committee on Government Reform gives Cotecna the opportunity "to transmit full and complete information that will allow it to set the record straight", it said in its statement.

**At least 13 Iraqis killed, 84 wounded in Samarra clash**

BAGHDAD, 15 Aug — Heavy overnight clashes broke out between US troops and guerrillas in Samarra, north of Baghdad, killing at least 13 Iraqis and injuring 84 others, police and medical sources said Saturday.

Samarra’s general hospital said it had received 13 bodies including three women and two children and 84 injured. Many of the wounded were also women and children.

Police headquarters at the entrance of the city was badly damaged in the fighting. Three of the policemen were also killed, the city police said.

Samarra, some 110 kilometres north of the capital, was a Sunni Muslim insurgency hotbed of insurgency since the beginning of US-led war on Iraq in March last year.

**Syrian truck driver kidnapped in northern Iraq**

KIRKUK, 14 Aug — A Syrian truck driver has been kidnapped in northern Iraq, according to a police official.

"The Syrian truck driver Hassan Awad Mohammed was kidnapped this morning," Kirkuk police chief Major General Turhan Yusif said.

He said the driver was abducted by masked gunmen in two cars near the town of Al-Buwar, 75 kilometres north-west of Kirkuk.

"Eyewitnesses said Mohammed, 35, was abducted by more than seven masked gunmen. He started shouting and saying that he was a Syrian when the abductors forcefully dragged him out of his truck," the police chief said.

The driver was later pushed into a car and taken to an unknown destination, he added.

"We found his identity card under the driver’s seat of the truck," Major Yusif said. Mohammed’s truck was loaded with iron pipes, he added.

**Philippines to train soldiers as journalists**

MANILA, 14 Aug — The Philippine military on Friday would give 30 soldiers a crash course in news reporting to strengthen the government’s campaign against terrorism.

Major General Hayudini of the military’s civil relations service in southern Mindanao island, said the deployment of the troops in local radio and television stations was aimed at strengthening the government’s information programme to combat terrorism.

"The 10-day journalism course will begin on Monday. The military will pay for the soldiers’ salaries and allowances after they join media outlets, mostly in Mindanao where the government has been fighting Muslim rebels for 30 years."

"They will do actual radio and television reporting and will do coverage regularly like the mainstream media."

He said the military had assured media companies that the soldiers would not spy on journalists. Hayudini said the programme was aimed at improving the military’s information dissemination and countering disinformation fed into the mainstream media that may affect anti-terrorism campaign.

**Himachal Pradesh remain on high alert as rivers level rise**

RAMPUR, 15 Aug — With the level of Paroechu River from Tibet rising by about two feet, the areas along the banks of Sutlej and Spiti rivers in northern Indian state of Himachal Pradesh remained on high alert, with the administration closely monitoring the situation.

"Air Force helicopters made aerial survey of the areas and Army remained on standby mode to evacuate people and assist administration in case of flash floods."

"We are yet to get satellite images and anything concrete can be said only when a clearer picture emerges," Ram said.
ASEM-5 to discuss int’l issues, membership enlargement

HANOI, 15 Aug — The fifth Asia-Europe Meeting (ASEM-5) is to be held here in early October is expected to focus on issues of mutual concern among the international community, and a plan to admit 13 more members.

Major topics to be discussed at the summit meeting will cover the fight against terrorism, multi-national cooperation, the United Nations’ role, non-traditional security including disease quarantine, and measures to strengthen Asia-Europe partnership through cooperation programs and cooperation plans, Vietnam News Agency on Friday quoted deputy head of the ASEM-5 Secretariat Nguyen Hong Cuong as saying. The ASEM-5 is expected to adopt three important documents, namely, a joint statement on economic partnership, a joint statement on cultural and civilizational dialogue, and a statement of the meeting’s president.

Cuong also unveiled a plan to consider accepting 13 more members, including Laos, Cambodia, and the 10 new members of the European Union (EU), namely, Poland, Hungary, the Czech Republic, Slovakia, Lithuania, Latvia, Estonia, Slovenia, Malta and Cyprus. ASEM has recorded a number of achievements since its establishment in 1996, but challenges still lay ahead with the biggest one being how to turn dialogue and cooperation projects among member countries into practical and efficient operation, he stated.

Vietnam and other ASEM members expect the summit will make greater contribution to the development of partnership between Asia and Europe, and the promotion of cooperation between the two continents in politics, economy and culture, especially in economy. The ASEM-5 will take place on October 7-9 as scheduled, since almost all member countries have confirmed their participation, Cuong noted.

Sadr calls on Iraqi govt to quit, vows to fight on

BAGHDAD, 14 Aug — Radical cleric Moqtada al-Sadr on Friday urged Iraq’s “dictatorial” interim government to resign and said his militia would fight US forces in the holy city of Najaf until death or victory, his spokesman said.

The spokesman quoted Sadr as telling supporters at Imam Ali Mosque: “I advise the dictatorial, agent government to resign... the whole Iraqi people demands the resignation of the government... they replaced Saddam with a government worse than him.”

“We will remain here defending the holy shrines till victory or martyrdom.”

Sadr’s Mahdi Army militia has been battling US and Iraqi Government troops in Najaf for more than a week. He warned supporters that a truce in the city might be a ploy to trick his men into laying down their weapons. Sadr urged supporters in other cities in central and southern Iraq to continue their uprising, saying the truce was restricted to Najaf.

US allows diplomats to return to Saudi Arabia

WASHINGTON, 14 Aug— Non-essential US diplomats ordered out of Saudi Arabia earlier this year because of security concerns can now remain too dangerous to allow family members to accompany them, the US State Department said on Thursday.

The United States ordered non-emergency employees and dependents to leave Saudi Arabia on 15 April and warned all Americans they should leave, citing new signals that attacks were planned on US and UK missions in Jeddah and Dhahran. The department cited reports of worsening guerrilla fighting in Iraq and believed the Americans were not safe.

The US administers the decision on the basis of a new travel warning. The State Department said: “Our mission in Saudi Arabia has gone off Ordered Departure status and is now an unaccompanied post as a result of continued security concerns.”

The United States has recently warned that Saudi Arabia faces severe food shortages as its food stocks were exhausted and many are short of food to survive after floods devastated thousands of villages, submerged crops and washed away homes. Lissner said aid was urgently needed for health care and sanitation programmes.

“The objective of this appeal is to solicit contributions to the immediate relief and early recovery needs of the people of Bangladesh most adversely affected by the devastating floods.”

About 800 people have died in flood-lying Bangladesh in five weeks of flooding and, at one point, some ten million are said to be homeless. Suffering rivers swept through two-thirds of the nation and damages to infrastructure, houses and crops were estimated at 7 billion US dollars.

Dhaka initially said it would try to tackle its flood needs without outside aid, but later sought international help as the extent of the devastation became more evident. “The US flash appeal shows that Bangladesh is not alone in terms of crisis and disasters,” Bangladesh Foreign and Disaster Management Minister Kamal Ibne Yusuf said.

 THROUGH floodwaters have receded, diseases such as diarrhoea were spreading due to lack of drinking water and sanitation.

Last week, the United Nations Children’s Fund (UNICEF) and the International Red Cross also launched global appeals for aid to help Bangladesh’s flood victims.

Poland says 20 soldiers surrounded by Iraqi militants

WARSAW, 14 Aug — A group of 20 Polish soldiers have been surrounded by several hundred militants loyal to Shiite cleric Moqtada al-Sadr at a police station in Hilla, southern Iraq, a Polish military spokesman said on Friday.

“Our soldiers were helping the Iraqi police, when their post was surrounded. Negotiations with the militant forces are under way, but there is no shooting going on,” Polish General Staff spokesman Colonel Zdzislaw Guznotowski said.

Guznotowski confirmed a report from Polish news agency PAP that US helicopters were circling overhead.

“If they don’t reach an agreement, it may be necessary to use force,” he said, but did not elaborate. The situation was easing as negotiations progressed.

Poland commands a multinational force of 8,000 troops in south-central Iraq, including 2,500 Polish troops.

Kerry blames Iraq war for higher oil prices

LOS ANGELES, 14 Aug— US Democratic presidential nominee John Kerry blamed on Friday Bush Administration’s Iraq war for contributing to the rise of oil prices, which are hurting the US economy.

Kerry told supporters in Springfield, Oregon, that higher oil prices hurt the US economy by sapping consumer’s spending power, eating into companies profits and weakening consumer confidence.

“The world is unstable right now. The marketplace...” Kerry quoted deputy head of the concrete programmes and traditional security including disease quarantine, and traditional security includ-
Smoke billows from a burning building in Najaf as US warplanes led an assault on Sadr’s militia in the city on 12 August, 2004.


Iraqi civilians flee the fighting in the city of Najaf, on 12 August, 2004.

A shot up truck on the road to Baqouba as a man points at the bullet holes on the vehicle, 60 kms north of Baghdad, Iraq, recently.

Images of Iraq


Endeavours for greening environments in arid zone of the nation

Forest plantation in Kanthalay village in Magway Township, Magway Division. —Forestry

Forest plantation designed to produce firewood in Minpayagan village in Thazi Township, Mandalay Division. —Forestry

Wetchokekon lake in Wetchokekon village in Kyaupadaung Township, Mandalay Division supplies potable water to rural people and contributes towards greening of environs. —Forestry

Hseikkawa dam built at the foot of Tantkyi Hill in Pakokku Township contributes to greening of environment. —Forestry
Agriculture being boosted on account of …

(from page 1)

After inspecting the construction works at the pagoda, Prime Minister General Khin Nyunt and party proceeded to Shweintaung Pagoda, where they paid homage to the pagoda and oversaw the renovation tasks.

At the hall of Taungdwingyi Township PDC, Prime Minister General Khin Nyunt met local authorities, departmental officials, members of social organizations and townswelders. At the meeting, Prime Minister General Khin Nyunt heard reports on location and area of the township, population, climatic conditions, land resources, cultivation of monsoon and summer paddy, food sufficiency, greening tasks and education and health activities.

On the occasion, Prime Minister General Khin Nyunt presented TVs, VCPs and computers to BEHS Nos 1 and 2 in the township through the school heads concerned.

Departmental officials also reported on education, health, agriculture, livestock breeding, forestry and development affairs. After hearing the reports, Prime Minister General Khin Nyunt delivered an address.

In his speech, he said the development momentum of the township is gaining speed as a result of frequent visits of the leadership of the State and assistance provided by them. Agriculture is booming in the township. Therefore, the township enjoy a considerable growth of economy.

To realize agricultural development in Magway Division, the State is constructing a great number of irrigation facilities, six of which are now supplying irrigation water to ensure extended cultivation of double as well as mixed cropping.

Agriculture is being boosted on account of adequate supply of irrigation water. And the growth in economy of the township is also accounted for the assistance provided by the Government.

He said departmental officials and farmers in Taungdwingyi Township are to make concerted efforts for development of regional agricultural services after making good use of better opportunities and results created by the government. He urged them to speed up successful cultivation of oil crops in the region while endeavouring systematically for regional rice sufficiency in accord with the objectives set.

He said the government has laid down the objective to make Magway Division become the edible oil bowl of the State and it has been providing assistance in order to fulfill 50 per cent of domestic edible oil consumption by Magway Division. Local sufficiency of edible oil can reduce import of edible oil. He said machinery that can contribute towards the emergence of an industrialized nation, materials and locomotives that can help develop transport sector can also be imported by the use of surplus of foreign exchange.

He urged the farmers in Magway Division to make strenuous efforts for boosting production and extended cultivation of oil crops that help develop the nation.

He said neighbouring countries and some in the region export agricultural products, fruit and vegetables and their economy is in success. Myanmar being an agrarian-based country, endeavours are to be made for strong economy of the State while growing new marketable export crops to earn more foreign exchange.

He said the government has laid down the objective to make the township become the edible oil bowl of the region. Local sufficiency of edible oil can reduce import of edible oil. He said machinery that can contribute to the development of agricultural industry, materials and locomotives that can help develop transport sector can also be imported by the use of surplus of foreign exchange.

He urged the farmers in Magway Division to make strenuous efforts for boosting production and extended cultivation of oil crops that help develop the nation. He said neighbouring countries and some in the region export agricultural products, fruit and vegetables and their economy is in success. Myanmar being an agricultural country, endeavours are to be made for strong economy of the State while growing new marketable export crops to earn more foreign exchange.

He said the government has laid down the objective to make Magway Division become the edible oil bowl of the State and it has been providing assistance in order to fulfill 50 per cent of domestic edible oil consumption by Magway Division. Local sufficiency of edible oil can reduce import of edible oil. He said machinery that can contribute towards the emergence of an industrialized nation, materials and locomotives that can help develop transport sector can also be imported by the use of surplus of foreign exchange.

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He said the development momentum of the township is gaining speed as a result of frequent visits of the leadership of the State and assistance provided by them. Agriculture is booming in the township. Therefore, the township enjoy a considerable growth of economy.

To realize agricultural development in Magway Division, the State is constructing a great number of irrigation facilities, six of which are now supplying irrigation water to ensure extended cultivation of double as well as mixed cropping.

Agriculture is being boosted on account of adequate supply of irrigation water. And the growth in economy of the township is also accounted for the assistance provided by the Government.

He said departmental officials and farmers in Taungdwingyi Township are to make concerted efforts for development of regional agricultural services after making good use of better opportunities and results created by the government. He urged them to speed up successful cultivation of oil crops in the region while endeavouring systematically for regional rice sufficiency in accord with the objectives set.

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He said departmental officials are to make harmonious efforts for uplift of education and health standards.
Prime Minister hoists Shwehtidaw …

(from page 16)

In the Htidaw hoisting ceremony, the Prime Minister, party and wellwishers conveyed the Seinbudaw, Hngetmyatnadaw and tiers of the Htidaw round the pagoda and then, the Prime Minister and party carried them to the pandal of Decorated Carriage.

The disciples hoisted tiers of the Htidaw and Hngetmyatnadaw atop the pagoda. At the auspicious time, the Prime Minister hoisted the Seinbudaw atop the pagoda. Next, he sprinkled scented water on them. Afterwards, members of the Sangha consecrated the Pagoda. Next, the Prime Minister and party proceeded to the construction site of Archaeological Museum Project in ancient Beikthanoe City.

Minister for Culture Maj-Gen Kyi Aung reported to the Prime Minister on the location of the museum, architectural design, arrangements for display of artefacts, construction of the road, power supply and greening tasks. The Prime Minister gave necessary instructions. Afterwards, the Prime Minister viewed silver coins of Pyu period, beads, earth pots bearing and other artefacts unearthed at ancient Beikthanoe City.

Prime Minister General Khin Nyunt and party take Nine Precepts from Shweyaungdaw Pagoda Monastery Patron Sayadaw Bhaddanta Viccitanana.—MNA

Paddy transplanting contest held in Kyaukse

YANGON, 14 Aug—A district level paddy transplanting contest (2004-2005) was held in conjunction with an agricultural demonstration on 11 August at the field No 1425 (A) in Kanchaw Village-tract, TadaU Township, Kyaukse District. Chairman of Mandalay Division Peace and Development Council Commander of Central Command Maj-Gen Ye Myint delivered a speech. Next, Manager of Division Myanma Agriculture Service U Aung Kyin explained the rules and marking system of the contest. The commander and those present watched the contest. The commander looked into the demonstration and inspected farm implements and machinery and agricultural methods booths organized by the Agricultural Mechanization Department. The commander gave necessary instructions and attended to the needs. Afterwards, Police Col Aung Htut of Myanmar Police Force (Mandalay Division) and officials presented second and third prizes to the winning transplanting teams. The commander presented the first prize to TadaU Township team. Seven transplanting teams from four townships of Kyaukse District took part in the contest. — MNA

New library, school building opened

YANGON, 14 Aug — The new Shwekywepon library was opened in Kywepon Village, Sagaing Township, on 10 August. The one-storey facility is 20 feet long and 15 feet wide. It was built at a cost of over K 1 million. A new building of the post-primary school in Kywepon Village was also opened. The one-storey building is 108 feet long, 26 feet wide and 11.5 feet high. It was built at a cost of K 3.4 million. — MNA
Radio Free Asia – an objective observation

Bala Min Hein

There is a strategy called the protracted war of psychological propaganda and agitation based on the concept — wrong may be construed as right if it is repeatedly heard.

Radio Free Asia” (RFA) may be construed as right if it is repeatedly heard. A foundation will become weak if it is all aggro in a cag. This strategy has been used as an effective weapon not only at the current era of psychological warfare, but also during the Cold War. The strategy was used by the BCP during the unrest in 1967. And during the period 1988-1989, these leftists tried to air, and living and working under orders and in pay of their masters. Willingly or not, the minions of RFA have to broadcast nothing but nonsense, underpaid, provided grudgingly, by the sponsors of the foreshadowed leaders of others a clear advantage over others in the field of IT and is dominating the media world. The country has been dealing with others dominantly with, much discrimination and the attitude that it is a better country. Those in the role of that power willing or unwilling to justify their having been employed as hirelings, their voice coming out from the hole that excretes the remains of food fast is to convey an objective image of the decay of RFA. Patriotic persons and those imbued with the spirit of safeguarding the race and religion will understand better.

In Myanmar language, there are sayings, which go, “Hate finds faults, while love brings benefits”: “Thief shouting ‘Stop thief!’: ‘Helping the enemy like handing stones don’t hurt my bones, words do not hurt me either.”

RFA, in fact, is not a free radio in Asia. It has been observed to be unfree, dancing to the tune of a group of persons controlling it from behind the scene.

Communist Party which put up a last-ditch fight at Mengyang, like the last flier of a candy about to sputter out, or the antics in 1988 of a power-crazy old politician with a rosary dangling from his neck but still had an intention to play the role of the real living person shining without any political quality, yet taking the shine from others. These are but a few snippets from history. It has been over half a century since the Union of Myanmar, which had the forebears of the nations, had prescribed and practised the Five Principles of Peaceful Co-existence. Enshrined in these principles is the policy of non-interference or in other words a policy of Peaceful Co-existence. Enshrined in these principles is the rule of law, internal peace and socio-economic development of the people. As it can discharge its duty amicably and skillfully with good will in solving problems, appreciation for its success in restoring national consolidation has spread all over the world. The Tatmadaw Government was able to improve the economic growth rate which was declining for many years, and later it has been able to gradually raise the gross domestic product. Neither person or group can transform from the socialist system into the capitalist one. What they need is for them to steer towards their own destiny, without being allowed to play the role of actor. The external elements approached such a group to hold sway over them in the sphere of political influence, and invented scurrilous rumours about the Tatmadaw Government of Myanmar. They were so consumed by pessimism, that they failed to think realistically.

With their power-crase, superciliousness and self-opinionated manner and boasting that ‘only when you are in office will this country be prosperous’, they disturbed the peace and tranquillity of the reason public and the world of Myanmar politics, without being able to consider that craving, pride and selfishness are three causes capable of locking them up in hell. Myanmar is a country where Theravada Buddhism flourishes. The nature of religion and politics is different from each other because the former is the secular world and the latter, mundane existence. When it comes to the law of social development, appropriate ideology and superstructure which are in consistence with infrastructure (economic base) come into being according to nature of dialectics. Accordingly, sound philosophies of religion have a reasonable effect on politics one way or another. To be explicit, it will be fatally wrong if the leadership of the Myanmar Tatmadaw who are in uniform are mistaken for militants. Professing Buddhism, they are in fact polite people. They are discharging the duties of State for unavoidable reason. They are in fact pro-socio-development practitioners holding the white dove in their hands. The RFA as well as the VOAs are critics trying to reverse the current authentic condition of politics in Myanmar. This being the case, it is advised out of love that we, Myanmar Buddhists, should beware of them, judging them by the five ethical standards worth practising as enunciated below:

In the Anguttara Nikaya, the Pitaka Nigata, the Aghata Vagga and the Codana Sutta, the Venerable Kariputta said, “My Friends, he who wants to put the blame on the other should do so only after he first lets these five self-imposed elements appear in him and then blames himself. The five elements are:

1. speak only when the time is right;
2. speak what is right;
3. speak politely;
4. speak when it profits the other; and
5. speak in earnest.

(Note: Codana implies stimulation, blaming the others, and criticism.)

There is no question of the leadership of our Tatmadaw Government showing understanding, patience and forgiveness towards national brethren. They do not, however, harbour any immoral thoughts in relations with foreign countries. The national people of Myanmar would have far less sentiments. These are the examples the Tatmadaw Government has set in a way to enhance amity and diminish enmity.

However, contrary to the divine nature of the five self-imposed elements, the RFA, the VOAs and the BBC involved in concoction of lies are those who go by the saying “Politics is the refuge of scoundrels”. They have no dignity and scruple whatsoever, not even as small as the tiniest drop of mist.

The reason is that they always speak demeaningly of the nation-building endeavours made by the Myanmar Tatmadaw Government. They turn a blind eye to reality. As the saying goes “As you sow, so shall you reap”, they must no doubt pay the price for their gross misconduct which was going on under their command. This article is written with deep sympathy for the puppets who crave for dollars and play whatever tune called by those in whose pay they are.

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(Myanma Alin + Kyemon: 15-8-2004)

(Translation: TMT+KTY)

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UMFCCI Executive Daw Kalya Pyi Wai Shan seen before departure for Singapore. — UMFCCI

Official leaves for Singapore

Yoadon, 15 Aug —Executive of the Union of Myanmar Federation of Chambers of Commerce & Industry Daw Kalya Pyi Wai Shan left here by air this afternoon to attend the Singapore-UNDP TDC. Productivity Improvement in the Public Sector from 16 to 20 August 2004. She was seen off at Yangon International Airport by UMFCCI General Secretary U Sein Win Hlaing and officials. — MNA
Today’s donations for the monasteries and nunneries in North Okkalapa Township were 504 bags of rice, 195.60 viss of oil, 391 viss of gram, 1,950 viss of iodized salt, 3,228 tubes of tooth paste, 3,288 bottles of traditional medicines, 1,950 cakes of soap and K 6,950,090.

First, North Okkalapa Township Sangha Nayaka Committee Chairman Gandayon Monastery Sayadaw Bhaddanta Kheminda administered the eight precepts. Next, the Secretary-2, the commander, the minister and those present donated provisions to the Sayadaws. Afterwards, Vice-Adjutant-General Brig-Gen Hla Shwe, Chief of Staff (Navv) Captain Nyan Tun and Colonel General Staff (Air) Lt-Col Nay Win offered 489 viss of rice, 195.60 viss of oil, 391 viss of gram, 1,950 viss of iodized salt, 3,228 tubes of tooth paste and 3,288 bottles of traditional medicine to the Sayadaws and nuns of monasteries and nunneries.

Similarly, well-wishers donated alms to the Sayadaws and nuns. The Secretary-2, the commander, the minister, the deputy ministers and senior military officers accepted cash and kind presented by well-wishers. Col Aye Thaw represented the Ministry of Defence and accepted the donations.

Next, Secretary-2 Lt-Gen Thein Sein presents alms to a Sayadaw at the ceremony to donate rice, edible oil, salt and funds to monasteries and nunneries in North Okkalapa Township by families of Tatmadaw (Army, Navy and Air Force). — MNA

Secretary-2 Lt-Gen Thein Sein presents alms to the Sayadaw at the ceremony to donate rice, edible oil, salt and funds to monasteries and nunneries in North Okkalapa Township by families of Tatmadaw (Army, Navy and Air Force). — MNA

MYANMAR, 15 Aug — Dwight B. Hixson, deputy director of the United States Agency for International Development (USAID), attended the donation ceremony today at the Sayadaw Bhaddanta Dhammazedi Monastery in Tawtaik Township of Yangon Region, together with senior officials of the Myanmarese government.

The ceremony was held at the Sayadaw Bhaddanta Dhammazedi Monastery in Tawtaik Township and was attended by senior officials of the government and the Myanmar Buddhist Sangha. The Sayadaw Bhaddanta Dhammazedi presented donations to the Sayadaw, alms to the Sayadaws and nuns in the township.

The Sayadaw Bhaddanta Dhammazedi thanked the US government and the Myanmar government for their support and assistance in the development of the Sayadaw’s monastery and the local community. He also expressed his appreciation for the contributions made by the USAID and other donor agencies.

The ceremony was followed by a meeting with the Sayadaw Bhaddanta Dhammazedi and senior officials of the Myanmar government and the Myanmar Buddhist Sangha. The meeting was attended by members of the USAID delegation, including the deputy director of the USAID Office in Yangon, Mr. Dwight B. Hixson, who delivered a speech on behalf of the US government.

The Sayadaw Bhaddanta Dhammazedi expressed his gratitude to the US government and the Myanmar government for their support and assistance in the development of the Sayadaw’s monastery and the local community. He also expressed his appreciation for the contributions made by the USAID and other donor agencies.

The meeting was followed by a tour of the Sayadaw’s monastery and the surrounding area. The tour was led by the Sayadaw Bhaddanta Dhammazedi and included a visit to the Sayadaw’s residence and the monastery’s various facilities, including classrooms, dormitories, and a library.

The Sayadaw Bhaddanta Dhammazedi expressed his gratitude to the US government and the Myanmar government for their support and assistance in the development of the Sayadaw’s monastery and the local community. He also expressed his appreciation for the contributions made by the USAID and other donor agencies.


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Myanmar, Belgian doctors jointly perform cardiac operations

MYANMAR, 15 Aug — Myanmar and Belgian doctors are jointly performing cardiac surgical operations on 13 patients at the No 1 Defence Services Hospital (1000-bed) here beginning this morning. They will continue surgical operations till 20 August.

Annually Belgian doctors led by cardiac specialist Dr Francis Wellens of OLVZ hospital of Belgium joined hands with Myanmar doctors in performing operations and this was the fifth time. It is aimed at promoting medical standard of both sides.

Such cooperation will continue in the future, it is learnt. — MNA

Myanmar and Belgian doctors performing operations. MNA
A year ago, rates on 30-year mort-
gages hit a high this year of 8.34 per cent in the week of
May 13 and have slowly drifted downward since then.
Freddie Mac’s survey also found that rates on 15-year,
fixed-rate mortgages, which is a popular option for refi-
nancing, declined this week to 5.24 per cent from 5.40 per
cent last week. Rates for one-
year adjustable-rate mort-
gages stayed steady at 4.08 per
cent this week.
A year ago, rates on 30-
year mortgages averaged 8.31 per
cent, with 15-year mort-
gages at 5.46 per cent and
one-year adjustable-rate mort-
gages at 3.80 per cent.
This week’s decrease of mortgage rates was resulted
from the unexpectedly weak employment report released
by the government last Friday, analysts believed.
According to the report, the
US economy created only
32,000 jobs in July, far below
the 200,000 jobs analysts had
expected.

US rates on 30-year
mortgages fall to
5.85%
WASHINGTON, 14 Aug—
Rates on 30-year mortgages
in the United States dropped
this week to the lowest level
in nearly four months, Freddie
Mac reported Thursday.
In its weekly nationwide
survey, Freddie Mac said that
rates on 30-year, fixed-rate
mortgages fell to 5.85 per cent
this week from 5.99 per cent
last week, registering the low-
est level since early April.
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Colombian police confiscate 1.2 tons of cocaine
BOGOTA, 14 Aug.—The Colombian police confiscated 1.2 tons of cocaine and
captured two drug traffickers in an anti-drug sweep on Thursday in the capital city
of Bogota, a spokesman for the police told the Press.
The spokesman pointed out the cocaine
was found in the front wheel of a roller
which would be exported to Mexico in
the western suburb of Bogota. The destination
of the cocaine worth 20 million US dollars
is the United States.
Colombia is the world’s top cocaine
producer, with an annual output of 580 tons
of cocaine, most of which end up in the
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MNA/Xinhua

MNA/Xinhua

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MNA/Xinhua

MNA/Xinhua

The best time to plant a tree
was twenty years ago.
The second best time is now.

MNA/Reuters

Britain warns nationals
against travel to West
Bank, Gaza Strip
LONDON, 14 Aug.—The British Government on Fri-
day warned British nationals not to travel to two key West Bank
areas and the Gaza Strip.
“We advise against all travel to Nablus, Jenin and
the Gaza Strip outside Gaza City. We strongly
advise against all travel to the West Bank
and the Gaza Strip at night.
We advise against all but es-
cential travel to Gaza City,
and most of the West Bank,”
the British Foreign Office said
in a statement.
“We continue to advise
against travel along Israel’s
border with Lebanon, and
close to the Israeli side of
the Israel-Gaza Strip border,”
the statement said.

MNA/Xinhua

MNA/Xinhua

UNION OF MYANMAR
MINISTRY OF RAIL TRANSPORTATION
MYANMA RAILWAYS
INVITATION TO SEALED TENDER
1. Sealed Tender is invited by Myanma Railways, from the interesting
Supplier, for supply of the following Stores:-
Sr.No. Tender No. Description Quantity
1. 2MR/RAIL BUS(M) IN SERVICE RAIL BUSES 12-Nos
Closing Date. - 6.9.2004 (Monday) (12.00) Hours.
2. Tender documents are available at the office of the Deputy General
Manager (Supply), Myanma Railways, Corner of 51st Street and Merchant
Street, Botataung, Yangon starting from 16.8.2004 during the office hours.
3. For further details please call: 291982, 201555 Ext-602, 605, 612
Deputy General Manager
Supply Department, Myanma Railways,
Botataung Yangon

MNA/Xinhua

Forest fire forces 6,000
from homes in Spain
MAZAGON, 14 Aug.—A
fierce forest fire has forced
around 6,000 people from
their homes in the east of
Spain, officials said on Fri-
day.
The fire has claimed 700
hectares of the Sierra de
Calderona national park in
the Valencia region since it
started on Thursday evening.
Residents of nearby towns
were evacuated in case the
flames spread and the
electricity supply to the area
has been cut.
The blaze appeared to have been
started intentionally by a
local security chief
Luis Ibanez said.

MNA/Reuters
Malaysian PM calls for coordinated approach to promote SMEs

KUALA LUMPUR, 14 Aug— Malaysian Prime Minister Abdullah Ahmad Badawi said Friday that a more streamlined and coordinated approach to small and medium-scale enterprises (SMEs) was necessary to maximize the resources and reduce wastage. Such approaches were needed to spur the development of SMEs and for them to achieve the most effective outcome, he said in his opening remarks at the National SMEs Development Council meeting organized by Bank Negara Malaysia, the central bank, in Putrajaya, Federal Administrative Centre.

“The government is giving its highest priority to SMEs where there are 12 ministries and 40 government agencies involved in their development,” he said.

To be effective, the Prime Minister also suggested that the council meet twice a year for the government to be kept informed of the progress which had been achieved in the development of SMEs. Abdullah also called on the private sector to work together with the government towards strengthening infrastructure for the development of domestic SMEs.

“China in the 21st Century is playing a pivotal role as a constructive actor and as a valued contributor and stability,” he said.

Abdullah also called on the private sector to work together with the government towards strengthening infrastructure for the development of domestic SMEs. “It is imperative for the government, together with the private sector, to work towards strengthening the infrastructure, which will then contribute to the overall development of the SMEs in a sustainable manner,” he said.

“Due to their (SMEs) significant number, size and nature of operations, they provide a vital link in the business system for the development of domestic SMEs,” he told a conference to commemorate the 20th anniversary of the Australia-China Free Trade Agreement Conference in Sydney.

Australia warmly welcomes a rapidly growing and internationalizing China as a driver of regional and global trade and as an important contributor to regional security and prosperity, he said.

In the current global environment, “China’s pragmatic and cooperative approach to these threats (from terrorism, weapons of mass destruction) — and to other security and foreign policy issues — has cemented its role as a constructive actor and a valuable contributor to the region’s core security and stability,” he said.

Downer pointed out that China is playing a pivotal role in hosting the Six-Party Talks on the nuclear issue on the Korean Peninsula, adding Australia strongly supports China’s extensive efforts to convene the talks. He also praised China’s role on issues of arms control and non-proliferation issues and counter-terrorism. MNA/Xinhua

Australian FM speaks highly of China’s role in region, world

CANNBERA, 14 Aug— Australian Foreign Minister Alexander Downer on Friday spoke highly of China’s role in the region and the world. “China in the 21st Century is playing a pre-eminent role in our region, and globally sharing its vitality and energy with the world,” he told a conference on Australia-China Free Trade Agreement Conference in Sydney.

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UNICEF raises alarm over AIDS orphans in Sub-Saharan Africa

LUSAKA, 14 Aug— The United Nations Children’s Fund (UNICEF) has raised alarm over the situation of AIDS orphans in Sub-Saharan Africa, saying that there were 11 million orphans in the region could double from the current 11 million in six years.

“When we launched the Africa orphan generation report last year, we pointed out there were 11 million orphans in Sub-Saharan Africa. We have estimated that the figure would double over the next six years,” Per Engerbak, UNICEF’s regional director for Eastern and Southern Africa, said Friday.

The newly appointed regional director who is on a familiarization tour said in southern Africa alone, there are 6.8 million orphans.

In four southern African countries, one-third of the children population are orphans, he said.

Engerbak warned that the world is yet to come and that the population of orphans would start to fall only after 2020. “Every country needs to be on alert,” he said.

The UNICEF official called for concerted efforts from governments, non-governmental organizations, the media to combat the pandemic of HIV/AIDS.

“There have to be concerted efforts at every level. This is the collective responsibility of the entire society to rally around this national effort,” he said. MNA/Xinhua

Sri Lanka provides “dry rations” for flood hit Bangladeshis

COLOMBO, 14 Aug— Sri Lankan Government has provided a consignment of “dry rations” for the Bangladeshi people who have been severely affected by the recent floods, the Foreign Ministry said on Friday.

Sri Lankan Foreign Minister Lakshman Kadirgamar presented the consignment of dry rations including biscuits and tea to High Commissioner of Bangladesh Yakub Ali in Colombo.

“This donation could be seen as a good will gesture extended to the people of Bangladesh and to assist the government of Bangladesh at this critical moment,” the Foreign Ministry said in a statement. MNA/Xinhua

India working out FTAs, PTAs with ASEAN, MERCOSUR, GCC

NEW DELHI, 14 Aug— On the heels of signing Free Trade Agreement with Thailand, India is working out FTAs and PTAs with ASEAN, MERCOSUR and Gulf Cooperation Council.

Pointing that these trade arrangements would provide the country’s industries with easier access to export markets in partner nations, junior Minister for External Affairs Ravi Inderjith Singh on Friday asked the industry to prepare itself for international competition. “These trade arrangements provide to our industries easier access to export markets in the partner countries. At the same time, Indian industry is being exposed to more international competition than ever before. In such a competitive environment, there is no shortcut to survival other than to become internationally competitive,” he said.

The minister was speaking after inaugurating a national workshop on “Strategic Approach to Strengthening International Competitiveness in Knowledge-based Industries” organized by Department of Scientific and Industrial Research and policy think-tank Research and Information System. MNA/PTI

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Australia warmly welcomes a rapidly growing and internationalizing China as a driver of regional and global trade and as an important contributor to regional security and prosperity, he said.

In the current global environment, “China’s pragmatic and cooperative approach to these threats (from terrorism, weapons of mass destruction) — and to other security and foreign policy issues — has cemented its role as a constructive actor and a valuable contributor to the region’s core security and stability,” he said.

Downer pointed out that China is playing a pivotal role in hosting the Six-Party Talks on the nuclear issue on the Korean Peninsula, adding Australia strongly supports China’s extensive efforts to convene the talks. He also praised China’s role on issues of arms control and non-proliferation issues and counter-terrorism. MNA/Xinhua

UNICEF raises alarm over AIDS orphans in Sub-Saharan Africa

LUSAKA, 14 Aug— The United Nations Children’s Fund (UNICEF) has raised alarm over the situation of AIDS orphans in Sub-Saharan Africa, saying that the population of AIDS orphans in the region could double from the current 11 million in six years.

“When we launched the Africa orphan generation report last year, we pointed out there were 11 million orphans in Sub-Saharan Africa. We have estimated that the figure would double over the next six years,” Per Engerbak, UNICEF’s regional director for Eastern and Southern Africa, said Friday.

The newly appointed regional director who is on a familiarization tour said in southern Africa alone, there are 6.8 million orphans.

In four southern African countries, one-third of the children population are orphans, he said.

Engerbak warned that the world is yet to come and that the population of orphans would start to fall only after 2020. “Every country needs to be on alert,” he said.

The UNICEF official called for concerted efforts from governments, non-governmental organizations, the media to combat the pandemic of HIV/AIDS.

“There have to be concerted efforts at every level. This is the collective responsibility of the entire society to rally around this national effort,” he said. MNA/Xinhua

Sri Lanka provides “dry rations” for flood hit Bangladeshis

COLOMBO, 14 Aug— Sri Lankan Government has provided a consignment of “dry rations” for the Bangladeshi people who have been severely affected by the recent floods, the Foreign Ministry said on Friday.

Sri Lankan Foreign Minister Lakshman Kadirgamar presented the consignment of dry rations including biscuits and tea to High Commissioner of Bangladesh Yakub Ali in Colombo.

“This donation could be seen as a goodwill gesture extended to the people of Bangladesh and to assist the government of Bangladesh at this critical moment,” the Foreign Ministry said in a statement. MNA/Xinhua

India working out FTAs, PTAs with ASEAN, MERCOSUR, GCC

NEW DELHI, 14 Aug— On the heels of signing Free Trade Agreement with Thailand, India is working out FTAs and PTAs with ASEAN, MERCOSUR and Gulf Cooperation Council.

Pointing that these trade arrangements would provide the country’s industries with easier access to export markets in partner nations, junior Minister for External Affairs Ravi Inderjith Singh on Friday asked the industry to prepare itself for international competition. “These trade arrangements provide to our industries easier access to export markets in the partner countries. At the same time, Indian industry is being exposed to more international competition than ever before. In such a competitive environment, there is no shortcut to survival other than to become internationally competitive,” he said.

The minister was speaking after inaugurating a national workshop on “Strategic Approach to Strengthening International Competitiveness in Knowledge-based Industries” organized by Department of Scientific and Industrial Research and policy think-tank Research and Information System. MNA/PTI
Owen arrives Madrid for real medical

MADRID, 14 Aug— England striker Michael Owen arrived in Madrid on Friday afternoon to complete a medical before joining Real Madrid from Liverpool. The 24-year-old flew in a private jet into the military airbase of Torrejon on the outskirts of the Spanish capital before being whisked away in an unmarked grey limousine to the Zarrazola clinic in the north of the city.

Dressed in a light blue T-shirt and jeans, Owen cut a relaxed figure as he smiled and waved to around 30 photographers waiting for him as he entered the clinic to undergo a detailed medical.

Owen's reception was far more low-key than the one given to fellow Englishman David Beckham, who joined Real last year.

Owen was expected to return to England immediately after the medical in order to link up with the national squad before next week's friendly against Ukraine. Radio Marca reported that Owen would not be officially unveiled to the media until next Thursday.

The striker is expected to sign a four-year contract with Real, with an option to extend the deal for an extra year.

Real will pay 12 million euros (14.71 million US dollars) for the former European Footballer of the Year in a deal which also sends Real midfield Antonio Nunez to the Premier League club.—MNA/Reuters

Farinos signs two-year deal with Mallorca

MAJORCA, 14 Aug— Spanish midfielder Javier Farinos has joined Real Mallorca on a two-year contract from Inter Milan, the Primera Liga club said on Friday.

Mallorca said the 26-year-old former Valencia player would be on loan for the first season before becoming the property of the Spanish club.

The midfielder left Valencia for Inter in June 2000 for 17 million US dollars, but failed to establish himself as a first-team player at the Serie A club.

He played on loan at Villarreal during the 2002-03 season and will be reunited with the club's former coach Benito Floro, who is now in charge at Mallorca.

The midfielder's arrival will help compensate for the loss of leading striker Samuel Eto'o, who was sold to Barcelona for 24 million euros.—MNA/Reuters

Eriksson slams "sick" interest in private life

LONDON, 14 Aug— England manager Sven-Goran Eriksson hit out at what he called the "sick" interest in his private life on Friday following the recent revelations that have rocked the Football Association (FA).

Eriksson's affair with former FA secretary Faria Alum and a botched attempt by officials to cover it up formed the backdrop to the Swedish boss's, chief executive Mark Palios, have been given exhaustive media coverage. The events triggered the resignation of Palios and FA communications director Colin Gibson.

"It's been a mess, it's been a soap opera and it's very regrettable," Eriksson told reporters on Friday.

"I always think that private business should be private. I've never understood that normal people have an interest in your private life, even if I'm the manager of England."

Asked if the saga had affected his view of English people, Eriksson said: "I like them. But what I can never understand is that sick interest in private lives."

A determined Eriksson said he had no intention of resigning and dismissed any notion that his salary, estimated to be four million pounds (7.32 million US dollars) a year, was not justified by the results after England's Euro 2004 qualifying exit.

"I can quit if we don't qualify for the 2006 World Cup, but that's football."

"If I don't feel I'm paid too much or not. I know what other managers are earning and I know I'm not the best paid manager in the world."

"I never read a word about how much (Fabio) Capello earns, or (Marcello) Lippi, (Jose) Mourinho, (Arsene) Wenger, or (Alex) Ferguson. But in this job I see it every day."

Eriksson tried to sum up his view of people's expectations.

"Sometimes I feel in this job that you should be a saint, at least a monk, you shouldn't earn very much money and you should win every football game," he said.

Promoted Plymouth go top of second division

LONDON, 14 Aug— Promoted Plymouth Argyle climbed to the top of the English Second Division with a 1-0 win at Cardiff City on Friday.

Cardiff midfielder Lee Bullock scored an own goal in the 24th minute when a header by Plymouth striker Stevie Crawford went in off his back.

Plymouth have taken seven points from their opening three games. They are three points ahead of Cardiff and six other teams that will be in action over the weekend including West Ham United, at home to second-placed Wigan Athletic on Sunday.—MNA/Reuters

Answer for yesterday's crossword

S STRUGGLING BOTAFOGO HELD TO 1-1 DRAW ON CENTENARY NIGHT

Answers:

ACRE
DIAL
DIVULGE
EA
ENDS
R
PULSE
ASSUMED
T
SORE
Y
CRISP
ASIDE
GIBLE
RISS
RURAL
PG
ABANDON
NE
STOOL
SMITH
DA
Silva, Jairzinho and Garrincha.

MNA/Reuters

Anahiem Angels, Chone Figgins (right), is congratulated by teammate Jose Molina after hitting a two-run home run in the sixth inning off Detroit Tigers Roberto Novoa in Anaheim, Calif. on 14 Aug, 2004. —INTERNET

Struggling Botafogo held to 1-1 draw on centenary night

RIO DE JANEIRO, 14 Aug— Botafogo, the club which has been plagued by some of the greatest names in Brazilian football history, were held to a frustrating 1-1 draw at home by Atlético Paranaense as they celebrated their centenary.

Thursday's result kept Botafogo in the relegation zone of the Brazilian championship which reached its halfway mark this week.

The club, who bounced back from the Second Division at the first attempt last year, stayed 22nd in the 24-team table with 22 points from 23 matches as they struggle to avoid going straight back down. The bottom four will relegated.

Atlético took a first-half lead as striker Washington scored his 13th goal of the championship before Botafogo striker Schwank pounced on a defensive blunder to rescue a point for Botafogo in the second half.

Atlético coach Leovis Culpi, who walked out on Botafogo after only two games of the championship, was given a rough reception by the Botafogo supporters. His team are fifth.

Palmeiras midfielder Magnus and Fluminense midfielder Roger were sent off for fighting as Palmeiras, who accompanied Botafogo out of the Second Division last season, came from behind to win 3-2 and jumped to fourth, one point behind leaders Santos, Ponte Preta and Sao Paulo.

Former player Nilton Santos, nicknamed the "Encyclopedia of Football", watched the Botafogo match. He won the World Cup with Brazil in 1958 and 1962 and spent his whole career at the club, playing more than 700 games.

Other former Botafogo players include Gerson, Leonidas da Silva, Jairzinho and Garrincha.
Song of national races
7:30 am

To be healthy exercise
7:00 am

Song of Myanmar
9:58 am

Song “Peace Be with you”
9:35 am

Blue Sea
9:20 am

Song “Sagawa Flowers Land”
11:15 am

Song “Mingalabar”
11:15 am

Song “Come and See Myanmar”
11:28 am

News
18:00

Weather report
18:00

National News
19:00

Myanmar Modern Song “Naughty Girl”
19:45 pm

Dances of Gon Shan
19:50 pm

National News
19:50 pm

National News
20:00

National News
20:00

National News
20:00

Song “Peace Be with you”
21:05

National News
21:10

Dances of Gon Shan
21:15

National News
21:45

National News
22:00

National News
22:10

National News
22:45

National News
23:00

National News
23:05

National News
23:15

National News
23:20

National News
23:28

Song of Myanmar Beauty & Scenic Sights “Come and See Myanmar”

Weather
Sunday, 15 August 2004

Summary of observations recorded at 09:30 hours MST:
During the past 24 hours, rain has been isolated in lower Sagain, Magway Districts, scattered in Chin State, upper Sagain, Mandalay Districts and widespread in the remaining areas with isolated heavy falls in Kachin, Rakhine States and upper Sagain District. The noteworthy amount of rainfall recorded were Thandwe (7.32) inches, Hkamti (4.25) inches, Putao (4.31) inches.

Maximum temperature on 14-8-2004 was 29.5°C (85°F). Minimum temperature on 15-8-2004 was 20.0°C (68°F). Relative humidity at 9.30 hrs MST on 15-8-2004 was 100%.

Total sunshine hours on 14-8-2004 was (3) hours approx. Rainfall on 15-8-2004 was 15 mm (0.59 inch) at Yangon Airport, 28 mm (1.10 inches) at Kaba-Aye, 28 mm (1.10 inches) at central Yangon. Total rainfall since 1-1-2004 was 2137 mm (84.13 inches) at Yangon Airport, 2088 mm (82.20 inches) at Kaba-Aye and 2081 mm (81.93 inches) at central Yangon.

Bay inference: Monsoon is moderate to strong in the Bay of Bengal.

Forecast valid until evening of 16-8-2004: Rain will be isolated in Kayah State, Magway District, scattered in Kachin, Shan States, Sagain, Mandalay Districts and widespread in the remaining areas with isolated heavy falls are likely in Rakhine, Mon and Kayin States. Degree of certainty is (100%).

State of the sea: Occasional squalls with moderate to rough seas are likely off and along Myanmar Coast. Surface wind speed in squalls may reach (35) to (40) mph.

Outlook for subsequent two days: Generally strong monsoon.

Forecast for Yangon and neighbouring area for 16-8-2004: Some rain. Degree of certainty is (100%).

Forecast for Mandalay and neighbouring area for 16-8-2004: Likelihood of isolated rain. Degree of certainty is (60%).

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YANGON, 15 Aug — Prime Minister General Khin Nyunt inspected all-round renovation tasks of Shwedagon Pagoda this morning and gave necessary instructions to officials.

Accompanied by officials of the State Peace and Development Council Office, the Prime Minister arrived at the site of all-round renovation of Aung Min Aung Pagoda in front of Maha Buddhological Museum near the western stairway of the pagoda at 9.30 am. The Prime Minister and party were welcomed there by Chairman of Yangon Division Peace and Development Council Commander of Yangon Command Maj-Gen Myint Swe, Minister for Religious Affairs Brig-Gen Thura Myint Maung, Deputy Chief Engineer (Electrical) U Aung Thein of Public Works and officials reported on 10 sectors of the greening tasks including construction of the circular road at the lake and the prayer hall, decoration of the circular road, water supply and water fountain works, nursery of trees, lawns, rebuilding of the Natlan passage, construction of the new building for Shin Upagutta Statue, power supply and decoration and others and progress of tasks.

First, the Prime Minister heard reports on matters concerning all-round renovation of Aung Min Aung Pagoda presented by Deputy Minister for Science and Technology U Nyi Hla Nge and officials. The Prime Minister gave instructions on renovation tasks to be carried out at the pagoda without losing its original style and inspected the renovation tasks.

Next, the Prime Minister and party inspected greening tasks at Shin Upagutta Lake in the precinct of Shwedagon Pagoda. In the briefing hall, U Soe Myint of SPA Co Ltd, Deputy Chief Engineer (Electrical) U Aung Thein of Public Works and officials reported on 10 sectors of the greening tasks including construction of the circular road at the lake and the prayer hall, decoration of the circular road, water supply and water fountain works, nursery of trees, lawns, rebuilding of the Natlan passage, construction of the new building for Shin Upagutta Statue, power supply and decoration and others and progress of tasks.

At the construction site of Archaeological Museum Project in ancient Beikthano City, the Prime Minister viewed silver coins, beads, earth pots and artefacts of Pyu period.

At the site of all-round renovation of Shwedagon Pagoda

(See page 9)