With Government’s assistance, health officials, physicians, surgeons making relentless efforts to provide international-level public health care services

Prime Minister asks after health of patient who has undergone liver transplant

NHC Chairman Prime Minister General Khin Nyunt comforts Ko Khin Zaw Htet who has undergone liver transplant at New General Hospital (Yangon).—MNA

YANGON, 3 Sept—Liver transplant was successfully performed for the first time in Myanmar at the New General Hospital (Yangon) on 25 August 2004. Chairman of National Health Committee Prime Minister General Khin Nyunt this evening visited the New Yangon General Hospital on Bogyoke Aung San Street here and asked after the health of the patient who has undergone liver transplant and fulfilled the needs.

The Prime Minister was welcomed there by Minister for Health Dr Kyaw Myint, the ministers, the deputy ministers, heads of department, surgical specialist Professor Dr Nawman Hla and surgical specialists, doctors and nurses. First, the Prime Minister asked after the health of patient Ko Khin Zaw Htet who has recovered from at the intensive care unit. Next, Minister of Health Dr Kyaw Myint and surgical specialist Professor Dr Nawman Hla reported on the improving health condition of the patient. Afterwards, Prime Minister General Khin Nyunt spoke words of honour to surgical specialists and medical staff who successfully performed the liver transplant.

Next, the Prime Minister met Daw Tin Tin Myint, wife of the patient and spoke words of encouragement. After greeting surgical specialists, doctors and nurses, the Prime Minister left the hospital later in the evening.

With Government’s assistance, health officials, physicians, surgeons making relentless efforts to provide international-level public health care services for people. After a series of successful advanced level operations including conjoined twin operation, kidney transplant and replantation of a traumatically amputated crushed distal forearm, officials of the health sector are making strenuous efforts for successfully performing a liver transplant operation.

The government has made necessary arrangements covering import of hospital equipment for liver transplant and sending of physicians abroad for further studies.

When every requirement is fulfilled, liver transplant team comprising physicians, surgeons, anesthesiologists, lab technicians, special nurses and others conducted practices for the operation again and again. On 25 August, a healthy liver taken from late donor Ma Aye Mon was successfully transplanted into patient Ko Khin Zaw Htet who was suffering from liver cirrhosis.

The success of liver transplant, the first of its kind in Myanmar, is something the entire national people of Myanmar can be proud of.

MNA

Established 1914

Emergence of the State Constitution is the duty of all citizens of Myanmar Naing-Ngan.
Minister meets Japanese guests

YANGON, 3 Sept — Minister for Religious Affairs Brig-Gen Thura Myint Maung met with Secretary-General Ven Hiroshi Fujikura of the Buddhist Summit Nembutsu Buddhista Sect of Japan and party at his office this afternoon.

Also present were Deputy Minister Brig-Gen Thura Aung Ko, Director-General of Religious Affairs Department Dr Myo Myint, Director-General of Department for Promotion and Propagation of the Sasana U Sann Lwin, Pro-Rector (Admin) of International Theravada Buddhist Missionary University Dr Myint Kyi and officials. — MNA

Secretary-General of the Buddhist Summit Nembutsu Buddhista Sect of Japan Ven Hiroshi Fujikura and party meet Minister for Religious Affairs Brig-Gen Thura Myint Maung.— MNA.

 Talks on nutrition development for teenagers given

YANGON, 3 Sept. — Talks on health education to mark Nutrition Promotion Week activities of the Myanmar Medical Association (Women’s Chapter) was held at Yankin Education College Practising Middle School of the Education Planning and Training Department, here, this morning.

Present were the chairperson of the MMA (Women’s Chapter) executives, the headmistress and teachers. First, Headmistress Daw Yin Yin Nwe and Chairperson of MMA (Women’s Chapter) Dr Daw Khin Lay Gyi gave speeches.

Next, Assistant Director Dr Daw Myint Myint Zin of Nutrition Division of the Health Department explained matters related to the development of nutrition for teenagers. — MNA

Artistes of UK to present musical concerts in Mandalay, Yangon

YANGON, 3 Sept — Artistes of St Catherine’s College of Cambridge University of the United Kingdom are scheduled to perform in the musical concerts to audience at the National Theatre in Mandalay on 6 September and the National Theatre in Yangon on 9 September. Admission is free. — MNA

Literary Charity

The second ceremony to donate cash, books and personal gifts for self-reliant village libraries will be held as follows:

Date — 7 September 2004
Time — 2 pm
Venue — Ministry of Information (Meeting Hall)

All are invited to participate in Book Charity.

Ministry of Information & Public Relations Department
# 22/24 Pansodan Street, Yangon.
Tel: 371359, 379769, 379771, 252451.
Iraqi militants kill three Turks, bomb oil pipeline

Baghdad, 2 Sept— Militants bombed Iraq’s northern oil pipeline to Turkey on Thursday, halting exports, and killed three Turkish hostages in a campaign to wreck reconstruction efforts and undermine the interim government.

In another hostage standoff, the editor of French newspaper Le Figaro said two journalists held in Iraq had been turned over to a new militant group, prompting some suggestions they would be freed soon.

Some people are talking of their release this night, others talk of tomorrow morning... but until the good news has actually arrived, others talk of tomorrow morning.

A. Reuters correspondent said he could see the blaze from the northern oil hub city of Kirkuk, about 40 miles away. Scores of hostages from dozens of countries have been seized in the past five months. Most have been freed but more than 20 have been killed by their captors.

Editor says hostages in Iraq given to group

Baghdad, 2 Sept— A Paris newspaper editor said Thursday that two French journalists held by kidnappers were turned over to an Iraqi opposition group, raising hopes that they could soon be released. A separate militant group in Iraq said it had killed three Turkish captives.

The kidnappers delivered the pair to a Sunni Muslim group, Jean de Belot, managing editor of Le Figaro newspaper, said on France Info radio. He said the opposition group favours the release of the hostages, but he stressed the status of the two Frenchmen wasn’t completely clear.

“We must be prudent in this kind of mixed-up situation because we know well that until the good news arrives, we can’t let ourselves be absolutely reassured,” he said.

The reports came during a day of frantic activity to win the releases — efforts that were spurred on by the passage of a deadline for the French government to revoke a ban on the wearing of Muslim headscarves in public schools that went into effect Thursday. A militant group calling itself “The Islamic Army of Iraq” said it had kidnapped the reporters and demanded that France lift its ban.

France’s foreign minister was cautiously optimistic about the journalists’ safety.

“According to the indications which were given to us and we are studying at this moment with caution, Christian Chesnot and Georges Malbrunot are alive, in good health and are being well treated,” he said at a news conference in Amman, Jordan.

US soldiers in Iraq search for explosives on a road outside Baquba, on 1 Sept, 2004.

ASEAN to open up 11 priority sectors

Jakarta, 2 Sept— Economics ministers of the 10-member Association of South-East Asian Nations (ASEAN) are expected to strengthen their commitment to push for the liberalization of trade and investment by 2007 during a three-day meeting here.

The director of regional cooperation at the Indonesian Ministry of Industry and Trade, Eliver Radjagoekgoek, has said that the ministers gathering for the 36th ASEAN Economic Ministers (AEM) conference would also agree to temporarily exclude certain products of the 11 key economic sectors from the liberalization drive.

“The (ASEAN) Secretariat will examine whether each country’s (negative) list has met the agreed requirements,” Eliver was quoted Wednesday by The Jakarta Post as saying.

The temporary exclusion would expire by 2010, he said, without elaborating which products are to be excluded.

During the leaders’ summit in Bali last year, the regional grouping agreed to create the ASEAN Economic Community in 2020, where there will be a free flow of investment, trade and labour within a region of some 100 million people.

It was also agreed to accelerate liberalization in the 11 priority sectors, ranging from the automotive to the agriculture sector.

The 11 sectors include agriculture, fisheries, automotive, wood-based products, rubber-based products, textile and apparel, electronics, air transport, tourism, and health care.

The planned liberalization measures will include cutting import tariffs under the Common Effective Preferential Tariff (CEPT) facility, streamlining customs procedures and adopting shared product standards for 2007 by the six original ASEAN members and by 2012 for the four newer members.

ASEAN original members were Singapore, Thailand, Malaysia, the Philippines, Indonesia and Brunei, while Laos, Cambodia, Vietnam and Myanmar joined later.

MNA/Xinhua
Kenyan Govt confirms release of three hostages in Iraq

NAIROBI, 2 Sept— The Kenyan Government on Wednesday evening confirmed the release of its three nationals who had been kidnapped in Iraq more than a month ago, saying they will return home soon.

“The today we have received wonderful news of the release of our brothers who had been kidnapped in Iraq,” government spokesman Alfred Mutua told a news conference in Nairobi.

According to Mutua, the abducted Kenyans along with one Egyptian and three Indians were released after their employer the Kuwaiti company paid half a million US dollars.

The Kenyan Government did not pay anything, he added. He said the three Kenyans just finished taking showers and eating a well-balanced meal in the company of their envoy, Ambassador Yusuf Nzbio, in a Kuwait hotel.

“The men are in good health, good spirits but very tired, according to Nzibio, they are very happy and look forward to seeing their loved ones. They arrived in Kuwait from Baghdad,” he added.

“Our envoys in Kuwait worked well with others who had the same mission,” said the spokesman.

“Our brothers will be flown back home as soon as possible. I mean tomorrow or Friday,” he noted.

The Kenyan Government has been pleading with the kidnappers to free the three nationals, saying they are doing everything possible to ensure the release of the hostages.

Kenyan senior officials have also reassured the families of the two Kenyan truck drivers taken hostage that every effort is being made by the government to secure their release.

The three Kenyans, together with others from India and Egypt, were kidnapped on 21 July in Iraq by a group calling itself “The Holders of the Black Banners”.

They worked as truck drivers for the Kuwait and Gulf Link Transport Company, which had negotiated with the Black Banners group for their release.

The kidnappers initially said they wanted the company to pull out of Iraq or they would behead the hostages one by one. The kidnappers then have several times extended deadlines set for killing the hostages.

The Kenyan Government has not sent troops to join the US-led forces in Iraq. After the kidnapping, the Kenyan Government urged all of its citizens to leave the country immediately. —MNA/Xinhua

Grant of $50m announced to help Florida

WASHINGTON, 2 Sept — A National Emergency Grant of up to 50 million US dollars will be provided to hire approximately 3,630 workers to help Florida recover from Hurricane Charley and Tropical Storm Bonnie.

This was announced Wednesday by US Secretary of Labour Elaine L. Chao, who was in Florida surveying the impacted areas, according to a Labour Department Press release.

“This grant of up to 50 million US dollars will aid with disaster clean up and provide temporary jobs for workers who can help re-store and rebuild the communities in Florida that have been impacted by the storms,” the Press release quoted Chao as saying.

The Press release said that in addition to temporary employment, assistance will include support services such as transportation, access to work related equipment and uniforms, and childcare.

The funding will also cover work performed on the homes of economically disadvantaged individuals, with priority given to services for the elderly and individuals with disabilities. —MNA/Xinhua

UAE to host int’l energy conference in September

ABU DHABI, 2 Sept— Abu Dhabi, capital of the United Arab Emirates (UAE), will play host to the 10th annual international energy conference on September 26-27, the official WAM news agency reported here Tuesday.

The organizer, the Emirates Centre for Strategic Studies and Research (ECSSR), announced in a statement that Abdullatif bin Hamad Al-Attiyah, Qatar’s Second Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Energy and Industry will deliver a keynote address in the opening session of the conference titled “The Gulf Oil and Gas Sector: Potentials and Constraints”. The statement said a galaxy of international experts from the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) countries, Arab world, European Union (EU) and the United States will take part in the conference. The conference will tackle a number of major issues encountering oil and gas sectors in the Gulf region. It will also focus on the role of the Organization of the Petroleum-Exporting Countries (OPEC) in the global energy market, regional oil reserves, output prospects and oil prices, according to the statement.

The opening session will be dedicated to discussing OPEC’s competitive positioning, the possibilities and limitations. Luis Gutti, a senior adviser of the US-based Centre for Strategic and International Studies, will present a paper on maintaining cohesion within OPEC titled “Implications for cooperation between member countries”. —MNA/Xinhua

Turkish hostage released in Iraq

ANKARA, 2 Sept— A Turkish truck driver who was held hostage in Iraq has been released on Wednesday, Turkish private television NTV reported.

The driver named Turan, Abdulrahman Top was kid-napped on 7 August when he was driving on the road between Tikrit and Mosul in northern Iraq.

The kidnappers, calling the Abdul Kader Al-Gilani Brigade, demanded Atahan Lojistik, the company which Top works for, to withdraw from Iraq.

Atahan Lojistik then announced to stop all activities in Iraq immediately.

So far, four out of dozens of Turkish hostages have been executed by their captors in Iraq, while most of others were released.

Militants in Iraq have been engaged in a string of kidnappings during the past several months in a bid to drive out foreign individuals and companies working in Iraq.

US Army sergeant charged in Afghan prisoner abuse

WASHINGTON, 2 Sept — The US military charged an Army sergeant with prisoner abuse and investigators are considering charges against other soldiers in the deaths of two prisoners in Afghanistan, an Army official said on Wednesday.

The Army Criminal Investigations Command is winding up a lengthy investigation of the December 2002 deaths of the men after blunt force injuries at Bagram Air Base outside Kabul, the Army official said on condition of anonymity.

These investigations could recommend charges against dozens of US soldiers in the 519th Military Intelligence Battalion and the 377th Military Police Company, the official said.

The Army already has charged one soldier, a sergeant in the military police unit, the official said.

The Washington Post reported on Wednesday that 26 soldiers could face disciplinary action ranging from negligent homicide to dereliction of duty and failure to report an offence.

This marks the latest criminal action taken by the US military against soldiers involved in the abuse of prisoners.

Seven soldiers have been charged in the abuse of Iraqi prisoners at the Abu Ghraib jail on the outskirts of Baghdad.

Military investigators last week recommended crimi-nal charges against dozens more military intelligence and military police soldiers as well as private contractors. —MNA/Reuters

48 Chinese awarded titles of “People-Satisfied Public Servants”

BEIJING, 2 Sept— Chinese Premier Wen Jiabao said here Tuesday the supreme criterion for a public servant is whether performance, and people’s satisfaction is the supreme award.

Wen made the remark at a meeting with representatives of 48 government staffs and 31 government institutions that have been awarded the titles of “People-Satisfied Public Servants” and “People-Satisfied Public Servant Collectives” by the central authorities.

It is now a crucial period for China’s reform and opening drive and efforts to build a relatively affluent society in an all-round way, Wen said.

The improvement of the Party’s ruling abilities and the government’s level of serving the people depends on the improvement of the quality of Party members and government staffs, he noted. —MNA/Xinhua

Members of Mostpada al-Sadr’s Mahdi Army militia are instructed how to throw a grenade in Baqra on 2 Sept, 2004. —INTERNET

Iraqis survey a crater left after a US air strike in the flashpoint town of Fallujah. Iraq’s hostage crisis further deepened when three Turkish truck drivers were reported killed, while a US air strike overnight on Fallujah killed 20 people. —INTERNET
Gunmen attack Iraqi politician Ahmad Chalabi

Baghdad, 2 Sept—Gunmen opened fire on former Iraqi Governing Council president Ahmad Chalabi’s convoy on Wednesday, wounding two of his bodyguards, the politician and his aides said.

The attack took place in the Latifiyah area south of the Iraqi capital Baghdad, where gunmen have fired on several foreigners and Iraqi officials in the past.

We were returning from Najaf after meeting with Ayatollah Ali al-Sistani and gunmen opened fire on the convoy south of Baghdad,” said Chalabi, who escaped unhurt.

“IT was an ambush. I don’t think there is anything further to say. These things are part of the job,” one aide said, adding that two wounded aides were expected to recover.

Developing countries hampered by inadequate support from rich countries

United Nations, 2 Sept—The efforts of developing countries in areas of reproductive health have been hampered by indifferent response from the rich nations in giving pledged assistance, a UN official said Wednesday.

Rich nations, which pledged 6.1 billion US dollars to developing nations at a watered down UN population conference a decade ago, have paid a little more than half of it, Executive Director of the UN Population Fund, Thoya Ahmed Obaid, said.

She was addressing a global round table discussion in London organized by NGOs to mark the 10th anniversary of the International Conference on Population and Development (ICPD).

Obaid observed that countries which had incorporated the ICPD Programme of Action into their national policies have paid a little more than half of it, since 1994 to empower women and address key reproductive health concerns.

“But it also showed that much more needs to be done to improve maternal health, slow the spread of HIV/AIDS and ensure adequate supplies of essential contraceptive commodities,” she said.

The donors’ share of funding for contraceptive supplies, plus condoms for the prevention of HIV/AIDS infection, has declined by one-third since 1994, but the need for such commodities will grow per cent by 2015, she said.

“In 2004, it is a crime that women still die because they are having babies,” Obaid said, referring to the persistence of high maternal death rates in poor countries.

She told a subsequent news conference that a recent survey answered by 169 governments showed that most have taken steps since 1994 to empower women and address key reproductive health concerns.

Musharraf swears in expanded Pakistan Cabinet

Islamabad, 2 Sept—Pakistan’s President General Pervez Musharraf swore in an expanded 32-member cabinet headed by new Prime Minister Shantak Aziz on Wednesday.

The new Cabinet included all 20 members of the previous Cabinet and 12 new full ministers, state-run Pakistan Television reported.

The portfolios of the ministers have yet to be announced, but officials said they were expected to be made public later in the day, with no major surprises.

Officials said Aziz, credited with turning around Pakistan’s economic fortunes over the past five years, would retain the Finance Ministry while Foreign Affairs would stay in the hands of Khursheed Mehmood Kasuri, who has led peace talks with India.—MNA/Reuters

Al-Sadr says Dutch troops should keep to base

BAGHDAD, 2 Sept—A representative of the radical Iraqi cleric Moqtada al-Sadr has warned the Dutch troops in Iraq to stay inside their base to avoid attacks, Radio Netherlands reported Wednesday.

The representative, named Ghuzail al-Zargani, said the attacks on Dutch troops will end only if they halt their efforts to arrest fighters of his Mahdi Army.

He made his statement in an interview with the Japanese news agency Kyodo according to the report.

The report also said that the Dutch Army has begun negotiations with local followers of al-Sadr. A delegation reportedly visited the office of the Mahdi Army in the city of as-Samawah Monday.

The discussion, which is said to have taken place at the entrance to the building, lasted one and half hours. However, the Dutch Defence Ministry denies occurrence of any such negotiations.

Radio Netherlands also said that the Dutch Defence Ministry is planning to send a number of commandos and military intelligence officers to Iraq.

Surveillance technology and specialists will be deployed to cove and local radio communications.

These measures are designed to increase intelligence capacities of Dutch troops in Iraq. There are so far more than 1,000 Dutch troops in Iraq.

France to continue all possible initiatives for hostage release

PARIS, 2 Sept—French President Jacques Chirac said Wednesday his country will continue to take all possible initiatives to free the two French journalists held hostage in Iraq.

“IN these difficult hours and days, all public authorities will continue to take all possible initiatives for the release of Christian Chesnot and Georges Malbrunot,” Chirac said after a ministerial meeting.

Uncertainty continued Wednesday over the fate of the two journalists reportedly kidnapped on their way from Baghdad to the Iraqi Shiite holy city of Najaf on 20 August.

After the meeting, government spokesman Jean-Francois Cope quoted Chirac as saying “the French people showed a flawless unity and solidarity in this test,” but released no fresh news about the two journalists.

The kidnappers, calling themselves the Islamic Army of Iraq, gave France 48 hours to revoke a law banning Islamic headscarves in state schools, according to footage aired by the Qatar-based al-Jazeera TV channel on Saturday.

The ultimatum was later extended by 24 hours to Tuesday night after the French Government refused the demand on Monday.

Hours before the expiry of the extended ultimatum, al-Arabiya television reported the release of the two hostages was “imminent”, but French Foreign Minister denounced the report as rumours.

Only one third of UN aid appeal for Bangladesh received

Geneva, 2 Sept—Ahead of a donor meeting here Tuesday, the United Nations urged donors not to forget the flood in Bangladesh which killed 900 people and displaced four million others recently.

Only one third of the UN appeal — about 69 million US dollars — has so far been received from the international community in assistance for the flood victims, the spokesman for the UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA), Elisabeth Byrs, told reporters on Tuesday.

The United Nations Resident Coordinator in Bangladesh, Jorgen Lissner, described the present situation in flood-affected areas as a “quiet disaster,” said Byrs.

“They have no income, damaged shelters, few assets and are highly vulnerable to disease,” Lissner was cited as saying.

Clean drinking water is in short supply as thousands of water sources are still contaminated by floodwater, said Byrs.

More than half the population in Bangladesh are dependent on agriculture to earn a living, but many farmers’ seed stocks have been swept away.

The United Nations appealed on 12 August for 210 million US dollars to help the poorest recover from the impact of the flood. “The meeting in Geneva today will review the status of the UN appeal for aid,” Byrs said. MNA/Reuters

Iraqi youths search through rubbish in front of a butcher in Baghdad’s Sadr City slum on 2 Sept, 2004. —Btvreuter

Iraqis survey destroyed cars covered by sand following a US air strike in Fallujah recently. —INTERNET

The United Nations Relief and Works Agency (UNRWA) is appealing for $3.8 million to help 35,000 Iraqi refugees and others in Jordan and Syria escape the economic effects of the war in Iraq.

UNRWA, which has continued to operate in Iraq throughout the war, said it had already spent $7.5 million on the appeal and was appealing for another $1.3 million now.

The agency said its appeal was the first ever made to donors by a UN agency on behalf of Iraqis and it was only the second such UN appeal since 1999.

MNA/UN

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Chinese V-P makes 4-point proposal on Asian cooperation

BEIJING, 3 Sept — Chinese Vice-President Zeng Qinghong made a four-point proposal here Friday calling on political parties and leaders of Asian countries to further strengthen cooperation.

"First, we should seize opportunities to continually expand the new channels for regional and multilateral cooperation," Zeng said. "We should improve the mechanisms for dialogue, cooperation and discussion among Asian governments on the basis of the principles of diversification and gradual progress."

He proposed that Asian governments should pay great attention to and make full use of the role of political parties, parliaments and mass organizations in regional dialogue and cooperation.

"Second, we should continue to seek common ground while differing differences, and constantly open new avenues to find more common ground," Zeng said. "We believe that neither differences in ideology and social systems nor lingering historical problems should be obstacles to increasing regional dialogue and cooperation." He proposed that Asian governments and political parties seek common ground in a constructive way, and "pursue cooperation instead of confrontation, seek accord through consultation instead of imposing their will on others, reconcile differences instead of causing troubles, work together to become stronger instead of profiting at others' expense, and try to bring about win-win cooperation."

"Third, we should constantly strengthen mutual trust and work hard to find new models for regional security and cooperation," he said. "We hope that on the basis of the Charter of the United Nations and the Five Principles of Peaceful Coexistence, they (Asian countries) will resolve conflicts through dialogue on an equal footing, eliminate differences through friendly consultation, settle disputes through mutual understanding and accommodation, and work hard to create a political and security environment for our regional development that is peaceful and harmonious."

"Fourth, we should increase the capacity of our political parties to increase "exchanges, dialogue and cooperation among Asian countries."

KGL paid $1m for hostages’ release

NEW DELHI, 3 Sept— The freedom of three Indians and four other hostages was secured after payment of one million dollars, the Kuwaiti company employing them said on Wednesday night and denied it had held operations in Iraq as demanded by the abductors.

"We paid nearly one million dollars in all to secure their release. The payment was made in four phases," KGL spokesperson Rana Abu-Zaimeh told PTI over phone from Kuwait soon after her company’s drivers were set free by the Iraqi militant group “Islamic Secret Army-Holders of Black Banners”.

She claimed the Indian government, which was kept informed about the developments in the hostage crisis on a regular basis, was aware of the payment of ransom.

A major chunk of 500,000-US dollar ransom was paid towards the end while the rest was paid earlier, Zaimeh said, adding recipients of ransom included the intermediaries involved in securing the release of the seven including, Antamary, Tilak Raj and Sukhdeo Singh.

She said the company could not talk about the ransom paid earlier as the employees were still in captivity but could do so now.

Zaimeh, however, said the Indian Government had been kept out of negotiations as part of an agreement in the beginning.

MNA/PTI

French hostages no longer held by kidnappers

PARIS, 3 Sept — Two French hostages held for almost two weeks by a radical Islamic group in Iraq are no longer in the hands of their kidnappers, French Culture Minister Renaud Donnedieu de Vabres said on Thursday.

"We know they are alive and no longer in the hands of the abductors who had held them," said the minister.

However, he gave no details on whether the two journalists had been set free.

"I hope that we will, perhaps this night, tomorrow, the next few hours, be able once and for all to turn the page on this tragic event while remaining vigilant," he said.

A report on the Arab television news network al-Jazeera said the group now holding the hostages intends to release them.

Meanwhile, Le Figaro editor Jean De Belot said on France Info radio: "The latest information is that Christian Chesnot and Georges Malbrunot have been handed over by the Islamic Army in Iraq to an Iraqi Sunni guerilla group...an opposition we know for a few days now has been in favour of the release of the hostages."

French Prime Minister Jean-Pierre Raffarin said, "The information we have gathered, even if positive, remains uncertain...according to a statement issued by his office.

Interior Minister Dominique de Villepin said he was "happy that the hostages would be freed by Friday in Iraq. "The indication that we have is positive and gives us confidence and encourages us to act," he said.

"Tomorrow is the day of prayers. Friday is a great moment of coming together, and meditation, I would like to believe that we could hope for a happy outcome," he said.

MNA/Xinhua

People look at a destroyed police car in Baghdad, Iraq, on 2 Sept. 2004. The car came under grenade attack and one policeman was injured.

MNA/Reuters

Putin says Russia to boost oil production, exports

MOSCOW, 2 Sept— Russia will continue to increase oil production and exports to world markets, President Vladimir Putin said Tuesday.

Russian companies are increasing oil extraction and will continue doing so in the future, Putin said after talks with French President Jacques Chirac and German Chanceller Gerhard Schroeder at Russia’s Black Sea resort of Sochi, according to the ITAR-TASS news agency.

Russia’s oil output and exports are expected to reach 450 million tons and 255 million tons respectively this year, he added.

As the second largest oil exporter in the world, Russia produced 421 million tons of oil with an export volume of 228 million tons in 2003.

MNA/Xinhua

French to sell 9.6% of France Telecom

PARIS, 2 Sept— France will sell 9.6 per cent of France Telecom (at least 4.5 billion euros or 4.44 billion US dollars) in what could be the biggest European telecoms placing this year.

The sale of the stake in the telecommunications operator, announced by the Finance Ministry on Wednesday, should be in the range of 18.95 to 19.25 euros per share, dealers and bankers said. If a green shoe option is exercised, bringing the total holding sold to 12.1 per cent, the government could raise as much as 5.75 billion euros.

The Finance Ministry added France Telecom would raise up to 1.15 billion euros through the issue of a convertible bond to preserve its capital structure.

Trading in the shares was suspended for two hours until 0900 GMT following the announcement.

The sale, which was expected at some point this year, will reduce the French Government’s direct holding to 41 per cent.

The government, which backed the company’s 15 billion euro rescue rights issue last year, said it planned to remain a major shareholder in the medium term.

Analysts said the timing and scale of the reduction of the government’s stake had been weighing on the stock.

"The stock will probably do better after the placing going forward," said one London-based analyst who did not wish to be named.

The move is part of wider efforts by the French Government to sell state assets to help cut its public deficit.

The state had decided to reduce the nation’s debt by lowering its stake in France Telecom, its "flagship" in the medium term, the Finance Ministry said in a statement, adding the company now needed more leeway to compete in the telecoms market.

MNA/Reuters

Syrian paper criticizes US pressure

DAMASCUS, 3 Sept — Syria’s state-run Tishrin newspaper on Thursday criticized the US pressure for a UN vote on Syria to respect sovereignty of the neighbouring Lebanon.

"Nobody can believe the United States is concerned about interests of Lebanon or any other Arab country, because the US stances and policies prove the opposite," the daily said in an editorial.

"Only the Lebanese Parliament has the right to decide who is going to be its President. Any foreign pressure is considered blatant intervention in the Lebanese internal affairs," it added.

MNA/Xinhua

Ahmed Hammed cursers the US forces after his son was killed in an US air strike in Fallujah, Iraq, on 1 Sept, 2004 in this photo made available on 2 Sept 17 people, including 3 children were killed according to hospital officials. — Interfax

Frank M. Benninger, President and CEO of the World Trade Center Association, Inc., at a recent awards gala, receiving the 2004 Chair's Award. — Interfax

The country has been reaping high profits from soaring world oil prices.

Deputy Prime Minister Alexander Zhukov pledged in May that Russia will strive to export more oil due to a good market prospect, but said the size of the increase requires further analysis.

Schroeder described Russia’s decision to increase oil production and exports as very important.

"We had certain apprehensions about the future, but cause otherwise the world economy could have suffered."

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"The stock will probably do better after the placing going forward." said one London-based analyst who did not wish to be named.

The move is part of wider efforts by the French Government to sell state assets to help cut its public deficit.

The state had decided to reduce the nation’s debt by lowering its stake in France Telecom, its "flagship" in the medium term, the Finance Ministry said in a statement, adding the company now needed more leeway to compete in the telecoms market.

MNA/Reuters

MNA/Reuters

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MNA/Reuters
Higher education centres built across the country

Three-storey buildings of Toungoo University in Bago Division. — MNA

Only well-qualified intellectuals and intelligentsia can build a modern developed nation. With this end in view, the government is building many educational institutions in the country. Photo shows the Magway Institute of Medicine in Magway. — PHOTO: MNA

The Government Technological College (Maubin) in Maubin, Ayeyawady Division. — MNA
YANGON, 3 Sept — The successful liver transplant conducted on 25 August 2004 has served as a proof of the development of the nation’s medical and health sectors on a par with those of the world countries.

The success is the realization of one of the four social objectives — Uplift of health, fitness and education standards of the entire nation — being implemented in accord with the guidance of Head of State Senior General Than Shwe and under the leadership of Chairman of National Health Committee Prime Minister General Khin Nyunt.

Ko Khin Zaw Htet, a 54-year-old man, was suffering from cirrhosis of liver, and too serious was his health condition that he already had vomited blood for five times and was also suffering from a bloated belly. According to physicians, the 35-year-old man would die within six months or a year of liver cirrhosis.

Coincidence is much important for a successful liver transplant, as there should be a ready donor for the patient, and the donated heart must be healthy and fresh.

The nation has been sending scholars abroad and importing medical equipment. Liver Transplant Committee was formed and assigned duty on 13 May 2003. Later, Prime Minister General Khin Nyunt visited Ko Khin Zaw Htet at the NGH this evening. The health condition of the patient is improving. He can walk without any help. He paid respects to the Prime Minister, expressing heartfelt thanks to the Prime Minister and the surgeons and all medical staff. He said that his health condition is improving.

The success is the realization of one of the four social objectives — Uplift of health, fitness and education standards of the entire nation — being implemented in accord with the guidance of Head of State Senior General Than Shwe and under the leadership of Chairman of National Health Committee Prime Minister General Khin Nyunt.

Ko Khin Zaw Htet stands witness to the skills of Myanmar physicians and the health sector development of Myanmar. — MNA
Tasks for smooth, secure transport coordinated

Commander Maj-Gen Myint Swe addresses the meeting to ensure smooth and secure transport of Yangon Division. — YANGON COMMAND

Minister for Culture Maj-Gen Kyi Aung and Minister for Foreign Affairs U Win Aung enjoy graduation presentation of students of University of Culture (Yangon). — MNA

Cultural skill demonstration presented

at the National Theatre on Myoma Kyawng Street in Dagon Township this afternoon.

Present on the occasion were Minister for Culture Maj-Gen Kyi Aung, Minister for Foreign Affairs U Win Aung, Minister for Education U Than Aung, Deputy Minister for Culture Brig-Gen Soe Win Maung, departmental heads, artists, Rector of the university U Tin Soe, pro-rectors, deans, faculty members, students and guests.

The ministers and the deputy minister and guests observed the works of the students at the reception hall.

Director-General of the Fine Arts Department U Kyaw Win and Rector U Tin Soe conducted them round the hall.

Next, the students presented a variety of entertainment programmes.

Altogether 208 students are going to obtain B.A degree — 65 students (Music), 58 (Thehin), 47 (Painting) and 38 (Sculpture). — MNA

CEC member lectures on State policies

YANGON, 3 Sept — Central Executive Committee member of the Union Solidarity and Development Association Deputy Minister for Information U Thein Sein gave lectures on the State policies and seven-point future policy programme of the State to 120 trainees of the USDA Basic Organizational Course No 18 of South Okkalapa Township USDA this afternoon. — MNA

Commercial Journal comes out

YANGON, 3 Sept — The Commercial Journal No 4, Vol 16, carrying articles of writers Saya Maung Su San, Saya Aung Thin, Saya Paragu; Dr Khin Maung Nyo, U Han Tun and others has been published from Commercial Journal House at No 38, 30th Street, Pabedan Township. — MNA

Special Appellate Bench hears criminal appeal cases

YANGON, 3 Sept — The Special Appellate Bench comprising Deputy Chief Justice of Supreme Court (Yangon) U Thein Sein, Supreme Court Judges U Khin Myint and U Myint Thein sitting at Court room No 1 this morning, heard three special criminal appeal cases, under section 7 of the Judiciary Law, 2000. — MNA

Yangon East District observes Nutrition Promotion Week activities

YANGON, 3 Sept — The activities of Yangon East District Nutrition Promotion Week, co-organized by Yangon Division Health Committee and Yangon Division Supervisory Committee for Maternal and Child Welfare Association, was held at Women’s and Children’s Hospital in South Okkalapa Township this morning.

Present were Patron of the Yangon Division MCWA SC Daw Khin Thet Huy and members, local authorities, officials of Health Department and UNICEF, Medical Superintendent Dr Mu Mu Nyo and specialists, expectant mothers and babies and local people.

First, Patron Daw Khin Thet Huy launched the activities of Nutrition Promotion Week and fed vitamin A tablets to 70 children under five. Next, she gave a speech.

Afterwards, specialists talked on requirements of nutrition.

Next, Patron Daw Khin Thet Huy and officials gave ferrous sulphate tablets to 70 expectant mothers. — MNA

Myanmar Academy of Arts & Science holds fifth anniversary ceremony

YANGON, 3 Sept — The fifth anniversary of Myanmar Academy of Arts and Science of the Ministry of Education was held at Diamond Jubilee Hall of Yangon University, here, yesterday afternoon.

Present on the occasion were Deputy Minister for Education U Myo Nyunt, directors-general and chairmen of departments and boards under the Ministry of Education, rectors, deputy directors-general, pro-rectors and vice rectors of the MASA and students.

President U Than Oo extended greetings. Next, Deputy Minister U Myo Nyunt gave lectures on ICT. — MNA
**For extended use of Natural Gas Vehicles**

_Myint Htay (Energy)_

It was on 11 August that the Ministry of Energy invited responsible officials of State level and gave a demonstration on the use of Natural Gas Vehicle (NGV). The Head of State gave guidance on broader use of NGVs on a national scale. According to the guidance, arrangements have been made to turn 200 passenger buses plying in Mandalay, Singaing, Kyaukse, Myintna, Kume and TadaU towns and 1,000 trucks which use natural gas in Yangon into NGV. The two hundred buses introduced into NGVs were carried out in two stages, 35 in the first stage and 165 in the second stage.

**The use of natural gas can give these benefits. Since the October No of natural gas is 130, the engine is free from knocking and can be used longer.**

As the use of natural gas helps bring about complete combustion, there is no content of hydrocarbon but less emission of carbon monoxide gases in exhaust gases. Therefore, the process protects the environment from pollution.

As natural gas causes full combustion only in the engine, it does not dilute the power of engine oil. As a result, a gas engine can run more nearly double than a petrol engine does on the same amount of engine oil. Clean engine oil extends the engine duration.

Natural gas, Liquefied Natural Gas, methanol and other gas fuel have been used safely and successfully in Myanmar since 1986. Therefore, NGVs are not new to the general public.

Presently, there are natural gas fuel buses plying from Yangon to Hmaunzwe, Taikkyi, Okkan and Bago; those plying from Chauk to Kyaukpyu and; those plying from Yenangyoung to Minbu and Magway. The number of such buses stands at 587, among which some have been NGVs since 1986 and proved safety in a span of 18 years. The use of natural gas is really safe and secure.

Natural gas is CH4 called methane and it is lighter than air. The density of air is 1, while that of natural gas is 0.55. In case of natural gas leakage, it will go up in the air and then disappear. Therefore, the chance of outbreak of fire is very slim. The possible ratio of combustion of the mixture of natural gas and air is 5:10, that of the mixture of petrol and air is 1:5.16, and that of the mixture of acetylene and air is 2:5.81. Therefore, petroleum is more flammable than natural gas, but acetylene is the most flammable material.

The auto-combustion of petrol can take place at the temperature of 360 to 380 degrees centigrade; diesel at 200 to 260 degrees centigrade; and natural gas at 615 to 680 degrees centigrade. Therefore, auto-combustion of natural gas is hard to occur when compared with petrol and diesel.

The use of natural gas can give these benefits. Since the October No of natural gas is 130, the engine is free from knocking and can be used longer. As the use of natural gas helps bring about complete combustion, there is no content of hydrocarbon but less emission of carbon monoxide gases in exhaust gases. Therefore, the process protects the environment from pollution.

As natural gas causes full combustion only in the engine, it does not dilute the power of engine oil. As a result, a gas engine can run more nearly double than a petrol engine does on the same amount of engine oil. Clean engine oil extends the engine duration.

**The alternative use of natural gas will no doubt lead to the effective use of natural gas exploited at home, the minimizing of the use of costly petrol and diesel fuel, a sharp fall in transport charges through adequate supply of natural gas at an affordable price as a result of the swift flow of trade.**

—a four-foot fluorescent lamp everyday by each household amounts to saving power equal to the capacity a 20-megawatt power station can supply.

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**Efficient use of electricity**

- Use daylight as the main source of light
- Use the least possible amount of electricity only if there is not enough natural light
- Use the least possible amount of electricity required in production and service enterprises
- Preventing waste of electricity benefits the user and others

There are about 500,000 households using electricity in Yangon. Thus, saving a four-foot fluorescent lamp everyday by each household amounts to saving power that is equal to the capacity a 20-megawatt power station can supply.

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**Let's render helpful hands to establishment of self-reliant libraries at every village**

Up to 31 August 2004, altogether 6,750 self-reliant libraries were opened nationwide.

Books and periodicals can be donated at District/Township Information & Public Relations Departments

**Commander attends coordination meeting of MCWAs in Shan State (North)**

_Yangon, 3 Sept — Shan State (North) Supervisory Committee for Maternal and Child Welfare Association and township MCWAs held the coordination meeting at the city hall in Lashio on 1 September morning._

Present were Chairman of Shan State Peace and Development Council Commander of North-East Command Maj-Gen Myint Hlaing; and wife Daw Khin Thant Zin, wife of Shan State (North) Supervisory Committee for MCWA, chairmen and members of Lashio, Muse, Kyaukme, Kunlong and Lawkai District Peace and Development Councils, members of MCWAs and guests.

Patron Daw Khin Thant Zin gave a speech and accepted K 500,000 to the funds of the state MCWA. Then, the coordination meeting followed.

At noon, the commander, accompanied by the excursion group led by Brig-Gen Than Win of Lawkai Station, went to 1,000 acres of highland farmland-1 zone in Lashio and production of quality seeds of crops.

They also visited the sunflower plus groundnut plantation, soybean and sunflower plantations, 10 acres of Hsinyadana paddy plantation, 100 acres of pigeon pea plus coffee plantations and the plantation of quality paddy strain.

On arrival at 2,000 acres reclamation for Highland Farmland-3 in Nahshin region of Lashio, they viewed storage of water for cultivation purpose, land reclamation with the use of heavy machines, and interference with irrigation water for the park, ploughing of 50 acres for wheat, soybean and groundnut.

Next, the commander and party proceeded to 253.97 acres of Hsinshwely paddy plantation with the use of water from Humon Dam being cultivated by Myanmar Police Force near Tepyan Village, Lashio Town.

The commander presented posters carrying knowledge on about Hsinshwely paddy strain to the excursion members and explained extension of monsoon and summer paddy acres.

MNA
On-job training course for management staff grade-1 concludes

YANGON, 3 Sept — The closing ceremony of the on-job training course for management staff grade-1 No 2/2004 of General Administrative Department of the Ministry of Home Affairs was held at Administrative Development Training School this morning, with an address by Minister for Home Affairs Col Tin Hlaing.

Also present on the occasion were Deputy Minister Brig-Gen Phone Swe, the Director-General of Myanmar Police Force and Directors-General and Deputy Directors-General of departments, advisers, directors, the Principal of the Training School, course instructors and trainees.

In his address, the minister said that in building a peaceful, modern and developed nation, the training school is nurturing qualified managers. He added that the trainees are to apply knowledge from the subjects on systematic leadership, administration and managements conducted at the training in their work sites. And, they are to implement three national policies, twelve objectives and seven-points future policy programme of the State in cooperation with collective efforts of the people. He stressed the need to take preventive measures against human trafficking and tasks of the narcotic drug elimination project with the aid of social organizations, to cooperate with the departments for achieving successes of the targets and to organize the people so as to participate in implementation of the tasks.

Next, the minister presented first and second prizes to U Naing Lin Tun and U Kyaw Lwin Oo and the director-General of General Administrative Department, the certificate to the trainees. Altogether 49 trainees attended and the 14-week course. — MNA

Mayor inspects progress of building Water Treatment Plant

YANGON, 3 Sept — Chairman of Yangon City Development Committee Mayor Brig-Gen Aung Thein Lin, accompanied by Joint-Secretary of YCDC U Aung Soe and officials, inspected progress of Water Treatment Plant being built by YCDC at Thanyathet, Botahtaung Township, this morning.

Member of the Work Committee for Construction of the Plant Dr Tun Than Tun, Project Manager of the construction U Tin Ngwe and officials reported on project tasks, installation of machines and construction of the road to the plant.

After hearing the reports, the mayor gave instructions on efforts to be made for timely completion of the tasks and sanitation and pleasant works at the plant.

Later, the mayor attended the meeting of the Work Committee for Construction of the Water Treatment Plant. — MNA

China builds giant panda cell bank

CHENGDU, 3 Sept — A bank for storing cells of giant pandas has been built in Chengdu Giant Panda Propagation and Research Centre in southwest China’s Sichuan Province, according to the centre. The bank, the largest of its kind in the world, is meant to rescue giant panda gene resources from extinction, said Hou Rong, deputy head of Sichuan Provincial Key Lab for Propagation and Protection of Endangered Animal Species.

“As an endangered large mammal that is unique to China, the giant panda has a low capability of propagation and a falling survival rate among its offspring due to increasing inbreeding,” said Hou, who is also director of Chengdu Giant Panda Propagation and Research Centre.

According to Hou, the bank, constructed with financial support from the Sichuan Provincial Youth Fund for Science and Technology, keeps epithelial fibroblast obtained from 26 giant pandas, including five that were already dead.

Hou vowed to cooperate with relevant departments and to enlarge the number of samples, by freezing somatic cells of all giant pandas in captivity across China.

Hou also plans to sponsor research about freezing the ovary of female giant pandas. — MNA/Xinhua

Monywa Open Golf Championship 16-19 Sept

YANGON, 3 Sept — Myanma Open Golf Championship organized by Myanmar Professional Golfers’ Association and Myanmar Golf Federation will be held on a grand scale as a second leg in Monywa golf course from 16th to 19th September.

The 0-12 handicap men amateur golfers may take part in the second leg together with professional golfers. And those under 18 are not allowed.

The golfers of Myanma Open Golf Championship who will be bound for Monywa are to enlist at Han Event Management Office, Tel-542989 and 723221 not later than 7 September.

Professional and amateur golfers are to enlist at No 15 Kanbanawza Street, Bahan township and Monywa golf club Tel-071-21550, not later than 14 September.

China set to offer more assistance to developing nations

BEIJING, 3 Sept — China has decided to build more facilities closely related to people’s daily life in the developing countries and send more medical teams there in the coming years.

The decision was made at a national conference on economic relations with developing nations that ended here Wednesday.

China will also provide more emergency aid to the developing nations, train more professionals for them, encourage more firms to invest in the developing countries and try to solve the problem of trade imbalance that some developing nations have complained about.

“We must uphold the principles of mutual respect, treating each other equally, integrate good political relations with economic cooperation, mutual benefit, common development, and seeking concrete results in economic cooperation when advancing relations with the vast majority of the developing nations,” said Chinese Premier Wen Jiabao when he met with the participants of the conference.

About 400 Chinese provincial-level officials and diplomats attended the two-day conference. Chinese Vice-Premier Wu Yi and State Councillor Tang Jiaxuan addressed the conference.

China started to provide assistance to Africa and some other developing countries in the 1950s.

The latest conference, held in accordance with the call of Chinese President Hu Jintao several days ago that “economic diplomacy” should be strengthened, was aimed at summing up its assistance to the developing nations and sketching out its blueprint for the coming years.

Wen called the developing nations China’s “believable friends” and “friends in deed”, saying the cooperation with the developing countries is a “basic point” of China’s diplomacy.

China must support the development of the developing nations in the course of its own advancement, he stressed.

China delegation pay homage to Lawka Chantha Abhaya Labha Muni Buddha Image

YANGON, 3 Sept — The six-member delegation led by Deputy Director-General of Public Relations Department of Thailand Mr Dussadee Sinchermsiri, accompanied by liaison officer U Kyi Tun of Myanma Radio and Television, visited Lawka Chantha Abhaya Labha Muni Buddha Image on Mindhamma Hill in Insein Township this morning.

They paid homage and offered flowers, water and lights to the Image.

The also visited White Elephant House and Hiinethaya Industrial Town. — MNA

Prizes given away for ASEAN Radio Quiz

YANGON, 3 Sept — The ASEAN Radio Quiz for salient points ASEAN brocast in Myanmar Radio programmes was held at Yangon Radio and Television yesterday morning and the enthusiasts took part in it. In the quiz, Ma Loira Tun of Thanlyin won the first prize, Ma Aye Aye Aung of Mingaladon the second, Maung Min Thu of Insein the third and Ma Khin Myo Kyaw of Insein the consolation prize. The officials gave the prizes to the winners.

ASEAN In Action Project is being implemented in the radio programme of MRTV and it is transmitting about salient points on ASEAN at 9:45 am every Saturday. The quiz for September will be held at 10 am on 1st October.

Those wishing to participate in the quiz may join without the specifications of qualification and age and deserving cash prizes will be awarded to the winners. — MNA

Thai delegation pay homage to Lawka Chantha Abhaya Labha Muni Buddha Image

YANGON, 3 Sept — The six-member delegation led by Deputy Director-General of Public Relations Department of Thailand Mr Dussadee Sinchermsiri, accompanied by liaison officer U Kyi Tun of Myanma Radio and Television, visited Lawka Chantha Abhaya Labha Muni Buddha Image on Mindhamma Hill in Insein Township this morning.

They paid homage and offered flowers, water and lights to the Image.

The also visited White Elephant House and Hiinethaya Industrial Town. — MNA
Storm “Gaston” kills five in Virginia

Virginians on Tuesday — Tropi- cals Storm Gaston raced out o sea on Tuesday after sweep- ing Virginia and killing five people, while powerful Hur- rricane Frances roared toward the Bahamas and the US East Coast with 140-mile per hour winds.

Virginia Governor Mark Warner declared a state of emergency after Gaston dropped up to 14 inches of rain on central parts of the state. Flooding cars and trucks smashed into buildings and nearly 180 roads were out of commission.

Dominion Virginia Power reported 60,000 cus- tomers in central Virginia without power as of Tuesday afternoon, and state emer- gency officials said the vic- tims all died in swamped cars or in attempts to rescue peo- ple. Gaston, however, was much milder compared to Frances, which the National Hurricane Center in Miami said was going to make landfall in the United States somewhere this week. It said Frances is a major storm capable of caus- ing considerable damage and possibly deaths.

“There’s really no reason that we see to make us think that this hurricane will weaken significantly in the next few days,” said hurri- cane center director Max Mayfield.

Gaston, Frances and Tropical Storm Hermine capped one of the busiest months for the Atlantic hurri- cane season. Eight tropical storms formed in August and four became hurricanes, in- cluding Charley, potentially the second-costliest hurricane in US history.

Frances’ sustained winds climbed from 125 miles per hour to 140 miles per hour or more due to the dangerous storm brushed by Antigua, Anguilla and other small islands of the northeast Caribbean.

The State Department advised Americans travelling in the Turks and Caicos to consider leaving and arranged the departure of non-emergency staff and fami- ly members at the US Em- bassy in the Bahamas.

Iran says nuclear case not to be referred to UNSC

Tehran, 2 Sept — An Iranian official on Wednesday said that Iran’s nuclear case would not be referred to the International Atomic Energy Agency’s (IAEA) Board of Governors will not be a complicated or hot one,” Ali Akbar Salehi, Iran’s former representative to the IAEA, was quoted as say- ing. Salehi stressed that Iran should avoid a dusty and uncalculated move, saying that “we should adopt wise decisions on the due time”.

The IAEA has admitted that Iran is not responsi- ble for the uranium contami- nation of some parts. The agency definitely knows that uranium enrichment has not been carried out in Iran and we take it as a favourabl decision,” he added.

“The remaining issues are legal, and it may be de- clared that the legal issues would require further study,” he said. As to the resumption of enrichment uranium, Salehi stressed that the issue was something special that the authorities should announce their own views.

“The authorities will make their decisions in light of the current developments and changes which may take place in the future,” said Salehi.—MNA/Reuters

MNA/Reuters

Iran says nuclear case not to be referred to UNSC

Japan launches nationwide disaster prevention drills

Tokyo, 2 Sept — One million people took part Wednesday in disaster pre- vention drills organized by central and local authorities in Japan.

The annual drills were held on the Disaster Preven- tion Day on the anniversary of the Great Kanto (East Ja- pan) Earthquake in 1923. This year’s ex- ercises were based on sce- narios of massive earth- quakes hitting the east Japan coastal region as well as To- kyo area.

The government drills were held in east Japan’s Shizuoka Prefecture, which is required to take special precautions in the event of a long-predicted quake occur- ring, based on the scenario of a major quake with a mag- nitude of 8 on the Richter Scale striking western Shizuoka.

The drills were also held in Yokohama and other lo- calities near Tokyo, based on a scenario that a quake with a magnitude of 6.5 hits Yokohama.

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MNASunExpress
Experts stress importance of HIV prevention vaccine

GENEVA, 3 Sept—World HIV experts stressed here Thursday that the development of an HIV prevention vaccine is as important as work on vaccines to treat the disease.

The experts from the International AIDS Vaccine Initiative (IAVI)—a global not-for-profit organization working to speed the search for a vaccine to prevent HIV infection and AIDS—said that besides treating people infected with HIV, the world must also intensify efforts to develop a preventive vaccine to stop the continuing spread of the virus.

“Scientists have learned a great deal about the structure of the virus, how infection occurs and how the immune system tries but fails to defend itself. This dynamic is at the heart of the science of how a vaccine needs to work,” Emini said.

But the questions that have been answered are outnumbered by those that have not, said Emini. For most vaccines for other diseases, scientists have been guided by studying people who became infected and then recovered. But in the case of AIDS, there is no one known to have recovered from the infection and HIV is constantly mutating its shape to evade detection.

“Given what we know about HIV today, we are advancing promising candidates into development and clinical trials at the same time. Basic research questions still have to be solved,” said Wayne Koff, IAVI’s senior vice-president and chief of vaccine research.

IAVI, which has more than 30 AIDS vaccine candidates underway in 19 countries, said it is unlikely that a vaccine will develop before the end of 2005.

“The experts view the current crop of candidate vaccines as promising but not yet ready to replace traditional vaccines, experts said on Wednesday.

Speaking on the same occasion, Victor Simango, the programme manager for Eastern and Southern Africa for World Meteorological Organization (WMO) said that a major obstacle to developing vaccines is the timing of warning systems on natural disasters.

Experts say virtual colonoscopy shows promise

WASHINGTON, 2 Sept—Virtual colonoscopy, which uses x-rays to check for colon cancer instead of threading a tube through the gut, shows promise but is not ready to replace traditional colonoscopies yet, experts said on Wednesday.

Virtual scans are not as good as the old-fashioned colonoscopy at spotting smaller pre-cancerous growths and polyps, the task force of experts said.

Colon cancer is the second leading cause of cancer death in the United States, having killed more than 57,000 people last year, according to the American Cancer Society.

Everyone over 50 is advised to get screened for the disease, which is easily cured if caught early.

The preferred method is a colonoscopy, which involves threading a tiny camera up through the rectum into the colon. A tiny cutting instrument is attached to the camera which can remove lesions or polyps on the spot and check them for cancer.

Computed tomography (CT) colonoscopies use x-rays and computer programs that create a clear image of the colon from the outside.

It is less invasive than a colonoscopy, but still requires taking laxatives, using an enema and fasting to prepare—so some patients refuse to undergo a traditional colonoscopy.

“The American Gastroenterological Association (AGA) put together a task force of gastroenterologists, radiologists and epidemiologists to see how useful the technique might be,” experts said.

Africa’s first human stem cell bank to be built in S Africa

JOHANNESBURG, 3 Sept—A South African company plans to build a human stem cell bank, the first of its kind on the African continent, to enable tens of thousands of parents to store their children’s genetic material for future use, sometimes being life-saving.

The decision of Lazaron Biotechnologies, a private firm, brought South Africa to the forefront of a controversial area of medical research, according to local media.

Lazaron will harvest stem cells from a baby’s umbilical cord blood for research, and not from embryos, said a report in Thursday’s newspaper Business Day.

Embryos are at the heart of the controversy surrounding stem cells as they have to be destroyed in the harvesting process, arousing opposition from anti-abortion groups.

Still cells are master cells in the body that have the capability to transform into new cells or tissue, acting as a repair system for the body and offering possible treatment for diseases such as cancer. The cells are available in vast quantities in the umbilical cord, which is usually discarded at birth.
Davenport, Henin-Hardenne reach third round at US Open

New York, 2 Sept—Fifth seed Lindsay Davenport, the 1998 US Open champion, advanced to the third round of the tournament with a 6-4, 6-2 win over Spain's Arantxa Parra Santonja.

Aranzua Parra Santonja, who had no such interest in the Russian champions. Abramovich, who has close links with CSKA, were found to have a controlling interest in the Russian club, neither could take part in the competition.

Both Chelsea and CSKA said immediately that Abramovich had no such interest in the Russian champions. UEFA, which governs European soccer, stated on its website on Thursday that it was now satisfied Abramovich did not have a controlling interest at CSKA.

"(Our) legal department has verified the issue as part of routine procedures before the new club competition season."

The third round with a 6-4, 6-2 victory over Santonja. But Davenport fired seven aces and hit more winners (30-8).

"I felt like I wasn't being aggressive enough until the middle of the first set and then I started to hit with more authority." — Internet

"The one thing I have done well this whole summer is play tennis and hit the ball hard and not put any loose errors." But her recent success hasn't dimmed talk of possibly retiring at the end of this year. Davenport, who wants to start a family, said she will make up her mind in November.

"Lacking the consistency she showed in her opening round match, Davenport had more double faults (7-3) and unforced errors (23-12) than Parra Santonja. But Davenport fired seven aces and hit more winners (30-8)."

"I feel like I played well after I won the second set it became easier," Parra Santonja said.

UEFA approves Abramovich, Chelsea, CSKA cleared for Champions play

Lisbon, 2 Sept—UEFA gave Chelsea and CSKA Mos- cow the all-clear on Thursday to take part in the Champions League after announcing that Chelsea's Russian owner Roman Abramovich had no controlling interest in the Moscow club.

The clubs have been in the same group in this season's competition and last week UEFA said that if Abramovich, who has close links with CSKA, were found to have a controlling interest in the Russian club, neither could take part in the competition.

Both Chelsea and CSKA said immediately that Abramovich had no such interest in the Russian champions. UEFA, which governs European soccer, stated on its website on Thursday that it was now satisfied Abramovich did not have a controlling interest at CSKA.

"(Their) legal department has verified the issue as part of routine procedures before the new club competition season."

UEFA monitors the situation of all clubs taking part in its tournaments.

The European Union's competition laws and UEFA's competition rules forbid an individual owning a major share of two clubs in the same tournament. However, there are no laws limiting the amount that an individual can sponsor another team.

UEFA suggested last week that its rules on sponsorship might need to be tightened after CSKA last March signed a $54 million sponsorship deal with the Russian oil company Sibur, of which Abramovich is the former owner and still the majority shareholder. —Internet

Deportivo miss out on Argentine midfielder Acciari

Malaga, 2 Sept—Deportivo Coruna has failed in a last minute bid to sign Murcia's Argentine midfielder Jose Luis Acciari after they were unable to complete the necessary paperwork before Tuesday's midnight transfer deadline.

"The documents weren't complete when the registration period closed," Spanish Football League (LFP) spokesman Manuel Garcia said on Wednesday. "As a result Acciari remains a Murcia player at least until December."

The LFP decision means Deportivo, who last season finished third in the Primera Liga and reached the semifinals of the Champions League, will be without any new faces as they look to maintain their impressive recent record at home and abroad. The European transfer market reopens in January.

MNA/Reuters

Manchester United's new signing Wayne Rooney poses for photographers at Old Trafford. Alex Ferguson has moved quickly to put a protective shield around teenage striker Wayne Rooney — and Manchester United's new record signing insists he is mature enough to evade the pitfalls that could derail his emerging career. —Internet

Ferguson has no fears for record buy Rooney

Manchester, 2 Sept — Alex Ferguson has moved quickly to put a protective shield around teenage striker Wayne Rooney — and Manchester United's new record signing insists he is mature enough to evade the pitfalls that could derail his emerging career.

Rooney's move from Everton to Old Trafford was for a fee that could rise to 30 million pounds, a new mark for a teenager and surpassing the 19 million pounds that AS Roma paid Bari for Antonio Cassano three years ago, and the weight of expectation on the forward is already intense.

A broken foot will sideline the England international for at least two weeks, but it is Rooney's life away from the pitch that has hit the front pages since the striker emerged from Euro 2004 with a reputation as the continent's most exciting young prospect.

Lurid tales about Rooney's social life has provided ammunition to observers who fear the player could follow the path trodden previously by the likes of Paul Gascoigne and fail to fulfil his undoubted potential.

And Rooney's decision to seek a move from the club he supported as a boy has transformed him from local hero to villain on Merseyside.

But Ferguson, who has a formidable reputation as a disciplinarian, has no fears for his new acquisition.

"We have a good reputation for looking after young players here," said the Scot, whose occasional fiery temper has been the stuff of legend at Old Trafford where he once famously kicked a football boot which hit his intended target David Beckham in the face.

"We are professional and I don't see that as a problem. For me, dealing with players has always been a black and white issue. Whenever you have to speak to a player about an issue, he is either doing the right thing or doing the wrong thing.

"We have to look after all the players and Wayne will get the same advice and protection as anyone else. But the most important thing is that dressing room of ours which is a security in itself, people like Roy Keane, Paul Scholes, the Nevilles and Ryan Giggs are all mature stable professionals and that's the best of all.

"Wayne will see these players and see how they have grown into how they are today and it's not by accident." —Internet

Atletico coach given two-match ban for referee protest

Madrid, 2 Sept — Atletico Madrid coach Cesar Ferrando has been handed a two-match ban for waving his arms in protest at a refereeing decision during his first league match in charge of the Primera Liga club.

"Ferrando was sent off for energetically raising his arms in protest at a refereeing decision during his first league match. He was heavily criticized in the Portuguese press for his tactics, but he was also backed by the referees' association." — Internet

"Wayne will see these players and see how they have grown into how they are today and it's not by accident." — Internet

Se Ri Pak of Korea watches her tee shot on the 13th hole during the first round of the LPGA State Farm Classic golf tournament in Springfield, Ill., on Thursday, 2 Sept, 2004. — Internet
Rainfall on 3-9-2004

- 0.28 inch at Yangon Airport,
- 0.08 inch at Kaba-Aye and
- 0.04 inch at central Yangon.
Total rainfall since 1-1-2004 was
- 96.97 inches at Yangon Airport,
- 93.90 inches at Kaba-Aye and
- 95.51 inches at central Yangon.

Weather
Friday, 3 September 2004
Summary of observations recorded at 09.30 hours MST:
During the past 24 hours, weather has been cloudy in lower Sagaing Division, rain or thundershowers have been isolated in Kayah State and scattered to widespread in the remaining areas with locally heavyfall in Shan State and isolated heavyfalls in Kachin, Mon States and Mandalay Division. The noteworthy amounts of rainfall recorded were Tachileik (4.65 inches), Namsam (3.54 inches), Mawlamyine (3.31 inches) and Mogok (2.20 inches).

Maximum temperature on 2-9-2004 was 92°F. Minimum temperature on 3-9-2004 was 72°F. Relative humidity at 9:30 hours MST on 3-9-2004 was 92%. Total sunshine hours on 2-9-2004 was 4.8 hours approx.
Rainfall on 3-9-2004 was 7mm (0.28inch) at Yangon Airport, 2mm (0.08inch) at Kaba-Aye and 1mm (0.04inch) at central Yangon. Total rainfall since 1-1-2004 was 96.97 inches at Yangon Airport, 93.90 inches at Kaba-Aye and 95.51 inches at central Yangon. Maximum wind speed at Yangon (Kaba-Aye) was 15 mph from Southwest at 14.30 hours MST on 2-9-2004.

Reference: Monsoon is generally weak in the Bay of Bengal.

Forecast valid until evening of 4-9-2004: Rain or thundershowers will be widespread in Kachin, Rakhine and Mon States, upper Sagaing, Ayeyawady, Bago, Yangon and Tanintharyi Divisions, scattered in Mandalay Division, Shan, Chin and Kayin States and isolated in the remaining areas. Degree of certainty is (85%).

State of the sea: Seas will be slight to moderate in Myanmar waters.

Outlook for subsequent two days: Increase of rain are likely to prevail in Southern Myanmar areas.
National development measures can be taken effectively only through might of intellectuals and intelligentsia at home

Outstanding children of staff of OCMI honoured

YANGON, 3 Sept—Outstanding children of the staff of Office of Chief of the Military Intelligence and its regiments and units and the ministries that are attached to the OCMI of the Ministry of Defence were honoured at a ceremony held at No 2 Tatmadaw Guest House on Inya Road here at 5 pm today.

They passed their matriculation examination (2004) with flying colours.

Prime Minister Chairman of the Myanmar Education Committee Military Adviser to the State Peace and Development Council Chairman Chief of the Military Intelligence General Khin Nyunt addressed the ceremony and presented cash awards to the children.

Also present on the occasion were Minister for Home Affairs Col Tin Hlaing, Minister for Immigration and Population Maj-Gen Sein Htwa, Minister for Finance and Revenue Maj-Gen Hla Tun, Vice-Chief of Military Intelligence Maj-Gen Kyaw Win, heads of departments and deputy heads of departments under the OCMI, directors-general of respective ministries, commanding officers of the regiments and units, outstanding children and their parents and representative officers from the regiments and units.

The Prime Minister in his speech said that the purpose of the ceremony was to honour outstanding children of the staff of Office of Chief of the Military Intelligence and its regiments and units, and the ministries that are attached to the OCMI Office of the Ministry of Defence. The ceremony was a means to acknowledge those who are worthy of honour.

Nowadays, the government has been striving for development of human resources who will take part in the tasks for all-round development of the nation that can stand shoulder to shoulder with the world nations.

Measures for national development and enabling the nation to catch up with the nations of the world can be taken effectively only through thorough exertion of the might of the intellectuals and intelligentsia at home.

That is why the government is producing more and more human resources capable of transforming the nation into a developed one.

In conclusion, the Prime Minister called on the children to continue making endeavours in pursuing higher education in order to be more outstanding anddynamic and to become intellectuals and intelligentsia who can serve the interests of the motherland.

Next, the Prime Minister presented cash awards to the students who passed 2004 matriculation exam with distinctions. Ministers and the MI Vice-Chief also presented cash awards to the outstanding students and representatives from regiments and units.

Afterwards, the Prime Minister posed for a documentary photo together with the outstanding students.

A total of 197 children of the staff of the OCMI and its regiments and units and the ministries that are attached to the OCMI passed the matriculation exam. Among them, two passed with six distinctions, three with five distinctions, two with four distinctions, five with three distinctions, eight with two distinctions and 22 with one distinction. — MNA

Use Natural Gas Vehicles and save fuel oil

- In automobiles, natural gas can be used in place of petrol and diesel.
- The use of natural gas can not only save fuel oil but also extend engine duration.
- Natural gas exploited at home can be used effectively and safely.
- Natural gas burns cent per cent and is environment-friendly.
- Adequate supply of natural gas helps facilitate passenger and cargo transport.

A Hilux bus installed with CNG cylinders.— PHOTO MAUNG MAUNG THAN.-- (MNA)