Minister inspects Yenwe Dam multi-purpose project

YANGON, 19 Oct — Minister for Agriculture and Irrigation Maj-Gen Htay Oo on 17 October arrived at model cultivation area of 300 acres of monsoon paddy in Tawwi Village in Nyaunglebin Township, Bago Division and discussed with farmers matters relating to increase production of major crops and conditions for crop cultivation in the region.

The minister, together with officials and farmers, viewed the high yield paddy cultivation and pilot cultivation of monsoon paddy, and gave instructions on reducing production cost, cultivation of quality strains and provision of agricultural techniques to farmers.

Next, the minister also inspected pilot paddy cultivation, direct seeding paddy cultivation and other pilot cultivations. He also urged the staff of the ministry to seek ways to boost crop production and to reduce production costs, to minimize loss and wastage in cultivation and to disseminate farming methods to farmers including effective use of fertilizer.

Later, the minister went to Yenwe Dam multi-purpose project being implemented near Myocharung Village in Kyauktada Township and inspected construction work of main dam and spillway.

At the briefing hall, officials of the Irrigation Department reported to the minister on progress of the main dam and spillway construction, future plans, needs and the estimated time of construction period.

As there are over 100,000 acres of irrigated land, the construction of irrigation canals and the project should be completed at the same time, the minister said.

On 18 October, Minister Maj-Gen Htay Oo inspected construction of diversion tunnel, spillway and the main dam.

YANGON, 19 Oct — A ceremony to hand over 69 LWL Fife Schooner “Sunshine” Yacht constructed by Myanmar Shipyards of the Ministry of Transport was held this morning at Nanthida Jetty.

The ceremony was attended by Minister for Transport Maj-Gen Aung Thein Swe, Minister for Rail Transportation Maj-Gen Aung Min, Minister for Social Welfare, Relief and Resettlement Maj-Gen Sein Htwa, Yangon Mayor Brig-Gen Aung Thein Lin, the deputy ministers for transport, Officer on Special Duty Brig-Gen Myo Tin, departmental heads and officials of Corvette Shipping Co, Ltd of France.

The ceremony was attended by Minister for Transport Maj-Gen Aung Thein Swe, Minister for Rail Transportation Maj-Gen Aung Min, Minister for Social Welfare, Relief and Resettlement Maj-Gen Sein Htwa, Yangon Mayor Brig-Gen Aung Thein Lin, the deputy ministers for transport, Officer on Special Duty Brig-Gen Myo Tin, departmental heads and officials of Corvette Shipping Co, Ltd of France.

The commander, the minister and party inspected building of the approach road on Kanni bank and installation of steel frames. Construction work of the approach roads and frame installation work have been completed cent per cent at present. The project engineers and staff are striving with might and main towards commissioning the facility as targeted — MNA

Yacht built by Myanmar Shipyards handed over to French Company

Sri Lankan Ambassador calls on Minister for Commerce

YANGON, 19 Oct — Minister for Commerce Brig-Gen Tin Naing Thein this morning received Ambassador of the Democratic Social-
**PERSPECTIVES**

**Wednesday, 20 October, 2004**

**Strive for introduction of more CNG-run vehicles**

The Union of Myanmar is endowed with plenty of natural resources. Petroleum and natural gas are among the rich terrestrial and aquatic resources and there lie a large deposit of them inland as well as off-shore. Nowadays, the prices of such fuel as crude oil, petrol and diesel are becoming higher and higher.

At such a time like this, it is good news that there is an abundant reserve of natural gas and that CNG engines can be used in place of diesel engines.

The Leading Committee and Work Committee for Substitution of CNG Engines for Petrol and Diesel Engines in Automobiles held a meeting at the Ministry for Industry-2 on 16 October. It was discussed at the meeting that at a time when the prices of crude oil, petrol and diesel are becoming higher and higher, combined efforts will have to be made to substitute petrol and diesel engines in cars with CNG engines and there are favourable conditions to do so.

Now, the Ministry of Industry-2, the Ministry of Energy, the Ministry of Rail Transportation and the private sector are cooperating harmoniously and the leading committee and work committees taking systematic measures to introduce the wider use of gas engines busses and trucks.

Now petrol engines have been successfully replaced with CNG engines and so efforts will have to be made to replace diesel engines. Work is well under way to make sure that gas cylinders and compressors are available in time and more and more gas-filling stations are opened.

The nation has around 0.26 million petrol- and diesel-run cars and, out of them, over 0.15 million are running in the City of Yangon. In the past, over 580 petrol- or diesel-run cars were converted into gas-run cars but now another 200 gas cars are running in Paleik Region.

It indicates that CNG can be used safely in cars. Measures are being taken to extend the number of gas-run cars starting from November and December.

We would like to urge all those responsible to try to the best of their ability to facilitate the plan to use more and more gas cars in place of petrol- and diesel-run vehicles.

**Myanmar delegation leaves for PRC**

**Yangon, 19 Oct —** At the invitation of China, the Myanmar delegation led by Deputy Minister for Industry-1 Brig-Gen Kyaw Win at the airport. — MNA

**Taninthayi Division USDA holds annual general meeting**

**Yangon, 19 Oct —** Taninthayi Division Union Solidarity and Development Association held its annual general meeting for 2004 in Pale Yadana Hall in Myeik this morning, with an address delivered by USDA Central Executive Committee Chairman of the division association Minister for Livestock and Fisheries Brig-Gen Maung Maung Then and Executives of division, district and township USDA, departmental personnel, and representatives of social organizations were also present. The minister presented gifts to students who are outstanding in education and who won prizes in essay and poster competitions. Gifts were also presented to outstanding athletes of the division. Fifteen donors presented K 71.6 million for new Division USDA office building. The minister and the secretary of the Division USDA accepted the donation. The minister spoke words of thanks. He then laid cornerstone of the new building. — MNA

**Prize winners announced**

**Yangon, 19 Oct —** Committee for organizing the photo contest in commemoration of Independent Day May 2005, Information and Public Relations Department of the Ministry of Information announced the winners today. In the contest, Shwe Hlay Myo Aung, Kyaw Kyaw Win (MPS) and Hlaing Aung Min (New Asia Photo), Kyaw Kyaw Win (MPS), U Than Wai (Taunggyi), A.K.Moe (Zoo), Tekkatho Han Min Oo (Best Photo), Hnin Aung (Insein), Kyaw Win Hlaing (University of Culture) and Wai Kyi Moe (Yangon University) won consolation prizes. — MNA

**MTCPAC Work Committee meets subcommittees**

**Yangon, 19 Oct —** The Chairman of Work Committee for Holding the 12th Myanmar Traditional Cultural Performing Arts Competitions met with the subcommittees and managers of state/division teams at No 1 Transit Centre here today. Chairman of the work committee No 3 Military Region Commander Col Tint Hsan made a speech. Members of the subcommittees and managers presented sector-wise functions. The chairman looked into their requirements. — MNA

**Minister inspects domestic training school**

**Yangon, 19 Oct —** Minister for Social Welfare, Relief and Resettlement Maj-Gen Sein Htwa inspected Zeebingyi domestic training school for the blind and National Registration Office in Sagaing. He later inspected a Dhammayon of Mandaalay Youth Training Centre, he visited children and presented gifts to them.

He inspected the Division Immigration and National Registration Office in Mandaalay Township, and presented gifts to out-of-school children at a drug rehabilitation centre in Mandalay. He met with principal officials at Mandalay Youth Training School.

At a child care centre, he visited children and presented gifts to them.

He inspected the Dhammayon of Mandalay Division Immigration and National Registration Office and met with staff. He later inspected a school for the blind and the Division Immigration and National Registration Office in Sagaing. — MNA

**USDA CEC Member In-charge of Taninthayi Division USDA Brig-Gen Maung Maung Then delivers an address at Taninthayi Division USDA’s annual meeting. — Livestock & Fisheries**

**Minister U Aung Thaung sees off the Myanmar delegation led by Deputy Minister Brig-Gen Kyaw Win at the airport. — MNA**
1,102 US troops killed since beginning of Iraq war

WASHINGTON, 19 Oct—As of Monday, on 18 October 2004, at least 1,102 members of the US military have died since the beginning of the Iraq war in March 2003, according to an Associated Press count. Of those, 846 died as a result of hostile action and 256 died of non-hostile causes, according to the Defence Department. The figures include three military civilians.

The British military has reported 67 deaths; Italy, 19; Poland, 13; Spain, 11; Ukraine, nine; Bulgaria, six; Slovakia, three; Thailand, two; the Netherlands, two; and Denmark, El Salvador, Estonia, Hungary and Latvia have reported one death each.

Since 1 May 2003, when President Bush declared that major combat operations in Iraq had ended, 964 US military members have died, 737 as a result of hostile action and 227 of non-hostile causes, according to the military’s numbers.—Internet

Jordan to enlarge Cabinet

AMMAN, 18 Oct—The Jordanian Cabinet will be enlarged to 26 portfolios from current 20 in an upcoming reshuffle, local newspaper Jordan Times reported Sunday.

The new Cabinet, expected to be formed within the next few days, will list public and administrative reforms as its priority.

MNA/Xinhua

Two Macedonians executed in Iraq

BAGHDAD, 19 Oct—A militant group in Iraq has beheaded two Macedonian men it accused of spying for the United States, an Arab television station reported on Monday.

Al-Jazeera broadcast a videotape from the Islamic Army in Iraq, saying the Macedonians were captured “a few days ago outside an American base in Iraq.” The network showed parts of the video of the two and their Macedonian passports and other identification papers, but it did not show their deaths.

An Al-Jazeera editor who spoke to The Associated Press by telephone from Doha said the tape, which the network received in Qatar, showed the two men being killed.

“They were thrown on their back and beheaded,” said the editor, who refused to give his name. He said the network decided not to show the “grisly images.”

The names of the slain men were not mentioned on the tape, and “they spoke a language we did not understand,” he said.

The Islamic Army in Iraq has previously claimed responsibility for kidnapping six Iraqis, two Lebanese and two Indonesian women. It also said it was behind the seizing of two French journalists in August.

Macedonian officials had previously announced that three Macedonian contractors vanished in Iraq in August. It was not immediately clear if the two men appearing on the video were the ones missing from August.

More than 150 foreigners have been kidnapped in Iraq since the fall of Saddam Hussein’s regime last year. Some captors seek ransom, while others pursue political motives such as the withdrawal of foreign companies or troops.

At least 32 have been killed, including the Macedonians. —Internet

Mortars hit arms handover centre in Baghdad slum

BAGHDAD, 18 Oct—Unidentified armed men launched mortars at an arms collection centre in Baghdad’s Sadr City on Sunday, witnesses said.

The attack took place at about 9 am (0600 GMT) in a football stadium where weapons were being collected from Shi’ite militiamen loyal to radical Shi’ite cleric Moqtada al-Sadr, they said.

There was no immediate word on casualties.

Sadr’s Mehdi Army agreed last week to hand in its medium and heavy weapons at three sites in Sadr City in exchange for the interim government’s pardon.

The hand-in process is supposed to last five days, but extended for two days till Sunday.

In return, the government has promised to start releasing detained Sadr followers, provided they did not commit crimes. It has also suspended raids in the northeastern Baghdad District.

MNA/Xinhua

Australian army chief fears for his troops in Iraq

SYDNEY, 19 Oct—Australian army trainers in northern Iraq have come under repeated attack, including a deadly suicide bomb attack at their heavily fortified compound, and there are fears of worse to come.

In an interview with the Herald, the Australian commander in Iraq, Brigadier Peter Hutchinson, praised the courage of his 40-strong army training team but said the impending US and Iraqi elections mean “increased threats” for personnel.

Mortar and rocket attacks and car bombs were increasingly familiar events for Australians, he said.

“The army trainers have been doing it tough up there in northern Iraq. A number of attacks have occurred on the team. It has got to the stage that, when they go and do some big event, there are rockets and mortars fired in. Thank God the bad guys are bad shots.”

Not so inaccurate was a suicide car bomber who rammed into the Australian compound two months ago. No Australians were hurt in the attack but Defense sources said several Iraqi military trainees were killed.

The trainers are particularly vulnerable because Iraqi insurgents are targeting Iraqis who join the new security forces. The Australian Government has rejected recent overtures to send more troops.

It was revealed yesterday that the Government rejected a request from the United Nations Secretary-General, Kofi Annan, in July to send more forces to protect UN workers.—Internet

UAE’s Emirates Airline wins Asia Travel Award

ABU DHABI, 18 Oct—The UAE’s national airline has been voted best Middle East and African airline at the prestigious TTG Asia Travel Awards, the official WAM news agency reported on Sunday.

The leading publications for the travel trade in the region said TTG Asia and TTG China awarded Emirates Airline the top accolade in this category for the second successive year.

The Emirates Airline got the award at the 15th annual TTG Awards, which was held last week in Bangkok and attended by key figures in the Asian travel and transport industry.

Launched in 1985, Emirates Airline has received more than 260 international awards in recognition of its efforts to provide unsurpassed levels of customer service, including repeated best airline awards from Skytrax, Official Airline Guide (OAG), and Business Traveller.

Inaugurated in 1989, the TTG Travel Awards are divided into 50 categories, including airlines, hotels and travel agents. TTG Asia and TTG China together have a weekly circulation of 29,800 and are among the most widely-circulated travel trade publications in the Far East.

The readership is made up of travel agents, tour operators, tourist boards, hoteliers and airline personnel.

MNA/Xinhua

Iraqis try to dismantle a destroyed mini bus after a roadside bomb exploded while the bus was passing by in the centre of Baghdad, on 18 Oct 2004. Internet
In memo, Iraq war general noted readiness problems

WASHINGTON, 19 Oct—The war in Iraq again became a focus of the presidential race Monday with the leak of a document from a former top US commander who questioned the Army’s preparedness.

Army Lt Gen Ricardo Sanchez wrote a memo in December 2003 in which he complained to top Army officials about a shortage of spare parts, lack of protective gear and poor readiness rates for Army weapons in Iraq.

The memo was leaked to the Washington Post, which first reported it in Monday’s editions. CNN has since seen a copy of the memo, dated December 4, and also obtained a December 13 response from Gen George Casey, then vice chief of the Army. Casey has since replaced Sanchez in Iraq.

The leaked Pentagon document brought fresh accusations from Democratic presidential candidate Sen John Kerry. He complained in Florida that President Bush’s “mis-management” of the Iraq war has left the United States less secure than it should be. In a later speech in New Jersey, Bush largely ignored the Iraq war and instead reminded voters of the terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001.

The Sanchez memo said, in part, “I cannot continue to support sustained combat operations with rates this low.” He was referring to the Army’s readiness rates, which measure unit strength and how well equipment has been maintained.

The rate had fallen to 84 percent for Abrams main battle tanks, 85 percent for Bradley armoured fighting vehicles and between 63 and 72 percent for Army helicopters. Internet

Seven killed, ten wounded in clashes in Fallujah

Fallujah, 18 Oct—Seven Iraqis were killed and ten others wounded in the ongoing fierce clashes that broke out Sunday morning between US-Iraqi forces and fighters who defend the city, local medics told Xinhua.

“We received seven bodies and ten wounded people treated in the hospital,” said Saleh al-Issawi, a doctor of the Fallujah General Hospital.

Direct fighting between fighters and US troops continued Sunday afternoon as US tanks and artillery pounded fighters’ positions on al-Askari neighbourhood, on the northeastern edge of the besieged city, according to Xinhua correspondent at the scene.

The fighters fired back with mortar rounds and rocket-propelled grenades as US planes flew overhead. Local residents confirmed that they saw two US tanks caught fire just outside the al-Askari neighbourhood where they saw a destroyed Humvee in the morning.

The city is almost deserted after most families have fled to safer resorts.

Iraq’s US-backed interim government has warned that it will launch a major offensive in Fallujah if the city does not hand over Jordanian militant Abu Musab al-Zarqawi and his followers.

Fallujah representatives and some residents in the city say they have seen no evidence that Zarqawi is holed up there. US Marines besieged the city in April in an all-out operation against rebels, many of whom were said to be foreign fighters, and only pulled out after hundreds of civilians were killed in the month-long war.

Lufthansa increases flights to Abuja

LAGOS, 18 Oct—German airline company Lufthansa announced here Saturday that its flight frequency to Abuja will increase by about 50 per cent as from 31 October.

Hartmut Volz, general manager of the airline’s Lagos office, described Abuja as “West Africa’s most important capital and a centre of attraction for foreign direct investment.”

Egypt, Russia seek to expand trade cooperation

CAIRO, 18 Oct—A visiting Russian trade official pledged Sunday Russia will expand trade and industrial cooperation with Egypt, official MENA news agency reported.

Boris Alyoshin, chairman of the Russian Federal Industry Agency, was quoted as saying after a meeting with his Egyptian counterpart that Moscow has a desire to promote cooperation with Egypt.

He said the doors of the Russian markets are wide open to Egyptian commodities, denying any hurdles to Egyptian exports to Russia.

Rashid Mohammed Rashid, Egyptian Minister of Industry and Foreign Trade, underlined the importance of augmenting the volume of trade exchange between the two countries. He also called for promoting technological cooperation in the industrial field. The two sides dealt with a number of problems that impede the flow of trade between the two countries, especially with respect to food and vegetables products.

The visit came as part of efforts to give momentum to Russian-Egyptian economic and trade cooperation, which was on top agenda when Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak met with his Russian counterpart Vladimir Putin in Moscow last May.

Syria highlights importance of national unity in Iraq

DAMASCUS, 18 Oct—Syrian Vice-President Abdul Halim Khaddam said on Sunday that it is vital to maintain the national unity of Iraq and avoid internal strife there, the official SANA news agency reported.

Khaddam made the remarks during his meeting with visiting Iraqi Kurdish leader Masoud Barzani, who shared the idea with the Syrian official.

According to SANA, the two sides, during the meeting, also tackled the role of neighbouring countries in helping the Iraqi people in current difficult circumstances. Speaking at a Press conference after the meeting, Barzani warned neighbours not to interfere in the issue of the disputed northern oil-rich city of Kirkuk.

“This is an internal Iraqi affair and foreign countries should not interfere in this issue,” he said.

Barzani arrived here Friday after his trip to Turkey, where he discussed Kirkuk issue with Turkish officials.

Australian Embassy in Iraq to be moved

SYDNEY, 19 Oct—Australia’s embassy in Baghdad will be moved into the highly-fortified “green zone”, the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFAT) said. A spokesman confirmed reports the embassy would be relocated to the high security area in the first half of next year.

“The report is correct,” the spokesman said.

The planned move follows a bomb blast near the embassy on Monday which killed seven people.

No Australians were killed or injured in the blast. A car bomb exploded near the Australian Embassy in May, but it failed to penetrate the mission’s tight security.

The green zone houses Iraqi government offices and US forces in Baghdad.—Internet