Ramayana Drama Contest continues

YANGON, 20 Oct — The Ramayana Drama Contest of the 12th Myanmar Traditional Cultural Performing Arts Competitions continued this evening for the last day at the National Theatre on Myoma Kyauk Street in Dagon Township. The Ramayana Drama Troupe representing Yangon Division participated in the contest.

Present at the contest were Daw Khin Thet Htay, wife of Chairman of the Leading Committee for organizing the 12th Myanmar Traditional Cultural Performing Arts Competitions Chairman of Yangon Division Peace and Development Council Commander of Yangon Command Maj-Gen Myint Swe, Minister for Construction Maj-Gen Saw Tun and family, member of the Panel of Patrons Minister for Culture Maj-Gen Kyi Aung and family, Deputy Minister for Construction Brig-Gen Myint Thein, Deputy Minister for Culture Brig-Gen Soe Win Maung, Chairman of the work committee for organizing the performing arts competitions No 3 Military Region Commander Col Tint Hsan, No 4 Military Region Commander Col Yan Naing Oo, leading committee members, members of the work committee and subcommittees, Cultural Counsellor of the Chinese Embassy Mr Wang Ruining, artists and the public.

Leader of the Panel of Judges U Chit Oo Nyo and members supervised and judged the contest.

Marionette contest competition will take place tomorrow evening at the same venue and the Marionette Troupe of Yangon Division will take part in the contest. — MNA

40th Anniversary of UDNR observed

YANGON, 20 Oct — A ceremony to mark the 40th Anniversary of University for Development of National Races was held at the convocation hall of the university at Ywathitkyi, Sagaing Division, this morning.

Present on the occasion were Member of the Civil Service Selection and Training Board U Aung Myint, Director-General Lt-Col Win Htein of No 2 Basic Education Department (Upper Myanmar), Rector Col Win Maung of Central Institute of Civil Service (Upper Myanmar), Rector Col Zaw Min Thein of UDNR, pro-rectors, members of the University Council and University Education Committee, representatives of State and Division Peace and Development Councils, departmental officials, faculty members of UDNR and trainees.

First, Member of the Civil Service Selection and Training Board U Aung Myint delivered an address. Next, CSSTB Member U Aung Myint presented cash to 40 service personnel of the university who have worked at the university for 30 years and over, four students who passed the 2004 matriculation examination with flying colours and four UDNR trainees who won first prizes in the State level competitions. After the ceremony, CSSTB Member U Aung Myint cordially conversed with the faculty members and trainees.

Exhibition to mark 40th Anniversary of UDNR opened

YANGON, 20 Oct — The ceremony to open the exhibition to mark the 40th Anniversary of University for Development of National Races was held on the lawns in front of Panglong Hall of UDNR this morning.

Present were Member of the Civil Service Selection and Training Board U Aung Myint, Director-General Lt-Col Win Htein of No 2 Basic Education Department (Upper Myanmar), Rector Col Win Maung of Central Institute of Civil Service (Phaunggyi), Rector Col Zaw Min Thein and Pro-Rector (Academic) Daw Khin Si Si formally opened the exhibition.

First, they took the designated places. Rector Col Zaw Min Thein and Pro-Rector (Academic) Daw Khin Si Si formally opened the exhibition.

Later, the CSSTB member and guests visited the exhibition and signed in the visitors' book. — MNA

NPE Credit Cooperative Society meets

YANGON, 20 Oct — The Credit Cooperative Society of News and Periodicals Enterprise of the Ministry of Information held the annual general meeting for 2003-2004 at the enterprise this morning.

Present were Manager U Nyunt Hlaing of Myanmar News Agency (Internal), Staff Officer U Win Kyi of Cooperative Department of Botataung Township, executives and members.

Manager U Nyunt Hlaing and U Win Kyi spoke on the occasion.

Next, the meeting approved the executive committee report and financial statement.
Coordination meeting to seek ways and means for development of crop production held

YANGON, 20 Oct — A coordination meeting to seek ways and means for boosting crop production was held at Myanmar Agriculture Service (Head Office) yesterday.

Present were Minister for Agriculture and Irrigation Maj-Gen Htay Oo, Deputy Minister Brig-Gen Khin Maung, managing directors and directors-general of enterprises and departments, agriculturalists, managers of states and divisions and officials.

In his address, Minister Maj-Gen Htay Oo said there are a lot of cultivable lands in agro-based country and there are agriculturalists who can disseminate agricultural techniques to farmers. The ministry is responsible for development of the State economy. He spoke of the need to give priority to use of modern cultivation methods for production on commercial scale, extension of cultivated acreage, boosting production of per acre yield, low cost in production, minimizing wastage and loss and seeking ways suitable for the regions.

He said efforts are to be made for meeting the targets of ten major crops. Deputy Minister Brig-Gen Khin Maung spoke on implementation of the tasks in accord with the policies laid down by the State.

General Manager (Land Use) of MAS Dr Nyi Nyi took part in the discussions.

The minister made a concluding speech and samples of paddy and soybean were produced by agricultural research of MAS. Professor Dr Oswalt Ban Cleenput of Ghent University of Belgium gave lecture on interaction between agriculture and environment to the managers of states and divisions and the agriculturalists.

MNA

Mon State USDA holds annual meeting

YANGON, 20 Oct — The Mon State Union Solidarity and Development Association held its annual meeting at Mon State USDA Office in Mandalay Ward of Mawlamyine Township on 18 October morning.

Present on the occasion were Member of the Panel of Patrons of USDA (Central) Patron of Mon State USDA Chairman of Mon State Peace and Development Council Commander Maj-Gen Thura Myint Aung, Member of the Central Executive Committee Brig-Gen Ohn Myint and departmental officials, Secretary of Mon State USDA U Tin Soe Moe Naing, executives, wellwishers, USDA members and outstation students.

First, students of Mawlamyine BEHS No 6 sang songs to the audience. Next, Mon State USDA Patron Maj-Gen Thura Myint Aung gave necessary instructions. Afterwards, CEC member Brig-Gen Ohn Myint delivered an address. Maj-Gen Thura Myint Aung submitted K 500,000 for Mon State USDA to the CEC member. Similarly, the Patron, the CEC member and departmental officials accepted donations for the Mon State USDA.

Next, the Patron, the CEC member and departmental officials gave away prizes to outstanding students who attended the training courses opened by USDA (Central) and outstanding students who won distinctions in 2004 matriculation examination and best pass rate schools in Mon State.

Then, Mon State USDA Annual Meeting followed. Mon State USDA Secretary U Tin Soe Moe Naing presided over the meeting together with Joint-Secretary Daw Yi Yi Myint and Executive U Win Bo.

Executive Daw Ei Ei San submitted the EC report. Next, tow groups discussed the report. Next, accomplishments of districts and townships were reported. Later, the meeting put two matters on record, made four resolutions and concluded with chanting of slogans.

Next, the CEC member together with Commander Maj-Gen Myint Aung attended the first cash donation ceremony for construction of Myanmar monastery in Paris, France, at Yamana Hall of Mon State Peace and Development Council Office. They inspected progress in renovation of Kyarakhlan Pagoda.

In charge of Mawlamyine Industrial Zone Minister for Mines Brig-Gen Ohn Myint went to Mawlamyine Industrial Zone and met officials and entrepreneurs. The minister attended to their needs.

MNA

Shan State Cooperative Festival opened

YANGON, 20 Oct — The Shan State Cooperative Festival for 2004, organized by Shan State Cooperative Department, was opened at No 2 Basic Education Middle School in Nyaungshwe on 18 October morning.

Present were Chairman of Shan State Peace and Development Council Commander of Eastern Command Maj-Gen Khin Maung Maung, staff officers, local authorities, departmental officials, social organizations and students.

First, the commander and Assistant Director U Soe Nyunt of Cooperative Department opened the festival and visited there. The festival will be held up to 22 October.

MNA

Commander inspects harvesting of model monsoon paddy plots in Toungoo, Oktwin

YANGON, 20 Oct — Chairman of Bago Division Peace and Development Council Commander of Southern Command Maj-Gen Ko Ko, accompanied by departmental officials, inspected harvesting of paddy of model monsoon paddy plot yielded 103.05 baskets per acre.

Afterwards, the commander inspected harvest of model monsoon paddy in Nyaungbintha Village, Toungoo Township, on 17 October morning.

In the briefing hall, Deputy Manager of Bago Division Monsoon Agriculture Service U Kyaw Myint reported on harvesting of model paddy plot and Chairman of Toungoo Township Peace and Development Council U Kyaw Than Shwe on arrangements for cultivating summer paddy.

Next, the commander inspected model plot of Manawthuaka paddy. He cordially met local farmers and attended to their needs. Later, the commander viewed winnowing of paddy. The model plot of monsoon paddy yielded 103.05 baskets per acre.

First, the commander inspected construction of buildings at Lebu Village Post-Primary School in Toungoo Township and fulfilled the requirements.

In Oktwin Township, the commander went to Hsin-Ekari paddy plot in Uyindaw Village, township authorities reported on progress of cultivation of monsoon paddy in the township and extended land reclamation and per-acre yield of Hsin-Ekari paddy strain.

The commander inspected harvesting of model monsoon paddy. The model plot yielded 103.3 baskets per acre.

MNA

Ma Ei Ei Mon of Ayeayawady Division taking part in basic education level (aged 15-20) girls’ xylophone contest (News on page 16).— MNA

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MNA

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Expressway being built to link two major scenic spots in E China

HEFEI, 20 Oct— Construction on the land shortcut between Mount Huangshan in Anhui Province, and Hangzhou of Zhejiang Province, two major tourist attractions in east China, has proceeded well, according to transport authorities of Anhui Province.

The expressway being built to link the famous scenic mountain with Hangzhou, capital city of Zhejiang had its Anhui section open to traffic Monday. The 83.103-kilometre-long section starts at the Shuizhu Bridge of Huangshan City, where the mountain is located, and ends at Yulingguan at the border of the two provinces, taking an estimated investment of nearly two billion yuan (241 million US dollars). It is believed that the section will benefit the efforts of southern Anhui, northern Jiangxi Province and the mountainous area of western Zhejiang to join the economically developed Yangtze River Delta.

The Zhejiang section of the expressway is still under construction and scheduled for completion before May 2005.

After the whole line of the expressway opens to traffic, journey by motor vehicle from Mount Huangshan to Hangzhou will take only two hours, much shorter than the previous six hours.

Huangshan City accommodates 6.2 million tourists annually. It is predicted that the figure will increase by six million after the expressway goes into operation. — MNA/Xinhua

Portuguese fishing boat missing near Aveiro

LISBON, 20 Oct — A Portuguese fishing boat with six crew members was missing in rough seas and a search was under way, a spokesman for the Marine Rescue Agency said on Tuesday.

The 27-metre (88-foot) fishing boat disappeared early on Tuesday near the port of Aveiro, about 155 miles north of Lisbon, the spokesman said.

The body of a man was found on the beach north of Aveiro but the spokesman said he could not confirm he had been on the missing boat.

A life raft believed to be from the boat was found on the beach at Torreira about nine miles north of Aveiro, a second spokesman said.

Pieces from a boat also washed ashore near there, but he said it was not known if they were from the missing boat.

High winds and rain are lashing Portugal and seas are forecast to be between 10 and 16 feet on Tuesday. — MNA/Reuters

Estonia, Russia sign wide-ranging economic agreements

CAIRO, 20 Oct — Egypt and Russia signed wide-ranging bilateral economic agreements on Tuesday, Egypt’s official MENA news agency reported.

Egyptian Prime Minister Ahmed Nazef and Boris Alyoshin, chairman of the Russian Federal Industry Agency, attended the signing ceremony, where a number of agreements in heavy industry, agriculture, tourism and energy sectors were inked.

They also explored the possibility of setting up a joint company for industrial and energy cooperation.

Alyoshin’s visit came as part of Russia’s efforts to give momentum to bilateral economic and trade cooperation, which topped agenda of talks between Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak and his Russian counterpart Vladimir Putin in Moscow in May.

MENA said that Alyoshin also met with Egyptian Foreign Minister Ahmed Abul Gheit on Tuesday to prepare for a visit to be paid by Russian Prime Minister Mikhail Fradkov to Egypt by the end of this year. — MNA/Xinhua

France, Romania to set up int’l committee on adoption proceedings

BUCHAREST, 20 Oct— France and Romania agreed on Monday to set up an international committee to help French couples caught out in the middle of adoption proceedings by a Romanian ban on foreign adoptions.

The two officials on bilateral cooperation.

EU candidate Romania approved a law in June under which children can only be adopted abroad by their grandparents, cementing a moratorium on foreign adoptions imposed in January after fears the babies were at risk of abuse.

The law meant that dozens of French couples, who had started adoption procedures before the moratorium, were caught out.

“I proposed to set up an international committee, under the incontestable authority of a credible organization, which could examine different cases,” French Prime Minister Jean-Pierre Raffarin said during a visit to Romania.

The collapse of communism 15 years ago sent thousands of Russian orphans from crumbling Romanian orphanages, crammed with 100,000 children. Stalinist leader Nicolae Ceausescu had banned contraception and abortion.

The EU, which Romania hopes to join in 2007, warned the Balkan country against easing the ban on adoptions when

Romanian officials said in July they were considering allowing couples to adopt the ban abroad of very ill babies.

Around 130 French couples are estimated to have been caught in the middle of adoption proceedings by the ban, with 35 of these having already met their prospective Romanian children.

“There are still delicate situations and for us it’s important to solve (them) in a humane way,” Romanian Prime Minister Adrian Nastase said.

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Norway accused of overfishing

LUXEMBOURG, 20 Oct — The European Union’s fisheries chief on Monday accused Norway of overfishing and warned non-EU member Oslo about taking a tough stance in annual negotiations over catches which start next month.

Under a yearly deal, EU trawlers fish cod in Norway’s waters while Norwegian fishermen catch capelin and Greenland halibut in EU waters.

“We have gained the right to ask others to act in a way which is conducive to conservation and puts an end to infringements,” outgoing EU Fisheries Commissioner Franz Fischler told a news conference, warning that talks with Oslo would be more difficult than usual this year. — MNA/Reuters

State-run Chinese research institute opens to public

BEIJING, 20 Oct — The Chinese Academy of Sciences (CAS) Institute of Automation put its latest, high technologies on display here on Monday.

The latest technologies include entertaining robots, an intelligent wheelchair, intelligenthousing systems, public information platform for 2008 Beijing Olympics and others.

The show attracted more than 1,000 students from Qinghua University, Beijing University of Science and Engineering, Beijing University of Aeronautics and Astronautics, and primary and middle schools.

In addition to the high technology show, the CAS institute organized ten lectures to promote public scientific awareness.

As tradition, Tan’s institute organized such kind of exhibition and promotion four to five times a year. — MNA/Xinhua

Cyprus, Egypt ready to expand bilateral cooperation

CAIRO, 20 Oct— Visiting Cypriot Foreign Minister George Iacovou Tuesday said his country would take advantage of its membership in the European Union (EU) to expand cooperation with Egypt, official MENA news agency reported.

The Cypriot official was quoted by the agency as saying that his talks with Egyptian Prime Minister Ahmed Nazef centred on how to widen bilateral cooperation through Cyprus’ status as an EU country.

The two sides also discussed ways of enhancing cooperation between the two countries in the fields of tourism, oil, natural gas and investments, he added.

Nazef, for his part, praised Cyprus’ strategy of development that depended on tourism investments and service industries such as banking, maritime transport and insurance.

He underlined the importance of bilateral cooperation in tourism development in Egypt, which is rich in ancient cultural sites and beautiful sea resorts.

Tourism industry has long been one of the pillars of Egypt’s economy and the Cypriot foreign minister by Nazef, who took office in July, is easier to attract more foreign investment as part of efforts to reactivate a stagnant economy.

The Cypriot Foreign Minister arrived in Cairo on Tuesday for a two-day visit, during which he will hold talks with Egyptian officials on bilateral cooperation in addition to other regional and international issues of common concern. — MNA/Xinhua

Int’l Conf on Power Supply Industry opens in Shanghai


Chinese Vice-Premier Huang Ju sent a letter of congratulations to the conference on behalf of the Chinese Government, hoping the conference would help promote the development of the power industry in the Asia-Pacific Region.

The Chinese Government attaches great importance to the development of the power industry and will map out policies on the industry’s development and a medium- and long-term development plan in a scientific manner, Huang said.

The five-day conference brings together more than 2,000 people from 37 countries and regions, including administrators, technical experts, equipment manufacturers and researchers.

Established in 1975, the AESIEAP is a regional non-governmental organization registered in Hong Kong, with an overall aim to promote development of the electric power supply industry in the region and international and regional cooperation.

China joined the organization in 1996 and it is the first time China plays host to the biennial conference. — MNA/Xinhua

Norwegian fishermen catch capelin and fish cod in Norway’s waters while Nort-
Indonesia export expo records $107.7m trade

Jakarta, 19 Oct—The 19th Indonesian annual export exhibition, which officially closed late on Sunday, recorded a total sales transaction of 107.7 million US dollars, a 12.7 per cent increase from the previous year, a senior official has said.

Diah Maulida, head of the National Agency for Export Development (NAFED) which organized the expo, attributed the boost in sales to the increasing number of participating companies.

The five-day expo at the Jakarta Fairground complex in Kemayoran, Central Jakarta, was participated in by 1,254 companies and drew at least 3,000 buyers from 65 countries and regions.

“The sales increase exceeded our initial 10 per cent target," Diah quoted Tuesday by The Jakarta Post newspaper as saying.

Trade fair marks new high

NEW YORK, 19 Oct—Crude oil prices fell sharply Monday as traders opted to take profits after futures reached a new high above 55 dollars a barrel.

On the New York Mercantile Exchange, crude oil futures for Novem-
ber delivery fell 1.26 dollars to end at 53.67 dollars a barrel. Prices reached 55.33 dollars in electronic-trading before the session.

Meanwhile, on Lon-
don’s International Petro-
leum Exchange, the No-
 vember Brent crude-oil futures contract declined 1.02 dollars to settle at 48.91 dollars a barrel. MNA/Xinhua

Belarus arrests US citizen for allegedly mishandling funds

UNITED NATIONS, 19 Oct — An American citizen specializing in the Internet was arrested by the Belarus KGB for allegedly mishandling funds, Belarus authorities reported on Monday.

The man, Ilya Mafter, a long-term employee of the Open Society Institute (OSI), founded by Ira-no- nycer George Soros, was also a consultant in Belarus for the UN Development Programme.