With participation of national people, government beavering away at successful implementation of set objectives, aims Road Map being implemented to speed up transition process to peaceful, modern, developed, discipline-flourishing democracy

Prime Minister Lt-Gen Soe Win in his speech said that standing as a united national force and upholding Our Three Main National Causes, the Association is actively participating in implementing political, economic and social objectives under the correct leadership of the Government. Besides, the Association has given priority to the public interest in carrying out the management, organizational, economic and training tasks. It is rewarding that the number of USDA members is remarkably on the increase with people from all strata of life, as a result of instilling the Association’s noble policy, aims and tasks into mass of youths and people. Since its birth, the Association has been able to realize the projects with added momentum for strengthening the unity of the USDAs at all levels, while making efforts for restoration of community peace and tranquility, prevalence of law and order and national progress.

Members are being trained and nurtured through a wide variety of courses and workshops for mental as well as physical development and efficiency not only in quantity but in quality.

With respect to central level courses, the course on Myanmar and international studies has been conducted six times, management course for executives 24 times, management course (advanced) for executives 10 times, special refresher course seven times, instructors course on study of Myanmar’s development four times, workshop on public relations and information management course two times, computer-aided accountancy diploma course and computer (basic level and office) courses. A total of 14,663 members have completed these courses, reflecting the Association’s endeavours for development of human resources.

Regarding State division, district and township level courses, 473 members have completed management courses for executives, 70,739 members course on study of Myanmar’s development, 492,564 members basic organizing course, 16,270,003 members national culture and moral conduct course, 14,656 members vocational training courses, 1,137,629 members proficiency courses, 70,739 members course on study of Myanmar’s development, 31,591 members art courses, 652,880 members other courses. So, the Association has enhanced qualifications of 18,903,103 members morally and physically. The Association is training and nurturing its members to become qualified ones imbued with good moral conduct and good leadership so as to produce more and more human resources and to shape brighter future of the nation.

At such a time when the State is gaining development momentum under the correct leadership of the Government, all members are to grasp unique opportunities to play an active role in implementing the Association’s objectives in the interests of the nation and the people.

Prime Minister Lt-Gen Soe Win delivers an address to preliminary meeting for USDA Annual General Meeting (2004).

Dignitaries at the preliminary meeting for USDA Annual General Meeting (2004). — MNA
Further strengthen national solidarity, safeguard peace and tranquillity

The fourth-day session of the Union Solidarity and Development Association Annual General Meeting 2004 was held at the Pyidaungsu Hall of the Central Training School of the USDA in Hmaubw Township, Yangon Division, on the morning of 17 November, and it was attended by Patron of the Union Solidarity and Development Association Chairman of the State Peace and Development Council Commander-in-Chief of Defence Services Senior General Than Shwe.

In his address on the occasion, Senior General Than Shwe said that the government has adopted “Our Three Main National Causes” as its national policy and always adhered to them in the interests of the nation and the people and that it firmly believes the national solidarity is the sine qua non for peace, prosperity and development of the nation as well as for its democratization and modernization endeavours. He also reiterated that the government will further strengthen the national solidarity for the sake of the nation and the people. A study of the past history of Myanmar will show that we Myanmar people had to live in miserable conditions under the colonial rule. And even after the nation regained her independence, due to the ill effects of the divide-and-rule policy of the colonialists, national solidarity weakened, resulting in the lack of peace, tranquillity and development.

The political objectives being practised today cover the past, the present and the future and the economic and social objectives have also been laid down in such a way that they can meet the absolute needs of the nation and the people. As the government has succeeded to some extent in realizing them hand in hand with the people, it is found that there have been tangible results in various sectors. The government firmly believes that national solidarity is the key to national development. Accordingly, it built national solidarity and mutual trust among the national people. As a result, border areas are now enjoying peace and tranquillity and security. The Central Committee for Development of Border Areas and National Races, formed with Senior General Than Shwe himself as its head, implemented development tasks and therefore tangible results have been achieved in transport, communications, agriculture, livestock breeding, education and health sectors.

We would like to call on the entire national people to further strengthen the national solidarity and safeguard peace and tranquillity, especially at a time like this when development tasks are gaining momentum.

Multisectoral Workshop on National Tobacco Control Legislation held

YANGON, 18 Nov — Multisectoral Workshop on National Tobacco Control Legislation was opened this morning at Grand Plaza Park Royal Hotel. Minister for Health Dr Kyaw Myint and Resident Representative of WHO Dr Agostino Borra delivered addresses at the opening ceremony of the workshop.

Deputy Minister for Health Dr Mya Oo presided over the meeting. Those present discussed matters regarding to the tobacco control legislation group-wise. The directors-general of the departments under the Ministry of Health, rectors, resident representatives of the organizations under UN, officials from NGOs and officials concerned also attended the workshop.

Ministry of Information holds Kathina robes offering ceremony

YANGON, 18 Nov — The 12th communal Kathina robes offering ceremony of the Ministry of Information was held at Dagon Pariyatti Monastery on Myoma Kyaung Street in Dagon Township at 8.30 am to 11.30 am. The visiting Sayadaws, monks and other dignitaries were also present.

On the occasion, the congregation received the Five Precepts from Vice-Chairman of State Sangha Maha Nayaka Committee Aung Myebonsan Sayadaw. Afterwards, Minister Brig-Gen Kyaw Hsan offered Kathina robes and provisions to Aung Myebonsan Sayadaw and departmental heads and guests to members of the Sangha.

Work coordination meeting of World Buddhist Summit held

YANGON, 18 Nov — A work coordination meeting for organizing successfully the World Buddhist Summit was held at the Ministry of Religious Affairs this morning.

Present on the occasion were Minister for Religious Affairs Brig-Gen Thura Myint Maung, Deputy Minister Brig-Gen Thura Aung Ko, the deputy ministers of the ministries, sub-committee members, departmental heads, the chairman of district/township peace and development councils and the secretaries and guests.

Chairman of work Committee for holding World Buddhist Summit Minister Brig-Gen Thura Myint Maung made an opening speech on the occasion.

Afterwards, officials reported to the minister on the arrangements made for the summit and those present took part in the discussions.

People’s Desire

- Oppose those relying on external elements, acting as stooges, holding negative views
- Oppose those trying to jeopardize stability of the State and progress of the nation
- Oppose foreign nations interfering in internal affairs of the State
- Crush all internal and external destructive elements as the common enemy

All this needs to be known

* Do not be frightened whenever intimidated
* Do not be bolstered whenever flattered
* Do not be softened whenever appealed
Chirac says US-led war on Iraq made world more dangerous

LONDON, 18 Nov— Last year’s US-led invasion of Iraq and ousting of President Saddam Hussein has, if anything, made the world more dangerous, French President Jacques Chirac said on the eve of a state visit to key US ally Britain.

The French leader’s interview with the British Broadcasting Corporation, excerpts of which were aired on Wednesday, indicate little chance of success for British Prime Minister Tony Blair’s efforts to mend Franco-American ties damaged by the Iraq war. “I’m not at all sure that one can say the world is safer,” Chirac said. “There is no doubt there has been an increase in terrorism.”

President Saddam Hussein has, if anything, made the world more dangerous, “I’m not at all sure there is no doubt there has been an increase in terrorism.”

Vice-Premier says China to observe WTO commitment

BEIJING, 17 Nov — China is a responsible country and will observe its commitments to the World Trade Organization, said Chinese Vice-Premier Wu Yi here on Monday.

Wu told Finnish Trade and Development Minister Paula Lehtomaki that China attaches importance to the protection of intellectual property rights, which helps create a better environment for foreign investors and is conducive to domestic economic development.

Wu said China and Finland have maintained good relations and high-level exchanges have been frequent. She noted that China and Finland are complementary in economy and relevant cooperation has developed rapidly. She voiced her hope that enterprises from the two countries expand cooperation in forestry, paper making and infrastructure.

Beijing calls upon star hotels to save energy

BEIJING, 17 Nov — Beijing has called upon its star-rated hotels again to take power-saving measures as part of the city’s efforts to host a green Olympics in 2008.

The Beijing Organizing Committee for the 2008 Olympic Games (BOCOG) on Monday issued a batch of power-saving handouts to the 70 hotels in the Chinese capital that have been designated as accommodation suppliers during the 2008 Games, urging them to raise air-conditioned room temperature by one degree during the summer months while lowering by one degree in winter.

Study shows that if the temperature of air-conditioned room were set one degree higher in summer, the electricity consumption would be reduced by 10 per cent. As a result, Beijing would be able to save 250 million to 320 million kilowatt hours of electricity.

Thai Army launches vocational training for southern youths

BANGKOK, 18 Nov — The Royal Thai Army has launched vocational training programmes for both youths from Thailand’s southern border provinces of Yala, Narathiwat and Pattani.

The training programmes were aimed to create more jobs for residents in the country’s deep South, the report quoted General Chaisit Shinawatra, supreme commander of the Royal Thai Armed Forces as saying, adding the move would support the government’s policy on poverty eradication in the region through income-generating.

The first batch of 24 youths from the deep South is being trained at the Army engineering school. When they finish the course, they will go back and work in their hometowns,” he said.

Fallujah diehards resisting as clashes spread

FALUJAH, 17 Nov — Resistance fighters in Fallujah are continuing to hold out in the face of massive firepower US forces are unleashing to try and seize overall control of the city.

“Fierce resistance is still raging with rocket-propelled grenades and machine guns against the US forces stationed on the outskirts of Fallujah,” according to Fadil al-Badrani, an Iraqi journalist in the city.

Badrani said American warplanes and tanks had resorted to bombing the holdout sectors of the city and some areas were still not under their control.

“The soldiers are still committing at the southern and eastern edges of the town. US forces have so far failed to storm the northern al-Jolan neighbourhood,” he said.

In fact they have abandoned al-Jolan and all the northern parts and resorted to to attack these neighbourhoods with tanks and aerial bombing in an attempt to weaken the resistance there.” News agencies reported heavy machine gunfire and explosions were heard on Wednesday morning coming from the south-central parts of the town as US Marines continued to hunt remaining fighters.

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British soldiers of Delta Company from the Black Watch Regiment take up positions during an operation on the banks of the Euphrates River, 25 miles south of Baghdad, on 17 Nov, 2004. —INTERNET

Two Marines killed in Iraq

FALUJAH, 17 Nov — Two Marines from Indiana were killed during combat this week in Iraq, their families said.

Lance Cpl Lance Thompson, 21, of Marion, died Monday during fighting at Ramadi, said his father, Gregory Thompson. He said he was notified of his son’s death by two Marines who visited his home Monday night.

“They told us he was killed in an explosion, and we were told a report would be filed later,” he said. Lance Cpl James Swain, 20, of Kokomo, was killed Monday during the fighting in Fallujah, his grandfather said today.

Ed Swain said his son and daughter-in-law were notified of the younger Swain’s death Monday by the Marine Corps. Swain was a 2002 graduate of Kokomo High School and enlisted in the Marine Corps in August 2002 and was based at Camp Pendleton, Calif.

The military said that at least 37 Marines and soldiers had been killed during the recent Fallujah offensive.

The deaths of Thompson and Swain increase to 33 the number of people from Indiana to have died after being sent to the Mideast since the buildup for the invasion of Iraq began in early 2003.

Thompson had been on his second, seven-month tour of duty in Iraq since September, his father said.

“Last year, during the run up to Baghdad, he was stationed at Hillah at the mass grave. He told me about seeing a young mother clutching a small child. He thought they had been buried alive. He saw that and thought he was doing the right thing,” Gregory Thompson said.

Thompson was a 2001 graduate of Eastbrook High School near Marion, about 60 miles northeast of Indianapolis.—Internet

US Marines search destroyed buildings while conducting a security operation during engagements with gunmen in the war-torn western city of Fallujah on 17 Nov, 2004.—INTERNET

Sri Lankan HIV/“AIDS” cases on increase

COLOMBO, 17 Nov — An increasing number of Sri Lankan youngsters are now threatened by Sexually Transmitted Infections (STI) including HIV and AIDS mainly due to unprotected sexual activity, the local newspaper The Island quoted a Sri Lankan health official as saying on Tuesday. The official in charge of national STI/AIDS programme said at a seminar on “Current trends of STI and HIV/AIDS” organized by the Health Education Bureau in Colombo recently that the reported numbers of HIV and AIDS case were 591 and 174 respectively up to the end of September 2004.— MNA/Xinhua

Study shows that if the temperature of air-conditioned room were set one degree higher in summer, the electricity consumption would be reduced by 10 per cent. As a result, Beijing would be able to save 250 million to 320 million kilowatt hours of electricity.

Sri Lankan youngsters are now threatened by Sexually Transmitted Infections (STI) including HIV and AIDS mainly due to unprotected sexual activity.
Policeman says extremists abduct 63 fellow officers in west Iraq

KARBALA, 17 Nov— Extremists abducted 63 police officers in western Iraq overnight, a policeman who escaped said in Karbala on Wednesday.

The group of 65 police officers had organized their own journey back from a training course in Jordan, Leith Saad Naama told DPA.

They were staying in two hotels in the town of Rutba on the road from the Jordanian border, when the abduction occurred, he said.

Naama said that only he and another officer had escaped.

Some of the extremists spoke with a Syrian accent, he said after returning to his home city of Karbala Wednesday morning.

Naama had no information regarding the fate of the 63 abducted officers.

He said other officers who had completed their training were waiting in Jordan for the Iraqi interim government to arrange their transport back to Iraq, as they did not want to travel without escort.

British soldier injured by Iraq bomb

BAGHDAD, 17 Nov— A Black Watch soldier was seriously injured today after being hit by a roadside bomb in Iraq.

He was in a Warrior armoured fighting vehicle about 10 km from the British base at Camp Dogwood, 25 miles south west of Baghdad.

It was a separate incident to the one in which members of the Queen’s Dragoon Guards were targeted by a suicide bomber today.

Remittances from OFWs rise 8.7%

MANILA, 17 Nov— Remittances from overseas Filipino workers (OFWs) rose 8.7 per cent to 6.2 billion US dollars in the first nine months of the year due to more deployment, the Central Bank said on Tuesday.

The Central Bank Governor Rafael B. Buenvianda said the country was deploying more workers than originally expected and their remittances were offsetting spiralling oil prices.

“ Without OFW remittances, we won’t have the cushion we have now in our reserves,” he said.

In the first three quarters, Buenvianda said that OFW remittances accounted for over 16 per cent of the country’s current account receipts and over 11 per cent of gross domestic product.

Afghan Govt tries to secure UN hostages safe release

KABUL, 17 Nov — Despite unproductive talks and failure to meet the kidnappers’ demand for the last over two weeks, Afghan Government is still hopeful to secure the safe release of three UN employees taken hostages in Kabul by a little known militia group, Presidential spokesman said on Tuesday.

“All our efforts are going on to secure the safe release of the hostages and we are hopeful to have a positive outcome very soon,” Jawed Luden told journalists here.

The trio, including two European ladies and a male Filipino diplomat, were abducted in daylight by supporters of former Taliban regime on October 28 in Kabul downtown.

Belonging to a radiating network of State Richard e-Muslimeen or Army of Muslims, the abductors have linked the release of the hostages to the release of 26 Taliban leaders from the US prisons in Afghanistan and Guantanamo Bay.

Afghan Government, according to unofficial reports has agreed to offer 1.5 million US dollar ransom to secure the safety return of the abductees while the US deputy Secretary of State Richard Armitage rejected any negotiations with the abductors during a visit last week here.

Blaming Armitage for the failure of the talks, the kidnappers on Sunday again extended the deadline to Tuesday evening which will decide the fate of the three international workers.

They warned that they will execute the captives if the government failed to deliver any significant deal.

“This is the responsibility of Afghan Government as well as Afghan people to spare no efforts in securing the safe release of their three guests, and we do what we can in this direction,” Luden noted while avoiding to disclose details.

“Unfortunately I cannot give specific details in this case,” he added.

British soldier injured by Iraq bomb

Three more Turkish drivers killed in Iraq

ANKARA, 17 Nov — Two more Turkish drivers were killed in Iraq, semi-official Anatolia News Agency reported on Wednesday.

The report said unidentified Iraqi gunmen shot dead the drivers, and then set their bodies ablaze near the Iraqi city of Balad.

The identities of the two drivers could not be confirmed yet, according to the report.

Seven Turkish drivers have been killed so far this week in the violence-plagued Iraq, the report added.

Turkish truckers working in Iraq have been frequent targets of kidnappings and killings by guerrillas, prompting the Turkish government to seek enhanced security measures for its nationals.

More than 60 Turkish citizens have been killed in Iraq since the US-led war in March last year.

Two more Turkish drivers killed in Iraq

British soldier injured by Iraq bomb

British soldier injured by Iraq bomb

European ladies and a journalist here.

Without OFW remittances, we won’t have the cushion we have now in our reserves,” he said.

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US forces detain deputy head of Iraq's parliament

BAGHDAD, 17 Nov — US forces detained a senior official of the Iraqi Islamic Party in a dawn raid on his house on Tuesday, colleagues said, a week after the leading Sunni Muslim party pulled out of the government.

“The Americans took Naseer Ayef from his house at dawn,” an Islamic Party official told Reuters.

“They shot one of his guards in the stomach and searched his house. We don’t know why he was detained.” The US military had no immediate comment. Ayef is deputy head of Iraq’s provisional National Assembly and a member of the Iraqi Islamic Party pol-litburo, the official said.

The party pulled out of Iraq’s US-backed interim government a week ago in protest at the onslaught by US forces on the outskirts of Fallujah, the official said.

The US military didn’t know why he was detained. “The US military detained.” The US military had no immediate comment. Ayef is deputy head of Iraq’s provisional National Assembly and a member of the Iraqi Islamic Party politburo, the official said.

The party pulled out of Iraq’s US-backed interim government a week ago in protest at the onslaught by US forces on the outskirts of Fallujah, the official said.

IAEA says found no proof of secret Iranian nuclear programme

VIENNA, 17 Nov — The UN nuclear watchdog said Monday it had found no proof of a secret Iranian nuclear weapons programme.

“All the declared nuclear material in Iran has been accounted for, and therefore such material is not diverted to prohibited activities (such as weapons). The agency is, however, not yet in a position to conclude that there are no undeclared nuclear materials or activities in Iran,” the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) said in a report.

“The agency’s legal authority to pursue the verification of possible nuclear weapons-related activity is limited,” it said.

The report said the IAEA is still investigating Iran’s efforts to acquire equipment that could have been used in uranium enrichment.

Iran allowed IAEA inspectors to visit the Lavizan military site in Tehran, it said. However, it said the IAEA had requested to visit the military complex of Parchin, 30 kilometres south-east of Tehran, “in order to provide assurance regarding the absence of undeclared nuclear material and activities at that site” but was still waiting for permission to go there.

Iran has denied carrying out any nuclear-related work at Parchin, but the United States suspected the site was used for developing nuclear weapons.

Iran’s pledge to suspend uranium enrichment activities was also men tioned in the report to the IAEA’s 35-nation board of governors that will meet in Vienna on November 25 to decide whether to send Iran to the UN Security Council for possible sanc tions.

The report, quoting an official letter sent by Iran to the IAEA on Sunday in which Tehran agreed to suspend uranium enrichment activities, confirmed that Iran had invited it to verify the suspension as of 22 November.

This leaves IAEA inspectors only three days before the board meeting to verify Iran’s suspension.

The IAEA report was issued after Iran agreed in a deal with Britain, France and Germany to suspend uranium enrichment activities.

Investigation of alleged abuses in Fallujah demanded

GENEVA, 17 Nov — Top United Nations human rights official Louise Arbour called on Tuesday for investigation of alleged abuses in Fallujah, Iraq, including disproportionate use of force and targeting of civilians.

Those responsible for any violations — US and multinational forces, Iraqi Government troops or guerillas — should be brought to justice, the former UN war crimes prosecutor said in a statement.

“There have been a number of reports during the current confrontation alleging violations of the rules of war designed to protect civilians and combatants,” Arbour said.

She gave no specific examples. But on Monday, Amnesty International accused both sides of breaking rules designed to protect civilians and wounded combatants during conflict.

Attacking US and Iraqi troops had failed to take necessary steps to ensure non-combatants did not come under fire. Guerillas had used false flags of truce and fired indiscriminately, the London-based group said.

All violations of international humanitarian and human rights law must be investigated, including “the deliberate targeting of civilians, indiscriminate and disproportionate attacks, the killing of injured persons and the use of human shields”, Arbour said.

Arbour, the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights, said she was especially worried about civilians still in Fallujah, who might lack access to aid, and about the paucity of information on civilian casualties.

Iraq’s government says civilian casualties during the US-led assault on the rebel bastion have been minimal and that reports of a humanitarian crisis in the city are exaggerated.

But a spokeswoman for the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) insisted in Geneva on Tuesday there were civilians still in the city, in need of food, water and medicine.

“The ICRC is very worried about the humanitarian situation in Fallujah, because we are receiving information from families that are still there that the injured have no access to medical care,” Rana Sidani told Reuters.

The ICRC did not know how many people were left in the shattered city of 300,000, but the Iraqi Red Crescent put the figure at around 150 families, she added.

Investigation of alleged abuses in Fallujah demanded

Investigation of alleged abuses in Fallujah demanded

PBOC says national economy develops towards anticipated direction

BEIJING, 18 Nov — The People’s Bank of China (PBOC), the nation’s central bank, predicts that in the fourth quarter of 2004 the national’s economy will continue to develop “towards the anticipated direction” under the state’s macro-economic control policies.

The central bank’s third quarter report on monetary policies published on Tuesday, says that the speed of economic growth will continue to moderate, the growth rate of consumer price index will be stable and the national economy will maintain “steady growth”.

According to the report, residents are optimistic about the prospects of the economy and expect higher incomes, which will support the increase of consumer spending.

Various localities are still keen to expand their investment, and there is the possibility of a rebound in fixed asset investment.

Families of abducted UN staffers plead for their release

UNITED NATIONS, 17 Nov — The families and friends of the three UN staff members abducted in Afghanistan on Tuesday issued a statement, expressing hopes that their loved ones could be released as soon as possible.

In the emotional appeal, families and friends of Amnestia Flanagan, Angelito Nayan and Shiqip Hehbiti, express hope that the people holding them would “place them somewhere safe where they can be found and restored to us.”

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regions for progress of urban regions, and border and rural areas for equitable development of all parts of the nation.

The Association is to play an active role as measures for national progress are for the sake of the people.

Myanmar still has to depend on agriculture for economic progress, so all possible ways and means are being sought for supply of water essential for improvement of agricultural sector. So far, all over the nation there have emerged 271 water pumping stations, 167 dams and reservoirs, and 36 irrigation facilities under construction. According to the present economic plan, efforts are being exerted for remarkable progress of the industrial sector. The Government has established 18 industrial zones in the length and breadth of the nation for promotion of the State-owned and private-owned industries. It can be witnessed that the industrial zones have achieved success in manufacturing items through competition with each other. The transport sector is the key to raising the economy of the people. So, the Government is extending air, water, road and rail transport services. Up to 2004, it has constructed 35,212 miles of roads, 1,128 miles of railroads, 12 airports, and 188 bridges each of which is 180 feet and above long. In the future, there will emerge Highways linking Myanmar with her neighbours.

Natural resources and oil and natural gas reserves are being exploited for industrial development. So far, 767 more megawatts have been generated across the nation.

Efforts are being made to raise the health and education standards to produce healthy and qualified human resources needed for modernization and constant development of the nation. In the basic education sector, plans are being implemented so that each and every citizen can fully enjoy the right to basic education. As a result of Education for All programme, literacy rate is now more than 93 per cent. About 900,000 students are studying at 156 universities and colleges across the nation. More and more subjects are being taught and doctorate courses conducted.

For public health, 813 new hospitals have been opened in states and divisions including border areas.

Rural people make up more than 70 per cent of the nation’s population. So, the five rural development tasks are being carried out with added momentum for bridging the development gap between rural and urban areas.

In cooperation with departments, committees, work groups, social organizations and local people, the Association is putting the five rural development tasks into motion to the best of its ability. Necessary measures are being taken to electrify rural areas. Rural development and successful organization of rural populace are indeed interrelated and leading rural people.

The objectives of this year’s annual general meeting are:
— to keep in the fore our three main national causes as national policy
— to successfully implement the political, economic and social objectives
— to successfully implement the seven-point future policy programme
— to add momentum to the socio-economic development
— to guard against the internal and external destructive elements with the strength and unity of the people
— to enhance the efficiency and capacity of the members, and
— to launch organizational campaigns on a broader scale.

The objectives of this year’s USDA AGM are:

* To keep in the fore our three main national causes as national policy
* To successfully implement the political, economic and social objectives
* To successfully implement the seven-point future policy programme
* To add momentum to the socio-economic development of the State
* To guard against the internal and external destructive elements with the strength and unity of the people
* To enhance the efficiency and capacity of the members, and
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So far, all over the nation there have emerged 271 water pumping stations, 167 dams and reservoirs, and 36 irrigation facilities under construction.
With participation of…

(from page 6)

the development of human resources. It is therefore necessary for the USDA to play an active part in these measures.

The USDA representatives of respective states and divisions are to present their reports in earnest with respect to the tasks carried out in their regions last year in accord with the future work programmes laid down by the USDA Annual General Meeting 2003. These work programmes are:

— the USDA members, namely, upholding our three main national causes: non-disintegration of the Union, non-disintegration of national solidarity, and perpetuation of sovereignty, are to build a peaceful, modern and developed nation;

— the USDA members are to adopt the 12 political, economic and social objectives laid down for the emergence of a peaceful, modern and developed nation, which is the goal of the State, as the policy of the Association;

— the USDA members are to ensure the active partici-

pation of the entire national people by doing their bit with Union Spirit in the successful realization of the seven-point Road Map of the State in accord with the resolutions of the Bagan Mass Rally held on 21 October 2003;

— as peace and stability of the State, strong economy of the State and the people, and high standard of national education are the basic requirements for the establishment of a discipline-flourishing democracy, the USDA members are to actively participate in the successful realization of the requirements;

— the USDA members are to participate in the implementa-

tion of the third short-term five-year project and the five rural development tasks;

— the USDA members are to fully engage in the organiza-

tional works by enhancing the four capabilities of the Association; and

— the USDA members are to adopt the guidance of the USDA Patron as their work guidelines.

They should also present progress reports on their participation in the tasks for stability and prosperity, development of human resources, rural development, the successful implementation of the seven-point Road Map, and organizational campaigns. In this context, it is necessary for them to note strong points from the reports of the others and put them into practice in their regions.

Broad discussions should be held at group-wise seminars on the topics ranging from organizational campaigns, management, economy, social and cultural affairs, education, and stability to the successful implementa-

tion of the seven-point Road Map and the enhancement of youth efficiency.

In conclusion, the Prime Minister urged the USDA Secretariat member U Thaung chaired the second session of the meeting, which resumed at 9.35 am, together with USDA CEC members U Thein Nyunt and U Thein Aung as members.

On the occasion, USDA Secretary-General U Htay Oo gave an account of the tasks for the annual general meeting. In his explanation, he said the USDA is founded with those willing to turn the country into a peaceful, modern and developed nation, those faithful to the country and the race, those wishing to further vitalize national solidarity, those desirous of the rule of law and order as well as regional peace, and the youths who will discharge national duty. Founded with lofty aims, basic principles, pledges, code of conduct, and responsibilities, the Association turned 11 on 15 Sep-

The preliminary meeting of the group for the sector of the successful implementation of the seven-point policy programme in progress. — MNA

The preliminary meeting of the group for the economic sector in progress. — MNA

USDA representatives concerned to make concerted efforts to lay down future work programmes of the USDA Annual General Meeting 2004 by taking the findings and suggestions as the base at the day’s meet-

ing. Next, Prime Minister Lt-Gen Soe Win cordially greeted members of the delegations to the meeting.

Guidance would be received from Head of State and USDA Patron Senior General Than Shwe in the morning of 17 November, the fourth day of the meet-

ing. The USDA Patron himself has never failed to at-

tend the annual general meetings held in successive years since the birth of the Association. Moreover, he always attends the opening ceremonies of courses con-

ducted by the USDA (Central) and gives guidance on such occasions. The Association always takes his guid-

ance as working guidelines and implements them in all seriousness.

The Association is formed with a majority of the youths who will discharge national politics. It is a national force implementing the 12 political, economic and social objectives by upholding our three main national courses while nurturing the youths to be high-

minded and efficient individuals. It also goes hand in hand with the general public in the drive for the de-

velopment of human resources and the promotion of national education under the auspices of the govern-

ment. In this process, outstanding youths will be awarded as in previous years. Brilliant students at the matriculation examinations, outstanding members of Red Cross and Fire Brigade, winners of at least five
The preliminary meeting of the group for management sector in progress. — MNA

The emcee gave an account of putting organization, administration, economy, social affairs, culture, education, stability and unity into successful implementation of the seven-point policy programme, and forming of seven groups for boosting the skills and qualifications of the new generation youths. Then, the meeting went into recess.

The group-wise meetings took place at designated places starting from 10 am. The preliminary meeting of the organization group was held at Bayinnaung Hall. USDA Secretariat Member U Thaung, CEC Members U Thein Nyunt and U Thein Maung Maung Thein presided over the meeting. Next USDA secretaries, joint-secretaries and executives from various townships and districts of states and divisions discussed management matters.

The preliminary meeting of the group of economic sector was held at Myawady Hall. USDA Secretariat member U Aung Thaung and CEC members U Ohn Myint and U Maung Maung Thein presided over the meeting. Shadow Township USDA member Daw Chaw Su Yee acted as emcee and executive of Yangon South District USDA Daw Moe Ei as co-emcee. Secretary U Aung Thaung gave an account of the meeting. Next USDA secretaries, joint-secretaries and executives from various townships and districts of states and divisions discussed management matters.

The preliminary meeting of the group of social and cultural sector took place at the hall No 8 Innwa Hall. The meeting was presided over by USEA Secretariat member U Tin Htut and USDA CEC members U Maung Pa and U Tin Naing Thein. Taungoo District USDA executive Daw Ni Ni Ma of Bago Division (South) acted as master of ceremonies and Leikha Township USDA Joint-Secretary of Shan State (South) as co-master. USDA Secretariat member U Tin Htut explained matters pertaining to the meeting. Next USDA secretaries, joint-secretaries and executives from various townships and districts of states and divisions discussed social and cultural affairs.

The preliminary meeting of education the emcee gave an account of putting organization, administration, economy, social affairs, culture, education, stability and unity into successful implementation of the seven-point policy programme, and forming of seven groups for boosting the skills and qualifications of the new generation youths. Then, the meeting went into recess.

The group-wise meetings took place at designated places starting from 10 am.

(See page 9)
The preliminary meeting of the group for social and cultural sector in progress. — MNA

The preliminary meeting of the administration group was held at Bayintnaung Hall. USDA Secretariat Member U Aung Thuang, CEC Members U Thein Nyunt and U Thein Aung presided over the meeting. Executive of Gangaw Township USDA in Magway Daw Yee Yee Swe acted as master of ceremonies together with Joint-Secretary of Monghsat District USDA in Shan State (East) Daw Nan Khin Hla Nyunt. The chairman of the meeting briefed those present on the preliminary meeting, and assigned duties to 17 delegates who will present reports on organizational matters to the meeting.

The preliminary meeting of the administration group was held at Anawrahta Hall. USDA CEC Members U Thein Swe and Thura U Aung Ko presided over the meeting. Joint-Secretary of Mon State USDA Daw Yi Yi Myint acted as master of ceremonies and Executive of Myingyan District USDA Daw Khin Swe Win as co-master. USDA CEC member U Thein Swe explained matters related to the preliminary meeting. Next USDA secretaries, joint-secretaries and executives from various townships and districts of states and divisions discussed management matters.

The preliminary meeting of the group for social and cultural sector was held at Myawady Hall. USDA Secretariat Member U Aung Thuang and CEC members U Ohn Myint and U Maung Maung Then presided over the meeting. Shardaw Township USDA member Daw Chaw Su Yee acted as emcee and executive of Yangon South District USDA Daw Moe Moe Ei as co-emcee. Secretariat Member U Aung Thuang gave an account of the meeting. Next USDA secretaries, joint-secretaries and executives from various townships and districts of states and divisions discussed economic matters and Meeting Chairman U Thein Sein gave a concluding remark.

The preliminary meeting of the group of social and cultural sector took place at the hall No 8 Innwa Hostel. The meeting was presided over by USDA Secretariat Member U Tin Htut and USDA CEC members U Maung Pa and U Tin Naing Thein. Taungoo District USDA executive Daw Ni Ni Ma of Bago Division (East) acted as master of ceremonies and Leikha Township USDA Joint-Secretary of Shan State (South) as co-master. USDA Secretariat Member U Tin Htut explained matters pertaining to the meeting. Next USDA secretaries, joint-secretaries and executives from various townships and districts of states and divisions discussed social and cultural affairs.

Next, the preliminary meeting of group of education took place at Tgaung Mess. Secretariat Member of USDA, U Kyaw Hsan presided over it together with USDA CEC member U Thein Sein.

Executive of Hpa-an District USDA of Kayin State Daw Tin Tin Hlaing acted as master of ceremonies together with Executive member of Chin State USDA Daw Hsan Kye Htwe as co-master of ceremonies.

First, the master of ceremony declared the meeting of the group of education open with the permission of the chairman for the attendance of 60 delegates.

Next, Secretariat Member of USDA U Kyaw Hsan gave explanations as to the meeting and 17 delegates who are to report on regarding the education sector were selected to assign duties.

Afterwards, CEC member U Thein Sein gave explanations and the meeting went into recess.

After that, the preliminary meeting of the group for participation of the association in successful implementation of the State’s seven-point roadmap took place at Khattaya Mess.

Secretary-General of USDA U Huy Oo presided over it together with Coordinator U Than Aung, CEC members U Aung Min and U Aung Thein Lin. Executive member of Ingyanyan Township USDA of Kachin State Daw Nan Ywe acted as master of ceremonies together with Joint-Secretary of Namhkham Township USDA of Shan State (North) Daw Nan Han Sein as co-master of ceremonies.

First, the master of ceremonies declared the meeting of the group open with the permission of the chairman for the attendance of 60 delegates.

(See page 10)
Secretary-1 Lt-Gen Thein Sein gives a speech at the opening of the 43rd Defence Services C-in-C’s Trophy Tatmadaw (Army, Navy and Air) Soccer Tournament. — MNA

YANGON, 18 Nov — Chairman of Defence Services Sports and Physical Education Management Board Secretary-1 of the State Peace and Development Council Adjutant-General Lt-Gen Thein Sein this afternoon delivered an address at the opening ceremony of Defence Services Commander-in-Chief’s Shield Tatmadaw (Army, Navy and Air) Soccer Tournament in Bagan Mess.

With participation of military attaches, officials of the Ministry of Sports and Recreation youths took place at Bagan Mess.

Next, Secretary-General of USDA U Htay Oo gave explanations as to the meeting and 17 delegates who were to report on regarding the participation of the association in successful implementation of the State’s seven-point roadmap were selected and it went into recess. Next, the preliminary meeting of the group for the sector of organizational campaigns in progress.

First, the master of ceremony declared the meeting of the group open with the permission of the chairman for the attendance of 60 delegates.

Next, Secretary-1 of the State Peace and Development Council Commander-in-Chief’s Shield Tatmadaw (Army, Navy and Air) Soccer Tournament declared the meeting open.

After delivering the opening address, Lt-Gen Thein Sein formally opened the tournament.

Thein Sein gave an address at the opening ceremony of the 43rd Defence Services C-in-C’s Trophy Tatmadaw (Army, Navy and Air) Soccer Tournament.

The preliminary meeting of the group for the sector of organizational campaigns in progress.

Next, 17 delegates who are to report on promotion of efficiency for new generation youths sector were selected to assign duties.

Delegates to preliminary meeting sign the attendance book. — MNA

USDA CEC members sign the attendance book. — MNA

Chin State USDA Executive Daw Hsan Kye Htwe acts as master of ceremonies with Ayeyawady Division USDA Executive Daw Nwe Nwe Oo. — MNA

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Chin State USDA Executive Daw Hsan Kye Htwe acts as master of ceremonies with Ayeyawady Division USDA Executive Daw Nwe Nwe Oo. — MNA
Indian goodwill delegation visits DSTA, tours Shan State

YANGON, 18 Nov — Visiting Indian goodwill delegation led by Air Chief Marshal S Krishnaswamy, COSC, PVC, AVSM, VM & Bar, ADC, Chief of the Air Staff and wife Mrs Harveen Krishnaswamy, accompanied by Chairman of Mandalay Division Peace and Development Council Commander of Central Command Maj-Gen Ye Myint and wife Daw Myat Ngwe, yesterday morning visited Defence Services Technology Academy in PyinOoLwin.

Before leaving the academy, Air Chief Marshal S Krishnaswamy signed in the Visitors’ Book and exchanged souvenirs with Brig-Gen Win Myint, Rector of DSTA.

They also made an observation tour around National Kandawgyi Garden. Afterwards, Commander Maj-Gen Ye Myint hosted a lunch to the delegation at Club House in the garden.

Afterwards, the Indian delegation flew to Shan State. When they arrived at Heho Airport, Chairman of Shan State Peace and Development Council Commander of Eastern Command Maj-Gen Khin Maung Myint and wife Daw Win Win Nu, and military officers welcomed them.

Next, they proceeded to Taunggyi and visited ShwePhonePwint Pagoda there. In Taunggyi, Commander Maj-Gen Khin Maung Myint hosted a dinner in honour of the Indian delegation at Mount Pleasant Guest House.

The delegation this morning went to Nyaungshwe Township and paid homage to PhaungDawOo Buddha Images in Inlay Lake and made cash donation. They also observed the traditional weaving at Shwethintha Weaving Factory in Inlay. Afterwards, they visited Alodawpauk Pagoda and contributed cash to the fund of the pagoda.

The visiting Indian goodwill delegation poses for a documentary photo together with Commander Maj-Gen Ye Myint and senior military officers. — MNA

Sayadaw Bhaddanta Sobhita passes away

YANGON, 18 Nov — Sayadaw Bhaddanta Sobhita, Chairman of State Sangha Maha Nayaka Committee, passed away peacefully at the age of 95, vasa 76, at 11.35 am yesterday.

Sayadaw Bhaddanta Sobhita (Abhidhaja Maha Saddhammajotika) was born in Thiri Pissaya village, Nyaung U Township, Mandalay Division.

He was novitiated at the age of 10. He studied basic religious knowledge since he was very young, and continued to learn Pariyatti at various monasteries. He became a lecturer Sayadaw when he attained five vasa as a monk.

The Sayadaw had dedicated his whole life to studying Pariyatti and practising Patipatti and disseminating the religious knowledge to disciples.

He had been to Japan, Sri Lanka, Nepal, India, Thailand, the Republic of Korea, Laos, and England as a missionary Sayadaw.

The Religious Affairs Department today announced that the remains of Chairman of the State Sangha Maha Nayaka Committee Presiding Sayadaw of Koesaungtaik Maha Wijutayama Pakokku Kyaungthit Monastery in Myaingyan, Mandalay Division, Bhaddanta Sobhita (Abhidhaja Maha Raththa Guru Abhidhaja Agga Maha Saddhamma Jotika), aged 95, vasa 76, is now kept in temporary building in the precinct of Pitakathonebon Monastery on Pale Yadana Street in Dagon Myothit (South) Township, here. At 1 pm on 27 November (Saturday), the remains will be conveyed to the pyre near the monastery with the use of decorative carriage for final rites for the Sayadaw. — MNA

Kazakhstan Wushu Team arrives

YANGON, 18 Nov — Kazakhstan Wushu Team arrived at Yangon International Airport this evening to take part in the 6th ASEAN Wushu Championships to be held in Myanmar from 20 to 28 November. They were welcomed by officials concerned of the Ministry of Sports.

The team consists of Manager Mr. Raduntsev Aleksandr and two participants. — NLM

Prize winners announced

YANGON, 18 Nov — Organizing Committee for 15th National Motto Literature and Photo Contest for 2004 held the literature contests. Prize winners who won in short story and poem contests were announced today. In short story contest, Margainda (Patheingyi) stood first, Muse Wongkham second and Shwe Nyatha Myat Min third.

In poem contest, Min Thwenwe (Zegone) secured the first, Win Way Naung the second and Maung Maung Thet Min the third.

Prize winners will be awarded at the National Theatre on Myoma Kyang Road, Yangon on 12 December 2004 (Sarsadaw Day).

To attend the rehearsal on 10 December 2004, prize winners are to contact in person to U Ko Ko Htwe, Secretary of Organizing Committee, MRTV on 9 December 2004. — MNA

Laotian Prime Minister and Foreign Affairs Minister Mr Somsavat Lengsavad calls on Minister U Nyan Win. — MNA

Deputy Prime Minister, Minister for Foreign Affairs of LPDR arrives

YANGON, 18 Nov — At the invitation of Minister for Foreign Affairs U Nyan Win, Mr Somsavat Lengsavad, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Lao People’s Democratic Republic, arrives here by air this morning.

Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Lao People’s Democratic Republic and party were welcomed by officials concerned of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Mr. Kobkeo Luangkhot, Charge d’Affaires of the Embassy of the Lao People’s Democratic Republic and Embassy staff.

Minister for Foreign Affairs U Nyan Win called on visiting Lao Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister H.E. Somsavat Leangsavad at the Sedona Hotel at 11:30 am the same day. Present on the occasion together with the Minister for Foreign Affairs were U Thaung Tun, Director-General of the Political Department and officials concerned of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. Together with the Lao Deputy Prime Minister’s Cabinet was present. The two Foreign Ministers exchange views on the matters relating to the forthcoming 10th ASEAN Summit to be held in Vientiane, Laos, on 29-30 November 2004.

Minister for Foreign Affairs U Nyan Win hosted a dinner in honour of His Excellency Mr. Somsavat Lengsavad, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Lao People’s Democratic Republic and party at Sedona Hotel in the evening of 17th November 2004.

The Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Lao People’s Democratic Republic His Excellency Mr. Somsavat Lengsavad and party left here by air in the morning of 18 November 2004.

Visiting Lao Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs and party were seen off at the Yangon International Airport by U Kyaw Thu, Deputy Minister for Foreign Affairs, Thura U Aung Htet, Director General of the Protocol Department, U Thaung Tun, Director-General of the Political Department and officials of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Mr. Kobkeo Luangkhot, Charge d’Affaires of the Embassy of the Lao People’s Democratic Republic and embassy staff. — MNA

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**CLAIMS DAY NOTICE**

**M.V. LONG XUYEN VOY: NO (007)**

Consignees of cargo carried on M.V. LONG XUYEN VOY (NO (007)) are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on 19-11-04 and cargo will be discharged into the premises of Myanmar Port Authority where it will lie at the consignee’s risk and expenses and subject to the byelaws and conditions of the Port of Yangon.

Damage cargo will be surveyed daily from 8 am to 11.20 am and 12 Noon to 4 pm up to Claims Day now declared as the third day after final discharge of cargo from the vessel.

No claims against this vessel will be admitted after the Claims Day.

Shipping Agency Department
Myanmar Port Authority
Agent For: DONGNAMA SHIPPING CO LTD. KOREA
Phone No: 256924/256914

**TRADE MARK CAUTION**

Sanofi-Synthelabo, a company incorporated in France of 174, avenue de France, 75013 Paris, France, is the Owner of the following Trade Mark—

**MIPRAAX**

Reg.No. 1653/2001

in respect of “Pharmaceutical products (Class 5).” Fraudulent imitation or unauthorised use of the said Trade Mark will be dealt with according to law.

Win Mu Tin, M.A.H.G.P., D.B.I.

for Sanofi-Synthelabo P.O. Box 60, Yangon.

Dated: 19 November 2004

**Heavy rains leave one dead, 580 homeless in Venezuela**

CARACAS, 17 Nov—At least one person was killed and 580 others were made homeless in recent torrential rains in Venezuela’s northern states of Nueva Esparta and Vargas, local daily El Universal reported Tuesday.

Civil Protection Director Antonio Rivero was quoted by the newspaper as saying the victim was Venezuelan surfer Jonathan Avila who was battered by strong waves at a beach of the Caraques area, Vargas State. About 880 people became homeless in Nueva Esparta.

The inclusion of victims will likely increase as weather forecasts show new rains with strong winds are coming, Rivero said.—MNA/Xinhua

**South Korean President in Brazil for closer economic ties**

BRASILIA, 17 Nov—South Korean President Roh Moo-hyun arrived here Tuesday to seek closer ties with South America’s biggest economy.

During his three-day visit, Roh will sign with his Brazilian counterpart, President Luiz Inacio Lula da Silva, a document on cooperation in information technology, energy, natural resources, science and technology.

South Korea is Brazil’s third largest trading partner in Asia, after China and Japan. In the first nine months of the year, trade between the two countries totalled 2.3 billion US dollars, said the Brazilian Foreign Ministry.

South Korean Foreign Minister Ban Ki-moon said his country is studying the feasibility of a free trade zone with Brazil, Argentina, Uruguay and Paraguay. Roh is due to travel to Sao Paulo Wednesday to meet Rio Governor Gerardo Alfredin and business representatives.

MNA/Xinhua

**APEC helps Chile deepen relations with Asia-Pacific region**

SANTIAGO, 17 Nov—The Chilean government said Tuesday that the presidency of the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation forum (APEC) has helped Chile to deepen relations with the Asia-Pacific Region.

Ricardo Lagos Junior, president of the High Representatives of APEC, Director of Multilateral Policies of the Chilean Foreign Ministry and son of Chilean President Ricardo Lagos made the comments on Tuesday.

He said that in the past year, presidency of the forum has let Chile increase its presence in the Pacific Rim through bilateral agreements with South Korea, the United States and Mexico, and strengthen ties with China, Singapore, New Zealand, Peru and Japan.

Lagos Junior pointed out that the Chilean government expects its efforts to be recognized as a prelude to the Forum’s successful meeting slated for this weekend.

The meeting will be attended by leaders of the 21 economies that constitute APEC.

MNA/Xinhua

**Putin asks big business to pay taxes**

MOSCOW, 17 Nov—President Vladimir Putin told Russian big business on Tuesday to pay its taxes, but sought to allay fears that the state may launch major new tax probes.

“Business should get used to paying taxes and observing the law, and not seek ways to avoid paying taxes,” Putin said in a speech to the Russian Union of Industrialists and Entrepreneurs, the country’s largest business lobby.

Putin did not refer explicitly to the case of Yukos, which faces ruin after being hit with a total of 18.5 billion US dollars in back-tax claims. But he suggested the Yukos case may be one-off.

“The state will guard the interests of reputable business, and large-scale violations, including tax probes, should not be regarded as a signal that every newly founded company poses a threat to the state’s interests,” Putin said.

The Kremlin’s onslaught against Yukos, Russia’s largest oil exporting company, has been widely seen as a drive to neutralize the private sector’s politically ambitious former chief executive, Mikhail Khodorkovsky.

Offering reassurance to other Russian “oligarchs” who acquired vast industrial assets at knockdown prices, Putin pledged the government would respect property rights. But he would not roll back past privatizations.

“Overall, the state should guarantee the inviolability of the existing system of privatization and the comprehensive defense of property rights as one of the foundations of a market economy,” he said.—MNA/Reuters

**China to promote healthy shrimp farming modes**

BEIJING, 17 Nov—China will actively promote the healthy, safe and environmentally-friendly shrimp farming methods to ensure the sustainable development of the sector, said a high-ranking official from the Ministry of Agriculture here on Monday.

During his three-day visit, Roh will sign with his Brazilian counterpart, President Luiz Inacio Lula da Silva, a document on cooperation in information technology, energy, natural resources, science and technology.

The harbour resumed operation Tuesday morning. —MNA/Xinhua

**Hainan unveils 161 projects for investment**

HONG KONG, 17 Nov—Hainan unveiled 161 projects in nine fields with a total investment of about 12.5 billion US dollars for foreign investment at the Hainan (Hong Kong) Trade and Investment Fair held here on Monday.

Ranging from high-tech industry, agriculture, tourism, logistic, real estate to infrastructure and culture, these projects aim to share Hainan’s investment opportunities with foreign companies, especially Hong Kong companies.

“We have carefully prepared these investment projects, which have been chosen in accordance with Hainan’s social and economic situation as well as Hong Kong’s practical conditions,” said Wei Liucheng, governor of Hainan Province.

He said that Hainan-Hong Kong cooperation has achieved remarkable success over the past 16 years and Hong Kong has become the largest investment source and the most important trading partner of Hainan.

Hainan has taken up over 80 percent of the total foreign investments introduced into the province, and the Hainan-Hong Kong trade volume has taken up over 80 percent of Hainan’s total volume of foreign trade.

MNA/Xinhua

**Chilean tanker sinking off Brazilian port**

RIO DE JANEIRO, 17 Nov—Chilean tanker Vicipi was about to sink Tuesday after one of its two tanks exploded Monday night off the coast of Paranagua Bay in Brazil.

Authorities said that the vessel accidentally crashed into the dock while loading a cargo of ethylene and, sparks triggered by crashing ignited the highly flammable fuel.

The fire caused explosion of one tank, and subsequently the ship was ruptured into two parts, one of which sank later.

Four crew members were rescued, while loading a cargo of sugar.

MNA/Xinhua

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MNA/Xinhua
### China raises fund to save miners from black lung disease

**SHIJIAZHUANG, 17 Nov —** China is raising funds to finance the treatment of black lung, a disease that claims at least 5,000 lives a year.

The country’s black lung therapy foundation has launched a public welfare project for coal miners nationwide. The miners, who are most vulnerable to the disease, will be able to receive timely treatment and prolong their lives, according to sources with the foundation at its first council after it was established in October, 2003.

Black lung, or pneumoconiosis, is caused by coal dust inhaled in underground mines and is the severest occupational disease among miners. Its patients suffer from acute pains in the chest, a bad cough and often come down with colds. The worst cases normally die of respiratory failure.

Experts say lavage treatment has proven safe and effective in removing dust from the patients’ lungs and restoring lung function. However, at least 200,000 black lung disease sufferers in China cannot afford such treatment, according to statistics provided by the foundation.

The foundation has started to raise funds at home and abroad, hoping to offer treatment for free to patients from poverty-stricken areas at a sanitarium for mine workers in Beidaihe, a seaside summer resort in the northern Hebei Province.

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### Unmanned jet breaks world record for speed

**LOS ANGELES, 17 Nov —** An unmanned experimental jet broke a world record for speed on Tuesday, cruising over the Pacific Ocean at just under 7,000 miles per hour in a NASA test of cutting-edge “ scramjet” engine technology.

The X-43A aircraft flew at a speed of around Mach 9.6 — nearly ten times the speed of sound — after a booster rocket took it to around 110,000 feet and then separated.

A modified B-52 aircraft had carried the experimental plane and booster aloft.

It was the last of three test launches for the X-43A series and its supersonic-combustion ramjet or “ scramjet” engine. The scramjet scoops up oxygen from the air rather than carrying liquid oxygen in a tank like an ordinary rocket.

Scramjet technology, NASA has said, could open the way to cheaper, safer and faster flights into the upper atmosphere, with smaller and lighter craft.

“ It thinks it’s easier than people think it is. We can really do this stuff. I don’t mean to make it sound too easy, but it’s definitely doable,” said Randy Voland, a senior research engineer on the project, at a news conference after the test.

The eight-year, $230-million-US-dollar programme got off to a rough start in June 2001 when the first X-43A and its booster rocket had to be destroyed in mid-air. The second attempt, in March of this year, successfully reached a speed of Mach 7.

That Mach 7 flight set the previous world record for a jet-powered vehicle, NASA said.

The silvery-black scramjet, just 12 feet long by five feet wide, took off from Edwards Air Force Base in the desert north of Los Angeles perched below NASA’s B-52 in the early afternoon Tuesday.

After reaching launch altitude over the Pacific, the modified booster dropped the scramjet and its booster rocket for a run at the speed record.

**MNA/Reuters**

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### ESA says “SMART-1” entered lunar orbit

**PARIS, 17 Nov —** The first European spacecraft sent to the moon has entered lunar orbit, the European Space Agency (ESA) said on Tuesday.

The SMART-1 spacecraft reached its closest point from the moon so far, coming within 5,000 kilometres of the lunar surface on Monday, the ESA said. Scientists were now seeking to stabilize the spacecraft in orbit around the moon. “ By about mid-January, SMART-1 will be orbiting the moon at attitudes between 300 kilometres (over the lunar south pole) and 3,000 kilometres (over the lunar north pole), beginning its scientific observations,” the ESA said in a statement.

The small spacecraft will make the first comprehensive inventory of key chemical elements in the lunar surface and investigate the theory that the moon was formed following the collision of a smaller planet with Earth, 4.5 billion years ago.

**MNA/Xinhua**

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### Global warming threatens Himalayan region

**LONDON, 17 Nov —** Mount Everest should be put on a United Nations danger list as global warming threatens the Himalayan region, environmentalists said on Wednesday.

Britain-based campaigners said melting glaciers had swollen Himalayan lakes and could create floods that would risk lives and destroy a unique environment.

The group will deliver a petition to the UN’s World Heritage Committee in Paris on Thursday.

Together with Everest experts such as Reinhold Messner, asking for the world’s highest mountain to get monitoring and assessment of the risk.

“ Everest is a powerful symbol of the natural world, not just in Nepal — if this mountain is threatened by climate change, then we know the situation is deadly serious,” said Prakash Sharma, director of Friends of the Earth Nepal.

“ In 1953 snow and ice reached all the way to base camp, but now it ends five miles above,” said Pemba Dorje Sherpa, who climbed the mountain in the fastest time of just over eight hours in May. — MNA/Reuters

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### Survey says Sweden leads world in social sustainability

**STOCKHOLM, 17 Nov —** Sweden is the world’s best performer in environmental and social sustainability, a Swedish official web site reported on Tuesday quoting a new report.

A survey of 30 leading members of the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) by the Swiss bank Zurich Kantolbank gave Sweden 9.5 points out of a maximum of 10.

Denmark came second, with 9.4 points, followed by Switzerland on 8.8 points. At the bottom of the list was the United States on 2.2 points, well behind Turkey and Mexico in 28th and 29th places respectively. The rankings were based on an index that considers countries’ performance across a range of indicators, including emissions, biological diversity, energy consumption and participation in international treaties.

**MNA/Xinhua**

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### Interview with Tom Hanks for “Da Vinci Code” movie

**LOS ANGELES, 17 Nov —** Oscar-winning actor Tom Hanks is expected to star in a film adapted from Dan Brown’s popular novel The Da Vinci Code, the Hollywood Reporter reported Monday.

Hanks, who will play the role of Robert Langdon, the professor who unravels the mystery, was the top choice for director Ron Howard and producer Brian Grazer, the report said. Columbia Pictures hopes to begin shooting the film next year.

Talks have begun for Hanks to join the project. “ Tom is an exciting actor to watch thinking,” Howard was quoted as saying. “ We probably don’t need his status from a box office standpoint, but he gives Langdon instant legitimacy.”

Hanks, who currently can be seen onscreen in animated form in Warner Bros. Pictures’ The Polar Express, previously worked with Howard in 1995’s “Apollo 13” and 1984’s “Splash.”

**MNA/Xinhua**
Serbia & Montenegro continue fine form in WC qualifier

BRUSSELS, 18 Nov—Group Seven leaders Serbia & Montenegro continued their fine form in World Cup qualifying with a smash-and-grab 2-0 victory at Belgium on Wednesday.

The result was a big blow to Belgium's hopes. They have only one point from three matches. The unbeaten Serbs have 10 points from four games and have scored 10 goals without reply so far.

Lithuania are second on eight points from four games with favourites Spain on five points from three matches.

Belgium were left to rue a host of missed chances after Zvonimir Vukic gave Serbia a 1-0 lead in the seventh minute in Brussels. Belgium's Walter Bageeggio lost possession and Savo Milotisevic fed an offside-looking Vukic who raced clear and beat Silvio Proto in the Belgium goal. Baseeggio and Wesley Sonck went close for the Belgians and in the second half substitute strikers Luigi Pieron hit the crossbar twice, first with a right-foot shot and in the final minute with a header. — MNA/Reuters

Czech Republic beat Macedonia 2-0

SKOPJE, 18 Nov—Late goals from substitute Vratislav Lokvenc and Jan Koller spared the Czech Republic's blushes and handed the visitors a 2-0 win against Macedonia in a Group One World Cup qualifier on Wednesday.

The Czechs, who lost striker Milan Baros to an early injury, had struggled to break down a well-organized Macedonia side beaten by Andorra in their last game.

Lokvenc's appearance as a 76th minute substitute to partner fellow beanpole striker Koller changed the course of the game. VfL Bochum's Lokvenc headed home Karel Poborsky's cross three minutes from time to break the home side's resistance.

Koller then sealed victory in the last minute with a header from Marek Jankulovski's cross. 

Ukraine upset Turkey 3-0 in World Cup qualifier

ISTANBUL, 18 Nov—Striker Andry Shevchenko scored twice as Ukraine upset Turkey 3-0 in a World Cup qualifier on Wednesday to move clear at the top of Group Two.

The convincing victory raised Ukraine's points tally to 11, five clear of nearest rivals Turkey, Albania and Denmark.

Ukraine midfielder Oleg Gusev opened the scoring after nine minutes, latching on to a pass from Andry Voronin and firing the ball into the net from the edge of the penalty area.

Shevchenko doubled the visitors' lead after 17 minutes when he raced away from a shaky Turkish defence on the break and sent a shot from inside the area wide of goalkeeper Rustu Recber.

The AC Milan forward sealed an emphatic victory for Ukraine in the dying minutes, jumping acrobatically to hook a cross into the net from close range.

Turkey coach Ersun Yanal looked glum after the match, which dealt a severe blow to the prospects of the World Cup semifinalists reaching the 2006 tournament in Germany. — MNA/Reuters

Greece beat Kazakhstan 3-1

ATHENS, 18 Nov—Two first-half goals from Werder Bremen striker Angelos Hirstias helped Greece kick-start their World Cup qualifying campaign with a 3-1 victory over Kazakhstan on Wednesday.

Substitute Costas Katsouranis added a third four minutes from time for the European champions while Ruslen Baltsiyev grabbed a consolation from the penalty spot a minute later for Kazakhstan.

With captain Theodoros Zagorakis celebrating his 100th cap, Greece's first competitive win since they beat Portugal in July to win Euro 2004 marked the real start to their bid to reach the World Cup finals in Germany in two years time.

After a defeat and two draws in their opening Group Two qualifiers, Greece now have five points from four games — the same as Georgia — and are one point behind Denmark, Turkey and Albania who all have six. — MNA/Reuters

Portugal in top of group three by beating Luxembourg

LUXEMBOURG, 18 Nov—Striker Pauleta scored twice to lead Portugal's 5-0 rout of Luxembourg in a World Cup Group Three qualifier on Wednesday.

The win put Portugal top of the group with 13 points from five matches and their 20 goals is the highest scored by any European team in the competition to date. Slovakia are three points behind with a match in hand.

"This win makes us confident that we can go ahead with our preparations for a place in the World Cup finals," Portugal coach Luiz Felipe Scolari said after the match. Portugal, who crushed Russia 7-1 in their previous game, went ahead after 11 minutes when striker Luis Boa Morte tapped in after defender Paulo Ferreira crossed from the right.

Winger Cristiano Ronaldo scored the second goal with a header from a corner by playmaker Deco Sousa. Midfielder Maniche Ribeiro added the third in the 51st minute with a shot from just outside the area. Paucltacana equalised after 66 minutes and added a penalty seven minutes from time — his 36th goal in 67 internationals.

Luxembourg have no points from six matches, but Manou Schaums squandered a rare Luxembourg chance to score when he failed to collect a cross from the right by Sebastien Remy in the 62nd minute. — MNA/Reuters

Netherlands ease to 3-0 win over Andorra

BARCELONA, 18 Nov—The Netherlands eased to a 3-0 win over Andorra in Barcelona on Wednesday to go top of World Cup qualifying Group One.

The experienced Philip Cocu opened the scoring after 21 minutes and winger Arjen Robben doubled the lead 10 minutes later with a strike from the edge of the penalty area.

Midfielder Wesley Sneijder sealed a comfortable win 12 minutes from time.

The Dutch have 10 points and a game in hand for the Euro 2004 hosts, who have opened the scoring in their last five matches and their 20 goals is the highest scored by any European team in the competition to date.

Serbia and Montenegro's Zvonimir Vukic makes the Serbian sign in victory at the end of their World Cup European Zone Group Seven qualifying match against Belgium at the King Baudouin Stadium in Brussels on 17 Nov, 2004. Serbia and Montenegro won 2-0. — INTERNET

Ukraine's Andry Shevchenko (7) celebrates his second goal against Turkey with team mates, Oleg Gusev (9) and Yariv Dmytrulin (18) as Turkey's Tolga Seyhan of Turkey's Tolga Seyhan reacts during their World Cup European Zone Group Three match at Sukru Saracoglu Stadium in Istanbul on 17 Nov, 2004. Ukraine beat Turkey 3-0. —INTERNET

Sweden thrash Scotland 4-1

E OSTERDAL, 18 Nov—Scotland's woes continued as they were thrashed 4-1 at home by Sweden in the first match since the resignation of head coach Berti Vogts.

Forward Marcus Allback led the rout for the visitors at Easter Road on Wednesday with goals after 30 and 49 minutes before substitute Johan Elmander and Fredrik Berglund struck midway through the second half.

Scotland, with Vogts' former assistant Tommy Burns in temporary charge, pulled one back when James McFadden scored with a penalty after 78 minutes.

A lively opening period brought chances to either side. Sweden goalkeeper Magnus Hedman saved Kenny Miller's blistering drive while at the other end Olaf Mellberg headed narrowly wide.

Despite being without three of their best attacking options — Henrik Larsson, Zlatan Ibrahimovic and Fredrik Ljungberg were rested — the Swedes always had too much class for the hard-working home team.

Ian Murray was forced to head teammate Russell Anderson's header off his own line before Sweden struck when the excellent Christian Wilhelmsson of Anderlecht crossed for Allback to sweep home the opener after 30 minutes.

A strong ending to the first half gave the home fans belief of a recovery but it proved false hope when the visitors cut open Scotland with ease for their second, Kim Kallstrom picking out Allback to score soon after the restart. — MNA/Reuters

Portugal's Cristiano Ronaldo (L) struggles with Luxembourg's Sebastien Remy during their World Cup European Zone Group Three qualifying match at the Josy Barthel Stadium in Luxembourg, on 17 Nov, 2004. —INTERNET
An apple a day really keeps doctor away

WASHINGTON, 18 Nov — An apple a day really does keep the doctor away, thanks to strong antioxidants that fight cell damage, US researchers reported on Tuesday.

Rat brain cells exposed to the antioxidant — in case quercetin — resisted damage much better than those not treated, the team at Cornell University in New York found.

Antioxidants are compounds that counteract the damage done by chemicals known as free radicals — generated by sunlight, chemical reactions and the stress of day-to-day living.

The researchers say their study adds strength to the theory that the risk of developing Alzheimer’s and similar brain diseases might be reduced by eating plenty of fresh fruits and vegetables.

Writing in the December 1 issue of the Journal of Agricultural and Food Chemistry, the Cornell team said they soaked rat brain cells in either quercetin or Vitamin C — another potent antioxidant.

The cells were then exposed to hydrogen peroxide to mimic the type of oxidative cell damage that is believed to occur with Alzheimer’s disease.

Brain cells that were treated with quercetin had significantly less damage than the cells treated with Vitamin C and cells that were not treated with antioxidants.

“The basis of serving size, fresh apples have some of the highest levels of quercetin when compared to other fruits and vegetables and may be among the best food choices for fighting Alzhei-mer’s,” CY Lee, a professor and chairman of the Department of Food Science & Technology at Cornell University, who led the study, said in a statement.

“People should eat more apples, especially fresh ones,” he added.

Lee said the skins of apples contain the highest levels of quercetin so juice is not necessarily the best source.

THAILAND STARTS SCANNING CONTAINER SHIPMENT DEPARTING FOR US

BANGKOK, 18 Nov — Thailand and the United States on Tuesday started a security initiative that scans containers bound for the US to prevent terrorist attacks.

“The programme is designed to protect the citizens of Thailand and the US as well as the trade between the two nations,” said a Press release issued by the US Embassy in Bangkok.

Under an earlier-reached agreement on the programme, the US Customs and Border Protection will station a group of personnel at the Port of Laem Chabang in Thail-land’s eastern coastal province of Chonburi.

They will work together with the Thai Customs officials in the screening of containers identified as potential terrorist risks.

Under the programme, Customs offici-als of the two countries will inspect and screen containers waiting at Port Laem Chabang for US-bound vessels.

“This initiative would make it extremely difficult for terrorists to carry out their destructive plans, while allowing the flow of trade to continue as normal,” the US Ambas-ador Darry N Johnson said at the ceremony marking the launch of the programme.

Besides the port of Laem Chabang, 24 other international ports are cur-rently in the container se-curity initiative network, including Malaysia, Sin-gapore and Hong Kong in the region.

MNA/Xinhua

Cambodia’s registered investment projects rise sharply in 2004

PHNOM PENH, 18 Nov — The number of investment projects registered at the Centre for the Development of Cambodia (CDC) this year has increased sharply compared to the same period in 2003, though the overall fixed assets of these projects have shown a slight decline, local newspaper quoted on Wednesday.

The CDC figures, quoted by The Cambodia Daily, showed that from January to October, the agency approved 48 projects worth 206.4 million US dollars in fixed assets.

During the same period last year, the CDC only approved 37 large investment projects, worth a combined 219.4 million dollars in fixed assets, according to the CDC figures.

The real gains have been made among domestic investors.

In the past, Cambodian investors were reluctant to take risks on larger enterprises, generally resigning themselves to small shares in joint ventures, said Chea Vuthy, director of the CDC’s information department.

Chea Vuthy said the domestic investors were encouraged by the government’s commitment to offering more favourable private-sector environment.

The CDC statistics also showed the changes of capital investment by sector.

As in 2003, the industry sector is still the largest investment sector, but has seen a significant decline.

MNA/Xinhua

WEATHER

Thursday, 18 November, 2004

Summary of observations recorded at 09:30 hours MST: During the past 24 hours, light rain have been isolated in Yangon Division and weather has been generally fair in the remaining areas. The noteworthy amount of rainfall recorded was Co Co Island (0.04) inch. Night temperatures were (3°C) above normal in Rakhine State and Tanintharyi Division, (3°C) to (4°C) below normal in Northern Shan State and Magway Divisions, (5°C) below normal in Chin State and Upper Sagaing Division and about normal in the remaining areas. The significant night temperature was (4°C) in Haka.

Maximum temperature on 17-11-2004 was 98°F. Minimum temperature on 18-11-2004 was 68°F. Relative humidity at 9:30 hrs MST on 18-11-2004 was 81%. Total sunshine hours on 16-11-2004 was (7.2) hours approx.

Rainfall on 17-11-2004 was nil at Yangon Airport, Kaba-Aye and central Yangon. Total rainfall since 1-1-2004 was (112.24) inches at Yangon Airport, (106.77) inches at Kaba-Aye and (109.64) inches at Yangon Maximum wind speed at Yangon (Kaba-Aye) was 8 mph from North at (13:30) hours MST on 17-11-2004.

Bay influence Weather is partly cloudy in Andaman Sea and South Bay and generally fair elsewhere in the Bay of Bengal.

Forecast valid until evening of 19-11-2004: Likelyhood of isolated light rain in Mon, Kayin State, Ayeyawady, Yangon and Tanintharyi Division and weather will be generally fair in the remaining areas. Degree of certainty is (60%).

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

Outlook for subsequent two days: Likelihood of isolated light rain in Southern Myanmar areas.

Forecast for Yangon and neighbouring area for 19-11-2004: Likelihood of isolated light rain. Degree of certainty is (60%).

Forecast for Mandalay and neighbouring area for 19-11-2004: Generally fair weather.
PM Lt-Gen Soe Win receives Deputy Prime Minister, Minister for Foreign Affairs of LPDR

PM Lt-Gen Soe Win receives Deputy Prime Minister, Minister for Foreign Affairs of LPDR

Prison terms of 3,937 convicts suspended

Prison terms of 3,937 convicts have been suspended with effect from today, 18 November 2004, and they will be released from the respective prisons. — MNA

Secretary-1 Lt-Gen Thein Sein sees off Myanmar Tatmadaw Sports Team

Secretary-1 Lt-Gen Thein Sein gives instructions to Tatmadaw sports contingent to ASEAN Defence Services soccer and volleyball tournaments. — MNA