Established 1914

YANGON, 14 March – Chairman of the State Peace and Development Council Commander-in-Chief of Defence Services Senior General Than Shwe met with local authorities, division-level officials and township level officials of Toungoo District and townships at Southern Command Headquarters in Toungoo yesterday.

First, Chairman of Bago Division Peace and Development Council Commander of Southern Command Maj-Gen Ko Ko reported to the Senior General on population of Bago Division and land use, saying that the division put 2,561,725 acres of land under monsoon paddy, exceeding the target of 2,450,000 acres. It has cultivated 285,568 acres of summer paddy to this date, or 95.18 per cent of the target of 300,000 acres. Annual plans are being implemented to grow up to three million acres of monsoon paddy.

The commander continued to explain the efforts being made to ensure local food and edible oil sufficiency in the division, the implementation of hydro power projects, running of livestock breeding farms, implementing of social, health, education, transport and rural development undertakings, and progress in implementing the projects of fiscal 2004-2005.

Next, Minister for National Planning and Economic Development U Soe Tha said that targets of the short-term projects for national development have exceeded. Bago Division is contributing to the national economy as a vital division. The division has bright prospects to contribute more to the national economic development. He also explained the inter-relations between the economy of the division and that of the nation.

Member of the State Peace and Development Council General Thura Shwe Mann expressed pleasure to see united efforts to develop the region during the tour, led by the Head of State. Thanks to community peace and tranquillity, Bago Division is achieving progress and success, he said. The people in all the states and divisions of the Union can earn their living safely and peacefully at any time and place. Thus, he said, the whole nation has witnessed economic development.

The social sector including the health and education is developing together with the economic progress. The developments can be seen practically. It is important for all to maintain and safeguard the solid foundations of national peace and progress.

[See page 8]

* Bago Division is to make constant endeavours for its regional development as man needs to make tireless efforts to improve his life.
* There are many tasks to be carried out for development of the whole division and improvement of living standard of the people residing in it.
* Only concerted and well-coordinated efforts are required for regional development as there have been a lot of bright prospects in the division.

Emergence of the State Constitution is the duty of all citizens of Myanmar Naing-Ngan.
Military columns practise parade drills

Under command of
Parade Commander Brig-
Gen Nyi Tun, the parade
columns — Anawrahta
Column led by Column
Commander Col Aung
Kyaw Oo, Kansittya by
Col Tha Aung, Bayinnaunga by
Col Aung Kyaw Oo, Nawade
by Captain Aung Zaw
(Navy), Aungzeya
by Col Myo Win, Hsinbyashin by Col Khin
Aung Myint, Bandoola by Col Khin Maung Oo,
Myawady by Col Win
Swe and Aung Sun by Col Thein Zaw — re-
hearsed parade drills. Chairman of
the Management Committee for Observance of
the 60th Anniversary Armed
forces Day Commander of Yangon Command Maj-Gen Myint Swe, Vice-Chief of Armed Forces Training Maj-Gen Kyi Aung, Vice-Adju-
tant-General Maj-Gen Hla Hshe and senior
military officers inspected the drills of the
parade columns.

Course No 3/2005 in
Enhanced Diplomatic Skills
concludes

YANGON, 14 March — The Graduation Cer-
emony of the Certificate Course in Enhanced Dip-
lomatic Skills (EDS 3/ 2005) concluded by the
Ministry of Foreign Af-
fairs was held today at
Wunzin Minyazar Hall of
the Ministry with an
address delivered by
U Nyan Win, Minister for
Foreign Affairs.
Also present on the
occasion were Deputy
Ministers for Foreign Af-
fairs U Kyaw Thu and U
Maung Myint, Directors-
General of the depart-
ments under the Ministry,
Attorney-General’s Of-
ce, departmental offi-
cials, Myanmar Ambas-
sadors, senior diplomats,
a rector and professors of universities and
institutes concerned and trainees.
Various subjects such as International
Law, International Trade,
Trade Negotiation &
WTO Regulations
are included in the course. A
total of 93 trainees attended
the 8-week course.

Temporary road closure

YANGON, 14 March — The Myanmar Rail-
ways of the Ministry of Rail Transportation will
become erection of the Kyaukkyedin overpass in
North Okkalapa Township on 20 March 2005.
Starting 16 March, the section of Kyaukkyedin
street from Thudhamma junction to Gyobyu con-
duit overpass will be closed for the time being.

Official inspects district road

YANGON, 14 March — Director-General of
Development Affairs Department U Myo
Myint inspected the No 2 district road in
Bago Division on 11 March.
Accompanied by offici-
als, the director-general
observed the Toonuo-Yeni
district road on the east bank of
Sittoung River. He then
inspected heavy machin-
ery at work to expand the
road at Hbonbogyi village
and earth works at
Kayinchaung village, and
gave instructions to offi-
cials.
When completed 33-
mile road will become a
direct link between vil-
lages on the east bank of
Sittoung and Lewe and
Pyinmana towns.

Build more resorts for development of tourism industry

The Union of Myanmar is home to more
than 100 national races and each national race
has its own tradition, colourful traditional cos-
tumes and beautiful culture. Beautiful lakes, wa-
terfalls, mountain resorts and beach resorts
make up wonderful scenic spots of the country.
Therefore, it has many sights to offer. And it
has such a temperate climate that tourists can
visit it all the year round. This being so, the
government is taking measures to develop the
tourism industry.

Chairman of the State Peace and Develop-
ment Council Commander-in-Chief of Defence
Services Senior General Than Shwe on 12 March
inspected the measures to beautify the
Kandawgyi Lake in Toungoo and development of
the town. Then Senior General and party
proceeded to Thandaung Hill Station,
Thandaung Township, and enjoyed its scenic
beauty. In his meeting with responsible person-
nel at the hill station and giving guidance to
them, Senior General Than Shwe said that, like
PyinOoLwin and Kalaw, Thandaung should be
built as a hill station of Lower Myanmar.

Thandaung Hill Station is 28 miles away from
Toungoo and 4050 feet above sea level. Holidaymakers can easily reach it by car. Three
hotel zones have been designated and hotels are
being built there. For the development of the hill
station, the 18-mile-long Thandaung-Leiktho
road is being extended and cinchona trees are
growing on either side of the road. The upgrad-
ing of Thandaung Hill Station, the building of
the hill station and the construction of the road
to the hill station are under way. Moreover, steps
are being taken to supply water and electricity
to the station.

Recreation centres have been built by na-
tional entrepreneurs and they are full of visi-
tors now. There is a 16-bed hospital at the hill
station and coffee, tea, pepper, cinchona and
cardamom trees are growing there. The gov-
ernment is building resorts all over the na-
tion to attract foreign and local tourists. It is
expected that about one million tourists will visit
it all the year round. This being so, the
government is taking measures to develop the
tourism industry.

MMCWA concludes Tailoring course

MMCWA, 14 March — The tailoring course
(No—36/2005) of Myanmar Maternal and
Child Welfare Associa-
tion concluded at the
office of the MMCWA this
afternoon.

The closing cer-
emony was attended by
MMCWA President Daw
Khin Khin Win and CEC
members. Daw Khin
Khin Win delivered a
speech and presented
prizes to outstanding
trainees. Next, MMCWA
CEC member Daw Aye
Aye presented comple-
tion certificates to the
trainees. The two-month
course was attended by
25 trainees.

Tailoring course of
concludes

YANGON, 14 March
— The tailoring course
(No—36/2005) of
Myanmar Maternal and
Child Welfare Associa-
tion concluded at the
office of the MMCWA this
afternoon.

The closing cer-
emony was attended by
MMCWA President Daw
Khin Khin Win and CEC
members. Daw Khin
Khin Win delivered a
speech and presented
prizes to outstanding
trainees. Next, MMCWA
CEC member Daw Aye
Aye presented comple-
tion certificates to the
trainees. The two-month
course was attended by
25 trainees.

Course No 3/2005 in
Enhanced Diplomatic Skills
concludes

YANGON, 14 March — The Graduation Cer-
emony of the Certificate Course in Enhanced Dip-
lomatic Skills (EDS 3/ 2005) concluded by the
Ministry of Foreign Af-
fairs was held today at
Wunzin Minyazar Hall of
the Ministry with an
address delivered by
U Nyan Win, Minister for
Foreign Affairs.
Also present on the
occasion were Deputy
Ministers for Foreign Af-
fairs U Kyaw Thu and U
Maung Myint, Directors-
General of the depart-
ments under the Ministry,
Attorney-General’s Of-
ce, departmental offi-
cials, Myanmar Ambas-
sadors, senior diplomats,
a rector and professors of universities and
institutes concerned and trainees.
Various subjects such as International
Law, International Trade,
Trade Negotiation &
WTO Regulations
are included in the course. A
total of 93 trainees attended
the 8-week course.

Temporary road closure

YANGON, 14 March — The Myanmar Rail-
ways of the Ministry of Rail Transportation will
become erection of the Kyaukkyedin overpass in
North Okkalapa Township on 20 March 2005.
Starting 16 March, the section of Kyaukkyedin
street from Thudhamma junction to Gyobyu con-
duit overpass will be closed for the time being.

Official inspects district road

YANGON, 14 March — Director-General of
Development Affairs Department U Myo
Myint inspected the No 2 district road in
Bago Division on 11 March.
Accompanied by of-
icials, the director-general
observed the Toonuo-Yeni
district road on the east bank of
Sittoung River. He then
inspected heavy machin-
ery at work to expand the
road at Hbonbogyi village
and earth works at
Kayinchaung village, and
gave instructions to offi-
cials.
When completed 33-
mile road will become a
direct link between vil-
lages on the east bank of
Sittoung and Lewe and
Pyinmana towns.

Director-General of Department of Develop-
ment Affairs U Myo Myint looks into progress in
building of district-to-district roads in
Bago Division. — MNA
ADB to provide additional grants for Indonesia reconstruction

JAKARTA, 13 March — The Asian Development Bank (ADB) will provide an additional 300 million US dollars in grants for the reconstruction of Indonesian Provinces of Aceh and North Sumatra which were hit by the December 26 earthquake and tsunami, local media reported Saturday.

The funds will bring the ADB’s total financial commitment to the tsunami-affected areas to 775 million dollars, which went to Indonesia, the Maldives, Sri Lanka, Thailand and Indonesia, Englishdaily Jakarta Post quoted ADB President Haruhiko Kuroda as saying. The additional money could be promptly disbursed for projects to restore essential infrastructure and services there, he added.

“The disbursement of the funds is essential to ensure that the incomes and livelihoods of people in the area are quickly restored,” said Kuroda. The 300 million dollars will be used to finance a two-phase, multisector Earthquake and Tsunami Emergency Support Project (ETESP) to facilitate disaster management, reconstruction and rehabilitation in the affected areas of the two provinces.

The first phase will last from April to June 2007 and involve the tackling of urgent priorities in some of the less devastated areas. — MNA/Xinhua

Japan’s Nuclear Development Institute to pay residents a fine

Tokyo, 13 March — The Japan Nuclear Cycle Development Institute will start paying a fine of 750,000 yen (7,210 US dollars) a day to local residents in the western Japanese town of Yurihama from Friday for its failure to meet a deadline to remove uranium-contaminated soil left in the town.

JNC, a state-backed organization developing technologies for nuclear fuel cycle, said it is seeking a place to temporarily store the tainted soil to end the payment of the fines as early as possible.

The Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology supervises the JNC. According to Kyodo News, a court-ordered deadline expired Thursday for JNC to remove 290 cubic metres of about 3,000 cubic metres of contaminated soil abandoned in the area for about 40 years. The abandoned soil came from the site of test uranium drilling conducted from 1956 to 1967 by JNC’s predecessor, Power Reactor & Nuclear Fuel Development Corp, Kyodo said.

In October 2004, the Supreme Court finalized an order for JNC to remove the contaminated soil. — MNA/Xinhua

Two US contractors killed in Iraq

Baghdad, 13 March — Two American security contractors were killed and a third wounded in a roadside bomb attack south of the Iraqi capital, the US Embassy said Sunday. The three were working for Blackwater Security, a North Carolina-based contracting firm that provides security for US State Department officials in Iraq.

They were attacked on the main road to Hillah, south of Baghdad, US Embassy spokesman Bob Callahan said.

Two Iraqis were killed and five injured when a roadside bomb missed a US convoy in al-Obeidi in southeastern Baghdad on Sunday, said Dr-Ali Karim of Kindi hospital, where the casualties were brought. Foreign contractors are often targeted by anti-US guerillas. At least 232 American civilian security and reconstruction contractors were killed in Iraq up to the end of 2004, according to the Washington-based Brookings Institution.

The Blackwater employees killed Saturday were in the last vehicle in a four-vehicle convoy and were travelling to Hillah from Baghdad, Callahan said. A foreign security official said they were in a black Chevrolet Suburban. The road south traverses an area known as the “Triangle of Death” because of the frequency of guerilla attacks.

Associated Press writers Rawya Rageh, Sameer N. Yacoub and Qasim Abdul-Zahra in Baghdad and Yahya Barzanji in Kirkuk contributed to this report. — Internet

Sauber Petronas Formula One team driver Felipe Massa of Brazil drives past Malaysian landmark Petronas Twin Tower during his performance in downtown Kuala Lumpur, on 13 March, 2005. — Internet
China’s 2nd largest hydropower station to operate in 2007

NANNING, 13 March — Longtan hydropower station, located on the upper reaches of the Pearl River in south China’s Guangxi Zhuang Autonomous Region, will begin power generation in May 2007.

The project opening is two months ahead of schedule, said Dai Bo, general manager of Longtan Hydropower Project Development Co., Ltd.

According to Dai, concrete pouring of the 216.5-metre dam has entered a crucial stage. The dam, which will need 8 million cubic metres of concrete for construction, will be the biggest of its kind worldwide.

A score of specialists, including five academicians, were invited to the site to give guidance on technical problems ranging from temperature control, timing of water storage, to quality control in building of the dam.

US soldier killed in northern Iraq

BAGHDAD, 13 March — A US soldier was shot dead Friday in the volatile northern Iraqi city of Mosul, the US military announced on Sunday.

“One Task Force Freedom soldier was killed by small arms fire in Mosul 11 March. The attack occurred at approximately 8:30 pm (1730 GMT),” the military said in a statement.

The death raised to 1,506 the number of soldiers killed in Iraq since the US invasion two years ago, according to an estimate based on the latest tally from the Pentagon.

Internet

Macedonian FM reaffirms “One-China” policy

TIRANA, 13 March — Macedonian Foreign Minister Ljubko Mitrove reaffirmed Friday Macedonia’s stance to stick to “one-China” policy during the meeting with Chinese Ambassador to Macedonia Zhang Wanxue, the MIA news agency reported.

The Anti-Secession Law marks China’s constructive effort to make step forward to China’s peaceful reunification, said Mitrove.

During the ongoing plenary session starting 5 March, deputies of the Chinese National People’s Congress, the country’s legislature, will deliberate the draft and vote to ratify the law.

Mitrove and the Chinese Ambassador also expressed satisfaction about the relations and cooperation based on friendship and mutual respect between China and Macedonia.

MNA/Xinhua

Kentucky deserter becomes high-profile Iraqi war opponent

KENTUCKY, 14 March — An Army Specialist from Kentucky has become a high-profile opponent of the Iraqi war. He’s one of many US military deserters who have fled to Canada.

Many Canadians who oppose America’s policy in Iraq see 22-year-old Darrell Anderson as a hero. But back home in Lexington, some say he should be severely punished.

Anderson says he never imagined that he would be in the position he’s in. He’s hoping the Canadian government gives him asylum in the country. But he’s had to leave his family behind. Anderson was slightly wounded during action in Iraq last year. Once he returned home for Christmas in December, he says he decided he couldn’t go back. — Internet

Oil prices retreated Thursday in what analysts described as profit-taking after the market tested the October peak above 55 dollars a barrel on Wednesday, but failed to beat it. However, analysts said crude prices remained generally strong on a weak US dollar and strengthened global demand.

Analysts said worries over a March 16 meeting of the Organization of Petroleum-Exporting Countries (OPEC) in Iran were easing as oil ministers assured traders in recent weeks that the group would keep the market well supplied.

OPEC officials said the oil cartel had about two million barrels a day in spare production capacity that could be quickly brought on line if there was a surge in demand. But analysts said the actual figure might be closer to one million barrels. — MNA/Xinhua

Crude oil futures climb on stronger demand outlook

NEW YORK, 13 March — Crude oil prices rose Friday after the International Energy Agency (IEA) raised its forecasts for global oil demand in 2005.

On the New York Mercantile Exchange, light, sweet oil futures for April delivery rose 89 cents to settle at $54.43 dollars a barrel. Meanwhile, the April Brent crude-oil futures contract closed 44 cents to end at $53.10 dollars per barrel.

The flood on the Hongshui River in 1996, for instance, endangered 12.01 million residents and ruined 470,000 hectares of farmland.

China’s Jiangsu to invest $602mn on country road construction

NANNING, 13 March — East China’s Jiangsu Province plans to invest 5 billion yuan ($622.4 million US dollars) this year to beef up the provincial country road network. The province vows to build 130,000 kilometres of country roads in 2005, with priority given to roads linking villages. The provincial government has instructed various local authorities to create a plan to meet the target.

Jiangsu has built 24,900 kilometres of country roads during the past two years, accomplishing more than 60 per cent of the province’s five-year target on country road construction, which effectively boosted rural economic development and helped increase farmers’ incomes. About 27 million rural residents across the province have benefitted from the country roads.

The provincial government has set strict demands on the quality of road construction and urged various localities to pay attention to the protection of farmland and environment while pushing forward road construction projects. — MNA/Xinhua

Italian PM urges world to cooperate to combat terrorism

ROME, 13 March — Italian Prime Minister Silvio Berlusconi Friday urged the world to further cooperate to combat terrorism as Rome and other European countries marked the first anniversary of the Madrid train bombings.

“Terrorism cannot be defeated without spreading freedom and democracy,” he said, referring to the recent successful elections in Afghanistan and Iraq.

Berlusconi also warned that the world should remain “respectful of human dignity” at all times in the fight against terrorism.

The Madrid train bombings on 11 March, 2004 — one of the worst terrorist attacks ever in Europe — killed 191 people and injured more than 1,500. — MNA/Xinhua

Italian PM urges world to cooperate to combat terrorism

ROME, 13 March — Italian Prime Minister Silvio Berlusconi Friday urged the world to further cooperate to combat terrorism as Rome and other European countries marked the first anniversary of the Madrid train bombings.

“Terrorism cannot be defeated without spreading freedom and democracy,” he said, referring to the recent successful elections in Afghanistan and Iraq.

Berlusconi also warned that the world should remain “respectful of human dignity” at all times in the fight against terrorism.

The Madrid train bombings on 11 March, 2004 — one of the worst terrorist attacks ever in Europe — killed 191 people and injured more than 1,500. — MNA/Xinhua

The debris of a vehicle is seen in rain water following a car bomb in an eastern district of Baghdad, on 13 March, 2005. — Internet
New Zealand conducts research on flu outbreak

Wellington, 13 March — An influenza pandemic in New Zealand could cost 3,700 lives and put 20,000 more people in hospital, a research commisioned by New Zealand Health Ministry shows.

The research, published in the latest (New Zealand) Medical Journal, says a flu pandemic could also see more than a million New Zealanders needing to visit a doctor, placing added strain on the health system.

Karen Poutasi, Director-General of Health, said Friday that the predictions reinforce the need to take the illness seriously and continue preparations to deal with a major outbreak of flu.

The figures were sobering but not surprising because concern about a pandemic of bird flu or a similar type of flu had been mounting worldwide, she said. "Nobody can be sure where or when it will emerge, but the ongoing H5N1 bird flu outbreaks in Southeast Asia have the experts concerned. We need to act prudently and responsibly in continuing to prepare."

The strain of bird flu known as H5N1 has killed 4,700 people, who appear to have caught it from chickens and other poultry.

Poutasi said it was important to strike a balance between making people aware of the seriousness of a flu pandemic and preventing panic.

"The biggest assurance is that we have done the planning. There is no magic solution."

Annual session of China’s top advisory body closes

Beijing, 13 March — The third session of the Tenth National Committee of the Chinese People’s Political Consultative Conference (CPPCC) closed here Saturday afternoon after electing a number of vice-chairpersons and adopting a political resolution.

Top Chinese leaders including Hu Jintao, Wu Bangguo and Wen Jiabao were present at the closing meeting presided over by Jia Qinglin, chairman of the CPPCC National Committee.

Shanghai Pudong Airport passes test on new runway

Shanghai, 13 March — The second runway of the Shanghai Pudong Airport has passed the test Friday, and is ready for operation, said an official with the airport.

The new runway, 2,260 metres east to west, is 3,800 metres long and 60 metres wide, is built to accommodate the Airbus A380 superjumbo, the world’s largest commercial jet.

The runway is also equipped with a sophisticated blind landing system.

US takes responsibility for Bulgarian soldier death in Iraq

Sofia, 13 March — The US military has admitted responsibility for the death of a Bulgarian machinegunner last week in Iraq, but insisted it was "unintentional" and partly resulted from nearby guerilla attacks, Bulgaria’s Defence Ministry said Saturday.

The Multinational Forces Command has admitted that the US Forces "did not put enough effort into identifying the objects on Tampa Road and directly opened fire without the required warning shots," the ministry said.

A Bulgarian soldier, Private Gardi Gardew, was killed on March 4 by a direct fire from a US communication post while patrolling on a road some 160 kilometres south of Baghdad.

"The gunfire against our patrol was preceded by a terrorist attack on an American logistics convoy nine kilometres south of communication post number 5 (which opened fire on the Bulgarian patrol) and a second attack against a rapid deployment unit of post number 6, three to five kilometres south of the same post," the ministry said quoting an investigation report from the Multinational Forces Command.

The report said "the Bulgarian patrol had acted in complete compliance with the standard operational procedures and the rules for application of force and did not in any way threaten the security of the US communication unit."

But it also insisted that the shooting was "unintentional" and was provoked by the two attacks. Gardew’s death has aroused strong resentment among the Bulgarians, with some Bulgarian parties demanding the Parlia- ment and government reconsider the Balkan country’s military presence in Iraq.

The Bulgarian soldier became the eighth fatality casualty while serving in Iraq, where the NATO member has about 450 peacekeepers stationed in Diwaniya as part of a multinational force under Polish command.

Italian economy grew by 1.2% in 2004

Rome, 13 March — The Italian economy grew by 1.2 per cent in 2004, according to the definitive figures released on Friday by the Italian statistics bureau Istat.

While in line with the government’s most recent official estimate, the final growth figure was a little less than the 1.3 per cent to 1.4 per cent mentioned recently by Italian Economy Minister Domenico Siniscalco as a likely rate.

The slightly disappoint- ing news came as government ministers met to discuss a series of long-awaited measures to help businesses become more competitive.

Italian business leaders and the central bank often blame the country’s sluggish growth in recent years on falling competitiveness.

The new measures, which have been the subject of considerable wrangling in the centre-right coalition, include a reform of Italy’s bankruptcy law and tax incentives to encourage mergers among small firms.

9th east, west China Trade Fair to open in April

Xi’an, 13 March — The Ninth Investment and Trade Fair for Cooperation between east and west China will be staged from April 6 to 10 in Xi’an, capital city of northwest China’s Shaanxi Province, said an official with the provincial government Friday.

Li Xuemei, director of the trade fair organizing office, said the fair has lured at least 300 projects, with total investment of 40 billion yuan (about 4.82 billion US dollars).

The event aims to expand the scope of cooperation between east and west China for harmonious development.

The fair is divided into two zones. One caters to trade talks, with 700 booths and the other for display of commodities at 1,300 business booths.

The fair, launched in 1997, has become an important national economic and trade event and an important platform for exchanges and cooperation between China’s east and west. It has played an active role in promoting the opening-up of the country’s western regions.
Legislator appeals for 12-year compulsory education programme

BEIJING, 14 March — A delegate to the National People’s Congress (NPC) has submitted to the annual session of the Chinese Parliament a motion appealing for a programme to prolong the current 9-year compulsory education to a period of 12 years.

President Liu Weixing of Anhui branch of the Industrial and Commercial Bank of China, the deputy, cited the following four major reasons:

— to help train more technical workers. Chinese enterprises are now forced to employ large numbers of less capable people because of the shortage of workers who master certain technology;

— to ease the pressure from unemployment. The country’s population aged above 16 will add an average 5.5 million annually in the coming two decades, bringing the total labour force to 940 million by 2020. An extended compulsory education programme will enable them to be employed three or even more years later;

— to provide “knowledge asset” for poor families. A 12-year compulsory education programme is like “sending charcoal in snowy weather” to rural families and poverty-stricken urban households; and

— to help train more technical workers. Chinese enterprises are now forced to employ large numbers of less capable people because of the shortage of workers who master certain technology.

A 12-year compulsory education programme will cover more farmers and help them enhance the capability of raising income, Liu said.

The current 9-year compulsory education programme from primary to junior high school covers nearly 94 per cent of the Chinese population, sources say.

Liu noted that the country’s fast and stable economic growth has created conditions for a 12-year compulsory education programme, while the swelling scale of higher-learning institutions have made it possible to enroll more students.

“The time (for the implementation of a 12-year compulsory education programme) is ripe now,” he said.

Liu suggests different places install the scheme in line with their own conditions.

Beijing, the country’s capital city, has already announced its plan to popularize a 12-year compulsory education scheme step by step, while the economic hub Shanghai said it had achieved the goal and was moving toward an upper goal: to let children and juveniles enjoy 14-year compulsory education.

Two arrested in largest corporate piracy case

HONG KONG, 14 March — Customs officers have cracked Hong Kong’s largest corporate piracy case and arrested two men, a government Press release said on Saturday.

Customs officers earlier raided an electronic watch company in Kwai Chung, New Territory and seized 16 computers installed with pirated software. The software was high-priced professional graphic design programmes, such as PTC Pro/Engineer Wildfire, AutoDesk AutoCAD and Adobe Photoshop. The retail price of their genuine versions amounts to about $50m for rebuilding Afghanistan

KABUL, 14 March — The Iranian Government has decided to allocate 50 million US dollars for Afghani- stan’s reconstruction projects in 2005, said an Afghan official.

“Iran intends to spend 50 million US dollars on various reconstruction projects in Afghanistan through- out 2005,” Afghan Finance Minister Anvarul Haq Ahadi was quoted by state-run Amil Daily as saying on Saturday. Iran pledged a 500-million-dollar package for the reconstruction process in postwar Afghanistan at Tokyo conference in 2002.

25 feared drowned as Indian bus falls into canal

AHMEDABAD (India), 14 March — At least 25 people were feared drowned on Saturday after a bus fell into a canal in the western Indian state of Gujarat, police said.

A senior police official said the bus plunged into the canal in Kheda District when the driver lost control.

“Nearly 25 passen- gers on the bus are feared dead. One passenger who survived the accident af- ter somehow swimming to safety informed the police that there were at least 25 passengers on the bus,” district superintend- ent of police S S Trivedi said.

Iran to allocate $50m for rebuilding Afghanistan

BEIJING, 14 March — China’s economy is still on the fast track, and its growth is expected to reach between eight and nine per cent in 2005, said a report published recently by the China Centre for National Accounting and Economic Growth.

The report, the China Economic Growth Report for 2005, cited a number of factors to support the forecast including stronger market forces, the improvement of economic system and the benefits brought by China’s entry into the World Trade Organiza- tion.

It also pointed to the fact that the country’s macro-control policy to rein in the economy had been a success, easing unbalanced market supply and demand and inflation pressure.

In his annual government work report presented earlier this month to the National People’s Congress, Chi- nese Premier Wen Jiabao set the target of China’s economic growth in 2005 at 8 per cent.

Water pollution control poses urgent task for China

BEIJING, 14 March — It is high time for China to bring water pollution under tight control, says a Chinese lawmaker.

“Statistics available from the Ministry of Re- sources show that more than 70 per cent of China’s rivers and lakes have been polluted to varying extent,” said He Shaoqin, a deputy to the National People’s Congress (NPC), China’s legislature, Saturday on the sidelines of the ongoing annual NPC session.

“Water pollution has aggravated an acute shortage of water resources and endangered the health of people. There should allow no delay in bringing it under effective control,” said He, who is also deputy chief engineer of the China Water Conservancy and Hydropower Research Institute.

Statistics of the Ministry of Water Resources show that pollution in the Yangtze River, Yellow River and Huaihe River have been worsening. Among them, more than 27 billion tons of waste water and sewage were discharged into the Yangtze River in 2003, an increase of 35 per cent over five years ago.

Water pollution has aggravated an acute shortage of water resources and endangered the health of people. There should allow no delay in bringing it under effective control,” said He, who is also deputy chief engineer of the China Water Conservancy and Hydropower Research Institute.

Two men, aged 47 and 32, the company director and officer-in-charge of the computer section, were arrested. They have been released on 5,000-HK-dollar bail.

Hong Kong Customs have strengthened their anti-piracy efforts in recent years. And 105 operations have been mounted since April 2001, in which 74 compa- nies were found to have breached the ordinance giving rise to the arrest of 141 people.

And 19 cases have been convicted in court, the heaviest penalty being a 50,000-HK-dollar fine and six-month prison sentence suspended for two years.

Hong Kong Customs and the Business Software Alliance also called on public awareness of using pirated software in conducting business and to encour- age the reporting of suspected cases.

— MNA/Xinhua
Iran puts on display captured 3 British naval boats

TEHERAN, 14 March—Iran on Sunday put on display three British naval boats it captured last year, shrugging off protests by London which has demanded their return, the official IRNA news agency reported.

The boats, seized along with their crews by Iranian Revolutionary Guards last June in the Shatt al-Arab waterway which divides southwestern Iraq from Iran, were included in an exhibition of mementos from Iran’s 1980-1988 War with Iraq.

They were displayed on the Shatt al-Arab close to where they were captured, IRNA said. An officer at the site will explain to visitors how the boats and their eight crew were seized.

The crew, who Britain said had been delivering the boats to Iraqi police when captured, were temporarily adjoined in 1996. It depicted the government’s efforts to intimate democratic reform and national reconciliation through its forbearance and own experiences.

In August 2003, the government announced the State’s seven-point Road Map for transforming the nation to a discipline-flourishing democratic one. In accordance with the seven-point programme, the government resumed the National Convention on a grander scale with more than 1,000 delegates of eight groups representing the entire people from all strata of life, at Nyaunghnapin Camp in Hmawby. The government will continue to give priority to the interests of the entire nation rather than that of an organization or two. Any other governments will do the same in such situations. There is a saying that goes “Even the god cannot fulfil man’s wants”. The first portion of the National Convention has been accomplished and the NC is in progress starting from 17 February 2005. Now, the delegates are discussing matters for adoption of detailed principles. Overall, the government has sent out invitations repeatedly to the said parties to attend the NC for the sake of national reconciliation and democracy, but some political parties have intentionally opposed the NC. It may be their plan to copy the western democracy in compliance with the wishes of certain big powers and to seize the State power through short-cuts.

Myanmar Alin + Kyemon: 14-1-2005
(Translation: MS)
Importance of wider exploitation of land and water resources in Bago Division stressed...
(from page 1)

With understanding, the people are taking part in the endeavours the Government has been making with good leadership, high vision and goodwill. Thus, sound developments can be seen in the entire nation.

The developments and successes have been achieved due to the correct policies of the State, sincere goodwill of the Head of State, and the united strength of the national races.

The entire nation will achieve more progress and success if all work in unity and on self-reliant basis, whatever difficulties, obstacles and hindrances may lie ahead.

At present, the nation is materializing the seven-point Road Map in her process of transition to a discipline-flourishing democratic state. The entire people are required to cooperate with the Government in harmony and unison and work might and main for the successful materialization of the seven-points. The General then explained the guidance given by the Head of State including the task of adding value to the natural resources, raising the per acre yield of crops, extending rubber, tea, coffee, cardamom, pepper cultivation, and conserving and developing the forests of Bago Division. He also said that Bago Division should strive to extend monsoon paddy sown acreage to reach three million acres and to become one of the top regions of the nation in terms of economy.

Also present at the meeting were members of the State Peace and Development Council Lt-Gen Khin Maung Than, Lt-Gen Thiha Thura Tin Aung Myint Oo, Lt-Gen Kyaw Win and Lt-Gen Tin Aye, Commander-in-Chief (Navy) Vice-Admiral Soe Thein, Commander-in-Chief (Air) Lt-Gen Myat Hein, ministers, senior military officers, officials of the State Peace and Development Council Office, heads of department, division level officials, officials of Toungoo District and Toungoo, Otwin, Yedashe, Pyu, Kyaukgyi and Htantabin townships, members of Union Solidarity and Development Association, social organizations, towns elders and trained nurses.

Next, Senior General Than Shwe gave guidance. He said that they were in Bago Division to fulfil requirements for regional development and to provide assistance for other matters.

He added that significant progress has been made in Bago Division and steps will have to be taken for ensuring further progress while maintaining progress already in placendeavours.

Bago Division is to make constant endeavours for its regional development as man needs to make tireless efforts for improvement of his life, he noted. There are many tasks to be carried out for development of the whole division and improvement of living standard of the people residing in it. For example, relentless efforts should be made to increase sown acreage of monsoon paddy to 3 million acres under the three-year project and to meet the target yield set for each major crop. Only concerted and well-coordinated efforts need to be made for regional development as there have been a lot of bright prospects in the division.

It is necessary to have enough population as well as enough educated human resources and natural resources for development of a nation or a region. If relentless efforts are made based on the three points the nation or the region will make progress, he said.

(See page 9)

* It is necessary to have enough population as well as enough educated human resources and natural resources for development of a nation or a region.
* If relentless efforts are made based on the three points the nation or the region will make progress.
* There have been enough population, natural resources and educated human resources in Bago Division.
* Meanwhile, universities and colleges are subsidized in the region to be able to produce more educated human resources.
* The most important point is to widely exploit land and water resources in the division and renovation measures are to be taken in order to grow paddy and other crops in plain regions as well as in hilly regions.
Senior General Than Shwe gives guidances to local authorities, departmental heads at division, district and township levels in Bago Division. — MNA

Importance of wider exploitation of land and water resources in Bago Division stressed...

(from page 8)

There have been enough population, natural resources and educated human resources in Bago Division. Meanwhile, universities and colleges are established in the region to be able to produce more educated human resources. If the people in the division make efforts for development more progress can be made in the division with better foundations. The most important point is to widely exploit land and water resources in the division and renovation measures are to be taken in order to grow paddy and other crops in plain regions as well as in hilly regions. After giving guidance, Senior General Than Shwe greeted those present on the occasion.

Senior General Than Shwe hears reports on the Pyu Creek Multipurpose Dam Project presented by Minister for Agriculture and Irrigation Maj-Gen Htay Oo at its briefing hall. — MNA

There have been enough population, natural resources and educated human resources in Bago Division. Meanwhile, universities and colleges are established in the region to be able to produce more educated human resources. If the people in the division make efforts for development more progress can be made in the division with better foundations. The most important point is to widely exploit land and water resources in the division and renovation measures are to be taken in order to grow paddy and other crops in plain regions as well as in hilly regions. After giving guidance, Senior General Than Shwe greeted those present on the occasion.

Senior General Than Shwe gives guidances to local authorities, departmental heads at division, district and township levels in Bago Division. — MNA

Afterwards, Senior General Than Shwe and party arrived at Pyu Creek Multipurpose Dam project in Pyu Township where they were welcomed by Deputy Minister for Agriculture and Irrigation U Ohn Myint, Deputy Minister for Electric Power U Myo Myint and officials. At the briefing hall, Minister for Agriculture and Irrigation Maj-Gen Htay Oo reported to Senior General Than Shwe for acquisition of equipment for the project and financial matters. Next, Deputy Minister U Myo Myint also reported on Thaukyaikhat hydel power project.

Deputy Minister U Ohn Myint, member of the State Peace and Development Council Lt-Gen Tin Aye, Minister for Energy Brig-Gen Lun Thi and Minister Maj-Gen Tin Htut on the project area and geological data of Sittoung basin.

The Senior General gave guidance on implementation of Thaukyaikhat hydel power project, responsibilities and tasks for Pyu Creek project to be undertaken by the Ministry of Agriculture and Irrigation and the Ministry of Electric Power. The Senior General and party inspected the site for the main dam of Pyu Creek Multi-purpose project and progress of work.

Pyu Creek Multi-purpose project will jointly be undertaken by construction-4 of Irrigation Department and No 3 Construction of Hydro Electric Power Department. On completion of the project, it can irrigate about 100,000 acres of farmland and generate 40 megawatts.

Minister U Soe Tha presents reports. — MNA

Acting Managing Director of Myanma Sugarcane Enterprise U Ye Htut reported on condition of sugar mills, data of No 7 Sugar Mill (Oktwin), annual sugar production and growing of sugarcane. Minister Maj-Gen Htay Oo gave a supplementary report.

The Senior General gave guidance on efforts for full operation at the State-run sugar mills including No 7 Sugar Mill.

No 7 Sugar Mill can crush 2,000 tons of sugarcane a day. In the afternoon, the Senior General Than Shwe and party arrived in Toungoo by helicopter.

General Thura Shwe Mann gives clarifications. — MNA

Minister U Soe Tha presents reports. — MNA

Commander Maj-Gen Ko Ko presents reports. — MNA

MNA
Minister inspects construction of Chindwin Shipyards

YANGON, 14 March—Minister for Transport Maj-Gen Thein Swe inspected construction of maintenance and engineering workshop of Chindwin Shipyards of Inland Water Transport in Monywa on 11 March. The minister inspected vessels moored at the jetty and Thananlay-6 of IWT. He went to the Chindwin Shipyards project site where Managing Director of IWT U Soe Tint and Assistant General Manager U Myo Naing reported on progress of regional coordination, gudowns and houses for staff. The minister proceeded to the office of the head of Department of Water Resources and Improvement of River Systems where officials reported on arrangements for supply of machines used in river water pumping station. The minister heard a report on functions of District Hydrology and Meteorology Department.

Chairman of Mandalay Division Peace and Development Council Commander of Central Command Maj-Gen Ye Myint, the minister and Mandalay Mayor Brig-Gen Phone Zaw Han arrived at Gawwein Jetty and inspected Shwekeinnayi-2 of IWT. They proceeded to Mandalay Yadanabon Shipyards where Managing Director of IWT U Soe Tint and officials reported on functions of the shipyards and plying of vessels. The minister also inspected the division head of Department of Water Resources and Improvement of River Systems, Shipyards of Marine Administration Department, Mandalay International Airport.

— MNA

Myanmar Traditional Maha Thingyan Rules Enforcement Committee meets

YANGON, 14 March—The 1366 ME Myanmar Traditional Maha Thingyan Rules Enforcement Committee held its coordination meeting at the office of Yangon Division Peace and Development Council on Bank Street in Kyauktada Township here at 1 pm today with an address by Chairman of the Committee Maj-Gen Ye Myint. The meeting ended with the concluding remarks by Commander Maj-Gen Ye Myint.

The committee will be held on a grand scale and stressed the need for officials to take systematic measures to prevent undesirable acts and behaviours that are detrimental to the State and the people.

Next, the vice-chairmen reported on work being carried out for holding the water festival in accord with Myanmar traditions and cultures and action to be taken against decadent acts and mode of dress contrary to Myanmar traditions and cultures.

Afterwards, Minister Brig-Gen Pyi Sone and Deputy Commander of Yangon Command Brig-Gen Wai Lwin reported on matters related to cooperation of the respective sub-committees to hold the water festival on a grand scale.

The meeting ended with the concluding remarks by Commander Maj-Gen Ye Myint.
Seminar on Malaysia-Myanmar Business Opportunities held

YANGON, 14 March — A seminar on Malaysia-Myanmar Business Opportunities was held at the Sedona Hotel on KabaAye Pagoda Road here this morning.

The seminar was attended by Minister for Commerce Brig-Gen Tin Naing Thein, Minister for Labour and for Science and Technology U Thaung, Minister of International Trade and Industry of Malaysia Dato’ Cheah Sam Kip, General Secretary of the UMFCCI. — MNA

Minister looks into factories in Indakew Industrial Zone

YANGON, 14 March — Jointly-organized by AA Medical Products Ltd and Hanmi Pharm Co Ltd of Korea, a seminar on Scientific Symposium on Irritable Bowel Syndrome & 3rd Generation Cephalosporin was held at Grand Plaza Park Royal Hotel on Alanpya Pagoda Road yesterday.

The seminar was attended by Minister for Commerce Brig-Gen Tin Naing Thein, Minister for Labour and for Science and Technology U Thaung, Minister of International Trade and Industry of Malaysia Dato’ Cheah Sam Kip, General Secretary of the UMFCCI. — MNA

Commerce Minister Brig-Gen Tin Naing Thein addresses the Seminar on Malaysia-Myanmar Business Opportunities. — MNA

Next, Minister U Thaung explained investment opportunities in Myanmar. The Malaysian minister also explained matters relating to business cooperation between the two countries.

Afterwards, the Malaysian Minister answered the queries raised by those present. The seminar went into recess after the concluding remarks made by the meeting chairman.

At 2.30 p.m., Myanmar business entrepreneurs and Malaysian trade and investment delegation members discussed matters related to business opportunities, and the seminar concluded. Minister Brig-Gen Tin Naing Thein hosted a dinner in honour of Malaysian guests. At the Karrweik Palace in Kandawgyi yesterday evening. Also present at the dinner were Ministers for Labour and for Science and Technology U Thaung, Deputy Minister for Commerce Brig-Gen Aung Tun, Malaysian Ambassador to Myanmar Dato’ Cheah Sam Kip, directors-general and managing directors of the departments and enterprises under the Ministry of Commerce and officials.

Yesterday evening, over 50 Malaysian business entrepreneurs visited the Myanmar Convention Centre, where Myanmar products were displayed by the UMFCCI. — MNA

Medical Seminar held

YANGON, 14 March — A seminar on Irritable Bowel Syndrome-related medicines; Team Manager Pharmacist Ms Eun Young Seo of Hanmi Pharm Co Ltd and Team Manager Pharmacist Ms Eun Young Seo of Hanmi Pharm Co Ltd of Korea, a seminar on Scientific Symposium on Irritable Bowel Syndrome & 3rd Generation Cephalosporin (Cefixime) was held at Grand Plaza Park Royal Hotel on Alanpya Pagoda Road yesterday.

The seminar was attended by Head of Department of Yangon Institute of Medicine-1 Prof Dr Saw Naing, professors, doctors, Prof Dr Hyo Jin Park of Yonsei University College of Medicine, Irritable Bowel Syndrome-related medicines; Team Manager Pharmacist Ms Eun Young Seo of Hanmi Pharm Co Ltd and Team Manager Pharmacist Ms Eun Young Seo of Hanmi Pharm Co Ltd of Korea, officials of AA Medical Products Ltd and Hanmi Pharm Co Ltd of Korea.

First, Managing Director of AA Medical Products Ltd U Zaw Moe Khaing and Prof Dr Saw Naing delivered opening speeches on the occasion.

Next, Export Team Manager of Hanmi Pharm Co Ltd Mr YS Bang discussed situation of companies; Prof Dr Hyo Jin Park of Yonsei University
CLAIMS DAY NOTICE

“MVO BAGO VOY: NO. (5)”
Consignees of cargo carried on MV BAGO VOY: NO. (5) arrived on 14.3.05 are hereby notified that their cargo will be discharged into the premises of the Port of Yangon where it will lie at the consignees’ risk and expenses subject to the byelaws and conditions of the Port of Yangon.

Damaged cargo will be surveyed from 8 a.m. to 11.20 a.m. and 12 noon to 4 p.m. 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.

AGENCY DEPARTMENT
MYANMA FIVE STAR LINE

Phone: 295329, 295020, 295821, 295658, 295658

CLAIMS DAY NOTICE

MV SEA MERCHANT VEOY: NO. (551)
Consignees of cargo carried on MV SEA MERCHANT VEOY: NO. (551) are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on 15-3-05 and cargo will be discharged into the premises of A.W.P.T where it will lie at the consignees’ risk and expenses subject to the byelaws and conditions of the Port of Yangon.

Damaged cargo will be surveyed daily from 8 a.m. to 11.20 a.m. and 12 noon to 4 p.m. 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.

AGENCY DEPARTMENT
MYANMA PORT AUTHORITY

AGENT FOR: M/S ADVANCE CONTAINER SHIPPARING AGENCY DEPARTMENT

Phone No: 256050/378134/376797

OASIS

TRADEMARK CAUTION
Smithern-Quincy Company, a company incorporated in the State of Ohio, USA of 2020 Front Street, Suite 301, Cuyahoga Falls, OH 44221, USA is the Owner and Sole Proprietor of the following Trademark

TRADEMARK CAUTION

English First

Reg. No. 1385/1989 in respect of recording discs, cassettes, tapes, videos, CDs, videos and computer software; all relating to education and training in Classes 9 and 41.

“Printed matter, including books and other teaching and educational material” in Class 16.”

U Than Maung, Advocate
For English First Co
Kelvin Chia Yang Ltd
Unit 223 suritit Parkview
200 Altoine Road, Dagon Thiri
Yangon, Unin of Myanmar.
Kelvin Chia Yang Limited
Registered 13 Mar 2005

Spanish police arrest people suspected of siphoning funds from YUKOS

MADRID, 14 March — Spanish police have arrested people suspected of siphoning funds from Russian oil firm YUKOS without the company’s knowledge as part of a bigger money-laundering operation, a source close to the investigation said on Sunday.

“These are individuals who from inside the Russian company appear to have diverted sums of money... which then left the country without the knowledge of the company nor the tax authorities,” the source told Reuters.

Spanish police said on Saturday they had cracked a money-laundering operation worth up to 250 million euros (335.8 million US dollars) which might have links to YUKOS, but did not specify what those links might be.

Police arrested 41 people, including several lawyers, based on Spain’s so-called money-laundering activities including homicide, drug trafficking, illegal arms and prostitution.

The source declined to say how many of the 41 were Russian.

“They seem to have been ripping (YUKOS) off as well, to invest in a Dutch company, which then sent the money to Spain,” the source said.

MNA/Reuters

Guatemalans continue protests against FTA ratification

MEXICO, 13 March — Protests in Guatemala against a free trade agreement (FTA) between Central America and the United States entered their fourth day on Friday, following the Parliament’s approval of the agreement a day earlier despite intense demonstrations, said officials.

Banks that have detected the hidden software have posted information on their websites saying what to do if customers have been blocked. More than 1.4 million New Zealanders are registered to bank online.

---

Illicit cigarettes worth 11.64 million HK dollars seized

HONG KONG, 13 March — Hong Kong Customs officers seized 7.7 million illicit cigarettes valued at about 11.64 million HK dollars during a raid, a government Press release said Friday.

Customs officers raid a river trade vessel with a 40-container truck which declared to be carrying 980 cartons of cookware at a container terminal Thursday. About 7.7 million illicit cigarettes with duty potential of 6.24 million HK dollars were found inside the container.

MNA/Reuters
**China aims to become world’s largest shipbuilder**

*BEIJING, 13 March —* China aims to build more ships in the years ahead to cope with a growing demand from the international market and turn itself into the world’s largest shipbuilding nation, said He Rongguang, president of Bohai Shipbuilding Heavy Industrial Co Ltd based in northeast China’s Liaoning Province.

China presently builds about 15 per cent of the world’s total tonnage of ships and holds 17 per cent of all the global orders, said He, a deputy to the 10th National People’s Congress, in an interview with Xinhua on Saturday.

MNA/Xinhua

---

**Cyclone “Ingrid” batters Australia’s Tiwi islands**

*Sydney, 14 March —* Cyclone Ingrid battered island communities off Australia’s tropical city of Darwin on Monday, uprooting trees and ripping off roofs as it moved across the country’s northern coast, but there were no reports of injuries.

Winds of up to 135 miles-per-hour cut categories to the Tiwi islands but Ingrid spared Darwin, which was destroyed by a cyclone on Christmas Day 1974. “At this stage there are no reported injuries,” said Northern Territory Police Commissioner Paul White.

Cyclone Ingrid, with winds of about 2,500.

“Gale force winds generated by Cyclone Ingrid have caused significant damage on the Tiwi Islands north of Darwin overnight, but the Northern Territory’s capital is expected to escape its destructive force,” said the latest cyclone warning bulletin.

Authorities said the full extent of damage on the small islands would not be known until communications were restored.

Tropical cyclone forecaster Sally Cutter said a cyclone warning still existed for Darwin, despite forecasts the storm had passed the city.

MNA/Reuters

---

**17 Canadians on “Forbes” billionaires list**

*OTTAWA, 13 March —* Another Canadian has made his entry into the exclusive but growing circle of people worth at least one billion US dollars in 2005, it is reported here on Friday.

According to Forbes magazine’s annual survey of the world’s super-rich, Russian-born businessman Alexander Shnaider, who is now a naturalized Canadian, is worth 1.4 billion US dollars, good enough for 488th place.

Shnaider is chairman of the Midland Group, a privately-owned international investment organization.

He recently paid about 41.5 million US dollars to buy a Formula One car racing team and is planning to build Toronto’s tallest building with real estate mogul Donald Trump.

The wealthiest Canadian entry on the list is still media magnate Ken Thomson and family, who again rank 15th on the list overall with a net worth of 17.9 billion US dollars. Fifteen other Canadian individuals and families remain billionaires.

MNA/Xinhua

---

**Eight foreign terror suspects granted bail in Britain**

*LONDON, 13 March —* Eight foreign terror detainees who have been held for up to three years without charge in Britain were granted bail on Friday by a British judge.

At a hearing of the Special Immigration Appeals Commission, Justice Ouseley signed orders granting bail to the men, who will leave custody under strict conditions — including a 12-hour curfew and restrictions on who they can meet and on their access to mobile phones and the Internet.

Among them was 33-year-old Jordanian Mahmoud Suliman Ahmed Abu Rideh, who was imprisoned at Belmarsh high-security jail following his detention in December 2001. Others were given code names such as B, P, E, H, K and Q.

The foreign suspects were detained under powers in the 2001 Anti-terrorism, Crime and Security Act, which expires on 13 March 2005 and which Britain’s highest court ruled, in December 2004, as being illegal and breaching the European Convention on Human Rights.

MNA/Xinhua

---

**At least 15 injured in eastern Turkey quake**

*ANKARA, 13 March —* At least 15 people were slightly injured in an earthquake in eastern Turkey on Saturday morning, the semi-official Anatolia news agency reported.

Erkan Capar, the head of Karliova Town of eastern city of Bingol, said 15 people were slightly injured in the earthquake measuring 5.7 on the Richter Scale.

MNA/Xinhua

---

**Two leading steel companies in N-E China to merge**

*BEIJING, 13 March —* Anshan Iron and Steel Group, one of the steel giants in China, would merge with another major steel company soon, General Manager Liu Jie said here Saturday on the sidelines of the national legislature’s annual session.

The merger of Anshan Steel and Benxi Steel, both located in northeast China Liaoning Province, will create China’s second largest steel producer with an annual capacity of more than 20 million tons, next only to the Shanghai-based Baosteel, said Liu, without giving any details of the deal.

Baosteel is the first Chinese steel company with annual production exceeding 20 million tons. The company produced 21.38 million tons of steel last year.

MNA/Xinhua

---

**Colombia to host first Latam Education Conf**

*Bogota, 13 March —* Colombia will host the first Latin American Education Congress scheduled for 17-18 March to analyse the educational policies of the region, organizers said on Friday.

Luz Saavedra, a coordinator of the meeting dubbed “Educators: Great Social Transformers”, said the participants will examine the educational policies of Latin America so as to make comparisons with those of Colombia, and to debate free, popular and inclusive pedagogy.

“We want to know if the changes introduced by the school organization, the institutional projects, the assessment of performance and the lack of training, among other aspects, do good or bad to education,” Saavedra said.

The educators will also elaborate on their positions on a free trade agreement among Colombia, Peru and Ecuador and the United States.

MNA/Xinhua
Qatar Masters golf tourney

DOHA, 14 March—World number three Ernie Els fired a seven-under 65 to storm to a one-shot win over Sweden's Henrik Stenson at the Qatar Masters on Sunday.

It gave the South African, who carded eight birdies and one bogey, a 12-under aggregate 276 and a second victory in seven days after his third Dubai Classic success last week.

Els, who languished in joint 81st place after an opening 73, began his final round five shots down on overnight leader Stenson.

The former world number one started with a flourish, almost clipping in for an eagle at the 1st. After dropping a shot on the short third Els went on a birdie spree for a front nine-33 before adding four more birdies to his tally. Els next plays at the Bay Hill Invitational in Orlando, Florida next week.

Swede Stenson began well with two birdies in the opening three holes, but two bogeys and then a double-bogey at the 14th dropped him down the leaderboard before he rallied with three birdies to finish second on 1-under. Australian Richard Green and Sweden's Pierre Fulke tied for third on nine-under-par.—MNA/Reuters

Blackburn defeat Leicester City 1-0

LONDON, 14 March—Striker Paul Dickov scored a late penalty to give Blackburn Rovers a scrappy 1-0 victory over his old club Leicester City and a place in the FA Cup semifinals on Sunday.

Blackburn were heading for a replay against their Second Division opponents until Norwegian midfielder Morten Gamst Pedersen was felled by defender Darren Kenton and Dickov blasted home the spot-kick in the 83rd minute at Ewood Park.

Mark Hughes' men join holders Manchester United, who thrashed Southampton 4-0 in their quarterfinal on Saturday, and Arsenal, who beat Bolton Wanderers 1-0, in Monday's draw.

Hughes, who will return to his native Wales for next month's semifinals, told Radio Rovers: "It was a difficult game, one of those where it was a little scruffy and stop-start. We never got the momentum."

As his match-winner, Hughes said: "It showed the mental strength of Paul. He's stood up to be counted, taken the responsibility and he's got his reward."

Blackburn had spurred several earlier chances to book their first appearance in the semifinals since 1960, with Pedersen proving their most dangerous player.

The Norwegian hit the woodwork with an early free kick and followed up with another in the second half which caused a scramble just a metre from the Leicester goal line.

Australian defender Lucas Neill had Blackburn's other clearest chance, but his scuffed shot under pressure was easily gathered by goalkeeper Ian Walker. Dickov, who joined Blackburn this season after a two-year spell at Leeds, decided the tie when Pedersen was floored by Kenton's clumsy sliding challenge and his booming spot-kick gave Walker no chance.

The FA Cup action was due to continue later on Sunday with Newcastle United entertaining Tottenham Hotspur at St James' Park. —MNA/Reuters

Kaka gives AC Milan all three points against Sampdoria

MILAN, 14 March—AC Milan hung on for a 1-0 win over Sampdoria in Serie A on Sunday with a 65th minute header from Brazilian Kaka, ensuring they keep the pressure on rivals Juventus.

Milan lead on 63 points with Juventinus, who play at Chievo Verona later on Sunday, three points behind in second place.

During a nervous finale for Milan, Sampdoria began to get more into the game when Brazilian Flach's shot was cleared off the line by Jaap Stam.

David Di Michele scored a hat-trick for Udinese as they enjoyed a shock 5-1 win over Lazio on Sunday, while Luciano Spalletti's fellow high-fliers Espanyol moved up to third spot in the standings, seven points behind Real after striker Diego Forlan inspired them to a 4-1 home win over Espanyol.

The Uruguayan scored one goal, made another and then won a penalty in a brilliant display against fellow high-flyers Espanyol.

Forlan put Villarreal in front and took his tally for the season to 17 goals when he whistled the ball into the net from the edge of the area 26 minutes into the game at El Madrigal. Espanyol hit back five minutes later when Albert Lopo scored with a fine diving header after breaking between two defend- ers to meet Oscar Reina's cross from the right.

Forlan helped restore his side's lead five minutes into the second half when he picked out Juan Pablo Sorin with a pinpoint cross from the right, leaving the Argentine midfielder to finish with a close-range header. —MNA/Reuters

Newcastle advance to FA Cup semis with 1-0 victory over Spurs

NEWCASTLE (England), 14 March—Newcastle United advanced to the FA Cup semifinals with a 1-0 victory over Tottenham Hotspur on Sunday, while Blackburn Rovers also squeezed through 1-0 against Leicester City.

Newcastle's Dutch striker Patrick Kluivert, neatly set up by captain Alan Shearer, coolly finished into the far cor- ner after five minutes of a goalless game at St James' Park.

Striker Paul Dickov converted an 83rd minute penalty to give Blackburn a scrappy victory over his old club, securing their first appearance in the last four since 1960.

The winning teams joined holders Manchester United, who thrashed Southampton 4-0 in their quarterfinal on Sat- urday, and Arsenal, who beat Bolton Wanderers 1-0, in Monday's draw.

Sunday's spotlight was trained firmly on Tyneside, where an early header by Jermain Defoe. Newcastle's cause was undermined five minutes before the break when centre half Titus Bramble limped off with an injury that will keep him out for several weeks and midfielder Jermaine Jenas ended up in the unfamiliar position of left back.

Tottenham pushed their hosts onto the back foot for much of the second half but were unable to find a way past Given, who pulled off one astonishing double-save.—MNA/Reuters

Real Madrid slump to 2-1 defeat at Getafe

MADRID, 14 March—Real Madrid effectively waved goodbye to their already faint hopes of mounting a challenge for the Spanish league title when they slumped to a 2-1 defeat at modest city neighbours Getafe on Sunday.

Real's third league loss in five games, which comes just four days after Real were knocked out of the Champions League by Juventus, leaves them 11 points adrift of leaders Barcelona with 10 games left until the end of the season.

Unlike Real, Barca shook off the disappoint- ment of their Champions League loss to Chelsea with a 2-0 win over Ath- letic Bilbao on Saturday.

Earlier Villarreal moved up to third spot in the standings, seven points behind Real after striker Diego Forlan inspired them to a 4-1 home win over Espanyol.

The Uruguayan scored one goal, made another and then won a penalty in a brilliant display against fellow high-flyers Espanyol.

Forlan put Villarreal in front and took his tally for the season to 17 goals when he whistled the ball into the net from the edge of the area 26 minutes into the game at El Madrigal. Espanyol hit back five minutes later when Albert Lopo scored with a fine diving header after breaking between two defend- ers to meet Oscar Reina's cross from the right.

Forlan helped restore his side's lead five minutes into the second half when he picked out Juan Pablo Sorin with a pinpoint cross from the right, leaving the Argentine midfielder to finish with a close-range header. —MNA/Reuters

Newcastle's Lee Bowyer, left, tussles with Tottenham Hotspur's Noureddine Naybet for the ball during their FA Cup 6th Round soccer match at Newcastle's St James' Park, on Sunday, 13 March, 2005. —INTERNET

Real Madrid's Raul (L) and Ronaldinho (R) react after ceding the second goal during their Spanish League football match at the Alfonso Perez Munoz Coliseum in Getafe near Madrid.—INTERNET

Newcastle United's Alan Shearer (C) and teammate Mikael Silvestre (L) celebrate after defeating Tottenham Hotspur 1-0 on Sunday. —INTERNET

Newcastle United's Alan Shearer (C) and teammate Mikael Silvestre (L) celebrate after defeating Tottenham Hotspur 1-0 on Sunday. —INTERNET
US can end up in dock over reports of its war on terror

GENEVA, 14 March — The United States, usually a finger-pointer on human rights, could end up in the dock itself over reports of torture and abuse in its war on terror when the United Nations begins a worldwide scrutiny this week.

Activists, such as the New York-based Human Rights Watch, are urging members of the Commission on Human Rights to condemn Washington for mistreatment of prisoners detained abroad.

If any such move emerges during the commission’s annual session, which starts on Monday, the United States will be in a similar position to Cuba, Iran and Sudan, countries which Washington and others are likely to seek to pillory.

“If the commission is going to be taken seriously, it needs to be looking at the United States and other serious human rights situations,” said Louisa Fradkin, Geneva representative of Human Rights Watch.

The United States has been strongly criticized over revelations of abuse of prisoners in Iraq and Afghanistan and allegations of mistreatment of detainees at Guantanamo Bay in Cuba.

A high level panel of experts probing the workings of the UN, at the request of Secretary-General Kofi Annan, concluded its credibility had been eroded because members were more concerned with protecting themselves and their allies than in exposing rights violations.

Launched in 1946, the Geneva-based commission examines nations’ adherence to treaties and conventions on issues ranging from illegal killings and arbitrary detention to women’s rights, child pornography and the right to food and health. But the most political heat has traditionally been generated by report cards on individual countries.

MNA/Reuters

Melting of Himalayan glaciers will cause water crisis

GENEVA, 14 March—The World Wide Fund for Nature (WWF) warned Monday that global warming is spurring the melting rate of glaciers in the Himalayan region, and will cause water shortage for people in China, India and Nepal.

The WWF said in a new report that the glaciers are now retreating at an average rate of 10 to 15 metres per year.

“It will first increase the volume of water in rivers, causing widespread flooding”, said Jennifer Morgan, director of the WWF’s Global Climate Change Programme, in a statement.

“But in a few decades, this situation will change and the water level in rivers will decline, meaning massive economic and environmental problems for people in western China, Nepal and northern India,” she added.

MNA/Xinhua

WEATHER

Monday, 14 March, 2005

Summary of observations recorded at 09:30 hours MST: During the past 24 hours, light rain or thundershowers have been isolated in Southern and Eastern Shan State, weather has been partly cloudy in Kachin, Chin and northern Rakhine States and upper Sagaing Division and generally fair in the remaining areas. Day temperatures were (3°C) to (4°C) above normal in Kayin State, upper Sagaing and Tantinayi Divisions, (5°C) about normal in Mandalay and Ayeyawady Divisions and about normal in the remaining areas. The significant day temperatures were (40°C) each in Minbu, Pathein and Hpa-an.

Maximum temperature on 13-3-2005 was 102°F. Minimum temperature on 14-3-2005 was 68°F. Relative humidity at 9:30 hrs MST on 14-3-2005 was 78%. Total sunshine hours on 13-3-2005 was (9.0) hours approx. Rainfalls on 14-3-2005 were nil at Yangon Airport, Kaba-Aye and central Yangon. Total rainfalls since 1-1-2005 were nil at Yangon Airport, Kaba-Aye and central Yangon. Maximum wind speed at Yangon (Kaba-Aye) was (4) mph from Southwest at (19:10) hours MST on 13-3-2005.

Bay inference: Weather is partly cloudy in North and Southwest Bay and generally fair elsewhere in the Bay of Bengal.

Forecast valid until evening of 15-3-2005: Likelihood of isolated light rain or thundershowers in Kachin, Chin, northern Rakhine and northern Shan States and upper Sagaing Division and weather will be partly cloudy 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: Isolated light rain or thundershowers are likely in Northern Myanmar areas.

Forecast for Yangon and neighbouring area for 15-3-2005: Partly cloudy.

Forecast for Mandalay and neighbouring area for 15-3-2005: Partly cloudy.

French officials intensify contacts in effort to free its hostage

Paris, 14 March — French Prime Minister Jean-Pierre Raffarin said on Sunday French officials had intensified contacts in an effort to free a French hostage in Iraq, which allowed him to be hopeful.

Florence Aubenas, a French journalist with Liberation newspaper, was taken hostage with her Iraqi driver Hussein Hamun al-Saadi in Baghdad on 5 January.

Raffarin told Radio J that since he launched a direct appeal to Aubenas’s kidnappers on 3 March, French officials had achieved “an intensification in contacts and information, which today allows us to have some hope”. MNA/Reuters

Weather Map of Myanmar and Neighbouring Areas
Prime Minister
Lt-Gen Soe Win receives
Malaysian Minister

YANGON, 14 March — Prime Minister Lt-Gen Soe Win of the Union of Myanmar received Malaysian Minister of International Trade and Industry Dato’ Seri Rafidah Aziz and party at Zeyathiri Beikman, Konmyinttha this morning.

Also present at the call were Minister for Commerce Brig-Gen Tin Naing Thein, Minister for Foreign Affairs U Nyan Win, Deputy Ministers U Kyaw Thu and U Maung Myint, Director-General of the Prime Minister’s Office U Soe Tint, Director-General of Protocol Department Thura U Aung Htet and Malaysian Ambassador to Myanmar Dato’ Cheah Sam Kip.

During their meeting, they frankly discussed trade and investment between the two countries.

NCC delegate groups discuss compilation of papers on discussions

YANGON, 14 March — Members of panels of chairmen of National Convention Convening Work Committee and members of panels of chairmen of National Convention delegate groups held a coordination meeting on compilation of papers on discussions of delegate groups at the Nyaunghnapin Camp in Hmawby township this afternoon.

The meeting was attended by NCCWC Chairman Chief Justice U Aung Toe, Vice-Chairman Attorney General U Aye Maung, Secretary U Thaung Nyunt and members of panels of chairmen of the delegate group of political parties, delegate group of representatives-elect, delegate group of national races, delegate group of peasants, delegate group of workers, delegate group of intellectuals and intelligentsia, delegate group of State service personnel and delegate group of (See page 7)

NC delegate groups discuss compilation of papers on discussions

NCCWC Chairman Chief Justice U Aung Toe presides over the meeting. — MNA

Prime Minister
Lt-Gen Soe Win greets Malaysian Minister of International Trade and Industry Dato’ Seri Rafidah Aziz at Zeyathiri Beikman, Konmyinttha. — MNA

Four economic objectives

- Development of agriculture as the base and all-round development of other sectors of the economy as well
- Proper evolution of the market-oriented economic system
- Development of the economy inviting participation in terms of technical know-how and investments from sources inside the country and abroad
- The initiative to shape the national economy must be kept in the hands of the State and the national peoples

Four social objectives

- Uplift of the morale and morality of the entire nation
- Uplift of national prestige and integrity and preservation and safeguarding of cultural heritage and national character
- Uplift of dynamism of patriotic spirit
- Uplift of health, fitness and education standards of the entire nation

Four political objectives

- Stability of the State, community peace and tranquillity, prevalence of law and order
- National reconsolidation
- Emergence of a new enduring State Constitution
- Building of a new modern developed nation in accord with the new State Constitution

Stability of the State, community peace and tranquillity, prevalence of law and order

National reconsolidation

Emergence of a new enduring State Constitution

Building of a new modern developed nation in accord with the new State Constitution

State service personnel and delegate group of (See page 7)