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

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

Senior General Than Shwe receives Chairman of the Senate Standing Committee on Military Affairs of Thailand

YANGON, 19 May — Chairman of the State Peace and Development Council of the Union of Myanmar Commander-in-Chief of Defence Services Senior General Than Shwe received a Thai goodwill delegation led by former Supreme Commander of the Royal Thai Armed Forces Arthit Kamlang-ek, Secretary-1 of the State Peace and Development Council, Secretary-1 of the Ministry of Defence, Secretary-1 of the Committee on Military Affairs of Thailand, Admiral Soe Thein, Chief of Military Affairs Security Maj-Gen Myint Swe and Minister for Foreign Affairs U Nyan Win.

The Thai goodwill delegation was accompanied by Thai Ambassador Mr Suphot Dhirakaosal.

Billboard erected to hail MWVO conference

YANGON, 19 May — A ceremony to erect billboard hailing the Myanmar War Veterans Organization Conference for 2005 was held near the traffic lights in Min Su Ward in Loikaw, Kayah State on 9 May morning. Secretary of Kayah State Peace and Development Council Lt-Col Tin Htun and Chairman of Loikaw District PDC Lt-Col Win Maung formally opened the ceremony.

Next, Patron of Supervisory Committee for Kayah State WVO Chairman of Kayah State PDC Col Hla Myint Shwe pressed the button to open the billboard and the ceremony concluded.—MNA

Emergence of the State Constitution is the duty of all citizens of Myanmar Naing-Ngan.
To supply clean water to rural people

The State Peace and Development Council, upholding “Our Three Main National Causes”, has been implementing the plans for the development of border areas and 24 special regions in addition to the five rural development tasks.

The annual coordination meeting of the development affairs committees of the Development Affairs Department under the Ministry for Progress of Border Areas and National Races and Development Affairs was held at the Development Affairs Department on 16 May and it was attended by Secretary-1 of the State Peace and Development Council Lt-Gen Thein Sein.

In his address at the meeting, the Secretary-1 said that rural people would be healthier if safe drinking water could be supplied sufficiently in rural areas. Moreover, he added, it would save them time, money and labour to get a pail of water. He called for speedy completion of water supply projects in villages and constant maintenance of the existing tube-wells.

To supply clean water is the second one of the five rural development tasks and the government is implementing it in various townships by laying a 30-year plan. As a result, 7,157 out of 8,042 villages in three divisions in the dry zone have had sufficient water supply during the period from the fiscal year 2000-2001 to 2004-2005.

In the remaining states and divisions also, water supply projects have been completed in 7,152 out of 15,183 villages. Therefore, now all over the nation, 14,309 out of 23,225 villages have safe drinking water supply.

The government has provided K 1,536,574 million and Development Affairs Department funded K 2,833.94 million and wellwishers donated K 1,053.067 million, US $ 70,252, FEC funded K 2,833.94 million and wellwishers do-

The Deputy Minister for Information, Chairman of the village Peace and Development Council contributed K 30,000 to the fund of the library and handed over 335 books to an official of the library.

Self-reliant libraries mushrooming in Gangaw District

YANGON, 19 May — With the assistance of Gangaw District Information and Public Relations Department, libraries have been opened on self-reliant basis in every ward and village in Gangaw District.

So far, 119 libraries in Gangaw Township, 75 in Saw Township, 95 in Htilin Township and 45 in Kyauktu Township in Gangaw District have been established.

On 29 April, a self-reliant library was inaugurated in Kyauk Khone Tha Village in Gangaw Township. At the opening ceremony, Chairman of the village Peace and Development Council contributed K 30,000 to the fund of the library and handed over 335 books to an official of the library.

Appointment of Iranian Ambassador agreed on

YANGON, 19 May — The government of the Union of Myanmar has agreed to the appointment of Mr Mohsen Pak Aein as Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the Islamic Republic of Iran to the Union of Myanmar.

Mr Mohsen Pak Aein was born in 1954 in Fasa, Iran. He graduated from the University of Tehran with a Bachelor Degree in Political Science. After graduation, he joined the diplomatic service in 1981 and has served in various capacities at the Iranian Foreign Ministry and embassies in Zambia and Uzbekistan.

Mr Mohsen Pak Aein will be concurrently accredited as Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the Islamic Republic of Iran to the Union of Myanmar with residence in Bangkok.

He is married and has three children. — MNA

Deputy Minister for Information receives Thai guests

YANGON, 19 May — Deputy Minister for Information Brig-Gen Aung Thein received International Market Executive & Technical Engineer Mr Hideo Sato and party of Interink Press in Bangkok, Thailand, at the Ministry of Information at 2 pm today.

Also present at the call were Director-General U Khin Maung Hlay of Myanma Radio and Television, Acting Managing Director Col Aung Nyien of Printing and Publishing Enterprise, Managing Director U Soe Win of News and Periodicals Enterprise, Managing Director U Bo Kyi of Myanma Motion Picture Enterprise, Head of Office U Ye Tint and officials.

Mr Hideo Sato of Interink Press, Bangkok, and party call on Information Deputy Minister

Brig-Gen Aung Thein. — MNA

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China to improve agri-production, environmental protection

BEIJING, 18 May — China will fortify the agricultural base and intensify environmental protection for overall, well-coordinated and sustainable development, said Vice Premier Zeng Peiyan on Tuesday at the ongoing 2005 Fortune Global Forum here.

To accelerate agricultural development, the government is carrying out a policy under which industry supports agriculture and cities support the countryside, Zeng said.

The government will try its best to help farmers increase incomes, he said, adding that the government will increase the supply of crop seeds, chemical fertilizers and farm vehicles for agriculture, and enable grain supply mainly by increasing domestic production.

Efforts will also be continued to improve the production conditions and living environment in rural areas. To protect environment, China will encourage clean production and put discharge of major pollutants under strict control, Zeng said. Water pollution control should be reinforced in key regions and river valleys, and desulfurization carried out in coal-burning power stations.

Zeng urged governments at all levels to increase input in environmental protection, while at the same time pushing forward market-oriented operation of sewage treatment and garbage disposal.

Ecological conservation programs, including conversion of farm land to forests, soil erosion control and prevention of land desertification, will continue.

China will also strengthen cooperation with foreign countries in scientific and technological innovation, protect intellectual property rights and give full play to human resources, he said.— MNA/Xinhua

Vietnam, Thailand to cooperate in setting rice prices

HANOI, 18 May — Vietnam and Thailand are considering a proposal raised by the latter, under which the two countries will jointly set prices of several kinds of rice and sell them in the world market at the same price, Vietnamese newspaper Trade reported on Tuesday.

The kinds of rice under consideration include white rice 100 per cent grade B and white rice 5 per cent broken. Thailand is looking forward to bilateral meetings on the cooperation, said the report.

Such cooperation on rice prices will benefit both Thailand and Vietnam, especially in the context of long-lasting drought and higher expenses for materials, petroleum and transport, because it can prevent price decreases caused by competition between the world’s biggest and second biggest rice exporters, the report said. Vietnam has the edge on prices, and Thailand on quality and quality and supply stability.

Now, Thailand offers 5-per-cent broken rice at the price of 293-294 US dollars per ton, while the price of similar Vietnamese rice stands at 255-260 dollars per ton. Thus, some countries, including Iran and the Philippines, have recently turned to Vietnamese rice.

In the first 4 months of this year, Vietnam exported nearly 1.6 million tons of rice worth 425 million dollars, down 9.9 per cent in volume but up 10.6 per cent in value against the same period last year, according to the country’s General Statistics Office.

Vietnam, which shipped abroad over 4 million tons of rice worth 941 million dollars in 2004, is expected to export 3.8-3.9 million tons of the commodity this year. Meanwhile, Thailand’s rice export is estimated at 8 million tons, down from more than 10.1 million tons last year, according to the report.— MNA/Xinhua

Indonesia signs gas purchase contracts with foreign firms

JAKARTA, 18 May — The Indonesian oil and gas executive body, BP Migas, here Tuesday signed gas sale and purchase agreements with Malaysia’s Petronas Carigali Muriah Ltd and Kalifa Operator Pty Ltd and PetroChina International.

Under the agreements, Petronas will supply 145 trillion British thermal unit (BTU) of gas per day for a ten-year term to a gas-fired power plant in Central Java belonging to state-run electricity company PT Perusahaan Listrik Negara (PLN).

Kalifa will supply PLN’s Pekanbaru power plant with 15 trillion BTU of gas per day for 15 years, and PetroChina is awarded a five-year gas supply contract of 1.2 trillion BTU per day for a plywood industry in Papua Province.

The rising economic cost of the Iraq war

WASHINGTON, 19 May — Fighting in Iraq has been prolonged and remains intense enough that it has pushed the total cost of US military operations since 11 September, 2001, close to that of the Korean War.

Despite the yawning federal deficit, Congress hasn’t blinked at this price. And while annual defense spending is now as high as it ever was during the Reagan buildup, the US economy as a whole is much larger, making it easier, in economic terms, for the nation to shoulder the bill.

Yet the costs for Pentagon operations are likely to pile up years ahead. By 2010, war expenses might total $600 billion, according to the Congressional Budget Office. Much depends on when - and how many - US military personnel can be withdrawn from the Iraqi theater of operations.

“We can’t be any more certain about the trend of the defence budget than we can about the number of troops that will be deployed overseas,” says Steven Kosiak, director of budget studies for the Centre for Strategic and Budgetary Assessments.

The demands and unpredictability of war have, in essence, turned the defence budget into a two-part allocation. First is the regular budget request, which contains acquisition and research and development funds as well as personnel and operations costs, and which Congress considers in its normal appropriation processes. Second is the supplemental appropriations - the add-on emergency spending requested by the administration later in the year.
China’s top legislator arrives in Singapore

SINGAPORE, 18 May — Wu Bangguo, chairman of the Standing Committee of China’s National People’s Congress, arrived in Singapore on Tuesday for a three-day official good-will visit aimed at strengthening friendship and cooperation between the two countries.

Wu came at the invitation of Singapore Prime Minister Lee Hsien Loong and Parliament Speaker Abdullah Tarmugi.

In an arrival statement, Wu said China-Singapore relations have grown rapidly since the establishment of diplomatic ties between the two countries 15 years ago.

The China-Singapore relationship has witnessed “increasing mutual understanding and trust, remarkable achievements in economic and trade cooperation, increasingly active cooperation in science and technology, culture, education, personnel training and other fields,” Wu said.

The two countries also enjoy “well-maintained coordination and cooperation in international and regional affairs”, the Chinese top legislator said.

“Through this joint visit, we hope to mutually strengthen and bilateral relations will further develop,” he added.

On Wednesday, Wu will deliver a keynote speech at the China-Singapore Economic and Trade Cooperation Forum. Singapore is the first leg of Wu’s current four-nation Asia-Pacific tour, which will also take him to Australia, New Zealand and Malaysia.

President SR Nathan, Prime Minister Lee Hsien Loong, Speaker Abdullah, and Minister Mentor Lee Kuan Yew on bilateral relations and other issues of mutual interest.

Wu expressed the hope that through his visit, the traditional friendship and mutually beneficial cooperation between China and Singapore will be strengthened and bilateral relations further developed.

Samsung opens largest overseas LCD service centre in HK

HONG KONG, 18 May — Samsung Electronics Co Ltd, based in South Korea announced here on Tuesday the opening of its new LCD service centre in Hong Kong.

Samsung said the Hong Kong centre will serve the local market, as well as other areas in South China and Southeast Asia.

Equipped with the most advanced facilities and experienced technicians, the 2,500-square-meter Samsung Hong Kong LCD Service Centre is located in Sha Tin.

It can handle 6,000 items per month — representing the largest capacity in the world outside of South Korea.

At the opening ceremony held on Tuesday, President of Samsung Electronics HK Co Ltd BJ Chung said that the establishment of the service centre in Hong Kong demonstrated the company’s long-term commitment to serving the city as a regional base to serve the region.

Chung explained the strategic importance of the centre to the company’s business development. He said there was rising demand in the global LCD market.

“We are selling around 10,000-40-inch and larger panels per month around the world. As the key market player, Samsung Electronics is committed to providing top standard after-sales services to our customers,” he said.

NYPD offers $12,000 reward for suspect in British Consulate blasts

NEW YORK, 18 May — The New York Police Department is offering a 12,000-dollar reward for anyone who helps find the person responsible for the explosion earlier this month outside the midtown Manhattan building that houses the British Consulate, police sources said on Monday.

At least four people are seen in surveillance video taken the day of the blasts, but so far no one has come forward though NYPD has urged witnesses to contact the police and help identify the suspect.

Police Commissioner Ray Kelly said earlier that tapes show a female jogger, a bicyclist, a taxi and an Asian man in the area when the two makeshift grenades exploded.

Investigators have looked through 36 tapes from 23 locations. They are also trying to determine if other tenants in the building could have been targets, besides the British Consulate.

Two grenades set off outside the building, causing minor damage to the building. The devices were described as replica grenades, normally sold as novelty items, that were stuffed with gunpowder and lit with a fuse. — MNA/Xinhua

Danish intelligence says stability not in sight in Iraq

STOCKHOLM, 18 May — The tense security situation in Iraq will continue in the years to come, Ritzau news bureau reported on Tuesday quoting Denmark’s Defence Intelligence Service.

Improvements in the Iraqi security situation are a long way off, and a coalition pull-out now would drag the country into civil war, said Denmark’s Defence Intelligence Service in its latest review of the situation in Iraq. The report comes as the Parliament prepares to extend the mandate of the country’s contribution to the international coalition until 2006.

“There is no expectation of fewer attacks by extremists,” the report said. The report stated that the area in which Danish troops operate, the southern Basra Province, continued to be marked by more peaceful than other areas of the country, but that the situation there was still tense.

It also said that Iraqi security forces are still unable to maintain order on their own, and that a lack of a tradition of peaceful change of government could lead to power struggles for control of the security forces. — MNA/Xinhua

Indian Govt working on mega food parks policy

NEW DELHI, 18 May — Indian Food Processing Minister Subodh Kant Sahai said Tuesday that the government is planning to set up mega food parks with an investment of one billion rupees (23 million US dollars) and fiscal incentives for domestic and foreign investors, Indo-Asian News Service reported.

“Encourage foreign investors the government is working on agri-zones and the concept of mega food parks,” Sahai told the national conference and annual session of the Confederation of Indian Industry (CII) here. “The government is willing to invest up to one billion rupees in these parks. The central government is also working towards offering 100 per cent foreign direct investment and income tax benefits,” he added.

Sahai said that barriers to growth such as power shortages and the non-availability of water were being considered and these parks would enable industry to invite global partners to invest in the food processing industry. Sahai said that in order to provide impetus to the food processing industry, plans were afoot to set up at least one such processing unit in each parliamentary constituency so that the surplus could be utilized. — MNA/Xinhua

India hands over biscuits to WFP in Kabul

NEW DELHI, 18 May — The third tranche of fortified biscuits for Afghan children was handed over by India to the UN World Food Programme in Kabul.

These biscuits are part of India’s efforts in improving both the health of Afghan children.

The third tranche, totalling 18,000 metric tons and worth approximately 20 million dollars, was handed over Monday by India’s Ambassador to Afghanistan Rakesh Sood at a ceremony attended by Afghan Deputy Education Minister Inayatullah Aman and Deputy Cultural Minister Stanekzai, an official release said here.

Hundred-gramme biscuit packets are given to nearly one million school children everyday. It acts as an incentive to ensure school attendance.

This is the third year India is providing assistance as part of the 100 million US dollar committed for this purpose in 2002. — MNA/PTI

Chinese workers raise decorative balloons in preparation for Beijing Mayor Wang Qishan’s address to the delegates of the 2005 Fortune Global Forum during a reception in the Temple of Heaven in Beijing, China, on 17 May, 2005. — INTERNET

An Indian potter sits near pitchers while waiting for customers in a New Delhi street on 18 May, 2005. — INTERNET
China, India expected to explore opportunities

BEIJING, 18 May — As the world is busy praising the fast-developing Chinese market, India, China’s neighbour, is receiving increasing attention as an emerging economic power likely to set forth a development paradigm in the world.

At the ongoing 2005 Fortune Global Forum here in Beijing, corporate executives from across the globe listened to the interpretation of the Indian story from an insider’s perspective.

Lakshmi Narayan, the Indian-born CEO and President of the US-headquartered IT company Cognizant, admitted that his envoy of China’s sound infrastructure but was obviously confident in his country’s ability to “do a lot of catching-up” quickly.

Widely recognized as a potential leader in the world’s knowledge processing industry, India has been reporting robust growth in its IT-centric service sector. “We will continuously find intellectual, management and leadership resources and develop them across the globe,” Narayanan said, proud of the market growth of the Indian IT industry over the past ten years.

As the world’s second most populous nation, India boasts a large proportion of relatively young people with people aged under 45 accounting for 30 per cent of the country’s total population.

“Impressively young social structure propels the country to create more jobs and grow more rapidly,” said Michael Patasos-Fox, Chairman of McKinsey & Company Americas. Endowed with a sound educational system and a large population of young talents fluent in English and well-trained in professional disciplines, the south Asian country also enjoys a full-fledged capital market, a big advantage over China’s chronically bearish stock market. Meanwhile, India’s increasing exposure to social and economic achievements scored by peer developing nations such as China also helped create an “almost invisible” urgency in India for social and economic progress, said David Kirkpatrick, senior editor of the Fortune magazine, impressed by the Indian people’s overwhelming “we will succeed” mentality. — MNA/Inthua

Japan, Malaysia mull basic FTA deal

TOKYO, 18 May — Japan and Malaysia will negotiate a bilateral free trade agreement during a two-day vice-ministerial level meeting in Malaysia from Tuesday with the aim to seal a basic deal by the end of May, a top Japanese Trade Ministry official said Monday.

“We expect good results from the upcoming talks so that the two countries can strike a basic FTA agreement when Malaysian Prime Minister Abdullah Ahmad Badawi visits Japan on 25 May,” Vice Minister for Economy, Trade and Industry Hideji Sugiyama said at a Press conference.

The two countries, which launched official FTA talks in January last year, have reached a basic accord on agricultural and marine products but failed to narrow gaps on industrial products.

“Some progress was made in the auto and steel trade during the previous round of vice-ministerial talks in Tokyo last week, but differences remain,” Sugiyama said.

Malaysia may fully eliminate tariffs on vehicle imports by 2015 and is also considering immediate tariff removal on some models that do not compete with vehicles produced by national car makers Proton Holdings and Perusahaan Otomobil Nasional Kedua, better known as Perodua, according to the official. — MNA/Inthua

US soldier sentenced to six months in jail for prisoner abuse

WASHINGTON, 18 May — A US Army reservist convicted of mistreating Iraqi prisoners was sentenced on Tuesday to six months in jail for her role in the abuse at the Abu Ghraib Prison outside Iraqi capital Baghdad in late 2003.

Sabrina Harman, 27, a military policewoman, will also be reduced in rank to private and receive a bad conduct discharge, a military jury ruled at Fort Hood, Texas.

The punishments against Harman is one of the lightest handed down in the Abu Ghraib cases.

Harman was found guilty on Monday of four charges of maltreatment of detainees, one charge of conspiracy to maltreat detainees and one charge of dereliction of duty.

She had faced a maximum sentence of five and a half years in jail, but prosecutors asked the jury to sentence her three years in jail.

Harman appeared in several of the most infamous abuse photos taken by American military police at the Abu Ghraib Prison, including one photo showing a naked pyramid of Iraqi prisoners.
A head portion of a 150-kilogramme tuna awaits a fish shop worker sharpening a knife at Tsukiji fish market in Tokyo, on 17 May, 2005.—INTERNET

Indian women leading the world in equality

DAKSHA SINGH, 18 May — India would test-fire its 3,000 kilometres longest range surface-to-surface missile "Agni III" by the end year and has started induction of the short and intermediate range Agni I and Agni II versions in the newly raised strategic command, India’s top defence scientist Dr Nirmal Natrajan said on Tuesday.

"Development of Agni III missile is on schedule and it would fly by the end year," Natrajan said in a presentation made at the Defence Research and Development Organization Technology day awards function here in the presence of Prime Minister Manmohan Singh.

His remarks assume significance as DRDO has put off tests of the wholly solid Agni III missiles twice. Former defence minister George Fernandes had announced that the missile, which can give India the capability of developing intercontinental range ballistic missile, would be test fired in 2003 year end.

The missile was later scheduled to be tested in mid-2004, but the trials were put off with defence scientists saying some snags had been noticed in propulsion systems and that these were being rectified.

The country’s scientific advisor on defence also announced "nine successful test firings have been undertaken of the surface-to-air Akash missile and fourth generation fire and forget Nag anti-tank missiles," he said declaring that Nag was now ready for use trials.

However, DRDO officials did not throw light on the recent claims by country’s top missile scientist Dr Prabha of the organization developing a hyper-sonic missile development capability.

Natrajan also announced that India had achieved a breakthrough in indigenous production of the pilotless target aircraft, Lakshya and remotely piloted vehicle Nishant.

While 13 Lakshya had been delivered to three services, on Nishant UAV, limited series production had started with the system being in advanced stages of clearance by the Ministry of Defence for induction.

On indigenous Battlefield Surveillance Radars, he said Army had placed a bulk order for 1,171 man portable systems at a cost of 5.51 billion rupees with Bharat Electronics in Bangalore.

He said that Indian artillery would get a boost with two regiments being equipped with Pinaka multi-barrel rocket system, which fires 12 rockets in 40 seconds. Natrajan also said that DRDO had successfully developed a man portable briefcase size satellite receivers which had been successfully tested and orders received for the first batch of six systems.

MNA/PTI

ADB to offer loans to Cambodia for airport expansion

PASUM PENN, 18 May — The Asian Development Bank (ADB) will provide a four million US dollars loan to the Cambodian Government to expand Ratanakkiri Airport to promote tourism, according to a local newspaper report on Tuesday.

Work on Ratanakkiri Airport will start in about 18 months.

The runway will be paved and lengthened so planes carrying 70 passengers can land, and a fence will be built to keep wild animals out. The Cambodia Daily quoted Alfredo Perdiguero, a project economist with the ADB’s Mekong department, saying.

"Tourism is growing so much in Cambodia, but is too restricted in Siem Reap," Perdiguero said. "We will distribute the tourists in other areas," he added.

The statement from the ADB’s most recent statistics, about 12,000 people visit the province each year.

The news airport could triple that figure or about 100 tourists per day.

Tourist arrivals in 2004 were over 1.05 million, which earned more than 777 million US dollars for the country, the report said.

MNA/Xinhua

Nordic countries lead in equality of women’s social status

STOCKHOLM, 18 May — Norway and the other Nordic countries are the leading nations of the world when it comes to the equal status of women in society, Norwegian Broadcasting (NRK) reported on Tuesday.

The least difference between men and women within politics, society, work and education is found in Sweden, followed by Norway, Iceland, Denmark and Finland, according to a survey among 58 countries, made by the World Economic Forum.

The report covered 30 OECD countries and 28 other emerging markets. The study compared gender differences in wages, access to labour market, political representation, access to education, and access to reproductive healthcare.

Augusto Lopez-Claros, chief economist and director of the Global Competitiveness Programme at the World Economic Forum, said the Nordic example demonstrated that countries could reap handsome economic rewards for their efforts to minimize the gender gap.

S Korea’s used car exports tumble this year

SEOUL, 18 May — South Korean exports of secondhand vehicles have plunged this year due largely to Iraq’s restrictions on imports, the South Korean News Agency quoted a trade association as reporting on Tuesday.

Overseas shipments of used cars plunged 41.5 percent from a year ago to 44,600 units in the January-April period, according to the Seoul Used Car and Part Export Association.

The nosedive represents a sharp turnaround from 2004, when exports of secondhand vehicles spiked 68 percent year-on-year to 273,900.

The sharp drop was attributed mainly to a January import ban the Iraqi Government imposed on vehicles made before 2000. "The import regulation was the biggest reason for the tumble in exports," said Park Sangjun, an official at the association.

MNA/Xinhua

Thousands of Vietnamese in need of kidney, liver transplant

HANOI, 18 May — Between 5,000 and 6,000 chronic kidney patients in Vietnam need to undergo kidney transplant surgery, and thousands of other local people want liver transplants, according to the country’s Health Ministry on Tuesday.

However, Vietnam is facing scarcity of kidney and liver sources for transplant, so some local patients have to undergo operation in China. Over 200 Vietnamese people have had their kidneys transplanted in the neighbour country in recent years.

In the capital city of Hanoi alone, 1,500 Vietnamese liver patients are now in need of liver transplant, but they find no liver donors.

Vietnam’s first liver transplant was successfully conducted early last year with the liver donor being a 31-year-old man and the recipient being his 10-year-old daughter. The country carried out over 110 kidney transplant cases in the 1992-2004 period.

MNA/Xinhua

An artist’s impression of the ‘City of Dreams’, a hotel and casino project featuring the world’s first underwater casino to be built in Macau’s Cotai island, is displayed in Hong Kong on 17 May, 2005.—INTERNET

107-year-old woman to vote in parliamentary elections in Gaza

Gaza, 18 May — A 107-year-old woman has registered her name to vote in the 17 July parliamentary elections, elections officials said on Tuesday.

Officials in the Central Elections Committee in Gaza said Hakeema Darweesh Sheikh al Eeed, born in 1898, went to the Rafah registration office Monday evening asking for registration.

Sheikh al Eeed, a resident in Rafah refugee camp in southern Gaza Strip, told elections officials that she came to register her name to avoid confusion that happened in the presidential elections in January and municipal elections held in Rafah, where her name was not on the list.

The oldest Palestinian woman in the Gaza Strip holds an identity card she obtained when the Gaza Strip was under the British mandate before 1948. Her full name was clearly written in ID. “I ask everyone who wants to come to and register his name on the list. I urge all my children and grandchildren, to come and register her,” she said.

The registration team warmly welcomed the woman, promising that “her name will be there in the coming elections.”

MNA/Xinhua

The new airport could triple that figure or about 100 tourists per day.

Tourist arrivals in 2004 were over 1.05 million, which earned more than 777 million US dollars for the country, the report said.

MNA/Xinhua

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MNA/Xinhua
Myanmar delegation led by Head of State Senior General Than Shwe attended the Asian-African Summit 2005 held in Jakarta for two days on 22 and 23 April, and the Commemoration of Golden Jubilee of Asia-Africa Conference held in Bandung on 24 April. At the conference, the leaders of the two continents reinvigorated the Bandung spirit that was conceived at the Bandung Conference and found areas of friendly cooperation in the future.

In addition to heads of state/government and government representatives of 54 Asian nations and 52 African nations totalling 106, the UN secretary general also attended the conference. There were representatives from large and small nations as well as rich and poor countries.

The combined population of the two continents is 4.6 billion or over 73 per cent of the global population. The total gross domestic product of the countries of Asia and Africa is about US $ 9.3 trillion. Superficially, the figures look encouraging. But a number of Asian and African nations are still in poverty facing the problem of illiteracy, diseases, socio-economic hardships, political instability and internal armed conflicts resulting from the consequences of the long-time exploitation and the di-vide-and-rule policy of the colonialists, insincere and insufficient aids the rich nations have been providing to them together with acts of agitation, and their own weaknesses.

A look back at the past 50 years will show that colonial powers including Britain, France, Dutch and Belgium were reluctant to relinquish their colonies. Thus, the colonized nations were struggling to regain independence. And when World War II ended, the Cold War started and the tensions were high between the west bloc led by the US and the east bloc led by the Soviet Union. But for the newly independent nations including Myanmar they would be able to safeguard their sovereignty and would not become a minion of the powers only if they are free to themselves from the Cold War.

**Bandung**

In that situation, leaders of the five politically awakened nations — Myanmar, India, Sri Lanka, Indonesia and Pakistan — met in Colombo, Sri Lanka, in April 1954 and initiated the idea of holding the Asia-Africa Conference. The historic first Asia-Africa Conference was held in Bandung, West Java, Indonesia, in April 1955.

Leaders of 26 Asian nations including Myanmar and three African nations totalling 29 attended the conference. Such a large conference attended by representatives of 29 nations was rare during the time. The first Asia-Africa Conference was known more as the Bandung Conference. The Bandung Declaration provided effective spiritual encouragement to the countries striving to regain independence and the newly independent nations.

Many new liberated nations emerged in the world, and their opinion of the founding of the Non-Aligned Movement of the third world countries had conceived among the former colonies to free themselves from the dangers of the Cold War between the two rival powers. Even then global powers were not able to reject, but had to accept and recognize the 10 principles of international relations laid down by the Bandung Conference. The conference was successful to that degree.

**The Asian-African Summit 2005**

Thanks to the efforts of the co-sponsors — Indonesia and South Africa — and the revitalization of the Bandung spirit, the number of participating countries has increased to 106 at the first Asia-Af-rica Summit.

**The Bandung Conference has gone down in the annals of history for laying down the international relations principles including friendship, mutual cooperation, equality and peaceful co-existence between the nations. The rise of terrorism has caused encroachments upon the territo-rial integrity and sovereignty of many small nations.**

The Bandung Conference has gone down in the annals of history for laying down the international relations principles including friendship, mutual cooperation, equality and peaceful co-existence between the nations. The rise of terrorism has caused encroachments upon the territorial integrity and sovereignty of many small nations. The international community is facing lopsided and self-centred pressures and intimidations, with human rights and democracy as excuses. And the rich-poor gap is still widening in the world.

The majority of developing countries are still facing and addressing the socio-economic problems of poverty, epidemics including new kind of diseases, portable water shortages and lower education standard.

True, for the newly independent nations, the evil colonialism and the Cold War were real challenges for them to overcome in 1955. But in today’s changing era, dignity, security, peaceful co-existence and sufficiency in social lives are the actual require-ments.

At the conference, Head of State Senior General Than Shwe explained the importance of Bandung Conference and the emergence of a fairer world, saying, “Myanmar is proud to have been among the 29 countries at the Bandung Conference and among the Colombo Five that co-sponsored and initiated the historic conference. The ten principles adopted in Bandung remain sacrosanct for developing countries like ours. I would like to urge that we always uphold those principles. The world today is vastly different from that of 1955. It is a matter of deep satisfaction that all countries in Asia and Africa have regained independence and moved forward. We have indeed come a long way. However, political freedom without commensurate eco-nomic development and human security does not meet fully the aspirations of our peoples for a fairer and more equitable world.”

Leaders of other nations also delivered ad-dresses at the conference. During the two-day con-fERENCE, the leaders found time to hold meetings between themselves on the sideline. Myanmar leader Senior General Than Shwe held talks with UN Secretary-General Mr Kofi Annan, President Mr Hu Jintao of the People’s Republic of China, and President Mr Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono of Indo-nesia. He also met with Japanese Prime Minister Mr Junichiro Koizumi and Singaporean Prime Minister Mr Lee Hsien Loong.

The Asian-African Summit 2005 is a his-toric meeting benefiting the human race. The con-fERENCE adopted and issued the Declaration on a “New Asian-African Strategic Partnership” and the joint statement on tsunami, earthquake and other natural disasters. It also approved to convene the next four-yearly summit in South Africa.

The benefits of the 1955 Bandung Confer-ence still exist for 50 years till today. The Asian-African Summit 2005 will help practically enhance the mutual understanding, friendship and coopera-tion between the two continents.

Concerning the matter, Myanmar leader Senior General Than Shwe in his address said, “The spirit of Bandung remains a potent force for closer relations between the two regions. What needs to be done now is to galvanize our efforts by adopting an effective and sustainable mechanism for interregional dialogue and cooperation.”

In this regard, the peoples of the two re-gions should continue to establish and maintain a firm Asian-African Strategic Partnership with prac-tical and long-term beneficial efforts, while adher-ing to the Bandung principles that remain a potent force till now.

(Translation: TMT)

YANGON, 19 May — Wellwishers donated stipends for students to Myanmar Women’s Affairs Federation at Khabaung Hall, Illicit Trafficking was held at the meeting hall of the federation this afternoon.

President of MWAF Daw Than Than Nwe presented K 1,000,000 for the stipend to Vice-President Daw Khin Lay Myint. Next, President Daw Than Than Nwe, Vice-President Daw Khin Lay Myint and General Secretary Prof Dr Daw Khin Mar Tun accepted K 5,206,000 donated by 21 wellwishers including K 1 million by Managing Director U Soe Thein of Dhana Aung Co Ltd and wife Additional Judge of Yangon Division Daw Khin Cho Ohn; K 415,000 by members of the Rehabilitation and Reintegration Working Group and wellwishers; K 370,000 by members of the Women’s Social Enhancement Working Group, K 300,000 by Ministry of Commerce; K 270,000 by Information Division and wellwishers; K 100,000 each by Myanmar Paper & Stationery Co and Shine Construction; K 100,000 each by Finance Division, wellwishers, members of the National Races Affairs Working Group, Legal Affairs Working Group, Consultation Working Group; K 180,000 by Director Daw Khin Moe Nyunt of Aung Yi Phyo Co Ltd; K 131,000 by members of the social and cultural working group; K 128,000 by members of the Discipline Enforcement Division and wellwishers; K 110,000 by Leader of Rehabilitation and Reintegration Working Group Daw Khin Aye and family; K 100,000 each by wellwishers of the Organization Division, gem merchant Daw Myint Myint Aye; Dr Aung Kyaw Win-Daw Thet Thet Khaing of Shwe Nawdaw Jewelry Shop, U Mya Soe of Doh Shwepyi Construction, Dr Myat Thu-Dr Khin Cho Oo and family of Asia Tawwin Specialist Clinic, Director U Thein Lwin of Asia Tawwin Specialist Clinic, U Kyaw Khang-Daw Khin Khan Aye of Myanmar Ahla Construction, President of Myanmar Traditional Sports Federation Daw Mi Khin, Chairman of Myanmar Engineering Society U Than Myint, Daw Khin Thein Kyi, U Tin Hla-Daw Aye Aye Kyi, and Dr Aung Win-Daw Kyaw Kyaw Zin. K 42,000 by wellwishers of the Management Division. Afterwards, certificates of honour were presented to the wellwishers. President Daw Than Than Nwe thanked the wellwishers for their donations.

MWAF President Daw Than Than Nwe thanks wellwishers for their donations for stipends of students. — MNA

Contest to mark International Day against Drug Abuse and Illicit Trafficking held

YANGON, 19 May — An opening ceremony of arts, cartoon, poster and computer poster contest to mark International Day against Drug Abuse and Illicit Trafficking was held on 14 May morning at Khabaung Hall, Taungoo, Bago Division, Taungoo District, Peace and Development Council Chairman Lt-Col Ye Myint made an address and commander of District Police Force Police Lt-Col Tun Yi reported on contests. Afterwards, Taungoo District PDC Chairman Lt-Col Ye Myint opened the ceremony. Computer poster and arts contests took place at the hall of Education College on 15 May.

YANGON, 19 May — A ceremony to erect billboard hailing the Myanmar War Veterans Organization Conference for 2005 was held in front of city hall of Monywa on 15 May morning. It was attended by Chairman of Sagaing Division Peace and Development Council Commander of North-West Command Maj-Gen Tha Aye and departmental personnel.

Chairman of Supervisory Committee for Sagaing Division WVO sprinkled scented water on the billboard, erected it and the ceremony ended. — MNA

Workshop on production of learning aids commenced

YANGON, 19 May — The workshop on production of learning aids for disabled youths was launched at the Myanmar Education Research Bureau on Pyay Road, Kamayut Township this morning. Present on the occasion were Minister for Education U Than Aung, Deputy Ministers U Myo Nyunt and Brig-Gen Aung Myo Min, departmental heads, guests, principals, teachers and students of Mary Chapman’s School for the Deaf and Dumb and Yangon School for the Blind (Khawegyan).

The minister in his address said that the workshop contributes towards the project “Education for All”. The Inclusive Education Plan covers the drive for enabling handicapped children to pursue education. He called for establishment of learning and recreation centres fully in stalled with pedagogical aids for disabled children. The workshop continues till 25 May. — MNA
Ash of Naya Sayadaw put into Ayeyawady River

YANGON, 19 May — A ceremony to put ash of the remains of Naya Sayadaw Bhaddanta Medhayaithanna, State Ovadaarpa Abhidhaja Ma Ha Rattha Guru Abhidhaja Agga Ma Ha Saddhammajotika Chairman of Tipitaka Pali-Myanmar Dictionary Treatise Committee, of Dekkhinayama Phaygyi Taik in Chanyathazin Township, was held at Gawwein Jetty in Chanyathazin Township on 16 May morning.

Altogether 30 members of the Sangha led by Lepaw Monastery Sayadaw U Karasa graced the ceremony. Also present on the occasion were Chairman of Mandalay Division Peace and Development Council Commander of Central Command Maj-Gen Ye Myint, Minister for Religious Affairs Brig-Gen Thura Myint Maung, Chairman of Mandalay City Development Committee Mayor Brig-Gen Phone Zaw Han, Deputy Commander Brig-Gen Nay Win, authorities, social organizations, relatives and local people.

The commander and the minister conveyed golden and silver urns of the Sayadaw on board the Karaweik barge.

The urns were carried by Karaweik barge to the designated place of Ayeyawady River. Meanwhile, members of the Sangha recited religious verses. The commander and the minister put the ash into the river.

Afterwards, the commander attended the coordination meeting of Mandalay Division Police Force held at the division MPF office.

Commander attends Shan State inter-middle school soccer tourney

YANGON, 19 May — Chairman of Shan State Peace and Development Council Commander of Eastern Command Maj-Gen Khin Maung Myint attended the prize-presentation ceremony for Shan State Education Officer’s Shield inter-middle school soccer tournament (2005) at Pyidaungsu sports ground on 16 May afternoon.

In the final match, Muse District (B) team beat Lashio District (A) team 8-7.

Director-General U Khin Maung Lin of Customs Department and wife donate alms to Sayadaw Bhaddanta Saddhamma Kittisara of Aungsan Tanwa TatU Monastery of Insein at 18th communal ordination ceremony of Customs Department on 14 May, 2005. — MNA

Construction tasks in Ayethaya Industrial Zone inspected

YANGON, 19 May — Chairman of Shan State Peace and Development Council Commander of Eastern Command Maj-Gen Khin Maung Myint arrived at the site to build the office of Hydro-electric Power Department No 7 under the Ministry of Electric Power in Ayethaya Industrial Zone in Taunggyi Township on 15 May morning. The Commander heard reports on progress of construction of the office by Deputy Director U Tin Hsan of Settlement and Land Records Department of Shan State (East) and departmental personnel and gave necessary instructions.

Director-General Lt- Col Myo Kyaw of Department for Promotion and Propagation of the Sasana offers completion certificate to a trainee monk. — MNA

YANGON, 19 May — Organized by Department for Promotion and Propagation of the Sasana, course No 7 for basic health care with traditional medicine concluded at Ordination Hall of State Piraytta Sasana University (Yangon) this afternoon.

On behalf of the Minister for Religious Affairs, Director-General Lt-Col Myo Kyaw of DPPS supplicated on religious affairs to the Sayadaws.

Director-General Lt-Col Myo Kyaw of DPPS and Director-General Professor Dr Than Swe of Traditional Medicine Department offered alms to members of the Sangha.

Next, Dr Than Swe presented prizes to outstanding trainee monks.

Later, Director-General Lt-Col Myo Kyaw and officials gave away completion certificates to the trainee monks. — MNA

Harvesting ceremony of Shwe Yin Aye summer paddy model plot held in Shan State (East)

YANGON, 19 May — A ceremony to reap Shwe Yin Aye summer paddy model plot was held at the pandal on 200-acre paddy field in Yan Law village-tract in Kentung Township, Shan State (East) on 17 May morning. It was attended by Chairman of Shan State (East) Peace and Development Council Commander of Triangle Region Command Maj-Gen Khin Zaw, state, district and township level departmental personnel, social organisations and the peasants. Deputy manager U Aung Kyaw Myint of Myanmar Agriculture Service of Shan State (East) reported on progress of cultivating summer paddy in Shan State (East). The commander inspected pilot in 200-acre paddy field, the use of fertiliser and summer paddy fields.

The summer paddy has been cultivated in 20033 acres in Shan State (East) more than targeted acres.

The commander then inspected summer paddy plot of the command and Seintalane mango farm and fulfilled the requirements. — MNA

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The commander then proceeded to the construction site of foundry plant in Ayethaya Industrial Zone. In charge of the plant U Than Zin Myint and officials reported on completion of the plant and installation of machinery to the commander. Afterwards, the commander also looked into extension of the road between Ayethaya Industrial Zone and Shwe Nyaung and fulfilled the requirements. — MNA

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The commander then inspected summer paddy plot of the command and Seintalane mango farm and fulfilled the requirements. — MNA
Top Chinese legislator applauds cooperation with Singapore

SINGAPORE, 19 May — Visiting top Chinese legislator Wu Bangguo hailed on Tuesday his country’s good cooperative relations with Singapore and called for increased exchanges between the parliaments of the two countries.

Wu, chairman of the Standing Committee of China’s National People’s Congress (NPC), held talks with Singapore Speaker Abdullah Tarmugi. They had an in-depth exchange of views on bilateral relations, parliamentary exchanges and other issues of common interest, and reached wide-ranging consensus.

Wu, who arrived in Singapore earlier in the day for a three-day official goodwill visit, gave a positive assessment of bilateral relations, noting that there have been frequent exchanges of visits by top leaders of the two countries in recent years, which increased mutual understanding and trust and economic and trade cooperation. Remarkable achievements have been made in bilateral exchanges in science and technology, culture, education, personnel training and other fields, Wu said.

China-Singapore cooperation has been marked by its high levels and mutual understanding and respect, he added.

Wu said China attaches great importance to its relationship with Singapore and the aim of his current visit to the Southeast Asian country is to give a fresh impetus to the good relations of cooperation between the two countries so that they will grow in an all-round way.

Speaker Abdullah noted the importance of Wu’s visit to further bilateral ties and exchanges between the parliaments of the two countries. He added that in addition to the frequent exchanges of visits at the top level, there have been good exchanges between the parliaments of the two countries, which have given a strong boost to the development of bilateral ties.

Singapore is ready to increase exchanges and cooperation with China in various areas and at various levels, Abdullah said.

Wu said exchanges between the two sides form an important part of state-to-state relations and strengthening parliamentarian exchanges will help promote mutual understanding and friendship between peoples of different countries. A good foundation exists for exchanges and cooperation between China’s NPC and the Singapore Parliament, he added. The NPC is ready to strengthen friendly exchanges with the Singapore Parlaiment at various levels, Wu said.

He invited Singaporean parliamentarians, young MPs in particular, to often pay visits to China and see for themselves what is happening there. Abdullah agreed. He also reaffirmed his country’s adherence to the one-China policy.

MNA/Xinhua

Indian manufacturer constructs sponge iron factory in Zimbabwe

HARARE, 19 May — Indian manufacturer Steelmakers (Private) Limited, is constructing a multi-billion-dollar factory which is expected to produce 200 tons of sponge iron daily, in a development likely to change the face of industry-starved Masvingo, local newspaper The Herald reported on Wednesday.

About 100 tons of sponge iron will be produced per day at the processing plant under phase one of the project.

The sponge iron will be ferrited to another plant in Kwekwe where it will be processed into various stainless steel products.

The steelmakers investment in Masvingo has so far benefitted about 200 people through direct employment.

The iron ore is being mined at Glenlived Hill, about 25 kilometres east of Masvingo.

Deputy Minister of Mines and Mining Development Tinos Rusere was quoted as saying that development was going to earn the country precious foreign currency.

“We as the government are very pleased with such a development because they will be using locally available resources for all their activities. The venture will no doubt earn the country the much-needed foreign currency consisting of the high demand for steel products on the international market,” he said.

“He will apply the government will give them the requisite support so that they can stay on course since such a big project would change the economic fortunes of Masvingo Province and the country at large,” said Rusere. — MNA/Xinhua

Macao promotes tourism through Visa’s help

MACAO, 19 May — Macao Special Administrative Region is to promote tourism with the help of Visa International, the world credit card giant.

It was announced here Tuesday at a Press conference that Visa has launched a promotional campaign entitled “Visa Treasure Hunt” to offer “treasures” for Visa card holders visiting Macao till 30 June.

Prudence Chan, Visa’s Country Manager for Hong Kong and Macao, told the briefing that the programme “gives great support” from Macao’s Tourist Office.

Manuel Antunes, director of the Tourist Office, said Macao continues to grow in stature as a top visitor destination and Visa has made it easy for tourists to enjoy everything the city has to offer.

Visa card-holders who visit Macao and spend with their cards could get “Scratch Win Card” to gain prizes including mobile phones, hotel and dining vouchers, said Chan, the Visa manager.

The Visa customers could also get much-needed foreign currency considered a win-win outcome and a vital of complementarity, two sides should cooperate to continue to increase bilateral trade to 100 million US dollars by 2008, focusing on the pharmaceutical, garment, and leather industries, cement production, agricultural machinery manufacturing, and wood furniture making.

They also agreed to consider incentives, particularly in the form of tariffs, for imports from each other and create favourable conditions for business circles of the two sides to conduct direct payments. Kha and his Bangladeshi counterpart reached an agreement on the necessary preparations for the first session of their Joint Governmental Committee on Economic, Cultural and Sci-tech Cooperation in the near future.

Jia Qinglin calls for further development of China-Latam ties

BOGOTA, 19 May — Visiting Chinese top national adviser Jia Qinglin called here on Tuesday for further development of the relations between China and Latin America.

In a speech at the Colombian Congress, Jia, chairman of the National Committee of the Chinese People’s Political Consultative Conference (CPPCC), said the bilateral relationship is at the best period in history, facing a historical opportunity to be lifted to a higher stage. Seizing the opportunity and strengthening cooperation conforms to the fundamental interests of China and Latin America and is conducive to their bid to become winners of globalization and push globalization to the direction of common prosperity of different countries, with narrowing the north-south gap in particular, Jia noted.

In the speech entitled “Enhancing Mutually Beneficial Cooperation and Promoting Common Development,” Jia said the rapid progress in China-Latam economic and trade relations fully demonstrated the complementarity of their economies, which means one’s development is another’s important development opportunity, he said.

Authoritative reports from international economic and financial organizations pointed out time and again that China’s economic development is an important factor in the economic recovery of Latin America, Jia said. Jia stressed that the two sides are complementary rather than competitive in product structure, market and attraction of foreign investment, etc. With the joint efforts, the prospect of economic and technological cooperation between China and Latin America will become even brighter, Jia said.

Both China and Latin American countries are developing countries, Jia said. With the international competition becoming increasingly fierce, the two sides should cooperate closely, tap the potential of complementarity, expand mutually beneficial cooperation, strive for a win-win outcome and jointly improve their situation in international competition.

China is willing, on the basis of equality, mutual benefit and common development, to constantly expand the economic and trade relations with Latin American countries including Colombia, Jia said.

MNA/Xinhua

Ronald Mwangi, 20 May, 2005

Shovels remove debris of a demolished old building at a construction site to build new apartment complex on 19, May 2005 in Shanghai. China’s investment in construction, factory equipment and other fixed assets grew 25.7 percent on-year in the first four months of 2005, a slightly faster pace than during the first quarter, the government said on Thursday. — Internet
Chinese Vice-Premier calls for active Sino-Japanese eco ties

NAKAYAMA, 19 May — Chinese Vice-Premier Wu Yi on Wednesday stressed the significance of the Sino-Japanese economic relations and called to set up a bilateral free trade agreement for long-term and active ties.

The bilateral trade and economic cooperation plays an important role for the Sino-Japanese relationship. The cooperative ties have been tremendously fruitful thanks to the measures between Japan’s advantages in finance, technology, equipment and managerial experience and the extensive market and abundant labour force of China, Wu said at a ceremony celebrating the 50th anniversary of the Tokai Japan-China Trade Centre, an institution engaged in promoting bilateral economic exchanges.

Noted the economic ties are growing both intensively and extensively and developing into a win-win situation, which serve as an essential foundation for an everlasting bilateral relationship. Stressing there are more reasons for cooperation than for competition in the future, Wu brought forward a six-point proposal: First, Speeding up the building of the Sino-Japanese free trade agreement; second, actively pushing forward with the energy cooperation in the spirit of equality and mutual benefit; third, strengthening dialogue on strategies in various sectors, such as steel, shipbuilding, information technology, software; fourth, cementing technological cooperation featuring more technological transfer from Japan and joint research and development; fifth, expediting Japan’s investment in backwater areas in China; last, expanding cooperation of middle- and small-sized enterprises.

Wu, who arrived in Japan on Tuesday on an eight-day visit, also met with Japanese Economy, Trade and Industry Minister Shosho Nakagawa and Land, Infrastructure and Transport Minister Kazuo Kitagawa, Wu commented at the meetings that economies of both countries are complementary. However, the cooperation is continued as the overall bilateral relationship is confronted with serious difficulties.

She said one of her purposes for the visit is to materialize the consensus reached last month by the leaders of the two countries on maintaining a stable and healthy bilateral relationship.

Agreeing with Wu, Nakagawa said up to 20,000 Japanese firms are running business in China, which just demonstrates the importance of the economic cooperation. Kitagawa promised that Japan will make substantial efforts to facilitate the bilateral exchanges as the ties are very significant.

Asia Pacific in dire need for infrastructure investment

BANGKOK, 19 May — The Asia-Pacific Region is in dire need for investment in its infrastructure, United Nations Economic and Social Committee for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP) said here on Wednesday.

The region needs more than 200 billion US dollars per year, which far exceeds the available resources of around 50 billion US dollars for all purposes, said ESCAP Executive Secretary Kim Hak-Su. Desperately-needed investment include those for the region’s massive infrastructure projects such as the Asian Highway and the Trans-Asia Railway. An additional 18 billion US dollars and a cost of 2.5 billion US dollars will be respectively required just to finance priority programmes of the above two projects.

The costs of regional connectivity infrastructure such as Internet connections, cabling and broadband are also substantial, he said. The financing situation in the region is exacerbated by declining investment from the private sector. According to a recent study by World Bank, Asia Development Bank and Japan Bank for International Cooperation, private investment in infrastructure is one-fourth of the levels prevailing before the 1997 crisis. This has created a large financing gap. Kim told reporters at the end of the 61st Commission Session of ESCAP held here from 12 to 18 May. The commission session was aimed at finding ways to create financing for development, while delegates from about 60 ESCAP member countries gathered for the six-day meeting.

The meeting, however, failed to reach consensus on the establishment of an ESCAP-proposed Asian investment bank, due to disputes among members. Some are afraid that functions of the proposed bank, will duplicate with the existing Asian Development Bank.

Even so, Kim said the UN institution will continuously study the possibility, with next year’s commission session still focusing on the same topic of financing for development. He also called on governments to take measures to increase foreign direct investment to the region.

“We must harmonize bilateral trading arrangements and free trade agreements with multilateral trading arrangements,” he said. — MNA/Xinhua

UN unveils reforms to strengthen accountability, ethics

UNITED NATIONS, 19 May — By scandals like the oil-for-food scam and sexual abuse by peacekeepers, the United Nations has unveiled reforms to prevent such incidents from recurring and to “strengthen accountability, ethical conduct and management performance” in the world body.

The reforms include: protection of whistle-blowers, a demand repeatedly made by the staff, uniform acceptable behaviour by peacekeepers, expansion of programme of financial disclosures by top officials.

The UN has said it plans to implement most of the reforms in the next couple of months and is also appointing a committee to help strengthen accountability and oversight which the Volcker panel, investigating charges of corruption in the oil-for-food programme, had identified as “weak spots”.

Italy to cut growth forecast

ROME, 19 May — Italian Economy Minister Domenico Siniscalco admitted on Tuesday that the government’s growth forecast for 2005 would have to be cut but he denied that public deficit was spiralling out of control.

The government had until recently defended its estimate of 2.1 per cent growth for 2005, but it seems impossible because the Italian economy continued to shrink in the last quarter of 2004 and the first of this year.

“The annual figure will probably require a downward revision,” he told the Parliament, declining to offer a new figure. He said that the picture would be clearer after second quarter figures became available.

Siniscalco spoke to the Parliament in the midst of widespread concern over the Italian economy and state accounts. Confisindustria, the powerful industrial lobby, insists that the Italian economy is in recession and that GDP will rise only 0.3 per cent this year, against the government’s forecast of 2.1 per cent.

Confindustria also says the budget deficit could reach 4.5 per cent of GDP without correction, well over the 3 per cent limit required by Europe’s Growth and Stability Pact. Prime Minister Silvio Berlusconi has admitted the government is “at risk of stagnation” but avoided the word “recession.”

Siniscalco stressed that even if the economy shrank another 0.6 per cent in the remaining three quarters of 2005, the public deficit would still stay below 3.75 per cent. According to national statistics bureau Istat, the economy contracted by 0.5 per cent in the first quarter, after shrinking 0.3 per cent in the previous three months. “Even if there is negative growth, the public accounts for the first five months don’t appear in any way critical,” the minister said. “I don’t think things have slipped out of control.”

The government is scheduled to meet unions and employers on Thursday to try to hammer out a joint response to the economic problems. Last week it pushed through the parliament a package of measures aimed at boosting Italy’s economic competitiveness.

Prodi appeals for dialogue to solve China-EU problems

BEIJING, 19 May — Romano Prodi, former president of the European Commission said here on Wednesday that he hopes the European Union (EU) can solve the divergence with China through dialogue instead of confrontation.

Prodi made the remark on a China-European panel held at the China Foreign Affairs University.

The EU is threatening to restrict textile import from China, alleging its growth has been too fast after quotas were eliminated on 1 January according to World Trade Organization agreements.

The EU should adopt the policy of “contact” rather than “containment” in dealing with problems with China, he said. China is emerging fast not only as a “big market”, but also a “strong competitor”, he said.

“China and the EU are not linked by markets, but because of the political conditions of the world,” Prodi added.

The EU has two reasons for establishing relations with China, he said. “One is that China is of economic interest to us, the other is the EU likes a multi-polar world.”

Prodi said the EU should face cordially the complementary competition relations between the EU and Chinese economies. Bilateral cooperation is in the interest of both sides as China has always pursued the way of peaceful development and maintained a rapid economic growth.

Both China and the EU need patience to cope with issues such as textile trade and the Renminbi, the Chinese currency, exchange rate, Prodi added.

“The long term, the cooperation between us will push forward world peace and stability,” Prodi said. This year marks the 30th anniversary of the establishment of China-EU diplomatic ties. Former German Defence Minister Rudolf Scharping, chairman of the China Reform Forum Zheng Bijian and president of CPAU were also present on the forum. — MNA/Xinhua

A float in the shape of a giant catfish with a stone on its head is pulled by shrine parishioners during a parade to mark the Kanda festival in Tokyo recently. — Internet

MNA/Xinhua

MNA/Xinhua

MNA/PITI

MNA/Xinhua

MNA/Xinhua
EU to launch formal consultations with China on textile imports

BRUSSELS, 18 May — The European Union (EU) Trade Commissioner Peter Mandelson said here on Tuesday that the EU would launch formal consultations with China for T-shirts and flax yarn imports. These are two of the nine categories of textile imports from China currently under investigation, which was launched on April 29 by the EU’s executive body, the European Commission.

“In view of the seriousness of market disruption in these categories, formal consultations need to begin immediately,” Mandelson told a Press conference. “Only if China does not take corrective action will the Commission propose temporary limits on the growth of Chinese exports in the categories concerned in 2006,” he added.

Mandelson’s proposal still needs the nod from the European Commission and EU’s textile committee, comprising of 25 EU member states. Mandelson believed this process could be completed before the end of May. — MNA/Xinhua

Ministry of Industry (1)
Myanmar Ceramic Industries
192, Kaba Aye Pagoda Road.
Yangon, Myanmar

INVITATION TO TENDER NOTICE

Sealed Tenders are invited by Myanmar Ceramic Industries for the following gas burning equipment which is to be used at Cement Factory. Tender forms and detailed information are available on payment of Kyats 3000/- (three thousand only), at Myanmar Ceramic Industries, Planning Department within Office Hour, starting from 19th May, 2005. Closing Date of Tender is 9th June, 2005 (Tuesday). 15:00 Hour Myanmar Standard Time. Please contact Phone No. 562036, 566074 for detailed information.

1. Gas Burner - 1 set
2. Gas Burner - 1 set

Managing Director
Myanmar Ceramic Industries

Greece to promote use of Internet

ATHENS, 18 May — Greece has to ensure direct access and cheap connection to the Internet for its citizens, Prime Minister Costas Karamanlis said on Tuesday.

“We need to act quickly and to close the gap to other advanced countries in new technologies in the telecommunications sector,” said the Prime Minister, addressing an event held at the Athens Metro Station in Syntagma Square to celebrate the World Telecommunications Day.

“Our aim is to guarantee all young people equal access to modern tools of knowledge,” he stressed, underlining that the sector of telecommunications is a determinant and especially important one, both for economic growth and for improving competitiveness, speed and for increasing the rate of employment.

Karamanlis, accompanied by Transport and Communications Minister Mihalis Liapis, visited the exhibition site showing the evolution of telecommunications from ancient times till nowadays. — MNA/Xinhua

WHO launches new global partnership

GENEVA, 18 May — A new global partnership that will work to improve public health and make health-care systems work better is to be launched Tuesday at the annual conference of the World Health Organization (WHO).

The Health Metrics Network (HMN) is a partnership comprised of countries, multilateral and bilateral development agencies, foundations, global health initiatives and technical experts.

“HMN will meet its commitments for people’s health,” he added. According to the WHO, HMN brings together health and statistical constituencies to build capacity and expertise for strengthening health information systems so local, regional and global decision-makers have quality data on which to base decisions to improve health.

By 2011, HMN expects that at least 80 countries will be able to report on agreed, standardized global health goals and indicators in a timely and sound manner. — MNA/Xinhua

WFP warns aid for refugees threatened by lack of fund

GENEVA, 18 May — The United Nations World Food Programme (WFP), warned Tuesday that food supplies for 2.2 million refugees are now threatened by the lack of donor support. WFP now urgently needs 315 million US dollars to meet the needs of 2.2 million refugee living in camps, and 75 per cent of this sum is required for Africa alone, the UN agency said in a Press release.

WFP has already been forced to reduce food rations for refugees in Africa. Without new contributions from the organization, said to have to resort to more cuts. “Refugees are among WFP’s most vulnerable beneficiaries and have been hit hard by shortfalls,” said WFP Deputy Executive Director John Powell, who is in Geneva to discuss funding opportunities with officials of the UN refugee agency UNHCR.

WFP assists refugees and returnees in collaborating with UNHCR through 25 operations worldwide. “Many of the refugees rely almost entirely on food aid for their survival,” said Powell. “They are frequently confined to camps where arable land, if available, is scarce and employment opportunities are limited.” — MNA/Xinhua

GOVERNMENT OF THE UNION OF MYANMAR
MINISTRY OF FORESTRY
MYANMA TIMBER ENTERPRISE

DATED. 19-5-2005.
SEALED TENDER NO. 01/ 2005-2006 (MUSE)

Myanmar Timber Enterprise will hold a Sealed Tender Sale as follows:

COMMODITY : TIMBER AND FOREST PRODUCTS
DATE : 6-6-2005 (MONDAY)
PLACE : ASSISTANT DIRECTOR’S OFFICE, MUSE,
DISTRICT FOREST DEPARTMENT, MUSE.

EARNEST MONEY : US$ 10000

PLEASE CONTACT THE MARKETING UNIT(2) OF THE EXPORT MARKETING AND MILLING DEPARTMENT OF THE MYANMA TIMBER ENTERPRISE FOR FURTHER DETAILS.

GOVERNMENT OF THE UNION OF MYANMAR
MINISTRY OF FINANCE & REVENUE
INTERNAL REVENUE DEPARTMENT
NOTICE FOR FILING OF RETURN OF INCOME

1. All Co-operative societies which have been assessed to tax under the Income Tax Law and those Co-operative societies having income amounting to Kyats 30001 and above during the income year 2004-2005 are also required to file the return of income, duly filled-in and signed by the chairman or the secretary of the society concerned, in the respective Township Revenue Offices not later than 30 June 2005.

2. Persons having income amounting to Kyats 30001 and above solely under the head “Salaries” during the income year 2004-2005 are not required to file the return of income in respect of their salary income as the tax had been paid thereon by way of deduction at source. However, the employer is responsible for furnishing the Annual Statement in the respective Township Revenue Office not later than aforesaid date.

3. Prescribed forms of return of income and Annual Statement are available free of charge at the Township Revenue Offices. The Return can be filed in the person or sent by registered post. A receipt will be issued by the Township Revenue Office concerned in case the return is filed in person.

4. Further information can be obtained from Township Revenue Offices and Companies Circle Tax Office.

(Thein Naing) Director Income Tax Directorate

Myanmar Timber Enterprise

DEPARTMENT OF FORESTRY
MYANMA TIMBER ENTERPRISE

DATED. 19-5-2005.
SEALED TENDER NO. 01/ 2005-2006 (MUSE)

Myanmar Timber Enterprise will hold a Sealed Tender Sale as follows:

COMMODITY : TEAK CONVERSIONS
QUANTITY : ABOUT (1239.9495)TONS
DATE : 6-6-2005 (MONDAY)
TIME : (12:00) NOON
PLACE : ASSISTANT DIRECTOR’S OFFICE, MUSE,
DISTRICT FOREST DEPARTMENT, MUSE.

EARNEST MONEY : US$ 10000

PLEASE CONTACT THE MARKETING UNIT(2) OF THE EXPORT MARKETING AND MILLING DEPARTMENT OF THE MYANMA TIMBER ENTERPRISE FOR FURTHER DETAILS.
**Seven die from heat wave in Andhra Pradesh, India**

**NEW DELHI, 18 May**— At least seven people have died in Andhra Pradesh, India, in the heat wave sweeping across the province with temperatures in several towns touching nearly 45 degrees Celsius, reported.

Nizamabad in Telangana region was the hottest place in the province recording a temperature of 45.5 degrees Celsius Monday. The temperature in Nalgonda in the same region was 44.8 degrees Celsius followed by Ramagundem (44.3) and Medak (44.2).

While six deaths were reported from the coastal district of East Godavari, one person died in Hyderabad, capital of the province, officials said Tuesday. The capital recorded 43.3 degrees Celsius, the highest so far this season.

Hyderabad Meteorological Director G Sudhakar Rao said the rise in temperature by three to four degrees in the state was due to dry northwest-erly winds from Gujarat, Maharashtra and Rajasthan blowing across the state.

Though the province escaped intense heat conditions due to seasonal rains in the first week of May, the sudden rise in temperature has spread panic. More than 1,500 people died due to the heat wave in 2003 in the province while more than 1,000 died in 2002. No deaths were reported last year.

**Study of breast cancer drug halted after causing deaths**

**WASHINGTON, 18 May**— A study to test a combination of two chemotherapy drugs in treating breast cancer was halted after leading to the death of two patients, French researchers reported on Tuesday.

The tested medication was standard intravenous drug doxorubicin plus a new drug called docetaxel. Researchers want to see if combining the two frequently used breast cancer drugs can have better effects as shown by previous similar trials, according to the researchers who wrote in this week’s Journal of the American Medical Association.

The combination, which was too toxic, can increase risk of severe and life-threatening complications, concluded the researchers from the Huguenin Cancer Centre, Saint-Cloud, France.

The report said 627 women ages 18 to 70 participated in the study aimed to prolong their life for at least five years. All of the participants had a high risk of cancer recurrence.

The study was halted about three years after it started in 1999, because of the subsequent two deaths and a high rate of complications including low white-cell counts with fever, which is a life-threatening condition coming as a result of weakened body’s ability to fight infection.

**Germany to set up heatwave alert system**

**BERLIN, 18 May**— German meteorologists will launch a heatwave alert system in a couple of weeks to prevent the recurrence of the 2003 tragedy in which thousands of elderly people died of scorching weather.

Under the system to be put in place in June, warnings will be faxed to nursing homes, advising them to shade the rooms of residents and ensure patients increase their fluid intake, the German news agency of DPA reported Tuesday.

“If the warnings get through, we’ll be able to significantly reduce the number of heatwave deaths,” said Klaus Bucher, a specialist in medical meteorology at the German Weather Service in the southern German city of Freiburg.

The system tracks temperature, humidity and sunshine in every district of Germany. “It will calculate thermal strain which is not the same thing as temperature,” Bucher was quoted as saying.

“Generally, the warnings will go out when the perceived temperatures reach 32 degrees Celsius,” he added.

Up to 15,000 elderly and weak people in France and 1,000 others in Germany did not survive the heat in the summer of 2003.

**Telephone service expansion programme benefits more Chinese farmers**

**HEFEI, 18 May**— Gu Jizhu, an orchid grower living deep in the mountainous areas of Jinzhai County, east China’s Anhui Province, used to suffer a lot for being unable to sell his products at good prices due to limited market information caused by a lack of means of communication.

Gu’s bitter experience has been put an end to until recently when his home was installed with a fixed telephone line.

Via the newly installed phone service, he got to know that one potted orchid could fetch a price of 80 yuan (about 9.64 US dollars) at the county seat of Jinzhai, instead of 20 yuan (about 2.41 US dollars) per orchid, a price he previously sold.

“I decide to take all my orchids to the county seat and sell them there,” he said. “This way, I will at least earn an extra 1,000 yuan (121 US dollars) once.” Gu is not the only beneficiary of China’s campaign launched last year to promote the local economy through bringing all its rural villages under dialing service cover. Residents of Dongli Village in Shucheng County, also in Anhui Province, where telephone service was just made available last year, have earned an extra 800,000 yuan (96,386 US dollars) from selling chestnuts and tea at favourable prices with timely market information obtained via new phone service extended to their homes.

**Fairy tale wedding in Hong Kong Disneyland**

**HONG KONG, 18 May**— A romantic dream for many young couples to be prince and princess or to get married in a fairy tale castle will come true, Hong Kong Disneyland announced here on Tuesday.

Don Robinson, Managing Director of Hong Kong Disneyland, told reporters that Hong Kong Disneyland now welcomes couples to celebrate their nuptials in Disney style with a personalized Fairy Tale Wedding.

He said Hong Kong Disneyland has so far received about 1,000 inquiries from couples interested in holding a fairy tale wedding. However, Robinson said couples with intentions to get married in Hong Kong Disneyland are still in the stage of consultation and the date of the first fairy tale wedding has not yet been decided.

Before the romantic and unforgettable Disneyland wedding, cost is the most practical problem for new couples to consider.

According to the package samples sent out by Hong Kong Disneyland, the price for a wedding banquet in the fairy tale world is around 10,000 Hong Kong dollars per table and the minimum requirement will be ten tables.

To common Hong Kong people with an average salary per month around 10,000 Hong Kong dollars, a romantic wedding in Disneyland is still a dream.— MNA/Chinhua

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**Uzbek Mukhamed-Said works at a vegetable stand at a Moscow market, on 17 May, 2005. He says he moved to Moscow from Uzbekistan.**
**SPORTS**

Beckham admits disappointment instead of failure

**Madrid, 19 May — Real Madrid president Florentino Perez has confirmed that Portuguese star Luis Figo has been left out of the team by coach Vanderlei Luxemburgo in recent games, as the team fails to win the Primera Liga. The Catalan club secured their first league title in six years last January and helped them stay in the Premier League on the last day of the season.**

“Rather than calling it a failure, I’d call it a disappointment, for this season we were the best team in the second part,” said Beckham in an interview with Radio Onda Cero.

The English captain said he enjoys his life in Madrid, adding: “I’d like to retire in Real Madrid. I have two more years to serve out my contract and I want more.”

Beckham accepted the apologies of Barcelona striker Samuel Eto’o after his insult against Real Madrid during the celebration of winning the league title at Camp Nou Stadium, saying the Cameroonian “was impressive as a player and as a person.”

Portuguese star Luis Figo has been left out by coach Vanderlei Luxemburgo in recent games, but Beckham said Luis Figo and himself are not incompatible in the pitch.

“I believe Figo and I can play in the same lineup as we’ve done on some occasions, but this is not my decision (to leave out him),” said Beckham.

**Van Bommel signs for Barcelona**

**BRUSSELS, 19 May — PSV Eindhoven midfielder Mark van Bommel has signed a three-year deal with Barcelona, the Dutch champion said on Wednesday.**

The 28-year-old had said he would leave PSV when his contract expired at the end of the season and was expected to join the Spanish champion.

Dutch international van Bommel will be officially presented in Barcelona after the Netherlands’ World Cup qualifiers against Romania on June 4 and Finland four days later.

Barcelona confirmed the signing on their website, saying the deal had been kept quiet until after they had won the Primera Liga. The Catalan club secured their first league title in six years last Saturday.

**England calls up Knight, Richardson for US tour**

**London, 19 May — Midfielder Kieron Richardson and defender Zat Knight have earned their first call-ups for England for this month’s four matches against the United States and Colombia.**

**Chelsea in chase for Eto’o**

**London, 19 May — Chelsea manager Jose Mourinho is lining up a 30-million-pound chase for Barcelona superstar Samuel Eto’o, according to local media reports on Wednesday.**

Mourinho is desperate to strengthen his strikeforce for next season’s assault on a Premiership and Champions League double. And he sees African Player of the Year Eto’o, 24, as the perfect replacement for frogs Didier Drogba and Mateja Kezman.

The player’s lawyer, Jose Maria Mesalles, has already been in contact with Blues officials. Mourinho has authorized Chelsea to offer 24-million-pound plus William Gallas and one more player from the Stamford Bridge squad.

Eto’o will be paid 6 million pounds a year, with his 115-thousand-pound a week salary making him the second best-paid player in England after Frank Lampard.

**Beijing sets up Olympic broadcasting committee**

**BEIJING, 19 May — The Beijing Organizing Committee for the 2008 Olympic Games (BOCOG) set up a broadcasting coordination committee to ensure the successful broadcasting of the world’s premier sporting event.**

The BOCOG Olympic Broadcasting Committee, headed by BOCOG executive vice-president Jiang Xioyu, is composed of representatives from concerned government departments, including the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Ministry of Information Industry, the Customs, State Administration of Taxation and China Central Television.

“The committee will work with different government departments to formulate favourable policies for the Beijing Olympic Broadcasting Co. Ltd.” said Jiang.

The Beijing Olympic Broadcasting Co. Ltd. (BOB), a joint venture between the IOC Olympic Broadcasting Services (OBS) and BOCOG, will serve as the host broadcaster of the 2008 Olympics and 2008 Paralympics.

“As the Olympics is currently the most widely covered sporting event in the world, with the highest number of TV viewers, a successful broadcast is a prerequisite for staging a successful Olympics,” added Jiang.

It is estimated that during the Beijing Olympics and Paralympics, more than 4 billion people will watch the games worldwide.

BOB will be in charge of producing international TV and radio signals for the Games and important side events, constructing and operating the International Broadcasting Centre and other venues, and providing other relevant broadcasting services to the rights-holding broadcasters of the Games. — MNA/Xinhua

**Fired Chinese coach accuses players of match fixing**

**BEIJING, 19 May — Chi Shangbin, fired on Tuesday as head coach of defending China Super League champions Shenzhen Jianlibao, accused on Wednesday the club’s key players of fixing league matches this season.**

“In our defeat to Sichuan Guancheng, one of our players told a Guancheng defender after we got a corner: ‘Don’t bother to mark me, I will never put the ball into the goal. You should mark our foreign teammates,’” said Chi at a news conference. But Chi admitted that he has no evidence to bring the players to justice. “But their performances have proved that.”

The defending champions are languishing at the bottom on China Super League standings with four draws and five losses.

**PSV Eindhoven midfielder Mark Van Bommel has agreed a three-year-deal with Barcelona. — MNA/Xinhua**

**Raul calls Barcelona “fair winner” for league victory**

**MADRID, 19 May — Real Madrid captain Raul Gonzalez on Tuesday called Barcelona “fair winners” for their league victory and admitted his team’s “made mistakes we have to solve now” to look forward to winning titles next season.**

“They always contest for the titles. After many years without winning anything now they have a great team that will be reinforced in the coming season. It will be a dangerous team both in Spain and Europe,” said Raul.

He said he was disappointed in analyzing the season, acknowledging that it is already two years for Real without titles.

“It always is a disappointment not to win with this club. Yet I think it is worth saying we have played well in the last matches,” also said Raul.

“Now it is time to rest and start the next season from zero to have chances to win titles,” he said, “as this year we only had minimum hopes.”

Raul said that the cause to lose this league was “the irregularity of the beginning” of the season.

For the next season, he said he was certain about coach Vanderlei Luxemburgo remaining at the head of the club, yet he did not say anything about the need to modify the roster. — MNA/Xinhua

**Tottenham Hotspur’s Michael Dawson, who was on stand-by, also pulled out with a calf injury.**
Nicaragua, Spain sign agreement to eradicate poverty

MANAGUA, 19 May — Nicaragua and Spain signed on Tuesday the Act of the 6th Mixed Commission for 2005-2008, aimed at eradicating poverty from Nicaragua, the local Press reported.

The act, signed by Nicaraguan Foreign Minister Norman Caldera and visiting Spanish Secretary of State for International Cooperation Lecrín Pajín, also seeks to reinforce the defence of human rights and governance, the reports said.

The sectors which will benefit from the cooperation in next four years include the Economic Growth and Poverty Reduction Reinforced Strategy of the National Development Plan, Caldera was quoted as saying. According to Pajín, who arrived here Monday for a two-day visit, the Spanish cooperation is aimed at strengthening governance, social coverage and institutional development and promoting the entrepreneurial sector, as well as the environment, culture, gender issues, education and poverty eradication.

MNA/Xinhua

WEATHER

Thursday, 19 May, 2005

Summary record of observations recorded at 09:30 hours MST: During the past 24 hours, rain or thundershowers have been scattered in Kachin State, upper Sagaing and Tanintharyi Divisions, isolated in Shan State, Mandalay Division and weather has been partly cloudy in the remaining areas. The noteworthy amount of rainfall recorded was Kawh邦 (2.13) inches. Day tempera-
tures were (3°C) above normal in Bago Division, (5°C) to (6°C) above normal in Kachin, Shan, Kayah and Kayin States, upper Sagaing and Yangon Divisions. (7°C) to (8°C) above normal in lower Sagaing, Mandalay and Magway Divisions, (9°C) above normal in Ayeyawady Division and about normal in the remaining areas. The significant day temperatures were Monywa, Mandalay, Nyaung oo, Mimb, Magway and Pakokku (44°C) each.

Maximum temperature on 18-5-2005 was 101°F. Minimum temperature on 19-5-2005 was 75°F. Relative humidity at 9:30 hrs MST on 19-5-2005 was 72%. Total sunshine hours on 18-5-2005 was (10.7) hours approx. Rainfalls on 19-5-2005 were nil at Yangon Airport, Kaba-Aye and central Yangon. Total rainfall since 1-1-2005 were (2.84) inches at Yangon Airport, (3.46) inches at Kaba-Aye and (1.89) inches at central Yangon. Maximum wind speed at Yangon (Kaba-Aye) was (10) mph from Southwest (at 11:50) hours MST on 18-5-2005.

Bay inference: Weather is partly cloudy in the Andaman Sea and Southeast Bay and generally fair elsewhere in the Bay of Bengal.

Forecast valid until evening of 20-5-2005: Rain or thundershowers will be isolated in Kachin, Chin and Shan States, upper Sagaing and Tanintharyi Divisions and weather will be partly cloudy in the remaining areas. Degree of certainty is (80%).

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

Outlook for subsequent two days: Likelihood of Southwest monsoon advance into the Southern Myanmar areas.

Forecast for Yangon and neighbouring area for 20-5-2005: Partly cloudy.

Forecast for Mandalay and neighbouring area for 20-5-2005: Fair weather.

Earthquake report

(Issued at 09:30 hours MST on 19th May, 2005)

An earthquake of strong intensity (6.8) Richter Scale with its epicentre outside of Myanmar about (1050) miles south of Kaba-Aye seismological observatory was recorded at (08) hrs (28) min (80) sec MST on 19th May 2005.
YANGON, 19 May — A ceremony to present nurse caps to first-year trainees of Nurse and Midwifery Training School was held in conjunction with the concluding ceremony of the training course at the school in Myitkyina, Kachin State, on 13 May morning.

Principal Daw M Nang Kham reported on training courses. Chairman of Kachin State Peace and Development Council Commander of Northern Command Maj-Gen Maung Maung Swe gave a speech.

Next, the principal presented nurse caps to 60 trainees. Head of Kachin State Health Department Dr Maung Maung Myint awarded prizes to outstanding trainees.

Afterwards, Dr Maung Maung Myint and officials accepted K 5 million for the training school donated by Kachin State Peace and Development Council through the commander; K 2.5 million by Northern Command through Deputy Commander Brig-Gen San Tun; K 1 million by Kachin State Maternal and Child Welfare Supervisory Committee through Daw Tin Tin Nwe, wife of the commander; K 1 million by Kachin State Organization for Women’s Affairs through Daw Tin Tin Hay, wife of the Commissioner of the state; and K 4.6 million by wellwishers.

Also present on the occasion were Commander of Myitkyina Air Base Brig-Gen Zaw Tun, authorities, training instructors and guests.

YANGON, 19 May — Minister for Forestry Brig-Gen Thein Aung attended the ceremony to honour victorious athletes of the Ministry of Forestry, who took part in local/international tournaments in 2004-2005, held at the International Business Centre on Pyay Road this evening.

Also present on the occasion were directors-general, managing directors and officials and guests.

Minister Brig-Gen Thein Aung made a speech and presented prizes of honours to the best athlete Ma Khin Than Htwe and best team award to the swimming team through Deputy General Manager U Sein Whet.

Afterwards, directors-general, managing directors and officials presented prizes of honours to the athletes who won the victory in the tournaments.

Next, on behalf of victorious athletes, bowling player Ma Khin Than Htwe expressed thanks. After the ceremony, the minister cordially greeted the athletes and hosted a dinner.

In 2004-2005, the athletes of Forestry Ministry secured 89 gold, 84 silver and 87 bronze in the local tournament and one gold, three silver and one gold, three silver and five bronze in the international tournament.

Paingkyon TV retransmission station airs programmes

YANGON, 19 May — For extension of broadcasting TV programmes, the construction of TV retransmission station in Paingkyon, Kayin State was completed on 14 May. Programmes of Myanmar Television have been on the air beginning 15 May, it is learnt. — MNA

Aerial view of the newly-opened Pulp Plant (Thabaung) of Myanma Paper and Chemical Industries near Hlaygyitat Village in Thabaung Township. — MNA