National unity further cemented despite all divisive attempts

SSNA Brigade-19 unconditionally exchange arms for peace

Emergence of the State Constitution is the duty of all citizens of Myanmar Naing-Ngan.
**PERSPECTIVES**

Saturday, 21 May, 2005

**Actively take part in nation-building endeavours**

The Myanmar Maternal and Child Welfare Association is taking systematic measures for all-round development of health, education, social welfare and economic sectors of children and mothers, after forming the education group, the health group, the economic group, the social group, etc. The aim of the MMCWA is to improve the health, education and social standards of children and mothers. The MMCWA members are striving for successful realization of that objective. The realization of that objective amounts to laying an infrastructure for improvement of socio-economic life of the people.

As relentless efforts are being made for increasing the number of permanent members of the association in townships, there are over 240,000 permanent members as well as some 420,000 ordinary members totalling over 660,000 as of 2004.

To turn 10 per cent of the township population into permanent membership, efforts are to be made to form the maternal and child welfare association (branches) in wards and villages.

As members of township MCWAs in Yangon Division actively took part in nation-building endeavours in 2004, Yangon Division MMCWA was awarded the first prize by Myanmar Maternal and Child Welfare Association.

The 15th Annual General Meeting of the MMCWA has laid down future tasks to be implemented in 2005. The first task calls on all the MMCWA members to actively participate in successful realization of the seven-step Road Map for the emergence of a peaceful, modern, developed and discipline-flourishing democratic nation.

That is why the MMCWA members are to strive for national development enhancing the socio-economic life of children and mothers, to actively take part in successful realization of the seven-step Road Map that guarantees perpetual existence of the Union and ensures higher national prestige and integrity.

This being so, at a time when efforts are being made for all-round development of the State, all the MMCWA members upholding the fine traditions are to actively take part in the task by doing their bit with the national outlook.

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**Entries invited for Pakokku U Ohn Pe Literary Award Contest 2005**

YANGON, 20 May — Pakokku U Ohn Pe Literary Award Contest 2005 invited entrants to participate in five genres-collected poems, novel, collected short stories, treatises and research. Manuscripts are to be submitted to Sarpay Beikman not later than 30 September, 2005. Award winning manuscripts will be announced at the end of this year and the prize presentation ceremony will be held in 2006.

Application form for entrants are available at Chief Editor, Secretary of Pakokku U Ohn Pe Literary Award Scrutinization Committee, 529, Merchant Street, Sarpay Beikman. Applications for those of other towns are to take out an application per K 40 for postal charge.—MNA

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**Follow-up news**

YANGON, 20 May — The correct names of the wellwishers in the news of presenting cash assistance for the stipend carried in the dailies issued on 20-5-2005 are Managing Director of Dhana Aung Co Ltd U Soe Thein and wife Deputy Director Daw Khin Cho Ohn of the Attorney-General’s Office.—MNA

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**People’s Desire**

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

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**Preliminary Conference of Bago Division WVO 2005 held**

Commander Maj-Gen Ko Ko addresses the Preliminary Conference of Bago Division War Veterans Organization 2005.—MNA

YANGON, 20 May — The Preliminary Conference of Bago Division War Veterans Organization 2005 took place at Thiri Oktiba hall Bago Division WVO in Bago on 19 May.

It was attended by Patron of Bago Division WVO Chairman of Bago Division Peace and Development Council Commander of Southern Command Maj-Gen Ko Ko. Vice-Chairman of Central Organizing Committee of Myanmar WVO Minister for Construction Maj-Gen Saw Tun, the Chairman of Bago Division WVO Supervision Committee, military officers, departmental heads, division/district WVO executives and social organizations.

Commander Maj-Gen Ko Ko made an opening speech and presented K 51.5 million for Bago Division WVO to Chairman of the Supervisory Committee for Bago Division WVO Lt-Gen Thein Lwin.

Next, the report on the preliminary conference of Bago Division WVO 2005 was read out. Afterwards, those present read the reports on five future tasks of the preliminary conference of Bago Division WVO 2005, the national and political sector, the State’s defence and security sector, economic sector, social welfare and tasks for public interests. Later, the meeting decided three matters, approved one matter and put record on three matters at the preliminary conference 2005 and the conference ended with chanting of the slogans.—MNA

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**Transport Minister attends 61st Annual Meeting of ESCAP**

YANGON, 20 May — The 61st Annual Meeting of United Nations Asia and Pacific Region Economic and Social Commission (ESCAP) was held in Bangkok, Thailand. The ministerial meeting was held from 12 to 14 May.

The Myanmar delegation was led by Minister for Transport Maj-Gen Thein Swe. Delegates from 62 countries attended the meeting.

On 17 May, leader of the Myanmar delegation Minister Maj-Gen Thein Swe delivered an address on progress of social and economic development of Myanmar. Furthermore, a paper of Myanmar on tsunami and prevention against natural disasters was submitted.

On 19 May, the minister and party arrived back here by air. The minister was welcomed back by Minister for National Planning and Economic Development U Soe Tha, Minister for Rail Transport Maj-Gen Aung Min, Deputy Minister for Transport U Than and officials. Members of the delegation who attended the senior officials meeting also arrived back.

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**Mines Minister receives Korean Ambassador**

YANGON, 20 May — Minister for Mines Brig-Gen Ohn Myint received Korean Ambassador to Myanmar Mr Lee Ju Heum at the ministry of mines on Kanbe Road this afternoon.

Also present at the call were Deputy Minister U Myint Thein and officials.—MNA

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**Special Appellate Bench hears Special Appeal cases**

YANGON, 20 May — The Special Appellate Bench Comprising Deputy Chief Justice of Supreme Court (Yangon) U Thein Soe, Supreme Court Judges Dr Tin Aung Aye and U Myint Thein sitting at Court room No (1) this morning, delivered judgement of five Special Civil Appeal cases and one Special Criminal Appeal case, also heard three Special Criminal Appeal cases under Section 7 of the Judiciary Law, 2005.

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**All this needs to be known**

- Do not be frightened when once intimidated
- Do not be bolstered whenever flattered
- Do not be softened whenever appeased

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**Transport Minister delivers an address at the 61st Annual Meeting of United Nations Asia and Pacific Region Economic and Social Commission (ESCAP) held in Bangkok, Thailand.**

MNA
China and Bangladesh open first direct flight

BEIJING, 19 May — The China Eastern Airlines opened a direct flight between Beijing and Dhaka, the capital of Bangladesh, on Wednesday, the first of its kind since the two countries signed bilateral civil aviation contract in 1980. The Beijing-Kunming-Dhaka flight with a one-way distance of 3,545 kilometres lasts 5.5 hours. It is available at 10:50 am in Beijing on every Monday, Wednesday and Saturday. Before reaching Dhaka, it will stop over at Kunming, capital of southwest China’s Yunnan Province.

Boeing 737 and 767 aircraft have been designated to fly the route. The airlines began market and field investigations on the new air route in late March and reached an agreement with Bangladeshi side in April. — MNA/Xinhua

Children’s film festival to showcase best world entries

KOLKATA, 19 May — From the Oscar winning ‘Finding Nemo’ to Shabana Azmi’s ‘Makdee’ and Satyajit Ray’s much acclaimed ‘Hirak Rajar Deshe’ (In the Country of Diamond King), children can feast on 16 celluloid gems from across the world at a film festival beginning 23 May here and dedicated to them.

The five-day fifth international children film festival will have entries from Malaysia, France, Spain, Russia, USA, India, China, Czech Republic and Israel.

The country’s oldest film club Cine Central would organize the festival along with the Eastern Zonal Cultural Centre at the latter’s Bharatirajam Complex on free entry.

Cine Central general secretary Sadhan Chakraborty said the festival would provide a panorama of world cinema for children during their summer holidays.


A series of short Israeli films — Pepe’s Watch, Personal Goals, Bedouin Sand, The Other Cheek and Small Change — would also be screened, Chakraborty added. — MNA/PTI

China, India to reopen Stilwell Road via Myanmar

BEIJING, 20 May — China and India are working on plans to reopen the Stilwell Road through Myanmar which would reduce the distance between the two countries from 6,000 kilometres to just 1,300 kilometres, the state media reported on Wednesday.

The Stilwell Road, a strategic supply route between Assam and China’s Yunnan Province via Myanmar built in the World War II by Chinese and American troops, will soon reopen.

Yunnan Province, which benefits greatly from trade with India, has played a vanguard role in the rebuilding of the Stilwell Road.

An Indian survey team arrived in Tengchong in Yunnan Province for a field investigation on the entire length of the road to be commenced this month, the official Xinhua news agency reported from the provincial capital, Kunming.

Yunnan and Assam have agreed to begin a joint exploration on the Stilwell Road at the end of this year, it quoted a senior official with the Yunnan Provincial Council for Promotion of Trade with Foreign Countries as saying.

According to the latest field investigation, the section from Ledo in India to Kunming in China’s Yunnan Province on the Stilwell Road is only 1,300 kilometres. The current trading route to ship most of India’s export to China, by contrast, is as long as 6,000 kilometres, going around the Malacca Strait and the Indian Ocean before reaching China’s eastern coast.

If the Stilwell Road is reopened, it will be the most convenient land route between China and India and turn Southeast Asia into a key trading hub. — MNA/PTI

Meningitis claims two more lives in India

NEW DELHI, 19 May — A meningitis outbreak in the capital claimed two more lives on Wednesday, taking the death toll to 28, while 10 new cases were reported.

“Two more deaths are confirmed,” a Municipal Corporation of Delhi official told local reporters.

Three people had succumbed Monday to the deadly disease that hit the capital over a fortnight ago. The total number of cases reported in the capital has gone up to 323. — MNA/PTI

An Indian doctor tests the blood of a suspected bacterial meningitis patient at the Hindu Rao Hospital, in New Delhi. An outbreak of bacterial meningitis in New Delhi has left at least 28 people dead in the past three weeks, a municipal health office spokesman said. — INTERNET

Vietnam busts up heroin trafficking ring

HANOI, 20 May — Vietnam will shortly prosecute 31 local people who trafficked and transported hundreds of cakes of heroin (1 cake weighs 0.35 kilos) from its provinces bordering Laos and Cambodia to its southern Ho Chi Minh City.

The biggest batch of heroin transported by the 42-member ring, which was cracked down by the city’s police in June 2004, included 60 cakes worth more than 100,000 US dollars, according to local newspaper Youth on Thursday.

The ring sold heroin to wholesalers traders in Ho Chi Minh City, who would resell the drug to distributors in the city and some surrounding provinces. The local police are trying to arrest the remaining 11 ring members.

Another big drug trafficking ring was cracked down in 2003. Twenty-two out of 60 ring members, who trafficked and transported over 3,000 cakes of heroin and 535 kilos of opium across borders into some Vietnam’s northern localities, will be prosecuted in the coming time.

The country detected 12,068 drug-related crimes, seized 239.4 kilos of heroin, and arrested 18,260 involved people last year. — MNA/Xinhua

Bihar may be new tiger trouble spot

NEW DELHI, 19 May — Bihar in northern India may bring in more bad news when India begins its elaborate tiger census in a few months. The state’s officials are struggling to account for missing big cats, Indo-Asian News Service reported.

The Valmiki national park in West Champaran District has reported an alarming drop in tiger population after its own census last month.

“The tiger number in the sanctuary is not encouraging, but this isn’t the final number. We have to look into it again,” BA Khan, chief of local wildlife conservation, said and declined to provide statistics.

“Tiger population at the Valmiki reserve is said to have fallen drastically in the last five years. In 1990, the sanctuary was estimated to have had 80 tigers and 31 leopards.

India, once considered the home of the big cat, has an estimated 3,500 tigers. The Project Tiger programme started in 1970s was credited with arresting the decline till media reports this year pointed to fewer or rare sightings of the animal in several parks, especially Sariska and Ranthambore in Rajasthan.

Indian central government recently admitted that poachers might have wiped off the entire tiger population in Sariska. — MNA/Xinhua

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Vietnam signs deal for first oil refinery construction

HANOI, 19 May — Petro Vietnam, a state-owned oil and gas corporation, has signed an engineering procurement and construction contract (EPC) with a four-party consortium led by France’s Technip Conflexip for construction of main components of the Dung Quat oil refinery, Vietnam News reported on Wednesday.

The scope of works in the EPC inked on Tuesday includes two packages totalling 1.6 billion US dollars. The overall estimated cost for the refinery in central Quang Ngai Province has escalated to 2.5 billion dollars from an initial 1.3 billion dollars. The refinery, with an annual processing capacity of 6.5 million tons of crude oil, will help meet Vietnam’s demand for high-quality products such as unleaded petrol A90, 92 and 95, kerosene, diesel and liquefied petroleum gas. When the refinery becomes operational, expected in the next few years, it will meet 40 percent of the local demand for petroleum.

The French-led consortium which signed the EPC includes Malaysia’s

Chinese mountaineers climbing toward summit of Mt Everest

QOMOLANGMA BASE CAMP, (Tibet), 20 May — A team of 22 Chinese women mountaineers, working to re-measure the height of Qomolangma, also known as Mount Everest, left the base camp Thursday to head for the summit.

They will first climb to a camp at 7,028 metres above sea level before finally hiking to the summit Sunday or Monday, said Zhang Jiayuang, the leader of the group. According to China’s first measurement in 1975, the peak is 8,848.13 metres above sea level. “Time for the final ascent depends on weather conditions,” said Zhang. The second group of mountaineers will set off towards the 7,028-metre-high camp Friday. They are expected to reach the summit a day after the first group, Zhang said. The ascent of the mountain, which straddles the border of China and Nepal, was originally scheduled for May but has been repeatedly delayed because of poor weather conditions. The peak has seen frequent heavy snows and strong winds since early May. Mountaineering experts say the turbulent weather is rare in recent years. — MNA/Xinhua

General says Iraq police force slow to develop

WASHINGTON, 19 May — Iraq’s police force has not developed as quickly as US commanders had hoped, the top American general in the region says, raising questions about how soon American forces can begin returning home. General John Abizaid, chief of US Central Command, said the slow progress of Iraq police is delaying improvements in the country’s overall security, forcing Iraqi military units to perform internal security functions.

“Any fully developed Iraqi security force is key in determining when US troops can turn over security operations to Iraqis and return home, Pentagon officials have said repeatedly,” Abizaid said, “I don’t know how much I would say time-wise they’re behind, but they are behind.” — MNA/Xinhua

EU helps China train 14,000 experts in village affairs

BEIJING, 19 May — The co-director of the EU-China Training programme on Village Governance said Wednesday that the programme has made a “significant first step” in training more than 14,000 Chinese Government officials since May 2001.

“This might appear a modest achievement if measured against the needs in the country, but it is significant when seen as a first step in a cascading process through which participants in the programme training courses are transmitted skills and tools...down to the village level,” said William Massolin.

He said at the ongoing National Conference on Village Self-Government that the programme has been working closely with the key institutions in charge of village governance at the central level by providing financial and technical support in the past four years.

It has also helped to create a strong pool of trainers at the central and provincial levels and developed training manuals on village elections, village governance, transparency in village affairs and democratic decision-making, he said.

“It has been a priority of the programme to develop training materials and conduct courses, ... which are of crucial importance to ensure the strengthening, over the long term, of village self-governance,” he said.

The EU-China Training programme on Village Governance is a five-year cooperation between the Chinese Government and the EU Commission, with the Ministry of Civil Affairs acting as executing agency on the Chinese side.

The main objectives are to facilitate long-term cooperation and understanding between China and EU, to enhance understanding and observance of the law among Chinese villagers, their elected representatives and rural officials and to promote village self-governance.

Li Xueju, Chinese Minister of Civil Affairs, said at the opening ceremony of the conference that the programme is so far, China’s largest cooperation project with a foreign partner. — MNA/Xinhua

India received $3.75 billion in foreign investment in 2004

NEW DELHI, 19 May — India received 3.75 billion US dollars of foreign direct investment in 2004, taking the cumulative inflows from July 1991 when the country opened up its economy to 32.69 billion US dollars, official data showed here on Wednesday.

The figures, however, only include inflows on account of equity component of foreign investment, and exclude other investments, such as reinvested profits that form the international norms. According to the annual report of the Department of Industrial Policy and Promotion, Mauritius was the largest source of foreign investment for India with a 31.23 per-cent share, followed by the United States with a 20.15 per-cent share. — MNA/Xinhua

Municipal officials work in the emergency operation room of the Tokyo Metropolitan government headquarters as Japan conducted drills on 19 May, 2005 in preparation for the possibility of a major quake hitting the capital during the morning rush hour.—INTERNET

A baby gorilla is back with her mother following an emergency medical procedure to treat a rare bone disease, according to Franklin Park Zoo officials, on 19 May, 2005 in Boston. —INTERNET
Mega kitchen makes waves in Bangalore

BANGALORE, 19 May — Culinary culture in this capital of South India's Karnataka State may not be the same now that a unique mega eatery with the state-of-the-art kitchen established that has made a sensation among the peers and the plebeians alike.

The fore outlet “Nammore Hotel” caters to the food needs of thousands of people daily dishing out a variety of tastes, including South Indian and North Indian dishes. Setting a new trend in the catering industry, it has earned a niche for itself as centralized food production unit.

China outlines its work agenda for developing western regions

BEIJING, 19 May — Rural affairs, infrastructure and ecological development, cultivation of specialty industries, as well as a boost of social causes will be the main tasks of this year for the country’s campaign to develop the vast western regions, according to the third plenary session of the leading group for development of western Chinese regions with the State Council held on Tuesday.

Premier Wen Jiabao, who chaired the meeting, told participants to “carry out and implement in an unswerving manner” the strategies and arrangements laid down by the Communist Party of China (CPC) Central Committee and the State Council about exploring the western regions. “It is imperative to develop west China in the light of scientific concept of development and advance the work in a down-to-earth manner,” said the Premier.

Participants agreed that since the campaign was launched five years ago, strides had been made, notable results had been produced in this regard, with the presence of an unprecedented promising prospects in economic and social developments of western regions.

Nevertheless, many problems and difficulties still remain in developing the country’s western regions, so it will be an arduous task with a long process to develop the west, said the participants.

Shanghai to erect more public sculpture parks

SHANGHAI, 19 May — Shanghai will erect an additional 30 to 50 public sculptures by 2010 in the key districts of the municipality, said sources with the just-concluded Shanghai Sculpture Construction Conference.

The overall sculpture development plan of the city has passed approval by the municipal government and has been put into effect. And the municipal urban planning bureau has publicized the timetable for the city’s sculpture construction.

Some 30 key sculpture projects are expected to be launched, including 10 in the municipal areas and 20 in the suburban counties and districts.

The Shanghai Pudong International Airport, the Shanghai Sculpture Park and other key sites will all erect sculptures, the source said. — MNA/Xinhua

Thai anti-car theft police accused of involving in smuggling vehicles

BANGKOK, 20 May — A total of 108 police from Bangkok’s anti-car theft division have colluded with Malaysian gangsters in smuggling automobiles, said the police inspector-general Seripisut Temiyavej.

The 108 policemen involving in car smuggling ranged from non-commissioned officers all the way up to major-general, Bangkok Post on Thursday quoted Seripisut as saying.

The gang of police had conspired with car thieves in Malaysia to smuggle 42 stolen vehicles into Thailand over the past two months, he said.

Malaysian thieves handed the vehicles to members of the police gang, who then parked the vehicles at different locations. Later, they “found” the vehicles and seized them as smuggled cars.

Those cars were then handed over to the Customs Department which eventually put them up for auction. The same group of police had their associates bid for the vehicles, which they then sold for a profit.

Seripisut blamed those police actions as serious legal violations and said their cases were destined for the National Counter Corruption Commission. Bangkok Post also quoted anonymous police source as saying that Seripisut’s action followed a search by Bangkok police at the residence of one of his close friends, where more than 80 cars were parked and were suspected of being stolen. — MNA/Xinhua

Officer guilty of sending arms from Iraq

BAGHDAD, 19 May — A military judge Thursday found an Air Force officer guilty of illegally shipping a small arsenal of automatic weapons and hundreds of other war souvenirs home from Iraq.

Major Gregory McMillion stood at rigid attention with his two military lawyers as Col. Ronald Gregory read his verdict in the judge-only court-martial.

The proceedings then moved into the penalty phase with the prosecution presenting four character witnesses before court recessed for the day. Defence character witnesses will testify Friday.

The 44-year-old McMillion faces anything from no penalty to a prison term of eight years.

Prosecutors said McMillion is a gun and military paraphernalia enthusiast who tried to use his deployment to stock his personal collection.

US soldiers examine a destroyed vehicle after a roadside bomb explosion in Baghdad on 18 May, 2005. — Internet
At the 60th anniversary to mark the end of World War II, the President of Germany said that because of the rule of nazism, WWII broke out in which many human lives were lost, adding that over two million Jews were also slaughtered. As a German citizen, he was ashamed of the wrongdoings, the President said. At this age of globalization and global village, the civilized world is against the acts of armed hegemonism.

When the then Government of South Africa led by de Klerk and the ANC leader Nelson Mandela were in the process of holding on-going peace talks, over 30 ANC members were murdered. As the murder upset the ANC members, they demanded to end the on-going peace talks and return to the armed struggle line.

But Mandela frankly told his men that he felt grievance and sympathy for the murdered ANC members as his own relatives, but there was no question of the ANC reverting to the armed struggle line.

The ANC was looking forward to working for the success of the peace talks, declared Mandela, a far-sighted leader. Because of his truthful stance, South Africa was able to restore peace and start the successful nation-building tasks within a short time.

In the field of social science, it is said, “Only the total peace is conducive to the social development, and on the other hand, terrorism (armed confrontation) will hamper social progress. Armed terrorism will turn the world back to the age of savages.

Thanks to its endeavours, the Tarmadaw Government has been able to build trust with the 17 armed groups that have eventually returned to the legal fold, and has restored peace in the whole nation. Now the entire people of Myanmar are happy to witness the start of the endeavour to develop human society with total peace in the country.

Meanwhile, terrorists blow up bombs on 7 May to murder innocent people and to frighten them with the envious intention of eroding the political and economic stability and the peace, progress and prosperity the nation and the people are enjoying. In reality, it was an outdated and barbarous act. In the end, the policy of armed struggle line and terrorism the multi-coloured insurgents had followed for over 40 years met its downfall, because of the failure to win public support. Everyone who uses brutal tactics to gain political success will surely face public opposition.

The people will support only the endeavours for transition to discipline-flourishing democracy which cover the task of strengthening the democracy foundation in political, economic and social sectors, developing the national entrepreneurs, workers, peasants, implementing the industrial and agricultural projects to increase productivity, and the uplift of the political, economic, social, health, education and cultural sectors.

Because of the Middle East crisis, there are daily killings between members of the two opposing sides. The leader of a Middle East country once said that at every hour of a day, all in the region were worried of being hit by a sniper bullet or blown up by a bomb. He continued to say that all should collectively find a way out of the terrible situation. The regional peoples should not let their posterity suffer the same evil fate as theirs.

All the persons who want to make every development come to a halt for not having the role of the key player, thinking that the loss of public lives and property is a political gain for them, and dreaming of a situation in which the people suffering more and more will rise up against the government, are terrorists who are totally against and jealous of the peace, prosperity and progress the nation and the people are enjoying at present.

In this regard, the people and the Tatmadaw will have to ward off the atrocious acts of the terrorists and to crush them with harmonious efforts.

The strength of the people is also that of the nation.

In this regard, people are requested to help safeguard the nation and the race by informing the nearest security personnel or organization soonest about any suspicious looking object or unusual condition as an inborn duty.

Matters coordinated to ensure smooth and secure transport

Yangon Division Supervisory Committee for ensuring smooth and secure transport held its coordination meeting at the office of the All-bus Lines Control Committee in Tamway Township here this afternoon. It was attended by Committee Chairman Yangon Division Peace and Development Council Chairman Commander Maj-Gen Myint Swe, Deputy Commander Brig-Gen Wai Lwin, military region and station commanders, Secretary of Yangon Division PDC Lt-Col Myint Kyi and members, committee members, local authorities and officials.

First, the commander delivered a speech and officials reported on measures being taken for ensuring smooth and secure transport in Yangon division. Later, the meeting ended with concluding remarks by the commander. MNA

Measures on Organizing Tipitakadhara Tipitaka

Kovida honouring ceremony coordinated

YANGON, 20 May — The coordination meeting on holding the 57th Tipitakadhara Tipitaka Kovida honouring ceremony was held at the Ministry of Religious Affairs this morning. Minister for Religious Affairs Brig-Gen Thura Myint Maung gave a speech. Chairman of the Work Committee for Organizing the ceremony Deputy Minister Brig-Gen Thura Aung Ko reported on progress of preparatory work. Officials reported on their respective sectors. MNA

Internal Revenue Department holds coord meeting

Minister Maj-Gen Hla Tun addresses the coordination meeting. — MNA

YANGON, 20 May — The meeting to review tax collection of Internal Revenue Department for 2004-2005 financial year and the meeting on revenue collection matters for 2005-2006 financial year were held at Internal Revenue Department on Pansodan Street this morning. Minister for Finance and Revenue Maj-Gen Hla Tun delivered a speech. Also present were Deputy Minister Col Hla Thein Swe, departmental heads and officials.

Revenue collection of states and divisions and future plans will be discussed tomorrow. — MNA

CEC member tours Sagaing Division

YANGON, 20 May — USDA CEC member Minister for Sports Brig-Gen Thura Aye Myint delivered an address at the ceremony to recount excursion experience of USDA youths at Yan Gyi Aung Hall in Shwebo on 18 May.

Youth from Shwebo District who visited Kayin and Chin States, Bago, Mandalay and Magway Divisions recalled their experience.

Next, Commander of North-West Command Maj-Gen Tha Aye and Minister Brig-Gen Thura Aye Myint attended the workshop on public relations and information management.

On 19 May, the CEC member met with secretaries of Sagaing Division and eight district USDAs. Next, he accepted K 650,000 for the association donated by ChaungU USDA.

NCCWC meets with alternate chairmen of NC Plenary Session

YANGON, 20 May — The National Convention Convening Work Committee and alternate chairmen of the Plenary Session of the National Convention held a discussion on Kyaiikasan Grounds, here, this morning. Present were Chairman of the Work Committee Chief Justice U Aung Toe, Vice-Chairman Attorney-General U Aye Maung, Secretary U Thaung Nyunt, members of the Work Committee and members of the Panel of Chairmen.

Chairman of the Work Committee Chief Justice U Aung Toe presided over the discussion. Joint-Secretary I U Khin Maung Myint acted as master of ceremonies. Chairman U Aung Toe gave a speech.

Vice-Chairman U Aye Maung and Secretary U Thaung Nyunt discussed matters related to the National Convention.

Participants took part in the discussions. Later, Chairman U Aung Toe gave the concluding remarks. — MNA

Coord meeting of alternate Chairmen of NC Plenary Session held

YANGON, 20 May — Alternate Chairmen of the Plenary Session of the National Convention held a coordination meeting at Kyaiikasan Grounds, here, this morning.

Member of the Panel of Chairmen of the Plenary Session of the National Convention Dr. Daw Myat Myat Ohn Khin presided over the meeting. Also present were members of the Panel of Chairmen U Myo Thant (Maung Hsu Shim), U Saw Philip Sam (a), U Philip Sam, U Law Hsin Kwam, U Kyaw Din (a) U Thay Yei, U Kyi Tint, U Bo Thein and Dr. Thein Nyunt (Nyunt Warkatha), Joint-Secretary-1 of the National Convention Convening Work Committee Dr. U Thaung Myint, members U Ba Han and U Hsan Tun, Director of the Work Committee Office U Than Aung and officials.

They discussed compilation of the Panel of Chairmen’s notes concerning 8 delegate groups’ proposals related to the sharing of power in executive and judicial sectors submitted to the National Convention held from 17 February to 31 March 2005. — MNA
Witnessing that the government and local administrative bodies were expanding the scope of regional development undertakings to raise the living standard of the people, the SSNA members felt uneasy.

(From page 1)

U Sai Hsaung, U Sai Tun, U Sai Taw, and U Sai Chan, U Lwe Maung and party of Shan State (North) Special Region-3 SSA, U Ma Htu Naw and party of Special Region-5 KDA, U Sai Mon and party of Monggan People’s Militia Group, U Law Mar and party of Monghin/Mongha People’s Militia Group and U Kan Na and U Aik Mone who had returned to the legal fold.

Shan State (North) Peace and Development Council Chairman North-East Command Commander Maj-Gen Myint Hlaing, Minister at the Prime Minister’s Office Brig-Gen Pyi Sone and Minister for Forestry Brig-Gen Thein Aung presided over the ceremony. Nampaung Village USDA members, Shan nationals Ma Nan Twam Kham and Ma Nan San Nwan Nge acted as masters of ceremonies.

First, the master of ceremonies announced the start of the ceremony and Commander Maj-Gen Myint Hlaing delivered a speech.

He said that the ceremony was pleasant, auspicious and honourable not only for the nationalities of Nampaung region, Lashio Township, but also for the entire people of the nation as eternal peace and stability, the basic requirement for national development, can be restored.

From a foreign nation, Sao Hkam Hpa, a son of Nyaungshwe Sawbwa Sao Shwe Thaik, announced the establishment of Shan State provisional government and the independent Shan State. At the time, the SSNA brigade 19 has stood witness to the national unity and denounced Sao Hkam Hpa’s acts by making the unconditional exchange of arms for peace. The people will have to live in unity as long as the world exists. They should not be deceived by the ones who are lying as if they are going to serve the public interest more than the government, which is like the parents of the people.
Secretary-1 Lt-Gen Thein Sein and dignitaries attend the ceremony to unconditionally exchange arms for peace. — MNA

Lt-Gen Aung Htwe accepts arm from commanding officer U Saing Chan of SSNA Brigade-19. — MNA

Lt-Gen Aung Htwe presents gifts to commanding officer U Saing Tun of SSNA Brigade-19. — MNA

The unexceptional exchange of arms for peace of SSNA Brigade 11 led by U Kan Na, which took place on 12 April 2005, was the very pioneering act not only for the remaining SSNA members but also all the remnant peace groups that still hold arms.

Local elders are happy as all the members of the SSNA brigade-19 led by U Gon Khay and U Kham Shan have unconditionally exchanged arms for peace, after realizing people’s stance.

As a commander, he heartily welcomed the brigade members and their comrades and to change their course to the eternal peace.

Amphunition, 102 mines, 162 shells and 25 assorted communication devices.

Next, Commander U Gon Khay of Brigade-19 expressed thanks in both Myanmar and Shan languages.

(The speech of U Gon Khay is reported separately.)

Captain Moon Pha of Brigade-19 of SSNA expressed thanks in both Myanmar and Shan languages.

(The speech of Captain Moon Pha is reported separately.)

Shan national U Sai Kyu gave a welcoming speech in both Myanmar and Shan languages.

(The speech of U Sai Kyu is reported separately.)

Shan national U Sai Mon delivered a speech. (See page 11)

The locals honour the spirit of all the men of the brigade for making the noble decision to serve the interest of their own region and people. U Sai Kyu wished U Gon Khay and all his men enjoy progress and a pleasant life.
All need to safeguard, protect the motherland…

The conditional exchange of arms for peace of SSNA Brigade No 11 led by U Kan Na, which took place on 12 April 2005, was the very pioneering act not only for the remaining SSNA members but also for all the remnant peace groups that still hold arms.

Again on 29 April, Palaung State Liberation Army led by U Aik Mone unconditionally exchanged arms for peace, and that marked the dawn of peace for the entire nation including Shan State.

While they were thinking of giving up the armed insurgency because there emerged a ray of sunshine for lasting peace and local people enjoyed development and peace, expatriate Sao Hkam Hpa announced the formation of so-called Shan provisional government to secede from the Union. Indeed, it was just a horrifying act designed to deal a shattering blow to peace and stability that had been restored in Shan State and to drive a wedge and to incite bloody conflicts among the brethren living in Shan State. SSA members and groups will never support such an evil act. Regarding the announcement, they issued their attitudes.

National race armed groups should have quitted acts of threatening and oppressing the people, and now is the most opportune time for them to discard armed struggle line and to build peace for enabling local people to fully enjoy the fruitful results.

Unconditional exchange of arms for peace of U Gon Khay of SSNA Brigade-19 will contribute not only to the group’s development but also to that of Nampaung region itself

U Sai Mon of Manpan-Naunglaing region of Lashio District, Shan State (North).

U Sai Mon added that he told U Gon Khay that his group could not serve the interests of the people while holding arms but instead his men would like to exchange arms for peace unconditionally.

He said that Commander of SSNA Brigade-19 U Gon Khay and he called on Commander of North-East Command Maj-Gen Myint Hlaing on 17 May 2005. At the call, U Gon Khay reported to the commander that his men would like to unconditionally exchange arms for peace. The commander heartily welcomed the news, and said that the command and the Government will welcome U Gon Khay and members of Brigade-19 of SSNA, and will carry out development tasks not only for the group but also local people.

U Gon Khay discussed with him that his men would like to exchange arms for peace unconditionally. After witnessing the warm welcome extended by the Government to these groups and immediate regional development tasks that followed. U Gon Khay addressed the local people to fully enjoy the fruitful results.

If the remaining armed groups exchange arms for peace unconditionally, Shan State can restore peace and stability and enjoy fruitful results of development.

In conclusion, he urged all armed national race groups to exchange arms for peace unconditionally for serving the interests of the people.

Yangon, 20 May — The following is a translation of the speech of national race leader U Sai Mon of Manpan-Naunglaing region of Lashio District, Shan State (North).

U Gon Khay of SSNA Brigade-19 will contribute not only to the group’s development but also to that of Nampaung region itself

U Gon Khay and his men unconditionally exchanged arms for peace

Shan National Ma Nan San Hwan.

She said that she was born and brought up in Nampaung Village and today is the happiest day in her life. Like her the entire national people including her friends, brethren, parents and relatives are also pleased and delighted.

In the past, the said, young women of Nampaung region had to lead a miserable life, let alone for enjoying peace and stability. In the days of the Tatmadaw government, she passed the Tenth Standard Examination with the emergence of Nampaung Basic Education High School. Fortunately, she had an opportunity to pursue higher education with the emergence of the Lashio Degree College, she stressed.

She said that the number of well-educated persons and degree holders in the region has increased as the degree college, the technological college, the computer college and the nursing training school emerged in Lashio.

Various taxes on paddy, cows and buffaloes had to be levied. When the local people become prosperous through their farming undertakings, they had to pay extortion money to the insurgents and they had, in the long run, been in despair.

Moreover, the local people had been in a state of misery to enjoy pleasure and loved ones in a happy manner.

In conclusion, he expressed his thanks to the government and local people who warmly welcomed the members of SSNA Brigade No 19. — MNA

Dream has came true. U Gon Khay and U Kham Shan of SSNA Brigade-19 and his men unconditionally exchanged arms for peace

Yangon, 20 May — The following is a translation of the speech delivered by Shan national Ma Nan San Hwan.

She said that she was born and brought up in Nampaung Village and today is the happiest day in her life. Like her the entire national people including her friends, brethren, parents and relatives are also pleased and delighted.

In the past, the said, young women of Nampaung region had to lead a miserable life, let alone for enjoying peace and stability. In the days of the Tatmadaw government, she passed the Tenth Standard Examination with the emergence of Nampaung Basic Education High School. Fortunately, she had an opportunity to pursue higher education with the emergence of the Lashio Degree College, she stressed.

She said that the number of well-educated persons and degree holders in the region has increased as the degree college, the technological college, the computer college and the nursing training school emerged in Lashio.

Various taxes on paddy, cows and buffaloes had to be levied. When the local people become prosperous through their farming undertakings, they had to pay extortion money to the insurgents and they had, in the long run, been in despair.

Moreover, the local people had been in a state of anxiety as their children were forced into recruitment. Those with high financial position sent their children to towns and cities for formal education and those who are needy had to send their children to the monastery. The increased number of children in the monasteries has led to a shortage of food. To satisfy the need, the Sayadaws of the monasteries, on behalf of the local people, had to write and make request to the head of the region, the commander.

Meanwhile, the local people had to pay the insurgents if they were not able to satisfy the latter’s recruitment. Those who were not in a position to pay have to be at the mercy of the insurgents and being subjected to torture.

At this juncture, we dreamed that how nice it would be if the armed group in the region unconditionally exchange arms for peace like other armed groups.

Now, our dream has come true. U Gon Khay and U Kham Shan of SSNA Brigade-19 and his men unconditionally exchanged arms for peace and made up their mind to take part in regional development tasks together with the local people. She, on behalf of the local people, would like to express thanks for the occasion.

Those who unconditionally exchange arms for peace today will soon reunite with their families or loved ones in a happy manner. She also thanked those present on the occasion including local authorities.

She wished the national brethren who had been in a state of misery to enjoy peace and delight, to possess a happy day soonest and to regain a happy family life. — MNA
Commander Maj-Gen Myint Hlaing addresses the ceremony.—MNA

Arms and ammunition handed over by members of SSNA Brigade No 19.—MNA

Ma Nan San Twan Kham acts as MC together with Ma Nan San Nwan Nge.

MNA

welcoming speech and expressed thanks for the development of Nampaung region in both Myanmar and Shan languages.

(The speech of U Sai Mon is reported separately.) Shan national Ma Nan San Hwan delivered a welcoming speech and expressed thanks for the development of Nampaung region in both Myanmar and Shan languages.

(The speech of Ma Nan San Hwan is reported separately.)

Later, Secretary-1 Lt-Gen Thein Sein presented clothes and gifts to Commander U Gon Khay and Deputy Commander U Sai Shan.

Later, the ceremony concluded, and the Secretary-1 and party inspected the arms and ammunition handed over by SSNA Brigade-19 and clothes and provisions provided by the State. Then the Secretary-1 and party cordially greeted the group members and local people. — MNA

Lt-Gen Aung Htwe also presented gifts to Commanding Officers U Sai Tun, U Sai Taw and Commander U Kham Shan and commanding officer U Sai Hsaung.

MNA

The provisions and clothes provided by the State and North-East Command for members of SSNA Brigade No 19.

MNA

The unexceptional exchange…
Ford launches conservation, environmental grants in China

BEIJING, 19May—Ford Motor China launched its 2005 Conservation and Environmental Grants here Wednesday, calling attention to water resources. Pollution and unreasonable use of water resources have made the challenge even greater to a country constrained by a short supply of water resources already. The Chinese Government has put top on its agenda the prevention and treatment of water pollution.

The Ford Environment Grant echoes that call by focusing on the protection of water resources and water life and fostering the sustained utilization of water resources. “Environmental Conservation crisis is not a future, but of the present,” said Wang Yuqin, deputy director-general of State Environment Protection Administration. “Water pollution prevention is crucial to the health and safety of people and is a top priority of Chinese Government’s environmental protection work agenda.” — MNA/Xinhua

CLAIMS DAY NOTICE
MV CARAJA JAYA NIAGA III-4 VOY NO (—)

Consignes of cargo carried on MV CARAJA JAYA NIAGA III-4 VOY NO (—) hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on 20-5-2005 and cargo will be discharged into the premises of Myanmar International Terminals Thilawa where it will at the consignee’s risk and expenses and subject to the bylaws and conditions of the Port of Yangon.

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

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

SHIPPING AGENCY DEPARTMENT
MYANMA PORT AUTHORITY
AGENT FOR: TRANSWORLD LOGISTIC PVT LTD, INDIA
Phone No: 2569242/256914

CLAIMS DAY NOTICE
MV SEA BRIGHT VOY NO (705)

Consignes of cargo carried on MV SEA BRIGHT VOY NO (705) are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on 22-5-2005 and cargo will be discharged into the premises of A.W.P.T where it will at the consignee’s risk and expenses and subject to the bylaws and conditions of the Port of Yangon.

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

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

SHIPPING AGENCY DEPARTMENT
MYANMA PORT AUTHORITY
AGENT FOR: MS ADVANCE CONTAINER
Phone No: 256988/378316/376797

450 kilos of narcotics seized in eastern Iran

TEHRAN, 19May—Iranian anti-drug police seized over 450 kilos of illicit drugs in the eastern province of South Khorasan, the official IRNA news agency reported Wednesday. IRNA quoted local police officer Mansour Sabaghi as saying eight drug traffickers and distributors were arrested. Drug addiction and transportation has been a serious social problem in Iran, which links drug-producing countries of Afghanistan and Pakistan and markets in the Gulf states, Central Asia and Western Europe. According to official statistics, there are at least two million drug addicts in Iran. The country also accounts for 80 per cent of the opium and 90 per cent of the morphine unheard worldwide, according to the International Narcotics Control Board. MNA/Xinhua

 commoration of ancient Chinese seafaring hero held in Fuzhou

FUZHOU, 19 May—China held a forum Tuesday to commemorate its ancient seafaring hero Zheng He in Fuzhou, capital city of east China’s Fujian Province.

More than 300 domestic and overseas scholars participated in the forum and reviewed the contributions of Zheng, a great Chinese navigator who made seven ocean voyages 600 years ago.

The scholars agreed that Zheng’s voyages are greatly important to the Chinese and world navi- gation history. They are not only a part of cultural heritage for China, but also a marked step in world civilization.

With the theme of “Loving Peace, Neighboring Friendship and Development through Coop- eration”, the five-day forum is designed to publicize Zheng’s great contribution to the world navi- gation industry and to all mankind and for promot- ing cooperation and exchanges between China and other countries in the world by carrying on Zheng’s spirit of loving peace, bravery and dili- gence.

From 1405 to 1433, during the Meng-Dynasty, Zheng He (1371-1435) travelled to more than 30 countries in Asia and Africa, travelling more than 100,000 kilometres. At its peak, his fleet comprised more than 300 ships manned by about 27,000 sailors, a number un- rivalled in the world at that time.

According to some scholars, Zheng is be- lieved to be the first man to blaze a direct sea route linking the Indian Ocean with the west. Zheng’s voyage was 87 years earlier than Columbus’ discov- ery of the Americas and 114 years earlier than Magellan’s round-the-world voyage.

2005 is the 600th an- niversary of Zheng He’s first voyage, and the Chi- nese Government has set up a special office headed by the Ministry of Com- munications to organize series of activities to mark Zheng’s contribu- tion to the history of navi-

Besides the seminar, other activities including lectures on oceanogra- phy, international aca- demic conferences and an International Expo on Navigation and the Ocean will take place this year, said sources with Chinese Ministry of Communica- tions. — MNA/Xinhua

Chinese, Palestinian leaders hold talks

BEIJING, 19 May—Chinese President Hu Jintao and Palestinian leader Mahmoud Abbas agreed during their talks on Wednesday afternoon to jointly develop all-round friendly and cooperative cooperation between the two countries and actively push forward the Middle East peace process.

During their talks in the presence of the Great Hall of the People in Beijing on Wednesday af- ternoon, Hu and Abbas exchanged views on bilateral relations and solutions to the Middle East in an extensive way.

Hu said the Chinese people and government will always firmly support the just cause of the Palestinian people. It is the existing policy of the Chinese Gov- ernment to develop a long- term, friendly and coopera- tive relationship between China and Palestine.

The Chinese President set forth several suggestions on further expansion of bilateral ex- itagreements on trade and economic coop- eration so as to bring about substantial benefits to the people of both countries. Hu also said the two countries should step up information exchange and cooperation in the fields of culture, education and public health. The two countries should also increase personnel ex- changes and enhance mu-
**Bank robber shot after taking hostages in US**

**WASHINGTON, 19 May** — A bank robber was shot by police on Wednesday after he took some people hostage at a bank in the central US state of Kansas, authorities said.

The man, 44, held up a bank in Olathe and took at least six people there hostage and ordered them to strip down to their underwear, news reports quoted local law enforcement officers as saying.

Later, the man took the six people, including four women and two men, into a minivan, and forced one of them to drive to an airport some 3 kilometres away. He was shot by police when he got out of the minivan and appeared to be trying to get away by a small plane.

The man, who was in critical condition, was taken to a hospital by helicopter and money was found from the minivan, the reports said.

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**E3 video game expo opens in Los Angeles**

**LOS ANGELES, 19 May** — More than 1,000 computer and video games and related products will make their debut at Electronic Entertainment Expo (E3) 2005, which opened here on Wednesday, organizers said.

The video game show, one of the world’s largest, attracts over 400 leading interactive entertainment companies from about 80 countries, according to the Entertainment Software Association (ESA), the trade association that represents US computer and video game publishers.

The firms will exhibit new technologies and products for computers, video game consoles, handheld systems and the Internet. “The more than 1,000 products debuting at E3 2005 are examples of the innovation and creativity that will drive industry growth in the coming year,” said Douglas Lowenstein, president of the ESA, adding that the show is the premiere product launching pad for the global interactive entertainment industry.

Overall, more than 5,000 products will be shown at over 50,000 square metres of space at the Los Angeles Convention Centre, with the top five categories falling into action and adventure games (19 per cent), role playing games (13 per cent), sports and driving games (11 per cent), child and family games (6 per cent) and strategy games (5 per cent).

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**Ukraine tightens security for Eurovision 2005 song contest**

**KIEV, 19 May** — The Ukrainian capital of Kiev beefed up security on Wednesday for the 50th Eurovision song contest.

According to Ukraine’s Interior Minister Yuriy Lutsenko, the main roads in Kiev were closed, with more than 4,000 police officers stationed in downtown areas.

A new metal fence has been installed around the recently refurbished Palace of Sport, the concert hall hosting most of the Eurovision events, with more than 2,000 police officers guarding the building.

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**South Africa makes massive education shake-up**

**JOHANNESBURG, 19 May** — The South African Government is to introduce tough measures designed to shake education in the country to the core, according to a report published here on Wednesday.

The Frontpage report said in local daily Star said that a plan unveiled in Parliament by Education Minister Naledi Pandor, the government plans to: Drastically reduce the powers of school governing bodies, loosening their grip on school policies; Give the minister powers to determine whether a school can charge fees; and Move indigenous languages from the fringes and give them equal status with English and Afrikaans.

The South African public education system accommodates more than 11.6 million school learners, 463,025 university students. There are 26,499 primary, secondary, combined and intermediate schools, with 340,000 educators.

Pandor made it clear on Tuesday that the government wants to rein in school governing bodies, which had “made public schools their personal property”.

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**Germany to reinforce battle against terrorism**

**BERLIN, 19 May** — Germany will strengthen its campaign against terrorism which has posed a major threat to the country’s domestic security, Interior Minister Otto Schily said on Tuesday.

The plot to attack visiting Iraqi Prime Minister Ayad Allawi last December showed that Germany is one part of the world’s dangerous areas threatened by terror, said the minister at a Press conference.

He also expressed his concern over the growth of the neo-Nazis and right-wing movement.

According to an annual report released by the German Domestic Security Agency to the Press, neo-Nazi crimes increased in Germany last year although the overall number of right extremists dropped.

There were 12,051 right extremist crimes reported in 2004, compared with 10,792 in 2003. Violent neo-Nazi crime cases also increased from 759 in 2003 to 776 last year, the report said.

Members of the National Democratic Party of Germany (NPD), a right-wing extremist party, also went up from 5,000 in 2003 to 5,300 in 2004. The number of neo-Nazis rose to about 3,800 last year from 3,000 in 2003.

“It must serve as a warning to all of us that the number of neo-Nazis in Germany in 2004 rose more than 25 per cent from the previous year,” said Schily. “The NPD party leader describes the super-criminal Hitler as a great statesman,” he noted. In 2003, the German Government sought to ban the NPD in the country, but its effort failed in the constitutional court.

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**Nontaya keeps lead in golf tournament in Thailand**

**BANGKOK, 20 May** — Player Nontaya Sri-sawang has kept her advantage after two rounds at the third leg of the All Thailand Golf Circuit Golf Tournament in the country’s eastern Chonburi Province, local newspaper reported Thursday.

Nontaya shot a one-under-par 71 Wednesday to stay three under 141 for the competition and had her lead cut down only once.

Followed in the second spot was national junior golfer Porn-anong Petlum, from Chachoengsao, who shot a three-under-par 69 for a total of two-under 142.

Meanwhile, Suthira Chamachai moved up to the third place whereby shooting a par 72, said the Bangkok Post Tuesday.

In the men’s category, Warut Chomchalaem carded an even par 72 but still managed to maintain his three-advantage over Kwanchi Tannil who shot a 71.

The outstanding amateurs of the tournament, the country’s third-leg qualifying competition, will be able to play in the finals in Chiang Rai Province at the end of the year. — MNA/Xinhua

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**Maradona to host weekly TV programme**

**BUENOS AIRES, 20 May** — Argentine legend Diego Maradona announced on Wednesday his plans for hosting a weekly television show which is scheduled to begin airing on Argentine television in the coming months.

“We are going to invite Pele and we’re looking to have Ronaldinho,” he said. “I’m going to invite whoever expresses interest in coming on the programme. The idea is that the guests come on the show and open themselves up and say whatever they feel.”

Other potential guests include players from the Italian national team and Real Madrid defender Roberto Carlos, Maradona said.

Maradona is combining with one of Argenti- na’s leading television producers to put on the show, which will be called “The night of No. 10”, a reference to his uniform number he wore while playing.

The 44-year-old Maradona is also consider- ing a return to soccer for the first time since his re- tern in 1997.

Argentine club Boca Juniors has offered him a job as talent scout at the team where he starred during the 1980s and 90s. But he has yet to publicly comment on whether he intends to accept the offer. — MNA/Xinhua

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**Ferguson says Glazer’s desire under Manchester United**

**LONDON, 20 May** — Alex Ferguson broke his silence on Malcolm Glazer’s takeover of Man- chester United on Thursday, saying the American businessman will get an idea of what Manches- ter United are all about in the FA Cup final on Saturday.

The United manager said the club’s new owner will be watching on television when The Red Devils defend the FA Cup against Arsenal at Cardiff’s Millennium Stadium.

Ferguson also stressed a desire that both Glazer and son Joel learn to understand the fabric of the Old Trafford club. Although the United supporters are expected to be dressed in black as a sign of mourning, and will chant in protest against the American business tycoon, Ferguson thinks Glazer will get a taste for the identity of Manchester United.

“I don’t know if they [the Glazers] will be there but they will be watching from the States, I’m sure of that,” he told the LMA’s official website.

“It will give them an idea of what Manchester United is and when, hopefully, they see our fans celebrating and see the atmosphere of that, it will be wonderful.”

Ferguson also issued a warning to Wayne Rooney to stop practising his cannonball shots in training.

“When he goes onto that training field, the first thing he does is get a ball and batters it into the net,” he continued.

“And it batters over the top of my head. One of these days he will hit me — and he will get killed.”

“I have decided to take doctors advice and not play next week as returning too early runs the risk of prolonging my recovery period,” Hewitt said in a statement.

“This is obviously disappointing but I am taking a longer term approach. My sights are now firmly set on the forthcoming grasscourt season starting with Queens and then Wimbledon, building up to our tough Davis Cup tie against Argentina in Sydney.”

The former Wimbledon champion, whose fiancee Bec Cartwright is expecting a child later this year, has returned to training after being forced to pull out of the French Open in the final at Indian Wells in March.

Australia’s top-ranked female player, Alicia Molik, has returned to training after being forced to pull out of the French Open.

Molik was sidelined for five weeks with a middle- ear infection but has begun her preparations for the French Open.

Hewitt, who was already struggling with a toe problem, has not played since losing to Roger Federer in the final at Indian Wells.

Brazil’s world number one Rafael Nadal will be the top seed in Paris, followed by Spaniard David Ferrer, the first placed seed out of the French Open.

Austria’s top-ranked male player, Thomas Berdych, is the second seed.

The seed numbers at the French Open follow the ATP and WTA rankings. — MNA/Xinhua

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**Hewitt pulls out of French Open**

**PARIS, 20 May** — World number two Lleyton Hewitt has pulled out of the French Open after fracturing a rib in a fall this month, organizers said on Thursday.

Australian Hewitt sustained the injury at his Sydney home two weeks ago, forcing him to delay a planned comeback at this week’s World Team Cup in Germany.

The former world number one will be replaced by a lucky loser in the draw for the claycourt Grand Slam, which starts on Monday.

“I have decided to take doctors advice and not play next week as returning too early runs the risk of prolonging my recovery period,” Hewitt said in a statement.

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**Kenya to field 20 runners in Dar marathon**

**DAR-ES-SALAM, 20 May** — Kenya is to field 20 of its runners in the inaugural Dar-es-Salam interna- tional marathon and three-time Boston marathon win- ner Cosmas Ndeti will lead the Kenyan squad.

Some 5,000 professional and amateur runners from around the world are expected to participate in the Dar marathon race slated for 24 July, according to race coordinator John Manjuma.

Foreign runners are also expected to come from such marathon-loving countries as Ethiopia, South Africa, Botswana, Zambia and Switzerland. — MNA/Xinhua

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**Benitez targets “best” tag**

**LONDON, 20 May** — Liverpool boss Rafael Benitez has targeted the position of “best” in Liverpool, saying he wants to become the most successful manager in the club’s history.

Benitez said he hopes the first of his trophies will come with a win over AC Milan in the Champions League final on 25 May.

“I was at Estremadura, Tenerife and Valencia and we had the best statistics in the history of each club,” he said. “I have done it at three clubs. Now I will try and do the same here. It will be very, very difficult I know because the history of this club is so big.”

The Reds boss has cited the win over AC Milan’s fellow Italian club Juventus as helping instil a belief among his players that they could win the club’s fifth European Cup. And he says comments from the Milan camp describing Liverpool as fortunate to be in the final are not proving an extra spur to win at the Atatürk Stadium in Istanbul. He said: “It’s not important what people say about us. We will just work really hard at our preparation and game plan and not listen to anyone from outside. “What is said doesn’t motivate me, I don’t need any more motivation. I already have a lot of it.” — MNA/Xinhua

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**ITF official visits Nigeria for promotion of wheelchair Tennis**

**LAGOS, 20 May** — Mark Bullock, the International Tennis Federation (ITF) Development Officer for Wheelchair Tennis, arrived in Nigeria on Thursday for a five-day visit.

Segun Oguntade, secretary of the Nigeria Tennis Federation (NTF), told reporters that the ITF official would assess facilities for wheelchair tennis in the country to effectively evaluate how the ITF could foster the development of the sport in the most popu- lous African country with a population of over 130 million.

Bullock would also hold a workshop for Nigeria’s technical officials of wheelchair tennis during his five- day visit.

Bullock is scheduled to leave Nigeria on May 23 for Tanzania. Wheelchair tennis is new in Nigeria which was introduced into the West African country in 2004. — MNA/Xinhua
Coffee prices go up in Vietnam

HANOI, 20 May — Coffee prices in Vietnam have reached their highest levels in the past five years, according to Vietnam Coffee and Cocoa Association (VICOFA) on Thursday.

The purchase price from farmers was 951-995.6 US dollars per ton and 1,027 US dollars at wholesale agencies on Tuesday. It reached 1,085-1,090 US dollars per ton on the coffee trading floor.

The rise is due to the deadline in coffee output because of drought in the central highland region, the largest producer in the country. Local experts expect the prices to stabilize at these high levels or even go up further in the coming months.

Meanwhile, global coffee prices were plunging with futures prices on the New York market Tuesday stood 1,113 US dollars per ton for July robusta coffee, 21 US dollars below the previous day’s closing, said the report.

Some Vietnamese coffee traders plan to import coffee if domestic prices continue to rise, as prices in Indonesia and Singapore are lower than in Vietnam.

Malaysian manufacturing sales up in March

KUALA LUMPUR, 20 May — Malaysia’s manufacturing sales value for March 2005 increased to 19.9 billion ringgit (10.36 billion US dollars), up 16.9 per cent over that in the same month of last year, the Department of Statistics said on Wednesday.

The department said in a statement released here that the March 2005 figure was also an increase of 16.2 per cent or 5.5 billion ringgit (1.44 billion US dollars) from the 33.9-billion-ringgit (8.92-billion-US-dollar) sales value recorded in February 2005.

WEATHER

Friday, 20 May, 2005

Summary of observations recorded at 09:30 hours MST: During the past 24 hours, Southwest Monsoon was advancing into Taninthayi Division. Rain or thunderstorms were widespread in Chin State and Taninthayi Divisions, scattered in Shan State, isolated in Rakhine State, Mandalay, upper Sagaing and Bago Divisions with isolated heavyfalls in Mandalay Division and weather has been partly cloudy in the remaining areas. The noteworthy amounts of rainfall recorded were Yamein (2.17) inches and Taunggyi (0.98) inch. Day temperature was (3°C) to (4°C) above normal in Rakhine State, lower Sagaing and Mandalay Divisions, (5°C) to (6°C) above normal in Shan and Kayin States, Magway, Bago and Yangon Divisions. (8°C) above normal in Ayeyawady Division, (4°C) above normal in Upper Sagaing Division and about normal in the remaining areas. The significant day temperatures were Maw, (44°C), Magway and Aunglan (42°C) each and Hinthada (41°C).

Maximum temperature on 19-5-2005 was 103°F. Minimum temperature on 20-5-2005 was 74°F. Relative humidity at 9:30 hrs MST on 20-5-2005 was 78%. Total sunshine hours on 19-5-2005 was (9.5) hours approx. Rainfalls on 20-5-2005 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 (7) mph from Southwest at (00:30) hours MST on 20-5-2005.

Bay influence: Monsoon is feeble in the South Andaman Sea and South Bay. Weather is partly cloudy in the North Andaman Sea and fair elsewhere in the Bay of Bengal.

Forecast valid until evening of 21-5-2005: Rain or thunderstorms are likely to be widespread in Shan State and Taninthayi Division, isolated in Chin, Rakhine, Kayin, Mon and Kayah States, Mandalay, Bago, Ayeyawady and Yangon Divisions and weather will be partly cloudy in the remaining areas. Degree of certainty (60%).

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

Outlook for subsequent two days: Thunder activity is expected in the Southern Myanmar areas.

Forecast for Yangon and neighbouring area for 21-5-2005: Possibility of isolated rain or thunderstorms. Degree of certainty is (40%).


Weather outlook for third weekend of May 2005: During the coming weekend, likelihood of isolated rain or thunderstorms in Yangon Division and possibility of isolated rain or thunderstorms in Mandalay Division.
Four political objectives
* Stability of the State, community peace and tranquillity, prevalence of law and order
* National reconsolidation
* Emergence of a new enduring State Constitution
* Building of a new modern developed nation in accord with the new State Constitution

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

All need to safeguard, protect the motherland from acts of fugitive Sao Hkam Hpa and accomplices who are making attempts to secede Shan State from the Union with alien instigations and incitement.

Yangon, 20 May — The following is a translation of the speech delivered by Commander of SSNA Brigade-19 U Gon Khay.

He said that he joined the MTA led by U Khun Hsa in 1979 to follow the armed struggle line. In 1996, U Khun Hsa and his followers returned to the legal fold, and so did SSNA members including him to build confidence with the government. Throughout the period of the armed struggle line, SSNA members together with U Khun Hsa and members did nothing beneficial to national people and brethren in Shan State. But, he said, they collected extortion money from the people to survive and to rise up against the government and to commit destructive acts.

Regarding the armed insurgents as its family members and showing benevolent attitude to them, the government not only forgives their misdeeds but undertakes regional development tasks and provides assistance for the national race armed groups. However, they still entertain doubts and suspicions to the government. The government is implementing its drive to ensure development of all regions of the nation, irrespective of race and creed. As a result, the regions where peace and stability has been restored, enjoy rapid development. Yet, the regions where armed insurgents reign lag behind in development.

Witnessing that the government and local administrative bodies were expanding the scope of regional development undertakings to raise the living standard of the people, they SSNA members felt uneasy. It was a long time, the members had not dared face the people and the government and reviewed their acts. (See page 10)

By unconditionally exchanging arms for peace and making eternal peace with State, all the group members will lead a life side by side with the people.

Yangon, 20 May — The following is a translation of the speech delivered by Captain Moonpha of Brigade-19 of SSNA.

He said their armed group with narrow-minded attitude had been rising up against the State for a long time, leading the region to the backwardness in all sectors such as social, education, health and transport.

Although the group had returned to the legal fold, it continued extorting money and collecting taxes from the local people. Consequently, only the people had to suffer from such kinds of difficulty, he added. He said by unconditionally exchanging arms for peace and making eternal peace with the government, all the group members will lead a life side by side with the people.

However, he said, there are still remnant armed groups in Shan State, and they are committing destructive acts. Again, Renegade Sao Hkam Hpa appointed himself as president and announced the independence of Shan State. And he is attempting to harm the interests of the local national people and the region.

That is why, Captain Moonpha said, entire local populace and the armed groups that have returned to the legal fold are denouncing the acts of fugitive Sao Hkam Hpa.

All in all, he said, he would like to urge the peace groups of Shan State and those of other states to unconditionally exchange arms for peace like Brigade-19 since it was the desire of the people.

He said he very much thanked the national people and the government for welcoming the members of Brigade-19, and that he would never commit such destructive acts. — MNA

Peace, stability, rule of law for regional development

U Sai Kyaw said, he has been living in Nampaung during his entire life of 58 years. As a local elder he has bitter personal experiences of the armed insurgency. Some of the village elders lost their lives because of the misjudgement of the lawless armed bands. However much they knew the mistakes of the armed groups, the village elders dared not tell the truth. The elders had to knowingly ignore the sufferings of the locals just for their own survival. And when a son was born, the parents’ happiness was overwhelmed by their high anxiety about their offspring being recruited forcefully into an armed band. Sometimes, locals had to flee their native land leaving behind all their possessions because of the armed conflicts. He said he had visited some other places as a pilgrim or on business, and found that mostly those regions were enjoying greater development than his. The key to regional development is the prevalence of peace and stability and the rule of law. He has come to believe that his region will be developing like others if there is no armed insurgency in it. All the locals have also come to understand that because of the armed insurgency the development pace of their region was slow despite the favourable conditions. The locals are happy as all the members of the SSNA brigade-19 led by U Gon Khay and U Kham Shang have unconditionally exchanged arms for peace, after realizing people’s stance.

The locals honour the spirit of all the men of the brigade for making the noble decision to serve the interest of their own region and people. He wished U Gon Khay and all his men enjoy progress and a pleasant life. — MNA