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

YANGON, 2 June — Vice-Chairman of the State Peace and Development Council of the Union of Myanmar Deputy Commander-in-Chief of Defence Services Commander-in-Chief (Army) Vice-Senior General Maung Aye received Military Attaché of the United States of America to the Union of Myanmar Colonel Michael A Norton, who had completed his tour of duty, and his successors Colonel Dan Tarter (Army) and Lt-Colonel John D Robinson (Air Force) at Zeyathiri Beikman hall on Konmyinttha, here, at 9 am today.

Also present on the occasion were Member of the State Peace and Development Council General Thura Shwe Mann of the Ministry of Defence, Commander-in-Chief (Navy) Vice-Admiral Soe Thein, Commander-in-Chief (Air) Lt-Gen Myat Hein and Chief of Military Affairs Security Maj-Gen Myint Swe. — MNA

Vice-Senior General Maung Aye shakes hands with Col Michael A Norton, outgoing Military Attaché of the United States of America.

Vice-Senior General Maung Aye shakes hands with Col Dan Tarter (Army), incoming Military Attaché of the United States of America (Left) and Lt-Col John D Robinson (Air Force) incoming Military Attaché of the United States of America (Right). — MNA

Emergence of the State Constitution is the duty of all citizens of Myanmar Naing-Ngan.
Actively take part in the anti-tobacco campaign

Good health is one of the blessings of life. It is important not only for an individual and a family but also for a nation. Only if we enjoy good health will we be able to work for the most basic necessities of life such as food, clothing and shelter.

Healthy human resources are the sine qua non in our efforts for the establishment of a peaceful, modern and developed nation. The government attaches great importance to health of the people. Therefore, “uplift of health and fitness” is embodied in the four social objectives and being implemented accordingly.

Smoking is one of the habits that are harmful to health of all adults. The government has taken measures to prevent the loss of valuable human resources due to smoking and for the Union of Myanmar to become a tobacco-free nation. The Ministry of Health constantly carries out educative work to raise people’s awareness of dangers resulting from the use of various tobacco products.

The Union of Myanmar has observed the World No-Tobacco Day since 1989 and the National Health Committee has raised the momentum of its anti-tobacco campaign since the year 2000. Myanmar ratified the international convention on control of tobacco and its products on 23 October, 2003 and became the eleventh member nation of the World Health Organization to do so.

Myanmar has been so successful in its anti-tobacco measures required by the convention that the Ministry of Health of the Union of Myanmar has been awarded by the world health body.

In Myanmar, as more and more people have become aware of the dangers of tobacco use, smoking rate has dropped remarkably. The motto of the World No-Tobacco Day 2005 “Health Professionals against Tobacco”. Health professionals and health conscious persons alike should be role models in their anti-tobacco drive besides giving health education and doing research.

And we would also like to call on the entire people to actively take part in the anti-tobacco campaign together with health professionals for the uplift of health and fitness of the entire nation.

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

Cooperatives Minister receives Vietnamese Ambassador

YANGON, 2 June — Minister for Cooperatives Col Zaw Min received Vietnamese Ambassador to Myanmar Mr Tran Van Tung at the ministry on Bogyoke Aung San Street this morning.

Also present at the call were Director-General of the Cooperative Department U Soe Win, Director-General of Cottage Industries Department, Managing Director of Cooperative Export and Import Enterprise U Hla Moe and officials of the ministry. — MNA

16th Country Coordinating Mechanism Meeting held

YANGON, 2 June — The 16th Country Coordinating Mechanism Meeting on eradication of AIDS, TB and Malaria to be undertaken by Global Funds, was held at the meeting hall of the Ministry of Health on Pyidaungsu Yeikha Road on Dagon Township this morning, attended by Minister for Health Dr Kyaw Myint.

The minister presided over the meeting and made an opening speech. Afterwards, AIDS/STD Eradication Project Assistant Director Dr Daw Khin Ohnmar San, TB Eradication Project Manager Dr Win Maung and Malaria Eradication Project Manager Dr Saw Lwin reported on the project measures to be taken. Next, CMC members took part in the discussions and made the decisions and the meeting ended with the concluding remarks by the minister.

Also present on the occasion were Deputy Minister Dr Mya Oo, directors-general and directors of the departments, officials and guests. — MNA

Myanmar swimmer takes part in SEA c’ship

YANGON, 3 May — A two-member Myanmar team will take part in 50-metre freestyle, and 50-metre and 100-metre butterfly in the 29th South-east Asia swimming championship to be held in Brunei from 3 to 5 June.

Yan Lin Aung, the sole swimmer of the team will compete in the age 15, 16 and 17 level events.

Swimmers from other ASEAN nations — host Brunei, the Philip-
Chinese shoppers check out bargain shirts at a clothes store in Shanghai on 31 May, 2005.—INTERNET

Japanese, Russian FM's agree on Putin’s visit to Japan within this year

TOKYO, 1 June—Japanese Foreign Minister Nobutaka Machimura and his Russian counterpart Sergei Lavrov agreed on Tuesday to realize Russian President Vladimir Putin’s promised visit to Japan within this year.

But the foreign ministers failed to immediately specify the date for Putin’s visit and they remained far apart over a long-standing territorial dispute.

"We confirmed that the visit by President Putin will definitely be realized within this year," Machimura said in a joint Press conference with Lavrov.

Machimura said the Japanese and Russian governments will “shortly” reach an agreement on a date for Putin’s first trip to Japan since 2000.

Lavrov was pessimistic about an early settlement of the disputed islands off north Japan’s Hokkaido. "It is true that we haven’t found ways to sign a peace treaty and determine territory," Lavrov said. "Our positions are totally opposite."

Machimura and Lavrov said they tried to hammer out a set of draft documents for Putin and Japanese Prime Minister Junichiro Koizumi to release during their summit in Japan. Putin last visited Japan in 2000.

The documents being drafted by the foreign ministers in last-ditch preparations for Putin’s visit to Japan are expected to feature various agreements on political issues, a senior official of the Japanese Foreign Ministry said earlier.

On the economic front, Japan and Russia broadly ironed out differences over pending issues when Machimura met with Russian Industry and Energy Minister Viktor Khristenko last month in Tokyo.

Specifically, they agreed to accelerate talks on the route of a planned Pacific-bound oil pipeline originating in eastern Siberia and vowed to work closely in order to boost mutual trade and investment.

MNA/Xinhua

Syria denies helping guerrillas cross into Iraq

DAMASCUS, 1 June—Defence Minister Hassan Turkmani denied claims that Syria is aiding the infiltration of guerrillas into Iraq, saying that his country is “concerned” about its neighbour’s security situation.

Earlier Tuesday Iraqi Foreign Minister Hoshyar Zebari called on Damascus to help “put an end to the flow” of terrorists he says are entering his country from Syria.

Zebari said in a statement read to the United Nations Security Council that Baghdad had “repeatedly urged each of our neighbouring countries to abide by their obligations” under a Security Council resolution to prevent terrorists entering and leaving Iraq, as well as stopping the flow of money and weapons to them. “Some have been more forthcoming than others in their response,” Zebari said.

“We have learned recently that Syria has stopped more than a thousand foreign fighters from entering Iraq from Syria. We welcome this action but note that it confirms our long-held view that Syria has been one of the main transit routes for foreign terrorists, as well as for remnants of the previous regime,” Zebari said.

“These are false accusations instigated by enemies,” Defence Minister Turkmani countered here, in comments in line with earlier denials from Damascus.

“There is no proof of such allegations,” he continued, adding however that his country wants “the end of the occupation in Iraq, and is concerned over its security and unity”. —Internet

China adopts new measures to narrow education gaps

BEIJING, 1 June—China will adopt a series of measures to help narrow the increasing education gap between its rural and urban areas.

According to a document issued by the Ministry of Education recently, education departments at various levels, when promoting compulsory education, must work to curb the gap between different regions and schools.

According to Chinese law, nine years of education is compulsory in China.

“The gaps have existed in aspects of facilities, funds, teacher groups, education quality and other aspects,” said the ministry.

The document warned that the imbalance of economic development in China and the gaps left over from the past have created ever-widening gaps in the quality of China’s compulsory education. A standardized rating system should be established to improve the quality of every school, according to the document.

At the same time, education rights of children from vulnerable social groups must be protected. —MNA/Xinhua

$18.3m granted for education upgrades in Hong Kong

HONG KONG, 1 June — Hong Kong’s Quality Education Fund Steering Committee said Tuesday it has approved 18.3 million US dollars in grants for 551 applications.

Committee chairman Tai Hay-lap said many applications aimed at developing the Liberal Studies curriculum for secondary school students under the new senior secondary structure. Some applications help promote students’ national identity or instill positive life values.

“These reflect the education sector and the community’s support of government’s education priorities through offers of bottom-up initiatives,” Tai said. — MNA/Xinhua

ADB loan to Philippines to resolve delinquent mortgage loans

MANILA, 1 June—The Asian Development Bank (ADB) will help the Philippines to resolve its portfolio of highly-delinquent mortgage loans through a 1.6 billion peso (29.6 million US dollars) loan, said ADB on Tuesday.

The loan is aimed at buying non-performing loans (NPL) and finally resolving an estimated 239 million US dollars of NPLs, said ADB.

The ADB loan will go to Balikatan Housing, Inc, a special purpose company formed by the Estate Global Opportunities IB, LP (DBGO), which signed a loan sale purchase agreement with NHMFC in May 2004. —MNA/Xinhua

Vietnam builds new railway

HANOI, 2 June — Vietnam is constructing a rail route to facilitate transport among northern economic hubs and from the country to China, local newspaper Saigon Liberation reported on Wednesday.

Capitalized at 3,992 billion Vietnamese dong (nearly 252.7 million US dollars), the 128.2-kilometre route, running from Hanoi capital to northern Quang Ninh Province, will facilitate passenger and cargo transport in the northern economic triangle of Hanoi-Quang Ninh-Hai Phong, as well as from Vietnam’s northern region to the Chinese province of Yunnan.

On the route, scheduled to become operational in 2009, the maximum speed for passenger trains and cargo ones will be 120 kilometres per hour and 80 kilometres per hour, respectively. —MNA/Xinhua

Iraqi firemen extinguish burning vehicles after a suicide car bomb attack on Baghdad’s airport road on 1 June, 2005.—INTERNET
**China, Chile sign agreement on copper cooperation**

**Beijing, 1 June** — China and Chile signed a 550-million-US-dollar agreement Tuesday to cooperate on copper development. Under the agreement, a joint venture will be established between China Minmetals Corporation and Corporacion Nacional del Cobre de Chile (CODELCO). The two sides expect the joint venture company will function as a vehicle to secure long-term copper supply from CODELCO to China Minmetals. CODELCO also granted China Minmetals an option to acquire, at a market price, a minority equity interest in the Gaby copper project, which may be exercised by Minmetals when CODELCO decide to proceed with development. In connection with this transaction, the two sides have appointed the China Development Bank as the lead organizer and underwriter for a term loan facility to the joint venture company. The proceeds of the loan will be used to partially fund the initial investment commitment. MNA/Xinhua

---

**Iraq’s wild west a constant thorn for US troops**

**Baghdad, 1 June** — When it comes to peace and stability in Iraq, there may be no greater obstacle to success than Anbar Province, a vast region of desert and scrubland stretching west from Baghdad. A huge sandy expanse dissected by a major highway, an oil pipeline and the Euphrates river, Anbar has been the bane of US forces almost since they arrived, with its Sunni Arab people virulently opposed to the presence of foreign troops. Despite a small, tribal population, the lawless province is the deadliest in Iraq and the heart of the attack hammering at the country. Of the 1,630 US troops who have died since the war began, more than 500 have lost their lives in Anbar, a higher toll than in any other area of the country, according to casualties.org, a Web site that tracks military deaths. The province, which includes the cities of Fallujah and Ramadi, a stronghold of the Sunni Arab-led attack, is so dangerous that no journalists venture there unless escorted by US forces. Even many Iraqis are too scared to go. Masked guerillas frequently parade through the streets of Ramadi, and other towns in the Euphrates valley, showing off rocket-propelled grenade launchers and assault rifles. “The province is a living, breathing time bomb for US forces,” said Ignacio Walker, visiting Chilean Foreign Minister, addressing the signing ceremony. He said that the economic and trade relationship between Chile and China has developed remarkably in recent years. The joint copper development project is a strong evidence of the bilateral friendly and cooperative ties. The supply and sales network and the strategic alliance established between the CODELCO and China Minmetals will benefit both sides. It is a new form of financing for the joint project, Walker said. According to the agreement, the joint

---

**ADB to aid Bangladesh improve living conditions of urban poor**

**Manila, 1 June** — The Asian Development Bank (ADB) will help improve the health status of Bangladesh’s urban population, especially the poor, by providing a 40-million-US-dollar loan and grant package, said ADB on Tuesday. The project will build on the gains of the first Urban Primary Health Care Project in Bangladesh and will cover all the six cities of Dhaka, Chittagong, Khulna, Rajshahi, Sylhet, and Barisal, and five municipalities of Bogra, Comilla, Sirajgonj, Madhabdi, and Savar. A 30-million-US-dollar loan from ADB’s concessional Asian Development Fund (ADF) will continue to contract out primary health care services to non governmental organizations (NGOs) through partnerships established under the first Urban Primary Health Care Project, said ADB. The project will ensure that at least 30 per cent of these preventive, promotive, and curative health services will target people living below poverty line. Nutritional supplements will also be given to severely malnourished women and children. The project will likewise support the construction of 64 health facilities, upgrading four, and purchasing 12 apartments and buildings for primary health care facilities in Dhaka. Community-run latrines and community-based solid-waste dispossession will be piloted to improve environmental health, and clinical waste management systems will be upgraded. “The project will lead to health improvements that will boost productivity and learning at school, and make savings on out-of-pocket expenditure on health care,” says Sekhar Bonu, an ADB health specialist. “With women and children to constitute more than three-quarters of those benefiting, child and maternal mortality will be reduced, thus helping Bangla- desh achieve the Millennium Development Goals.” Meanwhile, a 10-million-US-dollar grant from the ADF will support various HIV/AIDS and infectious disease control activities. MNA/Xinhua

---

**One-third of Vietnamese children suffer from iron deficiency**

**Hanoi, 2 June** — Up to 34 per cent of Vietnamese children aged under 5 suffer from iron deficiency and anemia, the country’s Nutrition Institute said on Wednesday. The rate of iron deficiency and anemia among children in some poor areas is as high as over 70 per cent, the institute said, noting that it can be lowered by more diversified and better diet, and regular intake of anti-worm medicines. A large number of local children also suffer from other diet-related diseases such as goiter and Vitamin A deficiency. An estimated 5,500 children become blind each year due to Vitamin A deficiency, the institute said. Improper diet of local juveniles is the main cause of the situation, it said, explaining that many of them were born healthy, but grow slowly due to shortage of some nutrients. Family meals meet only 84 per cent of their energy demand. MNA/Xinhua

---

**Singapore, US conduct annual bilateral naval exercise**

**Singapore, 1 June** — Singapore and the United States launched their annual Cooperation Afloat Readiness and Training (CARAT) bilateral exercise at Changi Naval Base on Tuesday, according to a joint statement by defence ministries of the two countries. More than 1,500 personnel, 12 ships and a submarine, as well as fixed and rotary wing aircraft from the Singapore Armed Forces (SAF), the United States Navy (USN), the United States Marine Corps (USMC) and the United States Coast Guard (USCG) are participating in the exercise. MNA/Xinhua
Malaysian King meets China’s top legislator

KUALA LUMPUR, 1 June — China’s top legislator Wu Bangguo met with Yang di-Pertuan Agong (Paramount Ruler) Tuanku Syed Sirajuddin of Malaysia here on Tuesday and said China-Malaysia relations have reached maturity.

Wu, chairman of the Standing Committee of China’s National People’s Congress, said the normalization of bilateral relations 31 years ago opened a new chapter in China-Malaysia friendship and also created conditions for the development of China’s relationship with the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN).

After more than 30 years of development, the good-neighbourly relations of friendship between the two countries have reached maturity and entered a new period of all-round development, Wu said.

Indonesia starts polio vaccination programme

JAKARTA, 1 June — Indonesian Minister of Health Siti Fadilah Supari announced Tuesday that the polio vaccination campaign which started earlier Tuesday across Greater Jakarta, West Java and Banten would be completed in one week.

Speaking in the West Java capital of Bandung, she said that 6.4 million babies in the three provinces would be vaccinated.

A second round of polio vaccinations will be held on 28 June, she was quoted by the Antara news agency as saying.

As of May 25, 14 children had contracted polio in Sukabumi and

China releases list of recommended children’s books

BEIJING, 1 June — The State Administration of Press and Publication Monday recommended 100 books for Chinese children to read during the coming month-long summer vacation.

Themes of the books range from adventure stories, hero stories, popular science to growth topics. Fifteen foreign titles, including Little Wooden Cabin on the Prairie, are also on the list.

The list has drawn positive response from white-collar worker Ning Shangyong in Beijing and many other parents.

“It is surely a very helpful guide. Tens of thousands of kids’ books are published each year. Some are good, but some are not right for kids,” said Ning.

Wu Shangzhi, director of the book publishing department of the administration, said the administration began recommending books in 2004. It will be done every year.

The list represents one of a range of measures taken by the government to purify the growth environment for minors.

A few days ago, the Ministry of Culture and the Ministry of Information Industry jointly recommended a number of “premium online games” for the summer vacation.

Chang Xinjian, deputy director of the cultural market department of the Ministry of Culture, said children are easily influenced by sexual and violent content common in online games.

“If they see such things often, they tend to imitate those actions in real life,” acknowledged Zhang. “But to keep the kids away from detrimental elements, we have to offer them something new and meaningful.”

In September last year, ministries of culture and education and a few other government organizations recommended 100 patriotic films, 100 patriotic songs and 100 patriotic books to youngsters.

Nearly half of Nepalis addicted to tobacco

KATHMANDU, 1 June — At least 10 million out of the total 23 million Nepalis are addicted to some kind of tobacco-related products, a new study disclosed here Tuesday on the “World No Tobacco Day”.

Smoking habits among women and teenagers are increasing gradually in the country, the study said.

“The situation will be perilous by the year 2020 unless all the sectors of the country, the study said.

Nearly half of Nepalis are addicted to tobacco, according to the study.

Shrestha said the consumption of tobacco is rising in Nepal’s rural hilly and mountain regions as well as urban areas.

There are many laws and regulations set by the Nepali Government and other institutes to discourage smoking, according to Shrestha.

US mility says detention of top Iraqi Sunni leader a mistake

BAGHDAD, 1 June — US military said on Monday that the troops mistakenly detained the leader of the Iraqi Islamic Party and released him later.

“This morning, coalition forces detained and interviewed Moeen Abdel Hamid. Following the interview, it was determined that he was detained by mistake and should be released,” the military said in a statement.

“Coalition forces regret any inconvenience and acknowledge Mr Hamid’s cooperation in resolving this matter,” according to the statement.

The Iraqi Islamic Party, a powerful leading Sunni Party, condemned the detention of Hamid and demanded an “apology” from the US forces who hooded Hamid along with his three sons and bodyguards before taking them away.
India, Israel set up joint industrial R&D fund

Jerusalem, 1 June — India and Israel have signed an agreement to set up a joint industrial Research and Development fund to encourage investment and joint ventures.

India’s Federal Minister of State for Science and Technology Kapil Sibal and Israeli Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Trade and Industry, Ehud Olmert signed the agreement under which each side will contribute one million US dollars each initially to provide risk-free grants to entrepreneurs from both sides.

The two ministers outlined cooperation in the areas of nano-technology, bio-technology, water management, non-conventional energy and space and aeronautics as five priority areas of “common interest” for enhanced collaboration. “We have collaborated with each other in defence and strategic areas but we need to move on to areas in which we can affect the lives of the ordinary people,” Sibal, the first minister to visit Israel, said.

Claiming that the two countries were “IT superpowers” with the sector contributing a major chunk of the income, he said “India can be the centre of joint Indo-Israel ventures to serve the rest of the world”. “If we can use some of your technology in the field of agriculture, we will leave far behind other countries in production”, Sibal added.

India is the fifth country with which Israel is setting up such a fund. Olmert, who visited India in December, said he was struck by the immense possibilities of cooperation between the two countries.

“There is enormous potential. I think that India is emerging as a major economy and Israel has designated India as one of the main targets of our foreign trade in the next five years,” he said.

“In selection of the projects and proposals, we will adopt the bottom up policy. The market demand will be the basic guiding principle”, Azriel Hemar, Deputy Chief Scientist at the Trade and Industry ministry, told PTI. Sibal also participated in the “India and Israel: R&D as a strategic bridge” Workshop at the prestigious Technion-Israel Institute of Technology in Haifa.

Calling cooperation in science and technology as the real bridge between countries that cuts across national boundaries, he said the two countries should increase interaction between young students to forge a permanent bond of friendship. — MNA/PTI

India to host Caspian oil ministers meet in October

New Delhi, 1 June — After getting lead oil producers from Gulf to forge alliance with major Asian consumers, India will in October host a meeting of the Central Asian oil producers with four largest consumers in Asia towards forming an ‘Asian Oil Community’.

“In the week beginning 17 October, we propose to host the oil ministers from Russia, Kazakhstan, Turkmenistan, Uzbekistan and Azerbaijan to a meeting with four prime Asian buyers — the Chinese, Japanese, Korean and, of course, Indian,” Petroleum Minister Mani Shankar Aiyar said on Tuesday.

On 6 January this year, Aiyar had staged a coup of sorts when he got oil producers Saudi Arabia, Iran, Kuwait, UAE, Oman and Qatar together with prime consumers India, China, Japan and Korea to give shape to a new regional forum that vowed to strengthen energy ties for ensuring stable energy supplies at reasonable prices.

Bangladesh’s BTMA demands 15% cash export incentives

Dhaka, 1 June — Leaders of the Bangladesh Textile Mills Association (BTMA) demanded 15 per cent cash incentive for exports in 2005-2006 budget for the primary textile sector to facilitate its development.

The Financial Express Tuesday quoted BTMA chairman MA Awal as saying that if the country wants to survive in the competitive post Multi-Fiber Arrangement (MFA), there is no alternative to cash incentive in this sector.

He said many neighbouring countries including India and Pakistan have been giving incentives for developments of their local primary textile sectors.

India has already disbursed a grant worth 220 billion rupees (5.11 billion US dollars) earmarked for its Technology Upgradation Fund Scheme in addition to normal interest subsidy of 5 per cent and a capital subsidy of 10 per cent to the textile sector.

He urged the government to make arrangement for duty free import of dyes and chemicals and to keep the tax holiday option for the textile sector in the upcoming budget for 2005-2006 fiscal.

He also asked the government to fix 5 per cent corporate tax instead of 15 per cent in the budget proposal.

The BTMA leader argued that the knit garment exporters of the country have been targeting to export products worth 3.0 billion dollars this year and it has become possible only due to the development in the primary textile sector. — MNA/Xinhua

Afghan Govt cracks down on smugglers, destroys drug bazaar

Kabul, 1 June — The Afghan Government in major crackdown against illicit drug and smugglers has destroyed an illegal drug market in southern Helmand Province, Deputy Minister of Interior said Tuesday.

“The Afghan Special Narcotics Force (ASNF) has completely disrupted the largest narcotics drug bazaar of Bahram Shah in Helmand Province as part of a three-day operation in which there were no casualties,” Mohammad Daud told reporters at a Press conference.

Aiyar had staged a coup of sorts when he got oil producers Saudi Arabia, Iran, Kuwait, UAE, Oman and Qatar together with prime consumers India, China, Japan and Korea to give shape to a new regional forum that vowed to strengthen energy ties for ensuring stable energy supplies at reasonable prices.

Now the Caspian Sea producers to come on board the pan-Asian agreement, he said, “We are creating brotherhood in the Asian oil economies”, Aiyar said. — MNA/PTI

HK to invest $56.4m for tourism promotion

Hong Kong, 1 June — Hong Kong Tourism Board (HKTB) plans to top $56.4 million US dollars for tourism promotion in the coming two years.

Targeting 16 world major tourism sourcing markets, the HKTB prepares to introduce several large-sized new tourism projects and 2006 Hong Kong tourism year to overseas tourists.

To welcome more commercial and family tourists to Hong Kong, the HKTB has decided to redesign several large sized tourism programmes, including Hong Kong shopping festival, Winter Festival and Spring Festival international performance parade and develop more new tourism programmes.

For the 2006 tourism year, the HKTB plans to introduce new programmes focusing on traditional culture. Hong Kong Disneyland is scheduled to open on September 12 and some other tourism projects will be built up next year. — MNA/Xinhua

Croatian PM highlights trade relations with China

Shanghai, 1 June — Croatian Prime Minister Ivo Sanader said on Monday in Shanghai that Croatia hopes to further develop its trade relations with China and serve as the gateway for Chinese companies to enter the European market.

Prime Minister Sanader made the remarks in his keynote address at the Croatia-China Business Forum opened on Monday morning in Shanghai. More than 150 entrepreneurs from both countries attended this forum.

Croatian companies are encouraged to come to invest in China, vying with companies from all around the world, and Croatia also hopes to see more Chinese companies would attend the Autumn Trade Fair held in Zagreb, said the Prime Minister.

Croatia and China have signed a number of government agreements over avoidance of dual taxation, protection of investment and maritime shipping, and the agreements will help boost bilateral trade and economic cooperation, he said.

Croatian statistics show that the value of bilateral trade between Croatia and China amounted to 642.7 million US dollars last year, up 56 per cent from 2003, making China the eighth largest trading partner of Croatia. — MNA/Xinhua

Shanghai schoolchildren work their way through a playground rope maze at a children’s event in Shanghai, China, on 1 June, 2005. China celebrated International Children’s Day on Wednesday. — Internet

Governor of Tourism Authority of Thailand Chutamas Sirivan, left, hands a bouquet of flowers to Miss Universe 2005 Natalie Glebova of Canada during a reception at the tourism office in Bangkok, Thailand, on 1 June, 2005. — Internet
A review of the multi-party democracy general election on its 15th anniversary

Myo Myat

The Tatmadaw Government held the free and fair multi-party democracy general election in the whole nation in 1990. During the election, the majority of the people of Myanmar assigned the democracy transition duty to the National League for Democracy.

At this 15th anniversary of the election, I will deal with the following three questions:
1. To what degree is the NLD dutiful in the task of democracy transition?
2. To what stage has the democracy transition drive reached at present?
3. Which is the less painful means toward transition to democracy?

The election was held in 1990 about two years after Myanmar had passed through the 1988 unrest. During the time, the Tatmadaw was assuming the State duties; and the 1974 Constitution had already been dissolved. So, the NLD’s situation is totally different from that of an elected party of a nation where democracy flourishes and which has the constitution. The party of that particular nation after winning the election will certainly form a new government within a few days.

To what degree is the NLD dutiful in the task of democracy transition?

The election was held in 1990 about two years after Myanmar had passed through the 1988 unrest. During the time, the Tatmadaw was assuming the State duties; and the 1974 Constitution had already been dissolved. So, the NLD’s situation is totally different from that of an elected party of a nation where democracy flourishes and which has the constitution. The party of that particular nation after winning the election will certainly form a new government within a few days.

Without analyzing its situation that was much different from political parties of other nations, the NLD called the Gandhi conference, and tried to take over power with a provisional constitution. In response to the NLD’s act, the ruling Tatmadaw Government issued the Order No 1/90, acknowledging the political parties that the initial step should be to write a durable constitution. At that moment, some NLD leaders came to realize the objective conditions and agreed to observe the Order.

The Tatmadaw Government on its part convened the National Convention in 1993 to draw a new constitution with the participation of elected members of the political parties, and representatives from all walks of life.

With the nation’s future in view, the Tatmadaw Government took great care in laying down the rules and regulations of the Convention. But in laying down the detailed basic principles, the Tatmadaw did not demand the absolute power, but it presented two proposals — the people’s representatives to take 75 per cent of the seats and the Tatmadaw representatives, 25 per cent in the parliament; and the permission of the setting up of legislative blotto in states and divisions (regions), a task inclusive in the installing a genuine democracy.

Although the NLD attended the National Convention, it rejected the two proposals the Tatmadaw had to pave the way for national re-consolidation. Instead of trying to achieve a compromise on the said two proposals, the elected delegates of NLD presented their intransigent stand at the Convention just to grab power. At that time, Daw Suu Kyi who was released from restriction order made the NLD representatives to leave the Convention. An elected representative asked her to analyze the essence of the results rather than rules and regulations. But her response was that she only cared about the form, not the content. Her stance showed that the NLD leaders at that time did not regard the Convention as a podium for negotiations. Instead they were sticking to the stand — to get everything or nothing.

When Daw Suu Kyi was released from restriction order the second time, there were signs of improvement in the initial stage of negotiations between the Government and the NLD. However, rather than further improving the sound results of the negotiations, the NLD leaders turned to public making demands for imposing harsher economic sanctions on Myanmar. Thus, the NLD’s organizational method gradually changed to the agitation work leading to confrontation that finally met with the Dabaiin conflict. Daw Suu Kyi had to stay at her house under restriction order again, and the NLD offices were closed.

All in all, the NLD leaders are still unable to undertake the task of transition to democracy.

To what stage has the democracy transition drive reached at present?

As the NLD did not respond to the Tatmadaw Government’s overtures inviting the party to negotiating table, the National Convention which commenced in 1993 had to be adjourned in 1996. In 2003, the Tatmadaw Government announced the seven-point Road Map to build a democratic state. It invited the NLD to attend the National Convention. Agreement was reached on the choice of National Convention delegates and continued discussion on the basic principles already discussed. But it rejected the plan to temporarily shelve the reopening of the party offices and the release of Daw Suu Kyi and U Tin Oo.

Because of the economic sanctions of some powers to isolate Myanmar, the international financial institutions ceased their assistance to the nation’s democracy transition drive or in other words endeavours to develop the market economy. Myanmar is getting farther away from the global market as it has to give priority to self-sufficiency on self-reliant basis. And as a result, the economic development of the people has slowed down.

Which is the less painful means toward transition to democracy?

The NLD used to say that it made overtures to the Government for a dialogue, but the latter rejected them. But the objective conditions bear witness to the fact that the Tatmadaw Government has already made many concessions. On the other hand, the NLD has not made a single proposal for the dialogue.

But the NLD keeps on saying that it will reveal its stance at the dialogue. Although the party is demanding a dialogue, it is also trying to press and coerce the Government with economic sanctions. The NLD is still far away from the dialogue as it has no will at all to negotiate with the Government.

We have learned that with constructive attitude, the Government officials held a meeting with student leaders to collectively ward off terrorist bombings like the ones that occurred on 7 May. The Government’s endeavour reminds us of the days during which the APPFL and the Communist Party forged unity to drive out the alien-conspired danger following the assassination of national leaders.

On this 15th anniversary of the election, I would like to urge the political forces including the NLD to understand the concessions made by the Government from the objective point of view, regarding the present situation as blessing in disguise and to serve the national interest, while discarding their extreme policies, passions and egos as time is running out.

(Translation: TMT)
Myanma Alinn-Kyemon: 1-6-2005
commander inspects progress and production of shwepaukkan industrial zone

Yangon, 2 June — Chairman of Yangon Division Peace and Development Council Commander of Yangon Command Maj-Gen Myint Swe went to Shwepaukkan Industrial Zone in Shwepaukkan Myothit, North Okkalapa Township, this evening, and met with members of Shwepaukkan Industrial Zone Management Committee and industrial entrepreneurs.

Speaking on the occasion, the commander said that ten industrial zones have been established in Yangon Division for ensuring development of the industrial sector of the State, and tasks of industrial production are being speeded up. The industrial zones are indispensable for boosting industrial production of Yangon Division as well as the nation. These zones play an important role in the increase of GDP. Import-substitute products are to be manufactured for local sufficiency, and efforts are to be made for production of export items. As industries will soon enjoy fruitful results of power supply that is essential for the industrial sector, it is necessary to make more energetic efforts for uplift of the production capacity, normally boosting production of the industrial sector, formation of industrial zone management committees, industrial zone beautifying committees and discipline enforcement committees and their functions.

Chairman of North Okkalapa Industrial Zone Management Committee U Khin Maung Myint and Chairman of Shwepaukkan Industrial Zone U Than Win briefed the commander on matters related to the industrial zones, beautifying tasks, proper flow of water and discipline enforcement tasks, agricultural tasks for greening the environs of Yangon International Airport all the year round and installation of telephones.

Yangon Division Engineer U Hla Paik of Myanma Electric Power Enterprise submitted reports on arrangements being made for sufficient supply of power to the industrial zones. After hearing the reports, the commander attended to their needs.

Next, the commander and party oversaw medicines produced at the pharmaceutical factory of Silver Shine International Co Ltd on Kanaung Myathagyi Road in Ward 18 of Shwepaukkan Industrial Zone.

Manager of the company U Aung Soe Haing and Factory Manager U Myint Hla reported on facts about the factory and production of quality medicines and distribution at reasonable price. Maj-Gen Myint Swe gave instructions on production and distribution of quality medicines.

They proceeded to Forward Industry on Makhaya Mynthagyi Road in Ward 19/1. They viewed manufacturing of agricultural equipment at the industry, and functions of Shwe Aye Foundry Plant. In meeting with the entrepreneurs, the commander gave instructions that the Government is providing necessary assistance to development of the industrial sector.

Similarly, the entrepreneurs should try hard to boost production of quality industrial products so as to substitute the import goods and to manufacture export items. Later, he fulfilled the requirements.

Yangon Division has set up industrial zones for ensuring development of the industrial sector of the State. Shwepaukkan Industrial Zone was established on 94.64 acres of land in 1998. A total of 210 factories including two automobile assembling factories are being operated with K 2,100 million of investment.

World Environmental Day essay competition winners announced

Yangon, 2 June — Winners of the essay competition (Open Level) organized by the National Commission for Environmental Affairs were announced today.

The first prize winner is U Aye Myint, the second prize winner Ma Sein Sein, the third prize winner Htar Suu Nyein and consolation prize winners are Dr Hsint Soe, Maung Win Pyi Phyo Pai, U Myint Thein (Maung Maung Myint Thein-YIT), Ma Aye Myint Myat Soe and Daw Nann May Thu. The prizes will be presented to the winners on 6 June at the ceremony to mark the World Environmental Day for 2005 at International Business Centre here. — MNA
Fire engines donated to Fire Services Department

YANGON, 2 June — The ceremony to present fire engines donated by Ibaraki Prefecture of Japan, Nippon Foundation Myanmar, Tokyo Myanmar Association and Myanmar PLG Travel & Trading Co Ltd to Fire Services Department under the Ministry of Social Welfare, Relief and Resettlement was held at the ministry yesterday morning.

Present on the occasion were Minister for Social Welfare, Relief and Resettlement Maj-Gen Sein Htwa, Officer on Special Duty Brig-Gen Thura Sein Thaung, Japanese Ambassador to Myanmar Mr Nobutake Odano, the director-general of Fire Services Department, officials and donors. First, the minister made a speech. Afterwards, Mr Nakata Takanori of Ibaraki Prefecture Fire Fighters Association and Mr Sakae Saito of the Nippon Foundation Myanmar explained the purpose of donating fire engines.

Next, the donors presented the documents related to the fire engines and the director-general of FSD presented certificates of honour to them.

After the ceremony, the minister viewed the fire engines donated by the wellwishers. — MNA

Provisor Marshal’s trophy volleyball

YANGON, 2 June — Eight first division men’s teams are taking part in the Provost Marshal’s trophy volleyball championship, which began in Hline gymnasium here today.

Provost Marshal Maj-Gen Saw Hla made a speech at the opening of the championship in which 15 second division men’s team and seven women’s teams are also competing.

The women’s team played on the opening day of the championship which continues till 10 June. — MNA

Chin State WVO’s preliminary meeting held

YANGON, 2 June — Preliminary meeting for 2005 of Chin State War Veterans Organization was held on 16 May in Haka, Chin State.

Patron of Chin State WVO Chairman of Chin State Peace and Development Council Col Tin Hla addressed the meeting and Minister for Religious Affairs Brig-Gen Thura Myint Maung, Member of the Central Organizing Committee of the Myanmar WVO, extended greetings at the meeting.

Altogether 621 members of Chin State WVO attended the meeting.

At the meeting, five sectors — national politics sector, national defence and security sector, economic sector, social and welfare sector and public welfare sector — were discussed at the meeting.

The meeting decided two resolutions and one approval, and put two matters on record. The meeting ended by chanting slogans.

Also present at the meeting were member of the Central Organizing Committee of MWVO Director-General of the Fire Services Department Col Myint Tun (Retd), Chairman of Chin State WVO Supervisory Committee Secretary of Chin State Peace and Development Council Lt-Col Ohn Myint Oo and committee members, departmental officials, members of Women Affairs Organization, Maternal and Child Welfare Association and Auxiliary Fire Brigade and guests. — MNA

Minister for Foreign Affairs U Nyan Win being welcomed by Italian Ambassador to Myanmar Dr Rafaele Miniero at the reception to mark National Day of the Republic of Italy on 2-6-2005. — MNA

Deputy Foreign Minister arrives back

YANGON, 2 June — At the invitation of the Deputy Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Kingdom of Thailand, Mr Preecha Laohapongchana and the Foreign Secretary of the People’s Republic of Bangladesh, Mr Hemayetuddin, a Myanmar Delegation led by Deputy Minister for Foreign Affairs U Kyaw Thu arrived back here by air this evening after paying an official visit to the Kingdom of Thailand and attending the 9th Senior Officials’ Meeting of the Bay of Bengal Initiative for Multi-Sectoral Technical and Economic Cooperation (BIMSTEC) in the People’s Republic of Bangladesh.

The Deputy Minister was welcomed back at the airport by Bangladesh Ambassador Mr A B Manjoor Rahim, Mr Opas Chantarasap, Charge d’ Affairs of Royal Thai Embassy and responsible officials of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

The Deputy Minister called on Mr Preecha Laohapongchana on 26 May and exchanged views on issues of mutual interest.

The Deputy Minister also paid a courtesy call on Dr Kantathir Suphamongkor, Minister of Foreign Affairs of Thailand, Mr Preecha Laohapongchana and the Foreign Secretary of the People’s Republic of Bangladesh.

The Deputy Minister also paid a courtesy call on M Morshed Khan, Foreign Minister of Bangladesh at his office. They cordially exchanged views on issues of mutual interest between the two countries.

The Deputy Minister also called on Mr Hemayetuddin, Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs of Bangladesh. The Deputy Minister and party arrived back here today.

That afternoon, the Deputy Minister paid a courtesy call on M Morshed Khan, Foreign Minister of Bangladesh at his office. They cordially exchanged views on issues of mutual interest between the two countries.

The Deputy Minister also called on Mr Hemayetuddin, Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs of Bangladesh. The Deputy Minister and party arrived back here today.

The Deputy Minister was welcomed back at the airport by Bangladesh Ambassador Mr A B Manjoor Rahim, Mr Opas Chantarasap, Charge d’ Affairs of Royal Thai Embassy and responsible officials of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

The Deputy Minister called on Mr Preecha Laohapongchana on 26 May and exchanged views on issues of mutual interest.

The Deputy Minister also paid a courtesy call on Dr Kantathir Suphamongkor, Minister of Foreign Affairs of Thailand, Mr Preecha Laohapongchana and the Foreign Secretary of the People’s Republic of Bangladesh.

The Deputy Minister also called on Mr Hemayetuddin, Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs of Bangladesh. The Deputy Minister and party arrived back here today.

The Deputy Minister called on Mr Preecha Laohapongchana on 26 May and exchanged views on issues of mutual interest.

The Deputy Minister also paid a courtesy call on Dr Kantathir Suphamongkor, Minister of Foreign Affairs of Thailand, Mr Preecha Laohapongchana and the Foreign Secretary of the People’s Republic of Bangladesh.

The Deputy Minister called on Mr Preecha Laohapongchana on 26 May and exchanged views on issues of mutual interest.

The Deputy Minister also paid a courtesy call on Dr Kantathir Suphamongkor, Minister of Foreign Affairs of Thailand, Mr Preecha Laohapongchana and the Foreign Secretary of the People’s Republic of Bangladesh.

The Deputy Minister called on Mr Preecha Laohapongchana on 26 May and exchanged views on issues of mutual interest.
Yangon, 2 June — Under the ASEAN Information Seminar Series III (Financial year 2004-2005) Project and with the arrangements of the Ministry of Information, the supervisory committee on ASEAN Information Seminar Series conducted the seminar “A Community of South East Asian Nations” at Aye Thaya Resort in Taunggyi, Shan State, 31 May morning.

Present on the occasion were Chairman of the supervisory committee Deputy Minister for Information Brig-Gen Aung Thein and members, members of ASEAN Culture and Information Committee, departmental officials, representatives of social organizations, and guests.

The deputy minister delivered a speech.

Next, the seminar continued at the venue. Director U Win Thein of the ASEAN Affairs Department of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs presided over the morning session.

Director-General of the ASEAN Affairs Department U Aung Bwa dealt with ASEAN and security of the ASEAN community; Adviser to the Prime Minister’s Office U Maung Maung Yi, with the first step for combination of the 11 ASEAN priority sectors and ASEAN economic community; Director-General U Khin Maung Htat of the Myanmar Radio and Television of the Ministry of Information, with information programmes of the ASEAN Culture and Information Committee; Director Daw Nandar Hmone of the Department of Cultural Institute of the Ministry of Culture, with cultural tasks of the committee; and Professor Dr Daw Myint Kyi of the International Relations Department of Yangon University of the Ministry of Education, with ASEAN cooperation for education, health and social sectors.

Deputy Minister Brig-Gen Aung Thein addresses the seminar on “A Community of South East Asian Nations”. — MNA

Adviser U Maung Maung Yi chaired the afternoon session.

Joint-Secretary of the Central Committee for Drug Abuse Control under the Ministry of Home Affairs Police Col Kham Aung discussed matters on regional narcotic drug-related situations in ASEAN and Myanmar; Deputy Director Police Lt-Col Ya Hlawn Mone of the Transnational Crimes Department of the Myanmar Police Force under the Ministry of Home Affairs, on preventive measures against trafficking in persons in ASEAN and Myanmar being taken by Myanmar; Deputy Director-General U Thein Lwin of the Energy Administration Department under the Ministry of Energy, on ASEAN and Myanmar energy sector; Joint-Secretary Daw Yin Yin Lay of the National Commission for Environmental Affairs under the (See page 11)
Indian Defence Services sports teams leaves

YANGON, 2 June —
Indian Defence Services football team and volleyball team led by Col VS Kandari left here this afternoon.

Vice Chairman of the Defence Services Sports and Physical Committee Adjutant-General Maj-Gen Hla Shwe, senior military officers, Military Attaché of India to Myanmar Col Jasvinder Singh Chopra and officials saw off the athletes of the sports teams at the Yangon International Airport.

Deputy Foreign Minister leaves for Singapore

YANGON, 2 June —
The Myanmar delegation led by Deputy Minister for Foreign Affairs U Maung Myint left here by air this afternoon to attend the 4th IISS Asia Security Conference which will be held in the Republic of Singapore from 3 to 5 June.

They were seen off at the airport by officials of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Singaporean ambassador to Myanmar. The deputy foreign minister was also accompanied by Secretary Ambassador U Nyan Win of Myanmar Institute of Strategic and International Studies of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

Seminar on Community of …

(from page 10)

Ministry of Forestry, on environmental conservation in ASEAN region; and Deputy General Manager U Tint Lwin of Myanmar Institute of Strategic and International Studies.

Deputy General Manager U Tint Lwin of Myanmar Institute of Strategic and International Studies gave concluding remarks.

Professor Daw Myint 
Kyi of International Relations Department of YU — MNA

Joint Secretary of CCDAC Police Col Khum Aung. MNA

Deputy General Manager U Tint Lwin of Myanmar Posts and Telecommunications — MNA

Deputy Director-General U Thein Lwin of Energy Planning Department — MNA

Myanmar Boxing Federation President U Win Myint presents best boxer award in junior class to Than Zaw Htwe (Mandalay) in A class junior event of Third MOC Chairman’s Trophy and 36th ISD A Class Boxing Championship.

Nepal to provide transit facility for China-India trade

KATHMANDU, 2 June — The Nepali Government has commenced exercises on providing transit facility for China-India trade, a government official said on Wednesday. “Holding the first meeting on the matter, a high-level task force constituted under the coordination of Shankar Sharma, vice-chairman of National Planning Commission, has formed two committees to carry out detailed studies,” the official told reporters on condition of anonymity.

The two separate committees, one led by Commerce Secretary Bharat Bahadur Thapa and the other led by Binod Bahadur Shrestha, president of the Federation of Nepali Chambers of Commerce and Industry, would conduct the study from public and private sectors respectively, he said.

The task force will lay down the future plan of action including the guidelines for tripartite talks between Nepal, India and China once it delineates the final strategy, the official said. It will also work out an integrated concept paper by summing up inputs from all those individual strategy papers developed by experts and also incorporating public and private sector perspectives.

Follow-up news

YANGON, 2 June — In the news of the 58th World Health Conference of the daily issued on 29 May, the maternal mortality rate among 1,000 women in Myanmar is 1.78 in urban areas and 2.81 in rural areas, it is learnt.

Vietnam sees smaller proportion of agriculture in economy

HANOI, 2 June —
The proportion of agriculture in Vietnam’s gross domestic product (GDP) has decreased in recent years, while its economic structure has undergone many changes, said local report.

In recent years, Vietnam’s rice cultivation area has decreased to 20.4 per cent in 2004 from 21.8 per cent in 2003, while 57.9 per cent of the country’s labour force worked in agriculture last year, down from over 59 per cent the year earlier, local newspaper Vietnam Economic Times reported on Wednesday.

In recent years, Vietnam’s rice cultivation area has dropped, but acreage of such crops as rubber, pepper and tea have increased. Meanwhile, animal husbandry and aquaculture have accounted for bigger proportions in the agriculture sector.

"Holding the first meeting on the matter, a high-level task force constituted under the coordination of Shankar Sharma, vice-chairman of National Planning Commission, has formed two committees to carry out detailed studies,” the official told reporters on condition of anonymity.

The two separate committees, one led by Commerce Secretary Bharat Bahadur Thapa and the other led by Binod Bahadur Shrestha, president of the Federation of Nepali Chambers of Commerce and Industry, would conduct the study from public and private sectors respectively, he said.

The task force will lay down the future plan of action including the guidelines for tripartite talks between Nepal, India and China once it delineates the final strategy, the official said. It will also work out an integrated concept paper by summing up inputs from all those individual strategy papers developed by experts and also incorporating public and private sector perspectives.

Follow-up news

YANGON, 2 June — The Nepali Government has commenced exercises on providing transit facility for China-India trade, a government official said on Wednesday. “Holding the first meeting on the matter, a high-level task force constituted under the coordination of Shankar Sharma, vice-chairman of National Planning Commission, has formed two committees to carry out detailed studies,” the official told reporters on condition of anonymity.

The two separate committees, one led by Commerce Secretary Bharat Bahadur Thapa and the other led by Binod Bahadur Shrestha, president of the Federation of Nepali Chambers of Commerce and Industry, would conduct the study from public and private sectors respectively, he said.

The task force will lay down the future plan of action including the guidelines for tripartite talks between Nepal, India and China once it delineates the final strategy, the official said. It will also work out an integrated concept paper by summing up inputs from all those individual strategy papers developed by experts and also incorporating public and private sector perspectives.

Follow-up news

YANGON, 2 June — In the news of the 58th World Health Conference of the daily issued on 29 May, the maternal mortality rate among 1,000 women in Myanmar is 1.78 in urban areas and 2.81 in rural areas, it is learnt.

Vietnam sees smaller proportion of agriculture in economy

HANOI, 2 June —
The proportion of agriculture in Vietnam’s gross domestic product (GDP) has decreased in recent years, while its economic structure has undergone many changes, said local report.

In recent years, Vietnam’s rice cultivation area has decreased to 20.4 per cent in 2004 from 21.8 per cent in 2003, while 57.9 per cent of the country’s labour force worked in agriculture last year, down from over 59 per cent the year earlier, local newspaper Vietnam Economic Times reported on Wednesday.

In recent years, Vietnam’s rice cultivation area has dropped, but acreage of such crops as rubber, pepper and tea have increased. Meanwhile, animal husbandry and aquaculture have accounted for bigger proportions in the agriculture sector.

"Holding the first meeting on the matter, a high-level task force constituted under the coordination of Shankar Sharma, vice-chairman of National Planning Commission, has formed two committees to carry out detailed studies,” the official told reporters on condition of anonymity.

The two separate committees, one led by Commerce Secretary Bharat Bahadur Thapa and the other led by Binod Bahadur Shrestha, president of the Federation of Nepali Chambers of Commerce and Industry, would conduct the study from public and private sectors respectively, he said.

The task force will lay down the future plan of action including the guidelines for tripartite talks between Nepal, India and China once it delineates the final strategy, the official said. It will also work out an integrated concept paper by summing up inputs from all those individual strategy papers developed by experts and also incorporating public and private sector perspectives.

Follow-up news

YANGON, 2 June — In the news of the 58th World Health Conference of the daily issued on 29 May, the maternal mortality rate among 1,000 women in Myanmar is 1.78 in urban areas and 2.81 in rural areas, it is learnt.

Vietnam sees smaller proportion of agriculture in economy

HANOI, 2 June —
The proportion of agriculture in Vietnam’s gross domestic product (GDP) has decreased in recent years, while its economic structure has undergone many changes, said local report.

In recent years, Vietnam’s rice cultivation area has decreased to 20.4 per cent in 2004 from 21.8 per cent in 2003, while 57.9 per cent of the country’s labour force worked in agriculture last year, down from over 59 per cent the year earlier, local newspaper Vietnam Economic Times reported on Wednesday.

In recent years, Vietnam’s rice cultivation area has dropped, but acreage of such crops as rubber, pepper and tea have increased. Meanwhile, animal husbandry and aquaculture have accounted for bigger proportions in the agriculture sector.

"Holding the first meeting on the matter, a high-level task force constituted under the coordination of Shankar Sharma, vice-chairman of National Planning Commission, has formed two committees to carry out detailed studies,” the official told reporters on condition of anonymity.

The two separate committees, one led by Commerce Secretary Bharat Bahadur Thapa and the other led by Binod Bahadur Shrestha, president of the Federation of Nepali Chambers of Commerce and Industry, would conduct the study from public and private sectors respectively, he said.

The task force will lay down the future plan of action including the guidelines for tripartite talks between Nepal, India and China once it delineates the final strategy, the official said. It will also work out an integrated concept paper by summing up inputs from all those individual strategy papers developed by experts and also incorporating public and private sector perspectives.

Follow-up news

YANGON, 2 June — In the news of the 58th World Health Conference of the daily issued on 29 May, the maternal mortality rate among 1,000 women in Myanmar is 1.78 in urban areas and 2.81 in rural areas, it is learnt.

Vietnam sees smaller proportion of agriculture in economy

HANOI, 2 June —
The proportion of agriculture in Vietnam’s gross domestic product (GDP) has decreased in recent years, while its economic structure has undergone many changes, said local report.

In recent years, Vietnam’s rice cultivation area has decreased to 20.4 per cent in 2004 from 21.8 per cent in 2003, while 57.9 per cent of the country’s labour force worked in agriculture last year, down from over 59 per cent the year earlier, local newspaper Vietnam Economic Times reported on Wednesday.

In recent years, Vietnam’s rice cultivation area has dropped, but acreage of such crops as rubber, pepper and tea have increased. Meanwhile, animal husbandry and aquaculture have accounted for bigger proportions in the agriculture sector.

"Holding the first meeting on the matter, a high-level task force constituted under the coordination of Shankar Sharma, vice-chairman of National Planning Commission, has formed two committees to carry out detailed studies,” the official told reporters on condition of anonymity.

The two separate committees, one led by Commerce Secretary Bharat Bahadur Thapa and the other led by Binod Bahadur Shrestha, president of the Federation of Nepali Chambers of Commerce and Industry, would conduct the study from public and private sectors respectively, he said.

The task force will lay down the future plan of action including the guidelines for tripartite talks between Nepal, India and China once it delineates the final strategy, the official said. It will also work out an integrated concept paper by summing up inputs from all those individual strategy papers developed by experts and also incorporating public and private sector perspectives.

Follow-up news

YANGON, 2 June — In the news of the 58th World Health Conference of the daily issued on 29 May, the maternal mortality rate among 1,000 women in Myanmar is 1.78 in urban areas and 2.81 in rural areas, it is learnt.

Vietnam sees smaller proportion of agriculture in economy

HANOI, 2 June —
The proportion of agriculture in Vietnam’s gross domestic product (GDP) has decreased in recent years, while its economic structure has undergone many changes, said local report.

In recent years, Vietnam’s rice cultivation area has decreased to 20.4 per cent in 2004 from 21.8 per cent in 2003, while 57.9 per cent of the country’s labour force worked in agriculture last year, down from over 59 per cent the year earlier, local newspaper Vietnam Economic Times reported on Wednesday.

In recent years, Vietnam’s rice cultivation area has dropped, but acreage of such crops as rubber, pepper and tea have increased. Meanwhile, animal husbandry and aquaculture have accounted for bigger proportions in the agriculture sector.
**COMESA sets 2008 as deadline for Customs Union**  
KIGALI, 1 June — The Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa (COMESA) has set 2008 as the deadline for all its 19 member countries to join the proposed Customs Union, COMESA spokesperson Mweusi Karakale told Xinhua here Tuesday. He said the decision was made at the ongoing Council of Ministers meeting in Kigali, the Rwandan capital, ahead of the 10th summit of the heads of state and government. “The meeting has decided that all member states must join the Customs Union in 2008, or never,” said Karakale. He, however, declined to say when the first countries will join the Customs Union. The decision of the ministers shall be submitted for approval to the summit scheduled for June 2-3. With a total population of 380 million and a combined gross domestic product of 200 billion US dollars, COMESA is one of the largest and most successful regional integration body in Africa. COMESA has planned to launch the Customs Union at its 10th anniversary last December, but the plan has been shelved due to concerns by some countries over reduced income as a result of tariff cuts. — MNA/Xinhua

**Mozambique plans to develop by products of natural gas**  
MAPUTO, 1 June — Mozambique wants to enter the list of producers of kerosene, fertilizers and other byproducts from its abundant resources of natural gas, local media reported on Tuesday. According to Minister of Mineral Resources Esperanza Bia, the government is currently working on the moment are carrying out a market study, that should be completed before the end of this year. As to the situation of the hydrocarbon sector in Mozambique, Bia said that the country has legislation that is “very favourable” to investment. She added the country has oil prospecting in the Zambezi delta block, which is being carried out by PETRONAS, the Malaysian State oil company. The government is also going to launch an international tender in July for the Rovuma block in the north of Mozambique. Commenting on the four-day African Conference on Trade and Finance in Oil and Gas, which was opened in Maputo on Tuesday, Bia said that African countries have been facing difficulties in the fi nancing is done by foreign companies. — MNA/Xinhua

**More foreigners visit Vietnam in first five months**  
HANOI, 1 June — Vietnam hosted nearly 1.4 million international arrivals in the first five months of this year, a year-on-year surge of 19.4 per cent. The number of visitors from China decreased by 5 per cent to 302,400, but still remains Vietnam’s biggest tourism market. A report from the Vietnamese National Administration of Tourism on Tuesday. The United States ranked second with 134,200 international arrivals in the first five months of this year, a year-on-year surge of 19.4 per cent. The number of visitors from China decreased by 5 per cent to 302,400, but still remains Vietnam’s biggest tourism market. A report from the Vietnamese National Administration of Tourism on Tuesday. The United States ranked second with 134,200 international arrivals in the first five months of this year, a year-on-year surge of 19.4 per cent. The number of visitors from China decreased by 5 per cent to 302,400, but still remains Vietnam’s biggest tourism market. A report from the Vietnamese National Administration of Tourism on Tuesday. The United States ranked second with 134,200 international arrivals in the first five months of this year, a year-on-year surge of 19.4 per cent. The number of visitors from China decreased by 5 per cent to 302,400, but still remains Vietnam’s biggest tourism market. A report from the Vietnamese National Administration of Tourism on Tuesday. The United States ranked second with 134,200 international arrivals in the first five months of this year, a year-on-year surge of 19.4 per cent. The number of visitors from China decreased by 5 per cent to 302,400, but still remains Vietnam’s biggest tourism market. A report from the Vietnamese National Administration of Tourism on Tuesday. The United States ranked second with 134,200 international arrivals in the first five months of this year, a year-on-year surge of 19.4 per cent. — MNA/Xinhua

**Fuel prices down in Uganda**  
KAMPALA, 1 June — The prices of diesel and kerosene have gone down by 80 shillings (4.5 US cents) and 100 shillings (5.6 US cents) per litre respectively in Kampala, Shell Uganda has announced. The price of diesel has moved to 1,600 shillings (90.1 US cents) per litre down from 1,680 shillings (94.6 US cents) while kerosene moves to 1,500 shillings (84.5 US cents) per litre down from 1,600 shillings (90.1 cents). Shell Uganda’s country manager Ivan Kyanyak contributed this to less demand, saying in a statement on Monday that Europeans were entering the summer season. “Each commodity is managed independently and the demand is also independent so there is less demand for diesel and kerosene, a cause for the fall,” Kyanyak explained. — MNA/Xinhua

**HK to spend $40.5m on building EcoPark**  
HONG KONG, 1 June — Hong Kong Environmental Protection Department has proposed the spending of 316 million HK dollars ($40.5 million US dollars) on building a 19-hectare EcoPark in western part of New Territories of Hong Kong. The Phase I project is expected to be completed by the end of next year. In a paper presented to the Legislative Council Panel on the Environmental Affairs Committee on Monday, the department said the EcoPark will promote the growth of the waste recycling and environmental industry in Hong Kong. The department said as much as 2.4 million tons of municipal solid waste are recovered as recyclable material annually, but more than 90 per cent are exported for recycling. — MNA/Xinhua

**Philip Morris wraps up Indonesian firm deal**  
JAKARTA, 1 June — US tobacco giant Philip Morris has officially sealed its 98 per cent control over Indonesia’s second largest cigarette-maker PT Hanjaya Mandala Sampoerna, with the completion of a 2.9 billion rupiah (71.8 million US dollars) payment for its purchase of the shares, reports said on Tuesday. The payment, which was made for Philip Mor- ris’ purchase of 57.5 per cent of Sampoerna’s shares from the investing public through a tender on May 20, follows its previ- ous acquisition in mid- March of 40 per cent of Sampoerna’s shares, re- ported The Jakarta Post newspaper. “The government re- sponded well to our report of the deal’s closure, par- ticularly as all of the funds would remain in the coun- try,” Sampoerna director Angky Camaro said after a meeting with Minister of Finance Jusuf Anwar earlier Monday. Philip Morris’ 5 bil- lion US dollars total investment into Sampoerna was ex- pected to help lift the rupiah, which has re- cently been slumping against the US dollar. “Indeed, Philip Mor- ris’ oil and gas industries, for the deal was indicated as having balanced Mon- day’s continuous strong dollar demand in the local forex market, resulting in the rupiah remaining flat at 9.85 per dollar on Monday, unchanged from last week’s closing day of Friday. Meanwhile, concern- ing the government’s plan to raise retail prices of cigarettes by up to 20 per cent, Angky refused to comment, but hinted Sampoerna’s objection to the idea. — MNA/Xinhua

**Officials says Nigeria to accelerate privatization process**  
ABUJA, 1 June — The Nigerian Government is to accelerate the pace of the government’s privatiza- tion programme, a high-ranking official said here on Tuesday. Speaking at a meet- ing on privatization in the capital Abuja, Irene Chigbu, director general of the Bureau of Public Enterprises (BPE), said the BPE’s current priority is to speed up the pace of priva- tization. “It would be un- healthy for government to continue to maintain mor- bund institutions and pay salaries to idle staff,” she said. The BPE director general invited Nigerians to contribute viable ideas to assist the BPE in its man- date, saying that “the proc- ess of selling public assets requires inputs from all stakeholders.” She said the agency would focus on reform of the state-owned power sec- tor, the railway, oil and gas, refineries and seaports. The agency would also be interested in privi- zation such state-owned 21 enterprises including Afribank, Nigerian Elec- tricity Power Authority, Nicon Hilton Hotel, Sherar- ton Hotel, Steyr and the 1.4 million vehicles, vehicles, plants, the International Conference Centre, as well as oil palm companies. At the meeting, Isaiah Balat, chairman of the Sen- ate Committee on Privati- zation, described privat- ization as “a very topical issue in the country today that required maximum publicity. He said the main ob- jective of privatization was to add value to the economy, saying “we will listen to BPE to know your roadmap”. “People are interested in the privatization pror- gramme and its outcome, including revenue genera- tion and job creation,” he said. Balat called for ac- celeration of the process and expressed delight that “things are now being done properly.” — MNA/Xinhua

**Vietnam to open direct air route to Germany**  
HANOI, 1 June — Viet- nam Airlines will start direct air flight to Frankfurt of Germany on 20 June, aiming to increase foreign visitors to the country. The national flag car- rier will initially operate two flights from Hanoi and one from Ho Chi Minh City to Frankfurt and vice versa every week, said a Press release issued by the Vietnamese Air- lines on Tuesday. The direct flights will save passengers around five hours compared to the existing routes between the two destinations, which require a transit in Russia, said the carrier. The Vietnam Airlines is also negotiating with Lufthansa to provide code- sharing services on the Germany-Vietnam route, scheduled to begin this winter. Among 70,000 German visitors last year, a year-on-year growth of about 70 per cent. — MNA/Xinhua

**Claims Day notice**  
M.V. BOUGAIN VILLA VOY: NO (084)  
Consignees of cargo carried on M.V. BOUGAIN VILLA VOY NO (084) are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on 3.6.05 and cargo will be discharged into the premises of M.I.P where it will lie at the consignee’s risk and expenses and subject to the byelaws and conditions of the Port of Yangon. Damaged cargo will be surveyed daily from 9 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. — MNA/Xinhua

**Advertisements**
Indian Govt bans screening of tobacco products

NEW DELHI, 1 June — Indian Government on Tuesday announced a ban on smoking scenes in films and television from August this year and set up a high-level committee to handle surrogate advertising.

“Government has notified additional rules that ban screening of tobacco products by characters in movies or television. The notification comes into effect from 1 August, 2005,” Joint Secretary, Health and Family Welfare, Bhawani Tyagarajan told reporters here on ‘World No-Tobacco Day’. — MNA/PTI

WHO awards Indian doctor for anti-tobacco activities

NEW DELHI, 1 June — An Indian doctor is among the recipients of the World Health Organization’s awards for contributing to the anti-tobacco control.

New Delhi-based Dr Nyo Kyaw Hlaing from Myanmar and Sanchal Tulabordee from Thai-land, it said.

Director-General’s special award was given to Professor Nurul Islam of Bangladesh while the second special award was given to Dr. Gines Gonzalez Garcia, Minister of Health, of Argentina.

World Health Organization gives public recognition to eminent people working in the field of tobacco control each year on the occasion of the ‘World No Tobacco Day’. — MNA/PTI

NASA’s “Messenger” snaps pictures for Earth, Moon

LOS ANGELES, 1 June — A spacecraft set to explore Mercury has successfully tested its main camera by snapping distant approach shots of Earth and Moon, engineers said on Tuesday.

The Messenger spacecraft is less than three months from an Earth flyby that will slingshot it toward the inner solar system. Messenger is short for Mercury Surface, Space Environment, Geochemistry, and Ranging.

It was the seventh mission in a lower cost, scientifically focused exploration Programme of the US National Aeronautic and Space Administration (NASA).

The spacecraft took a set of six pictures on 11 May with the narrow-angle camera in its Mercury Dual Imaging System, or MDIS. Earth was about 286 million kilometres from it at the time, but the main processed image clearly shows bands of clouds between North and South America on Earth’s sunlit side.

The Moon was 400,563 kilometres from the Earth.

Dr Edward Hawkins III, lead engineer for MDIS at the Johns Hopkins University Applied Physics Laboratory (APL), said finding the Moon in the pictures was an unexpected bonus.

“As we stretched the image we saw this little object to the side, which turned out to be the Moon,” he said.

That was exciting.”

One of seven instruments in Messenger’s science payload, the multispectral MDIS has wide-and narrow-angle imagers, both based on charge-coupled devices (CCDs) found in common digital cameras.

The MDIS has taken nearly 400 test shots since Messenger launched from Cape Canaveral Air Force Station last 3 August, but all were of star fields, dark space or a calibration target on Messenger’s lower deck. These were first “real” images, engineers said.

The photo session was just part of the preparations for the 2 August Earth flyby, the first major adjustment to Messenger’s flight path toward Mercury. While the MDIS took its pictures, the Mercury Laser Altimeter team at NASA’s Goddard Space Flight Centre checked its instrument’s alignment by firing a high-powered laser at it from a ground-based Goddard telescope.

The mission operations and science teams are also finalizing plans to calibrate several instruments, including the Magnetometer, Energetic Particle and Plasma Spectrometer, and Mercury Atmospheric and Surface Composition Spectrometer during approach and departure observations of Earth and the Moon. — MNA/Xinhua

Switzerland steps up anti-smoking efforts

GENEVA, 1 June — Switzerland is stepping up efforts to control smoking as it marks the World No Tobacco Day on Tuesday.

“This year we are focusing on two themes. One is how parents can set a good example to their children not to smoke. The other, which is from the WHO (World Health Organization), is how health professionals can help against tobacco,” director of the Swiss Association for Smoking Prevention, Verena El Farli, told reporters.

The remarks came after the association had launched a contest to encourage smokers — particularly parents — to kick the habit and the Swiss Federal Health Office last week launched a campaign to clamp down on passive smoking in the workplace.

In the association’s contest, smokers are encouraged to give up smoking for a month — from June 6 to July 5. If successful, they could win a total of 5,000 Swiss francs (4,950 US dollars) each, with 10 persons each winning 500 Swiss francs (405 US dollars).

The association is also emphasizing how health-care professionals can help people stop smoking.

Earlier, the WHO said that support from health professionals is one of the most cost-effective ways of reducing smoking. A Swiss Government report said almost half the working population was exposed to smoke at work, but that the effects of passive smoking — lung cancer, heart problems and asthma — were often underestimated. — MNA/Xinhua

South Africa’s population grows to 47 million

JOHANNESBURG, 1 June — South Africa’s mid-2005 population is estimated at approximately 46.9 million, Statistics South Africa (Stats SA) said on Tuesday.

According to the organization.

“It will be observed that the population estimates for 2005 are lower than previ- ously published. This is primarily a result of additional information about mortality now available to Statistics South Africa,” Stats SA said.

The data reveals that 51 per cent (about 23.8 milli- on) of the population is female.

The provincial esti- mates show that KwaZulu- Natal has the largest share of the population (20.6 per cent), followed by Gauteng (19.2 per cent) and Eastern Cape (15.0 per cent). Northern Cape has the smallest share of the population (1.9 per cent). — MNA/Xinhua

Zimbabwe commemorates “World No Tobacco Day”

HARARE, 1 June — Zimbabwe Health and Child Welfare Minister David Parirenyatwa on Tuesday called for strong advocacy from stakeholders and the government to tackle health challenges caused by smoking.

In a speech read on his behalf by Deputy Director for Skin Dis- eases and Prevention Stanley Mudzi, at the com- memoration of World No Tobacco Day, Parirenyatwa said although the issue of tobacco was a sensitive one linked to political and economic considerations, he was aware of the negative consequences posed by tobacco.

“My ministry is aware of the negative consequences of tobacco and we have reviewed and strengthened policy regu- lation on tobacco con- sumption since tobacco consump- tion was a preventable cause of death. — MNA/Xinhua

Kalam favours JV for developing anti-HIV/AIDS vaccine

NEW DELHI, 1 June — President A P J Abdul Kalam has favoured the idea of having a joint ven- ture for developing anti-HIV/AIDS vaccine, research on which is already in an advanced stage in India.

Delivering a lecture at the International Health Conference here on Monday evening, Kalam said among the tropical diseases the name of HIV/AIDS was getting added very quickly.

“India is also working to develop not only the retro- viral drugs for combating the disease but also to develop a vaccine for the prevention of HIV/AIDS,” he added.

“We should work together to develop drugs which can combat different strains. This will be a great service done to the humanity. As far as India is concerned, I understand that the anti-vaccine for HIV/AIDS is in the advanced stage of development and getting ready for clinical trials.

“This programme needs highest priority from dif- ferent countries. Success in HIV/AIDS vaccine will indeed be a major milestone for planet earth,” the President said while asking the Indian Pharmaceutical compa- nies to join hands for its marketing. — MNA/PTI

Zhang Xinquan, 39, drags a 24-ton train forward for more than 50 metres with one hand attached to his stomach. — INTERNET

Kalam favours JV for developing anti-HIV/AIDS vaccine

Photography of Zhang Xinquan, 39, drags a 24-ton train forward for more than 50 metres with one hand attached to his stomach. — INTERNET

Zhang Xinquan, 39, drags a 24-ton train forward for more than 50 metres with one hand attached to his stomach. — INTERNET

Zhang Xinquan, 39, drags a 24-ton train forward for more than 50 metres with one hand attached to his stomach. — INTERNET
FIFA urges World Cup teams to fight against racism

**Geneva, 2 June —** World soccer governing body FIFA on Wednesday called on teams taking part in World Cup qualifying matches this month to say no to racism and discrimination.

FIFA decreed that team captains in both semifinals of the Confederations Cup on June 25 and 26 will make statements rejecting racism just before kick-off, in its annual anti-discrimination day.

Their squads will carry “Say No to Racism” banners, while similar action will be taken during the quarterfinals of the World Youth Championship in the Netherlands on June 24 and 25. The move follows a spate of racist incidents that marred matches in Europe over the past season.

“Racism is still rearing its ugly head in society and unfortunately, football is not immune to this scourge,” FIFA president Sepp Blatter said.

“Thankfully, we are not powerless against this blight. Sport — and especially football — has the unique ability to use its unifying power to combat social ills such as racism and violence,” he added. — MNA/Xinhua

Chelsea, Cole, Mourinho guilty of breaching Premier League rules

**London, 2 June —** Jose Mourinho, Ashley Cole and Chelsea have all been found guilty of breaching Premier League rules following allegations of the London club “tapping up” the England defender.

An independent commission gave their verdict after meeting at the Premier League’s Headquarters in London on Wednesday. All three parties are expected to receive unprecedented fines of up to 250,000 pounds ($455,000) dollars when their punishments are announced later on Wednesday, although they will have 14 days to appeal against those punishments.

Cole, who is under contract at Arsenal until 2007, jetted in from New York to attend the meeting just hours after playing for England in Tuesday’s 3-2 win over Colombia.

He was found in breach of Premier League rule K5, which prohibited him from approaching any other club with a view to negotiating a transfer, without permission from Arsenal. — MNA/Xinhua

Barcelona’s Gerard to move to Monaco

**Madrid, 2 June —** Barcelona’s Spanish midfielder Gerard has signed a four-year deal with French Ligue 1 side Monaco, his agent said on Wednesday.

“He was in Monaco early this morning to sign a medical and then flew back to Barcelona where he signed all the papers that will see him join the team for the next four years,” Jose Maria Grobiolli said.

Gerard’s contract with Spanish champions Barcelona expires at the end of June.

The 26-year-old had been in talks with Monaco over a possible contract renewal but the recent signing of Dutch international midfielder Mark van Bommel from PSV Eindhoven pushed him further down the pecking order at the Catalan club. Gerard, who won six caps for Spain in 2005, underwent surgery on a groin injury last November and played only 13 league games for Barca this season. — MNA/Xinhua

I’m not quitting, says Schumacher

**Berlin, 2 May —** Seven-time world champion Michael Schumacher is winning a grand prix this season.

Brushing off questions about whether it was time to quit now that a pack of younger Formula One drivers had beaten him in all seven races this year, Schumacher told Tuesday’s Bild newspaper that he was not thinking about retiring.

“Let me say this more clearly so you can write it down: I’m not thinking about quitting,” said the 36-year-old, who is having his worst start to a championship.

“I’ve always said that I’d retire if I couldn’t keep up with the younger drivers,” Schumacher said when asked about past interviews in which he indicated he would quit if drivers came along who were better than him.

ALONSO: The Spaniard is 43 points in front of Michael Schumacher in the battle for the drivers’ title. “That’s different than what’s happening now. I’m very much able to keep up with them. In all honesty, with all the duels going on right now, racing is a lot more fun for me than it is for people would imagine,” said Schumacher, the oldest man on the F1 circuit, is the most successful driver in the history of the sport. But his chances of taking an eighth drivers’ title faded fur-
NZ committed to Pacific fight against HIV/AIDS

WELLINGTON, 2 June — New Zealand has committed to fighting against HIV/AIDS in the Pacific and would continue its assistance to it, Aid Minister Marian Hobbs said on Wednesday.

“This is our neighbourhood and New Zealand is working actively with our Pacific partners to address the challenges HIV/AIDS brings,” said Hobbs at a regional meeting on HIV/AIDS here. New Zealand is spending approximately 26.2 million NZ dollars (19 million US dollars) a year on HIV/AIDS related activities, according to the minister. Recently, the country has provided 2 million NZ dollars (1.4 million US dollars) to United Nations Children’s Fund (UNICEF) to help prevent HIV/AIDS affecting children in the Pacific.

The programme involves initiatives preventing the transmission of HIV/AIDS from mothers to children and teaching life skills to adolescents.

“We are also supporting the Pacific Islands AIDS Foundation (PIAF) to improve the quality of life for people living with HIV/AIDS and their families, and preventing the further spread of the disease in the Pacific,” said Hobbs.

NZAID, the country’s aid and development agency, contributes 175,000 NZ dollars (126,000 US dollars) annually to a unique project in Fiji that distributes safe sex information and condoms discreetly through the mail system. Hobbs expected the aid to increase over coming years with significant growth in aid spending covered by recently-announced budget.

“The cornerstone of our support is to help implement the Pacific’s own regional strategy on HIV/AIDS. Funding of this initiative is currently being finalized and is likely to be substantial,” said Hobbs.

— MNA/Xinhua

WEATHER

Thursday, 2 June, 2005

Summary of observations recorded at 09:30 hours MST: During the past 24 hours, rain or thunder-showers have been widespread in Kayin and Mon States, Bago, Ayeyawady and Tanintharyi Divisions, scattered in Shan, Kayah and Rakhine States, Mandalay, Magway and Yangon Divisions, isolated in Kachin, Chin States and lower Sagaing Division with locally heavyfall in Mandalay Division and isolated heavyfalls in Mon State and Tanintharyi Division and weather has been partly cloudy in upper Sagaing Division. The noteworthy amounts of rainfall recorded were Vay (4.25) inches, Dawei (3.27) inches, Yamethin (2.68) inches, Mekitila (2.13) inches and Co Co island (2.09) inches.

Maximum temperature on 1-6-2005 was 88.7°F. Minimum temperature on 2-6-2005 was 70°F. Relative humidity at 9:30 hrs MST on 2-6-2005 was 93%. Total sunshine hours on 1-6-2005 was (0.9) hour approx. Rainfalls on 2-6-2005 were (0.08) inch at Yangon Airport, (0.16) inch at Kaba-Aye and nil at central Yangon. Total rainfall since 1-1-2005 were (8.47) inches at Yangon Airport, (8.07) inches at Kaba-Aye and (3.98) inches at central Yangon. Maximum wind speed at Yangon (Kaba-Aye) was (15) mph from Southwest at (17:50) hours MST on 1-6-2005.

Bay inference: Monsoon is generally strong in the Andaman Sea, East Central Bay and South Bay and weather is partly cloudy elsewhere in the Bay of Bengal.

Forecast valid until evening of 3-6-2005: Rain or thunder-showers will be widespread in Rakhine, Mon, Kayin and Shan States, Yangon, Bago, Ayeyawady and Tanintharyi Divisions, scattered in Kachin, Chin and Kayah States and Mandalay Division and isolated in the remaining areas with likelihood of isolated heavyfalls in Mon State, Yangon, Mandalay and Tanintharyi Divisions. Degree of certainty is (80%).

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

Outlook for subsequent two days: Thundery conditions in Central Myanmar areas.

Forecast for Yangon and neighbouring area for 3-6-2005: One or two rain or thunder-showers will be widespread in Rakhine, Mon, Kayin and Shan States, Yangon, Bago, Ayeyawady and Tanintharyi Divisions scattered in Kachin, Chin and Kayah States and Mandalay Division and isolated in the remaining areas with likelihood of isolated heavyfalls in Mon State, Yangon, Mandalay and Tanintharyi Divisions. Degree of certainty is (100%).

Forecast for Mandalay and neighbouring area for 3-6-2005: Likelihood of isolated rain or thunder-showers. Degree of certainty is (60%).

Earthquake report

(Issued at 04:30 hours MST on 2nd June 2005)

An earthquake of moderate intensity (5.9) Richter Scale with its epicenter outside of Myanmar about (825) miles North of Kaba-Aye seismological observatory was recorded at (02) hrs (39) min (24) sec MST on 2nd June 2005.
Minister for Rail Transportation Maj-Gen Aung Min together with Chairman of Yangon City Development Committee Mayor Brig-Gen Aung Thein Lin inspected Kyaukyedwin overpass construction project being implemented by Myanma Railways, in North Okkalapa Township, this morning and gave necessary instructions.

The minister and the mayor were welcomed by the officials who reported on construction of road to North Okkalapa township. Yangon and the road linking Mayangon Township and Kyaukyedwin Ward, progress in building the construction of concrete floor, fixing the steel frames for pedestrian way on both sides of the overpass and the future tasks.

Next, the minister gave instructions to the officials on carrying out the task speedily, systematically, growing of haw- ey plants and meeting the set standard of the road construction. Now, 65 per cent construction work of Kyaukyedwin overpass project has been completed and great efforts are being made to be able to put it into service as targeted.

The NLD used to say that it made overtures to the Government for a dialogue, but the latter rejected them.

He added that at present, concrete bridges have been built for smooth transportation in the township. It is necessary to extend more acres of pepper for the increase of income. In conclusion, he urged the departmental personnel to join hands with the local people for development of the township with goodwill.

Minister for Rail Transportation Maj-Gen Aung Min together with Chair- man of Yangon City Development Committee Mayor Brig-Gen Aung Thein Lin inspected Kyaukyedwin overpass construction project being implemented by Myanma Railways, in North Okkalapa Township, this morning and gave necessary instructions.

The minister and the mayor were welcomed by the officials who reported on construction of road to North Okkalapa township. Yangon and the road linking Mayangon Township and Kyaukyedwin Ward, progress in building the construction of concrete floor, fixing the steel frames for pedestrian way on both sides of the overpass and the future tasks.

Next, the minister gave instructions to the officials on carrying out the task speedily, systematically, growing of haw- ey plants and meeting the set standard of the road construction. Now, 65 per cent construction work of Kyaukyedwin overpass project has been completed and great efforts are being made to be able to put it into service as targeted.

The NLD used to say that it made overtures to the Government for a dialogue, but the latter rejected them.

He added that at present, concrete bridges have been built for smooth transportation in the township. It is necessary to extend more acres of pepper for the increase of income. In conclusion, he urged the departmental personnel to join hands with the local people for development of the township with goodwill.

Minister for Rail Transportation Maj-Gen Aung Min together with Chair- man of Yangon City Development Committee Mayor Brig-Gen Aung Thein Lin inspected Kyaukyedwin overpass construction project being implemented by Myanma Railways, in North Okkalapa Township, this morning and gave necessary instructions.

The minister and the mayor were welcomed by the officials who reported on construction of road to North Okkalapa township. Yangon and the road linking Mayangon Township and Kyaukyedwin Ward, progress in building the construction of concrete floor, fixing the steel frames for pedestrian way on both sides of the overpass and the future tasks.

Next, the minister gave instructions to the officials on carrying out the task speedily, systematically, growing of haw- ey plants and meeting the set standard of the road construction. Now, 65 per cent construction work of Kyaukyedwin overpass project has been completed and great efforts are being made to be able to put it into service as targeted.