YANGON, 13 June — The ceremonies to hand over the documents related to the new tube-well sunk in the compound of Yangon General Hospital, present membership applications of the Union Solidarity and Development Association of the nurses of YGH and donate blood in commemoration of World Blood Donor Day tomorrow by Yangon Division USDA were held at the nurse training school this morning, attended by Chairman of Yangon Division Peace and Development Council Commander Maj-Gen Myint Swe and CEC member of USDA, in charge of Yangon Division Chairman of Yangon City Development Committee Mayor Brig-Gen Aung Thein Lin.

Mayor Brig-Gen Aung Thein Lin made a speech on the occasion. The Mayor handed over the documents of the tube-well donated by Yangon Division USDA to medical superintendent of YGH Dr. Daw Nu Nu Tha. Next, Dr. Daw Nu Nu Tha presented USDA membership applications of nurses of YGH to CEC member of USDA Brig-Gen Aung Thein Lin.

The commander and the mayor formally opened the tube-well. Later, the commander and party viewed the 200 persons donating blood in commemoration of the World Blood Donor Day, cordially greeted them and presented refreshments and medicines to the donors.—MNA

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The minister and party inspected operation at the Fine Screening Plant of Myanmar Ivanhoe Copper Co, mining of mineral at Sabai mountain and piles of ore. The minister gave instructions on exploration of ore, mining of quality metal, worksite safety and conservation of environment and inspected production of cathode copper at Take House. He inspected a workers' hospital, and vegetable plantations in its compound. In meeting with service personnel, he gave instructions on boosting production. (See page 9)

Minister for Mines Brig-Gen Ohn Myint views mining of mineral at Sabai mountain in Salingyi Township on 10 June. — MINES

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People’s cooperation, key to prevention of destructive acts

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YANGON, 13 June — Minister of Home Affairs Maj-Gen Maung Oo meets with division, district and township level departmental heads, social organizations and town elders in Bago. — HOME AFFAIRS

Similarly, the minister met with departmental personnel, social organizations and town elders at Hlegu Township Peace and Development Council Office and clarified the matters related to community peace and development tasks.

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Myanmar youth golf team wins third prize in ASEAN Junior Golf Championship

YANGON, 13 June — Myanmar youth golf team won third prize in team event in 100-Plus Powers ASEAN Junior Golf Championship 2005 held in Kelab Golf Sultan Abdul Aziz Shah Alam Selangor Kuala Lumpur from 7 to 9 June 2005.

In individual event, Nay Bala Win Myint secured second prize with 221 strokes. Singapore pine youth team picked up the first and Malaysia youth the second in team event. — MNA

General Secretary of Myanmar Golf Federation U Aung Kyi welcomes back participants of 100-Plus Powers ASEAN Junior Golf Championship. — MNA

Minister Maj-Gen Htay Oo inspects digging of canal for water supply for Meiktila Lake. — a&i

Irrigation and agricultural facilities inspected in Mandalay Division

Minister for Agriculture and Irrigation Maj-Gen Htay Oo held a discussion with members of the Mandalay Division Agricultural Coordination Committee on irrigation facilities of Chaunggauk Dam for agriculture purpose at the dam in Pyawbwe Township on 5 June. The minister inspected storage of 5,000 acre-feet of water at the dam, Meiktila Plain Greening Project and supply of water to Meiktila Lake. Afterwards, the minister inspected pre-monsoon long-staple cotton plantations in Kokkossu Village.

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PERSPECTIVES

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General Secretary of Myanmar Golf Federation U Aung Kyi welcomes back participants of 100-Plus Powers ASEAN Junior Golf Championship. — mna
New ruling in Indonesian air fares

Jakarta, 12 June — Economy-class passengers in Indonesia may have to pay up to 16.4 per cent more for plane tickets after the Ministry of Transportation’s introduction of reference prices for the airlines industry, reports said on Saturday.

A Ministerial Decree on the reference prices stipulates that airlines are required to set their fares for economic-class scheduled domestic routes based on the reference prices, reported The Jakarta Post newspaper.

The ruling is aimed at widening the government’s supervision of passengers’ security and safety as well as fair business competition.

“The government will use the reference prices as a tool to supervise the operations of domestic airlines in accordance with flight regulations,” Transportation Minister Hatta Radjasa was quoted as saying.

Although the decree does not specify sanctions for airlines that ignore the reference prices, the government said it would investigate the operations of airlines that violate the regulation.

The decree says that should an air carrier sell tickets lower than the reference prices, the ministry’s directorate general of air transportation will investigate its organizational, financial, operational and maintenance activities.

The directorate general will also ascertain whether security, safety and service-orientated regulations have been met. “If the air carrier proves to have violated (the regulations), the government may revoke its licence for serving the route effected by the price violations,” Hatta said.

Hatta explained that the reference prices were calculated on the basis of the operation of a Boeing 737-400 aircraft — which is regarded as efficient — with a load factor of 75 per cent and the aviation fuel price of 47.6 US cents per liter. — MNA/Xinhua

Hong Kong millionaires grow over 18%

Hong Kong, 12 June— The number of high net-worth individuals in Hong Kong grew 18.8 per cent to 67,500 last year from 2003, according to Hong Kong newspapers on Saturday.

Local newspapers said the data comes from a report by Merrill Lynch and the Capgemini Group on world wealth.

High net-worth individuals are defined as having at least one million US dollars of financial assets, excluding their primary homes.

An analyst from Merrill Lynch said Hong Kong enjoyed its second year of strong economic growth and both the property and stock markets continued to rebound. Hong Kong has seen an almost 50-per-cent increase in the number of wealthy people over the past two years.— MNA/Xinhua

Indonesian conjoined twins undergo separation surgery

Jakarta, 12 June — A team of eight Indonesian specialists began on Saturday a separation surgery of conjoined twins Nia and Mia who were born on 22 March, 2005.

They were born attached at the abdomen but each has a separate heart. “If the separation is successful, Mia’s heart will remain in trouble and at higher risk,” surgery team spokesman Dr Soedjatmiko was quoted by the Detikcom online news service as saying. He said leaks were detected at Mia’s heart.

Participants compete during a dragon boat race to celebrate the Dragon Boat Festival in Hangzhou, capital of east China’s Zhejiang Province on 11 June, 2005. — INTERNET

Bad habit contributes to poor hygiene in Thai toilets

Bangkok, 12 June — Thailand had enough public toilets, but they were under poor hygiene due to people’s bad habit, said the Public Health Ministry.

The country could not upgrade washrooms further without first educating people about the importance of personal hygiene, newspaper Nation on Saturday quoted Deputy Public Health Minister Anuthin Charnveerakul as saying. Public toilets can easily be found around Thailand in both cities and rural areas. Many provinces also hold annual competition for best-maintained and decorated public toilets. — MNA/Xinhua

1,701 US soldiers killed in Iraq

Washington, 12 June — As of Sunday, 12 June, 2005, at least 1,701 members of the US military have died since the beginning of the Iraq war in March 2003, according to an Associated Press count. At least 1,293 died as a result of hostile action, according to the Defence Department. The figures include five military civilians.

The AP count is 16 higher than the Defence Department’s tally, last updated at 10 am EDT on Friday.

The British military has reported 89 deaths: Italy, 25; Ukraine, 18; Poland, 17; Spain, 11; Bulgaria, 10; Slovakia, three; Estonia, Thailand and the Netherlands, two each; and Denmark, El Salvador, Hungary, Kazakhstan and Latvia one death each.

Since 1 May, 2003, when President Bush declared that major combat operations in Iraq had ended, 1,563 US military members have died, according to AP’s count. That includes at least 1,184 deaths resulting from hostile action, according to the military’s numbers.— Internet

China’s foreign trade reaches $522.78b in first five months

Beijing, 12 June— China’s foreign trade surged by 23.2 per cent year on year to reach 522.78 billion US dollars in the first five months, the latest Customs statistics show.

Figures from China Customs show that the trade volume included 276.4 billion US dollars in exports and 246.38 billion US dollars in imports, respectively up 33.2 per cent and 13.7 per cent over the same period last year.

General trade registered 225.48 billion US dollars in the first five months with a year-on-year rise of 21.1 per cent. The exports in general trade rose 37.8 per cent to 117.48 billion US dollars and imports 7 per cent to 108 billion US dollars.

The processing trade reported a rise of 26.3 per cent in the period to 248.21 billion US dollars, including 148.84 billion US dollars in exports and 99.37 billion US dollars in imports, up 29.4 per cent and 22 per cent, respectively.

Customs statistics show that two-way trade between China and the European Union, the United States and Japan, China’s top three trade partners, registered big rise.

The EU remained China’s largest trade partner in the first five months with a trade volume of 81.84 billion US dollars, up 24.2 per cent.

The Sino-US trade volume rose 24.6 per cent year on year to 77.7 billion US dollars in the first five months.

The trade volume between China and Japan reached 70.72 billion US dollars, up 10.1 per cent year on year.— MNA/Xinhua

A Shenzhen textile factory. China is drafting guidelines covering textile export quotas after the signing of a deal with the EU to defuse a trade row straining ties. — INTERNET

INTERNET
Australia’s relationship with India increasingly important

Canberra, 12 June — Australian Foreign Minister Alexander Downer on Friday said bilateral relationship between Australia and India is set to become increasingly important.

Downer made the remarks one day after he ended a four-day visit to India, during which he visited New Delhi and Chennai and met Indian Prime Minister Manmohan Singh and ministers of external affairs, defence and environment.

Downer said his visit focused on the enormous potential of the relationship, which now is recognized in both countries.

"In talks with Indian Minister for External Affairs, Mr Natwar Singh, we discussed how India’s Look East Policy means that our security and economic interests in East Asia are converging," he said in a statement.

"As India becomes integrated into the East Asian architecture, we will have much more to do with one another," he said.

Sri Lanka to take air defence radar system from India

Colombo, 12 June — Sri Lanka on Friday agreed to take air defence radar systems from India as both countries signed two agreements and announced a slew of measures to bolster cooperation in economic, educational and developmental projects.

"Yes, certainly we will accept it," Sri Lankan Foreign Minister Lakshman Kadirgamar said at a joint Press interaction with visiting External Affairs Minister K Natwar Singh after the meeting of the India-Sri Lanka Joint Commission here.

He stated this when asked whether Colombo was going to accept New Delhi’s offer of radar systems.

"Yes, this is very much under discussion," Kadirgamar said, adding "we are looking at ways and means to see how this can be done". The minister, however, declined to fix any timeframe for accepting it.

Singh said a Defence Cooperation Agreement between the two countries "is in the process of being finalized. There are certain procedures to be gone through and that process is underway".

This was a framework for providing cooperation for regular exchanges between their defence establishments, training of personnel and capacity building, he said.

The two agreements, one relating to small development projects and the other dealing with an exchange programme on education, were signed in the presence of the two foreign ministers.

Singh said India has decided to train 450 Sri Lankan policemen. India will also provide a 100 million-rupees grant for funding a pilot project of 20 e-libraries in the island nation.

Welcoming the ongoing close cooperation between the two countries in the areas of defence and security, Sri Lanka thanked India for the offer of training for its police personnel and other facilities extended by the neighbouring country, a joint Press statement said.

The two sides also noted that regular exchange of visits by senior defence and security officials has contributed to enhanced cooperation, it said.

Arroyo challenges opposition to present alternative leader

Manila, 12 June — President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo on Saturday challenged her oppositionist to present an “alternative leader” and called people to stay calm.

"These wayward elements may hate the President but we ask them: do they have an alternative leader or programme of government to offer? Let the opposition present their platform and their leader and let the public see this in full light," Presidential spokesman Ignacio Bunye said in a statement.

Bunye said that President Arroyo was prepared to face the challenges, which were brought by the allega- tion that her family were involved in illegal gambling and she cheated in 2005 elections, to defend the legiti- macy of her tenure.

"We are prepared to face all the challenges being raised against the national leadership, and to uphold the truth and the law without hesitation," he said.

"We will not allow democracy to be undermined as well as the gains we have already posted in the economy," he added.

The spokesman also called people to remain calm and treat the controversies with prudence and sobriety.

Mass rallies are expected to held on Saturday, the National Mourning Day, and on Sunday, the Independence Day, after a former intelligence official claimed himself the one who owned the tape containing the wiretapping concerning the alleged cheating of the President in the election last year.

Tigress dies of drought in west Indian city

New Delhi, 12 June — The only tiger at Bharatpur of west India’s Rajasthan Pradesh died of drought and hot weather this week, local media reported.

The tiger has died due to acute water shortage and excessive heat over several days in Keoladeo National Park Bharatpur, Saturday’s Indian Express reported.

The tigress had moved to the park in 1999, according to official records, the last Bharatpur tiger before her was hunted down in 1962.

The park, suffering severe water shortage, also reported reduction of the number of birds.

Journalist freed in Iraq after five months

Baghdad, 12 June — A French journalist held hostage in Iraq for five months returned home Sunday, looking radiant and strong as she described months of captivity in a cellar, tied up and blindfolded.

Florence Aubeaux, a 43-year-old reporter for the French newspaper Liberation, spent the first minutes of her homecoming embracing her family, then spoke to reporters in a strong, firm voice and in obvious good humour. Aubeaux’ Iraqi assistant was also freed.

The French journalist said she had been unbound recently and allowed to watch French television. She was moved to see a news ticker counting off her sides the road transport. ‘NCC President Rajesh Kaji Shrestha said that the Nepali-Lhasa trade fair has only been limited to formality, therefore the trade fair cannot be fruit bearing as expected. ‘The required items and areas for investment should be identified for promoting bilateral trade,’ Shrestha said.

"The problems of bus operators and Customs should be resolved for trade promotion," Shrestha noted, pointing out the problem of truck parking, and the expensive air fare and higher local taxes.

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Indonesia undecided on UNSC reform proposals

JAKARTA, 12 June — The Indonesian Government is sitting on its decision on the proposed reform of the United Nations Security Council, saying that it does not want to get involved in a “head-long rush” to support any of the two models proposed by a UN panel, a local newspaper reported on Saturday.

The government, however, hinted that Indonesia was still interested in getting a permanent seat on the Security Council, citing Indonesia’s relative independence from the influence of any global power, said The Jakarta Post.

“The reform of the United Nations Security Council, we are aware that there are two options presented by the UN Secretary-General. We have yet to confirm which of the two options are our final preference,” Foreign Ministry spokeswoman Marty Natalegawa was quoted as saying.

UN Secretary-General Kofi Annan recommended two models to the Security Council, which are expected to be discussed in two meetings at the end of the month.

Model A provides for six new permanent seats — besides the current five — with no veto power, and three new two-year non-permanent seats, divided among the major regions of Africa, Asia and the Pacific, Europe and the Americas.

Model B provides for no new permanent seats but creates a new category of eight four-year renewable seats and one new two-year non-permanent (and non-renewable) seat, divided among Africa, Asia and the Pacific, Europe and the Americas.

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First Mainland-made cargo ship for Taiwan launched

SHANGHAI, 12 June — The first cargo ship made in the Mainland for Taiwan left Shanghai Friday.

The ship is about 289 metres long, 45 metres wide and 24.5 metres deep, the size of three football fields and the height of a ten-storey building.

With a load capacity of 175,000 tons, the ship was made by Shanghai Waigaoqiao Shipbuilding Limited under the order of Chinese Maritime Transport Company Limited in Taiwan. The shipbuilder will construct another boat for the company later.

The cargo ship Zhonghua Heping (China Peace) named by Lien Fang-yu, wife of Lien Chan, chairman of Taiwan’s Kuomintang Party (KMT), carries the common wishes of the cross-strait people for the peaceful reunification.

Shanghai Waigaoqiao Shipbuilding Company Limited successfully made the first 175,000-ton cargo ship for a Hong Kong shipping company in June 2003, and attracted two more orders from Chinese Maritime Transport Limited in Taiwan in four days.

The famous shipping giant was founded by late C Y Tung, father of Tung Chee Hwa, vice-chairman of the National Committee of the Chinese People’s Political Consultative Conference (CPPCC), in Shanghai in 1946 and moved to Taiwan in 1949.

The cargo ship ushered in the new era of cooperation in the cross-strait shipping business. Chinese Maritime Transport Limited will order more ships from the Mainland, since the shipbuilding technology there has improved drastically, said John Y K Peng, chairman of Chinese Maritime Transport Limited and son-in-law of C Y Tung.

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Malaysia launches healthy lifestyle campaign

KUALA LUMPUR, 12 June — Malaysia will establish a community health promotion centre in every state under the Ninth Malaysia Plan (2006-2010), the national news agency Bernama reported Saturday.

Prime Minister Abdullah Ahmad Badawi announced the plan in his speech at the launch of the national healthy lifestyle campaign in Port Dickson, about 90 kilometres south of Kuala Lumpur.

These centres would provide health packages that would enhance people’s knowledge and skills in four areas: healthy eating, engaging in physical activity, cultivating a healthy mind and refraining from smoking, Badawi said in the speech, which was read out by Chief Minister of the Semblan State Mohamad Hassan. The establishment of these centres is to realize the government’s desire for the people of Malaysia to be healthy and well,” Badawi said, adding that a pilot project had been established in Penang.

He said the primary challenge the government faced in building a healthy society was to change the behavioural pattern of the Malaysian people. “We need much time to ensure that society not only changes its behavioural pattern but also maintains the new practice continuously,” Badawi said — MNA/Xinhua

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China elects chairman of AICESIS

PARIS, 12 June — Wang Zongyu, president of the China Economic and Social Council, was elected here on Friday as president of the International Association of Economic and Social Councils and Similar Institutions (AICESIS).

Wang, also vice-chairman of the National Committee of the Chinese People’s Political Consultative Conference, will replace outgoing AICESIS President Jacque Dermagne.

Addressing the closing session of the ninth meeting of the AICESIS, Wang said the organization has contributed a lot to the economic and social development of relevant countries and regions since its establishment in 1999.

MNA/Xinhua

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Syria says US accusations like those of Iraq WMD

DAMASCUS, 12 May — US accusations that Syria has not fully withdrawn its intelligence agents from Lebanon are similar to the unfounded prewar charges that Iraq had weapons of mass destruction, Syria’s ambassador to the United States said on Sunday.

“I would say it’s a shame that the world’s unique superpower, the United States of America, will degrade itself to this level,” Imad Moustapha said on CNN’s “Late Edition.”

After almost 30 years in Lebanon, Syria has said it had pulled out all military and intelligence personnel after former Lebanese Prime Minister Rafik al-Hariri was assassinated in February.

“The day we completed our withdrawal from Lebanon, the very same day the United States repeatedly continued saying from the very early stages, ‘No, Syria has not withdrawn from Lebanon. Syria has agents there. We have information and reports that Syria still has agents there. ’” Moustapha said.

Internet

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China, Britain drafting document on meeting challenges of globalization

LONDON, 12 June — China and Britain are drafting a joint document on how to meet the challenges of globalization for the deliberation of the G-20 meeting of finance ministers and central bank presidents this October, Chinese Finance Minister Jin Renqing said here on Friday.

Based on the document, the two countries will submit a report to the United Nations Millennium Summit this September, added Jin, who is here for the Group of Eight finance ministers’ meeting.

On the sideline of the meeting, the Chinese Finance Minister held bilateral talks on Friday with his counterparts from Britain, Germany and the United States.

Jin also met World Bank President Paul Wolfowitz on China’s cooperation with the banking institution as well as measures to support development and poverty alleviation efforts in the world. — MNA/Xinhua

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South Korean models pose with German auto maker BMW’s new 760 Li sedan during a Press unveiling in Seoul, on 13 June, 2005. The new 7-series has been scheduled to be attended by the heads of state of 21 countries in Busan, South Korea’s second-largest city, in November. The new 760 Li, priced at 253 million won (US$250,743). — INTERNET

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THE NEW LIGHT OF MYANMAR Tuesday, 14 June, 2005 5
India, Sri Lanka to expedite CEPA talks

COLOMBO, 11 June — India and Sri Lanka on Friday agreed to pursue negotiations to work out a Comprehensive Economic Partnership Agreement (CEPA), which seeks to expand the scope of the current Free Trade Agreement between the two countries.

A joint Press statement issued at the conclusion of the India-Sri Lanka joint commission talks here said that negotiators on both sides were asked to expedite remaining work (on finalizing CEPA) by 2005 as desired by Indian Prime Minister Manmohan Singh and Sri Lankan President Chandrika Kumaratunga.

While the FTA covers only trade in goods, CEPA would include two additional components — investment and services — thereby promoting greater trade and investment flows between the two countries.

The joint commission, co-chaired by India’s External Affairs Minister Natwar Singh and Sri Lanka’s Foreign Affairs Minister Lakshman Kadirgamar, also agreed to continue the process of understanding ‘outstanding implementation issues’ with a view to realizing the full potential of FTA.

“This would help in expediting CEPA process,” the joint statement said.

The commission also called for increasing number of flights and destinations between the two countries and explore possibilities for operating luxury cruises to tap what it called “the vast potential for collective development and tourism”.

The joint statement also said the National Thermal Power Corporation Ltd would submit a detailed proposal for setting up a coal or LNG-based power plant in Sri Lanka.

The two countries also agreed to explore further development of oil storage complex in Trincomalee, besides consenting that a block would be allocated to India for oil/gas exploration at a mutually accepted location, the statement said.

It said the joint working group (JWG) on fisheries, set up earlier this year, should continue to meet to step up cooperation in the sector.

The JWG should also continue the dialogue and pursue a mutually acceptable solutions particularly in dealing with straying fishermen, which required a humane treatment.

The commission also discussed utilization of credit line worth 381 million US dollars New Delhi had extended to Colombo and agreed to use the balance from the credit facility given for originally importing wheat to now import buses from India.

The shipments under the petroleum line of credit have commenced, it said, adding that the terminal dates for 100 million US dollars line of credit have been extended.

Vietnam to produce more hybrid rice

HANOI, 11 June — Vietnam is intensifying the production of hybrid rice, aiming to meet some 70 per cent of its demand for the product in 2010, according to the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development Friday.

Now, Vietnam has to import 11,000-14,000 tons of hybrid rice seeds, mainly from China, while being able to produce some 4,000 tons of the seeds each year.

To rapidly churn out more hybrid rice, it will focus on transferring techniques about production of first-generation hybrid rice seeds from research establishments to localities nationwide, the sources said.

It even plans to produce genetically modified rice varieties which are resistant to pests and diseases, and contain useful substances such as Vitamin A, Vitamin E and others, the sources said.

The ministry has recently recognized Vietnam’s first national hybrid rice variety, Viet Lai 20, which is expected to be available in 25,000 hectares next year from currently 17,000 hectares.

The Vietnamese Government has already decided to export a maximum of 3.8 million tons of rice this year, down from slightly over four million tons last year, to ensure the country’s food security.

Oil price should be $5-8 less than current level

KUWAIT, 11 June — The oil price should be five to eight US dollars less than the current level, the Chief of the Organization of the Petroleum-Exporting Countries (OPEC) said on Thursday.

Sheikh Ahmad Al-Fahd, also Kuwaiti Energy Minister, was quoted by the official KUNA news agency as saying that oil supplies are adequate to meet the market demand, so the increase in oil price is rather related to “psychological fear of the market.”

“Geopolitical reasons and environmental issues are also behind the current price hikes,” he added.

Sheikh Ahmad said OPEC is doing its best to ensure the stability of oil price, adding OPEC can maintain the current supplies and cope with emerging markets, like India and China. Oil price is currently fluctuating between 54 and 55 dollars per barrel. The chief made the remarks ahead of a meeting between OPEC and the European Union (EU) in Brussels, Belgium. “It is important to start a dialogue with the EU,” Sheikh Ahmad said, adding opening a channel for communication and dialogue will benefit both OPEC as an oil exporter and the EU as an importer.

Iraq can learn from Malaysia when drafting new constitution

KUALA LUMPUR, 11 June — Iraq could benefit from Malaysia’s experience when drafting its new Constitution and dealing with militants, a visiting key US official told Bernama news agency on Thursday.

Richard Jones, senior adviser to the US State Secretary and Coordinator for Iraq, was in Kuala Lumpur for a brief visit to meet Malaysian Foreign Minister Syed Hamid Albar.

Jones said Malaysia, as a multi-ethnic and multi-religious country, shared a lot with Iraq.

“We think that Malaysia’s experience probably has a lot to offer Iraq, and as the Iraqis move to draft their Constitution, we are interested in their having more contact with Malaysia,” Jones said, terming the Malaysian Constitution “one model the Iraqis would want to look at”.

During his meeting with Albar on Thursday, Jones invited Albar to attend a conference of foreign ministers on Iraq in Brussels on June 22 and urged Malaysia to become more involved.

The US official said that Malaysia had already offered to provide training for some Iraqi civil servants in Malaysia.

Malaysia was included in Jones’ pre-conference tour of key Asian countries, due to its prominence in the region and its chairmanship of the Islamic Conference Organisation (ICO) and the Non-Aligned Movement (NAM), he said.

The conference on Iraq is organized by the United States and the European Union and aims to put Iraq’s case to the international community.
Thabaung Pulp Plant, the pride of Ayeyawady Division

Moe Htet Myint (Delta Region)

The water of Panmawady River was crystal clear. Floating on the current were some small clumps of lilies and collections of flotsam and jetsam, on which some teak and moorhens were singing.

The motor boat we were riding in the river was on its way to Thabaung Township. From the boat, we saw several pagodas attracting our deep admiration for their appearances. When the boat passed Ngapudaw Township, we saw fishermen at work. From Thabaung jetty we proceeded to Thabaung Pulp Plant by car.

Thabaung in Ayeyawady Division has become an industrial region endowed with many industries based on paper thanks to the emergence of the plant. It gets raw materials from about 400,000 acres of bamboo in Thabaung, Yekyi, Laymyethna and Ngapudaw townships in the western part of Ayeyawady Division and Gwa Township in Rakhine State. Out of the 200 tons of pulp the plant has planned to produce daily, 150 tons will be exported and 50 tons will be used in producing quality paper and different types of paper. According to the process, a 50-ton quality paper plant and a 60-ton newsprint plant will be built.

At the inauguration of the plant on 14 May 2005, Prime Minister Lt-Gen Soe Win delivered a speech, saying that such a gigantic project was beyond the reach of national entrepreneurs and different types of paper. According to the process, a 50-ton quality paper plant and a 60-ton newsprint plant will be built.

The State had to invest US$ 90 million plus about K28 billion into the plant. It also had to pour US$ 18 million into the quality paper plant project and more than US$ 36 million, into newsprint plant.

By mixed growing of forest plantations for industrial raw materials and bamboo plantations, local residents can enjoy higher per capita income and Ayeyawady Division, significant economic development. So, that can bring a great benefit and honour to the State. Thanks to emergence of the Thabaung Pulp Plant, the regions on the western bank of Ngawun River especially Thabaung area are going to develop economically.

In the near future, the quality plant and the newsprint paper plant projects will be implemented near Thabaung Pulp Plant, and by then, Thabaung will become a region of paper and chemical zone creating a lot of jobs. Moreover, modern technologies will be disseminated in the region.

Now, the annual pulp manufacturing capacity of State-run Sittoung, Paleik and Kanhe pulp plants is around 25,000 tons and 300 private-run plants, more than 27,000 tons.

Due to the development in various sectors, the State’s paper demand is on the considerable increase. The nation’s paper production can fulfill only 33 per cent of the demand of 160,000 tons a year. Ayeyawady Division is contributing towards the State’s agricultural sector more than any other states and divisions. And it is one of the top states and divisions that contribute to the State’s GDP most. Therefore, the economic development of Ayeyawady Division contributes much towards that of the State.

By mixed growing of forest plantations for industrial raw materials and bamboo plantations, local residents can enjoy higher per capita income and Ayeyawady Division, significant economic development. So, that can bring a great benefit and honour to the State. Thanks to emergence of the Thabaung Pulp Plant, the regions on the western bank of Ngawun River especially Thabaung area are going to develop economically.

Up to now, out of the factories, mills and plants in Myanmar, Thabaung Pulp Plant is the largest one in terms of investment, production volume and strength of employees. Since the year 2000, the region has been establishing tree plantations in concert with the Ministry of Forestry for industrial raw materials and to avoid compromising the environmental conservation. So far, 12,650 acres has been put under tree plantations and 3,000 acres, bamboo plantations.

With the efficient and effective use of State’s forest resources for establishment of pulp and paper plants, the region will get more technologies and create job opportunities. It will contribute towards regional and national economic development. Besides, the nation will earn foreign exchange through exporting pulp.

With the emergence of more large factories, mills and plants, Ayeyawady Division is contributing much to national economic development and the drive for transition to industrialized nation.

Translation: MS

Myanma Alin, Kyemon: 12-6-2005
YANGON, 13 June — The work coordination meeting of Yangon Division Peace and Development Council took place at the office of Yangon Division PDC on Bank Road in Kyauktada Township this afternoon. It was attended by Chairman of Yangon Division Peace and Development Council Commander of Yangon Command Major-General Myint Kyi and members, division, district and township level departmental officials and others. First, the commander delivered an address. The officials reported on progress of plans implemented in 2004-2005 and future work, agricultural sector and crime reduction tasks to the commander. The commander assigned duties on plans for 2005-2006 and cultivation of monsoon paddy to the chairmen of township PDC.

The meeting ended with the concluding remarks of the commander. — MNA

Minister for Health Dr Kyaw Myint visits British Ambassador Ms Vicky Bowman at the National Blood Centre of YGH.— MNA

YANGON, 13 June — British Ambassador Ms Vicky Bowman visited the National Blood Centre of YGN on June 13, 2005. The minister viewed renovation of Moegaung Pagoda. The minister presented flowers to Sayadaw U Ti Kanyutkwin, Meiktila Townships. After the ceremony, the minister paid homage and offered alms to Sayadaw U Sila Sara. Then the minister conducted a round of Sayadaw U Ti Kanyutkwin and offered alms to Sayadaw U Sila Sara. The minister paid homage and offered alms to Sayadaw U Ti Kanyutkwin. The minister conducted a round of Sayadaw U Ti Kanyutkwin and offered alms to Sayadaw U Sila Sara. The minister paid homage and offered alms to Sayadaw U Ti Kanyutkwin.

Then the minister viewed renovation of agricultural products. The minister presented flowers to Sayadaw U Ti Kanyutkwin. The minister conducted a round of Sayadaw U Ti Kanyutkwin and offered alms to Sayadaw U Sila Sara. The minister paid homage and offered alms to Sayadaw U Ti Kanyutkwin. The minister conducted a round of Sayadaw U Ti Kanyutkwin and offered alms to Sayadaw U Sila Sara. The minister paid homage and offered alms to Sayadaw U Ti Kanyutkwin.

Afterwards, the minister viewed renovation of Dhamma Visawdani Thindawgyi, raising of educational funds and social affairs. The minister presented cash for setting up educational trust funds to executive of the township USDA U Tin Ko Ko. After the ceremony, the minister viewed renovation of Moegaung Pagoda. On June 5, the secretary general paid homage to Sayadaw U Ti Kanyutkwin, Meiktila Townships. After the ceremony, the minister conducted a round of Sayadaw U Ti Kanyutkwin and offered alms to Sayadaw U Sila Sara. Then the minister viewed renovation of agricultural products. The minister presented flowers to Sayadaw U Ti Kanyutkwin. The minister conducted a round of Sayadaw U Ti Kanyutkwin and offered alms to Sayadaw U Sila Sara. The minister paid homage and offered alms to Sayadaw U Ti Kanyutkwin. The minister conducted a round of Sayadaw U Ti Kanyutkwin and offered alms to Sayadaw U Sila Sara. The minister paid homage and offered alms to Sayadaw U Ti Kanyutkwin.

Next, the minister met with township USDA executives and members and town elders, and discussed renovation of agricultural products. The minister presented flowers to Sayadaw U Ti Kanyutkwin. The minister conducted a round of Sayadaw U Ti Kanyutkwin and offered alms to Sayadaw U Sila Sara. Then the minister viewed renovation of agricultural products. The minister presented flowers to Sayadaw U Ti Kanyutkwin. The minister conducted a round of Sayadaw U Ti Kanyutkwin and offered alms to Sayadaw U Sila Sara. The minister paid homage and offered alms to Sayadaw U Ti Kanyutkwin. The minister conducted a round of Sayadaw U Ti Kanyutkwin and offered alms to Sayadaw U Sila Sara. The minister paid homage and offered alms to Sayadaw U Ti Kanyutkwin.

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Minister inspects industries in Bago Division (West)

YANGON, 13 June — Minister for Industry-2 Maj-Gen Saw Lwin on 11 June met with officials of No 2 Auto Industry (Htonebo) in Padaung Township, Bago Division (West), and the Myanma Automobile and Diesel Engine Industries.

At the meeting, the General Manager of the industry reported on production of jeeps in 2004-2005 fiscal year and arrangements for production to meet the targets in 2005-2006 fiscal year. The minister urged the officials to work hard for meeting the target of production.

After the meeting, the minister inspected the machinery part and assembling of Mazda jeeps at the industry.

In the afternoon, the minister went to No 1 Agricultural Machinery Production Factory (Hsinde). At the briefing hall of the factory, the General Manager of the factory briefed on production of agricultural machinery.

Next, the minister gave instructions on extended production of new products and distribution of the machinery before the rainy season.

Afterwards, Maj-Gen Saw Lwin inspected the assembling and trial-drive of the power-tillers manufactured by the factory.

Afterwards, the minister also inspected the factory building being constructed by the Myanmar Industrial Construction Service and gave instruction on test-run of the machinery imported, timely completion of the building and drainage system. — MNA

Construction Minister tours Shan State (South)

YANGON, 13 June — Minister for Construction Maj-Gen Saw Tun, accompanied by Deputy Minister Brig-Gen Myint Thein and officials, on 11 June arrived at Heho in Shan State (South) and inspected construction and maintenance of the road along Meiktila-Taunggyi-Kengtung-Tachileik.

The minister gave instructions on repairing of road and proper flow of the drain.

The minister and party yesterday morning met with the staff of the Public Works, Shan State (South), at the office of the Superintending Engineer of the Shan State (South) and gave instructions. At the meeting, he urged the staff to strive for the nation and the people while the government is making endeavours for the equitable development in the State.

When he arrived Shwenyaung, the minister inspected machinery of the Public Works in Shan State (South) and attended to the needs. Assistant Engineer U Tin Myint of Public Works reported to the minister on maintenance of the machinery.

Myanmar Sepak Takraw team which won one gold and one silver in International Sepak Takraw Championship held in Manila, Philippines seen at Yangon International Airport on 12 June evening.—NLM

Jade and Gems Special Sale in June

YANGON, 13 June — The first meeting of Central Committee for Jade and Gems Special Sale to be held in June 2005 took place at Myanma Gem Mart on Kaba Aye Pagoda Road here this evening. It was attended by chairman of Central Committee for Jade and Gems Special Sale Deputy Minister for Mines U Myint Thein. Also present on the occasion were vice-chairman of the committee Deputy Minister for Transport Col Nyan Tun Aung, Deputy Commander of Yangon Command Brig-Gen Wai Lwin, Managing Director U Thein Swe of Myanma Gems Enterprise and Central Committee members. First, they fixed the date of the sale for 2005 to be held from 28 June to 5 July 2005.

The chairman and central committee members discussed a wide range of topics on the sale.

Next, the meeting ended with the concluding remarks of the deputy minister. — MNA

Minister for Mines inspects ...

From page 1

On 11 June, the minister discussed exploration of mineral and regional development in Sagaing Division with Commander Tha Aye.

The minister and Managing Director of No 3 Mining Enterprise U Hsan Tun inspected Kyartwinyay iron mine in PyinOoLwin.

Yesterday, the minister inspected production of steel at No 1 Iron and Steel Plant, construction of oxygen plant, production of import substitute materials. He provided stipend to students of basic education schools. The minister also inspected production of limestone at Pathetnyin limestone mine. — MNA

Doekyayywa Journal Vol-2 No 12 comes out

YANGON, 13 June — Doekyayywa Journal Vol-2 No 12 is put into circulation today. The journal depicts the life of farmers, the village life, knowledge about raising poultry on a manageable scale, cartoons, humour, poem, health knowledge and other interesting news. Those who want to give manuscripts and put advertisements in the journal are to contact No (31/32), 10th Street, Lammadaw Township (Ph: 371342/252452/2579768). — MNA

Minister for Finance and Revenue Maj-Gen Hla Tun delivers an address at the opening ceremony of Myanmar Economic Bank (Shwebo branch). — MNA
Man eats live frogs, snakes to get into “Guinness” Book
BANGALORE, 13 June — It might look and sound nauseating but a 24-year-old man has taken to eating live frogs, snakes and cockroaches to gain an entry into the Guinness Book of World Records.
Mohammed Mansoor, hailing from Shimoga District in Karnataka, eats live frogs, earthworms, cockroaches, water snakes and raw flesh.
Mansoor, who demonstrated his “feat” before scribes here on Saturday, says he took to the habit in order to see his name in the Guinness Book.
Mansoor, who chewed on a frog and ate a snake, also claimed that he could eat 60 raw eggs at a time, leaving the reporters shellshocked.
He also claimed that he can digest five kilos of raw meat daily. — MNA/PTI

EU foreign ministers meet on disputed budget plans
BRUSSELS, 13 June — Foreign ministers of the European Union (EU)’s 25 member countries gathered Sunday evening in Luxembourg for a closed-door conclave before their formal meeting on Monday and Tuesday, trying to strike a deal on the crisis-hit EU’s budget plans.
British Foreign Secretary Jack Straw was under strong pressure from his EU counterparts to make concessions over his country’s cherished 4.6-billion-euro annual rebate, a key point blocking accord on the 2007-2013 budget plans.
Luxembourg Prime Minister Jean-Claude Juncker, who currently holds the rotating EU presidency, has held a series of meetings with EU leaders in recent days, but the hope of reaching a consensus on the issue before next week’s EU summit remains slim.
The gathering of EU heads of state and government is to take place in Brussels on Thursday and Friday, just before Britain takes over the six-month EU presidency on 1 July.
Hampering out an agreement on the budget has been pushed to the second place as one of the top issues to be discussed at the Brussels summit, making room for EU leaders to prescribe for the Constitution crisis after France and the Netherlands said “no” to the treaty in their referendums in the past two weeks.
Diplomats warn that, while not formally linked, the Constitution crisis has inevitably complicated the political equations surrounding the budget talks.
The EU’s Luxembourg presidency has warned that a budget accord is all the more important now, to show that Europe is not completely paralyzed by turmoil.
However, British Prime Minister Tony Blair responded French President Jacques Chirac’s call for Britain’s concessions by saying that the rebate could only be negotiable via a full EU spending review.
“The reason for the unfairness is because the spending of Europe is so geared to the common agricultural policy,” Blair was quoted by British media as saying.
The annual 4.6-billion-euro rebate was famously secured in 1984 by then British Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher after she declared, according to legend, “I want my money back.” — MNA/Xinhua

Ancient Royal Garden excavation finished in N-W China
XI’AN, 13 June — Chinese and Japanese archaeologists have completed a four-year excavation at Taiyechi Lake in Daminggong Palace in Xi’an, the ancient capital of the Tang Dynasty (618-907 AD) in northwest China’s Shaanxi Province.
The Chinese and Japanese archaeologists will spend the following year studying the excavation results, said He Suili, an expert with the Institute of Archaeology of the Chinese Academy of Social Sciences, and a paper will be written to map out the structure of the garden.
The experts have excavated about 20,000 square metres of area, and found a lot relics of waterfront pavilions, halls, corridors and many other artificial garden facilities, He said.
The excavation also yielded many construction materials including bricks and tiles, stone statues, pottery and bronze and iron objects.
The garden, located at the middle area of the emperor’s living area, served exclusively for the royal members and showcased the top-level garden architecture in the Tang Dynasty, one of China’s most prosperous periods.
Taiyechi, or Pond of Heavenly Dew, was an important link in Chinese ancient royal garden architecture, and also influenced the royal garden construction in Japan and Korean Peninsula at that time, He said.
MNA/Xinhua

Memorial facility being constructed for legendary Chinese ancestors
ZHENGZHOU, 13 June — A memorial facility devoted to emperors Yan and Huang, believed to be the founders of the Chinese nation, has started for construction in Zhengzhou, capital of central China’s Henan Province.
It will be the largest of the kind in completion, said the city government sources.
The memorial facility is being built around a hill on the southern bank of the Yellow River or about 30 kilometres northwest of Zhengzhou. It will consist of a large plaza, an altar and two statues for Emperor Yan, also known as Emperor Shennong, and Emperor Huang, or the Yellow Emperor.
The project will cost 120 million yuan (about 14.46 million US dollars), with investment from a Hong Kong businessman who asked for anonymity. The first phase of the project will be completed next April. — MNA/Xinhua

China grants office equipment to Pakistani Government
ISLAMABAD, 13 June — The Chinese Government granted office equipment worth 190,000 US dollars to the Pakistani Government to facilitate officers with modern facilities.
A ceremony for the signing of an agreement on the handover of the equipment was held in Islamabad on Saturday, with Chinese Ambassador Zhang Chunxiang and Pakistani Economic Affairs Division Secretary Khalid Saed inking the document on behalf of their respective governments.
Saed said the office equipment would further consolidate the brotherly relations between the governments and the peoples of Pakistan and China. The office equipment, including 145 computers, printers, scanners, fax machines and photocopiers, is provided under the grant assistance agreement on economic and technical cooperation between Pakistan and China signed in 2001. — MNA/Xinhua
Chinese textile enterprises joyful about Sino-EU accord

SHANGHAI, 13 June — Most Chinese textile enterprises were happy about the news that China and the European Union (EU) reached a deal in the small hours on Saturday to avoid an escalating dispute between the two textile trade. They hailed the accord as a win-win approach, beneficial for all.

“As far as our enterprise is concerned, the Sino-EU deal will provide a relatively stable and foreseeable external environment and help mitigate risk of uncertainties for the textile trade,” said Xiao Yugui, president of Shanghai Textile (Group) Co, Ltd based in this international business and financial hub.

According to the latest textile exports in China, the group company exported 2 billion US dollars’ worth of textile products last year, of which one fourth were sold to Europe.

The accord is certainly good news for domestic textile manufacturers, which have been under the shadow of trade row for months,” commented Qian Feng, vice-president of Huayuan Group.

The group, a leading garments exporter in China, chalked up 2.62 billion US dollars in foreign trade of textiles and apparels, including 1.7 billion dollars in exports. It employs nearly 50,000 workers.

According to Qian, in the past few months, the Huayuan Group did not dare to receive orders, and most of its foreign clients dared not to make orders, as the trade row continued.

Eventhough China and the EU reached an agreement to settle their trade dispute, which will herald establishment of a good order on international textile market, Qian said.

According to the Sino-EU deal, the EU has agreed to stop investigations on ten types of textile products from China, including cotton fabrics, T-shirts, trou-sers, blouses and flax yarn.

The two sides also reached consensus on the annual worth of textile ex-ports for the ten types of Chinese products from June 11, 2005 through to the end of 2007. With an agreed base quantity, the annual growth is set to rise by 8 per cent and 12.5 per cent during the period.

Ning Jinyuan, general manager of the Import and Export Co, Ltd under the Tianjin Textile Group in the leading port city of north China, estimated that not only Chinese enterprises but also Euro pean enterprises will be pleased with the new deal.

As the world’s biggest high-grade textiles and garments exporter, the EU has most of its clothing makers depend on textile products from China. In the interests links, Chinese textile suppliers only take 10 per cent of profits from textile trade, while brand owners, distributors and retailers from the EU garner the remaining 90 per cent, Ning analyzed.

Iran says IAEA confirms peaceful nature of its nuclear activities

TEHRAN, 13 June — Iran’s chief nuclear negotiator Hassan Rowhani said on Saturday that the UN nuclear watchdog has confirmed the peaceful nature of Iran’s nuclear activities, the semi-official Mehr news agency reported.

“Fortunately, the Iranian nuclear issue will never give up its leg itimate rights for peace ful nuclear technology,” said Rowhani.

However, the Islamic Republic suspended its uranium enrichment activities last November to avoid a referral of its case to the UN Security Council. The suspension also opened the door to continuing nuclear negotia tions with the European trio of Britain, France and Germany, the broker of the Iranian nuclear issue since 2003.

The negotiations reached a deadlock due to uncompromising positions of the two sides.

Iran has sought to keep its uranium enrichment activities, while providing guarantees of the peaceful nature of its nuclear program, a non-existent concurrence according to Europe.

The two sides resumed a key round of talks on May 25 in Geneva, during which they agreed to prolong the negotiations till late July.
WASHINGTON, 12 June— The US Department of Agriculture (USDA) said on Friday it is checking a possible new case of mad cow disease, with additional tests to be done for confirmation.

The possible new case, in a beef cow, is one of the three suspected animals that were previously tested negative for mad cow disease. They were tested again with a different technology at the request of the USDA’s Inspector-General who was reviewing the department’s mad cow testing programme. The results showed one animal tested positive.

The meat of the animal that tested positive did not enter the food or feed chain, said Agriculture Secretary Mike Johanns.

The suspected sample is being subjected to additional tests, the department said.

The only US confirmed case of mad cow disease was found in December 2003 in a Washington state dairy cow, which was imported from Canada.

EU agrees to stop investigation on ten lines of China’s textile

BEIJING, 12 June— The European Union has agreed to stop investigations on ten categories of textile products from China, according to the agreement signed by both sides at the early hours Saturday in Shanghai.

China and EU also reached consensus on the annual growth of exports to the European market for the ten lines of Chinese products from 11 June, 2005 to the end of 2007. With an agreed base quantity, the annual growth is set to be limited by 8 per cent and 12.5 per cent during the period, said sources with the Chinese Ministry of Commerce.

Both sides agreed to address problems emerging from textile trade “through consultation”, according to the agreement.

The ten lines of textile products include cotton cloth, T-shirts, pullovers, trousers, blouses, sheets, dresses, brassieres, table cloth and flax yarn.

The agreement was reached after ten-hour strong closed-door talks between Chinese Commerce Minister Bo Xilai and visiting EU Trade Commissioner Peter Mandelson.

In April, EU published a guiding booklet on restrictive measures on textile products from China based on Article 242, setting concerned conditions and procedures for its restriction.

After that, EU launched a probe into a dozen of China-made textile products and decided May to propose a request for official consultation with China on T-shirts and flax yarn.

Following the consultation procedures, China and EU should find a satisfactory for both within 15 days. Otherwise, EU would take the restrictive measures.— MNA/Xinhua

Survey shows drug threatens Mozambican adolescents’ health

MAPUTO, 12 June— Illicit drug is threatening Mozambique’s secondary school students’ health, shows a survey carried out among Maputo secondary school students by the National Network of Mozambican NGOs against Drugs.

The survey, which was published by local media this week, took a sample of 1,000 students (629 boys and 371 girls) from the two largest state schools in Maputo, and the Maputo Portuguese School, and the privately-owned Isarel Jewish School.

The age of the pupils surveyed ranged from 14 to 25. According to the survey, more than 5 percent of the sample admitted to consuming the illicit drug cannabis.

As for hard drugs, 11 boys and three girls said they had taken cocaine. Three boys but no girls had taken heroin.

There were also three boys and one girl who had taken ecstasy tablets, and one boy who had experimented with LSD.

Singapor launches Road Safety Outreach 2005

SINGAPORE, 12 June— Themed "Think it’s safe? Think again," Singapore’s annual Road Safety Outreach was launched on Saturday, together with the opening of the Police Week Carnival.

Addressing the opening ceremony, Senior Minister for Law and Home Affairs Ho Peng Khoon identified motorcyclists, senior citizens, as well as primary and secondary school students, as the most vulnerable groups on the road. Though the total number of fatalities caused in traffic accidents in the first quarter of this year dropped to 45 from 58 in the same period of last year, motorcycle and their pil- лион riders accounted for slightly more than half of the total, Ho said.

Among pedestrians fatalities, percentages were reported for about 24 per cent of the total number of 45, nearly 82 per cent were aged 60 and above, according to Ho.— MNA/Xinhua
Chirac, Schroeder call for “constructive compromise” on EU budget

Paris, 12 June — France and Germany, the two heavyweight members of the 25-member European Union (EU), called on Friday for “a constructive compromise” on the EU budget to be discussed at the bloc’s summit in Brussels next week.

Visiting German Chancellor Gerhard Schroeder and French President Jacques Chirac said both countries are ready for a compromise on the EU budget for 2007-2013, and asked other members to follow suit.

“We completely approve the idea of a constructive compromise,” Schroeder said at a joint news conference with Chirac after their informal meeting in the French presidential palace, Elysee.

Chirac asked the Europeans, especially Britons, to make an effort for an agreement on the EU budget. An agreement “suggests that everyone should make an effort, and above all our British friends must recognize how things have changed and the need for greater equity in the financial charges that each country bears”, he said, referring to the five-billion-euro annual rebate that Britain won in 1984.

Chirac and Schroeder made the compromise appeal after France and the Netherlands rejected the EU constitutional treaty in the past two weeks.

While acknowledging a “difficult period”, Chirac said Europe “will better surmount the difficulties when there is a strong will between Germany and France to surmount them”.

Echoing Chirac, Schroeder stressed that “it is more important than ever to maintain the idea of unification and enlargement”. Chirac voiced opposition to renegotiating the EU Common Agriculture Policy, saying he would not overturn a deal he and Schroeder struck in 2002 to keep the agricultural subsidy system intact until 2013. — MNA/Xinhua

IEA maintains its estimate of oil demand in 2005

Paris, 12 June — The International Energy Agency (IEA) on Friday published a monthly report, maintaining its estimate for world demand for oil this year at 84.3 million barrels each day, with an increase of 2.2 per cent from 2004.

World oil production in May hit 34.6 million barrels per day, with an increase of 260,000 barrels per day from April, it said.

It also said that stocks held by countries in the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) amounted to 2,572 million barrels per day in April, equivalent to 53 days of consumption.

The IEA was created after the first oil crisis in 1974 in order to help OECD countries to manage strategic stocks of oil and make energy strategies.

MNA/Xinhua

Baltic countries expect closer cooperation with EU

Warsaw, 12 June — Foreign ministers of the 12-member Council of the Baltic Sea States (CBSS) said on Friday that Baltic countries look forward to strengthening cooperation with the European Union (EU).

The integration process for the EU greatly benefits the Baltic region and the entry to the EU of Poland, Estonia, Lithuania and Latvia opened new prospects for cooperation between Baltic states and the EU, the ministers said in a communiqué issued at the end of the 13th Meeting of Foreign Ministers of the CBSS in Poland’s northwestern city of Szczecin.

Icelandic Foreign Minister David Oddsson, whose country holds the rotating CBSS presidency, said at the two-day meeting that the Baltic region is the most dynamic region in Europe in economic development.

Following the enlargement of the EU, the CBSS would be a bridge for closer cooperation between the EU and Russia, and it would attach more importance to development of ties between the EU and Russia’s enclave of Kaliningrad in the near future, Oddsson said.

The foreign ministers agreed that closer cooperation with the EU would increase the power of Baltic nations, especially in the field of energy. The Baltic countries would carry out close cooperation in emergency situations and make efforts to reduce possible pollution from maritime transportation of oil in the region, the ministers said.

The CBSS, consisting of Denmark, Estonia, Finland, Germany, Ireland, Latvia, Lithuania, Norway, Poland, Russia, Sweden and the European Commission, was established in March 1992 as a forum for promoting the emerging cooperation between the countries on the Baltic Sea.

MNA/Xinhua

AICESIS pledges to work for women’s rights development

Paris, 12 June — The International Association of Economic and Social Councils (AICESIS) pledged for women’s rights and aid to development in a statement on Friday in Paris.

The AICESIS, holding its international congress from Wednesday to Friday in Paris, elected the Chinese Wang Zhongyu as president to replace the outgoing President Jacques Demarcq. The statement said that AICESIS will work to support “the elimination of all kinds of discrimination against women”.

It “insists on the necessity to conclude in 2006 within the World Trade Organization (WTO) the agenda of Doha for the development”. The statement recommends to “support emerging countries’ debt in order to make it compatible with their development and to better coordinate the WTO, the International Monetary Fund (IMF), the World Bank and the United Nations”.

MNA/Xinhua

EU records 15.7-b euro current account deficit in first quarter

Brussels, 12 June — The European Union (EU) recorded a current account deficit of 15.7 billion euros in the first quarter of 2005, the EU’s official statistics agency Eurostat said on Friday.

The figure, which was an initial estimate subject to revision, covered a deficit of 9.3 billion euros in the first quarter of 2004 and a deficit of 2.3 billion euros in the fourth quarter of 2004. The current account deficit for January-March is a measure of all goods and services flowing along with investment and interest revenues.

In the first quarter of 2005 the 25-nation bloc’s external balance of trade in services recorded a surplus of 7.9 billion euros as goods and services were sold abroad with investment and interest revenues.

The EU-15 (excluding the 10 new members of the bloc) recorded a current account balance of trade in services surplus of 9.7 billion euros in the first quarter of 2004 and a surplus of 9.0 billion euros in the fourth quarter of 2004. — MNA/Xinhua

Spain backs EU-China deal on textiles

Madrid, 12 June — The Spanish Government “highly values” the agreement between the European Union (EU) and China on Chinese textile exports, a senior Spanish official said on Saturday.

At the opening ceremony of new facilities of the Catalonian Tennis Federation at Cornellia, Spain’s Minister of Industry, Commerce and Tourism Jose Montilla said he believed the document “respects the will of the 25 EU countries”. — MNA/Xinhua

G-8 agrees to write off debts of 18 poorest countries

London, 12 June — Finance ministers of the Group of Eight (G-8) richest countries reached a deal here on Saturday on debt relief for the world’s poorest countries.

The ministers agreed on “100-per-cent debt cancellation” for 18 poorest countries with immediate effect, which amounts to 40 billion US dollars, British Chancellor of the Exchequer Gordon Brown told a news conference.

“It’s not a time for timidity, but a time for boldness,” he said.

Under the deal, the World Bank, the International Monetary Fund and the African Development Fund will write off debts owed to them by the 18 selected countries.

Brown added that there will be tough disciplines for the future which includes improving transparency and combating corruption as well as part of the beneficiaries.

The agreement came during a two-day meeting in London of finance ministers of the G-8 which groups the Britain, Canada, France, Germany, Italy, Japan, the United States and Russia. Brown said there was the political will of the richest countries to move forward and he had earlier promised “the biggest debt settlement the world has ever seen”. — MNA/Xinhua
**SPORTS**

**Vietnam thrash Philippines, India whitewash Guam in AFC soccer**

_**HANOI, 13 June—**_ Host Vietnam crushed the Philippines 6-1, while India whitewashed Guam 10-0 in the opening qualifying round of the AFC women’s championship here on Sunday.

The qualifying round of the Asian Football Confederation (AFC) women’s championship opened at My Dinh Stadium, attracting many local football fans. In the opener, Vietnam took a 3-0 lead at halftime. Midfielder Doan Thi Kim Chi made a hat-trick in the match.

Eight minutes into the match, Vietnamese striker Bui Thi Tuyen Mai scored the first with a low shot after receiving a ball from midfielder Tran Thanh Hong from the right wing.

Forward Do Hong Tien then scored twice in the 31st and 33rd minutes, giving the home team a 3-0 lead. After the break, Vietnamese continued having an upper hand, with midfielders and forwards showing smooth coordination. Chi made a hat-trick in the 56th, 58th and 78th minutes.

The lone goal for the young visitors with weaker physical fitness came in the 71st minute through a powerful shot of substitute Imperdido Angeline from the field’s centre.

“Our players played well, but I am not really satisfied with the way of performance of Vietnamese team in the second half,” Vietnam coach Tran Ngoc Thai Tuan said after the match.

Meanwhile, the Philippine’s coach Marlon Maro expressed his happiness. “I am not satisfied with the team’s performance,” he added. In another match of the day, India defeated Nepal.

The qualifying round features 12 teams from four groups on a round-robin format. Top four teams will then join China, South Korea, the North Korea and Japan in the final of the championship to be held in May 2006.

**Nigeria hold defending champions Brazil in goalless draw**

_**EMDEN, 13 June—**_ Defending champions Brazil were held to a goalless draw by a formidable Nigerian side in the heavyweight Group F clash of FIFA World Youth Championship Netherlands 2005 here on Sunday.

“We played to win the match, and created a lot of good opportunities, but unfortunately my players missed all of them. We really have to improve our forward position for the next match,” lamented an unsatisfied Weber Rene, head coach of Brazil.

The game began with a high tempo as both teams fought fiercely in the midfield. The champions of 2003 UAE World Youth Championship looked a little bit nervous in the first half, and it was Nigeria who had the say to control the game with a string of swift and accurate interchanges and passing moves.

Brazil nearly opened the scoring on 24 minutes when defender Gladstone headed home after a flick from his teammate from a fine corner, but it was disallowed by the referee for a suspect foul. Nigeria replied with several chances from corners, with a powerful header over the bar and a nice volley just wide of the post.

Brazil recovered after the break, carving open their rival’s defence several times. Diego got at least three clean chances when he faced Nigerian goalkeeper Vanzekin Amburze on virtually alone to one situation. But the striker squandered all of them after wonderful saves from Amburze.

Nigeria tried hard to break the deadlock. Okoronkwo Solomon fired a mid-range shot at the edge of the area in the 81st minute, which slipped past the far post. Finally the even-sided match ended with 0-0, a result fair for both teams.

“We are satisfied with the result, and our aim for the tournament is to win the title. We do some fine work at the midfield, and we have some good chance to score. We should be cautious during the next two group matches for we have got five yellow cards in this game,” said Nigerian boss Siasia Samsu.

**Johnston betters Liu in 110m hurdles duel**

_**WASHINGTON, 12 June—**_ Four-time world champion Allen Johnston had the better of Chinese Olympic champion Liu Xiang on Saturday in their much-hyped men’s 110m hurdles showdown by powering to a world’s leading time of 13.03 seconds at a New York athletics meeting.

The 21-year-old Liu, who tied the world record of 12.91 seconds in winning Olympic gold in Athens, clocked 13.06 seconds to win the Prefontaine Classic Grand Prix meeting last weekend, the world’s best time of the year.

But in the New York Reebok Grand Prix held at Icahn Stadium, Liu performed below his usual level as his uncharacteristic finish time of 13.11 ranked him behind Johnston and American Dominique Arnold, who posted a personal best of 13.05 for second.

"I didn't start very well, my rhythm was wrong," said Liu who had a false start in the final.

"I tried to adjust my rhythm and pace. In the middle of the race my body was tilted left," Johnston, who won 12 finals in the event last season but fell in the quarterfinals in Athens, had a chance to test his form against Liu in the Prefontaine Classic, but failed to materialize when Johnston was disqualified for a false start.

**Roddick wins third straight Stella Artois title**

_**LONDON, 13 June—**_ American Andy Roddick won his third successive Stella Artois title, taking two tiebreakers over Ivo Karlovic of Croatia 7-6 (9-7) and 7-6 (7-4) here on Sunday.

Roddick thus joined compatriot John McEnroe and Australian Lleyton Hewitt as the only players to win three titles in a row at the Wimbledon warm-up event at Queen’s Club.

Karlovic who was playing his first ATP-level final, showed no sign of nerves and was only outplayed on the big points by his more experienced opponent.

The tournament remained to be a big success for the Croatian whose world ranking of 77 will improve after victories over top seed Hewitt and former Australian Open champion Thomas Johansson.

“Tennis is a sport where the player who makes the most errors usually wins, but I was happy with my game,” said a delighted Roddick.
Kenya to play key role in Sudan’s reconstruction process

NAIROBI, 13 June — Kenya will be instrumental in southern Sudan’s reconstruction process by training its human resources and in the provision of goods and services to the vast region, officials said here Saturday.

A statement from the Ministry of Trade issued here following a two-day fact-finding mission to southern Sudan said the East African nation would train 250,000 civil servants to provide services in the entire southern Sudan region.

“Southern Sudan authorities requested Kenya to assist in training of personnel. Kenya is willing to assist and has the capacity in Customs and immigration, military training, judiciary, legislature and parliamentary training, energy sector training, cooperatives, public administration, tourism, survey and mapping, health sector, roads and teacher training,” said the statement.

The Kenyan delegation which visited southern Sudan on 7-10 June expressed readiness to assist the vast region with manpower to operate and install the airport control tower in Rumbek Airport.

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YANGON, 13 June — Commander-in-Chief (Navy) Vice-Admiral Soe Thein inspected development undertakings of Mali Island and Kyunsu Township in Taninthayi Division on 11 and 12 June.

Accompanied by Chairman of Taninthayi Division Peace and Development Council Commander of Coastal Region Command Maj-Gen Ohn Myint and officials, Vice-Admiral Soe Thein visited the regional unit on Mali Island and met with Tatmadaw members and families on 11 June. He urged them to join hands with locals for regional development.

Commander Maj-Gen Ohn Myint spoke of the need to extend farming in the region. Vice-Admiral Soe Thein and the commander presented gifts to the Tatmadaw members and families. After visiting students learning lessons at the affiliated high school, they met with departmental personnel and teachers. The commander urged them to strive in harmony and unison for success of the five rural tasks. Vice-Admiral Soe Thein explained the government’s development endeavours covering the island. The Commander-in-Chief (Navy) and the commander presented K 1 million for the school and cash assistance to government employees, teachers and students.

The following morning, the Commander-in-Chief (Navy) accompanied by the commander and officials, attended the rubber plantation ceremony of the regional battalion in Kyunsu Township. He also cordially conversed with officials, Tatmadaw members and families taking part in the ceremony.

Commander-in-Chief (Navy) Vice-Admiral Soe Thein and Commander Maj-Gen Ohn Myint visited the Tan Rubber Plantation of the township. Officials explained salient points of the plantation. Vice-Admiral Soe Thein and Maj-Gen Ohn Myint made arrangements for the success of the plantation. Vice-Admiral Soe Thein presented K 590,000 for the No 6 basic education high school of Tan village and K 230,000 for opening of a library at the school.

In the Taninthayi Hall, he met with Tatmadaw members and families of the regional battalion. After an address by the commander, Vice-Admiral Soe Thein urged them to strive together with locals for the success of the seven-point Road Map. At 10 am, the commander held a meeting with departmental personnel and social organizations in Kyunsu. Officials explained the progress achieved in launching the regional development drive. The commander spoke of the need to produce more food for ensuring self-sufficiency, and to exceed the crop cultivation targets.

In the afternoon, the Commander-in-Chief (Navy) and the commander observed the site were a new satellite town of Myeik will be built, the construction of new jetties, and sea-water prawn farms. They also attended to the needs of the officials of the projects. — MNA

YANGON, 13 June — Minister for Electric Power Maj-Gen Tin Htut visited the construction site of Yeywa hydel-power project in Mandalay Division.

The Yeywa hydel-power project can generate 790 megawatts. On completion, the project will produce 3,550 kilowatt hours annually and will supply electricity to all over the country via the national grid.

Minister for Electric Power Maj-Gen Tin Htut inspects Yeywa hydel-power project in Mandalay Division. — ELECTRIC POWER

YANGON, 13 June — Minister for Electric Power Maj-Gen Tin Htut on 10 June arrived in Mandalay and inspected the construction works including construction of the main dam, progress of intake channel and housing of Dokhtawady River water into diversion tunnel.

At the construction site, the minister urged the officials concerned to make efforts for timely completion of work and called for thrifty use of money and materials, and maintenance of machinery and equipment.

The Yeywa hydel-power project can generate 790 megawatts. On completion, the project will produce 3,550 kilowatt hours annually and will supply electricity to all over the country via the national grid.

Minister for Culture Maj-Gen Kyi Aung, Deputy Minister Brig-Gen Soe Win Maung view the construction site of new National Library. — CULTURE