State Peace and Development Council Chairman sends message of felicitations to King of Nepal

YANGON, 7 July — Senior General Than Shwe, Chairman of the State Peace and Development Council of the Union of Myanmar, has sent a message of felicitations to His Majesty King Gyanendra Bir Bikram Shah Dev, King of Nepal, on the occasion of the Birthday of the King of Nepal which falls on 7 July 2005. MNA

In order to reduce poverty, there must be more regional cooperation and technical assistance, and advanced technology must be made available to farmers in the region. Human resources must be developed and capacity building promoted to enable our peoples to get access to advanced information and new technologies that are required for economic progress.

Premier of the People’s Republic of China Mr Wen Jiabao greets Prime Minister General Soe Win. MNA

GMS Programme will augment ASEAN’s efforts for prosperity of the region and narrow the development gap between the old and new ASEAN members

Prime Minister General Soe Win attends Second GMS Summit in Kunming

YANGON, 6 July — Prime Minister of the Union of Myanmar General Soe Win and party arrived at International Convention and Exhibition Centre (ICEC) yesterday morning to attend the Second GMS Summit in Kunming, the People’s Republic of China.

Premier of the People’s Republic of China Mr Wen Jiabao greeted Prime Minister General Soe Win at Central Hall on the first floor of ICEC. Similarly, the Chinese Premier greeted Cambodian Prime Minister Samdech Hun Sen, Laotian Prime Minister Mr Bounnhang Vorachith, Thai Prime Minister Dr Thaksin Shinawatra, Vietnamese Prime Minister Mr Phan Van Khai and Asian Development Bank President Mr Haruhiko Kuroda at Central Hall.

Prime Minister General Soe Win together with Heads of Government of Greater Mekong Sub-region viewed round GMS Achievements Exhibition displayed at the Exhibition Hall on 5th floor of ICEC.

The GMS Summit commenced at Multifunctional Hall-I of ICEC on 9.20 am. Present on the occasion were Chinese Premier Mr Wen Jiabao, Cambodian Prime Minister Samdech Hun Sen, Laotian Prime Minister Mr Bounnhang Vorachith, Prime Minister of the Union of Myanmar General Soe Win, Thai Prime Minister Dr Thaksin Shinawatra, Vietnamese Prime Minister Mr Phan Van Khai and Asian Development Bank President Mr Haruhiko Kuroda, Minister for National Planning and Economic Development U Soe Tha, Minister for Commerce Brig-Gen Tin Naing Thein, Minister for Foreign Affairs U Nyan Win, Minister for Livestock and Fisheries Brig-Gen Maung Maung Thein, Minister for Electric Power Maj-Gen Tin Htut, Myanmar Ambassador to China U Thein Lwin, Director-General Lt-Col Pe Nyein of the State Peace and Development Council Office, departmental heads, Officialising Consul-General U Hauk Do Swan of Myanmar Consulate-General in Kunming, ministers, (See page 8)

Emergence of the State Constitution is the duty of all citizens of Myanmar Naing-Ngan.
Towards closer friendship and cooperation

It was fifty-five years ago that the Union of Myanmar and the People’s Republic of China established diplomatic relations. Since then, the two nations have lived in peace in accordance with the Five Principles of Peaceful Co-existence and there has been close friendship and cooperation between them.

The Myanmar delegation led by Prime Minister General Soe Win attended the 2nd Greater Mekong Subregion Summit held in Kunming, the People’s Republic of China, on 4 July. While in Kunming, Prime Minister of the Union of Myanmar General Soe Win had a cordial discussion with Mr Wen Jiabao, Premier of the People’s Republic of China.

At the meeting, Prime Minister General Soe Win said, “The Sino-Myanmar fraternal relations are flourishing and strengthening more and more with the passing of time thanks to the successive leaders of both nations who, with farsightedness, have established the bilateral relations based on the five principles of peaceful co-existence.” And Premier Mr Wen Jiabao said, “The valuable support Myanmar has provided for China together with other friendly nations are unforgettable for the PRC. As Sino-Myanmar relations are an important part of PRC’s foreign policy, the policy will ever remain unchanged whatever changes occur in the international situation.”

Myanmar has always supported the One China policy. China, on its part, has always stood by Myanmar as its true friend whenever there arises a matter that directly concerns Myanmar’s interests.

At the meeting, Prime Minister General Soe Win of the Union of Myanmar and Premier Mr Wen Jiabao of the People’s Republic of China discussed matters on construction of the International Convention Centre in Myanmar, construction of Taikkyi No 4 Fertilizer Plant, deep-well rigs and related equipment and a loan of 200 million yuan as already agreed by Myanmar and China. Moreover, matters on upgrading border trade to normal trade were also discussed.

China and Myanmar are now boosting cooperation in trade, economy, investment, communications and anti-drugs campaigns. And we believe that the meeting between Prime Minister General Soe Win and Premier Mr Wen Jiabao will be a shot in the arm for closer friendship and cooperation between the two nations.

Laotian Deputy PM and FM leaves for home

YANGON, 6 July—Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister of Lao People’s Democratic Republic Mr Somsavat Lengsavad left for home by air this evening.

The Laotian Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister was seen off at Yangon International Airport by Minister for Foreign Affairs U Nyan Win, Laotian Ambassador to Myanmar Chanthavy Bodsane and officials from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Laos Embassy in Yangon.

Together with Deputy Prime Minister Mr Somsavat Lengsavad, members of his delegation Director-General of ASEAN-Laos Mr Sayakane Sisouvong and Secretary to the Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs Mr Detsada Soukhaseum left on the same flight. — MNA

Jade & Gems special sales continue


YANGON, 6 July — The Jade and Gems special sales for 2005 continued today at Myanmar Gems Mart on Kaba-Aye Pagoda Road here.

Gem merchants yesterday bought 87 jade lots through competitive bidding system. A total of 59 jade lots were sold this morning and afternoon. The sales of jade lots continued this evening.

Patron of the central committee for Jade and Gems special sales Minister for Mines Brig-Gen Ohn Myint this morning visited the special sales.

— MNA

Minister inspects development tasks in Ayeyawady Division

Minister Col Thein Nyunt hears a report on development tasks in Kyaukpon Township. — PRASEDA

YANGON, 6 July — Minister for Progress of Border Areas and National Races and Development Affairs Col Thein Nyunt, accompanied by Deputy Director-General of Department of Development Affairs U Ohn Nyunt, inspected development work in Kyaukpon Township, Ayeyawady Division, on 2 July.

At the office of Kyaukpon Township Development Affairs Committee, executive officer U Aung Kyaw Moe reported to the minister on performance of development work and requirements with the use of charts. In connection with the reports, the minister fulfilled the needs and gave instructions on stepping up development work. Next, the minister checked the performance of development work.

On arrival at the meeting hall of Ayeyawady Division Union Solidarity and Development Association, CEC member Col Thein Nyunt met with secretary of Ayeyawady Division USDA U Than Tun, executives, district secretaries and members.

Next, secretaries of Pathine, Hinthada, Maungmya, Maubin and Pyapon Districts reported on sector-wise functions and the joint-secretary of districts gave supplementary reports. Regarding the reports, the minister fulfilled the requirements. — MNA
Pakistan says to maintain credible defence to ensure sovereignty

ISLAMABAD, 4 July — Pakistani Foreign Minister Khursheed Mahmood Kasuri Sunday reiterated his country’s firm commitment not to join arms race in the region, but said Pakistan would maintain a credible defence to ensure its sovereignty, according to the Associated Press of Pakistan.

Addressing a Press conference in Lahore, capital of the eastern Punjab Province, Kasuri said there was nothing to worry about the defence pact signed between the United States and India as both are sovereign countries like Pakistan.

He said that India purchased weapons from Russia, Germany and France in the past on which Pakistan had never raised alarm and that this time it has expressed concern with the United States over supply of improvised weapons like anti-ballistic missiles.

Kasuri said Pakistan, which has fought three major wars with India after partition in 1947, was not in arms race in the region but at the same time it would maintain “minimum credible deterrence” to ensure its sovereignty.

India is a huge country but at the same time both Pakistan and India are nuclear powers and “it is necessary to maintain conventional balance to avert nuclear war in the region”, Kasuri said, stressing that war should be avoided at all cost.

Defence ministers of the United States and India recently signed a 10-year defence pact, paving the way for joint weapons production, cooperation on missile defence and possible lifting of US export controls for sensitive military technologies.

1,748 US soldiers killed in Iraq

WASHINGTON, 6 July — As of Tuesday, 5 July, 2005, at least 1,748 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 1,346 died as a result of hostile action. The figures include five military civilians.

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

The British military has reported 89 deaths; Italy, 25; Ukraine, 18; Poland, 17; Bulgaria, 13; Spain, 11; 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, 1,609 US military members have died, according to AP’s count. That includes at least 1,237 deaths resulting from hostile action, according to the military’s records.

Kentucky guardsman killed in Iraq

BAGHDAD, 5 July — A Kentucky National Guard soldier was killed and two others were injured when their vehicle struck an explosive device.

The Kentucky National Guard says 22-year-old Ryan J. Montgomery of Greensburg died yesterday while returning from a convoy escort mission near Baghdad. The other soldiers wounded in the patrol were evacuated to a military hospital and are in stable condition. Both are expected to recover from their wounds. The families of those wounded soldiers have been notified, but their names were not released.

Montgomery was assigned to Bravo Battery 1st Battalion 623rd Field Artillery, based in Campbellsville. His unit mobilized for Operation Iraqi Freedom in November and deployed to Southwest Asia in January 2005.

Montgomery graduated from Green County High School and joined the military in September 2000 during his senior year of high school.

Montgomery was the seventh member of the Kentucky National Guard killed in Iraq. There are currently 11-hundred-27 Kentucky National Guard soldiers in Iraq.
Members of WAO presented songs in honour of women. Next, those present saluted the State Flag. Chairperson of Sagaing Division WAO Daw San Myint delivered an address.

She said in honour of high efficiency and endeavours of the entire Myanmar women, 3 July on which Myanmar National Committee for Women’s Affairs was formed, was designated as Myanmar Women’s Day. In the long course of Myanmar history, Myanmar women have enjoyed equal rights with men and it is heartening to note that they had rights to participate in the efforts for prosperity of the nation and its people. Myanmar women are proud of themselves for they are respected everywhere compared with those of other countries. The government formed Myanmar Women’s Affairs Federation for enhancing the brilliant efficiency of Myanmar women, progress in women sector and emergence of a major force that serves the interest of the nation.

She said based on strength of women, half of Myanmar’s population, Myanmar women with high efficiency are participating in nation-building tasks. However, she pointed out the fact that both men and women are responsible for building a nation and preserving the culture. Concerning bad women who wish to be under domination of others and to think highly of foreign countries, there is a Myanmar saying that it is a woman who destroys the country. It is the inborn duty of every woman to preserve national prestige and integrity.

She said the entire Myanmar women opposed and denounced traitor woman who attempted to enable Myanmar to be a satellite of the imperialists. Myanmar women suffered losses due to the economic sanctions imposed by some big nations. Some western countries are tarnishing the image of Myanmar levelling accusations that there were no economic progress, unemployment and lack of sufficient actions taken against human trafficking. Despite the pressure and sanctions imposed by foreign countries, the government has laid down projects for peace and stability, national solidarity and development and is implementing them pragmatically. MWAFAF will build a nation with the consolidated spirit in the interest of the nation and its people whatever difficulties may arise. She urged the women in Sagaing Division to take part in implementation of the tasks for emergence of a modern developed democratic nation.

Daw Wai Mon Lay Myint of Sagaing Division Women’s Affairs Organization.

(See Page 5)
As the sanctions and baseless accusations reflect the benefits of one person or one organization and harm to uplift of living standard of Myanmar women and poverty elimination task, the entire Myanmar women declare and oppose all economic sanctions and one-sided accusations.

The sanctions that aims at breaking imperialists and their minorities, and the destructive elements which are obstacles in nation-building tasks.

On 17 April, expatriate Sao Hkam Hpa, son of Nyaungshwe Sawbwa Sao Shwe Thaik, and his cohorts aired forming of Shan State provisional government and establishment of Independent Shan State. Secession from the Union is a plan of the imperialists and their minions that aims at breaking up the Union of Myanmar. That was why the government declared group led by expatriate Sao Hkam Hpa, and other related groups as unlawful associations.

She said MWAF is making efforts for promotion of the life of women in accord with fundamental principles of the federation. But, ABSDF terrorist group led by Than Ge is committing terrorist acts continuously. She demanded that ABSDF be declared as unlawful association. The women are to lay emphasis on promotion of their life and restoration of national solidarity and Union spirit and they are to ward off the destructive elements which are obstacles in nation-building tasks.

MWAF is serving the interest of the entire women comprising all the national races, flourishing Union Spirit and upholding Our Three Main National Causes.

The fundamental principle of the federation is to participate with strength of women in tasks for development of the State.

She said MWAF is making efforts for promotion of the life of women in accord with fundamental principles of the federation. But, ABSDF terrorist group led by Than Ge is committing terrorist acts continuously. She demanded that ABSDF be declared as unlawful association. The women are to lay emphasis on promotion of their life and restoration of national solidarity and Union spirit and they are to ward off the destructive elements which are obstacles in nation-building tasks.

An outstanding woman — MNA

An official presents prize to an outstanding woman — MNA

An official gives prize to an outstanding woman.

Myanmar Women’s Day Commemorative ceremony organized by Sagaing Division Organization for Women’s Affairs in progress in Monywa.— MNA

Members of the Panel of Chairpersons seen at the ceremony to mark Myanmar Women’s Day in Monywa.— MNA

Myanmar Women’s Day Commemorative ceremony organized by Sagaing Division Organization for Women’s Affairs in progress in Monywa.— MNA
Acknowledging high efficiency of the mass of Myanmar women in shoulder- ing tasks in the interests of the nation and the people, the government designated the 3rd of July as Myanmar Women’s Day in 1998. So, the 3rd of July, an auspicious day, is concerned with the entire Myanmar women but not just with an individual or a woman. 

The effective move- ments of organizations for women’s affairs at differ- ent levels have indicated that the MWAF is a reli- able force for the mass of Myanmar women. After 1990, internal anti- government groups, NGOs, some organizations, some western big nations, some armed insurgent groups and ICFTU made various base- less accusations against the government such as drugs production, trafficking in persons, sexual violence, violation of human rights, and forced labour. In consequence, that did cause a great hindrance to the development of the so- cial life of Myanmar women and the entire na- tional people. The MWAF has strongly protested against these groundless allegations and pressure put on the nation.

Members of the Panel of Chairpersons seen at Myanmar Women’s Day commemorative ceremony in Mawlamyine.— MNA

YANGON, 6 July—Mon State Organization for Women’s Affairs cel- ebrated Myanmar Wom- en’s Day at the state hall in Mawlamyine, Mon State, on 3 July.

Present on the occasion were Mon State organizer of Myanmar Women’s Af- fairs Federation Professor Dr Mi Khin Shwe Thaung and member of work group of prevention of violence against women and rehabil- itation Professor Dr Kyi Kyi Aung, the Chairperson of Mon State Organization for Women’s Affairs and members of Mon State Maternal and Child Welfare Association, chairperson and members of Mon State townships organizations for women’s affairs and MCWAs, members of Union Solidarity and Develop- ment Association, women’s sports federations, War Veterans Organization, Red Cross Society, auxil- iary fire brigade and stu- dents totalling about 1,200.

Chairperson of Mon State Organization for WA Daw Nyen Nyen Huik chaired the ceremony to- gether with member Daw Thidaar Maw, leader of work group of health Dr Tin Tin Myat Aye, leader of sub-working group of social affairs Daw Yee Yee Sein, Member of Mawlamyine Township Women Entrepreneurs As- sociation. Acknowledging high efficiency of the mass of Myanmar women in shoul- dering tasks in the interests of the nation and the people, the government designated the 3rd of July as Myanmar Women’s Day in 1998. So, the 3rd of July, an auspicious day, is concerned with the entire Myanmar women but not just with an individual or a woman.

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The ceremony to mark Myanmar Women’s Day in progress in Mawlamyine.— MNA

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The ceremony to mark Myanmar Women’s Day in progress in Mawlamyine.— MNA

Members of the Panel of Chairpersons seen at Myanmar Women’s Day commemorative ceremony in Mawlamyine.— MNA
MWAF will never let interests of the nation and the people and the mass of Myanmar women lose sight

Mawlamyine
Township
OWA
member
Daw Zin
Wah, Aung,
MNA

(from page 6)

Even though she has done nothing good for her motherland, some western countries and organizations deemed her to be the democracy icon and awarded 77 intentional prizes.

Under 35 out of the 77 awards, she received millions of US dollars, but has spent none of it in the interests of the nation and the people.

At the same time, NCGUB led by expatriate Sein Win, her elder brother, are constantly committing destructive acts.

In 1990, expatriate Sein Win and accomplices colluding with insurgents destructive elements illegally formed DFB.

Although it is claiming itself as parallel government, it is perpetrating destructive acts.

It can be found that the terrorist acts that broke out in Myanmar were committed by NCGUB fugitive Sein Win and absconder Pyithit Nyunt Wai and some westerners through well-schemed plots.

NCGUB is in disguise as a group getting involved in democracy campaign, but in the pragmatic world, its members are begging for cash assistance and funds from international community and are spending them for their personal interests.

She called on the government to announce NCGUB and other related organizations unlawful associations.

She pledged that the MWAF will never let interests of the nation and the people and the mass of Myanmar women lose sight and will continue to overcome such evil acts in collaboration with insurgents destructive elements illegally formed DFB.

In conclusion, she said preserving the national prestige and integrity, MWAF is to promote Myanmar women’s social quality of life. On behalf of Myanmar women, she pledged that MWAF will safeguard and promote the interest of the national races and Myanmar women.

Mon State.

ABSDF led by Thange are constantly committing destructive acts and deceiving many students.

Mawlamyine Township
OWA
member
Daw Hla
Htai Maw.
MNA

In conclusion, she said preserving the national prestige and integrity, MWAF is to promote Myanmar women’s social quality of life. On behalf of Myanmar women, she pledged that MWAF will safeguard and promote the interest of the national races and Myanmar women.

Next, prizes were presented to outstanding women.

Those present chanted slogans, which brought the ceremony to a close.

MNA

Participants at ceremony to mark Myanmar Women’s Day chanting slogans in Mawlamyine. — MNA
deputy ministers and senior officials of China, Cambodia, Laos, Thailand and Vietnam.

PRC Minister for Finance Mr Jin Renging acted as master of ceremonies and announced the opening of the summit. Minister for Finance Mr Jin Renging introduced Prime Minister General Soe Win and other Heads of State/Government of GMS. Chinese Premier Mr Wen Jiabao delivered an opening address.

At 10 am, the Summit continued at International Convention Hall No 2 of ICEC, attended by Prime Minister General Soe Win together with Heads of State/Government of GMS and ministers.

Next, Chinese Premier Mr Wen Jiabao discussed matters related to the Summit.

ADB President Mr Haruhiko Kuroda explained monetary, skill and management assistance of ADB for economic cooperation of GMS countries.

Heads of State/Government of GMS discussed common principle governing GMS cooperation, infrastructure for development, improving the trade and investment environment and resource mobilization and deepening partnership. ADB President Mr Haruhiko Kuroda and representatives of GMS countries held a discussion off the record. Next, Prime Minister General Soe Win discussed matters concerning further cementing the infrastructures of social affairs and environmental conservation. He said:

I consider it a privilege and honour to attend this second GMS Summit together with my distinguished colleagues, the Honourable Prime Ministers of the GMS countries in this beautiful city of Kunming in the People’s Republic of China. We have been accorded a most warm reception since our arrival.

The Greater Mekong Subregion GMS possesses vast natural resources and offers immense opportunities for economic development. It is therefore appropriate that the GMS Programme was initiated in 1992 with the objective of promoting economic and social development among the six countries — Cambodia, PRC, Lao PDR, Myanmar, Thailand and Vietnam — by strengthening economic linkages. The First GMS Summit in Phnom Penh in 2002 set out a vision of an integrated, harmonious and prosperous subregion with steady economic growth, social progress and environmental sustainability. In this regard the Asian Development Bank (ADB) has been playing an important role as facilitator of the GMS Programme by providing financial, technical and administrative support since 1992. An outstanding achievement of the GMS Programme has been the mutual confidence fostered among member countries, which in turn has contributed to understanding and better relations. As five of the GMS countries are ASEAN members and the People’s Republic of China is a dialogue partner, the GMS Programme will augment ASEAN’s efforts for prosperity of the region and narrow the development gap between the old and new ASEAN members as well as contribute to the successful implementation of the ASEAN-China programme.

(See page 9)
The First GMS Summit endorsed a strategic framework that focused on strengthening infrastructure linkages, facilitating cross-border trade and investment, enhancing private sector participation, developing human resources and protecting the environment. In view of this, reinforcing infrastructure development, improving trade and investment environment, strengthening social and environmental infrastructure, mobilizing resources and deepening partnership are priority areas under the strategic framework.

It should be emphasized that social infrastructure is key to reducing disparity in our subregion. We must forge ahead towards sustainable development and overcome the challenges posed by poverty and development gap. To overcome those challenges, greater effort will be needed in promoting human and institutional capacity for social infrastructure development.

To date progress has been impressive; however much remains to be done. The GMS region is rich in human resources, HRD is therefore vital for long term development of the subregion.

It is satisfying to note that the GMS region has achieved considerable economic growth in the past decade. However, poverty is still pervasive. A prosperous GMS means freedom from poverty and commitment to sustainable development for the future well-being of the people of the subregion.

A prosperous GMS means freedom from poverty and commitment to sustainable development for the future well-being of the people of the subregion. The Second GMS Summi. It is gratifying to note that all our countries have benefited from the PPP Learning Programme that aims to provide short-term training for enhancing capacity of officials in the field of leadership, good governance and advanced management.

We should also improve the health sector to strengthen the social infrastructure. In recent years we have witnessed new threats like SARS and Avian flu in our subregion. We are fully aware of the negative impact of those threats on economic growth. In the circumstance, strengthening surveillance and coordination as well as fostering cooperation mechanisms is much needed in our subregion.

The second GMS summit in progress at International Convention and Exhibition Centre-ICEC in Kunming. — MNA

A major challenge for the GMS Programme is to effectively assist countries in the region to protect the crucial environment resources on which depend much of the subregion’s social and economic development.
relations. Mr Xu and delegation visited Myanmar with the aim of further cementing the relations between Myanmar and Yunnan Province. The volume of Yunnan-Myanmar trade represents about 50 per cent of the overall Sino-Myanmar trade.

The Yunnan-Myanmar trade is developing and it stood at US $ 500 million in 2004. Efforts will be made to reach the trade volume of US $ 1 billion in next three to five years. The trade volume of Yunnan Province in 2004 was 40 per cent up when compared with that of previous year. Necessary programmes will be implemented to upgrade the border trade into normal trade. Mr Xu said, he visited Myanmar in 2000 and 2005. He said he witnessed the significant developments of Myanmar in every aspect in less than four years.

General Soe Win said, Chairman of the State Peace and Development Council, Senior General Than Shwe and Vice-Chairman Vice-Senior General Maung Aye have always praised the scenic beauty of Yunnan Province. The bilateral visits of leaders of both nations have further enhanced the relations between the two countries. SPDC Secretary-1 Lt-Gen Thein Sein himself received Mr Xu during his visit to Myanmar.

Myanmar and the province share a long common land border and peoples on both sides have extended cordial relations. Yunnan Province is home to various nationalities and striving for progress of all the nationalities. Thanks to the border areas development project, the 24-zone development project and five rural development tasks the nationalities of Myanmar are enjoying so-

Prime Minister General Soe Win shakes hands with Mr Xu RongKai, Governor of Yunnan Province at Expo Garden Hotel in Kunming, PRC. — MNA

Myanmar, PRC will have to observe international trading principles to increase bilateral trade volume

Yangon, 6 July — Ministers and high-ranking officials of the GMS countries — Myanmar, the People’s Republic of China, Cambodia, Laos, Thailand and Vietnam — signed the agreements and MoUs at International Convention and Exhibition Centre in Kunming, the People’s Republic of China, after the 2nd Greater Mekong Subregion Summit in Kunming Yunnan Province, yesterday.

At the signing ceremony, Minister for National Planning and Economic Development of the Union of Myanmar U Soe Tha and ministers of the GMS countries signed four agreements of a framework agreement — the GMS Cross-Border Transport Agreement, MoU on control and prevention of infectious diseases in GMS, agreement on regional power trade and MoU on cooperation, rules and regulations and guidelines.

Managing Director of the Myanma Posts and Telecommunications under the Ministry of Communications, Posts and Telegraphs U Maung Maung Tin and ministers and high-ranking officials of the GMS countries signed an MoU on Planning and Construction of the GMS Information Superhighway Network.

The signing ceremony was also attended by prime ministers of the GMS countries and high-ranking officials, Minister for Commerce Brig-Gen Tin Naing Thein, Minister for Foreign Affairs U Nyan Win, Minister for Livestock and Fisheries Brig-Gen Maung Maung Thein, Minister for Electric Power Maj-Gen Tin Htut, Myanmar Ambassador to China U Thein Lwin, Director-General of SPDC Office Lt-Col Pe Nyen and heads of department and high level diplomats.

Vice-Governor of the province Mr Li Hanbai and senior Chinese officials also attended the meeting.

The Yunnan province governor hosted a dinner in honour of Prime Minister General Soe Win and party. — MNA

GMS countries sign MoU and agreements

YANGON — Ministers and high-ranking officials of the GMS countries — Myanmar, the People’s Republic of China, Cambodia, Laos, Thailand and Vietnam — signed the agreements and MoUs at International Convention and Exhibition Centre in Kunming, the People’s Republic of China, after the 2nd Greater Mekong Subregion Summit in Kunming, Yunnan Province, yesterday.

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MINISTER U SOE THA AND MINISTERS OF GMS COUNTRIES SIGN AGREEMENTS AND MOUS AT THE SIGNING CEREMONY OF THE SECOND GMS SUMMIT. — MNA
YANGON, 6 July — Prime Minister of the Union of Myanmar General Soe Win received Mr Somsavat Lengsavad, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs of Lao People’s Democratic Republic, at Kominyintha here this afternoon.

Also present at the call were Minister for Foreign Affairs U Nyan Win, Director-General of the Prime Minister’s Office U Soe Tint, Director-General of the Protocol Department Thura U Aung Htet, Director-General of the Political Department U Thaung Tun and Laoian Ambassador to Myanmar Mr Chanthavy Bodisane.

Protocol Department

Prime Minister General Soe Win greets Mr Somsavat, Lengsavad

Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs of Laos.

PM receives Laotian

DY Prime Minister and Foreign Minister

Prime Minister General Soe Win receives Mr Somsavat Lengsavad, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs of Laos. — MNA

YANGON, 6 July — The Ninth Asean-Korea meeting was held yesterday and today here.

At the meeting, representatives of ASEAN countries and the Republic of Korea discussed matters related to ASEAN-Korea summits to be held in KL, Malaysia, in coming December.

The ASEAN-Korea dialogue partner meetings were held aiming at promoting trade, investment, tourism industry and cooperation between Asean and ROK.

The 9th meeting was also attended by Deputy Minister for Foreign Affairs U Kyaw Thu, Deputy Minister for Foreign Affairs and Trade of Korea Mr Song Min Soon and high ranking officials of ASEAN countries.

THE 9th ASEAN-Korea meeting held

The 9th Asean-Korea meeting in progress at Grand Plaza ParkRoyal Hotel. — MNA
Vietnam imports fewer fertilizers in first half

HANOI, 5 July—Vietnam imported nearly 1.4 million tons of fertilizers valued at $296 million US dollars in the first half of this year, seeing year-on-year respective declines of 27.1 per cent and 13.5 per cent, partly due to stronger domestic production.

In the period, the country imported 407,000 tons of urea worth $71 million US dollars, mainly from China, down 50.3 per cent and 31.7 per cent, respectively, according to the General Statistics Office on Tuesday.

Vietnam is estimated to need around 560,000 tons of urea for the approaching winter-spring crop, but its fertilizer producers are able to supply 200,000 tons of the product, sources at the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development said, noting that local importers are reluctant to import urea as its prices are declining both at home and abroad.

The prices of Indonesian urea were around $255 US dollars per ton in late June, down from $275 US dollars in early June, the sources said, adding that the newly built Phu My Urea Plant in southern Ba Ria Vung Tau Province with a designed annual capacity of 300,000 tons of urea is selling its products for $296 US dollars per ton.

Peru to invest $1.5b in natural gas exploration

LIMA, 5 July—Peru will invest $1.5 billion US dollars over the next five years for natural gas exploration, President Alejandro Toledo announced on Monday.

The investment will boost the national energy sector and promote the modernization of state-run refineries, President Toledo said, adding that Peru would increase its oil output to meet growing demand.

"We will harvest the achievements," said Toledo, in reference to the general elections due next year. According to reports, the government plans to boost oil production by 30 per cent in the next five years.

Indonesia, Poland pull joint aircraft production

JAKARTA, 5 July—Visiting Polish Prime Minister Marek Belka said Monday the Polish and Indonesian governments are exploring opportunities for the joint aircraft production.

When visiting aerospace industry PT Dirgantara Indonesia in the West Java capital of Bandung, Belka said the joint production may focus on small, heavy-duty helicopters, repurposed the Antara news agency.

Belka said since Indonesia and Poland established bilateral diplomatic relations 40 years ago, both countries have been cooperating in the industry.

Belka noted that Poland has sold a number of small planes and helicopters to Indonesia, adding that if the future cooperation is expanded to involve larger aircraft, it will not be on government-to-government basis.

On the same occasion, Indonesian Minister of Research and Technology Rostamhardjo said if the joint production is materialized, the local content must reach at least 30 per cent.

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Dated: 7 July 2005

Vietnam to build, upgrade seaports

HANOI, 5 July—Vietnam will invest some $6 trillion (nearly 3.8 billion US dollars) from now to 2010 to develop its seaports, the Transport Ministry said on Monday.

The country will construct new deepwater ports in the northern, central and southern regions, and upgrade 10 of its existing seaports, according to the ministry.

MNA/Xinhua
Bankruptcies rise sharply in the Netherlands

Brussels, 5 July — The first half of this year saw a significant rise in the number of companies going bankrupt in the Netherlands, according to reports reaching here on Monday.

Dutch news agency ANP reported that 5,018 firms have gone bust in the country in the last six months, a 10-per-cent rise over the same period of 2004. It quoted figures published by Graydon, a credit management agency, as reporting that a total of 60,000 jobs have been lost due to the bankruptcies.

A study also shows 7,790 individuals and one-person businesses have been under debt restructuring this year, also 10 per cent up from a year earlier.

Graydon expressed pessimism about the rest of the year, forecasting a total of 10,000 bankruptcies and 16,500 instances of debt restructuring for the whole of 2005. — MNA/Xinhua

Heavy rainfall hit Netherlands

Brussels, 5 July — Heavy rainfall hit the Netherlands over Sunday night and into Monday morning, causing flooding in the west of the country, reports reaching here said.

The port of Vlissingen in Zeeland took the brunt. Weather service KNMI said 56 millimetres of rain fell during the night, equal to the average that falls in a month.

The police received dozens of reports of flooding and the fire service was called out to pump water from several locations.

The KNMI estimated there was an average of 30 millimetres of rain in the west of the country. — MNA/Xinhua

Belgium Army to combat flooding in West Flanders

Brussels, 5 July — The Belgian Army was deployed in West Flanders on Monday to combat flooding caused by a severe thunderstorm.

Local media reported that the use of the military became possible after authorities announced the provincial disaster plan had been moved into phase three.

West Flanders governor Paul Bryne, who was in charge of coordinating the military response, urged farmers to move their livestock to higher ground. Bryne also said the stormy weather should be officially recognized by the government disaster fund as a natural disaster.

He promised every effort will be devoted to submitting damages claims to authorities for recognition from the disaster fund.

This will probably apply to the entire West Flanders region, newspaper De Tijd reported on Monday.

A severe thunderstorm hit West Flanders on Sunday night and moved across to East Flanders overnight. A weakened storm front then moved onto Antwerp on Monday morning.

Flooding, damage and lighting-sparked fires were reported across a large region of Flanders. — MNA/Xinhua

Two Aussies hospitalized after eating contaminated chocolate

Canberra, 5 July — Australia’s manufacturer that makes the Mars and Snickers chocolate bars has revealed two people received hospital treatment after eating the confectionery.

The Masterfoods company set up a hotline for consumers after receiving a letter last Friday claiming seven Mars and Snickers bars had been contaminated in the Sydney area, each of the state of New South Wales.

The company has contacted thousands of stores in the state to recall its products. — MNA/Xinhua

Malaria infections in Vietnam fall

Hanoi, 5 July — Cases of malaria infections and fatalities in Vietnam respectively dropped 27 per cent to 35,029 and 83.3 per cent to 1 in the first half of this year against the same period last year. In the period, the number of malaria patients fell 46.9 per cent in Vietnam’s southeast region, 38.7 per cent in the central highlands region and 20.7 per cent in the northern region, according to the country’s Health Ministry on Monday. — MNA/Xinhua

USAF says regret at GI’s molestation act in Okinawa

Tokyo, 5 July — A US Air Force base in Okinawa voiced regret Monday over the alleged molestation of a 10-year-old girl by a US airman in the city of Okinawa on Sunday, according to Kyodo News.

Okinawa Governor Keiichi Inamine called the act by Air Force Sergeant Armando Valdez a “serious crime”.

Valdez, 27, was arrested by the Japanese police on suspicion of molesting the elementary school girl in a parking lot in the city. The police said Valdez was drunk when he committed the act.

The type of behaviour alleged is completely unacceptable,” Brigadier-General Jan-Marc Jouas, commander of the 18th Wing at Kadena Air Base, was quoted as saying in a statement.

The Air Force said in the same statement that it is committed to ensuring appropriate actions are taken against individuals who commit crimes, and is cooperating fully with the Okinawa police and all government agencies involved.

In Tokyo, Chief Cabinet Secretary Hiroyuki Hosoda said the incident was “quite regrettable”, and that the Japanese side had asked the US Army to prevent such incident from happening again. — MNA/Xinhua

Thailand to expect over 1m Chinese tourist next year

Bangkok, 5 July — Chinese tourists to Thailand will surpass one million next year, predicted Juthamas Sirivian, the governor of the Tourism Authority of Thailand.

This year marked the 30th anniversary of establishment of bilateral diplomatic relations and in recent years the tourism exchanges of two nations developed rapidly, she said here Sunday.

Thailand and China are now discussing establishing a free trade zone, including tourism issue, said the governor, adding that tourism authorities of two nations vowed to provide more frequent air links, convenient visa procedure and quality service to tourists.

She said that according to the long-term goal of two governments, the visitors to either nation will reach four million by 2009, following the rapid trade increase. — MNA/Xinhua

NASA space probe successfully collides with comet Tempel 1

Washington, 5 July — A NASA space probe successfully collided with the comet Tempel 1 early Monday morning, by which scientists hope they can have a peek at the core of the comet to expand understanding of the formation of the solar system.

The collision occurred as scheduled at 1:52 pm EDT (0552 GMT), said Allen Brand, spokesman for NASA’s Jet Propulsion Laboratory in Pasadena, California, which is operating the 333-million-US-dollar project.

Before the head-on strike, the battery-powered copper projectile completed a trip of 304,500 kilometres to ward the sunlit side of the comet, with the last two hours of the dive on auto-pilot. The 370-kilo probe was released about 24 hours ago from its mothership Deep Impact.

The impactor is expected to smash in the comet a crater that could range from a large house to a football stadium in size and from two to 14 stories in depth. Scientists hope the impact would release prismatic material inside the comet core, which are believed not to have changed since the solar system was formed about 4.5 billion years ago.

About 15 minutes after the collision, Deep Impact will make its closest flyby of the comet nucleus, at a distance of about 500 metres. If the craft survives, scientists hope the instruments aboard it will transmit data back to Earth for an additional month before it is sent into an elliptical orbit.

Deep Impact was launched in January from Cape Canaveral, Florida.

Comets, made up of ice and dust, are frozen leftovers of the solar system building blocks. Scientists believe studying them could provide clues to how the Sun and planets formed.

Tempel 1, which was discovered in 1867, moves around the Sun in an elliptical orbit between Mars and Jupiter about every six years. — MNA/Xinhua

Tourists try cool in the shade as a heat wave sweeps across Beijing, in Tiananmen square on Wednesday, 6 July, 2005. Sustained high temperatures in north China over the past several days have affected people’s daily life leading to a hike of power and water consumption. — Internet

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Robinho is depressed, says his agent

Rio de Janeiro, 6 July — The thwarted dream of Robinho to go to Real at once with Real Madrid of Spain, has caused him a depression, said Tuesday his agent Wagner Ribeiro.

Ribeiro’s remarks comes in contrast with the versions of the local sports Press with the photo of Robinho, published Monday, showing him happy with friends playing on the street, while at the same time his team, Santos had troubles to draw without goals with Juventude in the 10th round of the Brazilian championship.

Robson de Souza “Robinho” Monday reiterated during a Press conference he wants to leave Santos and go to Real, which he defined as “the best team of the world,” and said he trusted the executives of his club would decide to transfer him as soon as possible.

In talking about the situation of the striker, Ribeiro said Tuesday “Robinho does not sleep and is depressed.”

He also said the problem that hinders the agreement between Santos and Real is not money.

Marcelo Teixeira, Santos President, last week turned down a 25-million US-dollar bidding by Real Madrid, considering the sports rights of Robinho cost 50 millions.

“Teixeira told me he would transfer the player for 25 million US dollars, but in a year’s time, and Robinho wants to leave now,” said Ribeiro.

The 21-year-old striker has a contract with the Brazilian champion from 2004 to 2008.

Robinho’s agent reminded that the bidding of Real Madrid is the highest in the history of the Brazilian soccer.

Raul says “Pablo Garcia, Diogo will do good to the team”

Madrid, 6 July — Real Madrid captain Raul Gonzalez Blanco, who currently is in Singapore for the election of the venue for the 2012 Olympic Games, said Tuesday the hiring of Uruguayan players Pablo Garcia and Carlos Diogo “will do good to the team.”

“These are important transfers. Pablo Garcia is a very experienced player. Diogo is less known but is talented and a multi-function player,” said he to Real Madrid Television.

Raul also said “this year, thanks to a good environment and a very competitive team, I am certain we will contend for the titles, we’re working fine.”

Raul is one of the elite athletes of Spain who have gone to Singapore, along with representatives of the organizing committee “Madrid 2012” to take part in the election on Wednesday, by the International Olympic Committee, of the venue for the 2012 Olympics.

Isinbayeva breaks women’s pole vault world record

Geneva, 6 July — Russia’s Yelena Isinbayeva set the women’s pole vault world record for the 14th time at Lausanne’s Super Grand Prix on Tuesday.

The 23-year-old Olympic champion cleared 4.93 metres for the record, improving by a centimetre the previous mark.

French sprinter Ronald Pognon provided perhaps the biggest shock by winning the men’s 100 metres with a personal best of 9.99 seconds ahead of Ghana’s Aziz Zakari and American Olympic champion Justin Gatlin.

Bahamas sprinter Chandra Sturrup stormed through the women’s 100 metres to set a year’s best of 10.84.

Earth’s striker Robinho when he would be free to negotiate his transfer to a foreign club.

“Regardless of the president not meeting his word, I will complete my contract until 2008 with Santos. The thing is I did not want to leave through the back door without giving any benefit to the club,” said the player.

Bakoyannis also presented Deputy Sports Minister George Orfanos and former secretaries general for the Olympic Games Constantinos Kartalis and Spyros Kapralos with the Medal of the City of Athens.

During her address, the Athens mayor referred to the cooperation among all officials and political parties in ensuring the success of the Olympic Games last summer.

“Once again we proved that if we Greeks put our minds to it, if we put our heart and soul into team-work, then there are very few things that we cannot accomplish,” she said.

Petraila also cited cooperation and teamwork as the factors that contributed to the successful Games.

“Thanks to the common perspective and cooperation among all political forces, thanks to the smooth functioning of the state, and finally, thanks to the active support and financial sacrifices of the Greek people, we were able to organize the most successful and the safest, modern Olympic Games,” she said.

Athens awards key officials for contribution to 2004 Olympics

Athens, July 6 — Athens Mayor Dora Bakoyannis presented Alternate Culture Minister Fani Palli-Petralia and former culture minister Evangelos Venizelos with the City of Athens’ Gold Medal of Merit on Tuesday for their contribution to the successful staging of the 2004 Athens Olympics.

Bakoyannis also presented Deputy Sports Minister George Orfanos and former secretaries general for the Olympic Games Constantinos Kartalis and Spyros Kapralos with the Medal of the City of Athens.

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MNA/Xinhua

South Korean soccer player Park Ji-sung boards a plane to join his team Manchester United, at an airport in Incheon, west of Seoul, on 6 July, 2005. Park, who helped PSV Eindhoven win the Dutch title and reach the Champions League semi-finals last season, became the first South Korean to play in the English Premier League. — INTERNET

Olympic champion Yelena Isinbayeva of Russia clears the bar in the pole vault event to set a new world record at the IAAF Super Grand Prix athletics meet in Lausanne, Switzerland, on 5 July, 2005. INTERNET

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MNA/Xinhua

MNA/Xinhua

MNA/Xinhua
Canadian legendary “treasure island” to be sold

OTTAWA, 6 July — A legendary “treasure island” in Canada’s eastern province of Nova Scotia is to be sold for about six million US dollars after the two estranged business partners agreed to give up their hunt for the buried treasure.

Dan Blankenship, 82, and David Tobias, 81, who own most of the Oak Island, located off Nova Scotia’s South Shore, have decided to shut down their business, Oak Island Tours Inc, and offered to sell it to the provincial government for seven million Canadian dollars, Canadian Broadcasting Corporation (CBC) said on Tuesday.

The island was rumoured for two centuries as the home of hidden treasure including pirates booty, the royal jewels of France, the treasures of King Solomon’s Temple, and the Holy Grail. A court-appointed liquidator hoped to wind up the business at the end of August, CBC said. At that time, the island could change hands, provided that the partners and the court approve the sale.

First discovered by a teenager in 1795, the mysterious money pit of the Oak Island, has stymied treasure hunters for decades, but 200 years of searching has failed to yield any thing. Blankenship and Tobias have spent almost 40 years in their search.

Modern engineering has failed to crack the mystery of various layers of logs and metals, mysterious inscriptions on stones, and booby traps that have either flooded the pit or caused it to collapse inward. — MNA/Xinhua

2 US soldiers found killed in east Afghanistan

KABUL, 7 July — The bodies of two US service members were found Monday during a combat search and rescue operation in the Afghan eastern province of Kunar, US military said on Tuesday.

“The service members’ whereabouts had been unknown since 28 June. They were part of a force conducting counter-terrorism operations in Kunar. An MH-47 helicopter carrying troops to support the force crashed on 28 June,” it said.

Sixteen US troops in the chopper died including eight Navy SEALs members. Tabealan has claimed the responsibility for the attack.

“The two service members were taken to the US military hospital at Bagram Airfield, where they were pronounced dead. Their names are being withheld until notification of their next-of-kin,” it added. Another member of the force was located and airlifted to the Bagram Hospital with non-life-threatening injuries. The whereabouts of one service member still remains unknown. It was the first helicopter to be shot down in Afghanistan since 2001. The casualties were also the heaviest for US forces in Afghanistan.”

WEATHER

Wednesday, 7 July, 2005

Summary of observations recorded at 09:30 hours MST: During the past 24 hours, weather has been partly cloudy in Kayah State and Magway Division, rain have been scattered in Kachin, Shan and Kayin States,Sagaing, Mandalay and Bago Divisions and widespread in the remaining areas with isolated heavy fall in Yangon Division. The noteworthy amounts of rainfall recorded were central (Yangon) (3.11) inches, Kawthong (2.91) inches, Kyaukpyu (1.89) inches, Dawei (1.85) inches, Hmaub (1.73) inches and Mindat (1.61) inches. Maximum temperature on 5-7-2005 was 89°F. Minimum temperature on 5-7-2005 was 68°F. Relative humidity at 9:30 hrs MST on 5-7-2005 was 96%. Total sunshine hours on 5-7-2005 was (3.7) hours approx. Rainfalls on 6-7-2005 were (1.02) inches at Mingaladon, (0.94) inch at Kaba-Aye and (3.11) inches at central Yangon. Total rainfalls centile 1-1-2005 were (33.58) inches at Mingaladon, (30.39) inches at Kaba-Aye and (32.52) inches at central Yangon. Maximum wind speed at Yangon (Kaba-Aye) was (15) mph from South at (18-35) hours MST on 5-7-2005.

Bay inference: Monsoon is generally strong in the Bay of Bengal.

Forecast valid until evening of 7-7-2005: Rain will be isolated in Southern and Eastern Shan, Kayah States, Magway, lower Sagaing and Mandalay Divisions, scattered in Chin and Kayin States, upper Sagaing and Bago Divisions and widespread in the remaining areas. Degree of certainty is 80%.

State of the sea: Squalls with rough seas are likely at times off and along Rakhine Coasts. Surface wind speed in squalls may reach (35) mph. Seas will be moderate elsewhere in Myanmar waters.

Outlook for subsequent two days: General decrease of rain in the whole country.

Forecast for Yangon and neighbouring area for 7-7-2005: One or two rain. Degree of certainty is 80%.

Forecast for Mandalay and neighbouring area for 7-7-2005: Likelihood of isolated rain. Degree of certainty is (60%).
YANGON, 6 July — Prime Minister General Soe Win held talks with Governor of Yunnan Province Mr Xu Rongkai in Kunming on 3 July.

During the talks, Mr Xu said that the Sino-Myanmar relations have strengthened under the leadership of Head of State of Myanmar Senior General Than Shwe and President Mr Hu Jintao. The Mekong River serves as a link between Myanmar and China which share the over 2,000-kilometre long common land border. Yunnan Province will play an important role in further strengthening the Sino-Myanmar relations.

Myanmar has always supported the One China policy. China, on its part, has always stood by Myanmar as its true friend whenever there arises a matter that directly concerns Myanmar’s interests.

Myanmar Women’s Day observed in Monywa

YANGON, 6 July — Myanmar Women’s Day organized by Sagaing Division Women’s Affairs Organization was observed at the city hall in Monywa on 3 July.

Present were members of Division, District, Township Women’s Affairs Organizations, Myanmar Maternal and Child Welfare Association, Myanmar War Veterans Organization, Fire and Red Cross Brigades and outstanding women in Sagaing Division totaling over 1,280.

Chairperson of Sagaing Division WAO Daw San Myint presided over the ceremony with members of the Panel of Chairmen Medical Superintendent of Monywa People’s Hospital Dr Daw Myint Myint Thein, National Convention delegate Dr Daw Win Win, Secretary of Sagaing Division WAO Daw Nu Nu Win and Monywa District Auditor Daw Khin Pyone Yi.

(See page 4)