Emergence of the State Constitution is the duty of all citizens of Myanmar Naing-Ngan.
Boost public health care services for better health

The State Peace and Development Council is expanding the horizon of the health care services for ensuring health and longevity of the entire national people. In order to achieve this goal, the government has been constructing basic foundations to the health infrastructure of the nation, while paying a serious attention to health care concerns for the people. As a result, many achievements of the national surgeons have gone down in the annals of the nation’s medical history.

The medical staff in Myanmar including physicians, surgeons and nurses have been providing health care services, giving medical treatments to the people, taking preventive measures against the diseases, and giving health education talks not only in urban regions but in rural areas.

In this regard, the medical staff are to carry on their studies and improve their skills to catch up with the medical science that is making a rapid progress and to give loving-kindness-based medical treatments to the patients.

Wellwishers and social organizations should cooperate to help provide health care services for needy patients through establishment of medical trust funds in hospitals and to carry out health care tasks in states and divisions. At a time when the government has been creating opportunities for uplift of health and fitness and ensuring longevity of the people, wellwishers are urged to contribute towards the drive in harness with service personnel in the medical field.

SID offers Waso robes to members of the Sangha

YANGON, 20 July — The 51st communal Waso robes offering ceremony of the Special Investigation Department of Myanmar Police Force took place at Aungthabye Ye Yeiktha on Fullmoon Day of Waso, today.

Present on the occasion were Commander of SID Police Brig-Gen Myint Thein and wife, Police Senior Officers and their wives, families of the police. At the ceremony, they donated Waso robes and ‘soon’ to Chairman of the State Sangha Maha Nayaka Committee and officials accepted the Waso robes and certificates of honour to them. Officials and wellwishers also offered Waso robes to the members of Sangha at the ceremony.

Cash donated to build new monastery building

YANGON, 20 July — Cash donation ceremony to build new Danyawady monastery building at Danyawady Monastery in Bahan Township was held in conjunction with Waso robes offering ceremony this morning at the monastery.

At the cash donation ceremony, Chairman of the monastery construction committee and officials accepted the cash totalling K 11.6 million donated by wellwishers and presented certificates of honour to them. Officials and wellwishers also offered Waso robes to the members of Sangha at the ceremony.

A & I Ministry offers Waso robes

YANGON, 20 July — The 4th Waso robes offering ceremony of the Ministry of Agriculture and Irrigation was held at the assembly hall of the Ministry here this morning.

Minister for Agriculture and Irrigation Maj-Gen Htay Oo and wife, heads of department under the ministry presented Waso robes and offertories to Sayadaws and shared merits gained.

At the ceremony, members of the Sangha led by State Sangha Maha Nayaka Committee Joint-secretaries Agga Maha Pandita Agga Maha Saddhammajotikadhaja Yenangyong Sayadaw Bhaddanta Sobhana. Members of the Sangha recited Parittas.

Later, wellwishers donated Waso robes and alms to the Sayadaws.

The Shwekyar Thigan offering ceremony in progress at a Buddha Image of Shwedagon Pagoda.

YANGON, 20 July — A ceremony to offer Shwekyar Thigan was held as Buddha Pujanaya at Shwedagon Pagoda on Fullmoon Day of Waso, today.

Member of the Pagoda Board of Trustees donated Shwekyar Thigans to four Buddha images in the precinct of the pagoda and Padamya Myetshin Buddha Image on the upper terrace.

Next, the ceremony to donate cash towards the funds of all-round renovation of the pagoda followed. Director-General U Aye Kyu of Department of Basic Education (Yangon City), the deputy director-general, township education officers and school heads handed over K 13,979,373 donated by schools from four Yangon districts under No 3 DRE, Latha BEHS No 2, Dagon BEHS No 1, Sangyoung BEHS No 2, Tamway BEHS No 1 and No 4, Kamayut BEHS No 2 and Bahan BEHS No 2 to members of the Pagoda Board of Trustees.

At 9.30 am, members of the pagoda board of trustees, religious associations and devotees took the Nine Precepts from Pagoda Ovada Carya Abhidhaja Maha Rattha Guru Agga Maha Pandita Nyaungdon Monastery Presiding Nayaka Sayadaw Bhaddanta Sobhana. Members of the Sangha recited Parittas.

Later, wellwishers donated Waso robes and alms to the Sayadaws. — MNA
Sri Lanka textile sector exports up 9.1% in 2004

COLOMBO, 19 July — Sri Lankan textile exports during the year 2004 topped 2.809 million US dollars, an increase of 9.1 per cent against 2.575 million dollars in the year 2003, official Daily News reported on Monday.

Garments accounted for nearly 94 per cent of total textile sector exports, the paper said.

The total exports for year 2004 were 5.757 million US dollars as against 5.133 million dollars in 2003, registering an increase of 12.2 per cent.

MNA/Xinhua

Malaysian firm to buy 52.05% stake of Indonesia’s Lippo Bank

JAKARTA, 19 July — A Malaysian Government-owned investment firm, the Khazanah Nasional Bhd, has agreed to buy a majority stake in Lippo Bank, Indonesia’s ninth-largest lender by assets, local media on Monday quoted a statement as saying. Khazanah has agreed to a conditional agreement to acquire 52.05 per cent stake in Lippo for between 3.18 trillion rupiah (some 353.3 million US dollars) and 3.30 trillion rupiah (about 367 million US dollars), according to the statement.

The proposed acquisition will be conducted through Khazanah’s wholly owned unit Santubong Investments BV.

“Khazanah is committed to the long-term development of Indonesia and views this investment as an important milestone towards further strengthening the ties between Malaysia and Indonesia,” the statement said.

Khazanah said that the planned acquisition needs all regulatory approvals including approvals from Indonesian central bank, Bank Indonesia and the approval of Lippo’s shareholders.

Khazanah will also offer to buy the remaining Lippo Bank’s shares in the tender, upon the completion of the deal, the statement added.MNA/Xinhua

Qatar eyes Nepali women workers

KATHMANDU, 19 July — Private companies in Qatar have forwarded requests to the Nepali manpower companies for around 5,000 Nepali women workers for the organized sector, an official at the Nepal Association of Foreign Employment Association (NAFEA) told Xinhua in an exclusive interview on Monday.

“Qatar now is very positive about employing Nepali women workers, and those working to send women workers to Qatar have been comparatively busier these days,” said Keshar Karki, executive member of the NAFEA, a flagship of more than 500 companies, half of which are sending Nepali workers to Malaysia and the rest to Saudi, Qatar and the United Arab Emirates.

The hardworking nature and honesty of Nepali women are the attributes that have led the companies in Qatar to demand for a growing number of women workers from Nepal, Karki said.

Official statistics show that about 600 Nepali women went abroad in the last 11 months, but if the present trend continues then the figure will go up to 10,000, Karki said.

A team of NAFEA recently visited countries like Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates, they found out other countries also show interest in taking in Nepali women workers, Karki noted.

The government of Nepal should cash in on the opportunity and make arrangements to send conflict-hit women to Qatar, Karki said, adding: “This will in turn contribute to addressing the unemployment problem in Nepal.”

The country has been plagued by guerrillas’ anti-government insurgency which took place in the Himalayan kingdom in February 1996, leading to the migration of a large number of women from mountainous areas to cities.

1,771 US soldiers killed in Iraq

WASHINGTON, 19 July—As of Tuesday, 19 July, 2005, at least 1,771 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 1,361 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 on Tuesday.

The British military has reported 92 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, 1,632 US military members have died, according to AP’s count. That includes at least 1,252 deaths resulting from hostile action, according to the military’s numbers.

Since the start of US military operations in Iraq, 13,559 US servicemembers have been wounded, according to a Defence Department tally released on Tuesday.
Chinese most prone to colorectal cancer in Asia

HONG KONG, 19 July — A study spanning 14 cities across Asia has found the highest incidence of colorectal cancer among ethnic Chinese, a trend which researchers in Hong Kong on Monday blamed on a more Westernized diet.

Between October 2004 and April 2005, doctors performed colonoscopies on 5,055 people and found polyps in 19.4 per cent of the subjects. Of these, 4 per cent had had cancer.

A further analysis found that colorectal polyps and cancers were found in more than 18 per cent of ethnic Chinese, followed by just over 12 per cent of Indonesians, 12 per cent of Malaysians, 10 per cent of Thais and 8 per cent of Filipinos.

Ethnic Indians were the healthiest in this regard, with only 5 per cent suffering the same condition.

A leading researcher in the study blamed the phenomenon on the genetic makeup of ethnic Chinese and their changing diet.

“The prevalence of colorectal polyps and cancer among ethnic Chinese is very high, as high as in Caucasian populations,” Leung Wai-keung, professor at the Chinese University’s Institute of Digestive Diseases, told Reuters in an interview. “Our belief is that the Chinese genetic makeup is very susceptible to colorectal cancer but this race has been protected by traditional Chinese diet.”

“But now, with lifestyle changes, a Westernized diet, this genetic susceptibility has been brought out,” he said, adding that diets rich in fat and red meat were the chief culprits.

 Asked about the growing popularity in Asia of weight-loss programmes from Western nations which advocated diets that were low in carbohydrates and high in fat and meat, Leung said they would have to be followed over the long term to be harmful.

The study covered the cities of Guangzhou, Hong Kong, Delhi, Jakarta, Fukuoka, Kitasato, Kurume, Seoul, Kuala Lumpur, Manila, Singapore, Taibei, Kaohsiung and Bangkok.

Among ethnic Chinese examined in the survey, researchers found those in Hong Kong the most susceptible to advanced colorectal polyps and cancer — 11 per cent of them were diagnosed with the condition.

Over 100 sickened in food poisonous incidence in S Philippines

MANILA, 18 July — More than 100 persons were sickened as a result of a mass food poison incident in the southern Philippines on Monday, the local government reported.

According to the authorities in Upi Town, Maguindanao Province, at least 134 people have been sent to hospitals after eating anchovies.

Among the sick, about 20 were in a critical condition, doctors said.

Upi Mayor Ramon Piang told reporters that the victims bought the anchovies from four vendors and began suffering from severe headaches, stomach pains and vomiting on Saturday.

The incidence is still under the investigation, he added.

India’s trade deficit widens further in first quarter

NEW DELHI, 19 July — India’s exports in the first quarter of the new fiscal grew by 19.04 per cent as compared to the previous financial year in the same quarter.

According to the foreign trade data for the first quarter of the 2005-06 financial year released here Monday, exports during April-June period in the 2005-06 fiscal is estimated at 20,900.31 million US dollars which is higher than the deficit at 5,962.44 million US dollars during the first quarter of the previous financial year.

However, India’s imports registered a quantum jump of over 38 per cent.

India’s imports during April-June, 2005-06, are valued at 32, 360.13 million US dollars, representing an increase of 38.02 per cent over the level of imports in the same period last fiscal.

While oil imports increased by of 33.16 per cent in the same period this fiscal, non-oil imports grew by over 40 per cent in the same quarter when compared to the oil imports in April-June 2004.

The trade deficit for the first quarter of the current fiscal is estimated at 11,459.82 million US dollars which is higher than the deficit at 5,962.44 million US dollars during April-June, 2004-05.

The government has set the export target for this fiscal at 92 billion US dollars compared to about 80 billion US dollars achieved during the previous year.
National Film Festival concludes in Nepal

KATHMANDU, 19 July — The first National Film Festival, which began from 10 July in Nepal, has concluded on Sunday, Radio Nepal reported on Monday.

Nepali King Gyanendra gave away awards in the closing ceremony to dozens of personalities contributing to the development and promotion of Nepali cinema in Nepal and outside, the state-run radio said.

Awards were given to 17 veterans of Nepali cinema, which comprised of producers, directors, writers, actors and actresses, while another 25 personalities in 21 other categories also won awards, the radio noted.

The weeklong festival was marked by the screening of new and old Nepali movies, interaction programmes on different aspects of cinema, cultural shows, food festival, and so on.

Addressing the closing ceremony, Minister for Information and Communication and Chairman of the Main Organizing Committee, Tankha Dhakal, said the film festival was an important step in promoting Nepali cinema at a time when the movie industry is in a lean phase.

The film festival was organized by Nepal Film Development Board with financial support from the government.

MNA/Xinhua

Waterborne diseases spread fast across Bangladesh

DHAKA, 19 July — Different waterborne diseases, including diarrhoea, have been spreading fast across Bangladesh, especially in flood-hit areas.

At least 16 people died of diarrhoea and 63,410 caught the waterborne disease in the last one month. Of them, three died and 14,538 contracted the disease in the past week alone, New Age quoted sources in the control room of the directorate of health as saying on Monday.

The number of people affected by diarrhoea and admitted to the hospital from 1 July to 7 July was 1,357, but the figure was 1,920 from 10 July to 16 July, it reported.

A number of people have also been affected by other waterborne diseases like dysentery and pneumonia due to lack of pure drinking water in the flood-hit areas and the areas clogged with water.

More than 600,000 people were marooned in seven districts on the Brahmaputra Basin in northern Bangladesh as more areas were inundated with further deterioration of the overall flood situation till Sunday, official BSS news agency reported. BSS quoted Water Development Board as saying that the rainfall recorded during the past one week at different points of greater Rangpur in northern Bangladesh was almost around 600 millimetres, the fifth highest annual average rainfall recorded in these areas in recent decades.

MNA/Xinhua

Singapore’s non-oil exports up 1% in June

SINGAPORE, 19 July — Singapore’s non-oil domestic exports (NODX) registered an increase of 1 per cent to 11.21 billion Singapore dollars (about 6.64 billion US dollars) in June as compared with the same period of last year.

According to the figures released by the International Enterprise Singapore (IE Singapore) on Monday, the growth reversed last month’s contraction of 5.6 per cent, the first negative growth rate in 35 months.

The export of electronics continued to decline by 4.2 per cent in June, while the export of non-electronic products grew by 6.7 per cent in the same month, reversing the drop of 6.6 per cent in May.

The NODX to China, one of the top three growth contributors for the month besides Taiwan province and Thailand, sustained a double-digit growth of 18 per cent in June.

The NODX to the United States and the European Union contracted by 14 per cent and 0.3 per cent respectively last month.

Singapore’s total trade rose 11.3 per cent in June.

MNA/Xinhua

Iraq, neighbours discuss border control

ISTANBUL, 19 July — Iraq’s Interior Minister is demanding that his country’s neighbours take stronger measures to stop Turkish Kurdish guerrillas based in Iraq from crossing into Turkey — while agreeing that halting infiltration into Iraq is also vital.

“Controlling the borders is the most urgent problem that stands in front of us,” Turkish Interior Minister Abdulkadir Aksu said in his opening speech at a meeting in Istanbul on Tuesday that ending infiltration was critical for stability in the region.

Turkey is demanding that Iraq and the United States take stronger measures to stop Turkish Kurdish guerrillas based in Iraq from crossing into Turkey — while agreeing that halting infiltration into Iraq is also vital.

“The success of the process in Iraq will be our success as well,” the minister said.

The interior ministers from Turkey, Iran, Syria, Kuwait, Saadi Arabia, Bahrain and Jordan as well as Iraq were expected to pledge to take steps toward increased border security and intelligence sharing at the meeting on how to increase regional security.

Internet

Iraq, Iran sign MoUs on economic cooperation

TEHRAN, 19 July — Iran and Iraq signed here on Sunday two memorandum of understanding (MoU) on bilateral cooperation in the fields of trade and transportation, the official IRNA news agency reported.

One MoU, inked by visiting Iraqi Minister of Trade Abdul Basit Karim and his Iranian counterpart Mohammad Shariatmadari, was aimed at expanding bilateral cooperation in various trade and commercial fields, the report added.

Based on the MoU, the two countries expressed readiness to sign free trade agreements, facilitate issuance of trade visa, hold ex-

clusive exhibitions, facilitate rendering of technical and engineering services and make joint investment in infrastructure construc-

tions, the report added.

The development of border markets, the establishment of Iran’s trade bureaus in Baghdad and the cooperation of the Iraqi side in this regard were also among issues agreed upon by the two sides.

Additionally, the MoU also stressed Iran’s readiness to export automobile, cement, steel and petrochemical products to Iraq.

Meanwhile, Iranian Minister of Transportation Mohammad Rahmati and his Iraqi counterpart Salam al-Maliki signed another MoU on expansion of rail, road, air and sea transporta-

tion between the two neighbours.

MNA/Xinhua

China to build dinosaur park around Cretaceous footprints

JINAN, 19 July — The construction of a dinosaur park will soon begin in east China’s Shandong Province in a bid to preserve a large number of rare dinosaur footprints dating back to the Cretaceous period.

The park, covering some 60 square kilometres in Junan County of Yimeng Mountain Area, will exhibit the intact remains of dinosaurs, said Zhao Xijin, an expert with the Chinese Academy of Sciences.

During the Cretaceous period, there was a huge lake in the region, home to a large number of herbivorous and carnivorous dinosaurs, said Zhao, who specializes in the research of ancient vertebrates and palaeoan-

thropology.

It is rare to discover flocks of intact dinosaur footprints in the stratum. The park will not only re-

store the traces of dino-

saur’s activities to visitors, but will offer valuable materials for the research of Cretaceous dinosaurs, the expert said.

“A geological park is of great importance in the protection of the rare di-

nosaur footprints, which require very special con-

ditions to be well pre-

served,” said Zhao.

MNA/Xinhua

An Iraqi policeman looks at a body in a car after gunmen killed three men in Baghdad on 19 July, 2005. — Internet
Top-notch Chinese student unable to apply to key universities

BEIJING, 19 July—Li Yang, 16, obtained first place in this year’s National College Entrance Examination amid the 44,929 examinees in south China’s Hainan Province. His score of 897 points theoretically made him qualified to apply to all the country’s prestigious universities.

However, his applications to the country’s key universities were officially disqualified on Friday by the Hainan Provincial Educational Department because Li was an examination immigrant — the study time he spent in Hainan Province did not meet Hainan Provincial regulations.

The provincial regulation stipulates that only students who possess Hainan residence permits and finish the last two years of high school courses in Hainan and are entitled to apply to the country’s top universities. Students who only fulfill one of the two requirements can only apply for the country’s common universities.

Li, who has a Hainan residence permission, but spent more than ten years in Hebei Province’s education system before transferring to a Hainan high school where he studied for less than two years, can only apply to common universities.

Li was one of the tens of thousands of examination immigrants in the country. An official within the Hainan Provincial Education Department disclosed that more than 9,000 high school students from central China’s provinces of Henan, Hebei, Hubei, Hunan and Jiangxi came to Hainan Province to attend the National College Entrance Examination to take advantage of Hainan Province’s lower university recruitment standards.

In China, the examination content of the annual National College Entrance Examination in different provinces is almost entirely unified. But admission standards for university enrollment for students from different provinces vary dramatically due to regional educational imbalances, which are caused by China’s regional economic disparities. Due to lower education investment, the quality of primary school and middle school education in economically backward provinces is lower than that in affluent provinces. Government, therefore, lowers admission standards for students from economically and educationally backward provinces to ensure a certain proportion of students there still receive higher educations.

This favourable policy toward economically and educationally backward provinces, however, has been criticized as "unfair" competition. As a consequence of the policy, examinees from economically affluent provinces face inordinately fierce competition in college admissions since entrance standards for them are dozens of points higher than those for students from poor provinces.

HK, EU to strengthen structured dialogue

HONG KONG, 20 July—The Hong Kong Special Administrative Region (HKSAR) government and the European Union (EU) Commission should develop, broaden and deepen cooperation in areas of common interest through a structured dialogue, a joint statement said here on Monday.

Both sides are instructing respective officials to assess options and recommend ways forward in this regard, said the statement issued by Donald Tsang, Chief Executive of HKSAR, and Jose Manuel Barroso, president of the EU Commission.

The two parties further agreed that it would be useful to periodically review progress in the dialogue at the leadership level and update mutual agenda to meet future demands as their dynamic relationship continues, the statement added.

The statement also mentioned the Sixth Ministerial Conference of the World Trade Organization, which will be held in Hong Kong in December. Since trade has been a key driver in EU–Hong Kong relations, both sides attach great importance to achieving a substantive outcome of the conference which will pave the way for the successful conclusion of the Doha Development Round.

Its Barroso’s first visit to China as president of the EU Commission. Hong Kong is the last stop of his five-day official visit. He had visited Beijing, Shanghai, and Macao before his arrival in Hong Kong. — MNA/Xinhua

Road accident kills 16 in northern Iran

TEHERAN, 19 July—Sixteen people, mostly students, were killed and four others injured when a minibus collided head-on into a truck in Iran’s central province of Teheran on Saturday, the official IRNA news agency reported on Sunday.

The accident took place near Fiourouzkouh, a town 130 kilometres east of Teheran city.

The minibus driver and his four passengers aboard, who were students of a university and accompanying relatives, were killed in the fatal accident, the report said. Meanwhile, four other people were seriously injured and were rushed to hospitals in Teheran city by helicopter, according to the report.

S Korea opposes Japan in raising abduction issue in nuke talks

SEOUL, 19 July—South Korea on Monday voiced opposition to Japan’s idea to raise the Japanese citizens kidnapping issue in the upcoming six-party nuclear talks.

“Clearly, the purpose of the six-party talks is to resolve the... nuclear issue so that other issues can be consulted on through different channels, including bilateral ones,” a ranking South Korean foreign ministry spokesman quoted by South Korean Yonhap news agency as saying on Monday.

The South Korean top leader Kim Jong-il said among the 13 Japan’s issues is the keypoint of the upcoming round of the six-party nuclear talks.

North Korea announced it will reopen the six-party talks aimed to resolve the nuclear issue on the Korean Peninsula in the last week of July. But the exact date of opening of the talks is yet to be decided.

Moreover, the unnamed South Korean official called on Japan to be more active in ending the nuclear issue, saying Tokyo has been passive in recent trilateral consultations with South Korea and the United States.

But, the official did not elaborate what means Japan’s passive position.

The top nuclear negotiators of South Korea, the United States and Japan gathered here last week to coordinate their strategy in resolving the nuclear issue in the six-party talks, which also involve China, North Korea, and Russia.

The South Korean official’s remarks came four days after Japan’s Chief Cabinet Secretary Hiroyuki Hosoda said his country will strongly press for the resolution of the kidnapping issue at the nuclear disarmament talks.

In 1970s and 1980s to use as a Japanese citizens, the top leader Kim Jong-il admitted that his country’s agents had kidnapped 13 Japanese citizens in the 1970s and 1980s to use as language and culture instructors.

Kim said among the 13 Japanese citizens, five were alive, eight others had died of hunger and disease.

However, Japan is skeptical of North Korea’s explanations about the eight dead, urging North Korea to show evidence to support its claim.—MNA/Xinhua

Iraq port paralysed, commodities import flows hit

AMMAN, 19 June—Iraq’s main port of Umm Qasr remained paralysed for the fifth day on Monday after a dispute between the Transport Ministry and private trucking fleets halted unloading of vessels, regional shipping agents said.

Smooth flows at Umm Qasr, Iraq’s primary outlet for imports of commodities, are vital to solve shortages in the state’s food distribution system, which have caused popular complaints and undermined economic recovery efforts by the US-backed government.

“We wanted to regulate the private fleets. I think that the issue has been solved,” Malaki said.

Shipping agents said the dispute concerns the ministry’s demands for higher fees from private trucks, adding that using

The statement also mentioned the Sixth Ministerial Conference of the World Trade Organization, which will be held in Hong Kong in December. Since trade has been a key driver in EU–Hong Kong relations, both sides attach great importance to achieving a substantive outcome of the conference which will pave the way for the successful conclusion of the Doha Development Round.

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Human resource development in full swing across the nation

On his inspection tour around Pathein in Ayeyawady Division in 2004, Head of State Senior General Than Shwe gave guidance, saying that at a time when the government was taking all possible steps for regional development, Ayeyawady Division on its part was to effectively harness its land, water and forestry resources in abundance for its greater development. And the region had also got an adequate number of human resources capable of tapping the natural resources, so what was needed was just to make efforts and take innovative measures.

The Head of State also gave guidance during a visit to Pathein Government Technological College. He said that only when human resources were well qualified, would the nation become one of the top countries, and in that regard turning out educated human resources was a must for national development.

With a view to ensuring development of human resources for emergence of a developed nation, the government has designated 24 development regions and established in those regions many universities, degree colleges, computer colleges and technological colleges that are the most important factor for development of human resources. Now, the government’s goodwill and the emergence of the educational institutions have borne fruit.

In his speech at the seminar (2004) on promotion of national education (higher education), Minister for Education U Than Aung said that the regions in which universities and colleges were located were rich in natural resources. And if the resources could be put into use for the community, the existence of the universities and colleges would be more meaningful.

Now, respective universities and colleges have been opened in each development region for local youths to pursue higher education. In compliance with the guidance of Head of State Senior General Than Shwe, Maubin University was constructed in Maubin Region. The Head of State also inspected the Maubin University Project on 22 February 2003 and gave guidance on the project. Maubin University was put into commission on 18 December 2002, and the inauguration of the main building of the facility took place on 18 July 2003.

Maubin University is situated on the 67.07-acre campus in Aikaka Village-tract, Maubin Township. Thanks to the facility, local youths in eight townships in Maubin and Pyayon Districts — Maubin, Nyauengdon, Pantanaw, Danubyu, Pyapon, Bogalay, Kyakklat and Dedaye — can pursue higher education in their region at fair expense.

More than 5,000 students, including those of University of Distance Education, attend Maubin University(113,27),(814,118), creating opportunities for local people to do businesses such as running restaurants and hotels, and marketing of personal goods.

Out of K 69,827.75 million plus over US$ 550 million the government spent on border areas development projects from May 1989 to 6 July 2005, K 3,930.07 million went to the plans for promotion of the education standard of border areas. That is indicative of to what extent the government has placed emphasis on the education sector of border areas.

In the past, there were only a few schools in border areas, but these regions have so far been facilitated with 92 basic education primary schools, 90 basic education middle schools and 92 basic education high schools. On 30 June 1999, the government established the Education and Training Department under the Ministry for Progress of Border Areas and National Races and Development Affairs, and since then the department has been constantly conducting a variety of courses for the development of the youths in the regions.

Up to now, the department has opened 27 youths training schools and 21 vocational training centres for women. At present, 1,908 boys and 341 girls are attending the classes of the youths training schools. The government opened Nationalities Youths Youth Training Schools and 21 vocational training centres for women. At present, 1,908 boys and 341 girls are attending the classes of the youths training schools.

The universities and colleges throughout the nation have been carrying out tasks on research based on natural resources of respective regions and have prescribed suitable subjects on technologies that can enhance regional development.

The universities and colleges have been carrying out tasks on research based on natural resources of respective regions and have prescribed suitable subjects on technologies that can enhance regional development. The government opened Nationalities Youths Resource Development Degree Colleges (Yangon) and (Mandalay) on 15 June 2000 and 12 July 2000 respectively for enabling youths, who have passed matriculation examinations from the schools, to continue their studies.

As to the opportunity for pursuing higher education, the number of universities and colleges in the nation has now surged to 156, up from 32 in 1988. Previously, the higher education sector made available the limited fields of arts and science, technology, medicine and forestry. Now, there have emerged different additional fields such as computer, maritime, aerospace engineering, culture, and cooperatives.

In relation to the field of medicine, there have emerged five institutes of medicine, two dental institutes, one institute of nursing and paramedical science, two institutes of pharmacy, and one university of community health. Under the Ministry of Science and Technology are four technological universities, two universities of computer studies, one aerospace engineering university, 26 government technological colleges, 24 government computer colleges and 11 government technical institutes.

Simultaneously, the government has installed modern teaching and learning aids, computers and electronics on information and technology, networks on information and technology, international level workshops and laboratories, international standard libraries, and modern research departments in the universities and colleges to enhance the higher education of the nation.

It is also helping prescribe new subjects by combining new studies and branches through cross-disciplinary and Inter-disciplinary approach methods.

The human resource development drive is now in full swing in all regions of the nation due to the government’s earnest efforts and arrangements to uplift the level of higher education or that of universities and colleges of respective development regions thereby contributing towards community development there.

Translation: MS
Senior General Than Shwe and wife Daw Kyaing Kyaing offer Waso robes to Chairman of State Sangha Maha Nayaka Committee the Magway Sayadaw. — MNA

Senior General Than Shwe and wife Daw Kyaing Kyaing and party donate "soon" to members of the Sangha. — MNA

Vice-Senior General Maung Aye and wife Daw Mya Mya San donate Waso robes to a Sayadaw.

Daw Khin Than Nwe, wife of Lt-Gen Tin Oo, offering Waso robes to a Sayadaw. — MNA

General Thura Shwe Mann and wife Daw Khin Lay Thet offer Waso robes to a Sayadaw. — MNA

Secretary-1 Lt-Gen Thein Sein presenting Waso robes to a Sayadaw. — MNA

Prime Minister General Soe Win and wife Daw Than Than Nwe offer Waso robes to a Sayadaw. — MNA

(from page 1)

the Commander-in-Chief (Air) and their wives, the Chairman of Yangon Division Peace and Development Council Commander of Yangon Command and wife, ministers, senior military officers of the Ministry of Defence, deputy ministers, departmental heads, local authorities, families of Defence Services (Army, Navy and Air) and guests.

Senior General Than Shwe and wife Daw Kyaing Kyaing offered 'soon', fruits, water, lights, joss sticks and flowers to the Buddha Image in the Ordination Hall and paid homage to it.

Master of ceremonies Deputy Director U San Thin Hlaing of Yangon Division Religious Affairs Department supplicated on the agenda of the ceremony. First, the congregation paid obeisance to the Buddha Image with three-time recitation of Namo Tassa. Senior General Than Shwe and wife Daw Kyaing Kyaing and party took the Nine Precepts from Chairman Sayadaw Bhaddanta Kumara. Members of the Sangha recited Metta Sutta. Next, the Senior General and wife donated Waso robes and alms to the Chairman Sayadaw. Vice-Senior General Maung Aye and wife Daw Mya Mya San offered Waso robes and donations to the Sayadaw. (See page 9)
Presiding Nayaka Sayadaw of the Monastery Bhaddanta Silakkhandha Bhivamsa delivered a sermon, and Senior General Than Shwe and wife Daw Kyawing Kyawng and party shared the merits gained.

After the ceremony, the Senior General and wife and party offered 'soon' to the Sayadaws. Next, they donated rice to members of the Sangha of the monastery and offered 'soon' to them.

The ceremony ended with three-time recitation of Buddha Sasanam Çiram Ṭihātu.
Pilgrims pay homage to Buddha Image at Thrimingalar Kaba Aye Pagoda on Fullmoon Day of Wasso (Dhamma-pakka Day) (20-7-2005). — MNA

Shwedagon Pagoda’s precinct is packed with pilgrims on Fullmoon Day of Wasso (Dhamma-pakka Day) (20-7-2005). — MNA

Wasso robes offering ceremony held at Shwephonepwint Pagoda

YANGON, 20 July — The 48th Wasso robes offering ceremony organized by Shwephonepwint Pagoda Board of Trustees was held this afternoon at the pagoda in Pazundaung Township.

First, the congregation received the Nine Precepts from Sayadaw Agga Maha Pandita Agga Maha Saddhamma Jotikadhaja Bhaddanta Narinda Bhivamsa of Phayaphyu Monastery.

Next, Ovadacariya Sayadaws of the pagoda board of trustees recited the parittas.

Those present receiving the Nine Precepts from the Sayadaw. — MNA

Officials, members of the board of trustees, members of social organizations and wellwishers also presented Wasso robes and offertories to the Sayadaws.

MNA

Reordination Wasso robes offering ceremony held at Pantapwinttaung Tawya

The eighth Wasso robes offering ceremony was held in conjunction with the reordination of Prasiding Sayadaw of Pantapwinttaung Tawya Monastery Saddhamma Jotikadhaja Bhaddanta Paññasara at the monastery in Taikkyi Township this morning.

First, the congregation took the Nine Precepts from the Sayadaw and offered eight requi-

A wellwisher offers Wasso robes and alms to Sayadaw Bhaddanta Paññasara. — MNA

of merits. The Wasso robes offering ceremony was held at Mahasi Sasana Yeiktha at 9th Mile, here, this morning.

Similar ceremonies were held at Chaukhtetkyi, Meilamu, Kyakkasan, Moegoung, Yangon, and Religious Monuments.

Meritorious deeds performed at pagodas…

Pilgrims pay homage to Buddha Image at Thrimingalar Kaba Aye Pagoda on Fullmoon Day of Wasso (Dhamma-pakka Day) (20-7-2005). — MNA

Mr. Sayadaw delivered a sermon, followed by shar-

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MNA
Trees planting ceremony takes place in Taikkyi Station

Yangon, 20 July — A ceremony to plant trees was held in Taikkyi Station on 17 July morning.

During the ceremony, Chairman of Yangon Division Peace and Development Council Commander of Yangon Command Maj-Gen Myint Swe planted a tree.

Also present on the occasion were Col Myint Naung of Pyhgui Station, Commander of Taikkyi Station Col Tint Wai, senior military officers, Secretary of Yangon Division PDC Lt-Col Myint Kyi and departmental officials at division level, Chairman of Yangon North District PDC Lt-Col Myat Min and officials, officers and other ranks of regiments and units and families.

Speaking on the occasion, Maj-Gen Myint Swe said that the tree planting ceremony held in Taikkyi Station is the fourth time in Yangon Division. Taikkyi Station is contiguous to Bago Yoma. It is situated in the area of greening the 30-mile radius of Yangon International Airport all the year round. As a result, the perennial crops and shade trees are to be planted in the places where the monsoon and summer paddy are not grown.

Next, Station Commander Col Tint Wai briefed him on planting of trees in the station and measures to be taken for planting trees and Director of Divisional Forest Department U Khin Win on collection and distribution of saplings and preventive measures against cutting trees illegally.

Afterwards, Commander Maj-Gen Myint Swe and officials distributed saplings to those present. The commander planted a teak sapling to mark the ceremony. The commander, officials and families took part in the tree planting ceremony.

A total of 10,050 trees were planted in Taikkyi Station today. — MNA

USDA Secretary-General meets with members in Kanyakutwin, Nyaunglebin

Yangon, 20 July — Secretary-General of the Union Solidarity and Development Association Maj-Gen Htay Oo met with USDA officials in Kanyakutwin, Bago Division (East), to the funds of the renovation of USDA at USDA office in Kanyakutwin. At the meeting, he briefed on future tasks of the association and urged them to make efforts for successful implementation of the five rural development tasks.

At the meeting with USDA members in Nyaunglebin Township, Secretary of Nyaunglebin Township USDA reported on regional development tasks. Next, Maj-Gen Htay Oo urged them to make efforts with Union Spirit for the emergence of peaceful, modern and developed nation. — MNA

Minister looks into factories in Indagaw industrial region

Yangon, 20 July — Minister for Industry 2 Maj-Gen Saw Lwin, accompanied by Deputy Minister Lt-Col Khin Maung Kyaw and officials concerned visited Indagaw industrial region in Bago Division yesterday afternoon. During the arrival, Managing Director of Myanmar Machine Tool and Electrical Industries U Kyaw Win and General Manager U Pe Than Hlaing briefed them on production process of aluminium wires.

In connection with the reports, the minister gave instructions on stockpile of raw materials, production with full capacity, standardization of quality products, production of variety of sizes and nurturing of skilled workers.

Next, the minister and party looked into progress in building of electrical and electric motor factory of MMTEI and installation of machine parts. Officials conducted them round the factory.

Afterwards, the minister gave instructions on measures to be taken for systematic installation of machine parts and test run, takeover of technology, timely completion of production, building of roads in the factory’s environment, worksite safety and duty assignment to skilled workers. — MNA

Paunglaung dam starts power generation beginning 17 July

Yangon, 20 July — Chairman of Mandalay Division Peace and Development Council Commander of Central Command Maj-Gen Khin Zaw inspected Myohta (Takton) Dam project in Takton Township, Mandalay Division, on 18 July.

Built on Myohta creek, the earth dam is 2,000 feet long and 80 feet high, with a maximum storage capacity of 13,000 acre-feet. From its 30 feet long reinforced concrete spillway, the dam can irrigate 10,000 acres of crops.

After hearing the presentations of officials, the commander made arrangements to fulfill the requirements. At Paunglaung multipurpose dam project, the commander gave instructions on work. Officials also conducted him around the control room and operation sectors of the power plant.

Depending on the volume of water in the reservoir, the power plant is running its four 70-megawatt turbines to generate 180 megawatts at night and 45 megawatts in the day time beginning 17 July.

Depending on the volume of water in the reservoir, the power plant is running its four 70-megawatt turbines to generate 180 megawatts at night and 45 megawatts in the day time beginning 17 July. Up to now, the reservoir has stored 28,949 acre-feet of water. At its maximum water storage of 500,000 acre-feet, the facility will irrigate 35,000 acres of crops — 19,000 acres in Mandalay Division and 16,000 acres in Bago Division.

In the evening, the commander attended the ceremony to launch the bio gas power station of Hee laung village four miles east of Yangon-Mandalay highway in Yame thin Township.

Locals contributed K 3.5 million and Mandalay Division Union Solidarity and Development Association K 1 million to build the mini power station.

After paying respects to and presenting offerings to the Sayadaw of the village monastery, the commander inspected the station hospital and looked after the health of patients. — MNA

FM sends felicitations to Belgian counterpart

Yangon, 21 July — U Nyan Win, Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Union of Myanmar, has sent a message of felicitations to His Excellency Mr Karel de Gucht, Minister of Foreign Affairs of Belgium, on the occasion of the National Day of the Kingdom of Belgium which falls on 21 July 2005.

Myanmar archers taking part in international championship

Yangon, 20 July — Myanmar team is taking part in the compound and recurve events of the 29th international archery championship being held in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia to 25 July.

Compound event archers of the Myanmar team are Paw Oo, Lin Naing, Ye Min Swe, Myo Aung Hsna, Thin Thin Khaing, Yu Nanda Htaik and Kathi, and recurve archers Nyi Tun, Tun Lin Aung, Zaw Win Htaik and Zaw Min Tun.

Led by Myanmar Archery Federation President Dr Khin Shwe, the team, also comprising Vice-President Dr Zaw Tun, Coach Cum Manager U Kyaw Oo and Coach Daw Myat Thuza Myint, left Yangon by air this morning. The members were seen off by officials.

NLM

Myanmar archery team seen at airport on 20-7-2005 before departure for Malaysia.

NLM
UN aide targeted in oil-for-food probe loses job

WASHINGTON, 19 July — A latest survey has shown that US businesses are increasingly reporting shortages of skilled workers, suggesting that using the US labour market is improving steadily.

The National Association for Business Economics (NABE), which polled corporate planners and financial analysts recently, said on Monday that more than a third of them reported their companies had difficulty hiring skilled workers. That marked the highest level in four years.

Meanwhile, the survey showed that the shortage of skilled workers has been a growing problem for businesses. Over the last year, the proportion of NABE respondents reporting such shortages has risen 10 percentage points to 35 per cent. That surge has occurred despite a steady increase in the proportion of businesses reporting increases in wages and salaries, according to the survey.

Poll shows more US COs seeing shortages of skilled labour

South Africa develops wine tourism

JOHANNESBURG, 7 July — South Africa, one of the world’s premium wine producers, in the world, will further develop wine tourism by incorporating wine tourism into the African cultural experience, according to a report here on Monday.

The local daily Star reported that the total turnover of the wine industry in 2003 amounted to 10.6 billion rand (about 1.6 billion US dollars), of which 4.2 billion rand (about 640 million dollars) was derived from the wine tourism industry.

A study by the South African Wine Industry Information & Systems found that excluding tourism, the wine industry contributed 16.3 billion rand (2.47 billion dollars), or 1.5 per cent, to the country’s gross domestic product in 2003 and approximately 11.4 per cent (1.73 billion dollars) of this remained in Cape Town and the Western Cape Province.

There was, therefore, a real opportunity to drive transformation in the wine tourism sector, Noki Dube, the chief executive of Cape Town and the Western Cape were already members of the Great Wine Capitals, which included the regions of Melbourne, Bordeaux, Porto, Bilbao-San Sebastian, Rioja and Florence.

This network served to encourage international winery tourism as well as economic academic and cultural exchanges between famous wine capitals.

Dube said the challenges and opportunities were the creation of a distinctive image for South African and Western Cape wines associated with tourism, the linking of the winelands experiences to the authentic experiences of the townships.

They also include the incorporation of wine tourism into the African cultural experience and the continual creation of sustainable jobs in the wine industry. — MNA/Xinhua

Nigeria, TOTAL sign contract on developing deep-sea oil

ABUJA, 19 July — The Nigeria National Petroleum Company (NNPC) and the French oil company TOTAL have signed a production sharing contract to develop oil in the deep offshore Niger Delta, Nigeria’s Ministry of State for Petroleum Resources, Edmund Daukoru said here on Monday.

Speaking at the signing ceremony in the Nigerian capital Abuja on Monday, Daukoru said under the contract, 7.6 million US dollars would accrue to the NNPC as a signature bonus and another 10 million dollars after the first oil.

The NNPC is the concessionaire of the Oil Prospecting Lease 223 block and has 30 per cent share while TOTAL is the contractor and has 70 per cent in the block.

Describing the block as attractive, Daukoru said "every square in it is a potential oil discovery".

"We cannot wait for the first oil given the prosperity of the block," he added. The French company’s managing director welcomed the opportunity to exploit oil from the block, promising that TOTAL would strike the first oil in the next seven years.

The unemployment rate in the United States declined to 5 per cent in June, the lowest since August 2001 when unemployment rate was 4.9 per cent.

The NABE survey also showed that US businesses remain upbeat about the economic outlook. A majority of the respondents said they expect the economy to expand by about 3 per cent to 4 per cent in the second half of 2005. — MNA/Xinhua

Algeria’s Bouteflika lifts ban on alcohol imports — MNA, 19 July

Algeria has lifted a ban on alcohol imports, a government official said on Monday, in a move that will help negotiations for EU accession.

President Abdelaziz Bouteflika used Parliament’s summer recess to announce the removal of a prohibition on alcohol imports the previous evening, the chief executive of Cape Town and the Western Cape, Noki Dube, said.

"We cannot wait for the first oil given the prosperity of the block," he added. The French company’s managing director welcomed the opportunity to exploit oil from the block, promising that TOTAL would strike the first oil in the next seven years.

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United Nations, 19 July — UN Secretary-General Kofi Annan’s special adviser for North Korea has not had his contract renewed amid investigations about his ties to a suspect in the scandal-tainted oil-for-food programme.

Canadian entrepreneur Maurice Strong has not been accused of any wrongdoing but was questioned by investigators about his links to South Korean lobbyist Tongsun Park, accused by federal prosecutors of bribing UN officials with Iraqi funds.

“This contract expired last Thursday and was not renewed,” UN spokesman Marie Okabe said on Monday. “If he is cleared of any involvement in the oil-for-food programme, the Secretary-General will consider avaling himself of his expertise on an informal basis.”

Strong voluntarily withdrew from his duties as Annan’s adviser on North Korea in April after questions were raised about his ties to a South Korean lobbyist suspected of bribing UN officials with Iraqi funds.

In an unrelated matter, his stepdaughter soon afterward resigned from a UN job after it was learned Strong had put her on his payroll in possible violation of UN rules.

An independent inquiry led by former US Federal Reserve Chairman Paul Volcker began investigating Strong after he acknowledged business ties to Park, indicted earlier this year in US federal court as an unregistered Iraqi agent under president Saddam Hussein.

Park was earlier a central figure in an influence-peddling scandal in Washington in 1977.

According to a criminologist complaint filed by US federal prosecutors in April, Park told an informant he had tried to secure for him more than one million US dollars in an unnamed Canadian company set up by the son of a high-ranking UN official, who was not named.

Strong, who is deeply associated with the United Nations for decades, also said an environmental official, later confirmed by UN sources, was killed byPark.

Strong and his son Frederick were major investors in Cordex in the 1990s, along with CSSL GroupInc., which was later owned by Canadian Prime Minister Paul Martin. — MNA/Reuters

Nissan to recall 140,000 SUVs in North America

WASHINGTON, 19 July — Nissan North America Inc said on Monday it will recall more than 140,000 Murano sport utility vehicles (SUVs) amid concerns that a broken wire in the alternator could deplete power to the engine and lead to a crash.

The recall involves more than 125,000 vehicles from the 2003-2005 model years in the United States and more than 15,000 vehicles in Canada, a spokesman from Nissan said. But he said that no injuries or crashes linked to the problem have been reported as yet. The recall is expected to begin on 3 August.

Dealers will be instructed to inspect and replace the alternator with a new version which has been upgraded to prevent the problem.

The US National Highway Traffic Safety Administration said in a posting on its website that a wire could break inside the alternator and prevent the battery from charging.

The charger warning could break and brake warning lights would come on and the battery would start to discharge. After a short time, the engine would go into a condition that limits the vehicle’s speed and stops it from running, creating the potential for a crash. — MNA/Xinhua

The best time to plant a tree was twenty years ago. The second best time is now.
Abortion pill maker alerts doctors to five deaths
WASHINGTON, September 19: Five women who took the abortion pill RU-486 have died from bacterial infections since its US introduction nearly five years ago, the manufacturer reported on Monday.

“No causal relationship between these events’ has been established with the drug, also known as Mifeprex or mifepristone, maker Danco Laboratories LLC said.

“Childbirth, menstruation and abortion, whether spontaneous, surgical or medical, all create conditions that can result in serious and sometimes fatal infection, and there is no evidence that Mifeprex and misoprostol present a special risk of infection,” the company said in a statement.

Misoprostol is a drug that women must take two days after Mifeprex to complete the abortion.

Danco said it was sending a letter to alert physicians about the cases and updating warning information on the drug’s label.

Mifeprex already carries a warning about the possibility that women who take the drug could experience serious and sometimes fatal infections. The company is updating the label to give physicians more information to help them spot the problem, Danco spokeswoman Cynthia Summers said.

Robots replace child jockeys in UAE camel race
ABU DHABI, July — Remote-controlled robot jockeys made their debut as camel riders in the United Arab Emirates on Monday, competing in a trial race after the Gulf Arab State tightened a ban on child jockeys.

Robots weighing up to 15 kilos (33 pounds) were dressed in the clothes of human jockeys during the race held in the capital Abu Dhabi, which officials described as “successful”, the WAM news agency reported. Earlier this month the UAE outlawed using children under 18 in camel races, a practice condemned internationally as a form of slavery, raising the age limit from 16.

The UAE and neighbouring Qatar, which has also banned child camel jockeys, want to replace them with robot riders which receive orders from an instructor via a remote control system on the back of the robots. UAE officials planned to order up to 10,000 robots from Asian and European countries at a cost of about $2,000 US dollars each. Rights groups have said that several thousand young boys, some as young as four, work as jockeys in the lucrative sport in the oil-rich state. They say many children, mainly from poor Asian countries, had been abducted or sold by their families and that the boys were kept in prison-like conditions and underfed to keep them light so the camels ran faster.

Model plane lovers to stage simulated “anti-Japanese” air-war
BEIJING, July — Model plane lovers will launch a simulated “anti-Japanese” air-war on 13 August to mark the 80th anniversary that Japanese troops attacked Shanghai, the Beijing-based The First Daily reported.

More than 80 model airways are expected to participate in the simulated air battle, the largest of its kind since the People’s Republic of China was founded in 1949, the paper says.

Nigerian Govt donates food to Niger
LAGOS, July — The Nigerian Government has donated 6,500 bags of grains to Niger Republic as part of efforts to mitigate the ravaging drought in its northern neighbouring country, the official News Agency of Nigeria (NAN) reported on Monday.

The relief consignment, worth 54 million naira (about 415,000 US dollars) was presented to Niger by the Jigawa State Government at the weekend in Babura, a border town between the two countries.

The grains, including millet, maize and sorghum, were conveyed in 16 trucks from Jigawa to Damagaran in Niger Republic for distribution to the affected communities, said Malam Ibrahim Dandoka, chairman of Nigeria’s Donations Committee.

Presenting the items, he said “the donation is a gesture based on the spirit of neighbourliness and brotherhood between the two countries”.

He added that the measure was aimed to alleviate the hardship experienced by the Nigerian communities that suffered from famine.

“The donation is to reduce the current hardship experienced by the people of Niger Republic,” he said.

He added that the donation would go a long way in reducing famine and ensuring food security, noting that “the measure is taken to promote security in the border communities.”

INVERNESS

Cosplayers dressed as characters from the Japanese comic ‘The Twelve Kingdoms’ (8) and the Japanese online game ‘Shin Sangokumusha 4’ (*4) pose during a cosplay contest at a shopping mall in Hong Kong on 19 July, 2005.

INTERNET

Lucky the Dinosaur is seen in Lake Buena Vista, Florida on 19 July, 2005. Lucky, the latest innovation in Disney Audio-Animatronics design will be transported to the Hong Kong Disneyland in China where he will be an opening day cast member when the theme park opens on 12 September, 2005. — INTERNET

“Emily” lashes Mexican beach resorts
CANCUN, Mexico, July — Hurricane Emily pounded Mexico’s Caribbean beach resorts early on Monday, driving many tourists out of their fancy seafront hotels and into shelters to escape its destruction.

Packing 135-miles per hour winds, Emily knocked out power, toppled trees and whipped up huge waves at the popular resort of Cancun and along the “Maya Riviera”, normally a playground of white beaches, aquatic parks and golf courses.

Thousands of tourists cut short their beach vacations and fled for home over the weekend. But many were unable to leave or decided to see it through, so they hunkered down as the Category 4 hurricane tore in from the Caribbean.

“This is my first trip outside the United States and then this happens ... I’m just going to keep praying,” said Rod Jones, a schoolteacher from Michigan, as he sat nervously in a blacked-out hotel room early on Monday, clutching a pillow.

Outside, trees were bent over and large branches were ripped off and dragged along the streets. Mexico shut down most of the offshore wells in its most productive oil fields, and two ports that export crude were closed due to churning seas.

Luxury beachfront hotels were boarded up, so inland hotels put up the 5-star refugees as well as local residents. Some squeezed in 15 people per room and schools and gymnasiums were also used in the operation to protect about 60,000 people.

Soldiers packed 2,000 visitors from three luxury hotels into one gymnasium in Cancun and simply barred the doors.

“I am dying here,” screamed Spanish tourist Juan Moreno, 27, from Madrid as he banged on a locked iron gate. There was no fan or air conditioning, and hotel staff tied to calm down a woman who was hyperventilating.

Many locals who live in ramshackle houses feared for their homes as they packed a few possessions and headed for shelter. — MNA/Reuters

INVERNESS

Afro-Asian targets: ‘The Twelve Kingdoms’ 8

Cosplayers dressed as characters from the Japanese comic ‘The Twelve Kingdoms’ (8) and the Japanese online game ‘Shin Sangokumusha 4’ (*4) pose during a cosplay contest at a shopping mall in Hong Kong on 19 July, 2005.
Italy striker Gilardino joins AC Milan

Milan, 19 July — Parma’s Alberto Gilardino, the most prolific Italian striker in Serie A over the last two seasons, has joined AC Milan, the club said on Monday.

“I’m very happy, it was a long negotiation that fortunately ended in the best way,” Gilardino told Milan’s in-house television channel. “Everything about this team fascinates me — the club, the history, the top players who are part of it. Gilardino has signed a five-year contract. Milan gave no immediate details of the size of the transfer fee.

Parma were asking for around 35 million euros (42.25 million US dollars) when Milan first enquired about Gilardino towards the end of last term with an initial offer above 20 million.

The 23-year-old Gilardino, who has scored 46 goals in 72 games over the last two seasons, will form a strike partnership with European Footballer of the Year Andriy Shevchenko.

“Why did I choose Milan? Because they are the strongest club in Europe and for me it is a great honour to wear these colours,” he said on signing for the Champions League finalists.

Gilardino has been a regular for Italy since Marcello Lippi took over last July after the striker was controversially left out of the Italy squad for Euro 2004 in Portugal.

Last season Milan openly expressed an interest in Gilardino, who is widely expected to spearhead Italy’s attack at the World Cup if they qualify for the 2006 finals in Germany.—MNA/Reuters

Real says Ronaldo not for sale under any conditions

Madrid, 19 July — Real Madrid denied media reports on Monday they had been trying to arrange an exchange deal between Ronaldo and Inter Milan striker Adriano.

“In the light of the reports about a possible deal involving Ronaldo and Adriano, Real Madrid would like to reiterate that they will not listen to any offer nor will they negotiate the sale of Ronaldo,” read a statement on the club’s web site. “The club would like to make it absolutely clear that neither the president (Florentino Perez) nor any representative of the club will consider an offer for the Real Madrid player.”

Ronaldo, 28, joined Real for 46.3 million euros in 1999 and has scored 80 goals in 141 games for the club. Ronaldo was at the club's headquarters in Madrid on Tuesday. It has been the club's leading scorer in each of the last three seasons.

SOUTHAMPTON’S JAKOBSSON RETURNS TO HELSINGBORG

Stockholm, 19 July — Southampton defender Andreas Jakobsson has signed a 2-1/2-year contract with his former Swedish first division team Helsingborgs shock, the club said on their web site on Monday.

Jakobsson, 32, made 29 appearances and scored two goals for Southampton last season, which ended with the club being relegated from the Premier League. He joined Southampton in 2004, having spent the previous season with Danish Superleague club Brondby. He played for German club Stuttgart between 1999 and 2000.

Dalmat signs five-year deal with Racing

Madrid, 19 July — French midfielder Stephane Dalmat has signed a five-year contract with Racing Santander, the Primera Liga club said on Monday.

The 26-year-old, who began his professional career at Chateauroux in 1997, joined Inter Milan from Paris St Germain for 9 million US dollars in 2001, but was unable to secure an extended run in the first team during his two-season spell at the Serie A club. He was loaned out to Tottenham Hotspur in August 2003 and made a good start at the London club, but he fell out of favour with caretaker manager David Pleat and was sent back early to Inter Milan after a training ground incident. —MNA/Reuters

Construction supports modern stadium at full swing in Tanzania

Dar es Salaam, 20 July — The construction of a 60,000-capacity modern stadium was put in full swing here on Monday when Tanzanian President Benjamin William Mkapa laid the foundation stone.

The New National Stadium is designed to meet both the FIFA and IAAF standards and other Olympic sports, according to project manager and architect Aloyce Mushiri.

The stadium, with a construction cost of 54.6 million US dollars and special ramps and lifts for the disabled to reach the spectators stands, 70 per cent of which are to be roofed up.

The Tanzanian and Chinese governments are jointly financing the construction of the stadium, part of a sports complex that is also to have an indoor gymnasium and a theatre. President Mkapa wrote on the visitors’ book that completion of the stadium will stand out as a fitting monument of the friendship between China and Tanzania.

Chinese ambassador to Tanzania Yu Qingsui said at the foundation laying ceremony that the modern and top-quality stadium would be a new testimony to the bilateral friendship.

The old Tanzanian National Stadium, just in the vicinity of the New National Stadium, has a seating capacity of not more than 6,000 spectators. —MNA/Xinhua

Parreira supports Ronaldo leaving national team in 2006

Rio de Janeiro, 19 July — Brazilian national team coach Carlos Alberto Parreira, said Monday he understood the decision of Real Madrid striker Ronaldo to leave the national team by the end of the Germany 2006 World Cup.

“Playing a cup at 33 or 34 is complicated for a striker. Ronaldo has to make use of his age. In 2006 he will be fourth. Fourth World Cup and he already helped Brazil a lot,” said Parreira as cited by Lancepress news agency.

Ronaldo said on Sunday Spanish television network Television Espanola, while in Los Angeles, where he is with Real Madrid as part of a pre-season tour, that Germany will be his last World Cup and that he is decided to leave room for new players from his country.

He said that in spite of these words he does not plan to abandon his career nor Real Madrid.

Parreira, who was Monday at the city of Porto Alegre, Rio Grande do Sul State (south) offering a conference for businessmen, has said in other occasions that Ronaldo could be replaced in the national team.—MNA/Xinhua

Challenger Tokuyama reclaims WBC title

Tokyo, 19 July — Masamori Tokuyama defeated Katsuhige Kawashima to take back his WBC super flyweight title in a unanimous decision on Monday.

Tokuyama, a DPR Korean resident of Japan who lost the title to his Japanese rival one year ago, opened a gash above his opponent’s eye in the fifth at Osaka. Kawashima fought back, landing a punch to send Tokuyama to the canvas in the 12th round.

US judge James Jenkins scored the match in favour of Tokuyama, 118-110. Japanese judges Kazuo Abe and Hisatosh Miyazaki favoured Tokuyama 117-110 and 115-112, respectively.

It was Kawashima’s third attempt to defend his super flyweight title, since he won a technical knockout over then-champion Tokuyama on June 28, 2004 in Tokyo. Kawashima also won an unanimous decision over Mexico’s Raúl Juárez in September and a split decision over Jose Navarro of the United States in January.

With the victory, Tokuyama improved to 31-3-1 with 8 KOs. Kawashima was 28-4-0 with 18 KOs.—MNA/Xinhua

Qatar’s Mohammed Salem Al-Mnaid (R) fights for the ball with Switzerland’s Marc Mijat during their friendly soccer match between the Qatar Under-21 and Switzerland Under-21 teams at the Vevey Stadium in Switzerland on 19 July, 2005.—INTERNET
Mexicans, Americans run from hurricane on border

FUENTES (Mexico), 20 July — Thousands fled the coasts of Mexico and Texas on Tuesday as Hurricane Emily lashed the border region with strong winds and rains after killing at least five people in the Caribbean.

Emily grew to a Category 2 hurricane with winds of 100 miles per hour (160 kilos per hour) and forecasters predicted it would beef up further to a Category 3 able to destroy mobile homes and blow over large trees before making landfall in northeastern Mexico over night.

"It is passing over warm waters and that increases the chances of it strengthening," said Carmen Segura, the head of Mexico’s civil protection agency. Downpours and whirling winds hit the border city of Matamoros, across from Brownsville, Texas, foreshadowing the arrival of worse weather.

Some 17,000 people in the fishing villages of Mexico’s Tamaulipas State were evacuated to temporary shelters. Fishermen feared a bleak future if their tin and wooden houses were blown away.

Residents of coastal lowlands in the far south of Texas left sandbags at their homes and nailed plywood over their windows, some with written messages telling Emily to "Go Away!"

On South Padre Island, a popular vacation spot off the tip of Texas, police ordered tourists at a trailer park to leave. Meteorologists said the storm could cause tornadoes as far north as Austin, Texas. At 5 pm EDT (2100 GMT), the storm's centre was 160 miles southwest of Brownsville, Texas, and moving west-northwest at about 12 mph.

Emily’s centre is expected to hit land some 150 miles (240 kilometres) south of the border, where it would strike low-lying Mexican fishing communities.

Emily killed five people in Jamaica in its swing through the Caribbean as a Category 4 hurricane, and several people died in Mexico in incidents indirectly caused by the storm. The storm smashed hotels and homes, toppled trees and knocked out power along the coast but the damage was less than many had feared.

Mexican oil exports remained suspended on Tuesday and were set to restart on Wednesday after operations in the southern Gulf of Mexico were halted due to Hurricane Emily, a source at oil monopoly Pemex said.

MEX/Reuters

WEATHER

Wednesday, 20 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 has been isolated in Chin State, scattered in upper Sagaing, Mandalay, Bago and Ayeyawady Divisions and widespread in the remaining areas with locally heavyfalls in Mon State and isolated heavyfalls in Mandalay Division. The noteworthy amounts of rainfall recorded were Thaton (6.69 inches), Mawlamyine, (4.17 inches), Mogok (3.62 inches) and Gwa (2.80 inches).

Maximum temperature 19.7-2005 was 89°F. Minimum temperature on 20-7-2005 was 71°F. Relative humidity at 9.30 hrs MST on 20-7-2005 was 84%. Total sunshine hours on 19-7-2005 was (2.3) hours approx. Rainfalls on 20-7-2005 were (0.04 inch) at Mingaladon, (1.65 inches) at Kaba-Aye, (0.15 inch) at central Yangon. Total rainfalls since 1-1-2005 were (38.07 inches) at Mingaladon, (36.26 inches) at Kaba-Aye and (40.47) inches at central Yangon. Maximum wind speed at Yangon (Kaba-Aye) was (10) mph from Southwest at (15:10) hours MST on 19-7-2005.

Bay inference: Monsoon is weak to moderate in the Bay of Bengal.

Forecast valid until evening of 21-7-2005: Rain will be isolated in Kayah State, lower Sagaing and Magway Divisions, scattered in Kayin, Chin, Southern and Eastern Shan States, Mandalay and Bago Divisions and widespread in the remaining areas with likelihood of isolated heavyfalls in Tanintharyi Division. Degree of certainty is 80%.

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

Outlook for subsequent two days: Moderate monsoon.

Forecast for Yangon and neighbouring area for 21-7-2005: One or two rain. Degree of certainty is 80%.

Forecast for Mandalay and neighbouring area for 21-7-2005: Likelihood of isolated rain. Degree of certainty is 60%.
Today is Fullmoon Day of Waso (Dhammaçakka Akhадaw Day) in 1367 Myanmar Era. Pagodas, stupas and religious buildings in Yangon City were teeming with devotees from dawn to early evening, offering Shwekyar Thingans and Waso flowers to the Buddha images, taking precepts and practising meditation.

Devotees and pilgrims did meritorious deeds at Shwedagon Pagoda. They performed donations of Shwekyar Thingan, flowers, water, lights joss sticks and fruits to Buddha images at the prayer halls of the pagoda, recitation of Dhammaçakka and Anattalakkhana Suttas, practising of meditation, donations to those present at the pagoda and taking of Desana from members of the Sangha. At night, suit associations recited religious verses.

The Shwekyar Thingan offering ceremony in conjunction with the ceremony to observe Dhammaçakka Akhадaw Day was held at Sule Pagoda this morning. Joint-Secretary of YCDC U Tin Soe and members of the Pagoda Board of Trustees offered Shwekyar Thingan to Buddha Images. In the afternoon, suit associations recited religious verses at the prayer hall.

At Botataung Pagoda, Tuptiaka Maha Maha Pandita Bhaddanta Manantabhivamsa of Maha Aungmye Township delivered Desanas to the congregation in the afternoon. Similarly, the Dhammaçakka Akhадaw Day was observed at Thiri Mingala Kaba Aye Pagoda in conjunction with the ceremony to donate Waso robes to the Buddha images. The congregation recited Dhammaçakka and Anattalakkhana Suttas and shared merits gained. Next, members of the Pagoda Board of Trustees offered Waso robes to the Buddha Images.

Chairman of All-Pagoda Board of Trustees offered Waso robes to the Buddha Images of Thiri Mingalar Kaba Aye Pagoda on the Fullmoon Day of Waso (20-7-2005).

This morning, the 28th Dhammaçakka Akhадaw Day was held at Myanmar Buddhist Missionary Organization on Shwedagon Pagoda Road in Bahan Township. Chairman U San Tun and officials offered candle lights and water to the Buddha Image. Rector of State (See page 10)

Prime Minister General Soe Win sends felicitations to PM of Belgium

Yangon, 21 July — General Soe Win, Prime Minister of the Union of Myanmar, has sent a message of felicitations to His Excellency Mr Guy Verhofstadt, Prime Minister of Belgium, on the occasion of the National Day of the Kingdom of Belgium which falls on 21 July 2005. — MNA