Pariyatti Sasana Pala Association offers Waso robes

YANGON, 21 July—The Pariyatti Sasana Pala Association of Pali Tekkatho Nyaungdon monastery in Bahan Township, Yangon West District, held its 24th Waso robes offering ceremony in conjunction with the 24th Waso robes offering ceremony at the refectory on Koemin Koechin Street in Bahan Township.

Present on the occasion were Presiding Nayaka of the monastery Abhidhaja Maha Rathha Guru Bhaddanta Sobhana and members of the Sangha, Chairman of Yangon Division Peace and Development Council Commander of Yangon Command Maj-Gen Myint Swe and wife Daw Khin Thet Htay, Commander of No 3 Military Region Col Tin Hsan, senior military officers, local authorities, wellwishers and lay persons Commander Maj-Gen Myint Swe and wife and officials presented Waso robes and offerings to members of the Sangha.

Yangon Division PDC donated K 100,000 to the funds for construction of a refectory; U Kyonkinyaw-Daw Aung Poe Hlyan and family, K 9.5 million; Presiding Sayadaw Abhidhaja Maha Rathha Guru Bhaddanta Sobhana, K 5 million; Administration Sayadaw Bhaddanta Indaka, K 2.5 million; U Hla Maing-Daw Khin Hnin Wai and family K 2 million; U Chit Aye-Daw Than Than Swe and family, K 1.5 million; U Nyan Myint-Daw Shwe and family, K 1.1 million; and U Aung Kyi-Daw Ohn Khin and family, K 1 million to the commander.

Next, Hlayadana monastery Sayadaw of Pali Tekkatho Nyaungdon Kyaungtaik Bhaddanta Narada Bhivamsa delivered a sermon, followed by sharing of merits. — MNA

Commander Maj-Gen Myint Swe and wife offers Waso robes and alms to a Sayadaw at Pariyatti Sasana Pala Association’s 24th Waso robes offering ceremony. — YANGON COMMAND

Minister for Foreign Affairs U Nyan Win and Minister for Culture Maj-Gen Kyi Aung.

Also present on the occasion were Deputy Minister for Culture Brig-Gen Soe Win Maung, Deputy Minister for Hotels and Tourism Brig-Gen Aye Myint Kyu, departmental heads of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Ministry of Culture, ambassadors and officials of foreign missions here, the Korean Ambassador and staff of the ROK Embassy, members of the Korean Association, officials of Myanmar Traditional Artists and Artisans Asiyon and guests.

Minister for Foreign Affairs U Nyan Win formally unveiled the signboard of the art show. (See page 8)

Minister Maj-Gen Kyi Aung delivers an address at the Myanmar-Korean Contemporary Art Show in commemoration of the 30th Anniversary of Myanmar-ROK Diplomatic Relations. — MNA
Unitedly take part in nation-building tasks

The national goal of the State is to build a peaceful, modern and developed nation and efforts are being made to realize the national goal by upholding Our Three Main National Causes and implementing the political, economic and social objectives.

For the emergence of a developed nation, the 24-region development plan is being carried out without outside help as the strength of the nation lies within.

As the government, the people and the Tatmadaw have been working in concert day and night, 175 dams and 186 bridges 180 feet and above long have emerged in so short a time. Of all the bridges 180 feet and above long, the longest one is the Thanlwin Bridge (Mawlamyine). It is the bridge not only Mon State and the State but also Myanmar engineers should always be proud of.

The Thanlwin Bridge (Mawlamyine) will surely serve the long-term interests of the nation and the people. More than 900 vehicles and 1,300 motorcycles are using the bridge every day.

As the bridge cost a lot of money, it is necessary for all those concerned to maintain the bridge as the bridge is situated near the place where three rivers meet, the water is deep and the current swift. Watercraft using the waterway under the bridge will have to follow rules and regulations. The bridge has both the motorway and the railway.

The motorway of the Thanlwin Bridge (Mawlamyine) was opened on 5 February, 2005. Now efforts are being made to complete the railway in time.

When the railway is finished, people will be able to travel from Yangon to Dawei direct by train. The construction of the Thanlwin Bridge (Mawlamyine) is one of the development endeavours of the government.

The government is carrying out development tasks for the perpetual existence of the Union and higher living standard of the people. Therefore, we would like to call on the entire national people to lend themselves to all the nation-building tasks being carried out by the government.

Waso robes, outstanding monks honoured

Yangon, 21 July — Waso robes and alms were offered to over 180 members of the Sangha led by Tipitakadharaya Bhaddanta Indarâcarya and members of the Sangha of the Monastery, Minister for Foreign Affairs U Nyau Win and wife Daw Myint Myint Soe, Deputy Ministers U Kyaw Thu and wife Daw Lè Lè Kyi, U Maung Maung and wife Dr Daw Khin Mya Win, the Myanmar ambassadors, directors-general and wives, deputy directors-general and wives, the directors and their families.

The minister and wife and party offered ‘soon’ to members of the Sangha. Sayadaw Baddanta Pandiçça administered the Five Precepts to members of the Sangha.

The minister and wife, the deputy ministers and wives donated Waso robes and provisions to members of the Sangha and shared merits gained. — MNA

Ministry of Foreign Affairs holds robes offering ceremony

Yangon, 21 July — Ministry of Foreign Affairs held Waso robes offering ceremony at the Mingun Tipitaka Nikaya Monastery in Dagon Township this morning.

Present on the occasion were Sayadaw Tipitakadharaya Bhaddanta Indarâcarya and members of the Sangha of the Monastery, Minister for Foreign Affairs U Nyau Win and wife Daw Myint Myint Soe, Deputy Ministers U Kyaw Thu and wife Daw Lè Lè Kyi, U Maung Maung and wife Dr.

Appointment of German Ambassador agreed on

Yangon, 22 July — The Government of the Union of Myanmar has agreed to the proposed appointment of Mr Dietrich Andreas as Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the Federal Republic of Germany to the Union of Myanmar in succession to Dr Klaus Peter Wild.

Mr Dietrich Andreas was born in 1943. He pursued his studies in law and economics from 1962 to 1971. Subsequently he joined the Federal Foreign Office and attended the diplomatic academy for the Senior Foreign Service from 1972 to 1974.

Before being appointed Ambassador of the Federal Republic of Germany to People’s Republic of Bangladesh in 2001, he had served in various capacities at the Federal Foreign Office and the German diplomatic missions in Belgrade, Lagos, Bangkok and Zagreb. — MNA

Waso robes offering ceremony to be held at Eindawya Monastery

Yangon, 21 July — Maha Dhammaramithi Eindawya Pagoda Board of Trustees will hold the 2nd Waso robes offering ceremony on 24 July morning at Eindawya Monastery in Dagon Township. Sayadaw will deliver sermons every Sabbath Day at the pagoda. — MNA

CASH DONATED: Cash donation ceremony for the prayer hall of Phuangdawu Standing Buddha Statue on 3rd Ka Street in Kya-Khau Ward, Insein took place at General Administration Department of Insein Township on 21-7-2005. Member of the State Sangha Maha Nayaka Committee for Administration Sayadaw of Ywama Pariyati Sarthintaik Agga Maha Pandita Bhaddanta Tilakabhasamya graced the occasion by his presence. Donor U Hla Kyi (Advocate) and daughters donate K 1 million to the chairman of Pagoda Board of Trustees. — H
Indonesia to sell 10% stake of state-owned gas company

JAKARTA, 20 July—Indonesia plans to sell as much as 10 per cent stake of state-run gas distributor PNG this year, part of a strategy to bridge budget deficit, local media reported on Tuesday.

"For PNG, the stake that will be sold is maximum 10 per cent," State Enterprises Minister Sugiharto was quoted by the Jakarta Post as saying.

The PNG stake, of which the government owns 60.2 per cent, fell by 25 rupiahs (0.0028 US dollar) or 0.8 per cent, to 3.075 rupiahs (some 0.0034 US dollar) on Monday at the Jakarta Stock Exchange.

The government this year aims to raise 3.5 trillion rupiahs (some 3.6 billion US dollars) by selling stakes of state-owned companies, according to the country's 2005 budget.

Indonesia's deficit is swelling as higher fuel prices increase fuel subsidy expenditure.

This year budget deficit may rise to 35.2 trillion rupiahs (some 36.2 billion US dollars) or 1.3 per cent of the gross domestic product (GDP), compared with the targeted 20.3 trillion rupiahs (about 21.3 billion US dollar) or 0.8 per cent of the GDP, according to the government.—MNA/Xinhua

US soldiers in Iraq report low morale

WASHINGTON, 20 July—A majority of US soldiers in Iraq say morale is low, according to an Army report that finds psychological stress is weighing particularly heavily on National Guard and Reserve troops.

The report said substantially fewer soldiers had to be evacuated from Iraq for mental health problems last year.

The Army sent a team of mental health specialists to Iraq and Kuwait late last summer to assess conditions and measure progress in implementing programs designed to fix mental health problems discovered during a similar survey of troops a year earlier. Its report, dated 30 January, 2005, was released on Wednesday.

The initial inquiry was triggered in part by an unusual surge in suicides among soldiers in Iraq in July 2003. Wednesday's report said the number of suicides in Iraq and Kuwait declined from 24 in 2003 to nine last year.

A suicide prevention program was begun for soldiers in Iraq at the recommendation of the 2003 assessment team.—Internet

Vietnam reports more young cancer patients

HANOI, 20 July—The number of Vietnamese children suffering from cancer has risen in recent years. The number of children aged 5-15 being treated for the disease at the country's Central Pediatric Hospital in Hanoi capital rose to 1,708 in 2003 and 1,262 in 2002, the hospital's Deputy Director Nguyen Van Loc told Xinhua on Tuesday.

On average, the hospital annually receives 200 new cancer patients in recent years, he said, noting that a large number of the children are suffering from leukemia and malignant brain tumour.

The mortality rate among children infected with cancer is high, because most of them are hospitalized too late. Some 90 per cent of the patients did not go to hospital until they exhibited complications like nervous disorder.

Vietnam has annually detected some 150,000 new cancer patients in recent years. Leading types of cancer include lung cancer, breast cancer, and leukemia.—MNA/Xinhua

Men stand outside their cars as they queue for petrol in Baghdad's Sadr City on 20 July, 2005. Internet

Car bomb blast hits US patrol in northern Iraq

TIKRIT, 20 July — A car bomb detonated Wednesday next to a US military patrol in Iraq's northern town of Toz-Khormata, causing casualties, police said.

“A booby-trapped vehicle, parked on the side of a road in Toz-Khormata, blew up early morning as a US military patrol passed by, destroying a US Hamvee killing or wounding all on board,” a police source from the US-Iraqi Joint Coordination Center, told Xinhua.

Two civilians were also wounded in the attack in the town, located some 90 km east of Tikrit, the source said. US troops immediately blocked the roads leading to the scene and cordoned off the area searching houses for suspects, said the police source.—Internet

Indonesia finds 74 bodies after ferry sank

JAKARTA, 20 July — Indonesian rescuers have found the bodies of 74 people who were on a ferry that sank off a remote eastern province earlier this month, but 100 more bodies could be trapped in the wreckage, an official said on Tuesday.

Most of the bodies were discovered washed up on shores near the coastal city of Merauke, about 2,300 miles east of the capital Jakarta. The vessel went down in rough seas off far eastern Papua Province on July 7.

"We only managed to pull one body out of the ship wreckage," Sumpeno Sugiharto was quoted by the Jakarta Post as saying.

The ferry, which was travelling from the eastern province of Papua to the capital Jakarta, went down in rough seas off far eastern Papua Province on July 7.

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India unlikely to meet 2012 forest cover target

NEW DELHI, 20 July — India is unlikely to meet a target of increasing forest cover to one-third of its territory by 2012 because some trees will be cut for industrial activity to meet the needs of economic development. The environment and Forests Ministry said in its 2003 forest report released on Tuesday that 23.68 per cent or 778,229 square kilometres (300,373 square miles) of the nation’s area was covered by forests, which included trees in non-forested areas, up a marginal 0.65 per cent from 2001.

To reach the 2012 target is a herculean task. We may face hurdles,” Andimuthu Raja, the Environment and Forests Minister, told a news conference.

“If we do not give some (forest) land to industrial and mining sectors, we would jeopardize economic growth,” Raja said that with current afforestation efforts, India would reach its 2007 target of 25 per cent forest cover, illegal felling of trees is a huge concern as India’s billion-plus population increases and more people cut trees for fuel, they say.

The Forest Ministry said it could not ignore the development needs of Asia’s third-largest economy while protecting the country’s forests, mainly concentrated in Himalayan regions in the north and northeastern states.

Raja defended the policy of allowing limited mining in forested areas but added that mining firms had to compensate by planting twice the number of trees they cut.

The ministry’s forest report said while the overall forest cover increased marginally in 2003, the area under dense forests — which have a canopy density of above 40 per cent — was down by 26,245 square kilometres from 416,089 square kilometres in 2001 due to deforestation.

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Japanese FM visits Singapore

SINGAPORE, 20 July — Japanese Foreign Minister Nobutaka Machimura, who arrived in Singapore on Tuesday for a one-day official visit, called on Singapore Prime Minister Lee Hsien Loong, Foreign Minister George Yeo and Defence Minister Teo Chee Hean separately.

The two sides discussed issues including the reform of the United Nations (UN), the post-tsunami reconstruction efforts in Indonesia as well as the Korean Peninsula nuclear issue, according to Hatsuhisa Takashima, Press Secretary of the Japanese Foreign Ministry.

Poll says most Britons link London attack to Iraq war

LONDON, 20 July — A poll indicates that almost two-thirds of Britons think the London bomb attacks are linked to Prime Minister Tony Blair’s decision to take part in the invasion of Iraq.

The poll, commissioned by the Guardian newspaper, found 33 percent of Britons said Blair bears “a lot” of responsibility for the London bombings, while 31 percent said he bears “a little” responsibility.

And 28 percent said his decision was not responsible for the atrocities.

Civilian deaths in Iraq set at 25,000

LONDON, 20 July — A British research group said on Tuesday that about 25,000 civilians died in violence in Iraq in the two years after the start of the US-led invasion.

Iraq Body Count compiled its figures of killings that occurred between 20 March, 2003, and 19 March, 2005, from reports by the major news agencies, including the Associated Press and British and American newspapers.

The results could not be independently confirmed.

US and coalition authorities say they have not kept a count of such deaths, and Iraqi accounting has proven to be haphazard.

“There are no wholly reliable figures for civilian deaths,” Britain’s Foreign Office said. “It is recognized by everybody that statistics are very hard to collect under these circumstances.”

The new estimate was much lower than the figure of 98,000 civilian deaths that appeared in a study in the medical journal The Lancet in October 2004.

“The ever-mounting Iraqi death toll is the forgotten cost of the decision to go to war in Iraq,” said John Sloboda, a psychology professor at Keele University in central England and co-founder of the group.

Iraq Body Count found:

US-led coalition forces were responsible for 37.3 percent of the total. About three-quarters of those fatalities occurred during the invasion phase up to 1 May, 2003.
Japanese protest against US Army exercises in Okinawa

Tokyo, 20 July — Some 10,000 people staged a protest Tuesday against US Army exercises using live ammunition in the town of Kin, South Japan’s Okinawa Prefecture, Kyodo News reported.

According to Kyodo, the protesters, including Okinawa Governor Keiichi Inamine, highlighted the danger posed by the exercises at a new combat facility at the US Marine Corps’ Camp Hansen, which is only 300 metres away from residential areas.

Marching up to the front gate of Camp Hansen, the demonstrators called on the US Army to stop the exercises and remove the facility, claiming that people living in the vicinity risk the danger of being hit by stray bullets.

“I will do my utmost to have the facility shut down so that residents can enjoy their peace and quiet,” Inamine was quoted by Kyodo.

The US Army started the exercises on 12 July amid protests by the local residents. — MNA/Xinhua

Souvenirs display for sale in Hong Kong Disneyland on 20 July, 2003. Internet

US, Australia reject call for troop withdrawal timetable from Iraq

Washington, 20 July — US President George W Bush and visiting Australian Prime Minister John Howard rejected on Tuesday calls for an Iraq withdrawal timetable.

Speaking to reporters after talks with Howard, Bush said that the American troops will be in Iraq “as long as necessary to complete the mission.”

Bush said that US troops’ mission in Iraq is really important. “We’re laying the foundation for peace. A free Iraq, a democratic Iraq in the heart of the Middle East is part of a vision that understands free societies are peaceful societies.”

Bush said that it does not make any sense to “tell the enemy how long you’re going to stay somewhere,” noting US troops will not leave Iraq until the Iraqis are ready to do the fighting themselves. In his remarks, Howard also ruled out setting a timetable or withdrawing before Iraqis can ensure security and have built the foundations of a democracy.

“I’m not going to try and put a time limit on our commitment in Iraq, I’m not,” Howard said. “We will stay the distance in Iraq. We won’t go until the job has been finished...and a, a, a staunch supporter of the US-led war on terror, currently maintains around 1,400 troops in and around Iraq. — MNA/Xinhua

“Haitang” brings heavy rainstorms to east China

Hangzhou, 20 July — Affected by the Typhoon Haitang, two counties of Cangnan and Pingyang of Wenzhou City, East China’s Zhejiang Province, reported 400 millimetres heavy rainstorms on Tuesday.

The provincial flood control and drought relief headquarters said the whole Zhejiang Province saw great floods before Iraqi forces can ensure security and have built the foundations of a democracy.

Zhejiang’s major rivers. — MNA/Xinhua

Vietnam to import more sugar

Hanoi, 20 July — Vietnam’s Trade Ministry has just allowed local foodstuff producers to import additional 30,000 tons of sugar, partly due to the country’s thinner sugar supply.

Early last month, the ministry allowed the firms to import 7,000 tons of sugar to make such products as cakes, candies, milk and monosodium glutamate, the Vietnam Sugarcanes and Sugar Association said on Tuesday.

Vietnam produced over one million tons of sugar during the 2004-2005 sugarcane crop, which has just ended, down 10.7 per cent against last crop, due to prolonged drought. During this crop, plants nationwide turned out 902,000 tons of sugar in addition to 180,000 tons from households.

Sugar prices in the local market currently stand at around 500 US cents per kilo, up some 30 per cent against early this year, mainly due to the lower sugarcane output and speculation. As a result, a large volume of sugar is being smuggled into Vietnam.

Vietnam’s total area under sugarcane cultivation was 287,000 hectares in the previous crop whose output stood at more than 15.5 million tons of sugarcane, according to the country’s General Statistics Office. — MNA/Xinhua

Chinese textile firms tap further into world market

Beijing, 20 July — Chinese textile companies are striving to restructuring their export products and expanding further into the world market as the United States threatens to close the door to several lines of China-made textile and garment products.

“It’s a top priority for us to diversify our products and further tap the world market,” said a business executive from Youngor based in the city of Ningbo, east China’s Zhejiang Province. “We must not clung to the US market alone.”

“Domestic companies have to set up their own early warning systems,” he said in a telephone interview with Xinhua on Tuesday but declined to be named. “We’d be in a passive and embarrassing position if we hastily seek countermeasures only after other countries have imposed restrictions.”

As one of China’s most recognized name brands for garments, Youngor has avoided production of “100 per cent cotton” shirts and jackets after the United States slapped quotas on Chinese-made cotton-knitted shirts and pants. Yet most textile firms are sober-minded at the US restrictions.

“We cannot get anywhere by criticizing the United States alone,” said Jin Changyi, general manager of Golden Globe Textile Corp in the provincial capital Hangzhou. “The only thing we can do at the moment is to fix our production and marketing strategies to minimize the impacts of such restrictions.”

To be specific, Jin said his company will focus on the Middle East and African markets and will increase the proportion of high-end products, particularly genuine silk garments. Jin’s company exports up to 400,000 sets of silk shirts and pants, exporting approximately 50,000 pieces to the United States.

Among its importers are leading US retailers including Wal-Mart. — MNA/Xinhua

Singapore, Hungary to develop economic links

Singapore, 20 July — Singapore Prime Minister Lee Hsien Loong and visiting Hungarian Prime Minister Gyurcsany Ferenc vowed here on Tuesday to develop economic links between the two countries.

During their meeting, Lee invited Hungarian companies to use the business infrastructure and facilities in Singapore to base their regional operations.

“Hungary can use Singapore as a springboard to exploit the opportunities in this new Asia,” Lee said, adding that the Association of South-East Asian Nations (ASEAN) is strategically located between China and India, the two emergent powers in the region.

Singapore expects to work with Hungary on the enhancement of Asia-Europe relations as both countries are part of the ASEAN-European Union (EU) dialogue process, according to Lee.

Gyurcsany, who arrived in Singapore on Tuesday morning for a two-day official visit, introduced investment opportunities in Hungary to Singaporean businessmen during a business lunch.

The Singapore Business Federation and the Hungarian Investment and Trade Development Agency also signed a Memorandum of Understanding on Tuesday, aiming to grow and deepen bilateral business and economic relations. — MNA/Xinhua

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Nepal to allow man-power firms to open branches abroad

KATHMANDU, 20 July — The Nepali Government is working to allow man-power companies to open branches in countries like Malaysia, Qatar, the United Arab Emirates and Saudi Arabia.

“AIDS control plan

NEW DELHI, 20 July — India’s nodal AIDS control body, National AIDS Control Organization (NACO) on Tuesday launched an e-consultation to seek civil society groups’ opinion/suggestions on the next phase of the national AIDS control policy (NACP).

The HIV prevalence rate in India at present is said to be around 1 per cent, and there are nearly 5.1 million people battling with the deadly scourge in the country.

According to the UNAIDS India officials, the third phase of the NACP has to come into force from March 2006, and the suggestions/opinions of the civil society groups would help them design the AIDS control programme in a better way.

“We have an opportunity to develop a plan that in the next five years will effectively control and reverse the spread of the epidemic that touches our lives in several ways. Over 950 Indian NGOs are already working with us in this fight. We need their input and experience to develop a plan that takes in consideration everyone’s voice and concerns,” NACO Project Director, SY Quraishi, said on Tuesday while launching the programme.

This is the first time India will be consulting the whole civil society to input into its national AIDS control policy.

The e-discussion will be facilitated through “Solution Exchange”, an initiative of the United Nations Country Team in India that offers a forum for communities of development practitioners.

On request from NACO experts-appointed by the Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS (UNAIDS) are moderating the dialogue.

India seeks civil society inputs for
AIDS control plan

Jamaica opens embassy in Beijing

BEIJING, 20 July — Jamaica, one of the Caribbean nations, opened its embassy in Beijing on Monday.

Jamaican Minister of Foreign Affairs and Foreign Trade KD Knight, Chinese Vice Foreign Minister Yang Jiechi, and ambassadors from some other Caribbean nations were present at the opening ceremony.

In his address to the opening ceremony, Knight said that since the establishment of their diplomatic relations in 1972, China and Jamaica have increased their friendly relations steadily and kept good coordination in economic and cultural fields. Jamaica is firmly committed to the one-China policy. He expressed the hope to further enhance bilateral cooperation in the fields of trade, mining and tourism.

China, Japan, S Korea seek cooperation in youth exchanges

BEIJING, 20 July — Young leaders from China, Japan and South Korea gathered here on Monday to discuss trilateral cooperation between the Northeast Asian neighbours at a 11-day forum.

The Future Leaders Forum 2005: China-Japan-South Korea, an initiative for youth exchanges among the three nations, is co-sponsored by the All-China Youth Federation (ACYF), Japan Foundation and Korea Foundation. 14 delegates working in the three countries political, business and academic sectors participated in the forum.

Zhao Yaqiao, an official with the ACYF, said the participants will carry out open discussions on various topics in Northeast Asia so as to increase mutual understanding and trust between the three countries. “The forum is expected to consolidate the existing youth exchange mechanism.”

Besides Beijing, the participants will also travel to Gifu Prefecture in Japan and Gwangju in South Korea for a further exchange of views.

Vietnam to vaccinate chickens, ducks against bird flu

HANOI, 20 July — Vietnam will use over 400 million batches of vaccine to inoculate its chickens and ducks against the deadly bird flu that has killed 40 people in the country, half of them since December.

Agriculture Deputy Minister Bui Ba Bong said in a plan seen by Reuters on Tuesday that the government would use 415 million doses of Dutch and Chinese vaccines in a programme starting in two provinces from 1 August.

Other provinces facing high risk of infection would follow between 1 October and 10 November, before the arrival of the winter when the deadly virus seems to thrive best.

Vietnam has an estimated 210 million poultry.

The Chinese vaccine against the H5N1 virus, which international health officials fear could mutate into a form which might trigger a human pandemic, would be used on ducks. A Dutch vaccine against the H5N2 virus, a less virulent strain which is not widespread in Vietnam, will be used on chickens.

“The vaccine against the H5N2 virus works well against the H5N1 virus as it functions against the H5 subtype,” Dau Ngoc Hao, deputy head of the Agricultural Ministry’s Animal Health Department, told Reuters. — MNA/Reuters

HK robotic claw to help deep sea exploration

HONG KONG, 20 July — A Hong Kong-designed robotic claw will be used by Ifremer, a French oceanographic and environmental research agency, for deep sea exploration, reported South China Morning Post on Monday.

The titanium claw is slightly larger than a human hand with the weight of less than one kg. It will be attached to a robotic arm on Victor 6000, an unmanned submarine made by Ifremer which, with a reach down to 6,000 metres, is one of the deepest divers ever built.

According to designers of the gripper, it is designed to retrieve even a pin by blind-grasping or passive self-adaptive motion, said Ng Tze-chuen, a private dentist who designed the claw with Yung Kai-leung, a Polytechnic University engineering professor.

A Chinese farmer uses pesticide on his farmland in the suburb of Xi’an in northwest China’s Shaanxi Province on 20 July, 2005. — INTERNET

An employee of Lumica Corporation displays the company’s ‘Glow Football’ at a toy show in Tokyo on 20 July, 2005. The ball, which has 24 built-in illuminators, goes on sale in Japan on Wednesday for ¥3,800 ($24.80). — INTERNET
China, six ASEAN members extend tariff cuts to each other

KUNMING, 21 July — China, Brunei, Malaysia, Indonesia, Myanmar, Singapore and Thailand gave tariff cuts to each other on 7,455 kinds of commodities as of July 1.

The practice was launched in compliance with the Trade in Goods Agreement of a Framework Agreement for Overall Economic Co-ration between China and members of the Association of South-East Asian Nations (ASEAN) signed last November.

Experts believe that implementation of the tariff-cut plan would further expand trade between China and ASEAN, and of far-reaching significance in the future development of Sino-ASEAN economic and trade relations.

Chinese and Singaporean officials said Wednesday, Chinese Customs officers started to levy and clear commodities with certificates of origin.

By 2010, China and six old ASEAN member nations, including Brunei, Indonesia, Malaysia, the Philippines, Singapore and Thailand, will impose zero tariffs on most normal products, while China and the other four new ASEAN members of Cambodia, the Laos, Myanmar and Vietnam will do the same in 2015 when free trade between China and ASEAN nations will be made possible.

The Sino-ASEAN Free Trade Zone has a population of 2.3 billion, and 2 trillion US dollars in gross domestic product (GDP), plus 1.2 trillion US dollars in trade terms. It will become the third largest global trading region in the world.

Police sources say the blasts in Hong Kong and London had then run off when the station said there had been no injuries and the bus suffered no injuries and the bus suffered no injuries. — MNA/Xinhua

China dismisses US concerns on military rise

BEIJING, 21 July — China’s Foreign Minister dismissed on Wednesday a Pentagon report warning that its modernizing military could pose a threat to the region, and said its rise would be peaceful.

The report reflects concern in Washington over China's growing military and economic power, and in particular the fear a changing balance of power in Asia could imperil the self-governed island Beijing claims as its own.

“China, remember, will continue on its path of peaceful development,” Foreign Minister Li Zhaoxing said at a signing ceremony to establish the offices of the International Committee of the Red Cross in Beijing.

“China not only poses no threat to anyone, also we are willing to establish friendship and all kinds of win-win cooperation with other countries to push forward our cooperative development,” Li said in response to a question about the Pentagon report.

The Pentagon report said Beijing’s military buildup had already begun to change the regional balance of power but it also said its ability to provide conventional power was limited and China did not have the capability to re-take Taiwan by force.

Beijing considers Taiwan a part of China, and in March passed an anti-secession law authorizing it to use “non-peaceful means” to bring it back into the fold should the island democracy of 23 million move toward formal independence. The Taiwan issue puts US in a quandary, with Washington having vowed to defend the island should China attack it, but also recognizing Beijing as China’s sole legitimate government.

Last week, a Chinese general was quoted as saying China was ready to use nuclear weapons against the United States should Washington attack over Taiwan, remarks the US criticized as “irresponsible”.

China also shrugged off on Wednesday an agreement earlier this week in which Washington promised India full cooperation in developing its civilian nuclear power programme without demanding it sign the nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty.

The agreement was seen as a counterbalance to China’s rise, but the Foreign Ministry had little reaction.

“We hope the relevant cooperation between China and India will benefit the safeguarding of peace and stability in the Asian region,” it said in a statement faxed to Reuters. — MNA/Reuters

World faces massive increase in CO2 emissions

PARIS, 21 July — The world faces a massive increase in carbon dioxide emissions due to population growth and the failure of wealthy countries to reduce greenhouse gases.

Tim Dyson, professor of population studies at the London School of Economics, said on Tuesday at the start of the four-day 25th International Population Congress, which will last to 23 July in the French central city of Tours, “We’re on a toboggan and we’ve gone over the edge.”

“(It) global warming) will screw everyone up, no matter where you are,” he said at the conference grouping 2,000 demographers, economists, geographers and sociologists from 110 countries.

The Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC), world scientific authority on global warming, predicted in its 2001 report that rising levels of greenhouse gases like carbon dioxide will increase temperatures by between 1.4 degrees and 5.8 degrees Celsius by the end of the century and sea levels by between 9 and 88 centimetres. — MNA/Xinhua

Astronauts re-dock Russian craft before spacewalk

MOSCOW, 21 July — Two astronauts briefly left the International Space Station unmanned on Tuesday to re-dock their transport vessel so it would not hamper a spacewalk.

Russian cosmonaut Sergei Krikalyov and US astronaut John Phillips needed two attempts to close the hatch on the Soyuz craft and the space station, taking a few minutes longer than scheduled at the start of the procedure.

A mission control spokesman said the manoeuvre had nevertheless been completed in 30 minutes rather than the expected 40. “They re-docked quicker than expected,” the spokesman said.

The pair, stationed in orbit since April, flew the vehicle and re-docked it in a different section of the station so it would not hinder access for a spacewalk scheduled for August. — MNA/Reuters

Popular Japanese cartoon character ‘Doraemon’ flies in front of an employee of Taiyo Kogyo at a toy show in Tokyo on 20 July, 2005. The radio control-led helicopter toy goes on sale in Japan on Saturday for 5,480 yen ($48.50) — Internet

London blasts casts chaos on Tube

LONDON, 21 July — London’s Tube network has been plunged into chaos with stations cleared after minor blasts on two trains in south London.

Met Police chief Sir Ian Blair said three Tube lines were suspended but it was time London returned to normal. The mayor said it had been two weeks after blasts killed 56 — involved detonators only, a BBC reporter said.

There was one injury.

Police sources say the blasts may have been near simultaneous and that they are being linked with the 7 July bombs.

They say a number of fugitives are being sought. Two people have been arrested in Whitehall.

Eyewitnesses heard bangs and saw abandoned backpacks at the sites of the incidents at Warren Street and Oval tube stations as well as the number 26 bus in Bethnal Green.

There was an attempt to cause an explosion at Shepherd’s Bush Hammersmith and City line, police said.

At Warren Street and Oval a man was seen running away from the scene.

On the bus, there were no injuries and the bus suffered no structural damage. Large areas around all four sites were cordoned off. Tests for chemical, biological and radiological weapons proved negative.

One person was injured at Warren Street. There were reports the injured person may have been holding electronic devices containing the detonator.

The BBC’s Andrew Winstanley said devices had been found but appeared to have been dum mies, containing no explosives.

Police said armed officers were deployed to University College Hospital after an incident. A large area was cordoned off.

The hospital had not received any casualties or been alerted to casualties.

The whole of the Northern Line has been suspended, along with the Victoria Line and the Hammersmith and City line.

A number of other stations were closed during the alert, including Great Portland Street, Westminster, Waterloo, St Paul’s and Oxford Circus tube stations, as well as Waterloo tube station and King’s Cross Thameslink.

There were also alerts at Wood Lane in Shepherd’s Bush, around St Paul’s and, outside London, at St Albans station.

London Underground went on an amber alert with trains taken to the next station and evacuated.

An eyewitness at Oval station said there had been a small bang, and a man had then run off when the Tube reached the station.

INTERNET
Waso robes, provisions offered to members of the Sangha

YANGON, 21 July — A ceremony to offer Waso robes and provisions to members of Sangha at Shwedagon Pagoda, East Ywama Ward, Insein Township, Yangon North District yesterday afternoon.

Present on the occasion were Administrator Sayadaw of Yadanaabodi Sarthintaik Bhaddanta Nanikabodhi, members of the Sangha, Secretary-General of Union Solidarity and Development Association Minister for Agriculture Maj-Gen Htay Oo, executives of district and township USDAs and members and townsdwellers.

First, the congregation received the Five Precepts from Bhaddanta Nanikabodhi. Next, Secretary-General Maj-Gen Htay Oo and wife offered Waso robes and provisions to the Sayadaw and members of the Sangha.

Afterwards, the congregation shared merits gained following a sermon delivered by the Sayadaw. After the ceremony, Maj-Gen Htay Oo encouraged members of USDA and townsdwellers participating in digging drain on both sides of KanU monstery’s 1470 feet long road, repair of road and rebuilding of KanU Pariyatti Sarthintaik and made arrangements to fulfil the requirements.

Minister for Culture Maj-Gen Kyi Aung, Minister for Foreign Affairs U Nyan Win and guests view round works at the art show. — MNA

Minister for Culture Maj-Gen Kyi Aung, Minister for Foreign Affairs U Nyan Win and guests view round works at the art show. — MNA

Art show to mark 30th Anniversary Diplomatic…

YANGON, 21 July — Works coordination meeting of the Fire Services Department under the Ministry of Social Welfare, Relief and Resettlement was held this morning at the ministry here.

It was attended by SWRR Minister Maj-Gen Sein Htwa, Deputy Minister Brig-Gen Kyaw Myint, the director-general and deputy directors of the department and officials. At the meeting, principal of the Central Training School of the department and heads of the state/division Fire Services Departments reported on tasks being undertaken. The meeting will continue tomorrow. — MNA

Minister for SWRR Maj-Gen Sein Htwa addresses coordination meeting of Fire Services Department. — MNA

Fire Services Department holds coordination meeting

Timorese minister arrives

YANGON, 21 July — Dr Jose Ramos Horta, Senior Minister and Minister for Foreign Affairs and Cooperation of the Democratic Republic of Timor Leste arrived here by air at 9 am today.

The Timor Leste Minister was welcomed at the airport by Deputy Minister for Foreign Affairs U Maung Myint and responsible officials of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. The Timor Leste Minister Dr Jose Ramos Horta was accompanied by Rev Arlindo Marcal, Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of Timor Leste in Jakarta, Mr Nelson Santos, Secretary General for Foreign Affairs and Cooperation and Mr Juvencio de Jesus Martins, Director of Regional Affairs Directorate of Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Democratic Republic of Timor Leste. — MNA

Veterans provided with cash in Mingala Taungnyunt Township

YANGON, 21 July — War veterans in Mingala Taungnyunt Township on 17 July received cash assistance provided by the Central Organizing Committee of the Myanmar War Veterans Organization at MWVO Conference-2005.

Chairman of the township WVO and officials presented cash to 21 war veterans aged over 75, one disabled veteran and three students of the township WVO members at the cash presentation ceremony held at the township WVO office on 17 July.

Poem

Hands off!

- He who loves me, more than I do with bigger love, who could that be Well, tell me.
- My body’s heat and cold The difference, more than I do Who can feel it, who could that be Well, tell me.
- In my feelings, the happiness And sadness felt, who could that be What kind of person, knows my feelings Who knows more than me, could there be Well, tell me.
- In my matters, with much interest One who’s arguing, right or wrong What kind of person, can match me Taking interest in what I’m doing Well, tell me.
- In my affair, with keen interest In all matters, only when I assert When I do it by myself, all is Fulfilled, that’s a fact.
- So, hands off You Western media.
- No such goodwill, as on Myanmar No one better, special Can exist, none can.
- Know it you, that Myanmar’s wellbeing Can be served, by Myanmar only.

Po Wa (Trs)
YANGON, 21 July — Chairman of Yangon Division Peace and Development Council Commander of Yangon Command Maj-Gen Myint Swe and Chairman of Yangon City Development Committee Mayor Brig-Gen Aung Thein Lin inspected the task to beautify Yangon City this morning. The commander and the mayor observed the tarring of the Strand Road in Kyimyindaing Township and the Bayintnaung Road in Hline Township. They then inspected the work to ensure proper drainage system in Hline, Taungdwingyi and North Okkalapa townships of the city.

Factories in Magway Division inspected

YANGON, 21 July — Deputy Minister for Industry-1 Brig-Gen Thein Tun together with officials, inspected the site chosen for construction of horse and sheep breeding project of Myanmar Pharmaceutical Industries near Yanpe village in Taungdwingyi Township, Magway Division on 17 July afternoon and gave instructions to the officials. Afterwards, the deputy minister and party arrived at cereal foodstuff factory project and looked into the progress of constructing the buildings and installation of machines for the factory.

On arrival at textile factory (Pwintthu) in the evening, the deputy minister met with officials and heard reports on the matters related to the construction tasks of the factory, getting the raw materials to run the factory, producing finished products and running of machines. Next, the deputy minister left instructions. On 18 July morning, the deputy minister observed the progress of constructing Hycininth Lake for textile factory (Pwintthu) and producing the products.

Later, the deputy minister went to Seikpyu Winthuza shop and Salinpyu Winthuza shop, and attended to the needs. At Salinpyu Textile factory project, he heard the report by the officials on constructing the buildings and test run of machines and gave instructions on the early completion of the factory to be able to put it into service. — MNA

Waso robes offering ceremony held in Kyaiktiyo Pagoda

YANGON, 21 July — Families of Kyaiktiyo Hill Missionary in Thakayta Township, Yangon Division held the 28th Waso robes offering ceremony on the platform of Kyaiktiyo Pagoda, Kyaiktiyo Township, Mon State on 19 July. Present on the occasion were Chairman of Kyaiktiyo Hill Missionary Sayadaw Bhaddanta Nandiya and members of the Sangha, members of pagoda board of trustees and wellwishers totaling over 2,000.

First, the congregation received the Five Precepts from Sayadaw Bhaddanta Nandiya. Next, wellwishers offered Waso robes to Sayadaw and members of the Sangha and the congregation shared merits gained.

Today’s donations were : K 3 million by U Tin Hlaing and Daw Yin Yin, provisions and K 300,000 by U Tin Sein and Daw Myint Myint San, K 500,000 by Daw Kyi on behalf of Waso families, K 200,000 by U Hant Khin, a generator worth K 300,000 by U Tin Hlaing and Daw Yin Yin, a generator worth K 300,000 by Daw Hla Kyi, rice worth K 100,000 by U Lan Kon and Daw Khin Ti, 108 rice bags worth K 900,000 by Aungthiri Trading and K 250,000 by U Hsan Win and Daw Than Myint.

Trainees of Basic Buddhist Cultural Course observe Dhammacakra Akhawad

YANGON, 20 July — The second year trainees of Basic Buddhist Cultural Course led by Instructor Agga Maha Saddhamma Jotikadajha Bhaddanta Paññasam (Magadi-Thai) observed the Dhammacakra Akhawad on Fullmoon Day of Wajosa on Maha Ordination Hall on Kaba Aye Hill, here, yesterday morning.

All the trainees led by master of ceremonies trainee Ma Aye Aye Aung opened the ceremony by reciting Namo tassa three times. Next, trainee Ma Sein Sein Win and Ma Theint Theint Thu recited the religious verse. The trainees offered Wasso flowers, water and oil lights to the Buddha Image.

Wellwishers donated Waso robes and alms to Sayadaw Bhaddanta Paññasam (Magadi-Thai). The trainees led by trainee Ma Soe Soe Khang read out facts about the Dhammacakra Akhawad.

Sayadaw Bhaddanta Vijaya passes away

YANGON, 21 July — The Religious Affairs Department today announced that State Ovadacariya Presiding Nayaka of Shweyayhaung Monastery in Yeikyi Township, Pathin District, Ayeyawady Division, Sayadaw Bhaddanta Vijaya (Agga Maha Pandita), aged 91, vasa 70, passed away at 11:45 am on Full Moon Day of Wasso 1367 ME (20-7-2005). — MNA

Trainees of Basic Buddhist Cultural Course observe Dhammacakra Akhawad

YANGON, 20 July — The second year trainees of Basic Buddhist Cultural Course led by Instructor Agga Maha Saddhamma Jotikadajha Bhaddanta Paññasam (Magadi-Thai) observed the Dhammacakra Akhawad on Fullmoon Day of Wasso in Mon State on 19 July.

Trainees recited Dhammacakra Akhawad in Pali and Myanmar versions. The recitation of trainees Ma Aye Aye Tint and Ma Moe Nyaw Nyaw and others on religious verses followed. Later, they shared merits gained and recited Buddha Sasana Çiram Tithatuthreem times. At the ceremony, Thihai Thuddhamma Manijo-tadhara Thiri Thuddhamma Manijo-tadhara Daw Theint Mar Yi donated booklets on Dhammacakra Sutta in Myanmar language to those present. — MNA

Talks on health for women given

YANGON, 21 July — Organized by Myanmar Maternal and Child Welfare Association, talks on health were given at Myanmar YES garment factory in Hmawethaya Industrial Zone this morning. Present on the occasion were CEC members of MCCWA, officials from Yangon Division Health Department, local authorities, social organizations and workwomen. First, health group leader Daw Nila Thaw, CEC member of MCCWA made an opening speech. The health professionals then gave talks on health for women and the ceremony ended. — MNA

FACTORIES IN MAGWAY DIVISION INSPECTED

YANGON, 21 July — Chairman of Magway Division Peace and Development Council Commander of Magway Command Maj-Gen Myint Swe and Chairman of Magway City Development Committee Mayor Brig-Gen Aung Thein Lin inspected the factories in Magway Division.

Commander, Mayor inspect task to beautify Yangon

YANGON, 21 July — Chairman of Yangon Division Peace and Development Council Commander of Yangon Command Maj-Gen Myint Swe and Chairman of Yangon City Development Committee Mayor Brig-Gen Aung Thein Lin inspected the task to beautify Yangon City this morning.
Developing Kengtung, capital...

(from page 16)

The section, which is part of Meiktila-Taunggyi-Kengtung-Tachileik Union Highway, occupies 79 miles in Mongpyin Township and 35 miles in Kengtung Township in Shan State (East), totaling 114 miles.

The 12-foot-wide tar road was upgraded from a gravel road in the past. To complete that section, 170 small bridges and rock-filled retaining wall and drains stretching 10,500 feet had to be built.

In an interview, Ma Nan Yone Kham, a local resident of Mongpyin, said, “Now, I’ve enjoyed a golden opportunity to join Kengtung Degree College, Government Computer College and Government Technical Institute. I’m very pleased with the development of our region. Previously, we local people had to spend a lot of time and energy to travel to Mongpyin due to poor transport. And Taunggyi-Kengtung section was a poor facility in the past. Some of its parts were rather narrow and some parts were often blocked with sand due to erosion of the sides of sand hills. So, we could not get to our destinations easily. But, Tarkaw-Kengtung tar road has been completed and we can now go to Kengtung from Mongpyin with peace of mind at any time. I’m a student of Kengtung Degree College. This road section will make significant contribution to wards promotion of the education of us youths. (Ma Nan Yone Kham)

Now both youths and adults are very happy with the fine facility.

Asked about the facility, U Soe Oo, driver of a ten-wheel truck who was waiting for the completion of the road section opening ceremony, said, “I’m a driver, so I’m happy if the road I’m taking is fine. In the past, we often found it difficult to transport goods from Kengtung to Taunggyi because many parts of the road were buried with sand from sand hills, and in the rainy season, sometimes we even could not find a place to park to stop over the night.

“We drivers had a lot of difficulties in driving along the road covered with sand and water. Sometimes, we had to stay on the road for four or five days with whatever we had. Previously, the road was full of potholes, and at that time, the breakdown of a truck blocked the others following it. And if a truck had a flat tyre, the truck in opposite direction could not have enough room to pass by the truck with flat tyre. At such times, we drivers had to eat what we found in the forest and stay with whatever we had until the truck that broke down had been repaired.

“Now, the road is 12 feet wide and is a tar one, so it is convenient for us to drive. Besides, there is the drain along the road and it prevents damage of the road to an extent. I’d say I thank the government very much for its upgrading the road. (U Soe Oo, driver)

I’m happy if the road I’m taking is fine. I thank the government very much for its upgrading the road. (U Soe Oo, driver)

With fine facilities such as the 200-bed hospital, Kengtung Degree College, Government Computer College and Government Technical Institute, Kengtung has been developed from a town to the capital city on the east bank of Thanlwin River. Besides, it has also been facilitated with an airport that can be used by jets to possess characteristics of a major city.

Translation: MS
China’s GDP grows 9.5% in first half year

BEIJING, 21 July — China’s gross domestic product (GDP) for the first half of this year reached 6,742.2 billion yuan (812.3 billion US dollars), a year-on-year increase of 9.5 per cent.

“It was 0.2 percentage points lower than the growth rate for the same period of last year,” said Zheng Jingping, spokesman of the National Bureau of Statistics, at a Press conference here on Wednesday.

In the first half of this year, regions and departments at all levels made all efforts in implementing the scientific approach to development and various policies set by the central authorities on economic work, with the aim to consolidate the achievements brought by macro-control, he said. “As a result, fairly good overall economic performance was recorded in the first half of this year.”

In breakdown, the primary industry reported a value added of 670.8 billion yuan, up 5.0 per cent; the secondary industry, 3,963.5 billion yuan, up by 11.2 per cent; and the tertiary industry, 2,108.0 billion yuan, up by 7.8 per cent, according to the National Bureau of Statistics.

Honda to increase vehicle sales to 4 million units

TOKYO, 21 July — Honda Motor Co plans to expand its global auto-sales to 4 million units in fiscal 2007 from 3.24 million in fiscal 2004 where sales have levelled off, Honda’s President Takeo Fukui told a news conference.

The new models include the remodeled Civic that will debut this fall, he said. In Japan, where auto sales have levelled off, Honda will enhance its marketing efforts to achieve a sales increase, the president said.

With an expansion in motorcycle and power generator sales as well as an increase in automobile sales, Fukui said, Honda plans to boost its consolidated sales to more than 10 trillion yen (89 billion US dollars) in fiscal 2007 from 8.65 trillion yen (77.1 billion dollars) in fiscal 2004. Fukui also said Honda will improve fuel efficiency in order to contribute to slowing global warming. In this respect, Honda plans to launch a fuel cell motorcycle model for lease by 2009, based on the fuel cell stack technology developed for automobiles, he said.

Vietnam builds 13 industrial parks in first half of ’05

HANOI, 21 July — Vietnam started construction of 13 industrial parks (IPs) in the first half of this year, raising the total number to 123, according to the country’s Ministry of Planning and Investment on Wednesday.

Of the 123 IPs with constructed area of 25,156 hectares, 71 are operating with average occupancy rate of nearly 60 per cent, and 52 others are under construction.

IPs attracted 131 foreign-invested projects worth 450 million US dollars or nearly 30 per cent of the total registered capital of foreign-invested projects licensed in the first six months of this year.

In the period, the IPs saw 169 operational foreign-invested projects increase their capital by 469 million dollars, accounting for 55 per cent of additional capital of foreign-invested projects nationwide.

Meanwhile, they made combined revenues of 4 billion dollars, including export turnovers of more than 2 billion dollars.

Vietnam plans to build additional 101 IPs, and expand 27 existing ones from now to 2010.

The proportion of production value of IPs in the country’s total industrial production will increase to 35 per cent in 2010 from current 26.4 per cent, and that of their export turnovers in the country’s total to 32 per cent from 18.8 per cent, he projected, respectively, the ministry said.

IPs have so far housed over 1,500 foreign-invested projects with total registered capital of more than 12 billion dollars, and over 1,600 domestic projects totalling 80 trillion Vietnamese dong (nearly 5.1 billion dollars).

Last year, IPs nationwide with total workforce of 700,000 posted industrial production of more than 11 billion dollars, and export revenues of 5 billion dollars, the ministry noted.

Vietnam eyes bigger seafood export in next 5 years

HANOI, 21 July — Vietnam has targeted seafood export turnovers of 16.1 billion US dollars between 2006 and 2010, up 46.3 per cent over the 2001-2005 period, the Fishery Ministry said on Wednesday.

To reach the target, the country is enhancing the capacity of forecasting seafood prices and demand of export markets, penetrate into the Middle East, Europe, Africa and South America, while boosting export to traditional markets such as the United States, European Union and China.

It is also promoting trademarks of its key seafood products, including shrimp, catfish and tuna, and helping more local enterprises and farmers to meet strict hygiene and safety standards set by importers.

Vietnam eyes seafood production of more than 18.7 million tons from 2006 to 2010, up from over 14.3 million tons in the 2001-2005 period.

Vietnam, which earned nearly 1.1 billion dollars from supplying seafood to the world market in the first half of this year, posting a year-on-year rise of 9.3 per cent, has targeted seafood revenue of 2.6 billion dollars in 2005.

Afghan Govt burns 60 tons of drugs

KABUL, 21 July — Afghanistan has destroyed 60 tonnes of illegal drugs with a street value of hundreds of millions of dollars in the past two weeks in a bid to avoid becoming a narco-state, an official said on Wednesday.

Confiscated catches of hashish, heroin, morphine and heroin were burned after being seized from traffickers trying to smuggle them outside Afghanistan, Interior Ministry spokesman Lutfullah Mashal said.

In total, 60 tonnes of drugs have been destroyed. It is a historical move globally in terms of the short period of time in which the destruction took place,” Mashal told Reuters.

Afghanistan is the world’s leading producer of heroin, and the narcotics trade dominates the economy, accounting for 60 per cent of gross domestic product, according to estimates by the United Nations. President Hamid Karzai said this month that drugs posed a greater risk to Afghanistan than terrorism, and that the world would turn its back on Afghans if they failed to curb the trade. The government has admitted that some senior officials are thought to be involved in the drugs trade.

Officials say the area under cultivation of opium-producing poppy has fallen since last year as a result of a foreign-backed crackdown, but good growing weather could limit the size of any fall in output.

Encouraged by Western countries, Karzai has vowed a “holy war” on opium, which has fallen since last year as a result of a foreign-backed crackdown, but good growing weather could hurt any hopes of a fall in output.

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But with an estimated 10 per cent of Afghans dependent on opium production, the government fears that rapid eradication could worsen security in southern and eastern areas where poppy is mostly grown and where militants are most active.
**Ex-FBI agent sentenced as China spy case closes**

LOS ANGELES, 20 July — A former FBI agent who failed to tell his superiors about an affair with a Chinese informan later arrested as a double agent for China was sentenced on Monday to three months’ home confinement.

The sentencing of James J Smith was a low-key conclusion to a case that started as a high-profile prosecution of a supposed spy and ended with the dismissal of all charges against the main defendant.

Smith pleaded guilty in May to lying to the FBI about his adulterous 18-year affair with FBI informant Katrina Leung. Leung, who was known as ‘Parlour Maid’, was arrested in 2003. Prosecutors portrayed her as a double agent for China, but she was ultimately charged only with taking classified documents from Smith.

The charges against Leung were thrown out in January by a federal judge who cited “willful and deliberate misconduct” by prosecutors. Prosecutors barred Smith from talking to defence lawyers, denying Leung of a crucial defence witness.

The news of Leung’s arrest and lengthy affair caused a sensation in Los Angeles, where she was a prominent businesswoman, society hostess and political activist.

Smith, who worked for the FBI for almost 20 years, was also ordered to perform 100 hours of community service. His sentence was lighter than the two months in prison requested by federal prosecutors. — **MNA/Reuters**

**India to be next world giant to face baby-boom**

PARIS, 20 July — Experts gathering in the French city of Tours for the 25th International Population Congress said on Tuesday that India is facing up to baby-boom.

India will be world’s biggest country in popula- tion in 2050, with a population of 1.628 billion habitants, compared with today’s 1.104 billion, said the International Un-ion for scientific study of the population.

“There’s in India a demographic impetus, with 2.8 children per woman, while China will have less than two per woman,” said Christophe Guilmoto, executive di- rector of the international committee in national re- search on demography.

India has however a rapid decrease of birth- rate, lower infant mortality, and at the same time a longer longevity, experts said.

**Spaniard tells of escape from “giant wave” of fire**

MADRID, 20 July — A Spanish firefighter who saw 11 colleagues die bat- tling a forest fire told on Tuesday how they were overtaken by a “giant wave” of flame heading straight towards them at furious speed.

Jesus Abad, the only survivor of 12 firefighters trapped on Sunday in a remote area of Guadalajara Province, 90 miles east of Madrid, es- caped with burned arms and broken ribs by shel- tering under a water truck that had water pouring out of it, his wife told the newspaper **El Pais**.

In his own first ac- count, Abad told Spanish television: “The hurricane of fire was very big. I think we all have courage.”

The fire scorched up to 13,000 hectares (32,000 acres) of forest and brush. By Tuesday, it was con- tained and close to being brought under control thanks to an 80-metre wide fire break, eight times wider than usual, officials said.

Police were question- ing a group of day-trip- pers who told them they had lit a barbecue on Sat- urday in the area, which had been turned into a tin- der box by Spain’s worst drought since the 1940s.

Casing a fatal fire can be punished in Spain with up to 20 years in jail.

The government says Spain has around 20,000 forest fires a year, 90 per cent of them started by people. — **MNA/Reuters**

**World population growth slows**

PARIS, 20 July — World population growth is slowing due to impres- sive drops in fertility rates in Asia and Latin America, but Africa remains the ex- ception, according to lo- cal reports on Tuesday.

Jean Pierre Guengant of the French Institute for Research and Develop- ment said on Tuesday that between 1960 to 1965 and 2000 to 2005, fertility rates in Latin America declined from six children for one woman to 2.9, and in Asia from 5.6 to 2.2 children for one mother.

But in Africa, the rate fell only from 6.9 to 5.0, said the French expert on the second day of the 25th International Population Congress that will last to 23 July in the French cen- tral city of Tours.

“Albany, a strong com- mitment to family planning programmes is the main reason behind the success of many countries to achieve high levels of contraception,” he said.

However in Africa, population rates are fast on the rise, with populations expected to triple by 2050 in a number of countries, including Burkina Faso, Burundi, Chad, Congo, the Demo- cratic Republic of Congo, Ethiopia and Uganda.

Niger has the highest fertility rate in the world with eight children born for each woman followed by Mali at 7.1, the Demo- cratic Republic of Congo at 6.7 and Burkina Faso at 6.2.

The world’s popula- tion of 6.5 billion people is expected to reach 9.1 billion in the next fifty years, but its annual rate of growth has slowed from a 2.5 per cent annual increase in 1960 to 1.2 per cent today.

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**Spaniard tells of escape from “giant wave” of fire**

MADRID, 20 July — A Spanish firefighter who saw 11 colleagues die bat- tling a forest fire told on Tuesday how they were overtaken by a “giant wave” of flame heading straight towards them at furious speed.

Jesus Abad, the only survivor of 12 firefighters trapped on Sunday in a remote area of Guadalajara Province, 90 miles east of Madrid, es- caped with burned arms and broken ribs by shel- tering under a water truck that had water pouring out of it, his wife told the newspaper **El Pais**.

In his own first ac- count, Abad told Spanish television: “The hurricane of fire was very big. I think we all have courage.”

The fire scorched up to 13,000 hectares (32,000 acres) of forest and brush. By Tuesday, it was con- tained and close to being brought under control thanks to an 80-metre wide fire break, eight times wider than usual, officials said.

Police were question- ing a group of day-trip- pers who told them they had lit a barbecue on Sat- urday in the area, which had been turned into a tin- der box by Spain’s worst drought since the 1940s.

Casing a fatal fire can be punished in Spain with up to 20 years in jail.

The government says Spain has around 20,000 forest fires a year, 90 per cent of them started by people. — **MNA/Reuters**
Antiviral drug suppresses deadly H5N1 avian flu in animal tests

LOS ANGELES, 20 July—An antiviral drug currently used against annual influenza strains has in mice experiments suppressed the deadly avian flu virus H5N1, US scientists reported on Monday.

This study, the first published on conducted on oseltamivir against the H5N1 influenza strain circulating in Vietnam, found that the drug commercially labelled as Tamiflu can dramatically boost the survival rate of infected mice. The researchers at St Jude Children’s Research Hospital have published the paper online in the Journal of Infectious Diseases.

The H5N1 virus strain, which spread from birds to humans, has killed dozens of people in Vietnam, Cambodia, Thailand, and Indonesia since early 2004. Public health experts fear the avian flu virus could develop the ability to spread easily from person to person and kill millions in a deadly flu pandemic.

In this study, the research team gave one of three possible daily dosage levels of oseltamivir or a placebo to mice infected with H5N1 influenza virus. The highest dosage level, adjusted for weight, was equivalent to the dose currently recommended for humans sick with the flu.

Although the re-combined human dose of oseltamivir was taken for five days, the researchers also tested an extended eight-day course in half of the mice. Oseltamivir decreases the ability of influenza virus to spread from infected cells to uninfectected cells by inhibiting neuraminidase, which is an influenza virus protein required for the virus to exit infected cells.

Of 80 mice infected with H5N1 virus, 20 received a placebo, 30 were given oseltamivir at one of three dosage levels for five days, and 30 received the drug at one of three dosage levels for eight days.

None of the mice receiving a placebo survived, and only five of 10 mice given the highest daily dose of oseltamivir survived for five days. Although oseltamivir reduced the number of mice in the virus continued to grow if the drug was stopped after five days, the researchers said.

Egypt retrieves antique taken by American in 1958

CAIRO, 20 July—Egypt received on Tuesday a rare antique made of alabaster with hieroglyphic writings which was taken by an American national from a tomb at the Valley of the Kings in Luxor in 1958, the official MENA news agency reported.

Zahi Hawass, secretary-general of the Supreme Council of Antiquities, said Egypt reclaimed the antique after Jack A Graves, a professor at the US University of California, sent him a letter in which the American claimed he had not got the antique.

In Graves’ letter, the US professor said one of his friends had recently given him the piece.

New device to detect arsenic level evolved in Bangladesh

DHAKA, 20 July—A new, simple and cheaper method to detect arsenic level in water has been evolved in Kusthi District in western Bangladesh by a group of foreign scientists.

Arsenic level less than 10 microgramme per litre can be measured by using the method while those now used in the country can not detect the contamination if it is below 50 microgramme per litre, The Daily Star reported on Tuesday. The World Health Organisation (WHO) prescribed that tolerable limit of arsenic in water for humans is 10 micro-gramme per litre.

Thousands of people are being affected in the country with the deadly poison as they are unknowingly taking water with arsenic contamination of around 50 microgramme per litre. The new method is more accurate and easy and does not need use of atomic absorption spectrometre or other expensive equipment, according to the innovators.

In the “arsenomolybdate” method, arsenic can be detected by using a simple spectrophotometer, distillation unit for purifying water, analytical balance, top-loading balance, glassware, an acid bottle, scrubber and absorber and some very common reagents.

Study says ducks may silently pass along bird flu

WASHINGTON, 20 July—The bird flu virus that experts fear will jump from birds to humans seems to be mutating yet again, and may be able to hide in healthy-looking ducks, thus putting both other birds and people at risk.

They said the H5N1 virus could kill some ducks after causing only mild symptoms — which means it could lurk, undetected, in flocks while spreading silently. “There is a real possibility that if these H5N1 viruses continue to circulate, further human infection will occur, increasing the potential for human-to-human transmission,” the researchers wrote in this week’s issue of the Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences.

The H5N1 strain has killed more than 50 people in Asia since 2003. More

Ancient Peru city reveals 5,000-year-old ‘writing’

LIMA (Peru), 20 July—Archaeologists in Peru have found a “quipu” on the site of the oldest city in the Americas, indicating the device, a sophisticated arrangement of knots and strings used to convey detailed information, was in use in thousands of years earlier than previously believed.

Previously the oldest known quipus, often associated with the Incas whose vast South American empire was conquered by the Spanish in the 16th Century, dated from about 650 AD.

But Ruth Shady, an archaeologist leading investigations into the Peruvian coastal city of Caral, said quipus were among a treasure trove of articles discovered at the site, which is about 5,000 years old.

“This is the oldest quipu in the Americas,” according to the government’s news agency.”

Canadian planes to monitor Arctic for ship pollution

OTTAWA, 20 July—Canadian spotter planes will for the first time start monitoring Arctic waters for illegal discharges of waste by ships which could damage the region’s delicate environment, officials said on Tuesday.

As part of an agreement reached after a high-level meeting in June, the Department of Environment, in partnership with Transport Canada, Environment Canada will decide whether to repeat the Arctic patrols and it shows us that this society... also had a system of “writing” (which) would continue down the ages until the Inca empire and would last some 4,500 years,” Shady said.

She was speaking before the opening in Lima on Tuesday of an exhibition of the artefacts which shed light on Caral, which she called one of the world’s oldest civilizations.

The quipu with its well-preserved, brown cotton strings wound around thin sticks, was found with a series of offerings including mysterious fibre balls of different sizes wrapped in “nets” and pristine reed baskets.

“We are sure it corresponds to the period of Caral because it was found in a public building,” Shady said. “It was an offering place on a stairway when they decided to bury this and put down a floor to build another structure on top.”

A sailor repairs masts and rigging of a boat during wet weather at the harbour of the Baltic sea coastal village of Schilksee near Kiel, Germany, on 20 July, 2005. —INTERNET

A new, simple and cheaper method to detect arsenic levels evolved in Bangladesh.
Miguel wants to cancel extended Benfica contract

LISBON, 20 July — Benfica defender Miguel Monteiro is seeking to cancel an extension to his contract which would keep him at the Portuguese champions until 2008.

We received on Monday an 11-page letter in which Miguel asked for the cancellation of the contract. Our lawyers are going to analyse it and we’ll make a statement afterwards,” club spokesman Antonio Cunha Vaz told Reuters on Tuesday.

Miguel’s lawyer, Dias Ferreira, told local newspapers the Portuguese international had the legal right to cancel the deal.

He said there was a provision for 30 days between the old contract which ended in June and the new extension when the player could decide his future.

Miguel, who began playing for the club in 2000, agreed to extend his original contract in 2003.

The Portuguese league and the soccer federation say the extension is legally binding.

According to local media, Miguel has shown interest in joining other teams including Valencia, Juventos and Inter Milan.

The matter is likely to be decided by a soccer council which would include representatives from the league and the players’ union.

Liverpool signs Southampton striker Crouch

LONDON, 20 July — Southampton striker Peter Crouch agreed to join European champions Liverpool after the clubs approved the transfer on Tuesday.

Southampton said they had accepted a contract of around seven million pounds (12.18 million US dollars) for the English international. The 6-foot-7 Crouch has to undergo a medical on Wednesday and to sign later on that day.

“A fee of seven million is good money and obviously it was too good to turn down,” Southampton manager Harry Redknapp said on the club’s website.

Manchester United signs goalkeeper Foster

LONDON, 20 July — Manchester United signed goalkeeper Ben Foster from West Ham United for a four-year contract from Football League Championship team Stoke.

It is reported that the transfer fee will rise to three million pounds (5.2 million US dollars).

“This is a great move for Ben and a great opportunity for him to join one of the biggest clubs in the world,” Stoke’s director of football John Rudge said.

Foster, 22-year-old goalkeeper, has only played at youth and reserve level for Stoke. He was loaned out to Wrexham and Kidderminster last season.

Shelbourne beat Glentoran 4-1 in all-island clash

DUBLIN, 21 July — Ireland’s Shelbourne beat Northern Irish neighbours Glentoran 4-1 in an all-island clash on Wednesday that put the Dublin side into the second qualifying round of the Champions League 6-2 on aggregate.

They will now face newly-crowned Romanian champions Steaua in the group matches.

Owen Heary headed Shelbourne in front in the 13th minute after a late challenge from Glentoran captain Paul Leeman — who was later sent off — gave David Crawford a free kick.

Peter McCann, on his Glentoran debut, replied for the visitors seven minutes later in what proved to be their best passage of play during a match that tested the fitness of the Northern Irish side at the start of their league season.

Shelbourne, midway through their campaign and who this week slipped to third in the Eircom League, otherwise gave Glentoran few chances to test a defence that has proved porous in domestic games.

Jason Byrne, who scored both Shelbourne’s first-leg goals in their 2-1 win last week, found the net in the 30th minute after Leeman was sent off for deliberate handball in the box.

With Glentoran down to 10 men, Shelbourne dominated the second half. Glen Crowe volleyed in a cross from Heary in the 57th minute and Byrne headed his second goal in the 70th.

Shelbourne manager Pat Fenlon was delighted with the performance but said they would focus on a domestic match on Friday before worrying about next week’s game with Steaua.

Hiddink almost certain to be new Australia coach

SYDNEY, 20 July — PSV Eindhoven coach Guus Hiddink is almost certain to take over as Australia coach, Football Federation Australia chief executive John O’Neill has said.

“It’s fair to say (Hiddink) is our preferred candidate,” O’Neill told Australian web site Fox Sports. “It’s not a decision on paper but very close. It’s a matter of days, not weeks.”

“We expect that once his duties in Korea are over we’ll get his undivided attention. It will be a great coup if we get him and I’m 99 per cent sure we will.”

Hiddink, who guided co-hosts South Korea to the semi-finals of the 2002 World Cup, has returned to the country where he is a hero for the Peace Cup tournament with Dutch champions PSV.

Sydney’s Daily Telegraph newspaper said on Wednesday Hiddink was expected to arrive in Australia to sign a contract once PSV’s run in the tournament was over.

PSV play French club Olympique Lyon later on Wednesday. If they win they will advance to the final on Sunday.

Hiddink will replace Frank Farina, who stepped down after six years in charge following Australia’s elimination from the Confederations Cup last month.

Lyon draw with PSV to reach final of Peace Cup

SOUTH KOREA, 21 July — French champions Olympique Lyon drew 1-1 with Dutch side PSV Eindhoven on Wednesday to reach the final of the Peace Cup pre-season tournament.

Robert de Pinho de Souza scored in the 37th minute for PSV after being put through by Lee Young-yo but Florent Malouda equalized for Lyon early in the second half after a goalmouth scramble.

The French club therefore went through to the final on goals scored in the group matches.

Thailand beat Everton in penalty shootouts

BANGKOK, 21 July — Thai national team defeated Everton 5-3 on penalty shootouts after a 1-1 draw in regulation time in the first match of the Premier League Asia Trophy competition here on Wednesday.

Thus, Thailand enters the final on Saturday to face the winner between Bolton and Manchester City.

In a hot and humid weather, midfielder Pichitpong Choeichew put the hosts in the lead in the 20th minute with a drive beyond the reach of Everton keeper Nigel Martyn.

Everton found the equalizer before the first half break when Marcus Bent slotted the ball from a pass off Leon Osman.

During penalty shootouts, Thai goalie Kosin Hatharattanakul stopped Joseph Yobo’s attempt, while Datoskorn Thonglaio, Teeratip Winothai, Pichitpong Choeichew, Chakrit Buathong and Jakkrit Bunkham all scored for Thailand.

Everton manager David Moyes explained that “what’s more valuable than the victory is the experience that players gained from this match”. 

Bolton Wanderers’s Ivan Campo (L) fights for the ball with Manchester City’s Joseph Barton during a friendly soccer match at Rajamangala Stadium in Bangkok on 20 July, 2005. —INTERNET

Thailand’s Datoskorn Thonglaio (L) challenges Everton’s Duncan Ferguson during a match in Bangkok, Thailand, pulled off a 6-4 penalty shootout upset over Everton in the opening match of the Premier League Asia Trophy tournament.—INTERNET
Obasanjo inaugurates 2014 Commonwealth Games Bid Committee

ABUJA, 21 July — Nigerian President Olusegun Obasanjo here on Tuesday inaugurated the 18-member 2014 Commonwealth Bid Committee which has former Head of State General Yakubu Gowon as chairman.

Speaking on the occasion, Obasanjo said Nigeria was eminently qualified to bid for the games.

"This is a very serious mission that requires that we put our very best foot forward, be focused, dedicated and committed to winning the bid."

He added that "it is for this reason that a former Head of State is requested to lead the committee".

The president said Nigeria, the most populous African country with a population of over 138 million, was a very important member of the Commonwealth and had all it takes to host the games, adding that the Nigerian Government decided to bid because of its belief that it was the right time to do so.

He said that winning the bid would afford the country an opportunity to remove the stereotypes held by many foreigners as well as in opening up its tourism potentials.

“We believe this is the right time, we have paid our dues and this is our century,” he said.

Obasanjo noted that 2014 would be the centenary celebration of the 1914 union of the country and that winning the bid could be part of the celebrations.

He said the committee could co-opt any experts that it needed to serve and, as current chair-in-office of the Commonwealth, he had already commenced the campaign for the games.

According to Malam Samaila Sambawa, newly appointed Federal Minister of Sports, the decision to bid for the games followed the successful hosting of the All Africa Games twice. Sambawa said he believed that the country was in a very good position to win the bid following its string of successful hosting of other major engagements.—MNA/Xinhua

CASH DONATED: His Excellency Ambassador of Thailand Mr Saphot Dirakason & Madam Sudeva Dirakason of the Royal Thai Embassy donated K 100,000 to Hninzagon Home for the Aged recently. Chairman of Administrative Board of the Home U Mungin Tin and Vice-Chairman Lt-Col Kyaw Shein (Red) accept the cash donation from the wellwishers.—(a)

ASLEEP IN JESUS
U Aung Myint (a) Frank Aung Myint
(Age 81)
Son of (U Sein Htun-Daw Thin Hsin), eldest brother of (Daw Colleen), (Daw Cynthia), Daw Khin Mya Yin (Keith), (Daw Si Win)-Rev U Tin M. Tin (George Than Win)-Jeanne, Daw Thien Su Wai-Rev U Mg Mg Din (Taunggyi) and Daw Mi My Lay, Dr BoH Zaw Win, father of Ann-Bryan, Sonya-Danny, grandson of 3 grandchildren and 1 great grandchild, passed away peacefully at 6:10 pm on Sunday 17th July 2005 at his residence No 9 E/2, Kaba Aye Pagoda Road, 8th Mile, Yangon. Funeral service at 9:00 AM on Friday July 22, 2005 at Yayway Christian Cemetery. Bereaved Family

WEATHER

Thursday, 21 July, 2005

Summary of observations recorded at 09:30 hours MST: During the past 24 hours, rain have been isolated in Mandalay and Magway Divisions, scattered in Kayah State, Sagaing, Bago and Ayeyawady Divisions and widespread in the remaining areas with locally heavyfalls in Mon State and isolated heavyfalls in Kachin State and Taninthayi Division. The noteworthy amounts of rainfall recorded were Dawei (3.70 inches), Bhamo (3.62 inches), Thayin (3.58 inches), Mudon (3.40 inches), Thinzayat (3.39 inches) and Mawlamyine (3.15 inches).

Maximum temperature on 20-7-2005 was 89°F. Minimum temperature on 21-7-2005 was 69°F. Relative humidity at 9.30 hrs MST on 21-7-2005 was 92%. Total sunshine hours on 20-7-2005 was (4.3) hours approx. Rainfalls on 21-7-2005 were (0.47 inch) at Mingaladon, (0.35 inch) at Kaba-Aye, (0.55 inch) at central Yangon. Total rainfalls since 1-1-2005 were (38.54 inches) at Mingaladon, (36.61 inches) at Kaba-Aye and (41.02 inches) at central Yangon. Maximum wind speed at Yangon (Kaba-Aye) was (6) mph from Southwest at (12:25) hours MST on 20-7-2005.

Bay inference: Monsoon is strong in the Andaman Sea and South Bay and moderate elsewhere in the Bay of Bengal.

Forecast valid until evening of 22-7-2005: Rain will be isolated in Mandalay and Magway Divisions, scattered in Kayah State, Sagaing Division and widespread in the remaining areas with likelihood of isolated heavyfalls in Mon State and Taninthayi Division. Degree of certainty is 80%.

State of the sea: Temporary squalls with moderate to rough seas are likely at Deltac, Gulf of Mottama and off and along Mon-Tanintayi coasts. Surface wind speed in squalls may reach (35) to (40) mph. Seas will be moderate elsewhere in Myanmar waters.

Outlook for subsequent two days: Likelihood of increase of rain in the coastal areas.

Forecast for Yangon and neighbouring area for 22-7-2005: One or two rain. Degree of certainty is 80%.

Forecast for Mandalay and neighbouring area for 22-7-2005: Likelihood of isolated rain. Degree of certainty is 60%.

THE NEW LIGHT OF MYANMAR Friday, 22 July, 2005

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Kengtung is the capital city of Shan State (East). Throughout the successive periods, local people had to face a number of difficulties and take a long time to travel from Kengtung to Mongyan, Tachilek and Taunggyi in the rainy season. In compliance with the guidance of the Head of State, Public Works under the Ministry of Construction launched the project for upgrading of Meiktila-Taunggyi-Kengtung Union Highway in November 2002. Tarkaw-Kengtung Section was put into service on 14 June 2005. Thanks to the emergence of Tarkaw-Kengtung Section, one can travel from Meiktila to Tachilek via Taunggyi and Kengtung. Local people are really pleased with the completion of the section as they can now make Taunggyi-Kengtung trip at ease although it took several days in the past.

Kengtung is an access to the border, through which national people can travel to the People’s Republic of China, Thailand and the Lao People’s Democratic Republic, and it will help promote border trade.

In order to ensure secure and smooth transport in the region, the Tatmadaw Government has constructed or upgraded Kengtung-Tachilek, Kengtung-Mongla, Kengtung-Mongkhat-Mongyawng, Kengtung-Lwemwe, Mongphyat-Mongyawng-Mongyu, Tarlay-Pasho-Kengpak, Namhsan-Mongton-Mongsat-Tachilek, and Monghsat-Mongpyin roads, thereby enhancing communication, friendship, and mutual cooperation between local national race people.

The emergence of Tarkaw-Kengtung tar road in Mongpyin Township will help raise the living standard of local national races. (See page 10)