COMMANDER attends opening of self-reliant tar road, bridge


Chairman of Mon State Peace and Development Council Commander of South-East Command Maj-Gen Soe Naing and wife Daw Tin Tin Latt, members of Mon State Women’s Affairs Organization and townsenders attended the ceremony.

First, Chairman of the village PPC U Maung Myint explained facts about the ceremony. Mawlamyine District PDC Chairman Lt-Col Tin Aung, Director U Aung Kyaw Nyein of Mon State Development Affairs Committee and the chairman of the village formally opened the road and the bridge.

The commander unveiled the signboard of the road and the bridge and viewed them.

The 7080 feet by 14 feet road cost K18.3 million and the 20 feet by 28 feet bridge K 7.2 million.

The commander also attended a free medical treatment and glasses donation ceremony of a specialist team of Yangon, sponsored by donor U Than Shein and Daw San San Win (Myathura Co Ltd).

Later, Commander Maj-Gen Soe Naing observed the free medical treatment being provided by a specialist team led by eye specialist Prof U Myo Khang at Myathura Co Ltd and providing of free medical treatment by a specialists team at Ye Hospital.

Commander Maj-Gen Soe Naing viewed the free dispensaries sponsored by donor U Than Shein and Daw San San Win (Myathura Co Ltd) and cordially comforted the patients there.

Sponsored by donor U Than Shein and Daw San San Win of Myathura Co Ltd, the specialists team of Yangon provided free medical treatment for a total of 2,084 patients with different complaints at the cold storage of the company in Asin Model village from 11 to 13 March.—MNA

Ceremony of growing physic nut plants held in Sittway Station, regional development inspected

YANGON, 17 March — Rakhine State Peace and Development Council Chairman Western Command Commander Maj-Gen Khin Maung Myint together with officials attended the ceremony to grow physic nut plants held at Sittway Station on 14 March and gave instructions on meeting the cultivation acre target.

Afterwards, Brig-Gen Than Tun Aung of Sittway Station explained the progress of growing and nurturing of physic nut, rubber, pepper and bellaric myrobalan and future plan.

After hearing reports on technique of growing physic nut plants, producing physic nut oil from the seeds and the use of the oil as bio-fuel, the commander (See page 8)

Agricultural, regional development tasks inspected in Yangon North District

YANGON, 18 March — Chairman of Yangon Division Peace and Development Council Commander of Yangon Command Brig-Gen Hla Htay Win oversaw agriculture and regional development tasks in Mingaladon, Hlegu, Hmawby and Taikkyi Townships this morning.

In Yegyaw Village of Hlegu Township, the commander inspected implementation of Yegyaw self-reliant river water pumping project and supply of water to 600 acres of farmlands.

The commander and party inspected the place for construction of Sittwayung river water pumping project (1000 acres) near the circular road of Hlegu Township.

At Barlar river water pumping project near the junction of Yangon-Bago Road and No 3 Highway in Mingaladon Township, the commander oversaw construction of the project site.

While in Hlegu Township, the commander inspected reclamation of 9,991 acres of vacant and virgin lands near Minkon Village and nurturing of the physic nut saplings at the respective nurseries.

(See page 8)

Emergence of the State Constitution is the duty of all citizens of Myanmar Naing-Ngan.
PERSPECTIVES

Sunday, 19 March, 2006

Strive for greening 30-mile radius of Yangon City

Under the guidance of the Head of State, steps are being taken for greening 30-mile radius of Yangon City the whole year. As the project will contribute much to the development of agriculture and greening tasks in the environs of Yangon, a number of sluice gates, embankments and canals have been constructed.

Secretary-1 of the State Peace and Development Council Lt-Gen Thein Sein on 16 March inspected Ngamoyeik Dam project Yangon City water supply project and Ngamoyeik river water pumping project, in Hlegu Township, Yangon Division, and gave instructions on the agricultural tasks.

In his instructions, Secretary-1Lt-Gen Thein Sein said that efforts are to be made for timely completion of Wakadok Dam and Kodukwe Dam that will benefit a lot for the cultivation of summer paddy and greening of 30-mile radius of Yangon. He quoted the guidance of the Head of State as saying that the construction of dams and reservoirs is to be carried out along with the building of canals. This being the case, the tasks are to be undertaken in accord with the guidance of the Head of State, he added.

With the aims of supplying water for summer and monsoon paddy, of preventing floods in Ngamoyeik creek and of supplying 135 million gallons of drinking water to Yangon daily, Ngamoyeik Dam project started in 1992-1993. The dam was completed in 1994-1995 and opened on 26 March 1995.

The dam, 15,500 feet long and 75 feet high, is of earthen type. Its water storage capacity is 180,000 acre-feet. Ngamoyeik river water pumping project that is to benefit 8,000 acres of farmland is being implemented near Moko-nyau-mhng Village in Hlegu Township by the Water Resources Utilization Department under the Ministry of Agriculture and Irrigation.

Meanwhile, Salu Dam, Shwelaung Dam, Kodukwe Dam and Wakadok Dam that are included in the project for greening of 30-mile radius of Yangon are being built for greening and agricultural purpose in the west of Bago River.

To prevent the inflow of salty water and maintain fresh water in Thanlyin, Kyauktan, Shwehlay and Kayan sluice gates were constructed and those irrigated facilities are now benefiting 65,000 acres of farmland.

The emergence of eight river water pumping projects in Yangon Division has resulted in the cultivation of 1.2 million acres of monsoon paddy. Now, work is well under way to cultivate 240,000 acres of summer paddy in Yangon Division. At present, the water supply of Ngamoyeik Dam has increased from 90 million gallons to 135 million gallons daily.

Therefore, the officials are to try their utmost for successful realization of the project for greening of 30-mile radius of Yangon the whole year, while striving for completion of the water supply task.

Roads, bridges construction tasks in Shan State (East) inspected

YANGON, 18 March — Shan State (East) Peace and Development Council Chairman Triangle Region Command Commander Maj-Gen Aung Min Hlaing together with officials inspected Kengtung-Mongping-Takaw Road and bridges along the road on 6 March.

After hearing reports at the briefing hall in Koorkwetaung, the commander gave necessary instructions. Afterwards, the commander inspected the nurturing of 60,000 physic nut plants near the construction site. Next, the commander inspected construction of the concrete bridge, choosing the site for reinforced concrete bridge and extension of the road.

On 7 March morning, the commander inspected progress of the tasks at the project of constructing Wamtkhet Bridge with the length of 440 feet on Namhka Creek situated on Mongping-Metmang Road and attended to the needs. — MNA

F&R Minister receives Malaysian Ambassador

YANGON, 18 March — Malaysian Ambassador to Myanmar Mr Shaharuddin bin Md Som called on Minister for Finance and Revenue Maj-Gen Hla Tun at his office yesterday.

U Kyaw Kyaw Maung, Governor of the Central Bank of Myanmar, and officials concerned were present on the occasion.

Coord meeting of Mandalay Industrial Zone Development Committee held

YANGON, 18 March — The coordination meeting of Mandalay Industrial Zone Development Committee for producing and using machinery and spare parts locally available took place at Kanaung Hall in Mandalay Industrial Zone on 15 March with an address by Mandalay District Peace and Development Council Chairman Lt-Col Maung Maung.

Afterwards, Rector of Mandalay Technological University Dr Aung Kyaw Myint explained the purpose of holding the meeting.

Next, Head of Mechanical Engineering Department of MTU U Maung Maung Soe and Head of Workshop of Metallurgy Department Daw Nyunt Nyunt Aye discussed the matters on producing machinery and spare parts necessary for State’s factories, workshops and enterprises. Later, those present took part in the discussions, and Chairman of Mandalay Industrial Zone Development Committee U Aung Win Khaing expressed thanks.

All this needs to be known

- Oppose those relying on external elements, acting as stooges, holding negative views
- Oppose those trying to jeopardize stability of the State and progress of the nation
- Oppose foreign nations interfering in internal affairs of the State
- Crush all internal and external destructive elements as the common enemy

Governor of Mandalay Region Aung Win Khaing expressed thanks.

Two Sayadaws honoured

YANGON, 18 March — A ceremony to honour two Sayadaws—Naga Hnathkaung Sayadaw Bhaddanta Dhammasari and Hill Missionary Sayadaw Bhaddanta Revata of Tachilek who had received the religious titles took place at Maha Myat Muni Monastery in Tachilek on 16 March.

It was attended by members of the Sangha, Col Myint Han of Tachilek Station and officials. Col Myint Han and Chairman of District PDC Lt-Col Zaw Moe Aye offered alms donated by Chairman of Shan State (East) Peace and Development Council Commander of Triangle Region Command Maj-Gen Min Aung Hlaing and wife Daw Kyu Kyu Hla to the two Sayadaws.— MNA

Computer quiz to mark Armed Forces Day continues

YANGON, 18 March — Organized by the Working Committee for Organizing the Twelve State Objectives Booth to mark the 61st Anniversary of Armed Forces Day, the computer quiz continued at Defence Services Museum on Shwedagon Pagoda Road, here, today.

A total of 60 USDA members from Hlaine, Dawbon and Botabtaung, Mingaladon, Mayangon and North Okkalapa Townships took part in the quiz that continues up to 20 March.

MNA
Russia, China urge diplomatic solution for Iran

BEIJING, 17 March — Russia and China, veto-wielding permanent members of the UN Security Council, are urging a diplomatic solution to the crisis over Iran’s nuclear ambitions, Russia’s Ambassador to China said on Thursday.

Iran was reported to the Security Council, which has the power to impose sanctions, after the UN nuclear watchdog found that Teheran was not cooperating with inspectors seeking to assess its nuclear programme.

“We both believe we need to seek political solutions to the issues through diplomatic channels,” Ambassador Sergei Razov told reporters in Beijing.

“Russian and Chinese cooperation has played an important role in keeping the Iran nuclear issue on the track of a diplomatic solution,” he added.

Razov said the Iran issue, as well as multilateral negotiations over North Korea’s nuclear programmes, would feature in talks between Russian President Vladimir Putin and Chinese President Hu Jintao when Putin visits China next week.

Western countries are pushing for the UN Security Council to press for a full suspension of Iran’s nuclear fuel activities, including research. The United States and European Union countries have said Iran is seeking the ability to make nuclear weapons, but Iran says its intentions are peaceful.

Russia has proposed a compromise plan that would allow Iran to continue civilian nuclear activities as long as it reprocesses fuel in an internationally monitored plant on Russian soil.

But Iran has said it will not stop its nuclear research, even if instructed to do so by the Security Council.

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British university students admit copying others’ work

LONDON, 17 March — One in six students at British universities say they have copied from friends and one in ten admits to looking for essays online, according to a survey published on Thursday.

The poll of more than 1,000 students across Britain found that male students were more likely to copy work from friends than females, with 21 per cent of men admitting to cheating in this way compared to 14 per cent of women.

The study covered 119 higher education institutions and was conducted for the Times Higher Education Supplement (THES).

Its publication follows an admission by a senior Oxford University professor that plagiarism was “becoming a serious problem” even among the country’s most able students.

Professor Alan Grafen, one of Oxford’s disciplinary officers, said ten students had been investigated over the last year and that “most have been found guilty.”

“It is hard though it may be to believe, students type word-for-word, and increasingly copy-and-paste from the internet, and submit essays containing whole pages of this verbatim material,” he wrote in the university’s Oxford Magazine.

Quakes jolt Indonesian island, hundreds of houses damaged

JAKARTA, 17 March — Two earthquakes respectively measuring 4.5 and 3.5 on the Richter Scale rocked Buru Island in Indonesia’s Maluku Province on Wednesday and Thursday morning, a spokesman of the Ambon Geophysics Station, Benny Sipolo said Thursday.

The epicenter of the quakes had been traced at 03.37 at 127.20.Eastern Longitude, about 128 kilometres southwest of Ambon, or north of Namlea, capital of Buru District.

The tremors were felt by residents of Ambon and Serang Bagian Barat (SBB) at the fourth and fifth level of the Modified Mercalli Intensity (MMI), while in Namlea it was above the fifth level of MMI.

The quakes were most likely followed by a minor tsunami, Benny Sipolo was quoted by Antara news agency as saying. At least 117 houses on Buru Island were damaged, according to an official of Buru, Hasru Soamole.

四川, 中国敦促外交解决伊朗核问题

北京，3月17日 — 中国和俄罗斯，安理会常任理事国，呼吁外交解决方案来解决伊朗的核问题，俄罗斯驻中国大使在周四说。

伊朗被安理会报告，美国核问题监督机构发现德黑兰没有与检查官合作评估其核计划。

“我们俩个都认为我们需要通过外交渠道解决这些问题”，驻华大使谢尔盖·拉佐夫告诉记者。

“中俄合作在保持伊朗核问题在外交轨道上的作用非常重要”，他补充说。

拉佐夫说伊朗问题，包括朝鲜核计划的多边谈判，将出现在俄罗斯总统弗拉基米尔·普京与中国主席胡锦涛下次的会晤中。

西方国家推动安理会促使伊朗完全暂停核燃料活动，包括研究。美国和欧盟国家已经表示伊朗正在寻求制造核武器，但伊朗说其目标是和平。

俄罗斯提出了一个妥协方案，允许伊朗继续民用核活动，只要其回炉处理燃料在俄罗斯的一个国际上监控的工厂。

但伊朗表示不会停止核研究，即使被要求这样做。

英国大学学生承认抄袭他人作品

伦敦，3月17日 — 英国大学超过六分之一的学生说他们从朋友抄袭工作，十分之一的学士承认他们为了寻找论文在网上搜索，根据一项周四发布的调查。

这项对超过1000名学生进行的调查发现男性学生比女性学生更可能从朋友抄袭工作，21%的男性承认这样做了，而女性为14%。

这项研究调查了119个高等教育机构，并由泰晤士高等教育增刊进行。

其发布后，一名牛津大学的纪律官员阿兰·格拉芬教授说，剽窃正在“成为严重问题”，甚至在国家最优秀的学生中。

“很难去相信，学生在抄写并从网上复制，而且越来越多的抄写并从网上复制，并在网上提交包含整页的这种现成文本”，他在牛津杂志上写道。

地震袭击印度尼西亚的一个岛，成百上千的房屋被损坏

雅加达，3月17日 — 两场震级分别为4.5和3.5的地震于周三和周四早上袭击了博岛在印度尼西亚的马鲁库省，星期四，阿姆丰地质局的发言人本尼·西波洛说。

地震的震中被追踪到3月17日在03.37时在127.20.东经，约128公里西南于阿姆丰，或北部于南利亞，博岛的首都。

地震被感觉到由阿姆丰和Serang Bagian Barat（SBB）在第四和第五的 Modified Mercalli Intensity (MMI)，而在南里亚它在第五以上的 MMI。

这两场地震最可能被跟随的是一场小海啸，本尼·西波洛被引述于Antara新闻社称。至少有117的博岛房子被损坏，根据一名官方的博岛，哈斯鲁·索阿摩勒。”
Putin calls for joint efforts to assure energy supply

MOSCOW, 17 March— Russian President Vladimir Putin called for joint efforts to assure energy services to developing countries when he met energy ministers of the Group of Eight (G-8) in the Kremlin on Thursday.

Ministers from the United States, Japan, Germany, Britain, France, Italy, Canada attended the two-day G-8 energy ministerial meeting, hosted by their Russia for the first time.

Officials from China, India and the OPEC were also invited in a bid launch the first ever global energy security dialogue.

Putin said energy resources could not resolve the problem of poverty.

“However, the shortage of energy resources significantly affects economic growth, and their imprudent use may lead to an ecological catastrophe on a global scale,” he noted.

Russia’s Industry and Energy Minister Viktor Khristenko said after the G-8 meeting that a joint strategy to supply the world’s poorest countries with nuclear power without risking nuclear proliferation could be developed for the G-8 leaders’ summit, to take place in July in St Petersburg.

Putin said in late January that Russia was ready to build an international centre “to offer nuclear fuel cycle services, including (uranium) enrichment under the control of the IAEA (International Atomic Energy Agency)”.

E.U. urged to press US to close Guantanamo

BRUSSELS, 17 March— European Union countries must press the United States to close the Guantanamo Bay Prison and should consider taking in detainees to put them on trial, the top UN investigator into torture said on Thursday.

UN investigators urged the United States last month to close the Guantanamo camp, saying it violated a host of human rights including a ban on torture and the right to fair trial.

“It is important that the EU (plays) its part in convincing the US,” Manfred Nowak, the UN’s rapporteur on torture and one of the investigators into Guantanamo, told reporters in Brussels.

Many of the 500 inmates in the prison at the US naval base in Cuba have been held for four years without trial. The prisoners were mainly detained in Afghanistan.

German Chancellor Angela Merkel is the only European leader to have publicly called on the United States to close the camp. The European Parliament made the same call last month. Nowak said it was time for the EU to raise the issue with the United States and “quiet diplomacy” might be the most efficient way forward.

EU countries could take some of the detainees and try them before their own courts, he said.

Nowak also voiced concerns about European countries extraditing terrorist suspects to countries with a record of systematic torture such as Egypt or Syria. He said Britain and Sweden were pushing other countries in the 46-countries Council of Europe to allow extraditions of suspected terrorists from the country to which they were sent gave assurances that they would not be tortured.

Bolivia rejects free-trade negotiations with US

LA PAZ (Bolivia), 17 March— Bolivian President Evo Morales has ruled out starting negotiations on a free-trade deal with the United States, saying such a pact would hurt the South American country’s small producers.

The comments by Morales late on Wednesday were the latest criticism of Washington by the leftist coca farmer who was sworn in as Bolivia’s first indigenous president in January.

“It’s not possible that... countries where the businessmen receive subsidies invade us with their products and destroy our small producers,” Morales told reporters, adding that a free-trade deal with Washington was “totally ruled out.”

Morales’ comments came a day after Colombian President Alvaro Uribe offered to mediate in eventual free-trade talks between Bolivia and Washington.

Along with fellow Andean countries, Bolivia currently receives preferential trade tariffs from the United States as long as it cooperates in the fight against the drugs trade. Bolivia is the world’s third-biggest cocaine producer after Colombia and Peru.

However, that deal expires at the end of the year and Bolivia has not taken part in free-trade negotiations with Washington, as Colombia, Peru and Ecuador have done. Bolivian soy producers have cajoled the government of failing to protect their exports to Colombia, which reached a free-trade deal with the United States late last month.— MNA/Reuters

Russian students perform folk dances in Beijing University during the China-Russia University Students’ Art Festival in Beijing, on 17 March, 2006. The festival, part of the series of activities celebrating the Year of Russia in China, kicked off in Beijing University on Friday. More than 50 Russian students and many university students of Beijing gave performances during the opening ceremony. The Year of China in Russia will be held in 2007.— INTERNET

Bodies of kidnapped Macedonian Albanians found in S Afghanistan

TIRANA, 17 March— Bodies of three Macedonian Albanians and one German, kidnapped by Taleban militants in southern Afghanistan, were found by Afghan police three days after their execution was announced, the Macedonian news agency MIA reported on Thursday.

The bodies were found in the Maiwand District of Kandahar Province where they were kidnapped on 12 March, along with four Afghans.

The Afghans were later released. — MNA/Xinhua

75% of deaths among Vietnamese children caused by accidents

HANOI, 17 March— As many as 75 per cent of fatalities among children in Vietnam are caused by accidents, and the remaining by diseases, a conference here was told Thursday.

Many local children have died of traffic accidents, and such other incidents as drowning, being burned or electrocuted due to carelessness of adults and unsafe living environment. Vietnam News Agency quoted reports at the conference co-organized by Vietnam’s Committee for Population, Family and Children and the United Nations Children’s Fund (UNICEF) as saying.

Some Vietnamese children have been physically and mentally affected by different kinds of abuse and domestic violence, the reports said.

Vietnamese and foreign delegates participated in the conference, mainly psychologists and sociologists, also exchanged views on building a better legal framework and improving public awareness on protecting children from accidents.

MNA/Xinhua
Malaysian Govt decides on route sharing between MAS, AirAsia

Kuala Lumpur, 17 March — The Malaysian Government has decided on the route sharing between the national carrier Malaysia Airlines (MAS) and the budget carrier AirAsia, local media reported Friday. The Transport Ministry will improve the supervision mechanism to ensure healthy competition between the two companies for the domestic routes, said the statement. — MNA/Xinhua

US study shows vaccine reduces pneumonia deaths

WASHINGTON, 17 March — A pneumonia vaccine seems to save the lives of older adults who become so ill that they are hospitalized, even if it does not prevent them from getting pneumonia, researchers said on Wednesday.

A study in several US states showed that hospital patients who had been vaccinated were 40 to 70 percent less likely to die than unvaccinated patients, or those who could not remember whether they had been vaccinated. The vaccinated patients had a lower risk of respiratory failure, kidney failure, heart attack or other complications, Dr David Fisman of Princeton University in New Jersey and colleagues found.

Vaccinated patients also spent an average of two fewer days in the hospital, they will report in next week’s issue of Clinical Infectious Diseases. “When people hit the door really sick and most likely to die, even in those people, being vaccinated was associated with a lower risk of death,” Fisman said in a statement.

Giving adults a vaccine against pneumococcal bacteria, notably Streptococcus, has been controversial, Fisman said in a statement, although the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention recommends it once every five years for everyone over 65. “It’s been very hard to show that it prevents pneumonia, especially in older adults,” Fisman said.

“Whether or not it prevents pneumonia is almost irrelevant — clearly it has an effect on reducing deaths in the individuals who get pneumonia.” MNA/Reuters

ETA bombing warning a false alarm

Madrid, 17 March — A call warning that the Basque separatist group ETA had planted three bombs in northern Spain was a false alarm, the regional government said on Wednesday.

The caller claiming to be ETA said that two bombs had been planted on two motorways in the northern region of Navarre, and the other in a court building in the regional capital Pamplona. Local police quickly evacuated the court building and cleared the motorways, but found nothing. — MNA/Xinhua

Iran says ready to negotiate with Washington on Iraq

TEHERAN, 17 March — A senior Iranian official said here Thursday that Teheran was ready to hold talks with Washington to solve Iraqi problems.

Ali Larijani, head of Iran’s Supreme National Security Council, made the remarks in response to a call by Iraqi Shi’ite leader Abdul Aziz al-Hakim for Iran to start talks with Washington on Iraq.

“We accept this proposal and we will appoint a negotiating team for talks soon,” Larijani told the reporters after making a closed door speech to Parliament. Iran accepts the Americans “to resolve the Iraqi problems and issues with the goal of creating an independent (Iraqi) government”, he stressed.

Iran, which has been accused by the United States of allowing weapons and guerrillas to cross into Iraq, had previously said it was not interested in discussions before U.S. troops pulled out of Iraq. MNA/Xinhua

China, Russia to hold 200 activities for Russia Year in China

BEIJING, 17 March — China and Russia will hold about 200 activities, including eight large ones, for the Year of Russia in China this year, according to a senior Chinese government official.

Li Hui, assistant foreign minister, told a press conference held here on Thursday that the opening ceremony of the Year of Russia is to be held at the Great Hall of the People in downtown Beijing during Russian President Vladimir Putin’s upcoming visit to China. Putin and Chinese President Hu Jintao will attend the opening ceremony. — MNA/Xinhua

Russian lawmaker restates adherence to one-China policy

MOSCOW, 17 March — Russia sticks to the one-China policy and opposes “Taiwan independence”, Konstantin Kosachev, head of the international relations committee of the State Duma, Russia’s Lower House of Parliament, said on Tuesday.

Expressing his views on the Taiwan issue, Kosachev said Russia will unsparingly observe the Russian-Chinese Treaty of Good Neighbourliness, Friendship and Cooperation signed on July 16, 2001, and adhere to the one-China policy. Taiwan is an inalienable part of China, he said.

Taiwan leader Chen Shui-bian declared on February 27 that the “National Unification Council” would “cease to function” and that the “National Unification Guidelines” would “cease to apply”.

This, Kosachev said, was actually a move to abandon the “National Unification Council” and the “National Unification Guidelines”.

Russia was concerned over the situation, he said, adding that what the Taiwan authorities had done ran against the interests of Taiwan people and would surely cause Taiwan to be isolated by the international community. — MNA/Xinhua

Iraqis look at the damaged house after a US raid in the rural Isahaqi area, about 80 kilometres (50 miles) north of Baghdad, Iraq, on 15 March, 2006. — MNA/Reuters

An aircraft from Malaysia’s budget carrier, AirAsia and a Malaysia’s national flag carrier, Malaysian Airline System Bhd (MAS) Boeing 737. — MNA/Xinhua

Stadium seen as the Commonwealth Games open in Melbourne on 15 March, 2006. INTERNET
**India, China to register trade of $20b by 2007**

**NEW DELHI**, 17 March — Bilateral trade between India and China is expected to reach 20 billion US dollars by the year 2007, a year ahead of the target set earlier, Union Minister of Commerce and Industry Kamal Nath said Thursday.

A number of Chinese delegates, including China’s Minister of Commerce Bo Xilai, were present on the occasion.

The two Ministers earlier co-chaired the seventh meeting of the India-China Joint Economic Group (JEG).

Bo and Kamal Nath said trade and economic cooperation held the key to strengthening the overall bilateral relationship.

“I reiterate India’s deep desire and strong commitment to continue developing a multi-faceted, mutually beneficial trading and economic relationship with China,” Kamal Nath said.

In 2000-01 period, the bilateral trade volume between the two nations was two billion US dollars. It increased to 11.3 billion US dollars in 2004-05 period.

“This year our bilateral trade will be in excess of 15 billion US dollars,” Kamal Nath said.

In April 2005, the two countries agreed to make joint efforts to increase the bilateral trade volume to 20 billion US dollars or higher by 2008.

Since 1997, India-China trade has registered a growth of 260 per cent, average yearly growth of around 33 per cent, Indian Ministry of Commerce and Industry said here Thursday.—**MNA/Xinhua**

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**Nepal, China agree to further ties**

**KATHMANDU**, 17 March — Nepali high-ranking officials and visiting Chinese State Councillor Tang Jiaxuan on Thursday agreed to promote the two countries’ traditional friendship and expand their cooperation in various fields.

Nepali Vice-Chairmen of the Council of Ministers Tulu Giri and Kirti Nidhi Bista met here with Tang, who arrived here Thursday on a three-day official visit to Nepal.

Giri said Nepal and China enjoy traditional friendship, adding that after the establishment of diplomatic relations, the two countries have made great progress in strengthening understanding and cooperation.

Nepal firmly supports the one-China policy and will never allow any anti-China activities in Nepal’s territory, Bista said.

Tang said the China-Nepal friendship has been a model for countries with different social systems. The two sides agreed to further cooperation in economy, trade, culture and education for the benefit of the two peoples.—**MNA/Xinhua**

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**Coral reefs seen threatened by tsunami rebuilding**

**GENEVA**, 17 March — Coral reefs that survived the devastating Indian Ocean tsunami are coming under threat from rushed rebuilding efforts in the region, two international environmental groups said on Thursday.

In a report issued in Geneva, they said studies along coastlines hit by the tsunami, the tidal wave which left nearly 200,000 dead on 26 December, 2004, found little harm to coral formations.

Only a few reefs were severely damaged, and most would recover naturally within 10 years, said the two bodies — the inter-governmental World Conservation Union and the Global Coral Reef Monitoring Network.

They said clean-up efforts had already addressed much of the initial damage which came from debris backwashed from shorelines mainly off the coasts of India, Sri Lanka, Thailand and Indonesia.

Since then, however, new threats have emerged from a rush to rebuild homes and other buildings wrecked by the tsunami.

The need for urgent supplies of building material has led locals to take sand and rock illegally from the coral reefs, which are protected under international conservation agreements.

Felling of coastal forests for building timber has also increased the risk of landslides that could cover reefs with sediment.

**Quake jolts Mozambique, Zimbabwe**

**HARARE**, 17 March — An earthquake measuring 5.3 on the Richter Scale rocked Mozambique and parts of Zimbabwe on Wednesday.

The earthquake came hardly three weeks after a powerful earthquake measuring 7.5 on the Richter Scale rocked several parts of Zimbabwe, Mozambique and South Africa.

Amos Makarau, the director of Zimbabwe’s meteorological department, confirmed Wednesday that the geological occurrence took place around 2:00 in the afternoon, saying investigations were continuing to establish the extent of the tremors and the damage caused, according to local Press reports on Thursday. He said the tremor whose epicenter was 250 kilometres southwest of Mozambique’s Beira, had taken an almost similar path to the one that took place on 23 February.—**MNA/Xinhua**

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**Drop in exercise efficiency with age can be eased**

**NEW YORK**, 17 March — Older adults may have to work harder than young people to perform the same physical activity, but regular exercise may close that age gap, research findings suggest.

In a study comparing sedentary adults in their 60s and 70s with those in their 20s and 30s, researchers found that older men and women had to use much more oxygen to walk at the same speed as their younger counterparts.

But that was before they went through a six-month exercise programme. After taking up walking or jogging, biking and stretching, the senior study participants reversed their loss of exercise “efficiency”.

Exercise efficiency refers to how much energy the body expends to perform a given activity. At the start of this study, older men and women used 20 per cent more oxygen to walk at the same speed as a younger person, said Dr. Wayne C. Levy of the University of Washington in Seattle, the study’s senior author.

But six months of regular exercise — 90 minutes, three days per week — improved older participants’ exercise efficiency by 30 per cent, versus only 2 per cent among their younger counterparts. The findings are published in the current issue of the *Journal of the American College of Cardiology*.

It is well known that as people age, there is a decline in exercise capacity — how much a person can do before becoming exhausted. But the new findings suggest this is not just a product of the aging cardiovascular system being less able to send oxygen to working muscles.—**MNA/Reuters**
The second para of the Preamble to the UN Charter collectively drawn by 50 member nations in 1945 in San Francisco, the US, says “We the peoples of the UN are determined to reaffirm faith in fundamental human rights, in the dignity and worth of the human person”.

Up to the time before and after the World War II, more than one hundred nations remained under alien subjugation, and inhabited and uninhabited islands in the seas and oceans were still taken possession by the nations that occupied them first and big nations. And the nations fighting for their independence were still under the oppression by the colonialists. The nations that had regained independence joined the UN. The majority of the UN member nations did not accept colonialism. So, the UN launched a decolonization campaign. The major aim of the UN was to enable all human beings and world nations to be free from the yoke of colonialism or to enjoy independence. The Universal Human Rights Declaration was collectively written in 1948 to help the UN to win freedom for the world people. Member countries signed the declaration.

The UN’s Universal Human Rights Declaration guarantees world people access to freedom of livelihood, being free from servitude, and freedom to serve the interests of the motherland and own people in accordance with the traditions, culture, history and the desire of the majority of the people of the nation concerned without being dominated by foreign countries. The essence in brief, the Universal Human Rights Declaration has been to enable all human beings to enjoy independence, freedom of livelihood and rights to shape own destiny.

Such UN agencies as the ECOSOC, ILO and UNESCO carry out UN functions on human rights in respective fields. The ECOSOC formed Human Rights Commission and Commission on the Status of Women in 1946.

At the conferences of the Human Rights Commission, representatives of respective countries and the commission always presented reports that human rights violation was common in the nations that had invaded others, colonialist nations and the nations that practised apartheid and racial discrimination. They also viewed gross violation of human rights in South Africa, Arab land under occupation, Chile, El Salvador and Guatemala.

Every time such reports were submitted to the meetings of the UN Human Rights Commission, the US and its allies voted against the reports. In particular, the Western countries voted against the proposals submitted to put an end to violation of fundamental rights and freedom.

In 1947, the Human Rights Commission formed a sub-commission against racism and apartheid and protection of ethnic groups. The sub-commission reported on any types of discrimination on colour, racism, culture, faith and language. Then, it formed work groups to assess cases of discrimination and slavery and other cases of human rights violation.

The resolution to protect the rights of women adopted by the UN Assembly was the fruit of the efforts of the sub-commission on women’s status. Its efforts have also resulted in many international agreements such as agreement on women’s right to enter into politics, agreement on marriages of women based on their own consent, agreement on naturalization of married women, declaration on non-discrimination of women’s rights, and agreement on preventing any types of discrimination against women. The UNESCO has striven for ensuring non-social, racial and colour discrimination in pursuing education.

In 1966, the UN General Assembly passed resolutions on reciprocal agreement on economic, social and cultural rights and international agreement on human rights and political rights. The two agreements state that the signatories are to make laws and provide relevant rules as and when necessary. In this way the UN made the signatories to observe the agreements on human rights.

There was a body compiling the list of countries that had violated the Article 19 of UHRD, based on the facts gathered by human rights bodies, individuals and nations. The watchdog is called Article 19. Time magazine of the US published the 1988 report of the Article 19.

The report listed the names of 50 countries that violated the Universal Human Rights Declaration and how they breached it. Those countries were: eight from southern Sahara, Africa, 12 from North and South America, nine from Asia; 13 from Europe, six from Middle East and North Africa, and Australia and Fiji.

The report also mentioned the signing date of the 50 countries and how they violated the Article 19. The US was included in the countries that did not sign the agreement. Myanmar was not included in the 50 nations that violated human rights in 1988.

America that is making slanders today, opposed and did not support the Human Rights Declaration passed by the UN in 1948. In fact, it was a country being criticised by the Human Rights Commission every year for its violations.

Later, the US signed the Declaration making a pledge to observe it. After two years, the US lawmakers opposed the Declaration. Thus the US government pledged to sign any international agreement only after consulting with the Congress and not to sign any international agreement that might harm the US interest.

While the California Court was hearing the case of a Japanese descendant, Fuji, vs the California State government, the California State Legislative House ruled that the law promulgated by the California State government was unlawful as it violated the UN Charter Principles and the UHR Declaration. The repercussions produced by the decision of the legislative house even reached the Senate.

In 1966, the US closed its human rights door, and was violating the interests of American citizens. Senator Bricker of Ohio made a submission to the Senate, saying that thousands of laws of the US and its states will become automatically annulled if the US courts continue to adhere to the UN Declaration. He interfered in the rights of free administration of justice, and submitted a proposal to amend the US constitution with the support of 50 other senators. His proposal was to bar the US from signing any international agreement without the approval of the Congress. During the session to discuss the proposal, Secretary of State John Foster Dulles, on behalf of the President, made a pledge that the US would never sign any international agreement that might change the social situation of America and become a burden on the people. Dulles said that the US would sign only the agreements with other nations that served the interests of American citizens.

The above-mentioned events proved that the US closed its human rights door, and was violating the UN Charter Principles and the UN Declaration and exercising the double-standard policy in slandering other nations. The US-based human rights watchdog, and a large number of foreign-based watchdogs under the financial assistance of the US are issuing many human rights reports to destroy the freedom and self-determination of the global countries.

(To be continued)
(Translation: MS + TMT)
Myaung Aung: 18-3-2006
Ceremony of growing physic nut plants held in Sittway Station, regional development...

(from page 1) presented 5,000 physic nut saplings and 31,000 seeds to the units and regiments of the station and viewed the collective growing of physic nut plants.

The commander and those present viewed the demonstration of using stoves and operating engines with the use of physic nut oil.

Next, the commander inspected the nurturing of 90,000 pepper plants and 45,000 rubber plants and gave necessary instructions. On arrival at Sittway Station breeding farm, the commander inspected the breeding tasks and left instructions.

Later, the commander inspected the sanitation task being carried out at Ywagyi North Ward in Sittway, the worksite of Myanmar Salt and Marine Chemicals Enterprise, repaving tasks and upgrading the earth road into tar road and gave necessary instructions to the officials.

MNA

Special sales of Ministry of Industry-1 opened in Monywa

YANGON, 17 March — As a gesture of hailing the 61st Anniversary Armed Forces Day, the special sales of Ministry of Industry-1 was opened at the sports grounds in Monywa yesterday morning.

Director-General U Thak Tun of Industrial Supervision and Inspection Department under the Ministry of Industry-1 and Commander of Mandalay Division Police Force Police Col Tin Maung Maung opened the special sales.

Chairman of Sagaing Division Peace and Development Council Commander of North-West Command Maj-Gen Tha Aye unveiled the signboard of the special sales.

Deputy Minister Brig-Gen Thein Tun conducted the commander and party round the sales centre.

A total of 325 kinds of goods produced by departments and industries of the Ministry of Industry-1 are being sold at the sports ground from 8 am to 8 pm daily.

MNA

MEB managers hold coord meeting on annual statement of account

YANGON, 18 March — Managers in Lower Myanmar of Myanmar Economic Bank under the Ministry of Finance and Revenue held a coordination meeting on annual statement of account for 2005-06 financial year.

Minister Maj-Gen Hla Tun addressed coordination meeting on annual statement of account for 2005-06 financial year.

Tamarlay Division, Mon, Kayin and Rakhine States also held the preliminary meeting. On 17 March, they participated in the paper-reading session.

MNA

methods of drying crops and quality maintenance to be explained

YANGON, 18 March — The Myanmar Rice Millers Association will give talks and present demonstrations of methods of drying paddy and crops and quality maintenance at Thaung Win Industry at No 142/143 in U Shwe Bin Street, Industrial Zone (1), Hlaingthaya Township, here, from 9 am to 4 pm on 1 April.

General Secretary of the Association U Myo Aung Kyaw will present a paper on quality control of crops and post-harvest technology and paddy dryers suitable for Myanmar, CEC Member of the Union of Myanmar Federation of Chambers of Commerce and Industry U Myint Zaw on equipment to measure quality of crops and post-harvest technology and paddy dryers suitable for Myanmar, CEC Member of the Union of Myanmar Federation of Chambers of Commerce and Industry U Myint Zaw on equipment to measure quality of crops, Agricultural U Ba Hein on propagation of quality paddy strains, and Executive of the Association U Thaung Win on crop dryers along with demonstrations.

Those interested may attend the free programme and are to get enlisted in the Association (Ph: 296248, 296284 and 296265) not later than 29 March.

MNA
Chinese journalists tour Bagan-NyaungU, Mandalay

YANGON, 18 March—The Chinese journalist delegation led by Chairman of China Journalists Association Mr Shao Huaze left here by air on 16 March and arrived NyaungU Airport.

At Shwezigon and Ananda Pagodas in NyaungU, the Chinese delegation made cash donations and signed the visitors’ book.

They visited the Archaeological Museum and Lacquer College.

The Chinese guests observed works of U Ba Nyein Lacquerware Industry in Bagan Myothit. Next, they enjoyed sunset beauty of Bagan from Bagan Nammyint Tower.

On 17 March, they flew to Mandalay. The guests visited Myanmar Sankyaw Golden Palace and Cultural Museum. They called on Chairman of Mandalay City Development Committee Mayor Brig-Gen Phone Zaw Han at his office. The mayor explained facts about Mandalay and its progress to the guests.

Afterwards, the Chinese journalists paid homage to Maha Muni Buddha Image and made donations.

At Ayeyawady Bridge (Yadanabon) Project site, Deputy Superintendent Engineer U Htay Myint conducted them round the project site.

The guests also visited Hsutaungpyay Pagoda on Mandalay Hill. In the evening, the mayor hosted a dinner to the Chinese journalists.

This morning, they arrived back here by air.

MNA

Preventive measures undertaken against avian flu inspected

YANGON, 18 March—Chairman of Work Committee for Control of avian influenza Deputy Minister for Health Dr Mya Oo inspected preventive measures undertaken at Waibagi Specialist Hospital this morning.

Medical Superintendent Dr Nilar reported on wards, receiving patients and health care services at intensive care units, Deputy Director of Health Education Department Dr Khin Maung Lwin on data necessary for treatment of bird flu and points to be observed and Professor Dr Tin Aung Saw on use of overcoats, gloves and masks for protection.

The deputy minister gave instructions on special training for guarding against of disease.

MNA

Suits for protection against Avian Influenza donated to Health Department

YANGON, 18 March—The suits donation for protection against Avian Influenza to the Health Department of the Ministry of Health at Waibagi Specialists Hospital this morning.

Present on the occasion were Chairman of Myanmar Red Cross Society Dr Hla Myint, Deputy Director-General of Medical Research Department (Lower Myanmar) Dr Soe Thein, directors, officials of health departments and officials of WHO.

First, the chairman of MRCs Dr Hla Myint explained the purpose of donating suits and presented 1,000 suits worth 5 millions to the Health Department. Director of Health Department Dr Tin Nyunt accepted the donation and presented certificates of honour.

MNA
Vice-Mayor inspects tax free markets, central Sanpya Fish Market

YANGON, 18 March — Vice-Chairman of Yangon City Development Committee Vice-Mayor Col Maung Pa and officials inspected sales at tax free markets and central Sanpya Fish Market this morning.

The vice-mayor inspected tax free markets in Mayangon, Yankin, Tamway, Kamayut and Dagon Townships.

He visited central Sanpya Fish Market in Kyimyindaing Township and inspected the sales of fresh water and deep sea fish and prawn and met fish entrepreneurs and officials of the market. — MNA

43rd Myanma Gems Emporium chalks up success

The 43rd Myanma Gems Emporium (2006) organized by the Myanma Gems Emporium Central Committee held on the Myanma Gems Mart on Kaba Aye Pagoda Road in Yangon is drawing a greater number of gem merchants and achieving success.

A total of 2,213 merchants—1,371 from 232 companies of 11 foreign countries and 842 from 337 local companies—attend the emporium.

Myanmar is worldwide popular as a land that is rich in precious stones of various kinds. Gems merchants from international community are taking interest in Myanmar’s gems. Myanmar is called the Golden Land as different sorts of precious stones are produced in it.

The Myanma Gems Emporium has been held since 1966. In the emporium, 66 lots of gems, 190 lots of jade and 34 lots of pearls will be auctioned.

Sixty-two lots of gems, 2,269 lots of jade and 216 lots of pearls will be sold through tender system, and 123 lots of gems at fixed prices.

A total of 2,459 lots of jade are on display for sale in this emporium, and this is a record number of jade lots.

The emporium draws the attention of Austria, Russia, the Republic of Korea, Japan, India, China, Singapore, Thailand, Spain, Sri Lanka and the US.

Quality jade lots displayed at the emporium attract the gems merchants.

In particular, the merchants eye lot No 63 of Mogok ruby weighing 33.39 carats with the reserve price of 3.5 million euros, lot No 233 comprising 68 pearls of gold hue weighing 62.50 mommes with reserve price of 17,300 euros, and lot No 2429 comprising five jade blocks weighing 125 kilos with reserve price of one million euros and the lots are highest prices of their kinds.

Moreover, lot No 2278 of imperial jade weighing 1.80 kilogrammes with reserve price of 200,800 euros wins the attention of the merchants.

Lots of pearls shiny with gold colour, quality jade lots and Mogok ruby with the highest reserve price have fascinated the merchants. It is simply believed that the gems emporium will effectively help realize the State’s aim of earning more foreign exchange.

Translation: MS
1. Incidences of Avian Influenza

Avian Influenza (bird flu) is of zoonotic nature, (transmissible to human beings) that has occurred since December 2003 and spreads to 14 countries in Asia and 30 countries in other parts of the world totaling 44 countries. As of the end of February it caused 96 numbers of human death.

2. Situation in Myanmar

Starting from the 1st week of February to the early part of March, the outbreaks of chicken disease, suspected Avian Influenza occurred in Shwebo Township, Kantbalu and KhinOo Townships in Sagaing Division and Pyigyidagun Township in Mandalay Division. The cause of disease may be due to migratory birds that fly across the country or illegal importation of hatching eggs and day-old-chicks. If the dead bird had been vaccinated with Avian Influenza vaccine, it causes complication in disease diagnosis and identification.

3. The measures currently taken

The above said townships in the southern part of Sagaing Division and Mandalay Division are confined as restricted zones and the movement control, temporary close down of markets and disease investigation in the poultry farms are undertaken under the guidance of local authorities. Field investigation and disease surveillance are carried out continuously.

4. Signs and Symptoms

(a) Sudden death and high mortality, drop in egg production
(b) Dull, decreased feed intake and excessive drinking
(c) Difficult in breathing, eye and nasal discharges.
(d) Oedema in head and face
(e) Oedema in comb and wattles
(f) Haemorrhages and red spots in legs and knee joints
(g) 100% mortality if it is severe

5. Disease control measures to be taken

(a) To notify promptly the local authorities or Livestock Breeding and Veterinary Department (LBVD) if the disease suspected of Avian Influenza is noticed.
(b) If chickens are affected with any kind of disease, not to sell out to the market or any other region.
(c) To protect the domestic birds from contact with wild and migratory birds.
(d) Not to convey the birds from other farms to the own farm and not to practice mixed farming of different species.
(e) Not to allow the entry of people including young children from outside into own poultry farm
(f) Whenever enter the farm, use boots, overcoat, head wear, glove and mask for protection.
(g) To keep the farm hygienic and apply disinfectants and lime regularly on the farm.
(h) Not to allow farm workers to poultry markets and to change clothes and shoes before entering the farm if happens to do.
(i) To cook well poultry meat and eggs to prevent transmission to humans.

6. The Animal Health and Development Law has been promulgated for the control of animal infectious diseases. The stakeholders involved in poultry farming and trading are notified to coordinate and cooperate in contributing effectively to the control of Avian Influenza.
INVITATION FOR TENDER

Sealed Tenders are invited for the supply of Road Bitumen 80/100 Grade to Myanma Petrochemical Enterprise, Ministry of Energy. Tenders are to be submitted under the following terms and conditions:-

Quantity: 20,000 ± 10% MT
Price (in bulk): USD/Mt CIF Ex-ship Thalilin
Country of Origin: Thailand
Delivery: Within end of May
Closing Date: 28.3.2006 12:00 HRS

Tender Documents are available at Finance Department, Myanma Petrochemical Enterprise, No. (23), Min-Ye-Kyawswa Road, Yangon starting from (20.3.2006) on payment of one hundred (100) FEC. Only tender bid purchased officially will be accepted for evaluation.

Managing Director
Myanma Petrochemical Enterprise

Turkish military helicopter crashes in east, 4 dead

ISTANBUL, 17 March — A Turkish military helicopter crashed in the east of the country on Thursday after colliding with a power line, killing four people and injuring two, the provincial governor said.

State-run Anatolian news agency quoted the governor of eastern Erzincan Province as saying the helicopter had crashed on to the main road between Erzincan and Erzurum.

The governor's office confirmed that the helicopter had crashed but provided no further details.

MENA/Reuters

China to produce 91 mn colour TVs in 2006

BEIJING, 17 March — China is expected to produce 91 million units of colour TVs in 2006, the Ministry of Information Industry forecast on Thursday.

Some 48 million units will be for export, a source with the ministry's Economic Performance Department said.

The output of thin film transistor-liquid crystal display panel TVs has grown very fast over the past years, said the source, adding that China's flat screen TV technology has gradually matured, leading to reduced production cost.

The sales ratio of flat screen colour TV has outpaced that of traditional colour TV, according to a colour TV sales database which covers 200 cities.

China is the world's biggest colour TV producer and exporter, with its colour TV output making up half of the world's total.

In 2005, the country turned out 82.83 million sets of colour TVs, an increase of 13 per cent year-on-year. It sold 80.45 million sets, a rise of 10.69 per cent from a year earlier.

Meanwhile, it exported 39.75 million units of colour TVs last year, a year-on-year rise of 43.36 per cent, with export volume hitting 5.05 billion US dollars, up 57.55 per cent. Although the growth of the industry began to slow down in 2003, it has maintained double-digit growth.

MENA/Reuters

German named to head UN environment agency

UNITED NATIONS, 17 March — UN Secretary-General Kofi Annan chose a German conservationist to head the UN Environment Programme for a four-year term, a UN spokesman announced on Wednesday.

Achim Steiner, now director-general of the World Conservation Union, will replace another German, Klaus Toepfer, as head of UNEP, based in the Kenyan capital, Nairobi.

If confirmed, 44, is expected to assume his post on June 15 after ratification by the UN General Assembly, UN spokesman Stephane Dujarric said.

UNEP was established in 1972 to guide environmental activities at the United Nations, especially among developing nations, through its scientific advisory groups.

Its widely recognized activity is Earthwatch, an international monitoring system designed to facilitate the exchange of information on significant environmental risks among governments.

The World Conservation Union that Steiner heads is the world's largest environmental network with over 1,000 members in 140 countries, including China.

US, Japan, Australia to tackle rise of China

SYDNEY, 17 March — The United States has made the economic and military rise of China the focus of top-level security talks with Australia and Japan on Saturday, but Canberra has assured Beijing it is not a bid to contain the Asian giant.

US Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice, who will meet Australian Foreign Minister Alexander Downer and Japanese Foreign Minister Taro Aso in Sydney, wants to assure China its military build-up does not “outsize” its regional ambitions and interests.

But Downer has been a little more restrained, describing the meeting as an opportunity to discuss harnessing the growing power of China to the advantage of the region and managing its rise so that Beijing can play a positive international role. “(The security talks) shouldn't be viewed as a policy of containment of China or in any sense hostile towards China. There are plenty of issues for us to talk about other than China,” Downer told Australia's Sky News.

MENA/Reuters

Sleaze accusations against Blair’s Labour Party

LONDON, 17 March — Prime Minister Tony Blair came to office in 1997 promising to clean up politics after a series of sleaze scandals had rocked the outgoing Conservative government.

But Labour has not managed to avoid accusations of sleaze during its nine years in office and now faces another cash-for-favourites test over donations to party coffers.

Here are some of the past problems:

* In November 1997 it was revealed Formula One motor racing boss Bernie Ecclestone gave the Labour Party one million pounds. The government later decided to exempt Formula One from a proposed ban on tax on sponsorship. Labour gave the money back.

* Trade Secretary Peter Mandelson resigned in December 1998, after he failed to declare a 373,000-pound (687,300-US-dollar) loan from ex-minister and millionaire Geoffrey Robinson to buy a house.

MENA/Reuters

Indonesian lawmakers take to street against US firm

JAKARTA, 17 March — Several members of the Indonesian House of Representatives took to the street Wednesday joining dozens of students in a rally to protest recent appointment of US oil giant Exxon Mobil as operator in Cepu oil block.

The protesters filled the street here near a building where visiting US Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice was delivering a speech on democracy.

Exxon Mobil on Monday won operatorship in Cepu oil block which has estimated reserves of 600 million barrels of oil.

The victory came several days after the government replaced nearly all directors in state-run oil firm Pertamina, which previously insisted on becoming the sole operator in Cepu, and one day before Rice's arrival here.

Local news website Detikcom said at least three lawmakers were seen among the protesters. Legislators Amy Taher from the Social Justice Party said from the scene the House would summon related ministers to quiz them over the Cepu case.

Taher called for the government to review or consider cancelling contract with Exxon Mobil while the joint operation agreement (JOA) between Exxon Mobil and Pertamina had not been signed yet.
Astronomers find DNA-like nebula near centre of Milky Way

LOS ANGELES, 17 March— With NASA’s Spitzer Space Telescope, US astronomers spotted an unprecedented DNA-like nebula near the centre of our Milky Way.

The observed part of elongated double helix nebula, stretching 80 light years in length, sits approximately 300 light years from the enormous black hole at the centre of the Milky Way. The Earth is more than 25,000 light years from the black hole.

The researchers published their findings in the March 16 edition of the journal Nature.

“We see two intertwining strands wrapped around each other as in a DNA molecule,” said Mark Morris, lead author of the study at the University of California, Los Angeles.

“Nobody has ever seen anything like that before in the cosmic realm. Most nebula are either spiral galaxies full of stars or formless amorphous conglomerations of dust and gas — space weather. What we see indicates a high degree of order.”

The fancy feature of the nebula could be driven by magnetic waves at the centre of galaxy, Morris explained. Galactic centre has a strong, highly-ordered magnetic field, and the magnetic field lines are oriented perpendicular to the plane of the galaxy.

Russia-China military cooperation not foremost in relations

BEIJING, 17 March — Russian Ambassador to China Sergey Razov said here on Thursday that military cooperation is not the most important part of Russia-China relations.

Razov made the remarks at a Press conference on the Year of Russia, to be inaugurated amid Russian President Vladimir Putin’s state visit to China on on 21 and 22 March. Razov told the media not to pay too much attention to the military programmes during the Year of Russia, which after all account for only a portion of all the programmes. The Year of Russia in 2006 in China and the Year of China in 2007 in Russia were declared in a joint statement last year.

The two goodwill programmes will involve a wide spectrum of areas designed to enhance mutual understanding between the two countries and peoples.

China’s population reaches 1.30 bln last year

BEIJING, 17 March— China’s population had risen to 1.306 billion by 1 November, 2005, up 3.2 per cent from the figure on 1 November, 2000 when the Fifth National Population Census was conducted, the National Bureau of Statistics reported on Thursday.

The figures are the outcome of China’s third one-per-cent sample census conducted on 1 November, 2005. The Chinese Government started in the 1980s to punctuate thorough National Censuses with sample censuses, which sample 1 per cent of the population.

Based on the sample census, researchers put China’s population at 1.307 billion by the end of 2005.

The country’s population has grown at an annual rate of 0.63 per cent or 8.09 million people in the past five years, the report said.

Booming auto sales in emerging markets lure world carmakers

HONG KONG, 17 March — Booming auto sales in the emerging markets of China and India are offering huge growth potential to the largely saturated global car market, said a report published by Standard and Poor’s Rating Services on Wednesday.

“We expect an average growth in car sales in China of at least 10 per cent to 15 per cent per year over the medium term,” said Standard & Poor’s credit analyst Maria Bissinger, author of the report entitled “Dream Machines: Emerging Markets Beckon the World’s Carmakers.”

She said “in India, market forecast a growth rate of about 10 per cent to 12 per cent in 2006, matching long-term economic growth expectations in the country,” she added.

On a lower level, the emerging Russian car market is also attractive to global automakers after seeing growth of 7 per cent to 8 per cent since 2000. Every major international manufacturer is now present in the Chinese market, in which more than 100 auto manufacturers currently compete, the report said.

Young Chinese physicists invited to Switzerland, Germany

BEIJING, 17 March— The Swiss and German embassies in Beijing announced Thursday that 18 Chinese doctoral candidates for physics have been invited to Switzerland and Germany for a three-week academic exchange.

Hu Jian at elite Qinghua University in Beijing and the other 17 recipients of the Einstein Award are scheduled to visit prestigious research institutes in both Switzerland and Germany. During their stay in Switzerland, they will visit the Einstein Museum located in Bern. At the awards ceremony, the Swiss Ambassador to China said Chinese scientific research is developing rapidly. Both Switzerland and Germany are conducting closer research cooperation with China.

The Einstein Award is aimed at strengthening cooperation between China, Switzerland and Germany. Germany and Switzerland lead the world in winning Nobel prizes. The year of 2005 is the centennial anniversary of the remarkable discoveries by Albert Einstein, who articulated the celebrated theories of relativity and quantum optics in Bern, Switzerland, in 1905.

Photo taken on 17 March, 2006 shows the noseless Great Sphinx of Giza in Cairo, Egypt. The half-man half-lion statue is to get a facelift according to the Egyptian Ministry of Culture. Restoration work carried by the High Council for Antiquities is to focus on the beast’s neck and chest, eroded by desert winds.

The last restoration work was undertaken in 1996. — INTERNET
Benitez joins in criticism of FA Cup schedule
LIVERPOOL, (England), 18 March— Liverpool manager Rafael Benitez is angry that his team must play an FA Cup quarterfinal match against Birmingham City, just two days after Sunday’s Premier League clash with Newcastle United.

The FA Cup is now Liverpool’s last hope for silverware this season after they were knocked out of the Champions League by Benfica and falling too far behind Chelsea in the league.

“In this case you have to think about both games. It is only two days and you do not have time to recuperate the players,” Benitez told reporters.

At Christmas time we had similar problems. We played four games in eight days. I don’t understand these things because if you want to see the best of your players and the best football you must give the players a rest. “You cannot give the players just one day to recover. If you know football, you know the second day after a game is the worst day for players.” —MNA/Reuters

Queiroz says van Nistelrooy staying at United
MANCHESTER (England), 18 March— Manchester United striker Ruud van Nistelrooy will not be leaving Old Trafford, assistant manager Carlos Queiroz said on Friday.

van Nistelrooy’s omission from the starting line-up for the past three games has led to speculation the Dutch international could leave in the close season after five years leading the United line.

Queiroz insisted the 29-year-old still has a key role to play at United.

“Ruud is a crucial player for our goals and our ambitions. Nobody can have any doubts about that,” Queiroz told reporters.

“He is part of our team and part of our contribution, starting the game or during the game, is always crucial to us. He is part of our plan — the short, medium and long-term.

You can’t be surprised that 50 teams in the world want Ruud. There is only one team that does not need to want Ruud and that is Manchester United because we have him.”

“We are the special team that has Ruud so we just need to show our commitment and our appreciation to the player because he is a crucial player to us,” Queiroz believes van Nistelrooy, joint top scorer in the Premier League, is happy at Old Trafford where he has been offered reassurances about his importance to the club. —MNA/Reuters

Betis coach asks for forgiveness after UEFA Cup exit
MADRID, 18 March— Real Betis coach Lloren&egra#80; Serra Ferrer asked for forgiveness from the fans after his side’s humiliating UEFA Cup exit by Steaua Bucharest on Thursday.

The players and coaching staff were barracked from the stands after falling 3-0 at home to the Romanians, having drawn 0-0 in the first leg of the last 16 tie in Romania.

“The fans have good reason to protest because things have not gone well for us of late,” Serra Ferrer said.

“I want to apologize to them for our poor run of form. Now we have to try and finish the season with as much dignity as possible.” Two goals from Banel Nicolita, and one from Victorias Jacob, steered Steaua to an impressive victory, while Betis’ challenge faded following the 60th-minute red card for winger Joaquin.—MNA/Reuters

Howell glides into halfway lead at TCL Classic
BEIJING, 18 March— European Tour order of merit leader David Howell of Britain fired a nine-under 63 to storm two shots clear at the halfway stage of the TCL Classic on Friday.

On a second straight day of low scoring, the world number 14 picked up 11 birdies on the par-72 Yalong Bay Golf Club on Hainan Island to surge up the leaderboard with a 17-under-par 127 total at the 1-million-US-dollar co-sanctioned European and Asian Tour event.

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British’s Dougherty was particularly impressed with Howell’s play.—MNA/Reuters

CROSSWORD PUZZLE

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ACROSS
1 Australian Englishman
4 Hard rock
8 Pre-eminent in show business
9 Savoury meat jelly
10 Excuse
11 Moral
13 Adam’s third son
15 Grossly material
17 New
20 Swirl
22 Supplementary items
24 Of the same value
26 Concede
27 Largely
28 Venomous US snake
29 African antelope
35 Extreme

DOWN
1 Corridor
2 Resort in Florida
3 Corrupt Hebrew
4 Boring-tool
5 Put out of countenance
6 Collision
7 Surpass
8 Surname of the American hockey player
drafted by the New York Islanders
in 1981
9 Observed
10 Shining
11 Shiny
12 Dull sound
13 DOV
14 Ihnen
15 Billion
16 Billion
17 Shiny
18 Tanzanian statesman
19 Help up
20 Peril
21 Peril
22 Irene
23 Province of
24 South Africa
25 Extreme

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Australia, England swimmers split gold medals
MELBOURNE, 18 March— Australia completed a pair of medal sweep while England pocketed two in the men’s session of the swimming competition at the Commonwealth Games here on Friday.

On the second day of the competition, swimming was still the centrepiece of the 11-day Games as people swarmed into the Melbourne Sports and Aquatic Centre. World champion Dannie Miatke led the Australian haul of medals when she finished 26.43 seconds in the women’s 50m butterfly.

Jessica Schipper, winner of the 100m butterfly in last year’s World Championships, took the second with 0.22 seconds back, while Alice Mills came in third.

MNA/Xinhua

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Gene changes found in Vietnam’s Agent Orange victims

HANOI, 18 March — Vietnamese scientists have found that genes of some local people affected by Agent Orange, defoliants sprayed by US Army in the Vietnam War, have been altered, said a symposium delegate.

At the two-day international symposium entitled “What Vietnamese Agent Orange/Dioxin Victims Hope For,” Le Ke Son, office manager of Vietnam’s National Steering Committee for Overcoming Aftermaths of War Toxic Substances, said the gene alteration has caused serious diseases and congenital malformations among children or grandchildren of people exposed to the defoliants, local newspaper Pioneer reported Friday. Son said among 174,197 Agent Orange victims recently researched by the scientists, 169,193 are the first generation (children), and 5,005 the second generation (grandchildren). The scientists have also found that some people and their children have not shown signs of illness, but diseases appear among the next generation.

During the symposium starting here Thursday, 155 representatives from 11 countries, mainly scientists, social activists, officers of governmental and non-governmental organizations, and local victims, are to hear 28 reports on effects of the defoliants on human lives, and view photos and documentaries about the victims’ sufferings.

The symposium’s minutes will be sent to the US Court of Appeals, which will hear Vietnamese victims’ case against American chemical producers next month.

MNA/Xinhua

WEATHER

Saturday, 18 March, 2006

Summary of observations recorded at 09:30 hours MST: During the past 24 hours, rain have been scattered in Tanintharyi Division, isolated in Kachin State and Sagaing Division, weather has been generally fair in the remaining areas. Day temperatures were (3°C) to (4°C) above normal in Kachin, Shan, Kayin and Mon States, Magway, Bago and Ayeyawady Divisions, (5°C) above normal in Mandalay Division and normal in the remaining States and Divisions. The significant day temperature was Aunglan (41°C). The noteworthy amounts of rainfall recorded were Myeik (0.67) inch and Dawei (0.08) inch.

Maximum temperature on 17-3-2006 was 101°F. Minimum temperature on 18-3-2006 was 67°F. Relative humidity at 09:30 hrs MST on 18-3-2006 was (77%). Total sunshine hours on 17-3-2006 was (8.5) hours approx.

Rainfalls on 18-3-2006 were nil at Mongladon, Kaba-Aye and central Yangon. Total rainfalls since 1-1-2006 were nil at Mongladon, Kaba-Aye and central Yangon. Maximum wind speed at Yangon (Kaba-Aye) was (6) mph from Northeast at (14:30) hours MST on 17-3-2006.

Bay inference: Weather is generally fair in the North Bay and partly cloudy elsewhere in the Bay of Bengal.

Forecast valid until evening of 19-3-2006: Isolated light rain are likely in Kachin State and Tanintharyi Division, weather will be partly cloudy in Rakhine, Mon, Kayin States and Yangon Division and generally fair in the remaining areas. Degree of certainty is (60%).

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

Outlook for subsequent two days: Likelihood of continuation of slight increase of day temperatures in Central Myanmar areas.

Forecast for Pyinmana and neighbouring area for 19-3-2006: Partly cloudy.

Forecast for Yangon and neighbouring area for 19-3-2006: Partly cloudy.

Forecast for Mandalay and neighbouring area for 19-3-2006: Generally fair.
Commander inspects development of Bhamo District

YANGON, 18 March — Chairman of Kachin State Peace and Development Council Commander of Northern Command Maj-Gen Ohn Myint met with departmental personnel at Bhamo District and Township levels and local people at the city hall in Bhamo on 6 March morning.

Chairman of Bhamo District Peace and Development Council Lt-Col Hla Thaung and departmental officials reported on regional development tasks, agriculture, education, health and transport facilities, and tasks of departments concerned.

The commander presented K 500,000 each for health care services of Bhamo Township Hospital and for education tasks to officials.

Afterwards, the commander oversaw Thiri Yadana Market in Bhamo and instructed officials to keep the market clean.

At noon, the commander inspected construction of Momauk-Kyanphone gravel road and bridges along it. He gave instructions on construction of the retaining walls at the road and dredging of drains on either side of the road.

In Lwejel, the commander oversaw the office of Border Trade Department, police station, physical nut nursery, vegetable patches and departmental offices. He met with departmental personnel and attended to the needs.

The commander inspected the Myanmar-China border post, roads and buildings in Lwejel.

Objectives of the 61st Anniversary Armed Forces Day

* To work in concert with the people for emergence of a peaceful, modern, developed, discipline-flourishing democratic new nation
* To strive for successful realization of the seven-point policy programme of the State
* To crush every danger posed to the State hand in hand with people
* To build a strong, capable and modern Tatmadaw to safeguard Our Three Main National Causes

Above-23 defeat Selected-B 4-1

YANGON, 18 March — Above-23 Selected Team trounced Tentatively Selected Team-B 4-1 in the fourth match of the Second Quadripartite Trials, at Aung San Stadium, here, at 4 pm today.

The Above-23 Selected Team showed off their brilliant football skills, and grasped chances of scoring. The Above-23 Selected Team beat its opponent by a wide margin through scoring of one goal each from Lakye O Lwe, San Maung, Thet Naing Soe and veteran Myo Hlaing Win.

Despite making concerted efforts in their moves, the Tentatively Selected Team-B did not have the opportunity to drill the opponent’s side. Maneuver of the team was thrown into disarray by the Above-23 Selected Team.

The Tentatively Selected Team-B was consoled with an equalizer scored by its player Han Soe Aung.

The match was handled by referee U Win Htut. — NLM

142 lots of pearl sold

YANGON, 18 March — Chairman of the Myanmar Gems Emporium Central Committee Deputy Minister for Mines U Myint Thein viewed sales of pearl lots through tender and competitive bidding system of the 43rd Myanmar Gems Emporium at Myanmar Gems Mart on Kaba Aye Pagoda Road, here, this morning.

The deputy minister cordially greeted local and foreign pearl merchants.

Pearl merchants inspected pearl lots from 15 to 17 March and put the tender proposals into the tender box.

This afternoon, 142 lots of pearl were sold. A total of 1,371 gem merchants from abroad and 842 local merchants, totalling 2,213 observed gem and jade lots from 9 am to 5 pm.

On 19 and 20 March, 128 gem lots will be sold through tender system and competitive bidding. — MNA

Lot No 63 of Mogok ruby weighing 33.39 carats with reserve price of 3.5 million euros. — MNA