Demonstration on direct seeding method, paddy transplanting skill contest, power-tiller demonstration held in Taunggyi

NAY PYI TAW, 10 Aug — Member of the State Peace and Development Council Lt-Gen Kyaw Win of the Ministry of Defence attended the ceremony to organize demonstration on direct seeding method, paddy transplanting skill contest, power-tiller demonstration and releasing of fingerlings into the paddy fields for 2006 for Taunggyi Township in Shan State (South). The ceremony took place at Sanpya paddy field in Shwenyaung, Taunggyi Township on 9 August.

Lt-Gen Kyaw Win, Chairman of Shan State Peace and Development Council Commander of Eastern Command Brig-Gen Thaung Aye, senior military officers of the command and officials viewed the paddy transplanting contests, demonstrations of paddy seeders and power-tillers.

Next, Lt-Gen Kyaw Win, the commander and officials released 50,000 fingerlings into paddy fields. They heard a report on efficient use of fertilizers and farmlands and production and distribution of seed corn presented by officials at the respective booths.

Lt-Gen Kyaw Win gave instructions on the development of agricultural sector, use of advanced agricultural techniques and dissemination of knowledge on agriculture by making field trips to the officials.

Lt-Gen Kyaw Win, the commander and officials presented prizes to outstanding village-tracts in the demonstration of power-tillers, demonstration on direct seeding method and paddy transplanting skill contest.

After the ceremony, Lt-Gen Kyaw Win cordially greeted the contestants and local people.

Taunggyi Township has put 33,027 acres of land under monsoon paddy against the target of 39,010 for 2006-07. — MNA

Lt-Gen Khin Maung Than attends concluding of ploughing for monsoon paddy cultivation in 2006-07, paddy transplanting contest in Ayeyawady Division

NAY PYI TAW, 10 Aug — A ceremony to conclude the ploughing of monsoon paddy fields for 2006-07 of Ayeyawady Division was held in conjunction with the paddy transplanting contest at East Kwinya Village near Yangon-Pathein Road in Kangyidaunt Township yesterday morning.

Speaking on the occasion, Lt-Gen Khin Maung Than said that the Government has assigned duties to Ayeyawady Division to cultivate 3.7 million acres of monsoon paddy, 1.6 million acres of summer paddy, 1.6 million acres of pulses and beans and 500,000 acres of edible oil crops for 2006-07. Ayeyawady Division

Lt-Gen Khin Maung Than of Ministry of Defence visits a power-tiller shop in Kangyidaunt Township, Ayeyawady Division, on 1 August. — MNA

Emergence of the State Constitution is the duty of all citizens of Myanmar Naing-Ngan.
Work in concert for success of National Convention

Now is the time when the government, the Tatmadaw and the people of the Union of Myanmar are working in concert for the emergence of a peaceful, modern, developed and discipline-flourishing democracy.

In implementing plans for a smooth transition from an old system to a new one, it is necessary to make constant efforts in accordance with the nation’s historical background, culture, traditions and customs, a correct policy, practicalities and good intentions. Peace and stability and all-round development that the people have longed for are prevailing all over the nation now.

It is necessary for a nation to have a constitution whatever political system it practises. Therefore, to draft a constitution, an absolute necessity for the emergence of a discipline-flourishing democracy, Myanmar is holding the National Convention. Due to the endeavours made by the National Convention Convening Commission and various committees and delegates from all walks of life, seventy-five per cent of the whole work has been completed.

Fifteen chapter headings to be included in the constitution have been laid down by the National Convention. At the previous session of the Convention, proposals and suggestions on relations between Hluttaws, rights and responsibilities of citizens and the role of the Tatmadaw were discussed and approved. Detailed basic principles regarding these chapters are to be laid down at the end of this year.

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We believe that constant and concerted efforts of the delegates to the National Convention, the National Convention Convening Commission and the Work Committee and the Management Committee will surely bring complete success to the National Convention.

**New school building handed over in Thongwa**

YANGON, 10 Aug — A ceremony to hand over a self-reliant new school building for upgrading Basic Education Middle School (Branch) was held at Gadonhaw Athet village in Thongwa Township on 9 August. The new building costs K 14 million.

First, Thongwa Township Peace and Development Council Chairman U Khin Maung Aye, Township Education Officer U Than Hay, Secretary of Township Union Solidarity and Development Association Dr Myint Thein and responsible persons unveiled the signboard of village BEMS (Branch).

Next, the Township Education Officer accepted documents of the new building and commemorative tenant handed over by the Chairman of Board of Trustees. He presented certificates of honour to the nine wellwishers who donated above K 1 million.

Head of Township Information and Public Relations U Nyunt Shwe presented publications to librarian U Chit Lwin of village self-reliant library.

**Japan Foundation donates books to Bago Degree College, Yangon East University**

YANGON, 10 Aug — Under the Library Support Programme 2005, the Japan Foundation donated altogether sixty five books on Japan worth ¥ 578,191 (approximately $ 4,950) to History Department, Bago Degree College and International Relation Department, Yangon East University this month.

The Embassy of Japan officially handed over thirty four books worth ¥ 275,559 (approximately $ 2,250) to the Bago Degree College on 12 July and another thirty one books worth ¥ 302,632 (approximately $ 2,600) to the Yangon East University on 27 July.

This programme is designed to promote both understanding of and research on Japanese affairs through donations of books. It is expected that the researchers, scholars and students in Myanmar can continue their studies on Japan, and that it will contribute to further promoting relationship and friendship between Japan and Myanmar.

The Japan Foundation has been donating the reference books on Japan to some libraries in respective universities throughout Myanmar.

**Foreign Minister arrives back from New Delhi**

YANGON, 10 Aug — Myanmar delegation led by Minister for Foreign Affairs U Nyan Win arrived back here by air today after participating in the 9th Ministerial Meeting of the Bay of Bengal Initiative for Multi-Sectoral Technical and Economic Cooperation (BIMSTEC) held on 9 August, 2006, in New Delhi, Republic of India.

U Win Mra, Director-General of the International Organizations and Economic Department, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, U Soe Myint, Director-General of Energy Planning Department, Ministry of Energy, U Myint Shwe, Deputy General Manager, Myanmar Agriculture Enterprise, Ministry of Agriculture and Irrigation, U Win Zeyar Tun, Assistant Director, Minister’s Office, Ministry of Foreign Affairs and U Kyaw Soe Thein, Head of Branch-1, Economic Division, International Organizations and Economic Department, Ministry of Foreign Affairs also arrived back together with the minister. — MNA

**Sportswear donated to Myanmar Cricket Team**

President of Myanmar Cricket Federation U Nyunt Win accepts donation of sportswear for Myanmar Cricket Team. — MCF

**New office of UMFCCI at 29 Min Ye Kyawswa Road**

YANGON, 9 Aug — The new office of the Union of Myanmar Federation of Chambers of Commerce and Industry has been opened at No.29, Min Ye Kyawswa Road in Ward-9 Lannadaw Township. Those who wish to make contact with the federation may dial phone numbers 214344, 214345, 214346, 214347, 214348 and 214349 or Fax number 214484 and through e-mail umfcci@mptmail.net.mm. — MNA
Kremlin warns US arms sanctions could hurt ties

MOSCOW, 9 Aug — The Kremlin on Tuesday branded US sanctions against two leading Russian arms exporters “an unfriendly act” and warned they could rebound on US-Russia relations.

The United States announced sanctions on Friday on seven firms from Russia, India, North Korea for selling restricted items to Iran, which Washington fears is trying to make nuclear weapons.

The sanctions were imposed on Russian state export agency Rosoboronexport — headed by a close friend of President Vladimir Putin — and state-owned warplane maker Sukhoi.

“This looks like unfair competition. It was an unfriendly act towards Russia and it was not done in a spirit of cooperation,” Kremlin spokesman Dmitry Peskov said.

“If we are to speak about possible consequences of this act for bilateral relations, of course it has not contributed to a further strengthening of the partnership. Among other things we cannot rule out further negative consequences for this relationship,” he said.

The US State Department said it imposed the sanctions after Washington received information the companies had transferred materials to Iran that could contribute to the development of weapons of mass destruction or missiles.

The sanctions took effect on 28 July and will be in place at least until 28 July, 2008.

Amid corruption probe, Republican representative quits race

CINCINNATI, 9 Aug — Republican Representative Bob Ney, dogged by ties to disgraced Washington lobbyist Jack Abramoff, dropped out of the US mid-term election race on Monday, a move that analysts said hurts Democratic chances of gaining ground in the November ballot.

Election watchers said Ney’s decision to quit puts his central Ohio District onto firmer footing for Republicans by deposing Democrats of a favourite poster-boy for the bribery investigation that has plagued Congress.

“This actually gives the Republicans a shot at holding the seat,” said Larry Sabato, a University of Virginia political analyst who tracks congressional races. “Ney was bound to fail, so this is a recognition of reality.” Veteran state lawmaker Padgett quickly emphasized her ethics as she announced that she will seek the Republican nomination to replace Ney on the ballot.

“It has been my honour to serve Ohio in the House of Representatives and the Senate, and I promise to take the same work ethic and values I applied there to the United States Congress,” said Padgett. She has been in the state Senate since 2004 and was in the state house from 1993 to 1999.

Pentagon seeks to slash “B-52” bombers

WASHINGTON, 9 Aug — The Pentagon is seeking to slash its fleet of B-52 bombers — a move which is being opposed by Congress, US media reported on Tuesday.

The US Air Force’s plan to reduce its B-52 bomber fleet from 94 aircraft to 33, is part of a drive to divert more cash toward high-tech equipment, including the expensive F-22 fighter jet. However, the House of Representatives has maintained its opposition to the plan in its version of the 2007 Defence Authorization Act, according to the report.

That draft act requires the current fleet to be kept until 2018, when a new long-range bomber comes into service.

The Pentagon has made several attempts to reduce the B-52 fleet over the last decade, but Congress has repeatedly required the full complement of 94 aircraft to be kept.

Although the B-52, developed in the 1950s, lacks the speed and stealth of the B-1 and B-2 bombers, it has an enormous bomb bay that, combined with new, low-cost precision munitions, gives it great ability on the battlefield.

A ‘Blackhawk’ down in Iraq, two crew missing

BAGHDAD, 9 Aug — An US Blackhawk helicopter crashed in western Iraq and two of the six troops on board are missing, the US military said on Wednesday.

“The aircraft has been located. Search and rescue efforts are ongoing for two missing crew members. The remaining four are in stable condition,” US Marine Corps spokesman Major Rexcoh Player said of Tuesday’s crash.

Coalition forces spokesman Major General William Caldwell told reporters the chopper had crashed in water following a technical snag. “The helicopter went down with some kind of technical difficulty. It crashed in water,” Caldwell said at a Press conference.

“We will have a full status report later in the day,” he added, noting that the names of the missing would not be revealed until their families were informed.

It crashed in the province of Al Anbar, a hotbed of the Sunni insurgency against the US presence in Iraq.

A ‘UH60 Blackhawk’ helicopter, similar to the one shown here, has crashed in western Iraq. Two of its six crew are missing. —INTERNET

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Waterproof rice gene identified

CALIFORNIA, 9 Aug— Scientists say they have identified a gene that will allow rice plants to survive being completely submerged in water for up to two weeks.

Most rice plants die within a week of being submerged, but the researchers hope the new gene will offer greater protection to the world’s rice harvest. Farmers in South-East Asia lose an estimated $524m ($1bn) each year from rice crops being destroyed by flooding. The findings have been published in the science journal Nature.

The team from the University of California, Davis, and the International Rice Research Institute (IRRI) based in the Philippines says the gene, called Sub1A-1, will give the plants greater protection against damage from flooding.

They say it will also offer farmers greater crop protection, especially those who live in vulnerable areas. Although rice production has doubled over the past 40 years, demand is continuing to grow. The crop is the staple food for more than three billion people around the globe.

Many rice growing regions in southern Asia are located in low-lying areas that are at risk from flooding during the monsoon season. Plants submerged in water for longer than a few days are deprived of oxygen and soon wilt and die.

Dr David Mackill, from the International Rice Research Institute and one of the paper’s authors, said scientists had been trying for half a century to develop a water resistant crop. "Several traditional rice varieties have exhibited a greater tolerance to submergence, but attempts to breed that tolerance into commercially viable rice failed to generate successful varieties," he explained.

Another member of the team, Dr Pamela Ronald from the University of California, Davis, added: "Our research team anticipates that these newly developed rice varieties will help ensure a more dependable food supply for poor farmers and their families." Takuji Sasaki, from Japan’s National Institute of Agrobiological Sciences, said the researchers had succeeded where others had failed.

"The particular impact of this study lies in the accurate and effective introduction of Sub1A-1 into local rice varieties subject to seasonal flooding," the team members said that they were confident that "even more important" discoveries were in the pipeline. —INTERNET

Bomb blast, car bomb hit Baghdad building

BAGHDAD, 9 Aug— A bomb went off outside a building in an eastern Baghdad District followed by a car bomb explosion on Monday and initial reports showed that three policemen were wounded, an Iraqi Interior Ministry source told Xinhua.

An explosive charge detonated at around 12:20 pm (0812 GMT) inside an Internet Cafe near the Sakhrab Intersection in Palestine Street, the source said on condition of anonymity.

Minutes later, an explosive-packed car parking in front of the Cafe went off, causing heavy damages to the building and nearby shops, the source added.

Initial reports said that three policemen were wounded, but the casualties might rise further as rescuers are evacuating other people wounded or killed in the attacks," the source said.

MNA/Xinhua

Int’l intellectuals urge US to stop threatening Cuba

HAVANA, 9 Aug— More than 400 intellectuals from 30 countries called on the United States in a signed open letter to stop threatening Cuba and to respect the nation’s sovereignty, some of the signatories told a Press conference here on Monday.

“Faced with the growing threat to one nation’s integrity, and to the peace and security of Latin America and the world, we the undersigned demand that the United States Government respect Cuba’s sovereignty,” says the letter that was jointly presented by Belgian sociologist and theologian Francois Houtart, editor of the magazine Arets Andres Gomez, and president of the Casa de las Americas, Roberto Fernandez Retamar.

The letter denounced statements made by US Government officials following the 31 July operation on Cuba’s leader Fidel Castro to control an intestinal hemorrhage. US President George W Bush threatened after Castro’s illness that “we are working actively for a change in Cuba, not simply hoping it will happen,” while US Trade Secretary Carlos Gutierrez said, “The moment has come for a transition to a real democracy.”

Castro, who turns 80 on 13 August, has been out of sight since 31 July, when his secretary went on state television to announce he had undergone surgery and was temporarily ceding power to Defence Minister Raul Castro.

The intellectuals also denounced a recent leaked plan by the Commission for a Free Cuba, which is run by Condoleezza Rice, the US Secretary of State. The plan included anti-Castro measures that “must remain secret for reasons of national security and so they can be realized effectively.” MNA/Xinhua

About 15,000 Filipinos evacuated near eruptive Mayon Volcano

MANILA, 9 Aug— Nearly 15,000 Philippine residents were evacuated on Monday from their homes in face of an imminent eruption of Mayon Volcano, according to government officials.

About 3,000 families or 15,000 people have sought shelter in state-run resettlement centres under the help of the government and military soldiers, Cenepa, chief disaster management officer of the Albay Province, told Xinhua.

The evacuees came from the towns of Guinobatan, Santo Domingo, Daraga, Camalig and the cities of Tabaco, Ligao and Legazpi, he said.

Classes were suspended as some schools are being used as evacuation sites, he added.

MNA/Xinhua

China probes four deaths for link to drug treatment

BEIJING, 9 Aug— China is investigating four deaths for links to a banned antibiotic treatment, state media reported on Tuesday, adding that more than 80 patients in 10 provinces had complained of severe adverse reactions to the drug.

Beijing last week banned the use of the Clindamycin Phosphate Glucose Injection, produced by a company in the eastern province of Anhui for treatment of bacterial infections.

Four fatalities possibly linked to the drug include a six-year-old girl in northeastern province of Heilongjiang who died after using the drug, and a 63-year-old woman from northwestern province of Shaanxi who suffered a severe adverse reaction while receiving the injection and died two days later, the official China Daily reported. — MNA/Reuters

MNA/Xinhua

Performers from Italy’s Kataklo Athletic Dance Theatre pose in formation for photographers at the Edinburgh Fringe Festival on Calton Hill in Edinburgh, Scotland, on 9 Aug, 2006. The festival will run until 28 Aug, 2006.—INTERNET

A man clears the area outside his flooded residence in Badrachalam, in the southern Indian state of Andhra Pradesh, on 9 Aug 2006.—INTERNET

British Honda driver Jenson Button poses for photographers during a promotion event on 8 Aug, 2006 in outskirts of Shanghai, China. Button won a Formula One race for the first time, capturing the Hungarian Grand Prix on last Sunday. Shanghai Grand Prix will take place on 1 Oct, 2006.—INTERNET
Philippines uses national flower as logo for ASEAN summit

MANILA, 9 Aug—The Philippines’ national flower, sampaguita, will take centre stage during the 12th Association of South-East Asian Nations (ASEAN) summit in Cebu, central Philippines, this December as it dominates the design for the event’s logo. President Gloria Macapagal Arroyo launched Tuesday the logo for the summit, her and Foreign Affairs Secretary Alberto Romulo’s personal choice from among the other designs presented to them by Radio Television Malacanang staff in charge of the design. Sampaguita is a kind of jasmin shrub with small white flowers adopted as the national flower of the Philippines. It blooms all year round, with white, small, dainty star-shaped blossoms and has a distinct sweet fragrance.

For this year’s ASEAN summit, the official logo is surrounded by 10 sampaguitas symbolizing the 10 member states of the organization. The sampaguita may best represent the 10 ASEAN countries that may be relatively small geographically but have unique characteristics that separate them from the rest of the world, a statement from Malacanang Presidential Palace read.

The flower also symbolizes hope and other virtues such as fidelity, purity, devotion, strength and dedication, “the very virtues that are essential in forming one caring and sharing community, the theme for the 12th ASEAN summit,” it said.

The statement said in the logo, the blossoms rest on seven leaves that represent the seven countries that support the ASEAN in its pursuit for global unity and prosperity. These countries are China, Japan, South Korea, India, Russia, New Zealand and Australia.

Annan says Israel’s attack on Qana could breach int’l law

UNITED NATIONS, 9 Aug—Israel’s airstrike on the Lebanese village of Qana could be part of “a pattern of violations of international law” in the fighting between Israel and Hizbollah in Lebanon, UN Secretary-General Kofi Annan said in a report released on late Monday.

The UN chief called for a more thorough investigation into the 30 July attack which had resulted in heavy civilian casualties, including at least 28 people dead, 16 of whom were children. Annan made his assessment in a letter to the Security Council calling for more information on the attack, and drew on official accounts provided by the governments of Lebanon and Israel, as well as UN witnesses who visited Qana after the incident, although he highlighted that none were present when it occurred. “The attack on Qana should be seen in the broader context of what could be, based on preliminary information available to the United Nations, including eye-witness accounts, a pattern of violations of international law, including international humanitarian law and international human rights law, committed during the course of the current hostilities,” Annan said.

“I support calls for a more comprehensive investigation” into the Qana attack, he said.

“I have repeatedly condemned all actions that target civilians and I again call on all parties to the conflict to respect their obligations under international humanitarian law and, in particular, to take all necessary precautions to spare civilian life and property,” the UN chief said.

Expressing his grave distress at the “tragic events” in Qana and by the overall effect of the conflict on the civilian populations of both Israel and Lebanon, Annan said it was a “level of seriousness that requires further gathering of information, including violations of international humanitarian law and international human rights law.”

30 hospitalized after eating fish in Philippines

MANILA, 9 Aug—At least 30 people have fallen sick and remained in critical condition after eating a local fish in central Philippines on Sunday, said police Tuesday.

The victims, who felt dizzy after eating the barracuda fish, have been hospitalized since Sunday in Illoso, said Senior Superintendent Wesley Barrayuga, Deputy Regional Director for Operations for Western Visayas in central Philippines. The fish was reportedly bought from a vendor at a public market, he said. More than 20 schoolchildren died after eating a local plant-made food sold by a vendor last year in Bohol, central Philippines. The vendor reportedly used pesticide to cook the food.

Japan baby badges help pregnant women get to work

TOKYO, 9 Aug—Tokyo rail companies are providing pregnant women with badges in the hope of prompting other passengers on the Japanese capital’s crowded trains to offer them seats.

The pink and blue badges reading: “There is a baby in my belly” are being handed out at stations around the region to try to make commuting and other train journeys easier for pregnant women, who are often left standing. No proof of pregnancy is required.

“Especially in the early stages, it is difficult to tell from someone’s appearance whether they are pregnant,” said an official at the Health Ministry which came up with the idea. “But these early stages are rather unstable and it is important to take care.”

The move comes as Japan scrambles for ways to persuade women to have more babies. The dwindling birth rate has left the nation with a shrinking population, and the world’s highest proportion of elderly people. “We want to create an environment that is pleasant for pregnant women,” the agency official said— MNA/Reuters

Silver medal winner Olga Kaniskina from Russia (L), gold medal winner Ryta Turava from Belarus (C), and bronze medalist Elisa Rigaudo from Italy, hold their medals after the women’s 20 km walk final at the European athletics championships in Gothenburg (Sweden), on 9 August, 2006. —INTERNET

Members of the Spanish Air Force acrobatic group “Patrulla Aguila” fly over San Lorenzo beach in Gijon, northern Spain during an aerial exhibition on 6 August, 2006.—INTERNET

A Chinese man wears protective goggles as he is bathed in ultraviolet light to develop a tan in a tanning salon in Shanghai, China, on 9 Aug, 2006. —INTERNET

A girl looks at a giant embroidered shoe on show in a street in Duyun City, southwest China’s Guizhou Province, on 7 Aug, 2006. The shoe, 3.22 metres long, 1.25 metres wide and 0.9 metre high, consumes nearly 1 kilogramme of floss.—INTERNET
ASEAN urged to balance preservation, innovation

KUALA LUMPUR, 9 Aug — Malaysian Prime Minister Abdullah Ahmad Badawi Tuesday delivered the 2006 ASEAN Lecture here urging the organization to adopt the twin policy of preservation and innovation while marching forward.

“I believe the secret for ensuring ASEAN’s future survival and growth as a regional entity lies in our ability to find the right formula for managing continuity and change,” said Badawi at a ceremony marking the 39th anniversary of the establishment of the Association of South-East Asian Nations (ASEAN).

In other words, the ASEAN should adopt the “twin policy of preservation and innovation”, keeping all that are good about ASEAN while making changes if the necessity arises, said Badawi. On the one hand, funda-mentals enshrined in the Treaty of Amity and Cooperation should be preserved, noted the Malaysian Prime Minister.

Among those most important principles are mutual respect for the independence, sovereignty, equality, territorial integrity and national identity of all nations; non-interference in the internal affairs of one another; settlement of differences or disputes by peaceful means and renunciation of the threat or use of force, said Badawi.

On the other hand, the 39-year-old organization should make innovations to be relevant and responsive to the changing needs of its member countries, said Badawi. MNA/Xinhua

Saudi King arrives in Ankara for historic visit to Turkey

ANKARA, 9 Aug — King Abdullah bin Abdul Aziz al-Saoud of Saudi Arabia arrived here on Tuesday for a three-day historic visit to Turkey, the first official visit by a Saudi king in four decades.

King Abdullah was received by Turkish Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Abdullah Gul at Ankara Esenboga Airport.

Turkish President Ahmet Necdet Sezer will hold a welcome ceremony for King Abdullah at Cankaya Presidential Palace.

King Abdullah is expected to meet Turkish Prime Minister Recep Tayyip Erdogan in Istanbul on Wednesday, where the two leaders will address a joint Turkish-Saudi business meeting on Thursday.

The two countries will sign seven agreements including deals on duties, trade and transport during Abdullah’s visit, Turkish Daily News quoted Saudi Ambassador to Turkey Mohammed Al-Hussaini as saying on Monday.

Some 400 delegates including several members of the royal family, ministers, high-ranking officials and a large number of Saudi businessmen will accompany the King, according to the newspaper. MNA/Xinhua

OPEC continues to benefit from high oil prices

KUWAIT CITY, 9 Aug — Oil exporting countries will continue to reap large profits from high oil prices caused by under-investment, structural changes on supply and demand and geopolitical tensions, Kuwait-based Global Investment House (GIH) said Tuesday.

Net oil export revenues of the Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC) are forecasted at $522 billion US dollars and $495 billion dollars for 2006 and 2007 respectively, GIH said in a newly-released report.

OPEC net oil export revenues for 2005 are now estimated at around $473 billion dollars, up 43 per cent from 2004 levels, said the report. Oil prices have reached record high of 75.76 per barrel and have increased by almost 16.9 per cent so far in 2006.

The report pointed out that main factors in this tremendous increase are the underinvestment in oil sector, structural changes on supply and demand sides and refining issues which are pushing prices higher.

Meanwhile, geopolitical tensions with the current Israeli attacks on Lebanon, uncertainty of oil production from Iran and supply disruption from west Africa are the other contributing factors for high prices, said GIH. MNA/Xinhua

China hosts int’l earthquake rescue drills

SHIJIAZHUANG, 9 Aug — Over 200 Chinese and foreign rescuers participated in an international earthquake relief exercise held under the framework of the United Nations.

Local residents in Shijiazhuang, the provincial capital of Hebei Province, also held an exercise on rescue and survival in an earthquake. The drills served as a test of China’s abilities to cooperate with international rescuers, an opportunity for Chinese rescuers to learn from their foreign counterparts, and to show off the country’s achievements in earthquake relief, said Zhao Heping, deputy director of the State Seismological Bureau. Seventeen foreign teams came from Australia, Belgium, Switzerland, India, Japan, South Korea, Mongolia, the Netherlands, New Zealand, Philippines, Russia, Italy, Sweden, Singapore, Britain, United States, and Nepal. Seventeen Chinese provincial rescue teams joined in the drills. — MNA/Xinhua

Contestants sway the fishing boat to drive fishes while competing in fishing with nets in the Hongze Lake Water Games in Laozishan Town of Hongze County, east China’s Jiangsu Province, on 9 Aug, 2006. — I NTERNET

LeBron James of the Cleveland Cavaliers holds his new shoe during a sharing session with the young basketball players in Hong Kong on 9 Aug, 2006. — I NTERNET

In this photo released by China’s Xinhua News Agency, a total of 1,000 players play 1,000 pianos together to greet the opening of the 28th China Harbin Summer Concert in Harbin, capital of northeast China’s Heilongjiang Province on 6 Aug, 2006. — I NTERNET
**Transport**

Taninthayi Division now has direct land, air, and coastal sea transport services to Yangon, Dawei, Myeik, Taninthayi, and Bokpyin in the division all of which lie on Yangon-Kawthoung road. As transport plays a pivotal role in developing and modernizing a region, the government built Winka, Palauk, and Palaw bridges in 1988, the 1360-foot Taninthayi Bridge in 2000, Kyaukphyu Bridge and 810-foot Pathaung Bridge in 2001, Lenya-Mandaing Bridge in 2003, and 3612-foot Kywegu-Kyaukphya Bridge near Myeik in 2004 in the division. Of the eight facilities, Kyaukphyu Bridge is the longest of its kind in the division.

The bridges have helped ensure smooth transport between Myitkyina, Kachin State, in the northern tip of the nation and Kawthoung, Taninthayi State, in the northern tip Myitkyina, Kachin transport between helping ensure smooth its kind in the division.

**Myeik industrial zone**

Mostly, industries of the fishery sector including cold storages are running production businesses in Myeik industrial zone established on 17 November 1995. Market economy serves as the engine of growth for the zone to export its fishery products.

Myeik and Kawthoung have a number of shipyards, with a total capacity to dock 24 ships at the same time.

**Yetagon gas field**

The Yetagon natural gas field in the division is earning foreign exchange annually. Its capital investment is US $ 652 million.

The division is producing 62 per cent of Myanmar’s tin and tungsten. Mawtaung mine in Taninthayi Township exported over 600,000 tons of coal in fiscal 2005-2006.

**Pearl**

Myanmar Anda-man Pearl Company, a joint-venture, found the world’s largest pearl in Myanmar waters off Taninthayi coast on 18 April 2001. The company entrusted the pearl, 6.2 cm long, 5.3 cm wide and 3 cm high, to the State. Its weight is 45.16 momme, 845 carats or 169 grams. The seas around Pale, Mali and Shwe islands in Myeik region produce the largest number of pearl in Myanmar.

In addition to the world’s largest pearl, Myanmar also has the globe’s largest ruby weighing 63,000 carats mined in Mogok region, and the planet’s largest jade found in Phakant region during the time of the State Peace and Development Council. The massive jade boulder is 70 feet long and 35 feet in circumference.

**Fish market**

At the convergence of Taninthayi river and Yaw creek near the industrial zone in Myeik is the Fish Market occupying a 103.56-acre compound. The market is jointly run by Fisheries Department of the Ministry of Live-stock and Fisheries, Myanmar-owned OEM (M) Co Ltd and French-owned Setraco International Co Ltd. The ownership ratio is the government 30 per cent, OEM (M) 10 per cent, and Setraco 60 per cent.

All the daily catch along the division’s coast arrives at the market’s jetty 225-metre long and 15-metre wide, for trade. In the compound are the 100-metre by 40-metre market, cold storages with a total capacity of 500 tons and a two-storey building serving the rich aqua and coastal sea transport supply.

In addition to oil palm and rubber, pepper also grows well in the division, which has already put 25,041 acres under the perennial crop against the three-year target of 26,000 acres.

**Other facilities**

The government built a 200-bed general hospital in Myeik at a cost of K 400 million. Vice-Chairman of the State Peace and Development Council Deputy Commander-in-Chief of Defence Services Commander-in-Chief (Army) Vice-Senior General Maung Aye with his presence graced the opening of the hospital held on 25 October 2003. Myanmar is planning to build a university on oceanography with the capacity to conduct the largest marine research programme in Southeast Asia and to help the task of protecting and conserving her waters. The nation has already opened an oceanography department at Myeik University with the aim of extracting and conserving the rich aqua and mineral resources of the Myanmar seas dotted with over 800 islands and islets and touching Taninthayi coast facing the Andaman Sea and Rakhine coast opposite the Bay of Bengal. The total length of the nation’s coastline is 1760 miles (3060 kilometres). Rivers in Myanmar are also the source of fresh water fish supply.

Kyundanshe one of the most charming islands in the world has been established as a Marine Park preserving and protecting a rich diversity of oceanic flora and fauna species. The island in Myeik District is also a tourist destination.

The article presents the developing images of resource-rich Taninthayi Division as much as it can, viewing the region as one of the nation’s promising economic zones.

(Translation: TMT)

*Myanmar Alin:*

10-8-2006
Lt-Gen Khin Maung Than views Ayeyawady Division’s transplanting skill contest for 2006-2007 Monsoon Season. — MNA

Deputy Minister urges officials to develop more local-made locomotives

Deputy Minister for Rail Transportation Thura U Thaung Lwin meeting with officials of Insein Locomotive Shed. — RAIL TRANSPORTATION

YANGON, 10 Aug — In view of growing number of passengers and progress of goods transport, more trains need to run. So locomotives as well as passenger and goods coaches will be developed at home, said Deputy Minister for Rail Transportation Thura U Thaung Lwin in meeting with the officials at Locomotive Shed (Insein) yesterday.

The deputy minister added a home-made locomotive pulling passenger coaches is running on Yangon-Mandalay railroad. More locomotives will be developed at home with the use of local-made machine parts.

Meetings for Ad-Hoc Committee of Tourism Manpower concludes

YANGON, 10 Aug — A Meeting for Ad-Hoc Committee of Tourism Manpower was held yesterday at Sedona Hotel in Mandalay.

Representatives of the ministries of tourism in Cambodia, Indonesia, the Philippines and Singapore and the ASEAN Secretariat have participated in the two-day meeting which concluded today.

The 18th Meeting of the Task Force on Tourism Manpower Development will be held tomorrow at the same venue in Mandalay. — MNA

Health Educative Course opens in Mandalay


An opening ceremony of health educative course (8/2006) was held at Mandalay Division MCWSC on 3 August.

At the ceremony, Chairperson Daw Khin Pyone Win presented prizes to expectant mothers and breastfeeding mothers.

A Waso robes offering ceremony took place at Myitathshin Hospital in Mandalay Industrial Zone on 4 August. It was sponsored by Mandalay Division MCWSC.

The chairperson and members of Mandalay Division MCWSC offered Waso robes and alms to members of the Sangah of Pamoukkharama Monywe Monastery. Mandalay Division Health Committee held a coordination meeting (7/2006) at Division Health Department on 4 August.

The chairperson of Mandalay Division MCWSC made a speech. The officials concerned discussed department-wise measures taken and future work.—MNA
Yangon Division’s 14th Performing Arts Competitions open

YANGON, 10 Aug — Yangon Division’s 14th Myanmar Traditional Cultural Performing Arts Competitions (High Education Level) were opened today at University of Culture in Dagon Myothit (South) Township.

Chairman of the organizing committee for the division’s cultural performing arts competitions Rector of the University of Culture U Kyaw Myint formally opened the competitions.

At the opening ceremony, students of the university entertained those present at the ceremony with songs, puppet performance and dances.

Chairman of Yangon Division Peace and Development Council Commander of Yangon Command Brig-Gen Hla Htay Win presented gifts and cash to performers. — MNA

Tailoring course opens in Shwepyitha

YANGON, 10 Aug — Yangon North District Maternal and Child Welfare Supervisory Committee opened a tailoring course in Shwepyitha Township here this morning.


Daw Mar Mar Wai accepted 2500 membership applications for the district committee from Chairperson of District Maternal and Child Welfare Supervisory Committee Daw Saw Shwe.

She then presented teaching aids for the course to Chairperson of Shwepyitha Township Maternal and Child Welfare Supervisory Committee Daw Khin Moe Moe.

Twenty-one trainees are attending the course which continues till 9 August.

At Child Development Training School, Daw Mar Mar Wai presented toys to boys and girls. — MNA

Nurses and midwifery training schools, medical universities inspected

YANGON, 10 Aug — Deputy Minister for Health Dr Paing Soe, accompanied by Deputy Director Dr Aye Thaung of Medical Science Department and Head of Bago Division Health Department Dr Htay Aung, met with the principal, teachers and trainees at Nurses Training School in Toungoo on 9 August morning.

The deputy minister also met with the principal, teachers and trainees of the Midwifery Training School in Bago and gave necessary instructions.

At No 3 lecture hall of Yangon University of Medicine-2, Deputy Minister Dr Paing Soe met with Rector Dr Than Nu Shwe and faculty members. He urged them to nurture students to become outstanding doctors, and attended to the needs. He inspected modern teaching equipment.

Afterwards, the deputy minister proceeded to University of Dental Medicine in Thingangyun Township. Rector Dr Ba Myint reported on academic and management matters of the university. The deputy minister comforted patients at the teaching hospital and inspected the site for construction of a two-storey lecture hall.

Women entrepreneurs view bottles of medicine displayed at a booth of 11th Annual General Meeting of Myanmar Women Entrepreneurs’ Association. (News reported) — MWEA

Sewing machines donated to Nurses and Midwifery Training School in Loikaw

NAY PYI TAW, 10 Aug — Kayah State Maternal and Child Welfare Supervisory Committee and Kayah State Women’s Affairs Organization presented sewing machines to Nurses and Midwifery Training School in Loikaw on 27 July morning.

Chairperson Daw Cho Cho Than of Kayah State MCWSC gave a speech and presented one sewing machine to Principal Daw Tin Tin Aye of the training school.

Member of Kayah State WAO Daw Khin Nwe Aye presented one sewing machine to the training school through two trainees.

The principal spoke words of thanks.

Obstetrician and Gynecologist Dr Soe Lwin of Kayah State General Hospital gave lectures on prevention of cancer disease in women’s reproductive organs.

Chairperson Daw Cho Cho Than comforted patients at the maternity ward of the hospital and made cash donations. — MNA

Objectives of the 14th Myanmar Traditional Cultural Performing Arts Competitions

— To vitalize patriotism and nationalism
— To preserve and safeguard Myanmar cultural heritage
— To perpetuate genuine Myanmar music, dance and traditional fine arts
— To preserve Myanmar national character
— To nurture spiritual development of the youths
— To prevent influence of alien culture, and
— To strengthen national unity and Union Spirit.
Chinese Women’s Association donates medicines, robes to nuns

YANGON, 10 Aug — Kyunxua Chinese Women’s Association offered ‘soon’ (a day meal) and donated medicines and robes to 150 nuns at Thathanawdaya (Pyay) Nunnery in Mayangon Township. First, the congregation took the Five Precepts from Nun Gandavacaka Pandita Daw Vimalaññi. Presiding Nun of the nunnery Maha Gandavacaka Pandita Daw Punnavati and nuns accepted the donations. The donation ceremony concluded after sharing of merits by the audience.

Giant panda gives birth to giant cub, twins to twins

BEIJING, 10 Aug — A giant panda in China has given birth to the heaviest cub born in captivity after the longest period in labour and elsewhere twin pandas each gave birth to twins, Xinhua news agency reported.

Six-year-old Zhang Ka delivered the baby on Monday at the Wolong Giant Panda Research Centre in the mountainous southwest, Xinhua said. The cub weighed just 218 grammes (half a pound), but was still the heaviest panda ever born in captivity, where most cubs are born at between 83 and 190 grammes, Xinhua said.

“It is very rare for them to be even near 200 grammes,” it said in a report late on Monday. But the size and the fact that it was Zhang Ka’s first meant a “painstaking and eventful” birth for the mother, who was born in the wild.

“The whole process lasted about 34 hours and was the longest in the history of panda reproduction,” Xinhua quoted Zhang Hemin, head of the Wolong Centre, as saying.

Both mother and baby were doing well, the agency said.

Two twin panda sisters, also aged six, gave birth to two pairs of twin male cubs — with much less drama — on Sunday and Monday respectively in the Chengdu Giant Panda Reproduction and Research Centre near Wolong, Xinhua said.

It brought the number of panda cubs born in captivity in China so far this year to six, it said.

The giant panda is one of the world’s most exotic and endangered species and is found only in China, where it is a national treasure.

An estimated 1,600 wild pandas live in nature reserves in Sichuan, Gansu and Shaanxi provinces.

It is extremely hard to breed giant pandas in captivity. Females only ovulate once a year, with a slim 24- to 48-hour window for breeding when artificial reproduction methods are usually adopted. Infant mortality is also high.

Pandas eat bamboo shoots and spend a lot of time sleeping. They usually wean their young at around 18 months, and healthy pandas live into their late 20s or early 30s.

Relief measures taken at flooded areas in Mon State, Mandalay Division

NAY PYI TAW, 10 Aug — The torrential rains caused flooding in some States and Divisions in the country recently.

On 9 August, Bayintnaung, Butayon, Yazadat and Taninthayi Roads were flooded and all were under six or seven feet of water in Ye of Mon State. Family members of five wards and one village in Ye Township are being evacuated to seven relief centres. Due to the floods, some schools were closed temporarily. Township authorities, members of Myanmar Police Force and social organizations are performing security and relief tasks for the flood victims.

Likewise, the railroad between Kamawat Village in Mudon Township and Thanyayzayar was flooded. Therefore, the train running Yangon-Ye-Dawei route stopped over at Kamawat Village, and some Dawei-Ye rail services were cancelled temporarily. Engineers of Myanmar Railways are repairing the same damages to the railroad.

In Mandalay, some schools were temporarily closed due to flooding water overflowed some roads due to torrential rains. Residents in flooded areas were evacuated to the safe area, and provided with relief items and packets of meals.

Despite flooding caused by torrential rains in Mon State and Mandalay Division, there were no death and no one was missing. Officials are supervising repairing works at damages to railroads and motorways.

Huge meteorite crater discovered in E Jordan

AMMAN, 10 Aug — A huge crater caused by a gigantic meteorite has been discovered recently in the eastern part of Jordan, the largest meteorite crater in the region, the Jordan Times reported on Tuesday.

The impact site in Jabal Waqf es Swwan, some 200 kilometres east of the Karak governorate in eastern Jordan, was discovered by geology professors of University of Jordan Elias Salameh and Hani Khoury, along with German Professor Werner Schneider.

A meteorite struck the area around 7,500-10,000 years ago with an impact diameter of about 100 metres, the report said.

“The damage force of such an impact might equal 5,000 times that of the Hiroshima atomic bomb,” Salameh said, adding that it would have destroyed everything within a radius of hundreds of kilometres.

The crater consists of two concentric circles. The diameter of the outer ring measures around 5.5 kilometres, with the inner ring measuring 2.7 kilometres.

The impact size and velocity, according to Salameh, would have raised the atmospheric temperature within a radius of 10 kilometres to more than 1,000 degrees Centigrade, spewing millions of tons of rocks, vapour, dust and smoke into the atmosphere.

The discovery is thought to be the largest such meteorite crater in the region, a statement issued by the University of Jordan said. Salameh said that the site is expected to explain many geologic and historic features and events such as calcinated rocks, molten rock, highly jointed and cracked rocks.
Israel takes control of town in southern Lebanon

Along the Israel-Lebanon border, 10 Aug—As cease-fire negotiations appeared to stall Thursday, Israeli forces took control of the town Marjeyoun in southern Lebanon, CNN has learned.

Israeli troops warned residents to remain in their homes as forces moved toward the nearby town of Blatt, Lebanese military intelligence and police said.

The secured area overlooks the Litani River, where Hezbollah fighters reportedly have fired rockets into Israel, sources said.

One Hezbollah rocket landed Thursday in the northern Israeli village of Deir al Assad, killing a child and another civilian and wounding two others. Israeli ambulance service officials said.

Hizbollah announced “violent battles” in Marjeyoun, and Arab news networks Al-Manar and Al Arabiya reported at least two Israeli tanks were destroyed in fighting there.

While Lebanese intelligence said Israeli troops did not experience any resistance during their advance there, Lebanese military sources and UN observers described a vicious battle in Khiyam, which Israel said is a Hizbollah stronghold. (Internet)

'Airlines terror plot' disrupted

London, 10 Aug—A plot to blow up planes in flight from the UK to the US and commit “mass murder on an unimaginable scale” has been disrupted, Scotland Yard has said.

It is thought the plan was to detonate explosive devices smuggled in hand luggage on to as many as 10 aircraft.

Police are searching premises after 21 people were arrested. Home Secretary John Reid said they believed the “main players” were accounted for.

High security is causing delays at all UK airports. The threat level to the UK has been raised by MI5 to critical.

Critical threat level — the highest — means “an attack is expected imminently and indicates an extremely high level of threat to the UK”.

Three US airlines are believed to have been targeted. Mr Reid said had the attack gone ahead it would have caused a loss of life of “unprecedented scale”.

He said they were “confident” the main players were in custody, but neither the police nor government are “in any way complacent”. The airport is crammed with thousands of passengers, while at Stansted more than 2,000 people are queuing to pass through Customs. (Internet)

Penguins corralled on Texas highway after accident

San Antonio, 10 Aug—Twenty-one penguins were rescued on a hot east Texas highway on Tuesday after a truck carrying the wildlife to a temporary home south of Houston overturned, said a state trooper.

Four penguins and some exotic fish were killed in the accident, including three penguins that were hit by passing motorists, said Texas Department of Public Safety Trooper Richard Buchanan. “The rest of the penguins kind of stayed together in the ditch.”

The truck, also carrying an octopus that was uninjured, was bound for Moody Gardens, a tourist destination in Galveston, an hour south of Houston, a resort spokeswoman said. The wildlife was being transported to Texas from the Indianapolis Zoo while the zoo’s ocean exhibit is being remodelled, said Jerri Hamacheck of Moody Gardens. (MNA/Reuters)

New evidence suggests longer paper making history in China

Beijing, 10 Aug—A 2,000-year-old piece of paper inscribed with legible handwriting has been found in Gansu Province, suggesting that China’s paper-making and handwriting history are older than previously thought.

The 10-square-centimetre piece of paper, made from linen fibres, was found during restoration of an ancient garrison near the Yumen Pass at Dunhuang in northwest China. The garrison was in use during the Western Han Dynasty (206 BC-25 AD), a report in the Beijing-based Guangming Daily said. (MNA/Xinhua)
Britain police arrest three men over Royal phone taps

Three men have been arrested on suspicion of intercepting telephone calls at the official residence of the heir to the British throne, Prince Charles, London police said on Tuesday. The alleged phone tapping at the Prince’s Clarence House London home may have compromised the security of members of the Royal Family, Scotland Yard said.

“As a result of their inquiries police now believe that public figures beyond the Royal Household have had their telephones intercepted, which may have potential security implications,” police said in a statement.

The three suspects, aged 35, 48 and 50 were arrested early on Tuesday in the London area and are being held at a police station in the capital. Scotland Yard’s anti-terrorist branch is leading the investigation.

Poland to buy 4-5 million tons of grain

WARSAW, 9 Aug—Poland will have to buy 4-5 million tons of grain, the Polish Deputy Prime Minister and Agriculture Minister Andrzej Lepper was reported by PAP news agency as saying on Monday. Speaking at a news conference in Nowy Dwór Gdański, a town in northern Poland, Lepper said the drought and high temperature this summer have destroyed 20 per cent of Poland’s grain harvest but imports will help keep prices stable.

Lepper noted that grain purchases were mainly necessary to keep animal fodder resources on the present level. Grain imports could be avoided if farmers cut their animal stock. However, Poland would have to import dairy products and meat, he explained.

MNA/Xinhua
Philippines asks ASEAN to join calls for ceasefire in Lebanon

MANILA, 9 Aug — Philippine President Gloria Macapagal Arroyo on Tuesday called on members of the Association of South-East Asian Nations (ASEAN) to join calls for a ceasefire in Lebanon between Israel and Hizbollah guerrillas.

In a speech to mark the 50th anniversary of the founding of ASEAN, Arroyo said the Philippines have evacuated thousands of its overseas workers from Lebanon over the past few weeks.

She said the safety of millions of migrant workers in the Middle East, including 30,000 Filipinos in Lebanon, is at stake because of the on-going war.

“...we have moved thousands to safety from the most harmful areas of south Lebanon. We ask our ASEAN neighbours to join us in calling for peace in the Middle East and a cessation of violence from all parties,” she said.

She said ASEAN nations should cooperate with each other to ensure the safety and welfare of workers in Lebanon and other conflict-torn areas in the Middle East.

Arroyo also launched the logo and website of the 12th ASEAN Summit to be held from 10 to 14 December in Cebu, central Philippines.

The Philippines took over ASEAN chairmanship late last month.

MNA/Amnhd

A boy watches an enormous LG TV screen in a department store in Beijing recently. The casing of the LG home theatre system is partially made from 24-carat gold and is priced at 1.18 million yuan (US$147,000). Buyers can order the product in China and it will be manufactured in South Korea. — Internet

MySpace selects Google search system

NEW YORK/SAN FRANCISCO, 9 Aug — News Corp's Fox Interactive Media said on Monday that signed a multiyear deal to use Google Inc's search and advertising system to direct traffic across its network of Internet sites, including the wildly popular MySpace.com.

Google said it had agreed to pay Fox at least 900 million US dollars in revenue share payments based on certain traffic and other commitments promised by Fox over the next three years and nine months, beginning in October.

The deal, signed on Monday, runs through the end of calendar year 2009, which is halfway through News Corp's fiscal year.

Close to 11 percent of all traffic to Google.com comes from the MySpace domain, according to Bill Tancer, an analyst with online audience measurement firm Hitwise.

With one transaction, the Google deal helps to pay for most of News Corp's Internet investments, News Corp executives said. Less than a year ago, the company paid $80 million US dollars for MySpace, part of a 1.3-billion-US-dollar spending spree to buy Web properties.

"In one fell swoop, we have paid for two-thirds of our Internet investments," Peter Chernin, chief operating officer of News Corp, said on a conference call with analysts and reporters. "The money comes in at about 100 per cent margin — We're sort of playing with house money," he said.

MNA/Reuters

466,000 evacuated in as Saomai approaches

HANGZHOU, 10 Aug — At least 466,000 people in China — 266,000 in Fujian and 200,000 in Zhejiang — have been evacuated from the path of Typhoon Saomai, which has upgraded to extremely powerful.

Meteorologists said Saomai, the eighth typhoon to hit China this year, would probably hit the Chinese mainland between Lianjiang in Fujian and Yuhuan in Zhejiang later on Thursday.

At around 11:00 p.m. on Wednesday, Saomai, which is the Vietnamese name for the planet Venus, was located approximately 480 km southeast of Zhejiang city of Wenzhou.

With winds reaching 216 km per hour at its centre, the typhoon was moving northwest at a speed of 30 km per hour.

Li Yuzhu, head of the Zhejiang provincial observatory, said on Wednesday, "Saomai has outpaced forecasts and outrun the powerful Typhoon Rananim that claimed 164 lives in Zhejiang in August 2004."

In Wenzhou alone, 42 people from nine villages were killed and five were missing in a landslide caused by Rananim.

In the adjacent Fujian Province, more than 36,000 vessels have returned to harbour and outdoor activities in all 26,800 schools in Fujian have been suspended, as Saomai approaches with Bopha, forecast to be the ninth tropical storm to hit China this year, close behind.

Internet
Late Gonzalez goal spares Liverpool blushes

LIVERPOOL (England), 10 Aug — Liverpool needed a late winner from Chilean substitute Mark Gonzalez to overcome a determined Maccabi Haifa 2-1 at Anfield in the first leg of their Champions League qualifier on Wednesday.

Rafael Benitez’ side came from behind to win a nervy encounter against the Israeli team who are still frustrated that the second leg of the third qualifying round tie will not be played in their home country due to security concerns.

“I am a little disappointed because we had a lot of possession and didn’t make the most of it in the first half,” Benitez told reporters.

“We hope to have players fitter for the second game. We had some players that have done just 15 days training, so it is hard to be fit.”

Looking ahead to the second leg, Benitez added: “They wanted to play on the counter attack; now they need to score goals and will have to go forward.

“We have a little bit of an advantage, but we know they are a good team.”

Maccabi shocked the 2005 European champions by taking a 29th-minute lead against the run of play.

Gustavo Boccoli started the move in his own half and took a clever return pass from Roberto Colautti to run through on goal and shoot past Liverpool goalkeeper Jose Reina’s right leg.

Liverpool’s response was instant with Welsh forward Bellamy scoring his first goal for the club in the 33rd minute.

Good link play between Jermaine Pennant and Steven Gerrard set up Momo Sissoko for a shot and when that was saved Bellamy barged Gerrard out of the way to score.

Gonzalez, also making his debut, scored within two minutes of arriving as a substitute by digging the ball out of his feet and hooking it home at the far post from Xabi Alonso’s cross after 88 minutes.

“We started off using our quality and then tried to use the pace of Mark Gonzalez and it was good to see him score the goal,” said Benitez.

“I was confident Mark would do well and we wanted to use his pace when Steven Gerrard tired.” — MNA/Reuters

Huntelaar takes Ajax towards Champions League group stage

COPENHAGEN, 10 Aug — Striker Klaas-Jan Huntelaar scored both goals as Ajax Amsterdam beat Danish champions FC Copenhagen 2-1 away on Wednesday to edge towards the lucrative Champions League group stage.

Huntelaar opened the scoring in the third qualifying round first leg match after 38 minutes by diverting Thomas Vermaelen’s cross after 38 minutes.

The Dutchman put the visitors firmly in charge for the second leg.

“The goal raised Danish hopes of having a manageable task in the return match in the Netherlands in two weeks’ time, but Huntelaar struck again six minutes from the end by driving the ball past Christiansen from close range.

That goal all but dashed FC Copenhagen’s chances of becoming the third Danish team ever to qualify for the group stage of the Champions League since the Danes will have to score at least twice in Amsterdam on 23 August to go through.” — MNA/Reuters

AEK Athens snatch late 2-1 win over Hearts

EDINBURGH, 10 Aug — AEK Athens came from behind to snatch a 2-1 victory over 10-man Hearts after scoring twice in the final minutes of their Champions League third qualifying round match on Wednesday.

Lithuanian Saulius Mikoliunas put Hearts in front in the first leg match at Murrayfield, squeezing home a near-post shot in the 62nd minute from six metres.

But Hearts were rocked four minutes later when Portuguese midfielder Bruno Aguiar was sent off for a second bookable offence.

They looked to have held on for a win until Pantelis Kapetanos headed an equalizer for the Greek side with two minutes left.

The winner came in stoppage time as Nikolas Liberopoulos’ shot was deflected into the net off Christoph Berra for an own goal that put the Greeks firmly in charge for the second leg.

“The sending off cost us the match,” said Hearts manager Valtas Ivanovas. “Bruno was very angry in the dressing room.

’It wasn’t even with a full team and the players are angry about the last four minutes.” — MNA/Reuters

Inzaghi birthday strike gives Milan narrow lead

MILAN, 10 Aug — AC Milan striker Filippo Inzaghi celebrated his 33rd birthday with the goal that secured a 1-0 win over Red Star Belgrade in their Champions League third qualifying round, first leg match on Wednesday.

Despite Inzaghi’s 22nd minute strike the six-times European champions still have a lot of work to do in the return match in two weeks’ time in the Serbian capital.

Milan, who originally finished runners-up in Serie A last season, found themselves in the Champions League qualifying round after being demoted to third place by an Italian sports tribunal that examined a match-rigging scandal.

UEFA cleared Milan to face Red Star due to a lack of legal grounds to exclude them but European soccer’s governing body scolded the Italian club in a statement that spoke of the damage they had “already caused to European football”.

Red Star gave the home side an early scare when Blagov Georgiev was picked out unmarked inside the area but Milan’s Brazilian goalkeeper Dida saved well.

MNA/Reuters
Blair ally quits over Middle East policy

London, 10 Aug — A junior member of the British Government resigned on Wednesday in protest at Prime Minister Tony Blair’s policies in the Middle East.

Jim Sheridan said he was standing down as parliametary private secretary to the government’s defence team in anger at the decision to allow US planes carrying munitions to Israel to refuel in Scotland.

The post is governmental but is below that of a minister.

Sheridan said he was dismayed Blair had aped the stance of US President George W Bush since the war between Israel and Hezbollah guerrillas erupted four weeks ago.

“There’s been little if any public evidence that the Americans are serious about an early end to this conflict (and) I think we are guilty by association,” he told Sky TV news.

“It’s on that basis that I can no longer support the government’s close relationship with America.”

The member of Parliament for Paisley and Renfrewshire North said that while he supported Blair’s domestic policies, “I cannot say that about our foreign policy”.

“I’m somewhat concerned about the Americans’ objectives for the Middle East,” he said. “I shuddero to think what President Bush would be like if Tony Blair were not there offering his support and advice.”

Sheridan said he was angered by the government’s decision to allow US aircraft carrying munitions to Israel to refuel at Prestwick Airport near Glasgow.

The US flights came to light on 26 July when Foreign Secretary Margaret Beckett said the government would make a formal complaint to Washington over the way it used Prestwick for ferrying bombs to Israel.

MNA/Reuters

Brazillian jet lands safely after door falls off

Rio de Janeiro, 10 Aug — A jet owned by leading Brazilian airline TAM landed safely on Tuesday after one of its doors fell off and crashed to earth next to a supermarket shortly after departure from Sao Paulo.

No one was hurt in the incident, a TAM spokeswoman said. The Fokker 100 plane with 79 people aboard en route to Rio de Janeiro returned to the airport safely 18 minutes after taking off.

TAM has been replacing its Fokker planes since the Dutch aircraft maker went bankrupt 10 years ago. It still has 22, but expects to gradually eliminate all of them by 2010.

The same type of plane, also operated by TAM, caused one of Brazil’s worst air disasters in 1996. It crashed in an urban area shortly after taking off from Sao Paulo, killing about 100 people, including some on the ground.

MNA/Reuters

A Chinese soldier fights raging waters to carry a child to safety after tropical storm Parapiroon swept through Xinyi, south China’s Guangdong Province on Tuesday, 8 Aug, 2006. China’s death toll from the storm rose to 80 on Monday with another nine people missing, state media said.

INTERNET

THE NEW LIGHT OF MYANMAR Friday, 11 August, 2006

WEATHER

Thursday, 10 August, 2006

Summary of observations recorded at 09:30 hours MST: During the past 24 hours, rain have been scattered in Kachin, Shan and Kayah States, fairly widespread in Bago Division and widespread in the remaining areas with locally heavyfall in Mon State and isolated heavyfalls in Rakhine and Kayin States, Yangon and Tantibhaya Divisions. The noteworthy amounts of rainfall recorded were Ye (7.13) inches, Gwa (7.05) inches, Hpa-an (6.70) inches, Thaton (4.41) inches, Co co Island (4.37) inches, Dawei (3.19) inches, Mawlamyine (3.03) inches, Mindat (2.99) inches, Kale (2.36) inches, Chauk, Aunglan and Kalewa (1.06) inches each.

Maximum temperature on 9-8-2006 was 85°F. Minimum temperature on 10-8-2006 was 72°F. Relative humidity at 09:30 hours MST on 10-8-2006 was 88%. Total sunshine hours on 9-8-2006 was nil.

Rainfalls on 10-8-2006 were (0.24) inch at Mingaladon, (0.28) inch at Kaba-Aye and (0.23) inch at Central Yangon. Total rainfalls since 1-1-2006 were (60.24) inches at Mingaladon, (72.68) inches at Kaba-Aye and (77.32) inches at Central Yangon.

Maximum wind speed at Yangon (Kaba-Aye) was (12) mph from Southwest at (15.30) hours MST on 9-8-2006.

Bay inference: According to the observations at (06:30) hours MST today, a low pressure area has formed over North Bay and adjoining Central Bay. Monsoon is strong in the Andaman Sea and Bay of Bengal.

Forecast valid until evening of 11-8-2006: Rain will be scattered in Shan and Kayah States, Mandalay, Magway and lower Sagaing Divisions, fairly widespread in Kachin State and Bago Division and widespread in the remaining areas with likelihood of isolated heavyfalls in the Coastal areas. Degree of certainty is (80%).

State of the sea: Occasional squalls with rough seas are likely off and along Myanmar Coasts. Surface wind speed in squalls may reach 35 to 40 mph.

Outlook for subsequent two days: Strong monsoon.

Forecast for Nay Pyi Taw and neighbouring areas for 11-8-2006: Isolated rain. Degree of certainty is (80%).

Forecast for Yangon and neighbouring areas for 11-8-2006: Some rain. Degree of certainty is (80%).

Forecast for Mandalay and neighbouring areas for 11-8-2006: Isolated rain. Degree of certainty is (80%).
Lt-Gen Myint Swe inspects business at five tax-free markets

YANGON, 10 Aug — The Ministry of Industry-1, the Ministry of Energy, YCDC, regiments and units, entrepreneurs of Yangon Division Vegetable and Poultry Farming Special Zone of Hmaubwy Township, the Ministry of Livestock and Fisheries, Myanmar Rice and Paddy Wholesalers Association and Myanmar Oil Dealers Association open shops to sell various kinds of kitchen crops and groceries to the people at tax-free markets in Yangon daily.

Lt-Gen Myint Swe of the Ministry of Defence, accompanied by Chairman of Yangon Division Peace and Development Council Commander of Yangon Command Brig-Gen Hla Htay Win and Chairman of Yangon City Development Committee Mayor Brig-Gen Aung Thein Lin, this morning inspected tax-free markets here and fulfilled the requirements.

They inspected Pantaya tax-free market in Dagon Township, Hanthawady tax-free market in Sangyoung Township, the tax-free markets in Hlinethaya and Shwepyitha Townships and Nawade tax-free market in Mayangon Township.

Lt-Gen Myint Swe instructed officials to make supervision for systematic business at the markets, and shopkeepers to sell fresh and clean vegetables, fish and meat to the people at reasonable prices. — MNA

USDA members urged to join hands with locals for regional development

NAY PYI TAW, 10 Aug.— Secretary-General of the Union Solidarity and Development Association U Htay Oo met with executives and members of Pakokku district and township USDAs in Pakokku on 5 August and urged USDA members to carry out the tasks of the association with local people for the development and community peace of the region.

In meeting with USDA Secretary-General, Executive of Pakokku District USDA U Kyaw Tint and Executive of the township USDA U Ye Tun Hla reported on social activities of the association in the region.

The Secretary-General called on the members for performance of tasks laid down by the association while participating in social welfare tasks.

After hearing reports on social, economic and health matters presented by executives and members of USDA, Secretary-General U Htay Oo attended to the needs for regional development tasks.

28 resign from the party as members

YANGON, 10 Aug — Twenty-eight members of Mawlamyineygun Township National League for Democracy left the party their own volition on 25 July by sending their letters of resignation to the NLD Headquarters and Mawlamyineygun Township Multi-party Democracy General Election Sub-commission.

The members including U Myat Tha, U Hmoun Gyi, U Myint Tha and U Kyi Tun of Lintwe Mezali Village, U Than Aung of Kywechan Chaungpyu Village, U Aye Aung, U Maung Aye, Daw Sein Hla Yee, U Tin Khaing, U Chit Aung and U Than Nyein of Hti Hseik Phayausu Village, and U Aye Min of Kyungalay Village in the letters said that the NLD, instead of serving the interests of the nation and the people, has constantly concentrated all its attempts on the acts that will make the nation and the people get into precarious conditions. So, the NLD can no longer earn their reliance and trust, and they decided to quit as members of the party, they added. — MNA

Putting no trust and reliance on NLD

Weather Forecast for (11-8-2006)

Nay Pyi Taw and neighbouring areas
Isolated rain.
Degree of certainty is (80%).

Yangon and neighbouring areas
Some rain.
Degree of certainty is (80%).

Mandalay and neighbouring areas
Isolated rain.
Degree of certainty is (80%).

Myanmar Andaman Pearl Company, a joint-venture, found the world’s largest pearl in Myanmar waters off Taninthayi coast on 18 April 2001. The company entrusted the pearl, 6.2 cm long, 5.3 cm wide and 3 cm high, to the State. Its weight is 45.16 momme, 845 carats or 169 grams. The seas around Pale, Mali and Shwe islands in Myeik region produce the largest number of pearl in Myanmar.

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PINOOILWIN CHIT SWE

Lt-Gen Myint Swe of Ministry of Defence inspects Pantaya tax-free market in Dagon Township. — MNA