Senior General Than Shwe sends message of felicitations to Montenegro

NAI PYI TAW, 13 July—Senior General Than Shwe, Chairman of the State Peace and Development Council of the Union of Myanmar, has sent a message of felicitations to His Excellency Mr Filip Vujanovic, President of the Republic of Montenegro, on the occasion of the National Day of the Republic of Montenegro which falls on 13 July 2007. MNA

Bago Division to put 3m acres of land under monsoon paddy, 1.6m acres under pea, 400,000 acres under summer paddy and 500,000 acres under edible oil crops

NAI PYI TAW, 12 July—Member of the State Peace and Development Council Lt-Gen Khin Maung Than of the Ministry of Defence, accompanied by Chairman of Bago Division PDC Commander of Southern Command Maj-Gen Ko Ko and Vice-Chairman Col Sein Myint, Col Maung Maung Aye of Inma Station and departmental officials, viewed running of small-scale hydropower generator in Bogyikon Village of Thayawady District yesterday.

In meeting with local people, Lt-Gen Khin Maung Than gave instructions on participation of local people in construction of self-reliant hydropower generators in their respective areas.

The two 3-kilowatt generators at Bogyikon Village can supply electricity to 300 fluorescent lamps. At present, the generator supplies power to 80 fluorescent lamps and one TV.

In Thayawady, Lt-Gen Khin Maung Than met departmental personnel, social organization members and local people at Saya San Hall.

Chairman of Thayawady District PDC U Kyaw Khaing Soe reported on progress of the district. The commander gave a supplementary report.

After hearing the reports, Lt-Gen Khin Maung Than stressed the need to grow 10 major crops including monsoon and summer paddy in Thayawady District for exceeding the target. Officials are to supervise cultivation of monsoon paddy, pulses and beans and summer paddy on the designated areas to meet the target acreage. It is necessary to organize local farmers to extend 10,000 acres of rubber in Thayawady District and to provide necessary assistance and agricultural technologies to them.

(See page 8)

The first Summit held in Bangkok in July 2004 changed the body’s name to Bay of Bengal Initiative for Multi-Sectoral Technical and Economic Cooperation (BIMSTEC).

ECONOMIC DEPARTMENT
INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS AND ECONOMIC DEPARTMENT
MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS

Emergence of the State Constitution is the duty of all citizens of Myanmar Naing-Ngan.
Boost commodity production for national economic growth

The government is providing necessary assistance for national entrepreneurs and encouraging export services through the exercise of the export and import policy to achieve one of the economic objectives — Proper evolution of the market-oriented economic system.

It is also giving encouragement for extensive reclamation of vacant and fallow lands and cultivation of the 10 major crops including paddy, along with edible oil crops, perennial crops, new crops and other suitable crops throughout the nation. National entrepreneurs, farmers and livestock breeders are engaged in growing marketable crops, raising farm animals and producing marine products through mutual interests system.

The nation can enjoy economic development only when it is able to boost production of goods. National entrepreneurs with investments should have to make investments extensively not only in service and trade sectors but also in the manufacturing sector.

In the process, national entrepreneurs are to engage systematically in the enterprises that can bring benefits not only to individuals and groups but also to the State.

Furthermore, they are to work hard so as to speed up export of goods and earn more foreign exchanges and to spread their wings in manufacturing import-substitute goods for helping the nation reduce its reliance on imported goods and stand on its feet.

Therefore, making use of the assistance of the government effectively, national entrepreneurs should make harmonious efforts to boost production and export of goods, manufacture import-substitute items, minimize loss and wastage and practise thrifty for great national economic development.

PBANRDA holds Waso Robes Offering Ceremony

NAV PVT TAW, 11 July — Under the patronage of Minister for Progress of Border Areas and National Races and Development Affairs Col Thein Nyunt and wife Daw Kyin Khaing, the 14th Waso Robes Offering Ceremony of the ministry was held at the meeting hall of the ministry, here, this morning.

The ceremony was attended by members of the Sangha led by Presiding Nayaka Sayadaw Agga Maha Pandita Agga Maha Ganthavacako Pandita Bhaddanta Visaro of Zaygon Monastery, Minister Col Thein Nyunt and wife Daw Kyin Khaing and family members of the staff.

First, the congregation received the Five Precepts from the Sayadaw and members of the Sangha recited parittas. Next, the minister and wife, departmental heads and wellwishers offered Waso robes and provisions to the Sayadaw and members of the Sangha. Later, those present shared the merits gained.

After that, the congregation offered 'soon' to the members of the Sangha.

MNA

MYANMAR GAZETTE

NAV PVT TAW, 12 July — The State Peace and Development Council has confirmed the following persons as heads of service organizations shown against each on expiry of the one-year probationary period.

Name Appointment
(a) Dr Myint Thein Rector
University of Veterinary Science
(b) U Thein Lwin Managing Director
Myanmar Petrochemical Enterprise
(c) U Tun Lwin Director-General
Department of Meteorology and Hydrology

The State Peace and Development Council has appointed Deputy Director-General U Than Tun of Department of Consular and Legal Affairs under the Ministry of Foreign Affairs as Director-General of the same department on probation from the date he assumes charge of his duties. — MNA

Minister Col Thein
Nyunt and wife offer
Waso Robe to a
Sayadaw.

MNA

Joint Secretary of MFPTMA leaves for Singapore

YANGON, 12 July — Joint Secretary of Myanmar Forest Products and Timber Merchants Association Dr Myo Thet today left here for Singapore to attend the work committee meeting of 15th ASEAN Furniture Industries Council to be held in Singapore from 13 to 15 July.

The joint secretary was seen off at Yangon International Airport by General Secretary U Nay Tun Min and Executive U Min Thaw Kaung and responsible personnel. — MNA

Dr Myo Thet, Joint Secretary of MFPTMA, being seen off by officials at Yangon International Airport. — UMFCI

China develops water-skimming plane

BEIJING, 12 July — Chinese scientists have developed a “Wing-In-Ground” (WIG) aircraft which can fly long distances just a few feet above the sea surface, state media said on Wednesday.

The plane can fly as low as half a metre (1 foot 7 inches) off the surface, hitting speeds of up to 300 kilometres (180 miles) per hour and can carry up to four tons on takeoff. — MNA/Reuters
Suicide bomber kills four people in N Iraq

MOSUL, 12 July — A suicide bomber stormed a wedding ceremony in a town near the northern Iraqi city of Mosul on Thursday, killing four people and wounding five others, local police source said.

“A suicide bomber wearing an explosive-belt blew himself up in a wedding party inside a house in the town of Tal Afar, 70 km west of Mosul,” Staff Brigadier Ibrahim al-Jubouri, chief police of the town told Xinhua by telephone.

The attack targeted the house of a brother of an Iraqi police officer in the town, killing four people and wounding five others, most of them in critical condition, al-Jubouri said.

In a separate incident, a car bomb detonated in the Bab Sinjar neighbourhood in western Mosul, local police source said.

The attack targeted a passing police patrol in the neighbourhood, wounding two policemen and four civilians, the source added.

Mosul is the capital of the Iraqi Nineveh province, some 400 km north of Baghdad. — Xinhua

US Army misses recruit target, Marines beat goal

WASHINGTON, 11 July — The US Army, strained by the war in Iraq, fell nearly 1,400 recruits short in June, the Pentagon said on Tuesday, marking the second straight month the military’s largest branch missed its target for new soldiers.

The active-duty Army recruited 7,031 soldiers in June, missing its goal of 8,400. That followed a shortfall in May, when the Army signed up 5,101 recruits, below its goal of 5,500. Other active-duty branches of the US military met or exceeded goals, according to Pentagon data.

For example, the Marine Corps, which too has been strained by deployments to Iraq and Afghanistan, recruited 4,113 new Marines, exceeding its goal of 3,742 for June. Of the reserve forces, all except the Air National Guard met or exceeded monthly recruiting targets, the Defence Department said.

Defence officials, speaking on Monday ahead of the release of the June figures, called the Army’s shortfall troubling. June is typically a strong recruiting month, given the timing of high school graduation in the United States. Pentagon polling data has shown parental support for recruitment has declined.

If the downward trend continues at current rates, the Army could miss its annual target of 80,000 new soldiers for the current fiscal year, ending 30 September.

The Army last missed annual recruiting goals in fiscal years 2005 and 1999. — MNA/Reuters

Car bombing at military post kills up to 10 soldiers

ALGIERS, 11 July — A suicide bomber blew up a refrigerated truck allegedly packed with up to a ton of explosives inside a military encampment southeast of the Algerian capital, killing 10 soldiers and wounding up to 35, a security official said.

Al-Qaeda’s North African affiliate claimed responsibility for the truck attack on Wednesday, saying the truck carried more than a ton of explosives, the Al-Jazeera TV network reported, quoting a recorded message from an alleged spokesman for the extremist group.

The truck drove into the small post on the edge of Lakhdaria, some 80 kilometres (50 miles) from Algiers, as the doors opened in the morning for arriving personnel, the security official said. He was not authorized to discuss the bombing and spoke on condition of anonymity. — Internet

A soldier carries an elderly woman in the flood water in Chizhou city, east China’s Anhui Province, on 10 July, 2007. The city witnessed heavy rainfall recently, which caused over 30 villages and townships flooded, six people dead and two others missing. — Xinhua

Chinese President Hu Jintao (R) shakes hands with Navinchandra Ramgoolam, Prime Minister of Mauritius, at the Great Hall of the People in Beijing, on 11 July, 2007. — Xinhua
Poll shows US opposition to Iraq war hits new high

WASHINGTON, 11 July — Opposition to the Iraq war has climbed to a record high and President George W Bush’s approval rating dropped to a new low amid growing dissent from members of his own Republican Party over his war strategy, according to a new USA Today/Gallup poll.

Bush’s approval dropped to 29 per cent in the poll taken Friday through Sunday, down from 33 per cent in early June, USA Today reported on Tuesday.

One in five Americans said the increase in US forces in Iraq this year has made the situation there better while half said it has made no difference, the newspaper said.

More than seven in 10 Americans favour withdrawing nearly all US troops from Iraq by April, the newspaper said.

The review, which appears in Tuesday’s issue of the Journal of the National Cancer Institute, refutes numerous studies which have pointed to a link between eating lycopene, the antioxidant that gives tomatoes their red color, and a reduced risk of certain cancers.

Iraqi police say Green Zone mortar barrage kills three

Baghdad, 11 July — A big mortar and rocket attack on Baghdad’s heavily fortified Green Zone compound on Tuesday killed two Iraqis and a Filipino and wounded 25 other people, Iraqi police said.

Police said some 30 mortars and rockets were fired at the compound, which houses the Iraqi Government along with the US and British embassies.

It was one of the biggest barrages against the zone since the US-led invasion in 2003.

A US embassy spokesman said he was not aware of anyone getting killed, adding there had been around a dozen explosions inside the zone, which covers a large area of central Baghdad and is bounded on one side by the Tigris River.

Hundreds of thousands stranded in India floods

KOLKATA (India), 11 July — Hundreds of thousands of people remained stranded with little food and water for a seventh day in eastern India, while heavy rains continued to pour in the west sparking more flooding, officials said on Tuesday.

At least 187 people have died and seven million have been affected by flooding caused by the annual June-September monsoon rains across eastern, western and southern parts of the country.

The rains, which have caused rivers and dams to overflow, swelling towns and villages, have killed around 770 people across India, Pakistan, Bangladesh and Afghanistsan.

In India, hundreds of flooded villages in the eastern state of West Bengal remained cut off, with some residents stranded in trees and on rooftops with only coconuts to eat.

“It was distressing to see so many people perched on rooftops and crying for help,” said Ramesh Kumar Das, a defence official, who is helping the Indian Air Force distribute food to marooned villagers from helicopters.

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A dancer from Peru’s Jallmay Dance Company waits for the starts of the ‘Ciudad de Burgos’ festival in Burgos, northern Spain, on 11 July.

INTERNET

FDA: tomatoes do not help prevent cancer

BEIJING, 12 July — The US Food and Drug Administration (FDA) Wednesday concluded that tomatoes do not really help prevent cancer after its review of all known lycopeno studies.

“The review found no evidence that tomatoes reduced the risk of lung, colorectal, breast, cervical or endometrial cancer. However, there was very limited evidence for associations between tomato consumption and reduced risk of prostate, ovarian, gastric and pancreatic cancers.”

“Very limited and preliminary scientific research suggests that eating one-half to one cup of tomatoes and/or tomato sauce a week may reduce the risk of prostate cancer. (The) FDA concludes that there is little scientific evidence supporting this claim.”

The review, which appears in Tuesday’s issue of the Journal of the National Cancer Institute, refutes numerous studies which have pointed to a link between eating lycopene, the antioxidant that gives tomatoes their red color, and a reduced risk of certain cancers.

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INTERNET
**Economic News**

**S Korea, EU exchange tariff offers ahead of FTA talks**

SEUL, 11 July—South Korea and the European Union (EU) have exchanged proposals on tariffs in preparation for the second round of negotiations for free trade agreement (FTA), South Korea’s Yonhap news agency said on Tuesday.

In the proposal, South Korea asked the EU to exempt rice and about 150 agricultural and fisheries goods, out of 1,452 such items, from the agreement. Yonhap quoted an official of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade as saying.

South Korea and the EU held their first round of FTA talks in Seoul in May. They agreed to have the second FTA negotiations from 16 to 20 July in Brussels.

In the first round of FTA talks, the two sides agreed to eliminate tariffs on 95 per cent of bilateral trade. South Korea’s average tariff is 11.2 per cent, far higher than the EU’s 4.2 per cent. The EU is South Korea’s second-largest trading partner after China. The trade volume between South Korea and the EU totalled 79.4 billion US dollars in 2006.

**ASEAN Elenex targets to increase 20% in sale**

KUALA LUMPUR, 11 July—ASEAN Elenex, the 7th Power Generation, Transmission and Electrical Engineering Exhibition to be held from 18 to 21 July in Malaysia, is expected to generate a 20-per-cent increase in sales to 800 million ringgit (235.29 million US dollars).

About 600 companies from 40 countries will attend the event, the organizer said in a statement on Tuesday.

The exhibition at the Kuala Lumpur Convention Centre has attracted national pavilions from China, India, Singapore, South Korea and the United Kingdom.

About 12,000 trade visitors are scheduled to network and pursue business opportunities during ASEAN Elenex.

The event is held concurrently with the biennial ASEAN Industrial Automation Exhibition (IA) 2007 at the same venue, the national news agency Bernama reported.

According to the organizer, interest in IA 2007 has been high due to Malaysia’s current position as Asia’s leading source of machine-building and systems integration expertise, especially for the electronics manufacturing sector.

**China appreciates Switzerland’s recognition**

BEIJING, 11 July—Chinese Vice-Premier Hu Lianguo expressed his appreciation on Monday of Switzerland’s recognition of China’s full market economy status.

“I appreciate the Swiss Government’s recognition of our full market economy status, and I believe that decision will create a better environment and a broader space for bilateral economic and trade cooperation,” Hui told visiting Swiss Federal Councillor Doris Leuthard. Leuthard, who is also head of the Federal Department of Economic Affairs, held talks with her Chinese counterpart Bo Xilai on Sunday and, on behalf of the Swiss Government, announced that Switzerland officially recognized China’s full market economy status.

Hui said Switzerland is an important economic partner for China and that Swiss products are very famous in China.

He pointed out that China is the largest source of imports and the second largest export market for Switzerland, and he hoped firms from the two countries would strengthen cooperation in areas such as high tech, resource utilization and environmental protection.

**Indonesia, Singapore to renegotiate defence agreement**

JAKARTA, 11 July—Indonesia and Singapore have agreed to discuss several contentious articles in the Defence Cooperation Agreement (DCA) that hamper the implementation, a senior official said here Monday.

“The heads of the two governments agreed to continue with the negotiations,” Indonesian Defence Minister Juwono Sudarsono was quoted by the national Antara news agency as saying.

The negotiating teams will be led by the foreign ministers, he said.

The DCA, which grants Singapore the right to conduct military exercises in the Indonesian territories, was signed on 27 April along with the extra

**Vietnam’s automobile sales surge in 1st half**

HANOI, 11 July—Automobile joint ventures in Vietnam posted total sales of 28,528 vehicles in the first half of this year, up 79 per cent over the same period last year, according to a local industrial association.

In June alone, the country’s automobile sales stood at 6,085 units, increasing 62 per cent over last June, said the Vietnam Automobile Manufacturers Association.

Last month, Toyota Vietnam kept on holding the biggest local market share, with 1,774 units sold, followed by local bus and truck maker Truong Hai with 956 units, and Vinavesco with 688.

Automobile joint ventures in Vietnam, sole producers of cars and main makers of other kinds of automobiles in the country, sold 39,876 vehicles in 2006, down from 40,853 in 2005, said the association.

Last year, Vietnam with a population of over 83 million housed 13 automobile joint ventures with total registered capital of nearly 700 million US dollars and combined annual capacity of 173,000 units.

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UN chief highlights men’s life-saving role in supporting maternal health

UNITED NATIONS, 11 July— UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon highlighted on Wednesday the significance of men’s care for maternal health and their support for women’s sexual and reproductive health rights.

“As partners for maternal health, men can save lives,” Ban said in a message marking this year’s World Population Day.

In case of immediate medical care, the support of an informed husband, Ban said, could be life-saving.

More than half a million women die each year during pregnancy and childbirth, 99 percent of them in developing countries.

Many more suffer serious complications that can have a severe impact on the quality of life for women and their families, he noted.

However, “almost all of this death and suffering is preventable,” the UN chief said.

Despite the progress in terms of reducing maternal death rates in several countries over the past decade, much more needs to be done to achieve the Millennium Development Goal of improving maternal health around the world by 2015, he said.

“Partnering with men is an important strategy for advancing reproductive health and rights,” Ban stressed. “Gender equality, another Millennium Development Goal, is most likely to be achieved when men recognize that the lives of men and women are interdependent and that the empowerment of women benefits everyone,” he said.

Soldiers wounded in Thai southern blast

BANGKOK, 11 July— Five soldiers were wounded when insurgents detonated a roadside bomb in Thailand’s southern province of Pattani on Tuesday, local media reported.

The soldiers were ambushed when they were patrolling on a pick-up in Mayo District shortly before noon, the Bangkok Post said on its website.

Police said the bomb, hidden near a trash can, was detonated when they were passing by. The vehicle was partly damaged. Five soldiers were injured during the blast and were rushed to Mayo District hospital.

Thailand’s three southernmost provinces — Pattani, Narathiwat and Yala have been troubled by an insurgency which has claimed more than 2,300 lives since it resumed in early 2004.

China, Australia, New Zealand to hold first joint maritime drill

BEIJING, 11 July— China, Australia and New Zealand will hold their first-ever joint maritime drill in September near Australia. The news came out of the talks between Chinese Defence Minister Cao Gangchuan and Australian counterpart Brendan Nelson on Monday.

Nelson said Chinese vessels would visit Australia in September and hold a “search-and-rescue exercise” with Australia and New Zealand.

That will be good to “build trust and increase friendship”, he said.

Cao lauded the drill, China’s first multilateral maritime drill, as “a step to show the expansion of our substantive military cooperation”.

China has conducted bilateral search-and-rescue drills with countries including Britain, France, Pakistan, India, Australia, Thailand and the United States since 2003. Nelson is here on his first visit to China since he assumed the post in January 2006.

His visit comes just days after Australia issued a defence policy paper that said “the pace and scope of (China’s) military modernization... could create misunderstandings and instability in the region”.

The Chinese Foreign Ministry last week brushed aside Australia’s concerns over China’s military development, saying the country was firmly on the path of peaceful development.

Yet, neither Cao nor Nelson directly touched upon the defence policy paper in their 90-minute talks. Instead they both hailed the good momentum of China-Australia military ties.

Nine Iraqi soldiers killed in bomb attack

TIKRIT (Iraq), 11 July — Nine Iraqi soldiers on Monday were killed and 21 others injured in a roadside bomb followed by gunfire attacks near the town of Balad, some 80 kilometres north of Baghdad, local police and medics said.

“Gunmen blew up a roadside bomb near an Iraqi Army convoy and then opened fire with their machine-guns and small arms fire on the convoy,” local police source told Xinhua on condition of anonymity.

Qasim Abbud, director of Balad Hospital, said they have received nine bodies and 21 injured soldiers. The convoy encountered the attack on its way from Tikrit, 170 kilometres north of Baghdad, to the capital, said the police source, adding that several military vehicles of the convoy were damaged by the attack.
The Bay of Bengal Initiative for Multi-Sectoral Technical and Economic Cooperation (BIMSTEC) has reached its tenth anniversary in June this year. Widely known as BIMSTEC, the regional organization is a sound result of the integration of Thailand’s Look West policy and India’s Look East policy. Thailand adopted the Look West policy with the aim of extending economic and trade ties with its western neighbours — South Asian countries. Likewise, countries of the Indian Sub Continent laid down the Look East policy to establish close economic relations with Southeast Asian nations after witnessing the latter’s economic growth.

BIMSTEC is formed with countries touching the Bay of Bengal or relying on the said sea for trade, with the objective of promoting multi-sectoral cooperation for economic and social progress of the region. Its seven members are: Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, Myanmar, Nepal, Sri Lanka and Thailand. BIMSTEC was formed in June 1997 and it had six sectors of cooperation in 1999. In 2006, the number of sectors was increased to 13. With an idea of forming an economic cooperation group comprising Bangladesh, India, Myanmar, Sri Lanka and Thailand in the Bay of Bengal region, Thailand initiated talks with India on the matter. As Myanmar had not joined the body yet then, the ministerial meeting hosted by Thailand in Bangkok on 6 June 1997 formed the Bangladesh-India-Sri Lanka-Thailand Economic Cooperation (BIST-EC).

As India aimed at forming the body with the participation of Bangladesh, India, Myanmar, Sri Lanka and Thailand, it approached Myanmar and invited her to attend the ministerial meeting. As Myanmar wished to wait and see the situation, she attended it as an observer. Later, Myanmar began to make preparations to join the BIMSTEC in June 1997. In accord with the procedures, the country proposed a proposal to the body through Thailand that was taking the alternate chairmanship to enter the body in early July 1997. Without any objection, all the four founding member nations accepted Myanmar’s proposal. Myanmar started to attend the monthly meeting of the Bangkok-based BIST-EC Task Force at the second meeting held on 25 August 1997.

For the first time, Myanmar delegation led by the Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs took part in the BIST-EC special ministerial meeting and the senior officials meeting held for four days from 19 to 22 December 1997. The special ministerial meeting held on 22 December, officially welcomed Myanmar and changed the body’s name from BIST-EC to BIMSTEC-India-Myanmar-Sri Lanka-Thailand Economic Cooperation (BIMSTEC) with the proclamation signed by deputy foreign ministers of the five member countries. Later, Bhutan and Nepal joined the body.

The first Summit held in Bangkok in July 2004 changed the body’s name to Bay of Bengal Initiative for Multi-Sectoral Technical and Economic Cooperation (BIMSTEC). The two acronyms “BIMSTEC” and “BIMSTEC” are the same in pronunciation but totally different in meaning.

The BIMSTEC is organizing two senior officials meetings and one ministerial meeting annually and a Summit every two years to lay down future work programmes and to implement them through coordination. The regional body is holding its Task Force meeting monthly in Bangkok at which every Lead Country presents sector-wise cooperation activities and the participants discuss other matters including the sponsoring of a BIMSTEC film festival, the issuance of BIMSTEC business travelling card, the cooperation with Asian Development Bank, the establishment of main BIMSTEC website and setting up of the BIMSTEC Secretariat.

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs can serve as a coordinating body for other ministries to present their developments, work programmes, stance and opinions to the Task Force meeting. MOFA also serves as the central liaison department, and Myanmar is the Lead Country in energy and agricultural sector cooperation.

The first BIMSTEC Summit was hosted by Thailand in Bangkok on 31 July 2004. The regional body is notable to sponsor its second Summit till now, although the planned date was in 2006. At present, it is planning to hold the Summit in New Delhi in the early 2008. Member countries take BIMSTEC chairmanship for a year in rotation in alphabetical order. The country holding the chairmanship is responsible for hosting senior officials’ meetings, ministerial meetings and summits and taking a leadership role in discussions about BIMSTEC affairs. At present, India is holding the chairmanship.

The Foreign Affairs Minister has to lead the delegation of the country concerned to attend ministerial meetings accompanied by high-ranking officials of relevant ministries as members. The 9th Ministerial Meeting took place in India in August 2006. The 2nd BIMSTEC Ministerial Meeting held in 1998 passed a resolution to propose BIMSTEC sectors of cooperation into six and share the duty of the leading country sector-wise. The Eighth Ministerial Meeting held in Dhaka in December 2005 laid down seven more sectors, so the number of the chapters reached 13. The sectors and leading countries are as follows:

(1) Trade and Investment/Sub-sector Bangladesh
(2) Technology/Sub-sector India
(3) Energy/Sub-sector India
(4) Transportation & Communication/Sub-sector Myanmar
(5) Tourism/Sub-sector Sri Lanka
(6) Fisheries/Sub-sector Thailand
Sectors expanded in 2006 Lead / Chairman Country
(7) Poverty Alleviation/Sub-sector Nepal
(8) Agriculture/Sub-sector Myanmar
(9) Cultural Cooperation/Sub-sector Bhutan
(10) Counter-Terrorism and Transnational Crime/Sub-sector India
(11) Environment and Disaster Management/Sub-sector India
(12) Public Health/Sub-sector Thailand
(13) People-to-People Contact/Sub-sector Thailand

BIMSTEC consists of certain ASEAN countries and members of SAARC-South Asia Association for Regional Cooperation. So, BIMSTEC serves as a bridge to link the two regional organizations. India enjoying rapid economic growth and Thailand enjoying economic growth are playing a leading role in the BIMSTEC. So, the organization will contribute towards sector-wise economic cooperation in the region.

Under the political encouragement given by Heads of State/Government of the member countries, cooperation meetings are being held to cooperate at the departmental level. However, the plan has not been able to mobilize the active participation of private sector and commercial sector that can make significant contribution towards economic growth and trade development. And it is still needed to build infrastructures to link transport and communication among the members of smooth transport of commodities and people.

BIMSTEC has come into existence for 10 years only. Some salient works of the BIMSTEC are endorsement of Framework Agreement on BIMST-EC Free Trade Area, designating 2004-2005 as Visit BIMSTEC Year, establishment of BIMSTEC Chambers of Commerce and Industry, hosting the first BIMSTEC youth football tournament in Phuket, forming of Central Department on BIMSTEC activities in Bangkok, and implementing bio-gas project in Kokke village, Myingyan Township, Myanmar. There have still been limitations on cooperation of the member countries due to the difference on national development, areas, culture and historical backgrounds. However, if small members are able to apply the strong points of globalization in human resource development with the use of technological advancement, they will be able to catch up with big countries in the international economic sphere. Therefore, Myanmar joined the BIMSTEC soon after becoming a member of ASEAN—and this may be seen as the right step.

The BIMSTEC is located in a strategic area. The members with economic growth and technological advancement are in a position to provide assistance to other members. Members can expand their markets with their use of economic growth. Intellectuals and intelligentsia from related departments and private organizations are urged to work hard together for the development of respective sectors so that the BIMSTEC can help members to enjoy greater economic growth and practise the market economic system.
Bago Division to put 3m acres of land under monsoon paddy, ... (from page 1)

The government has created good infrastructures for development of the nation. Development tasks for rural areas reflect improvement of the State. As a result, it is necessary to strive for undertaking five rural development tasks. Despite ensuring sufficiency of rice, meat and fish and vegetables, the country still needs edible oil sufficiency. He stressed the need to extend cultivation of edible oil crops in the nation for producing edible oil at home instead of importing the items into the country.

He added that Thayawady District is to implement to grow edible oil crops on 110,000 acres of land including 70,000 acres. This year, Bago Division is to put three million acres of land under monsoon paddy, 1.6 million acres under pea, 400,000 acres under summer paddy and 500,000 acres under edible oil crops. Likewise, efforts are to be made for planting of 500,000 acres of physic nut in three years to extract bio-diesel. For prevention against overflow of water in Thayawady District, preparations are to be made for maintenance of the embankments on eastern bank of Ayeyawady River. Departmental personnel are to join hands with the people in undertaking regional development.

They attended the collective monsoon paddy cultivation ceremony of Letpadan Township for 2007-08 in Kyayni Village.

Chairman of Letpadan Township PDC U Chat Thein reported on cultivation of monsoon paddy in the township. Lt-Gen Khin Maung Thant viewed paddy transplanting in the field.

Letpadan Township has so far put 55,858 acres of land under monsoon paddy against the target of 115,000 acres in 2007-08, and the plan is under way to grow paddy on the remaining acres of land this month.

At the local battalion in Minncha Township, Lt-Gen Khin Maung Thant met with servicemen and families. He instructed them to join hands with local people in undertaking five rural development tasks while serving the defence duty of the State.

Afterwards, they proceeded to Pyay. — MNA

Sri Lankan delegation concludes visit

YANGON, 11 July — The delegation led by Foreign Minister of Sri Lanka Mr Rohitha Bogollagama returned home by air this evening.

They were seen off at the Yangon International Airport by Deputy Director-General U Soe Win of the Protocol Department and officials of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Sri Lankan Ambassador to the Union of Myanmar Mr Samuraseker and embassy staff.

NLD members fed up with selfish acts of party’s leaders

YANGON, 11 July — A total of 11 members — U Ya Thuang of Wa Taw Ma village, U Khin Maung, Daw Sein Shwe, U Tat Pwa, Daw Then Lwin, U Nyunt Lwin, U Thein Win, U Myint Swe, Daw Thein Aye, Daw Kywe and U Po Nya of Kang Village of Ayadaw Township National League for Democracy of Sagaing Division resigned from NLD of their own accord on 19 June.

They sent their resignation letters to NLD headquarters and local authorities concerned.

They said in the letters sent to Sagaing Division Multi-party Democracy General Election Sub-committee, that they became fed up with the selfish acts of party’s leaders and they no longer wished to be members of NLD owing to the acts detrimental to the State and the people. Therefore, they resigned from the party of their own volition.

MNA
Wellwisher donates medicines to MMCWA


The donation ceremony was held at the association here and Agga Maha Thiri Thudhamma Theingi Daw Myint Myint Yi and daughter Dr Thin Nwe Win of Royal Ruby Co Ltd donated medicines to be used in health care services of the association. President of MMCWA Daw Khin Khin Win accepted the donation and presented certificate of honour to the wellwishers.

MMCWA carries out social welfare tasks in Shwedaung, Pyay

YANGON, 12 July — Vice-President of Myanmar Maternal and Child Welfare Association Daw Aye Aye and Secretary Dr Daw Wai Wai Tha went to the delivery unit of Shwedaung Township Maternal and Child Welfare Association in Shwedaung on 10 July and donated cash to the unit.

During the tour, they also visited the day-care nursery of the township MCWA. They also went to the General Hospital in Pyay and donated over K 2 million to the funds for giving treatment to 48 cleft lip and palate patients.

MWAF educates women in three villages in Taungtha Township

Dr Daw Khin Hsan Nwe briefly on Myanmar Women’s Affairs Federation at Thigon Village in Taungtha Township. — MNA

YANGON, 12 July — Under the arrangement of Myanmar Women’s Affairs Federation, educative talks and roundtable discussions were conducted in three villages in Taungtha Township, Myingyan District, on 6 and 7 July separately.

The talks were held at Kyakka, Thitmahta and Thigon villages in Taungtha Township. Women from the villages gathered at the talks and participated in the discussions related to women’s affairs.

Head of the Organizing Department Dr Daw Khin Hsan Nwe briefed on MWAF and responsible personnel of Myingyan District Women’s Affairs Organization gave talks on matters related to prevention against trafficking in persons and culture. Those present also discussed matters related to trafficking in persons and culture in groups.

After the talks, Daw Khin Hsan Nwe and party presented uniforms of MWAF, periodicals and gifts to those present. They also donated K 500,000 to Ziwitadana Association in Thitmahta Village and K 500,000 to the funds for the maintenance of sinking tube-well in Thigon Village. At the talks, they also accepted applications of villagers for membership of MWAF.

Foreign Minister sends felicitations to Montenegro

NAY PYI TAW, 13 July— U Nyan Win, Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Union of Myanmar, has sent a message of felicitations to His Excellency Mr Milan Rocen, Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Montenegro, on the occasion of the National Day of the Republic of Montenegro which falls on 13 July 2007. — MNA

Minister visits Yeywa Hydro Power Project

NAY PYI TAW, 12 July — Minister for Electric Power No 1 Col Zaw Min went to Yeywa Hydro Power Project located at 31 miles south-east of Mandalay on 6 July and inspected construction work of the project.

Yeywa Hydro Power Project is being implemented on Myintge River near Yeyaman Village by Construction-2 of Hydropower Projects Implementation Department under the Ministry of Electric Power No 1. At the briefing hall, officials concerned reported to the minister on progress of the project, tasks being undertaken and future tasks for the 2007-2008 fiscal year and condition of machinery.

After hearing reports, Minister Col Zaw Min urged officials concerned to make efforts for timely completion of work, to cooperate with departments concerned and to carry out preventive measures against natural disasters in the rainy season. He also called for work site safety and stockpiling of materials to be used in construction works in the open season.

Afterwards, the minister and party went to the construction site and inspected construction of the separation wall, concrete dam and intake structure. He also inspected construction of the power supply station and other works.

Over 37 per cent of the work of the project has been completed. Generators of the project will have a total capacity of 790-megawatt and the project is expected to produce about 3,550 million kWh annually. — MNA

NC delegates from Chin State, Sagaing Div arrive

YANGON, 12 July — The National Convention delegates from Chin State and Sagaing Division arrived here by air to attend the National Convention this evening.

They were welcomed at the Yangon International Airport by Chairman of Organizing, Invitation and Accommodation Subcommittee Col Hein Lin and officials. They were accommodated at the Nyauhngnapin Camp in Hmawby Township, Yangon Division. — MNA

Delegates to the National Convention from Chin State and Sagaing Division arrive at Yangon International Airport. — MNA
Cash donated to funds for missionary task

Wellwishers donate K1 million to funds for missionary work through an official.

First round of First Inter-Ministry Football Tournament continues

Likewise, Ministry of Sports Team trounced Ministry of Social Welfare, Relief and Resettlement Team 6-1 at Paunglaung Sports Ground in the afternoon.

Attorney-General’s Office Team was defeated by Ministry of Health Team 2-0 at the sports ground in Lewe Township.

Among the spectators were Chairman of Myanmar Olympic Committee Minister for Sports Brig-Gen Thura Aye Myint, Deputy Minister for Health Dr Paing Soe, Deputy Minister for Religious Affairs Brig-Gen Thura Aung Ko, Deputy Attorney-Generals U Myint Naing and U Tun Tun Oo, departmental officials and government employees.

Ministry of Labour Team and Ministry of Electric Power No 2 team will meet at Paunglaung Sports Ground, and Ministry of Rail Transportation Team and Ministry of Agriculture and Irrigation Team at the same ground tomorrow.

Ministry of Energy Team will play against Ministry of Health Team at the sports ground in Lewe tomorrow.

English Proficiency Course No 1 of USDA opens

Headquarters, course instructors and trainees.

USDA CEC Member U Aung Thein Lin made a speech on the occasion, saying that USDA members are discharging duties while trying to improve their qualification. They are to do their best to successfully implement the objectives and future tasks laid down yearly.

There are two points that a nation has its future. The first point is that there are citizens who are making endeavours for development of the nation while removing obstacles that undermine the interests of the nation. Another point is strong foundation of education, knowledge and skill. The citizens with above-mentioned qualifications can make the nation develop.

He said English proficiency courses are being conducted as English is a major language for international relations and other studies.

After the ceremony, CEC members and officials cordially greeted the trainees.

The 12-week course is being attended by 40 trainees.

I&P Minister receives UNFPA Resident Representative

Ministry for Immigration and Population Maj-Gen Maung Maung Swe met Resident Representative Mr Daniel B Baker of United Nations Fund for Population Activities at the minister’s office, here, this morning.

Present also at the call were Deputy Minister Brig-Gen Win Sein, Director-General U Maung Maung Than of Immigration and National Registration Department, Director-General U Tin Yi of Population Department, Head of Office U Than Naing Tun and officials.

Deputy Foreign Minister signs Book of Condolences for demise of Former Indian Prime Minister

Deputy Foreign Minister U Maung Maung signs the Book of Condolences for demise of Former Indian Prime Minister Mr Chandra Shekhar.

Minister Maj-Gen Maung Maung Swe receives Resident Representative of UNFPA Mr Daniel B Baker.
China flood toll hits 360

BEIJING, 12 July — Floods and landslides have killed at least 360 people across China this summer and destroyed more than four million hectares (15.4 million square miles) of crops, Xinhua news agency said on Wednesday.

Direct economic losses were 24.3 billion yuan (3.21 billion US dollars), according to latest figures from the State Flood Control and Drought Relief Headquarters.

“Apart from 217,000 houses wholly or partially destroyed, more than 4.28 million hectares of grain crops have been hit, with 2.03 million hectares totally destroyed,” headquarters deputy director Cheng Dianlong was quoted as saying.

Russian police arrest US pastor for bribery

SAKHALIN, 12 July — Police on Russia’s Pacific Island of Sakhalin have detained a US missionary on suspicion of bribing a local official, prosecutors said.

UAE firm delivers natural gas from Qatar to Abu Dhabi

ABU DHABI, 12 July — Dolphin Energy of the United Arab Emirates (UAE) announced on Tuesday that it has started the delivery of natural gas from its production wells offshore Qatar to Abu Dhabi, the UAE capital.

Scientists say large scale animal cloning unlikely

LONDON, 12 July — Cloning animals will not be useful on a large scale but the technology offers farmers an important tool to increase food production and protect animals from disease, scientists said on Tuesday.

Hungary, Ukraine discuss border, customs issues

BUDAPEST, 12 July — Hungary and Ukraine plan to open new crossing points along their common border, the Hungarian President said here on Tuesday after talks with visiting Ukrainian President Viktor Yushchenko.

The two nations will also discuss the introduction of joint Customs clearance, the Hungarian President Laszlo Solyom added.

Solyom noted that it was the first country to open an embassy in Kiev. Solyom asked Yushchenko’s support for allowing ethnic Hungarian school-leavers to take their university entrance examinations in the Hungarian language.

Indonesian boat missing with dozens on board

JAKARTA, 12 July — A boat with about 60 people on board has disappeared near Ambon Island in eastern Indonesia, rescue officials said on Wednesday.

The boat set sail from Buru Island on Tuesday but ran into bad weather just short of Ambon early on Wednesday, Abraham Lesnussa, head of the rescue team in Ambon, told Reuters.

He said about 15 survivors had been rescued from waters around Tiga Island, about 12 kilometres (seven miles) from Ambon, part of the Moluccas chain of islands.

“The boat experienced engine failure and was hit by bad weather. The meteorology and geophysics agency reported that the waves in the waters reached up to six metres high,” Lesnussa said.

Indonesia has about 17,000 islands and ferries and boats are a popular means of transport.

Sea connections are cheaper and more readily available than aircraft, but safety standards are not always strictly enforced and accidents occur fairly often.

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Scientists at a briefing to address the intense debate said the technology was just the next step in artificial breeding and would only ever account for a small part of food production.

“Cloning is never going to be a large scale breeding system,” Simon Best, chairman of the UK-based BioIndustry Association, told reporters. “It has niche applications.”

Cloning involves taking cell nuclei from adults and fusing them into egg cells that are implanted into a surrogate mother.

Scientists said some uses could be to clone animals that are less resistant to certain diseases or to reproduce “elite” livestock that can churn out more milk or produce healthier offspring.

Gloria, the first calf born to a cloned cow, Vitoria (L), is seen on a government farm outside Brasilia in this 4 October, 2004 file photo. Cloning animals will not be useful on a large scale but the technology offers farmers an important tool to increase food production and protect animals from disease, scientists said on Tuesday. — INTERNET

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MNA/Reuters

Ryan Gunning, 5, of Flower Mound, Texas, looks at high water on Lake Texoma in Pottsboro, Texas, on 10 July, 2007. Officials were assessing damage from intense weekend flooding as the heaviest storms subsided across the state. — INTERNET
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P.O.Box 109, Ph: 723043
(For. Domnern Somgiat & Boonma, Attorneys at Law, Thailand.)

Dated. 13 July 2007

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Reg. No. NV22/2007

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U Than Aung, Advocate For Mepha AG
Co Kelvin Chia Yangon Ltd., Unit 701-702, Traders Hotel, Yangon, Union of Myanmar utm.kc@gmail.com
Dated 13 July 2007

US space shuttle Endeavour moves to launch pad for 7 August lift-off

WASHINGTON, 11 July—The US space shuttle Endeavour rolled out to its seaside launch pad in Florida early Wednesday, in preparation for the 7 Aug 2007 launch to the International Space Station, according to NASA website updates. The rollout began at 8:10 pm EDT Tuesday (0010 GMT Wednesday) at Kennedy Space Centre in Florida. The crawler-transporter carrying the massive shuttle assembly completed the 5.5-kilometre journey to the launch pad at approximately 2:30 am EDT (0630 GMT) on Wednesday morning and was set up there half an hour later. The mission, designated STS-118, will be NASA’s second shuttle mission this year, but Endeavour’s first flight in almost five years, according to NASA. The last time Endeavour was at the launch pad was in November 2002 on a construction mission to the ISS.—Internet

The space shuttle Endeavour sits on launch pad 39A after rolling out of the Vehicle Assembly Building at Kennedy Space Centre in Cape Canaveral, Florida, on 11 July, 2007.—Internet

Serbia plans to join WTO by end of 2008

BELGRADE, 11 July—The World Trade Organization has told Serbia it can join by the end of next year and Belgrade plans a series of reforms to meet membership requirements, Economy Minister Mladjan Dinkic said on Tuesday.

“Our delegation was told today that Serbia could become a WTO member by the end of 2008,” Dinkic told Reuters after meeting WTO Director-General Pascal Lamy in Geneva.

“We have agreed a timetable of activities that need to be completed...These include regulatory changes and a revised list of goods,” he said.

These legal changes should be completed by mid-2008. Then, we must embark on a series of bilateral talks with WTO member states to negotiate trading rules for agricultural and industrial goods and services,” he said.

Internet

UAE recalls 4,545 Honda vehicles

ABU DHABI, 11 July — The United Arab Emirates (UAE) on Monday announced a recall of 4,545 Honda vehicles of several models in the country, the official Emirates News Agency reported.

The recall issued by the UAE Ministry of Economy’s Consumer Protection Department involves models of Accord 05, Accord 06, Jazz 05, Civic 06 and Odyssey 05, according to the report.

An official with the ministry said that owners of those Honda models should report to Honda’s service centres so that appointments would be made to effect the repairs.—MNA/Xinhua

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Serbia must improve hygiene standards at border crossings where goods leave the country, strengthen food safety regulations, lift non-Customs protection and reduce customs protection from the current average of 6.5 per cent. Regulatory improvements and other activities will be discussed at a joint working group meeting due in late October.

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DRIVE WITH CARE

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Astronomers find water on extra-solar planet

WASHINGTON, 11 July — An international team of astronomers report the first conclusive discovery of the presence of water vapour in the atmosphere of a planet beyond our Solar System.

The findings appear in the 12 July issue of journal Nature.

Giovanna Tinetti, European Space Agency fellow and colleagues from around the world, used data from NASA’s Spitzer Space Telescope.

They targeted planet HD 189733b, 63 light-years away, in the constellation Vulpecula.

The planet was discovered in 2005 as it dimmed the light of its parent star by some three percent when transiting in front of it.

Using Spitzer, Tinetti and the team observed the star, which is slightly fainter than the Sun.

They watched its starlight dim at two infrared bands (3.6 and 5.8 micrometres).

Had the planet been a rocky body devoid of atmosphere, both these bands and a third one (8 micrometres), recently measured by a team at Harvard, would have shown the same behaviour.

Instead, as the planet’s tenuous outer atmosphere slipped across the face of the star, the starlight absorbed showed a different, distinctive pattern.

The atmosphere absorbed less infrared radiation at 3.6 micrometres than at the other two wavelengths.

“Water is the only molecule that can explain that behaviour,” says Tinetti.

The presence of water vapour does not necessarily make it a good candidate in the search for planets that harbour life. “This is a far from habitable world,” she adds.

Instead of a rocky world like Earth, HD 189733b is large, about 1.15 times the mass of Jupiter.

Located just 4.5 million kilometres from its star, it orbits it in 2.2 days.

In comparison, Earth is 150 million kilometres from the Sun; even Mercury, the innermost planet, is 70 million kilometres away.

Astronomers classify such worlds as “hot Jupiters.”

Thieves steal artwork worth millions from Moscow flat

MOSCOW, 11 July — Thieves stole a collection of rare paintings worth millions of dollars that an elderly Russian had been storing unguarded in his empty apartment, Russian newspapers reported on Tuesday.

The 13 paintings stolen from retired judge Kamo Manukyan included works by Frenchman Georges-Pierre Seurat, the founder of neo-impressionism, Russian seascape painter Ivan Aivazovsky, and Russian expressionist Alexej Jawlenski. “This is a real nightmare. This is a real fortune stolen, you just don’t realize how much all this may cost. Millions,” Sofya Chern-yak, secretary of the Moscow Fine Arts Collectors’ Club, told the Izvestia daily.

“All of these painters are widely known ... A Seurat painting alone costs more than 500,000 US dollars.”

Manukyan returned home from a trip abroad to find the paintings gone.

Statistical agency: Portugal becomes world’s seventh oldest nation

LISBON, 11 July — Portugal has become the world’s seventh oldest nation, due to a falling birth rate and a rising proportion of senior citizens, the country’s National Statistical Agency said on Wednesday.

On average, a Portuguese woman has 1.36 children during her fertile years, down from the previous 1.41.

In 2006, Portugal’s birth rate was 105,351, down 4,100 from 2005, the agency said in its latest report.

The birth rate has been falling for 20 years.

If the trend continues as it is, the nation will lose a quarter of its population by 2050, and will have a net population of 7.5 million people, according to the report.

The birth rate drop from 1987 to 2006 is largely attributed to women choosing to have children at older ages.

Twenty years ago the highest number of pregnancies was registered for women between 20 and 29 years old. From 2005 to 2006, pregnancies were mostly linked to women between 30 and 34.

Experts said that the low birth rate is resulting from women’s job insecurity, warning Portugal’s aging population in the long run will cause problems for the nation’s pension system.

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Moscow to bid for first Youth Olympics in 2010

MOSCOW, 12 July — Moscow will bid to host the first Youth Summer Olympics in 2010, a senior Russian sports official said on Wednesday.

Alexander Polinsky, general director of Moscow's bidding committee for the 2012 Olympics, said the Russian capital was the ideal choice to stage the youth version of the world's greatest sporting spectacle for athletes aged 14-18.

Moscow officials scheduled a news conference on Thursday at City Hall where they planned to make the announcement.

Moscow, which hosted the boycott-affected 1980 Summer Olympics, also staged the first Youth Games under the patronage of the International Olympic Committee (IOC) in 1998.

Last week at its session in Guatemala, the IOC approved a plan to stage summer and winter Youth Games to try to overturn the dwindling interest of teenagers in the Olympic movement. — MNA/Reuters

Beijing airport gears up for Games “challenge”

BEIJING, 12 July — Beijing’s main airport will likely handle more flights than London Heathrow or Paris Charles de Gaulle during the 2008 Olympics and be “challenged” by the increased passenger numbers, a state newspaper said on Thursday.

“An average of 1,150 flights take off and land at the airport every day now. But during the Games, the number will be between 1,700 and 2,000,” the China Daily quoted Zhang Yuehua, in charge of air traffic plans for the Games, as saying.

Even with the opening of a third runway next March, that number could prove hard to handle, he said.

“When the daily movement reaches 1,700 or the capital airport encounters thunderstorms that last more than an hour, we will launch the blue scheme, under which additional air routes will be opened,” Zhang said.

When that number hits 1,900, or flights need to be diverted to Beijing from another Olympic host city — like Qingdao where the sailing will take place — non-Olympic flights will be suspended and the military asked to open up its airspace, he said. — MNA/Reuters

Top seeds washed out in rainy Gstaad

GSTAAD (Switzerland), 12 July — Russian top seeds Nikolay Davydenko and Mikhail Youzhny both suffered first-round exits on Wednesday as persistent rain continued to dog the Swiss Open.

Davydenko, the world number five, bowed out in just 12 minutes after resuming play with two unforced errors, Davydenko was forced to defend two break points before conceding a crucial break with an over-hit shot from the baseline.

Monfils, who had squandered a chance to serve out at 5-4 shortly before the overnight rain break.

“Monfils played well and we made crucial mistakes,” he said.

The 26-year-old reversed the result of their meeting in their opening match at Wimbledon last Tuesday in a third-round match also held over by rain, but was unable to repeat the feat in Gstaad and was beaten 3-6, 6-4, 7-5.

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“Youzhny suffered a surprise 6-4, 6-3 loss at the hands of Austrian world number 65 Stefan Koubek.— MNA/Reuters

South Korea, Saudi Arabia draw after power failure

JAKARTA, 12 July — South Korea and Saudi Arabia battled out a 1-1 draw in their opening Asian Cup Group D match after the game was halted for 20 minutes due to a power failure on Wednesday.

Following a cagey first half, Korea took the lead through Cho Sung-uk in the 66th minute, the diminutive winger somehow

became the saviour of the game in the United States. — MNA/Reuters

Iran battle back to beat Uzbekistan

KUALA LUMPUR, 12 July — Substitute Javad Nekounam struck in the 77th minute to give Iran a come-from-behind 2-1 victory over Uzbekistan in their Asian Cup Group C match on Wednesday.

The 26-year-old rescued a largely disappointing Iranian side, who struggled to find their rhythm against the combative Central Asians.

Uzbekistan, with main striker Maksim Shaktikhuzhiev suspended, took the lead on 15 minutes through an own goal by Iran defender Rahman Rezaei.

Iran levelled in the 55th minute when Seyed Jalal Hosseini scored from a corner before Kazemian emerged as the hero.

Iran coach Amir Ghahremani said his team's superior fitness was the key.

The victory put Iran in second place in Group C behind China, who beat hosts Malaysia 5-1 on Tuesday. The top two teams advance to the quarter-finals.

With both teams playing cautiously, Uzbekistan took an unlikely lead. Cap-

tain Server Djeparov sent a high ball forward trying to find striker Ulugbek Bakaev. Rezaei, under pressure from Bakaev, tried to head back to goalkeeper Hassan Rodbarian but only succeeded in finding the back of his own net.

Iran came out more determined in the second half and equalized after captain Mehdi Mahdaviya made his first foray upfield. The skipper sent in a testing corner from the left and defender Hosseini rose high to head past Uzbek goalkeeper Pavel Bugalo. — MNA/Reuters

Urbay's midfielder Luis Suarez (foot at left) kicks a goal past US goalkeeper Brian Perk during their Round of 16 match at the FIFA Under-20 World Cup soccer tournament in Toronto, Canada on 11 July. 2007. — INTERNET

Czech Republic's Jakub Marek (10) scores against Japan on a penalty kick during the second half of their Round of 16 match at the FIFA Under-20 World Cup soccer tournament in Victoria, British Columbia on 11 July, 2007. — INTERNET

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US accused of insulting Serbia’s intelligence

BELGRADE, 12 July — Serbian Prime Minister Vojislav Kostunica on Wednesday accused the United States of insulting his country’s intelligence by pledging friendship while backing independence for breakaway Kosovo province.

He vowed that no amount of declarations by Washington would make Kosovo independent and again warned that future relations would suffer if the United States and its European Union allies back independence for Kosovo’s two million ethnic Albanians.

Kostunica has made Kosovo the top policy issue for Serbia’s two-month-old government, although polls show most Serbs are far more concerned about jobs, wages and prosperity.

He has turned to Russia for help in blocking Kosovo’s independence, and his rhetoric has become anti-Western.

“Kosovo will not be independent and that fact cannot be changed by American officials with their daily statements advocating independence for the province,” he said in a statement given to the government-backed news agency, Tanjug.

Kostunica was responding to comments by US envoy Daniel Fried, who on Tuesday reaffirmed American friendship for Serbia while repeating that Kosovo would inevitably be independent.

“It is particularly unacceptable to explain this attempted seizure of Kosovo as a form of honest friendship towards Serbia,” the Serbian Premier said.

Such an explanation is an insult to common sense.”

Serbian Foreign Minister Vuk Jeremic on Tuesday called independence for Kosovo “an inadecent proposal”. Serb forces killed between 7,500 and 12,000 Kosovo Albanians in the 1998-99 counter-insurgency war and drove 800,000 out of the country before NATO intervened with a bombing campaign.

That forced the Serbs out after 11 weeks and ushered in United Nations rule eight years ago. — MNA/Reuters

Suspected insurgents detained in S Thailand

BANGKOK, 12 July — Thai Army soldiers and officials raided a village in Thailand’s southernmost province of Narathiwat on Wednesday and detained a dozen suspected insurgents, local media reported.

About 200 military, police and Interior Ministry officers raided the Bluglahulume Village in the morning and the raid lasted about five hours.

A total of 12 suspects were detained, local news network The Nation said. The officials also sought a 9mm revolver, a shotgun, an air gun and some fertilizers during the raid.

MNA/Xinhua

Weather

WEATHER

Thursday, 12 July, 2007
Summary of observations recorded at 09:30 hours MST: During the past 24 hours, weather has been partly cloudy in Kayah State, lower Sagaing Division, rain have been isolated in Shan State, Mandalay and Magway Divisions, fairly widespread in Kachin and Rakhine States, upper Sagaing and Yangon Divisions, and widespread in the remaining areas with isolated heavyfall in Rakhine State. The noteworthy amounts of rainfall recorded were Gwa (3.03) inches, Myek (2.60) inches, Dawei (2.24) inches, Pathein (2.17) inches and Hkamti (1.80) inches.

Maximum temperature on 11-7-2007 was 88°F. Minimum temperature on 12-7-2007 was 75°F. Relative humidity at 09:30 hours MST on 12-7-2007 was 82%. Total sunshine hours on 11-7-2007 was (7.1) hours approx.

Rainfall on 12-7-2007 was (0.27) inch at Mingaladon, (0.08) inch at Kaba-Aye, (0.23) inch at Central Yangon. Total rainfall since 1-1-2007 was (70.35) inches at Mingaladon, (74.76) inches at Kaba-Aye and (72.12) inches at Central Yangon. Maximum wind speed at Yangon (Kaba-Aye) was (10) mph from Southwest at (19:20) hours MST on 11-7-2007.

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

Forecast valid until evening of 13-7-2007: Rain will be isolated in Kayah State, Mandalay, Magway and lower Sagaing Divisions, fairly widespread in Shan State, Bago and upper Sagaing Divisions and widespread in the remaining areas. Degree of certainty is (80%).

State of the sea: Squalls with moderate to rough seas are likely at times off and along Myanmar Coasts. Surface wind speed in squalls may reach (35-40) mph.

Outlook for subsequent two days: Strong Monsoon.

Forecast for Nay Pyi Taw and neighbouring areas for 13-7-2007: Likelihood of isolated rain. Degree of certainty is (60%).

Forecast for Yangon and neighbouring areas for 13-7-2007: One or two rain. Degree of certainty is (80%).

Forecast for Mandalay and neighbouring areas for 13-7-2007: Likelihood of isolated rain. Degree of certainty is (60%).

Weather Map of Myanmar and Neighbouring Ocean
Lt-Gen Myint Swe inspects progress in growing physic nut plants at battalions in Bago Township

Yangon, 12 July — Lt-Gen Myint Swe of the Ministry of Defence attended the physic nut growing ceremonies of battalions in Bago Township this morning. Accompanied by Commander Brig-Gen Win Myint of No 77 LID and senior military officers, Lt-Gen Myint Swe attended the ceremony to plant physic nut saplings at the local battalion in Thayagon Village of Indagaw Village-tract in Bago Township.

At the briefing hall, Lt-Gen Myint Swe heard reports on cultivation of 381 acres of physic nut at local battalions against the target of 600 acres presented by Bago Station Commander Major Kyaw Kyaw Win. Deputy Bago Division Manager U Tin Maung Win of Myanmar Agriculture Service presented a report on cultivation of physic nut in the division.

After hearing the reports, Lt-Gen Myint Swe stressed the need to exceed the target of physic nut plants and nurture the farm. He presented physic nut saplings to servicemen and family members. No 77 LID Commander Brig-Gen Win Myint and officials also gave physic nut saplings to the people.

Lt-Gen Myint Swe planted a physic nut sapling in commemoration of the ceremony. Brig-Gen Win Myint and officials also grew the saplings.

Next, they viewed the participation of servicemen and family members in cultivation of physic nut plants.

Lt-Gen Myint Swe and party inspected 104 acres of thriving physic nut plantations at the local battalion in Thayagon Village-tract in Bago Township and left necessary instructions.

Weather Forecast for 13-7-2007

Nay Pyi Taw and neighbouring areas
Likelihood of isolated rain. Degree of certainty is (60%).

Yangon and neighbouring areas
One or two rain. Degree of certainty is (80%).

Mandalay and neighbouring areas
Likelihood of isolated rain. Degree of certainty is (60%).