Senior General Than Shwe felicitates Portuguese President

NAY PYI TAW, 10 June—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 Anibal Cavaco Silva, President of the Portuguese Republic, on the occasion of the National Day of the Portuguese Republic which falls on 10 June 2009.—MNA

True patriotism

* It is very important for everyone of the nation regardless of the place he lives to have strong Union Spirit.
* Only Union Spirit is the true patriotism all the nationalities will have to safeguard.

Chairman of the State Peace and Development Council Commander-in-Chief of Defence Services Senior General Than Shwe receives Senior Minister of the Republic of Singapore Mr. Goh Chok Tong and party

NAY PYI TAW, 9 June – Chairman of the State Peace and Development Council Commander-in-Chief of Defence Services Senior General Than Shwe received Senior Minister of the Republic of Singapore Mr. Goh Chok Tong and party at Bayintnaung Yeiktha here at 1.30 pm today.

Present on the occasion together with Senior General Than Shwe were 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, member of the State Peace and Development Council General Thura Shwe Mann of the Ministry of Defence, Prime Minister General Thein Sein, Secretary-1 of the State Peace and Development Council General Thiha Thura Tin Aung Myint Oo, Minister for Foreign Affairs U Nyan Win, Minister for National Planning and Economic Development U Soe Tha, Director-General of the Office of the State Peace and Development Council Col Kyaw Kyaw Win and Director-General of Protocol Department U Kyaw Kyaw. Together with the delegation led by Senior Minister Mr. Goh Chok Tong at the meeting was Ambassador of the Republic of Singapore to the Union of Myanmar Mr. Robert Chua Hian Kong.—MNA

Chairman of the State Peace and Development Council Commander-in-Chief of Defence Services Senior General Than Shwe receives Singaporean delegation led by Senior Minister of Singapore Mr Goh Chok Tong in Nay Pyi Taw. — MNA

Chairman of the State Peace and Development Council Commander-in-Chief of Defence Services Senior General Than Shwe welcomes Senior Minister of Singapore Mr Goh Chok Tong in Nay Pyi Taw. — MNA
Kayah State chairman meets with trainees of UDNRR

Nay Pyi Taw, 9 June—Chairman of Kayah State Peace and Development Council Brig-Gen Win Myint met with trainees of University for Development of National Races at the State’s meeting hall on 26 May.

The chairman made a speech at a ceremony to assign annual project duties, and assigned duties to District Chairman and state-level departmental officials.

The chairman inspected maintenance of Moebye-Loikaw railroad section, replacing of concrete sleepers and bridges along the railroad and left necessary instruction.

The chairman inspected summer and monsoon paddy fields near Wethekhu village.—MNA

Grow fruit trees as well as shade trees for green and pleasant environment

Trees and plants are necessary for the existence of all creatures, including human beings. They fulfil food and shelter needs of not only humans but also birds and animals. We can eat fruits by growing fruit trees. Moreover, growing teak and other hardwood trees can contribute to the national economic development.

Trees and plants absorb carbon dioxide and thus make the climate neither too hot nor too cold. Therefore, the Ministry of Forestry is taking measures for systematic conservation of forests speciaJ special teak plantations and extension of plantations in watershed areas.

Being a country where teak trees naturally grow, Myanmar has a vast area of land covered with teak trees. The Bago mountain ranges are a region where teak trees thrive well, afforestation work is being carried out by laying down plans to keep the region always green.

Also in the 13 arid districts, the task for greening the environment is being done with the cooperation of the people. As a result, teak plantations are thriving well in the forest reserves in Nay Pyi Taw Tatkon, Nay Pyi Taw Lewe, and Taungdwingyi townships.

Now that the rainy season has set in, tree-planting ceremonies are being held in various regions. Fruit trees as well as shade trees are being grown in Nay Pyi Taw Lewe township and other townships in various states and divisions.

Hardwood trees, including teak, are important for national economy. Not only that, they can keep urban and rural areas green and pleasant and the cycle of the season in regular order. Therefore, the government and the people should boost cooperation in the conservation and yearly afforestation work.

Join hands with government for stability of State, community peace, national development

Information Minister attends opening of self-reliant libraries in Sagaing Division

Nay Pyi Taw, 9 June—The opening of Bawashei-saung self-reliant library in Kywelu Village, Sagaing Division took place this morning, attended by Minister for Information Brig-Gen Kyaw Hsan.

Well-wishers Thudhamma Manizawtadara U Soe Naing Daw Aye Aye Khang (Aye Aye Khang Gems Co), Head of Division Information and Public Relations Department U Tin Than Win, and village elder U Tun Naing formally opened the building.

The minister made a speech, and inspected the library, and cordially greeted the attendees. He also attended the opening of Toetetyay self-reliant library of Naukkkyan Village in Sagaing Division. Well-wishers Thudhamma Manizawtadara U Soe Nain-Daw Aye Aye Khanga, Head of District IPRD U Maung Ko, and village elder U Hla Ngwe formally opened the library.

In his speeches at the opening ceremonies, the minister said that so far, 55,755 villages have a self-reliant library each. It is heartening to see local well-wishers contributing towards tasks as a national duty for sustainable development of the libraries, he said, calling for improving their socioeconomic life while expanding their horizons, and joining hands with the government for stability of the State and community peace and national development. —MNA

Using Web as a Professional & Using Web to be a Professional

Yangon, 9 June— For the development of Information and Communication Technology, Myanmar Computer Professional Association (MCPA) will give talks on Using Web as a Professional & Using Web to be a Professional by Executive U Nyi Lin Set of MCPA at No.205, Myanmar Info-tech in Hline Township on 13 June (Saturday). At the talks, he will discuss how to apply web as a professional and earn living as a successful IT professional. Those interested may attend the talks free of charge. For more information, contact MCPA office, ward 4, room 4, (Ph-652276). —MNA
Pentagon admits “problems” with Afghan air strike

WASHINGTON, 9 June — The Pentagon acknowledged on Monday that there were “problems” with the way US forces conducted a bombing raid in Afghanistan that provoked outrage over civilian casualties.

Defence Secretary Robert Gates was briefed on the investigation into the incident, which took place in early May in the western province of Farah, a Pentagon spokesman said.

“There were some problems with some tactics, techniques and procedures or... the way in which close air support was supposed to have been executed in this case,” said Pentagon press secretary Geoff Morrell, who sat in on the briefing.

The bombing heightened tensions between Afghans and foreign troops over civilian casualties. Afghan President Hamid Karzai has urged an end to US air strikes in his country, but Washington has rejected his call.

Afghan officials put the civilian death toll from the Farah bombing as high as 140. An Afghan human rights watchdog put the total at 97 and said no more than two Taliban fighters were killed. The US military has said 20-35 civilians were among 80-95 people killed, most of them Taliban fighters who used the civilians as human shields.—INTERNET

Afghans, Kyrgyz may discuss leaving US base open

BISHKEK (Kyrgyzstan), 9 June — A high-ranking Kyrgyz official says the Central Asian nation’s president may meet with Afghan leader Hamid Karzai to discuss the possibility of letting US-led forces continue using an air base to support operations in Afghanistan.

Aibek Moldogaziyev said on Monday that President Kurmanbek Bakiyev and Karzai might discuss the Manas air base during an upcoming security summit in Russia.

Moldogaziyev serves in Bakiyev’s administration.

Bakiyev announced in February that the US base would be closed, citing what he said was inadequate financial compensation and other concerns. Kyrgyzstan has given US forces until 18 August to leave.

Moldogaziyev said that Karzai has approached the Kyrgyz authorities with an appeal to allow further use of Manas by coalition partners.—INTERNET

Bomming of minibus in Shiite area kills nine

BAGHDAD, 9 June — A bomb tore through a minibus during morning rush hour on Monday in a mainly Shiite area in Baghdad, killing at least nine people and wounding 24, Iraqi officials said.

The blast was a grim reminder of the major challenge facing Iraqi forces three weeks ahead of the 30 June deadline for US troops to withdraw from urban areas.

The bomb was attached to the minibus in the southern area of Abu Dishir, a Shiite enclave in the mainly Sunni neighbourhood of Dora, police said.

“The ball of fire rose into the sky. We saw a minibus thrown about five metres (yards) into the air, then come down in flames,” said Omar Abdul-Ghafar, a university student who was waiting with his friend for another bus.

The explosion left a crater at the entrance of the bus station where commuters were gathered to catch rides to different parts of the city.—INTERNET

Iraq says four US contractors detained, not five

BAGHDAD, 9 June — The Iraqi government spokesman says four Americans, not five, have been detained in an investigation into the killing last month of a US contractor in the Green Zone.

Ali al-Dabbagh says four Americans and one Iraqi were picked up Wednesday during a raid on the Corporate Training Unlimited house. He says the raid was ordered after Iraqi security forces received information that a suspect involved in last month’s stabbing death of contractor Jim Kitterman might be there.—INTERNET

Battles, ambushes kill around 30 in Afghan

KABUL, 9 June — A joint Afghan and US-led coalition operation against militants in southern Afghanistan killed more than 20 Taliban fighters on Sunday, while a militant ambush in the northwest killed four policemen, officials said.

The joint operation in Zabul Province included ground forces and airstrikes. The battle killed more than 20 Taliban, said provincial police chief Abdul Rahman Sarjang. After the operation, a roadside bomb exploded and killed one Afghan policeman as the forces were returning to base, he said.

Elsewhere, militants attacked a police security post in northwestern Farah Province, sparking a one-hour battle that killed four police, said Khalil Andarbi, the provincial police chief.

Another Taliban attack in the eastern province of Paktika killed the police chief in Sarhawza District, while militants elsewhere in Paktika ambushed a truck of private security guards, killing four of them, said Hamidullah Zhwak, a spokesman for the governor.

Militants have stepped attacks in the last several years and now control many rural areas in Afghanistan. President Barack Obama is sending 21,000 additional troops this year to help increase security in regions where the Afghan government has little control.—INTERNET
Lebanon vote undercuts Hezbollah, boost for Obama

BEIRUT, 9 June—A pro-Western coalition won Lebanon’s parliamentary elections on Monday, dealing a major setback to the Iran-backed Hezbollah and giving a boost to Barack Obama’s Middle East peace policy.

Coming just days after the American president reached out to the Muslim world, the vote undercuts the most militant force in the Middle East since Obama’s political test in the Mid-east.

It was the first major political test in the Middle East since Obama’s groundbreaking address last week, in which he challenged the Islamic world to confront violent extremism and urged Israel and the Arabs to find common ground to establish peace.

Official results, announced on Monday, may also set the stage for renewed political deadlock in this sharply polarized, volatile Arab nation. The results mirrored the breakdown of the outgoing parliament, meaning many of the questions that have dogged the fractured nation, such as what to do with Hezbollah’s many weapons, remain. Still, the outcome was cause for relief for many in the West and eased the apprehension of some of America’s moderate Arab allies.

“Once more, the people of Lebanon have demonstrated their courage and the strength of their commitment to democracy,” Obama said in a congratulatory statement that made no reference to Hezbollah.

Cuba rejects offer to rejoin OAS

HAVANA, 9 June—Cuba is formally rejecting an offer to rejoin the Organization of American States, echoing the sentiments of Fidel Castro who has long maintained his island has no use for the group.

The OAS voted last week to lift a decades-old suspension of Cuba’s membership. A statement published on Monday in the communist newspaper Granma says the government is satisfied “with this expression of sovereignty and community” but repeats that Cuba “will not return to the OAS.”

Gunmen throw grenades in Acapulco, three police killed

ACAPULCO, 9 June—Gunmen launched grenades and opened fire in near simultaneous attacks on two police stations in Acapulco on Monday, killing three officers in violence that broke out less than 48 hours after a gunbattle in the resort left 17 dead.

The bold, pre-dawn attacks on Monday also wounded one police officer in this Pacific resort city, which has long been plagued by drug violence.

Gunmen fatally shot two officers sitting in a patrol car parked outside one police station. A few minutes later, assailants attacked a second station, about two miles (three kilometres) away, wounding two officers, according to the Guerrero state police department.

One of the officers later died.

Soldiers set up roadblocks in search of the suspects, who shot up at least eight patrol cars.

A state police official, who was not authorized to give his name, said investigators are looking at whether the attacks were in retaliation for late Saturday’s gunbattle.

The weekend shootout between soldiers and alleged drug traffickers killed 13 suspected hit men, two soldiers, and two innocent bystanders, Daniel Velasco, a military commander in Acapulco, told reporters on Monday.

One bystander was wounded. The Defence Department in initial reports mistakenly said 18 people had died.

A hit man named “Commander Magana” with the Beltran Leyva cartel was among the dead, Velasco said.

Gaddafi in historic Italian trip amid investment drive

ROME, 9 June—Libyan leader Muammar Gaddafi makes his first trip to former colonial ruler Italy this week in the most open acknowledgement yet that the two nations have put their bitter past behind them to forge deeper investment ties.

Italy’s $5 billion reparations deal last year for rule paved the way for the visit, which comes almost a century after Italian ships arrived off Tripoli in 1911 claiming to rescue Libya from Ottoman rule.

Libya now is pumping its petrodollars into major Italian companies like UniCredit and Eni, in addition to supplying a quarter of Italy’s oil imports and helping curb the influx of illegal migrants.

“This trip is very symbolic, because here is Gaddafi who has been saying for 40 years how badly Italians have treated Libyans and how in the end Libya would win out,” said Dirk Vandewalle, a professor at Dartmouth College in the US and Libya expert.

24 bodies retrieved from Air France plane crash

BRASILIA, 9 June—Eight more bodies of the passengers on the crashed Air France Flight 447 have been found, raising the total number of the recovered bodies to 24, the Brazilian military said on Monday.

The bodies were found in an area some 440 km northeast of the Sao Pedro and Sao Paulo Islands where the water depth reaches 3,500 metres.

The military also recovered a large tail section from the jittery, an Airbus A330, helping narrow the hunt for “black boxes” that could reveal the cause of the disaster.

According to Lieutenant Colonel Henry Munhoz, spokesman for the Air Force, the recovered bodies and wreckage were being taken first to a military staging area at the Fernando de Noronha Island, and then to the northeastern coastal city of Recife for identification.

Right now, finding the bodies of the plane’s 228 occupants was the top priority of the search crew, the spokesman said.

At least eight bodies were found on Monday after rescue teams hauled up 14 corpses on Sunday and two on Saturday, along with personal items and pieces from the plane. Officials said they would no longer disclose the genders of the bodies found because in some cases that was impossible to immediately verify.
Developed countries need to show political will at climate talks

BONN, 9 June—The United Nations climate talks should be conducted in accordance with the principle and basic framework of the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change and the Kyoto Protocol, said Li Gao, acting chief of the Chinese delegation to the second round of the talks this year.

“The meeting has great significance, but no substantial progress has been made so far” as major developed countries lack political will to push the negotiations forward according to the “Bali Road Map,” Li told Xinhua in a recent interview.

The second round of the UN climate talks opened in Bonn, Germany on 1 June and will last until 12 June. The main task of this round is to discuss and prepare key negotiating texts for the Copenhagen meeting in December.

“Developed countries have neither enough active responses to proposals from developing countries about emission-cut target by 2020, nor interests in providing funds and technologies to help developing countries adapt to climate change,” Li said.

Some developed countries are tardy in providing emission-cut target, while some developed countries’ targets are much lower than the requirements of the international community, Li said.

Li took the United States as an example, saying its target is only equivalent to the 1990 level. However, the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change required developed countries to realize the target in 2000, which means the United States has delayed its obligation under the Convention for 20 years.

Fewer divorces during financial gloom in Britain

BEIJING, 9 June—Fewer British couples are filing for divorce as a sharp drop in property prices makes it hard for couples to sell a joint home, and the credit crunch dampens a desire to fund two separate households, a study shows.

The study, quoted in media reports on Tuesday, was published by Grant Thornton accountants. It shows that almost half of all surveyed matrimonial lawyers believe the numbers of divorces has slumped — and will continue to do so — because of the financial squeeze.

“Lawyers believe they will see less couples filing for divorce during the credit crunch,” said Robert Kerr, partner at Grant Thornton’s Forensic and Investigation Services.

“Reasons vary but certainly the financial carve-up that follows a divorce settlement will be at the forefront of a couple’s minds when contemplating divorce,” he added. Data published by the Office for National Statistics earlier this year showed that the number of people getting divorced fell from 12.2 per 1,000 couples in 2006 to 11.9 in 2007, and is currently at a 26-year low.—Xinhua

US physicists create thinnest superconducting metal

WASHINGTON, 9 June—A superconducting sheet of lead only two atoms thick, the thinnest superconducting metal layer ever created, has been developed by physicists at the University of Texas at Austin, the university said in a press release on Monday.

Dr Ken Shih, the Jane and Roland Blumberg Professor in Physics and colleagues reported the properties of their superconducting film in the 5 June issue of Science, the press release said.

Superconductors are unique because they can maintain an electrical current indefinitely with no power source. They are used in MRI machines, particle accelerators, quantum interference devices and other applications.

The development of the thin superconducting sheets of lead lays the groundwork for future advancements in superconductor technologies.

“To be able to control this material — to shape it into new geometries — and explore what happens is very exciting,” says Shih. “My hope is that this superconductive surface will enable one to build devices and study new properties of superconductivity.”

A visitor takes photos of a sand carving in Copacabana, a well-known coast in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, on 7 June, 2009. Artists from Brazil gathered in the coast of Copacabana to present sand carvings to visitors. Xinhua

Japan considers flu aid to Latin America

MEXICO CITY, 9 June—Japan is considering aid for the Latin American nations hit by the A/H1N1 flu virus, visiting Japanese Vice Foreign Minister said here on Monday.

“We are very willing to cooperate as needed,” Shintaro Ito said at a news conference together with his Mexican counterpart Lourdes Aranda.

It said he had met with Mexican Health Minister Jose Angel Cordova Villalobos earlier on Monday to ask for more details on how to handle the epidemic.

According to World Health Organization data, the new strain of A/H1N1 flu, which has killed 106 people and infected 5,717 others in Mexico, has spread to 73 countries, infecting 25,288 people.

Japan, which has reported 410 infections and no deaths, imposed visa restrictions on Mexicans shortly after the disease was first publicly reported on 23 April.

“We took those measures when we did not know how dangerous the flu might have been,” Ito said. “As a result, no Mexican had fallen ill during visits to Japan, we wish to have the understanding of the Mexicans.”

Mexico, which has the single largest number of flu deaths, has seen a fatality rate of around 2 percent.

The United States, which has the highest number of confirmed infections at 13,217, has seen 27 deaths or a rate of 0.2 percent. Aranda said President Felipe Calderon had planned a visit to Japan next year, but had not yet set an exact date.—Xinhua

The L15-05 trainer plane, developed by the Hongdu Aviation Industry Group takes off at Qingyunpu airport in Nanchang, east China’s Jiangxi Province, on 8 June, 2009. The trainer plane had a successful maiden flight on Monday. —Xinhua

The staff workers weigh the purchased cocoons of the spring silkworms on the steelyard, at the Cococon Center of Wenfeng Town, local largest mulberry and silkworm breeding base in Nanchong City, southwest China’s Sichuan Province, on 7 June, 2009.—Xinhua

A visitor takes photos of a sand carving in Copacabana, a well-known coast in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, on 7 June, 2009. Artists from Brazil gathered in the coast of Copacabana to present sand carvings to visitors. Xinhua

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The staff workers weigh the purchased cocoons of the spring silkworms on the steelyard, at the Cococon Center of Wenfeng Town, local largest mulberry and silkworm breeding base in Nanchong City, southwest China’s Sichuan Province, on 7 June, 2009.—Xinhua
Seoul unveils $18 b plan for river development

SEOUL, 9 June—South Korea on Monday announced details of a 18-billion-dollar waterways project aimed at reducing flooding and drought, as well as creating tens of thousands of jobs.

The plan to improve the country’s four major rivers will cost 22.2 trillion won (17.8 billion dollars) by 2012, said the ministry of land, transport and maritime affairs.

It is a major plank of the government’s “Green New Deal” to create jobs and lay the ground for further economic growth.

Work will begin before the end of this year to build dams, banks and water treatment facilities, the ministry said.

The plan calls for 16.9 trillion won to dredge rivers, to develop parks and recreation facilities on banks, and to build dams, catchment basins and reservoirs capable of storing up to 1.3 billion cubic metres (84.5 billion cubic feet) of fresh water.

A further 5.3 trillion won will be used to improve water flow and to build 750 sewage processing plants and 46 new water treatment facilities.

The ministry said that the country would suffer a water shortage of about 1 billion cubic metres a year by 2036, as the climate changes.

Singapore needs to find more niche areas for growth

SINGAPORE, 9 June — The world beyond the global economic storm will see new market dynamics and tougher competition, therefore Singapore needs to find new growth sectors and gear up for them, Singapore’s Prime Minister Lee Hsien Loong said here on Tuesday.

Speaking at the opening of a vaccine manufacturing plant, Lee said that Asia is now the main growth story in the world.

Many companies are looking to locate their key functions and decision makers closer to Asian markets. With more and more manufacturing and research and development taking place in the region, companies are also establishing “control towers” to better manage and coordinate their activities.

He said that one possibility for the future is to have the corporate base for global companies, both big and small,

“We need to find many more such niche areas. Then we can continue to prosper in the new world,” Lee said.

Speaking on the success of the country’s biologics manufacturing, Lee said, “Drugs are physically small but their effects are targeted and potent, and they command high value. That is how Singapore must be.”

Lost ring found after 42 years

A Virginia man who lost his wedding ring while washing his car 42 years ago said his son found it in the family’s backyard.

Paul Sawyer, 63, of Virginia Beach, said his wife, Ruth Ann, 61, refused to believe he had accidentally lost the ring when he noticed it missing after washing his car in 1966, the year after the couple’s wedding.

The (Norfolk) Virginian-Pilot reported, “You threw it away,” he quoted her as saying. “You just didn’t want the girls you used to hang with to know you were married.”

Sawyer said his wife was finally proven wrong last month when their oldest son, Paul Jr, found the ring caked in dirt several inches deep in the soil of their backyard. Sawyer said he cried when he saw the ring.

Oil rises towards $69 as dollar dips and ahead of stocks data

SINGAPORE, 9 June—Oil rose toward $69 a barrel on Tuesday, snapping two days of falls, on a weaker US dollar and ahead of weekly stocks data forecast to show a fall in US crude inventories.

The dollar took a breather on Tuesday after rallying in the wake of last week’s US jobs data, which stirred talk that the Federal Reserve may raise interest rates later this year.

US light crude for July delivery rose 52 cents to $68.61 a barrel by 0206 GMT, having settled 35 cents lower on Monday at $68.09, more than $2 below a seven-month high above $70 touched on Friday.

London Brent crude was up 52 cents at $68.40. “The currency market has been driving the oil market since the middle of May. Traders are looking more at the dollar than at equity markets now,” said Tetsu Emori, fund manager at Tokyo-based Astmax Co Ltd.

“It is quite difficult to take positions above $70 for now. It is too risky,” he added.

Oil prices have more than doubled since the lows of this winter, tracking stronger equities markets, with the S&P 500 index rallying 39 percent since sliding to a 1-year closing low on 9 March.

NY couple to have weightless wedding

Noah Fulmor and Erin Finnegan from New York will become the first couple to get married floating in zero gravity when they fly in several deep dives to give them eight minutes of weightlessness. Each guest’s ticket costs $3,500.

British space tourist and adventurer Richard Garriott, the son of an astronaut, will officiate at the ceremony during the 150th anniversary celebration of the opening of a port in Yokohama, Japan.
Chindwin Gonyi Magazine in circulation

 Yangon, 9 June — No. 2 of Chindwin Gonyi Magazine published by Monywa Township Writers and Journalists Association came out today. The book is available at Monywa Township Information and Public Relations Department and book shops in Monywa at the price of K 2000 per copy. The book has covered poems, cartoons, articles and short stories and novels.

58 receive carpentry, bricklaying and steel fixing skills in Putao

 Yangon, 9 June — Course No 1 on carpentry, bricklaying and steel fixing of the training school for development of national races in Putao, Kachin State, was concluded at the training school on 5 June. A total of 58 trainees — 29 from Putao, four from Naungmon Township, 25 from Machanbaw township — completed the course. During the training, the trainees were provided with meals, accommodation and aids for the training free of charge. The training school is under the Education and Training Department of the Ministry of Progress of Border Areas and National Races and Development Affairs.

Transforming roofs from wasted space to energy source

 Richland, 9 June — The flexible rooftop solar panels - called building-integrated photovoltaics, or BIPVs - could replace today's boxy solar panels and current panels and made to last 25 years.

Drinking water from air humidity

 Stuttgart, 8 June — Not a plant to be seen, the desert ground is too dry. But the air contains water, and research scientists have found a way of obtaining drinking water from air humidity. The system is based completely on renewable energy and is therefore autonomous. Cracks permeate the dried-out desert ground, the landscape bears testimony to the lack of water. But even here, where there are no lakes, rivers or groundwater, considerable quantities of water are stored in the air. In the Negev desert in Israel, for example, annual average relative air humidity is 64 percent – in every cubic meter of air there are 11.5 milliliters of water.

Nanoscale zipper cavity responds to single photons of light

 Pasadena, 8 June — Physicists at the California Institute of Technology (Caltech) have developed a nanoscale device that can be used for force detection, optical communication, and more. The device exploits the mechanical properties of light to create an optomechanical cavity in which interactions between light and motion are greatly strengthened and enhanced. These interactions, notes Oskar Painter, associate professor of applied physics at Caltech, and the principal investigator on the research, are the largest demonstrated to date. The device and the work that led to it are described in a recent issue of the journal Nature.
Lt-Gen Myint Swe receives Singaporean goodwill delegation

YANGON, 9 June— Lt-Gen Myint Swe of the Ministry of Defence received a visiting goodwill delegation led by Senior Minister of the Republic of Singapore Mr. Goh Chok Tong, who arrives in Yangon, at the invitation of Prime Minister General Thein Sein, at the guest house on Alan Pya Pagoda Road in Dagon Township, here, yesterday afternoon.

Also present at the call were Chairman of Yangon Division Peace and Development Council Commander of Yangon Command Brig-Gen Win Myint, officials and Singaporean Ambassador to Myanmar Mr. Robert Chua Hian Kong. —MNA

MWAF donates stationery, school uniforms to school-age children in Ayeyawady Div

YANGON, 9 June — Myanmar Women’s Affairs Federation donated 2,100 dozens of exercise books and 2,100 dozens of pencils, 2,100 dozens of school uniforms to school-age children in Ayeyawady Division on 2 June. During the school enrollment activity and a ceremony to present school uniforms to school-age children at No 1 Basic Education High School in Pathein, Members of the central executive committee of MWAF Daw Ni Ni Win and Daw Tin Tin Nwe handed over exercise books and school uniforms to school children from Pathein, Hinthada, Pyapmon and Labutta districts, Division Education Officer of Ayeyawady Division U Khin Maung Yi reported on measures taken for school enrollment in the division and spoke words of thanks.—MNA

Singaporean Senior Minister Mr. Goh Chok Tong arrives in Yangon

YANGON, 9 June— At the invitation of Prime Minister General Thein Sein of the Union of Myanmar, a visiting goodwill delegation led by Senior Minister of the Republic of Singapore Mr. Goh Chok Tong arrived here by special aircraft yesterday afternoon. They were welcomed by Chairman of Yangon Division Peace and Development Council Commander of Yangon Command Brig-Gen Win Myint, Chairman of Yangon City Development Committee Mayor U Khin Maung Yi and departmental heads at Yangon International Airport. —MNA

NAY PYI TAW, 9 June — At the invitation of Prime Minister General Thein Sein, Senior Minister of the Republic of Singapore Mr. Goh Chok Tong and party, together with Ambassador of the Republic of Singapore to the Union of Myanmar Mr. Robert Chua Hian Kong, arrived here at 9:10 am today by a special aircraft of Singaporean air force to pay a goodwill visit to Myanmar. Senior Minister of the Republic of Singapore Mr. Goh Chok Tong and party proceeded to the City Hall of Nay Pyi Taw and there Chairman of Nay Pyi Taw Development Committee Mayor Col Thein Nyunt briefly briefed Mr. Goh Chok Tong on construction tasks carried out and being carried out in Nay Pyi Taw. After that, Mayor Col Thein Nyunt and the Singaporean Senior Minister of the Republic of Singapore exchanged souvenirs.

Next, the Senior Minister of the Republic of Singapore and party went round Nay Pyi Taw in a motorcade to view the development of Nay Pyi Taw and construction work being carried out.

In the evening, the Senior Minister of the Republic of Singapore left for Mandalay and Minister for Foreign Affairs U Nyan Win and departmental heads saw them off at Nay Pyi Taw airport.—MNA
NAY PYI TAW, 9 June — The total number of confirmed cases of the A/H1N1 flu virus across the world mounted to 25,288 while the number of death toll has reached 139 since its outbreak on 17 April, according to the information released yesterday by the World Health Organization.

With regard to situations of outbreak of the influenza, the preventive measures and dissemination of health knowledge are being issued to the people through TV, radio and dailies in time.

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Minister visits main workshop, training centre

NAY PYI TAW, 9 June—Minister for Forestry Brig-Gen Thein Aung visited the main workshop of Engineering Division of the Myanmar Timber Enterprise here yesterday.

In response to the reports by officials concerned, the minister gave instructions, and inspected the main workshop.

He also inspected the driving course and basic mechanic course at the Training Centre of the enterprise.

Myanmar still an influenza A/H1N1 free country

Health Ministry taking preventive measures against influenza A/H1N1

NAY PYI TAW, 9 June — The total number of confirmed cases of the A/H1N1 flu virus across the world rose to 25,288 while the number of death toll has totaled 139 since its outbreak on 17 April, and the virus has spread to 73 countries including Mexico, according to the information released yesterday by the World Health Organization.

The virus A/H1N1 may be mutated into the global human pandemic disease. Therefore, the Ministry of Health commenced the necessary preparedness task on 25 April.

Not to break out the influenza A/H1N1 in the territory of Myanmar, the Ministry of Health is taking preparedness measures such as daily virus observation, preparations for medical treatment, providing of medicines and medical equipment and laboratory apparatuses to the hospitals and making ready for use of the special patient wards.

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First qualifying cut of Baron’s “Commands Respect” Amateur Open Golf Challenge 2009 held in Mandalay

YANGON, 9 June—The first day qualifying cut of the Baron’s “Commands Respect” Amateur Open Golf Challenge 2009, organized by Myanmar Golf Federation and sponsored by Myanmar Brewery Ltd, was held at Shwemantaung Golf Club, Mandalay this morning.

After the first qualifying cut 18-hole round, Executive U Ko Ko Lay of Myanmar Golf Federation presented the prizes to Naing Ye Lin who stood first with 69 strokes, Myo Zaw Aung, second with 72 strokes, Tun Tun Oo, third with 73 strokes, Than Naing Oo, fourth with 73 strokes. Maung Me, fifth with 73 strokes and Nyunt Win Tun, sixth with 73 strokes.

General Sales Manager U Kyaw Kyaw of Myanmar Brewery Ltd presented prizes to Aye Min Cho who stood in seventh position with 75 strokes, Myo Tun, eighth with 75 strokes, Soe Min Min Oo, ninth with 77 strokes, Thha Aung, tenth with 78 strokes, Naing Lin, eleventh with 78 strokes and Khin Maung Aye, twelfth with 78 strokes. The second qualifying cut will be held at Myanmar Golf Club at 9-mile on Pyay Road in Yangon on 15 June, and only over 18-year participants will be allowed and also be organized through the stroke play (scratch) system.—MNA

“Marine product processing technology with organic system” course opens

YANGON, 9 June—Organized by the Fisheries Department under the Ministry of Livestock and Fisheries, a ceremony to open “Marine product processing technology with organic system” course was held at the Thiri Annawa hall of Myanmar Fisheries Federation on Bayintnaung Road, Insein Township here this morning, with a speech by acting Director-General of Fisheries Department U Khin Ko Lay.

A total of 44 trainees from marine product factories attended the two-day course.—MNA

Foreign Minister felicitates Portuguese Minister of State and Foreign Affairs

NAY PYI TAW, 10 June—U Nyan Win, Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Union of Myanmar, has sent a message of felicitation to His Excellency Mr Luis Amado, Minister of State and Foreign Affairs of the Portuguese Republic, on the occasion of the National Day of the Portuguese Republic, which falls on 10 June 2009.—MNA

Myanmar, second in Japan-Mekong U-15 friendship football tourney

YANGON, 9 June—Myanmar stood second at Japan-Mekong U-15 friendship football tournament held at J Village in Japan. Myanmar had three wins, one draw and one loss in five matches. Host Japan secured first.

The Myanmar team was welcomed back at Yangon International Airport by officials of the Myanmar Football Federation and their relatives this evening.—MNA

Experts discuss ways to promote veterinary to prevent animal-to-human infectious disease

NAY PYI TAW, 9 June — The total number of confirmed cases of the A/H1N1 flu virus across the world mounted to 25,288 while the number of death toll has reached 139 since its outbreak on 17 April, according to the information released yesterday by the World Health Organization.

Experts from Livestock Breeding and Veterinary Department of the Ministry of Livestock Breeding and Fisheries and OIE held a meeting to discuss matters related to veterinary services meeting the set standards of OIE at Sedona Hotel in Yangon today. It was attended by experts from OIE led by President Dr Gardner Murray of OIE, officials from ministries concerned and organizations and media men. Participants of the meeting discussed ways for cooperation in promotion of the veterinary services to prevent infectious diseases from animals to human.

Meanwhile, educative talks on prevention of the influenza A (H1N1) was held at the office of Myanmar District Peace and Development Council yesterday and Acting Director-General of the LBVD Dr Aung Gyi and experts gave talks on awareness against the A (H1N1). Around 135 personnel from governmental departments, Myanmar Maternal and Child Welfare Association and Myanmar Livestock Breeding Federation attended the talks.

In Myanmar, there is no outbreak of the influenza A (H1N1) in pigs, the Ministry of Livestock Breeding and Fisheries said. The ministry has urged the people to cook pork at 70 degree centigrade (160 degree Fahrenheit) and to observe cleanliness when they prepare for cooking to prevent the infection of disease.

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Prevent influenza

Influenza may break out in any season, especially in a transitional period between two seasons. If infected with flu, a person has high body temperature, muscular pain, cough, running nose, sneezing and cold for three or four days.

The infectious disease is due to the virus that can naturally proliferate in a transitional period between two seasons. A patient will recover from the illness if he/she practises personal hygiene.

To prevent influenza,

(a) avoid taking a bath just after being in the hot sun for some time,
(b) practise personal hygiene,
(c) do not go to busy places, take enough rest,
(d) have nutritious food,
(e) have fruit and vegetables which are rich in Vitamin C; have medical check-up in a nearest clinic or hospital if necessary.

Ministry of Health
Rakhine State with thick foliage of valuable forests

Article: Reporter Singu Soe Win; Photos: Tin Soe (Myanma Alin)

To write articles on sector-wise development of Rakhine State, the news team of the Myanma Alin Daily recently visited the office of Rakhine State Forest Department under the arrangements of Rakhine State Peace and Development Council.

At the office of Rakhine State Forest Department, we had interviews with Deputy Director U Than Myint of Rakhine State Forest Department and Assistant Director U Maung Maung Zaw of Sittway District Forest Department.

Deputy Director U Than Myint explained, “A total of 4,238,340 acres of Rakhine State is covered by the forests, accounting for 46.64 per cent. Rakhine State Forest Department is implementing the aims of the Ministry of Forestry: earning foreign exchange, exposing illegal timber, regularly setting up watershed plantations, establishing forest plantations, and organizing the entrepreneurs to establish private forest plantations.”

Rakhine State has 13 forest reserves on 522,623 acres of land; 20 protected public forests on 1,163,641 acres of land and one environmental conservation region on 433,843 acres of land. There are 2,120,107 acres of forest area, accounting for 23.32 per cent in the state.

The deputy director said that Rakhine State has been establishing forest plantations in accordance with the annual plans. A total of 1350 acres of commercial (teak) plantation, 1,000 acres of commercial (ironwood tree) plantation and 250 acres of mangrove plantation, totalling 2600 acres were established in 2008-2009.

He continued to say that the department undertook forest conservation, extension of forest plantations, the amendment of 70 square miles of forest reserve area and fire preventive measures at 14,005 acres of forest plantations.

Forest products are being extracted according to the annual economic plans. The efforts of the staff of the department are to be put on record as they earned K 74.5 million for the State within seven months.

As part of efforts for carrying out the task on progress of border areas and national races, a total of 30 acres of commercial (teak) plantation with 3,000 saplings were established in Maungtaw Township, 20 acres of plantation with 8,000 saplings in Buthidaung Township. Teak, ironwood, physic nut and other saplings were distributed to the local people free of charge.

During the tour, we saw thriving saplings in Maungtaw and Buthidaung Townships. Teak, ironwood, physic nut and other valuable trees and perennial plants were put on record as they earned K 74.5 million for the State within seven months.

The effort of the Forest Department alone is not adequate for conserving natural environment and protecting the forests. The local people should join hands with the department for undertaking the forest conservation task with active participation so as to maintain the beauty of Rakhine State in the long term.

Translation: TTA

Myanma Alin: 21-5-2009
Man shot dead by suspected militants in S Thailand

BANGKOK, 9 June—A Thai man in Thailand’s southernmost province of Yala was gunned down on Monday morning by suspected militants. The victim was Arase Kama, 39, was attacked by the suspected militants, while he was working in his rubber farm, police said.

Kama was a member of Banglang village, Bajoh sub-district of Ban-nang-star District in Yala Province.

Thailand’s South comprises mainly three southernmost provinces - Yala, Pattani, Narathiwat — and some part of Songkla Province. Insurgent violence has killed over 3,500 people in this restive South since its resurrection in January 2004.

Colombian navy seizes over 1.6 tons of marijuana

BOGOTA, 9 June—The Colombian Navy seized about 1.7 tons of marijuana and detained four people on Monday morning in a ship sailing from the Pacific Ocean to Panama. The Navy said the marijuana was packed in 35 bags without registration, and the detainees, whose identifications were still unrevealed, would be investigated.

The drugs had been destroyed, it said. The Colombian Navy has seized over 9.5 tons of marijuana so far this year, which was worth of about eight millions US dollars in the blackmarket.

Japanese urged to issue 2020 greenhouse goals

OSLO, 9 June—Japan and Russia should publish 2020 goals for greenhouse gas emissions to help spur UN talks on a new climate treaty, the head of the UN Climate Change Secretariat said on Monday.

Other developed nations have already set targets and the lack of Japanese and Russian data was holding up the June 1-12 talks among 181 nations in Bonn, Germany, on a new pact due to be agreed in Copenhagen in December.

"A number of critical ... ones are missing — Japan and Russia," Yvo de Boer told a webcast conference.

Developing nations say that all developed nations should publish 2020 goals by 17 June — six months before the end of the Copenhagen conference.

Empty display case where Picasso’s sketchbook had been stolen

PARIS, 9 June—A notebook of 33 pencil drawings by Pablo Picasso has been stolen from the Paris museum that bears the painter’s name, authorities said on Tuesday.

The book is reportedly worth several million euros (dollars).

The theft took place between on Monday and Tuesday morning at the Picasso Museum, France’s Culture Ministry said. It was discovered on Tuesday morning, a police official said anonymously, as police are not authorized to discuss cases publicly.

The stolen sketchbook, shiny red with the word "Album" inscribed in gold on the front, dated from 1917 to 1924, the Culture Ministry statement said. It measured 6.3 inches by 9.5 inches (16 by 24 centimeters) the ministry said.

The Picasso Museum, in Paris’ old Marais neighborhood, is dedicated to the Spanish-born painter, a founder of the Cubist movement and leading 20th century artist.

Picasso book of sketches stolen from Paris museum

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“Japanese Prime Minister Taro Aso aims to publish a 2020 goal for emissions in the coming days. Options outlined by experts range from a rise of 4 per cent over 1990 levels to a cut of 25 per cent. Russia has not said when it plans to issue numbers.

“There is a significant lack of progress in the Kyoto process, the key numbers are still missing, that is slowing down the debate,” de Boer said.

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Stolen artifacts found in Ill returning to Italy

CHICAGO, 9 June—Thousands of Italian artifacts—including a handwritten document by Benito Mussolini and antiquities dating to 900 BC—were found in the home of a local collector, the FBI said.

Nearly half the items were identified as stolen and will be returned to Italy, the FBI said. The collection, worth between $5 million and $10 million, had been shipped to John Sisto during two decades by his father, who lived in Italy and likely bought the treasures from thieves who looted them from private collections, the FBI said.

Sisto’s relatives discovered the some 3,500 artifacts, manuscripts and antiquities squirreled away in boxes in his Berwyn home after his death in 2007. The collection includes hundreds of Etruscan artifacts produced between 1200 BC and 500 BC, parchments and manuscripts, some with wax papal seals dating to the 12th century, and more than 1,000 books and documents written by kings and popes.

It also includes a more modern document handwritten by the fascist dictator Mussolini: his handwritten preface to the book “Dux” by Margherita Sarfatti, published in 1926. FBI agents believe Sisto’s father, Giuseppe “Joseph” Sisto, sent the items to his son with an eye to selling them for a profit.—INTERNET

Mexican authorities raise nursery fire death toll to 43

MEXICO CITY, 9 June—Two more children died from injuries sustained in a fire at a daycare center in the northern Mexican state of Sonora, bringing the total death toll to 43, the country’s health provider said on Monday. There were a total of 33 children still in hospital, and 20 of whom were in grave condition. Mexican Social Security Agency Director Daniel Karam told a local radio.

The social security agency, which also has the responsibility for supervising the nursery, is paying attention to the injured children’s medical care and for family members’ expenses.—INTERNET

CLAIMS DAY NOTICE
MV GATI MAJESTIC VOY NO (93509)

Consignees of cargo carried on MV GATI MAJESTIC VOY NO (93509) are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on 10.6.2009 and cargo will be discharged into the premises of M.I.T.T where it will lie at the consignee’s risk and expenses and subject to the byelaws and conditions of the Port of Yangon.

No claims against this vessel will be admitted after the Claims Day.

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Four dead, nine missing in Ukraine coal mine accident

DONETSK, 9 June—At least four miners were killed and nine remained missing on Tuesday after a coal mine explosion in eastern Ukraine, a government official said, as relatives kept a tearful vigil at the mine.

“Four bodies have been found. The search for the nine missing goes on,” Ria-Novosti news agency quoted Marina Nikitina, a spokeswoman for the State Committee for Emergencies, as telling Kanal 5 television.

Out of 51 miners working in the mine at the time of the accident, 38 have been able to escape to the surface, said the accident early Monday at the Skochinsky mine in Donetsk, a city in eastern Ukraine, was not caused by an explosion but apparently happened after a discharge of gas three times above the accepted safety limit. After the accident all mining work was suspended,

Work using explosives had been under way in the mine’s shafts just hours before the disaster, Interfax news agency reported.

After the accident all mining work was suspended, said Marina Nikitina, a spokeswoman for the State Committee on Workers’ Safety.

“Work is under way to ventilate the shafts and reduce the presence of methane,” the mine’s director Valen Mininsholov told reporters.

“I hope we will have managed to clear the debris and ventilate the mine in 24 to 36 hours,” he added.

About 30 relatives of the missing miners sat outside the entrance waiting for news of their loved ones, some of them reduced to tears. Some had rushed to the scene of the mine entrance waiting for news of their loved ones, some

A Daunia Vase, part of a collection of millions of dollars worth of stolen manuscripts and other antiquities found in a home of a suburban Berwyn home collectibles dealer, is shown at FBI headquarters in Chicago, on 8 June, 2009.—INTERNET

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U Myint Lwin,
Advocate, L.B, DBL
Dip in Marine Affairs(UK)

A new building will be returned to Italy, identified as stolen and announced on Monday.

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A Daunia Vase, part of a collection of millions of dollars worth of stolen manuscripts and other antiquities found in a home of a suburban Berwyn home collectibles dealer, is shown at FBI headquarters in Chicago, on 8 June, 2009.—INTERNET

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Airlines pledge carbon-neutral growth by 2020

KUALA LUMPUR, 9 June—The world’s airlines have committed themselves to a global cap on emissions in 2020, even allowing for a return to growth after the worldwide economic slump, the industry body said on Monday.

The fuel-hungry air travel industry, which has been under attack from environmentalists for its contribution to global warming, faces estimated losses of 20 billion dollars in 2008 and 2009. But despite the global financial crisis, the International Air Transport Association (IATA) said at its annual meeting here that carriers had set an ambitious environmental goal that other major industries had yet to strive for. “Two years ago we set a vision to achieve carbon-neutral growth on the way to a carbon-free future. Today we have taken a major step forward by committing to a global cap on our emissions in 2020,” IATA chief Giovanni Bisignani said.

“After this date, aviation’s emissions will not grow even as demand increases. Airlines are the first global industry to make such a bold commitment,” he said.

Healthy diet may boost men’s fertility

NEW YORK, 9 June—Men who eat healthier diets may also have healthier sperm, new research from Spain shows.

“A healthy, well-balanced diet is not just important for preventing diseases like diabetes, high cholesterol, or hypertension, but it may be useful for preserving or improving your reproductive health too,” Dr Jaime Mendiola of the University of Murcia, the lead researcher on the study, told Reuters Health via e-mail.

A number of studies have suggested that there are links between consuming certain nutrients and male infertility. Mendiola and his team note in the journal Fertility and Sterility. They had previously investigated the relationship between consumption of certain foods and semen quality, and found that men who ate more dairy products and more meat, and less lettuce, tomatoes, and fruit, were more likely to have poor semen quality.

That investigation didn’t look at specific nutrients. But in this one, Mendiola and his team compared the nutrient content of the diets of 30 men with poor semen quality and 31 men with normal sperm.—INTERNET

Swine flu spreads to 73 countries

GENEVA, 9 June—Swine flu has now spread to 73 countries with 25,288 people known to have been infected since the disease was first uncovered in April, data from the World Health Organisation showed on Monday.

The number of deaths rose to 139 after 14 more deaths were reported, according to the latest WHO tally of confirmed influenza A/H1N1 cases. Most of the new cases were reported by the United States, with 2,163 new infections, bringing its total caseload to 13,217, including 27 deaths.

Australia also posted a significant rise of 175 cases, bringing its total to 1,051. Chile likewise saw its caseload grow by 42 to 411 in total.

Flu experts are watching the situation in Australia and Chile carefully as they are part of the southern hemisphere which is entering the flu-prone winter season.

Two US students diagnosed with swine flu in Cairo

CAIRO, 9 June—A foreign students’ dormitory for the American University in Cairo has been put under quarantine for seven days on Monday after two US students were diagnosed with swine flu, health and university officials said.

The two cases were discovered Sunday night after the students exhibited flu-like symptoms and tested positive for the virus. They were hospitalized and given Tamiflu, a Health Ministry statement said. “The building and the people inside it have been put under quarantine, their temperatures are being checked, and swabs have been taken from their throats and mouth and sent to laboratories,” said Nasser el-Sayyed, an assistant health minister in the statement.—INTERNET

Singapore confirms two more Influenza A/H1N1 cases

SINGAPORE, 9 June—Singapore has confirmed two more cases of Influenza A/H1N1, bringing the number of total cases here to 17, the country’s Health Ministry said on Tuesday.

The 16th case is a 40-year-old male foreigner from India who is working in Singapore. He went to Melbourne on 31 May on a business trip and returned to Singapore on Singapore Airlines SQ238 on 6 June. He developed symptoms on 7 June, and laboratory results confirmed his infection on Monday evening.

The 17th case is a 25-year-old Malaysian female who works as a cabin crew with Singapore Airlines. She was on holiday in Melbourne and developed symptoms on 5 June while she was there.

Less sleep associated with high, worsening blood pressure in middle age

WASHINGTON, 9 June—Middle-aged adults who sleep fewer hours appear more likely to have high blood pressure and to experience adverse changes in blood pressure over time, according to a report published on Monday in the Archives of Internal Medicine.

Almost one-third of Americans have hypertension, a condition that contributes to seven million deaths worldwide each year, according to background information in the article.

“Identifying a novel lifestyle risk factor for high blood pressure could lead to new interventions to prevent or reduce high blood pressure,” the authors write.

“Laboratory studies of sleep deprivation have suggested potential mechanisms for a causal link between sleep loss and hypertension.”

Sleep deprivation is associated with increased activity in the sympathetic nervous system, which controls the body’s stress response. Over time, this activation could contribute to high blood pressure.

Handout photo released in 2008 by the British Antarctic Survey shows of a chunk of ice that started to break away from the Antarctic Wilkins Ice Shelf. Millions of years ago, rivers ran in Antarctica through craggy mountain valleys that were strangely similar to the European Alps of today, Chinese and British scientists reported.—INTERNET

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Newcastle United for sale at £100m

LONDON, 9 June—Newcastle United announced on Monday they were up for sale at an asking price of 100 million pounds.

The north-east side were relegated from the lucrative Premier League on the final day of the season and owner Mike Ashley, who was almost once before hounded out of the club by angry fans, has now decided to sell up.

“The board of Newcastle United can confirm that the club is for sale at the asking price of 100 million pounds,” a club statement said.

‘Interested parties should contact Newcastle United for further details. The club will not be making any further comment at the present time.’

Barca aims to keep top striker Eto’o

MADRID, 9 June—Barcelona president Joan Laporta said on Monday he hoped to hold on to Samuel Eto’o despite interest in the Cameroonian striker from some of Europe’s top clubs.

“We’re trying to find a way in which he can stay,” he said after talks between the player’s agent, Josep Maria Mesalles, and Barca’s director of football Tski Begiristain.

That was the message from Messales too.

“The player is not going to be looking to go. He likes it here and there is no better place to live than Barcelona,” he said, but added “we’re not ruling anything out.”

Eto’o, the top scorer for Barcelona in the league this season with 30 goals, is under contract with the Catalan side until 2010.

But the 28-year-old has reportedly sparked interest from big-spending English Premier League club Manchester City, French side Lyon and Italy’s Inter Milan.

Sharapova makes winning grass return

BIRMINGHAM, 9 June—Former world number one Maria Sharapova cruised into the second round of the WTA Birmingham grasscourt event here on Monday with a 6-4, 6-2 win over Canada’s Stephanie Dubois.

The unseeded 22-year-old Russian, twice a winner at the Edgbaston Priory Club, will now play American 19-year-old Alexa Glatch, who defeated ninth-seeded compatriot Bethanie Mattek-Sands 7-6 (7/3), 6-3.

Sharapova, a three-time Grand Slam champion was broken again early in the second set but hit 14 aces to win the match.

Russia’s Victoria Azarenka also progressed to the second round.

Hewitt hits the grass running at Queen’s

LONDON, 9 June—Four-time champion Lleyton Hewitt made a storming start on the first day of the ATP Queen’s Club grasscourt event here on Monday with a 6-1, 6-0 victory over Argentina’s Eduardo Schwank.

Hewitt, a former world number one and Wimbledon champion in 2002, looked as comfortable on grass as ever as he took just 64 minutes to see off his opponent, the world number 109. The 15th-seeded Australian, champion here in 2000, 2001, 2002 and 2006, will play Portugal’s Frederico Gil, a 6-1, 6-3 winner against Spain’s Daniel Gimeno-Traver, in the second round.

Hewitt has been spending time in Florida, ahead of the 10-month absence due to a shoulder injury.

It was Sharapova’s first grasscourt match of the season after a spell in inactivity following a foot injury.

Samuel Eto’o

Heskey backs Rooney to put England top of the World

WATFORD, 9 June—England forward Emile Heskey believes Wayne Rooney can fire Fabio Capello’s team to World Cup glory in South Africa.

For the second time in his England career, Heskey is the foil for one of the world’s best strikers and the Aston Villa star is convinced his partnership with Rooney can be even better than the relationship he established with Michael Owen.

It was Heskey’s muscular presence that allowed Owen to thrive during Sven-Goran Eriksson’s reign. After a spell in international exile, Heskey was brought back into the England team.

It was another excellent performance from the colossus of a forward as he cause the England coach to flourish.

Celtic want Mowbray, West Brom admit

BIRMINGHAM, 9 June—Scottish giants Celtic are trying to tempt manager Tony Mowbray to leave his post at relegated English Premier League side West Bromwich Albion and join them, the English club confirmed on Monday.

Celtic chief executive Peter Lawwell has contacted the Baggies, asking for permission to approach the ex-Celtic player, West Brom admitted on its website. Albion chairman Jeremy Peace made it clear he wants Mowbray to stay in place, in spite of West Brom’s relegation from the Premiership at the end of the season.

“I made it absolutely clear the approach was not welcome because we have an ongoing project at Albion in which Tony is an integral part.”

Tiger takes a trip to Bethpage

FARMINGDALE, 9 June—Tiger Woods returned to the Black Course at Bethpage on Monday, tuning up in preparation for his US Open title defense.

Woods made a detour on his way home from winning the Memorial in Ohio a day earlier, playing 18 holes with swing coach Hank Haeny.

Newsday reported that several dozen golfers who planned to play at Bethpage State Park’s four other courses spied the world’s No. 1 player and immediately pulled out cell-phone cameras.

Woods plans to return home to Florida later Monday and practice on his home course at Isleworth leading to the Open, which is 18-21 June.

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“I made it absolutely clear the approach was not welcome because we have an ongoing project at Albion in which Tony is an integral part.”

Italian coach Marcello Lippi, pictured in April 2009, says he will use the FIFA Confederations Cup starting on 14 June to build a team capable of retaining the World Cup in South Africa next year.

The ‘Azzurri’ staged their first training session on Monday in chilly, windy conditions at a college in this village between Johannesburg and Pretoria after Group B matches against the United States, Brazil and Egypt next week.

“We will be trying to mix a few youngsters with the experienced footballers we have as this is how you blend a team for the World Cup next year,” said the 2006 World Cup-winning coach.

Lippi told reporters he was relishing the chance to spend three weeks with his squad, who lead the Republic of Ireland by one point in a European qualifying group and have a game in hand.

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French court fines GDF Suez over deadly gas blast

Mulhouse (France), 9 June — A French court fined energy giant GDF Suez 232,500 euros (321,600 US dollars) on Monday for manslaughter and causing injury in a gas explosion that killed 18 people in 2004.

The blast, which tore through a five-storey building in the eastern city of Mulhouse, also injured 16 people. A broken pipe under a street caused gas to pour into the basement before exploding. The pipe was made of a brittle type of cast iron which GDF had pledged to replace in all its pipes by 2000 but it later changed that policy.

"Abandoning the policy of replacing grey cast iron, when trade unions had repeatedly underlined the dangers of it, constitutes a fault," judge Christine Schlumberger said in the court ruling.

The court denounced "the absence of rigour and checks in the monitoring of pipes", but it did not allow senior GDF executives to be tried as defendants as requested by the victims' families.

Gas company GDF, which merged with utility Suez last year, was fined 200,000 euros in 2006 over requested by the victims' families.

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Prime Minister General Thein Sein felicitates Portuguese counterpart

NAY PYI TAW, 10 June—General Thein Sein, Prime Minister of the Union of Myanmar, has sent a message of felicitations to His Excellency Mr. Jose Socrates Carvalho Pinto De Sousa, Prime Minister of the Portuguese Republic, on the occasion of the National Day of the Portuguese Republic, which falls on 10 June 2009.—MNA

Prime Minister General Thein Sein receives Singaporean Senior Minister

NAY PYI TAW, 9 June—Prime Minister General Thein Sein received a visiting goodwill delegation led by Senior Minister Mr. Goh Chok Tong of the Republic of Singapore and party at the hall of Government’s Office here at 9.40 am today.

Also present at the call were Minister for Foreign Affairs U. Nyan Win, Minister for Science and Technology U. Thaung, Attorney-General U. Aye Maung, Director-General Col Thant Shin of the Government’s Office, Director-General U. Kyaw Kyaw of Protocol Department under the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Director-General U. Kyaw Tin of Political Department under MOFA and Singaporean Ambassador to Myanmar Mr. Robert Chua Hian Kong.—MNA

Prime Minister General Thein Sein hosts lunch in honour of Senior Minister of the Republic of Singapore Mr. Goh Chok Tong and party

NAY PYI TAW, 9 June—Prime Minister General Thein Sein hosted a lunch in honour of Senior Minister of the Republic of Singapore Mr. Goh Chok Tong and party at Myat Taw Win Hotel in the hotel zone here at noon today.

Present at the lunch were Minister for Foreign Affairs U. Nyan Win, Minister for Science and Technology U. Thaung, Minister for Progress of Border Areas and National Races and Development Affairs Col. Thein Nyunt, Attorney-General U. Aye Maung, Deputy Minister for Hotels and Tourism Brig-Gen Aye Myint Kyi, the directors-general of the Office of the State Peace and Development Council and the Government Office, departmental heads, Ambassador of the Republic of Singapore to the Union of Myanmar Mr. Robert Chua Hian Kong and responsible personnel.

Artists of the Fine Arts Department under the Ministry of Culture gave performance while the guests were having lunch.

After the lunch, Prime Minister General Thein Sein presented a souvenir to Senior Minister of the Republic of Singapore Mr. Goh Chok Tong.

The Senior Minister of the Republic of Singapore gave a bouquet to the artists and cordially greeted them.—MNA

Four political objectives

- Stability of the State, community peace and tranquility, prevalence of law and order
- National reconciliation
- Emergence of a new enduring State Constitution
- Building of a new modern developed nation in accord with the new State Constitution

Four economic objectives

- Development of agriculture as the base and all-round development of other sectors of the economy as well
- Proper evolution of the market-oriented economic system
- Development of the economy inviting participation in terms of technical know-how and investments from sources inside the country and abroad
- The initiative to shape the national economy must be kept in the hands of the State and the national peoples

Four social objectives

- Uplift of the morale and morality of the entire nation
- Uplift of national prestige and integrity and preservation and safeguarding of cultural heritage and national character
- Uplift of dynamism of patriotic spirit
- Uplift of health, fitness and education standards of the entire nation