Lt-Gen Myint Swe of Ministry of Defence attends Vietnam-Myanmar International Exposition 2009

YANGON, 19 Nov—Lt-Gen Myint Swe of the Ministry of Defence this morning attended the Vietnam-Myanmar International Exposition 2009 at the Myanmar Convention Centre on Mindhamma Road in Mayangon Township.

Deputy Minister of Industry and Trade Mr Nguyen Thanh Bien of the Socialist Republic of Vietnam made an opening speech.

Deputy Minister for Commerce Brig-Gen Aung Tun extended greetings. Ambassador of the SRV to the Union of Myanmar Mr Chu Cong Phung also extended greetings.

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

Umin Koepauk river water pumping station benefiting agriculture and greening of Chauk Township

For many years, the Anya region had experienced less rainfall, high temperature and shortage of water for agriculture purpose. Due to reliance on the rainwater in the past, the farmers could cultivate monsoon paddy in the favourable weather of rainy season. In some years when there was less rainfall, the farmers bought rice for their consumption from others without growing paddy. At that time, they cultivated groundnut, beans and pulses and cotton only.

The Tatmadaw Government has been striving for ensuring availability of water not only for agriculture purpose but for drinking. The Ministry of Agriculture and Irrigation constructed dams and reservoirs, implemented river water pumping projects and sank artesian wells and tube-wells for agricultural purpose. Likewise, the Ministry of Progress of Border Areas and National Races and Development Affairs and wellwishers are sinking tube-wells for supply of potable water. As a result, farmers have opportunities to grow suitable crops for the regions without waiting for the rainwater.

During the visit to Chauk Township, the news crew of the Myanmar Alin Daily went to Umin Koepauk river water pumping project implemented by the Water Resources Utilization Department under the Ministry of Agriculture and Irrigation and had interviews with officials.

First, Chairman of Chauk Township Peace and Development Council U Thiha explained, “The Water Resources Utilization Department commenced the implementation of Umin Koepauk river water pumping project in Sale region of Chauk Township in the year 2000. The project was first aimed at supplying water to 300 acres of farmlands. After that, the project was extended to irrigate 7800 acres of farmlands in accordance with the decision (See page 7)
Irrigation water fundamental for boosting agricultural production

Construction of dams, river water pumping stations, and underground water tapping stations in the regions in upper Myanmar where water is scarce is one of the top priorities the government gives in its bid to fulfill the basic needs of the people.

In compliance with the guidance of the Head of State, a large number of projects for construction of dams, diversion weirs, river water pumping stations, and sluice gates are being implemented to supply adequate irrigation water to farmlands in the arid zones in upper and central Myanmar.

As a result of great prominence to water supply projects, the government so far has managed to construct 228 dams across the nation, the majority of which are in the arid zones.

The inauguration of Kantdaunt Dam near Kantdaunt Village, Pale Township, Sagaing Division, constructed by the Irrigation Department of the Ministry of Agriculture and Irrigation, took place on 15 November.

The government is working hard to transform the nation from agricultural to industrialized one. At the heart of mechanized farming lies sufficient irrigation water supply. Farming crops does not call for much water, whereas supply of sufficient irrigation water is an engine for growing paddy.

Kantdaunt Dam benefits nearby villages to grow monsoon and summer paddy. Pale Township gets average annual rainfall of only 30 inches, with many water sources and fertile soil. Due to the dam, local people have launched triple-cropping pattern, growing monsoon paddy, summer paddy and other crops in a year.

In response to the government’s benevolent attitude towards them, local people have to maintain the irrigation facilities with a sense of duty for their durability.

CPA Association to hold talks

NAY PYI TAW, 19 Nov—Under the arrangement of Myanmar CPAs Association, the Internal Revenue Department will hold a talk entitled “Claim and Self-levying Tax System” at the training school (Yangon) of the Auditor-General’s Office at No. 1/190 on Thakhan Mya Park Road in Atho Township on 29 November.

The CPAs may attend the talk and those who attended the talks will receive the CPE hour endorsement. They may pay the fee for the talks at the CPA office on the first floor of the training school (Yangon), not later than 25 November. Those from the other states and divisions may dial 214653 at the association.

The trainees from the CPA Part-II wishing to attend the talks may register at the office of the training school (Yangon) before the designated date.

Part-time Banking Services Diploma Course commences

NAY PYI TAW, 19 Nov—Under the supervision of the Ministry of Finance and Revenue, the Myanmar Banks Association organized the Part-time Banking Services Diploma Course No. 1 of Myanmar Institute of Banking (Yangon) at the hall of the association in Yankin Township, Yangon, on 16 November.

After giving an address, Minister for Finance and Revenue Maj-Gen Hla Tun cordially greeted the principal and instructors of the institute and trainees. Altogether 40 trainees—eight from State-owned and private-run banks and 32 from other organizations—are attending the two-year course.—MNA

Mayor inspects upgrading, construction of roads and bridges

YANGON, 19 Nov—Chairman of Yangon City Development Committee Mayor Brig-Gen Aung Thein Lin inspected the upgrading of Okponseik road into nine-inch feet thick tarred one in Mayangon Township here yesterday morning.

Afterwards, the mayor inspected upgrading of Bo Teza road in Bo Sein Hman ward in Bahan Township into six inches thick concrete one, extension of Thawunna Youth Training Centre circular road in Thingangyun Township and Sethmu Yadana road in Tamway Township, completion of RC type creek-crossing Khunhnabinlain Bridge and laying gravel for paving of Sethmu Yadana road section.

Upon completion of above roads, people will be able to go to Thingangyun, Tamway and related Townships in a short time.—MNA

Monywa Open Golf Championship opens

YANGON, 19 Nov—With the main sponsorship of Monywa Open Golf Championship, jointly-organized by Myanmar Golf Federation and Myanmar PGA, Monywa Open Golf Championship was opened in Monywa Golf Club this morning.

Among the spectators were Chairman of Sagaing Division Peace and Development Council Commander of North-West Command Maj-Gen Myint Soe, guests, officials and golf enthusiasts.

By the time golfers took their designated positions, President of Future Engineering Group U Khin Maung Han, General Secretary of MGF U Aung Hla Han, Managing Director of Pacific Asia Hi-Tech Dr Tun Tun Aung opened the tournament by teeing off golf balls in turn.

In the first round of professional golfers level, Zaw Zaw Latt led the tournament with 70 strokes, followed by Min Naing (Srixon) with 71 strokes and Zaw Zaw Win (Srixon), Thaing Win (Srixon) and Thar Zin (Srixon) with 72 strokes each shared in the third place.

In the amateur level, Naing Ye Lin took a lead in the tournament with 69 strokes ahead of second placed Aung Win (Myanmar selected golfer) with 72 strokes and third placed Thura Kyaw with 72 strokes.

The main sponsor is Future Engineering Group and co-sponsors are Htoo Group of Companies, International Beverages Trading Co Ltd (IBTC), Pacific Asia Hi-Tech, Aung Thamadi Gold Shop, Han Golf Masters Pte, Ltd, and Monywa Golf Club.

A golfer competing in Monywa Open Golf Championship.—NLM
British soldier killed in Afghanistan

LONDON, 19 Nov—A British soldier was shot and killed on Wednesday in Afghanistan, taking the number of British deaths there this year alone to 98, the Ministry of Defence said. The soldier, from the Royal Military Police, was killed during operations in the Babaji area in southern Helmand Province, the ministry said.

His family have been informed.

“It is with deep sadness I must inform you that a soldier from The Royal Military Police was shot and killed this morning on operations,” said a spokesman for Task Force Helmand, Lieutenant Colonel David Wakefield. “One of our fellow soldiers taken from us in the course of his duty, and who we will remember,” he said.

The death brings the total number of British killed in Afghanistan to 235 since the US-led invasion in 2001 to oust the Taleban regime.

British Prime Minister Gordon Brown offered on Monday to host an international conference on Afghanistan in London in January, which he said could set a timeframe for a gradual security handover from 2010 to Afghan forces. —Internet

Half of children in 17 US counties live in poverty

WASHINGTON, 19 Nov—At least one in two children in 17 small counties in the United States is living in poverty, according to a US Census survey measuring income and poverty in small areas and school districts.

Ziebach County, South Dakota, an area with a population of 2,542, leads with a poverty rate for those under the age of 18 of 67.1 percent, the survey released on Wednesday showed. For all ages, the poverty rate is 54.4 percent.

In at least 30 counties with populations ranging from just over 2,000 people to nearly 62,250 people, the poverty rate for all ages is more than one in three, the Census showed.

Douglas County, Colorado with a population of 280,621 has the lowest poverty rate of 3.1 percent, while New Mexico’s Los Alamos County has the lowest rate for children of 2.8 percent. The survey, which relies on 2008 data, is an indication of how American small towns and rural areas are faring economically. The data is also important as the stimulus plan passed in February has special programmes targeted to “recovery zones,” areas with high unemployment and low incomes, and schools where large numbers of the students live hand to mouth. —Internet

Ark police officer uses Taser on 10-year-old girl

LITTLE ROCK, 19 Nov—A police officer in a small Arkansas town used a stun gun on an unruly 10-year-old girl after he said her mother gave him permission to do so. The town’s mayor is calling for an investigation into whether the Taser use was appropriate.

According to a report by Officer Dustin Bradshaw, obtained on Wednesday by The Associated Press, police were called to the Ozark home on 11 Nov because of a domestic disturbance. When he arrived, the girl was curled up on the floor, screaming, the report said.

Bradshaw’s report said the girl screamed, kicked and resisted any time her mother tried to get her in the shower before bed.

“She mother told me to take her if I needed to,” Bradshaw wrote.

UN official questions world’s hunger commitment

ROME, 19 Nov—The director of a UN food agency questioned on Wednesday how world powers could commit so much money to fighting the financial crisis and not to feeding the 1 billion hungry.

The three-day summit at the UN Food and Agriculture Organization headquarters in Rome ended with little new headway in efforts for a new strategy to help farmers in poor countries produce enough to feed their people.

The director-general of the Food and Agriculture Organization said the summit “didn’t go as far” as he had hoped.

“If it has been possible to mobilize trillions of dollars” to stimulate the global economy to combat the financial crisis, the world should be able to come up with resources to solve its hunger problem, Jacques Diouf said added at a final news conference. —Internet

US drone attack kills four militants in Pakistan’s tribal area

ISLAMABAD, 19 Nov—At least four militants were killed and five others wounded in a suspected United States drone missile strike in North Waziristan tribal agency, local TV channel reported on Thursday.

The attack took place late Wednesday night in Shanawakhora village of North Waziristan, the Pakistan’s tribal region near the Afghan border. Washington said in insurgent fighters are hiding out in the area and planning attacks on Western troops stationed in neighbouring Afghanistan.

“It was a US drone attack which targeted a militant compound, killing four militants and wounding five others,” a senior security official in the area told the private TV GEO news. He said two missiles were fired from a US drone. Another security official confirmed the attack.

US drone plane’s flights are still underway over the area, witnesses said, adding that the attack pounded militants hideout established in a house.

Pakistan opposes the US strikes inside the Pakistani tribal region, which Washington considers as the center of Taleban and Al-Qaeda militants.

Pakistan expresses its displeasure with the US attacks and seeks the drone technology. But the US does not accept Islamabad’s request. —Internet

Two Afghans injured mistakenly by German troops

KUNDUZ, 19 Nov—Two civilians were injured by German troops in Kunduz Province north of Afghanistan on Wednesday.

“The troops mistakenly opened fire in Ladin area of Kunduz Province this afternoon injuring two persons. One is 15 years old and the other is 25,” a spokesman with German troops said.

The incident took place in an area where militants often attack the troops, he said.

People learn to use the Internet in Gabon. The Internet is still under the control of the United States, participants at a governance forum said, despite a move by America to loosen its grip over the private corporation that administers the net. —Internet
Malaysia’s Maxis in SE Asia’s biggest IPO

KUALA LUMPUR, 19 Nov—Malaysia’s top mobile operator, Maxis, made a strong return to the bourse on Thursday in Southeast Asia’s biggest ever IPO, worth 3.3 billion dollars.

Maxis Berhad, controlled by reclusive Malaysian tycoon Ananda Krishnan and Saudi Telecom, opened on Bursa Malaysia at a 9.2 percent premium to its 5.00 ringgit (1.49 dollars) reference price.

The opening price of 5.46 ringgit was at the top end of forecasts for Maxis’ return to the stock market, two years after it was taken private and de-listed. “Today’s listing marks another milestone on our bourse — the largest IPO in the history of Southeast Asia and the largest telecomcommunications IPO in Asia-Pacific since 2000,” said Second Finance Minister Ahmad Husni Hanadzialah.

Ahmad Husni said that at 5.00 ringgit per share, Maxis’ market capitalisation stands at 37.5 billion ringgit, expanding the capitalisation of the nation’s bourse by 4.0 percent.

“The offering was met with strong demand from international and Malaysian investors,” he said at the launch ceremony.

“On the global front, the return of Maxis has attracted the attention of the international investment community to the Malaysian equity market.”

Maxis Berhad said earlier this month it had raised 11.2 billion ringgit (3.3 billion dollars) in the IPO. It offered 2.25 billion, or 30 percent, of its shares and the majority were taken up by institutional investors. —Internet

China electrical appliances retailer Gome expects better profit

BEIJING, 19 Nov—Gome Electrical Appliances Holdings Ltd said its expected better full year numbers and would open more outlets next year, as the electronics retailer continued to benefit from its store restructuring plan and various other cost control measures, China Daily reported on Thursday.

GM must pay debt, make money before IPO

WASHINGTON, 19 Nov—General Motors (GM.U) should focus on making money and repaying US Treasury loans before turning to public markets to sell the taxpayer’s stake in the automaker, a senior government official said.

Ron Bloom, head of the Obama administration’s auto task force, nevertheless told Reuters that an initial public offering could come as soon as the fourth quarter of 2010 if the automaker meets its recovery targets and the financial markets are receptive.

Bloom said the government had previously expressed concerns about GM operations but now trusts the directors and management to do what is best for shareholders.

“We’re done. We’re not saying what we think anymore,” Bloom said of the more passive role assumed by the administration since GM’s bankruptcy.

Ensuring corporate independence at GM and Fiat-led (FIA.MI) Chrysler includes accepting decisions that may surprise the government or diverge from government goals, such as production of electric vehicles.

Bloom said the administration was caught off guard when GM decided this month to keep its European Opel unit rather than sell a majority stake to a Russian-backed group led by Canadian auto parts maker Magna International (MGa.TO).

The former investment banker and senior executive of the United Steelworkers union said the GM board, which the task force helped create, is as good as any globally and the decision on Opel was never challenged by the administration. —Internet

Singapore declares its recession over

SINGAPORE, 19 Nov—Singapore on Thursday declared a severe recession over as data showed its economy grew for the second straight quarter in the three months to September.

Official data released on Thursday showed gross domestic product (GDP) expanded 14.2 percent in the July-September period on a quarter-on-quarter annualised basis following a 21.7 percent surge in the previous quarter.

“Effectively, the recession in Singapore is over,” Ravi Menon, permanent secretary with the Ministry of Trade and Industry (MTI), said at a media briefing.

“Economies around the world are now turning the corner... Singapore has benefited from these global and regional trends.”

Year-on-year, Singapore’s GDP grew 0.6 percent in the third quarter compared with a 3.3 percent contraction in the April-June period, the MTI said in its third-quarter economic survey.

The 0.6 percent annual growth in the July-September period was the economy’s first positive showing since the third quarter of 2008, when the city-state slid into a recession. —Internet

Aetna says cutting roughly 1,250 jobs

NEW YORK, 19 Nov—Aetna Inc (AET.N) on Wednesday said it expects to eliminate roughly 1,250 jobs by the end of March 2010, reflecting weak economic conditions and the potential impact of health care reform.

The third-largest US health insurer said it is cutting about 625 jobs now, and expects to make a similar number of cuts by the end of the first quarter. Such cuts would reflect about 3.5 percent of its 35,500-person work-force.

Aetna also said it expects to merge some field offices, but is not exiting any markets as a result. —Internet

Ireland’s Aer Lingus warns of more job losses

DUBLIN, 19 Nov—Irish airline Aer Lingus warned on Wednesday of more possible job losses if agreement cannot be reached by the end of November over proposed cost cutting measures.

The loss-making airline announced last month it planned to save 97 million euros (143 million dollars) a year by 2011, largely by cutting nearly 700 jobs and staff pay.

Aer Lingus said on Wednesday that more cuts, including compulsory redundancies, could not be ruled out if agreement on the plan was not reached in full with unions and staff when talks conclude on 30 November. If the plan has not been agreed, “the board and management will proceed to implement an alternative means of delivering the savings within the same timeframe set out under the plan.” —Internet

Singapore declares its recession over

SINGAPORE, 19 Nov—Singapore on Thursday declared a severe recession over as data showed its economy grew for the second straight quarter in the three months to September. —Xinhua

The Port of Singapore container terminal. The city state on Thursday declared a severe recession over as data showed its economy grew for the second straight quarter in the three months to September. —Internet

BEIJING, 19 Nov—Gome Electrical Appliances Holdings Ltd said its expected better full year numbers and would open more outlets next year, as the electronics retailer continued to benefit from its store restructuring plan and various other cost control measures, China Daily reported on Thursday.
Disaster Management Exercise for Fiji

Disaster Management Exercise for Fiji officials.

China, Vietnam sign land boundary demarcation agreements

BEIJING, 19 Nov—China and Vietnam signed a package of agreements on the demarcation of their 1,300-kilometer land boundary on Wednesday.

Vice Chinese Foreign Minister Wu Dawei and his Vietnamese counterpart Ho Xuan Son inked these agreements on behalf of the two governments. Chinese Foreign Minister Yang Jiechi attended the signing ceremony. The agreements include a protocol on demarcation of the land boundary, an agreement on land boundary management regime and an agreement on land port and its management regime.

The two vice foreign ministers held talks before the ceremony, during which they agreed to further the coordination and cooperation in land border affairs and work to achieve lasting peace, security and mutual development along the border areas.

Five cyclones to originate from Fiji

SUVA, 19 Nov—Five cyclones will originate in Fiji’s backyard out of the 12 expected to hit the Asia Pacific region in the next two years. This was the shocking revelation made by John Goodman, director of the US Military’s Center for Excellence in Disaster Management and Humanitarian Assistance.

Tour bus rolls over in Minnesota, killing two

WASHINGTON, 19 Nov—A tour bus rolled over in a high way in Minnesota, killing at least two persons and injuring 21 others, said local officials on Wednesday. Minnesota Department of Public Safety spokesman Andy Skoogman told reporters that the crash took place on the Interstate 90 highway in southern Minnesota in the afternoon.

The bus, which was operated by Strain Bus Line Motorcoach Tours, was running eastbound on the highway when it crossed into westbound lanes and then crashed, according to local authorities. Six helicopters have sent all the injured to hospitals nearby. The bus company said that the bus carrying 22 passengers and one driver came from the Diamond Jo Casino in Northwood, Iowa, and was on its way to Rochester.

One injured in blast in Indonesia’s Yogyakarta

JAKARTA, 19 Nov—An explosion occurred at a drug store in Indonesia’s Yogyakarta province on Thursday, one motorcyclist injured, local media reported. The accident took place in Medistra drug store at 08:10 local time (0110 GMT).

A police line is unfurled to block residents entering the scene.

According to a witness, one person that was riding a motorcycle around the area was injured due to the explosion.

One of staffs of a national bank, Puji, who works around 200 meters from the explosion scene, claimed that he had heard a loud explosion with billowing smoke seen right after the incident.

“I was on the third floor (of my office building). The drug store was closed (when it was happened),” Puji told Kompas.com, an online news service.

The intensity of the explosion was felt by patients at Dr Yap Eye Center across the pharmacy.

Suspected Somali pirates stay at the northeastern Somali port town of Bossaso, on 18 Nov, 2009. The Spanish Navy patrolling Somali coast handed over 12 suspected pirates to the local authorities on Wednesday.

China homegrown C919 jets final assembly line settles in Shanghai's Pudong

BEIJING, 19 Nov—Commercial Aircraft Corp of China Ltd (COMAC) has announced that it would set up its C919 airplane final assembly line in Pudong New District of Shanghai. —Xinhua

China, Vietnam sign land boundary demarcation agreements

They also reiterated that the two countries will try to solve the sea issue through diplomatic negotiation. They agreed to jointly maintain peace and stability of the South China Sea and start consultation to formulate the guidelines to solve the sea issue. China and Vietnam signed land boundary treaty in 1999 and set up a joint committee for land border demarcation two years later.
US ship repels pirates with guns and sound blasts

NAIROBI, 19 Nov—Guards aboard the Maersk Alabama used guns and a sound blaster on Wednesday to repel the second pirate attack in seven months on the US vessel at a time when ships are increasingly hiring armed security teams to thwart hijackings.

Despite an increased international flotilla of warships off the Horn of Africa, maritime figures indicate the number of ship boardings has remained about the same in the past year. A US naval commander hailed the ship’s new defences and family members rejoiced at the Maersk Alabama’s escape this time around, but the handling of the attack highlights a growing schism over use of arms on commercial vessels.

The UN’s Maritime Safety Committee says members should “strongly discourage the carrying and use of firearms by seafarers for personal protection or for the protection of a ship.”

The concern is that bringing guns aboard ship will encourage violence. With young and impoverished Somalis increasingly seeking out multimillion-dollar paydays from successful hijackings, ship owners are turning to new tactics, including armed security.

NATO postpones conference on forces for Afghanistan

BRUSSELS, 19 Nov—NATO has delayed a meeting on boosting forces for Afghanistan to take all developments into account, including US President Barack Obama’s decision on his new strategy.

NATO spokesman James Appathurai said on Wednesday at a press briefing that the force generation conference, which is expected on 23 Nov, will take place in two parts. The 23 Nov meeting will go ahead and focus on NATO’s missions except Afghanistan, while the conference concerning Afghanistan will be held in December.

The spokesman gave no specific date, but said it will be held after the meeting of NATO’s foreign ministers on 2-3 Dec.

He also said that he was confident “before the force generation meeting, the United States will make its announcement, not only on troop levels, but very much in a broader context on approach and strategy.”

Venezuela rejects US mediation in dispute with Colombia

CARACAS, 19 Nov—The Venezuelan government rejected on Wednesday a US proposal to mediate in a dispute between Venezuela and Colombia over Colombia’s military cooperation agreement with the United States.

“The mediation proposal has a clear aim of deterring the attention of its primary responsibility in the crisis and it is rude for the people of the world who are aware of it,” the Venezuelan Foreign Ministry said in a statement.

The ministry said that the best way for the United States to collaborate on this issue is to stop intending to make Colombia an operational base for its regional strategy to dominate and control the countries in South America.

Venezuela said that the agreement signed between the United States and Colombia on 30 Oct this year allows a disproportionate military presence of US troops in Colombian territory, and this brings uncertainty to the South American region.

“These arguments (fight against drug trafficking and terrorism) are false and do not dissipate the doubt and questions, with the establishment of equipment for the electronic war, tasks of intelligence, military officers and staff of security contractor companies,” the ministry added.

Malaysia vehicle sales down 5.07%.

KUALA LUMPUR, 19 Nov—Malaysia’s total vehicle sales in the first 10 months contracted by 5.07 per cent, the Malaysian Automotive Association (MAA) said here on Wednesday.

MAA said in a statement that the sales volume for the period this year was 443,711 units as compared to 467,425 units in the corresponding period last year.

MAA also noted that vehicles production in the same period registered a drop of 10.07 percent from 449,988 units in 2008 to 404,681 units this year.

However, MAA said sales volume for November is expected to recover given the continuous favorable market and consumer sentiment, as well as year-end sales campaigns in place.

Lack of sleep may lead to devastating errors

US researchers have linked moderate sleep deprivation to potentially devastating errors.

Todd Maddox and David Schmer, psychology professors at the University of Texas at Austin, found moderate sleep deprivation can lead to an overall immediate short-term loss of information-integration — a process of information categorization that enables people to make accurate, split-second “gut” decisions. “It’s important to understand this domain of procedural learning because information-integration — the fast and accurate strategy — is critical in situations when soldiers need to make split-second decisions about whether a potential target is an enemy soldier, a civilian or one of their own,” Maddox said in a statement.

Comics books get no respect but they should

Critics stop pushing Superman’s cape — comic books can be just as sophisticated as other forms of literature, a US researcher says.

Carol L Tilley, a professor of literature and informatics science at the University of Illinois, says children benefit from reading comics at least as much as they do from reading other types of books.

“A lot of the criticism of comics and comic books comes from people who think that kids are just looking at the pictures and not putting them together with the words,” Tilley said in a statement. “Some kids, yes. But you could easily make some of the same criticisms of picture books — that kids are just looking at pictures, and not at the words.”

IBM reports progress in creating brain-like computer

International Business Machines Corp (IBM) announced that its researchers have made significant progress toward creating a computer system that simulates the way the brain works.

Reporting their results at a supercomputing conference being held in Portland in the US state of Oregon, IBM researchers said they have achieved a simulation with 1 billion neurons and 10 billion synapses using a supercomputer that has 147,456 processors.

Neurons are the key functional elements of the brain and synapses are the connections between them.
Umin Koepauk river water pumping station benefiting agriculture and greening of Chauk Township

**Article: Htein Lin; Photos: Aung Than (Mingala Taungnyunt)**

(from page 1) of the Special Projects Implementation Committee’s Meeting 1/2000.”

In-charge of the project Staff Officer U Kyaw Myint Sein said, “Sale region of Chauk Township is located on the east bank of Ayeyawady River. The station is pumping water from Ayeyawady River to Sale Region. The distance of the water supply area from the station is 860 feet long. The water is pumped to 305 feet high through six steps. The water is pumped to the platform watt pumps and nine tube sets x one 55-kilowatt pump. On the 35 feet high fourth step, the water is irrigated to 1028 acres of farmlands through nine tube sets x four 55-kilowatt pumps.”

With regard to the cultivation task, “The water pumping project benefits 1500 acres of paddy plantation and 6300 acres of other crops. Despite setting the plan to supply water to 300 acres of monsoon paddy in 2002, actualized efforts, the region was able to grow 2502 acres of paddy that year. Paddy plantations covered 2520 acres in 2007-2008 and 3500 acres in 2009-2010,” he continued.

2003, only 132 acres of farmlands could be irrigated. Commencing 2003-2004 cultivation season, the plan was set to grow 1500 acres of monsoon paddy annually, and the sown acreage could be extended year by year. In 2005-2006, a total of 1215 acres of land was put under paddy. In 2006-2007, the plan was adopted to cultivate 1 million acres of monsoon paddy in Magway Division. Therefore, the Sale region extended its targeted sown acreage from 1500 to 3500. Due to concerted efforts, the region was able to grow 2502 acres of paddy that year. Paddy plantations covered 2520 acres in 2007-2008 and 3500 acres in 2009-2010,” he continued.

The Staff Officer added, “The cultivation of summer paddy met the target. The local farmers use high yield Hsinnweyin paddy strain for both monsoon and summer paddy. Thanks to implementation of river water pumping project, the croplands could be reclassified as the farmlands in the region. Due to triple cropping including summer and monsoon paddy acres of land with the use of irrigation water. The lush and green paddy plantations are stretching along the main canal of the pumping station.

The Chairman of the Township PDC and party explained progress of agricultural task. In their clarifications, the farmers can grow crops as well as shady trees and flowery plants as the water pumping project is supplying sufficient water for both agricultural and drinking purposes. Actually, Umin Koepauk river water pumping project is contributing to the greening of the region.

Chairman of Township PDC U Thiha and Township Manager of Myanma Agriculture Service U Khaing Min inspect thriving Hsinnweyin paddy plantations.

The Chairman of Township PDC and party explained progress of agricultural task. In their clarifications, the farmers can grow crops as well as shady trees and flowery plants as the water pumping project is supplying sufficient water for both agricultural and drinking purposes. Actually, Umin Koepauk river water pumping project is contributing to the greening of the region.

Irrigation water flows in five feet wide, four feet deep and 68,900 feet long tributary canal of water pumping station.

Thriving monsoon paddy plantations seen by the canal of Umin Koepauk river water pumping station in Chauk Township.
Commander, ministers attend opening of free eye surgical treatment in Pyapon

Nay Pyi Taw, 19 Nov—Chairman of Ayeyawady Division Peace and Development Council Commander of Coastal Region Command Maj-Gen Khin Zaw Oo inspected road construction on Bok-Daw-Gabin road section on 14 November.

Next, the commander looked into upgrading of the bailey bridge, construction of Myeik-Dawei railroad section, and progress in completion of the entrance to Technological University (Myeik).—MNA

South-West Command Maj-Gen Kyaw Swe, accompanied by Minister for Hotels and Tourism Maj-Gen Soe Naing and Minister for Health Dr Kyaw Myint, Dr Nyi Nyi, Dr. Nyi Nyi, performed surgical treatment. The commander and the ministers attended the opening ceremony of providing surgical treatment to eye patients free of charge, jointly organized by Ministry of Health and Eye From Zion of Israel at the hall of the Pyapon District General Administration Department. The commander, the Israeli Ambassador and Expedition Manager Mr Nati Marcus spoke on the occasion.

Medical Superintendent Dr Nyi Nyi Min, doctors, nurses and staff of Pyapon General Hospital (200-bed) assisted the eye surgical team.

Eye From Zion of Israel will provide modern eye surgical treatment to the Myanmar eye specialists. The team brought Phaco machines, lens pharmaceuticals and medicine equipment from Israel along with them to perform surgical treatment on the patients with cataract complaint and squinted eyes.

The eye specialist team will conduct the surgical treatment at Pyapon General Hospital (200-bed) up to 20 November, at Mandalay Eye, Ear, Nose and Throat Hospital from 23 to 25 November, Yangon Eye Specialist Hospital on 26 November, and will provide training to eye specialists and the trainees of the master’s degree course.

On 15 November evening, Minister Dr Kyaw Myint inspected Kungyangon and Dedaye Township People’s Hospitals.—MNA

Rakhine Fellowship Association (Yangon) to provide scholarships

Yangon, 19 Nov—Yangon Fellowship Association (Yangon) is inviting application to provide scholarships to those who cannot afford to learn university education for 2009-2010 academic year.

The application forms may be available from respective township education officer’s office of Rakhine State, representatives of Rakhine Fellowship Association (Yangon) and Rakhine Fellowship Association (Yangon) office. One may submit the forms to Rakhine Fellowship Association (Yangon) office at No. (115), first floor (right), Thamainbayan Road, Tamway Township, Yangon, not later than 31 January 2010. Those who want to supply scholarship may contact Chairman U Khin Maung Soe (ph: 552126), Vice-Chairmen U Kyaw Yin (ph: 376848, 095126489), U Bo Tin (ph: 095006926), U Myo Swe (ph: 095001180), U Zaw Aye Maung (ph: 095006926), Vice-Chairmen U Kyaw Yin (ph: 376848, 095126489), U Bo Tin (ph: 095006926), U Myo Swe (ph: 095001180), U Zaw Aye Maung (ph: 095006926), and Acting General Secretary U Tha Mya Kyaw (ph: 556221, 095155419).—MNA

TV Guide to be published

Nay Pyi Taw, 19 Nov—TV Guide Volume 1, No. 20 will be in circulation on 20 November.

The guide carries programmes on MTV World Stage through MTV channel, Mrs. World 2009 and Kings TV series through STAR World, football matches of EPL through STAR Sports, seven wonderful places of Greek through Discovery, programmes of MRTV-4 and others.

TV Guide is available for K 500 per copy at City Marts, Sein Gay Har minstores, shopping centres, book shops, and the door-to-door sales of the TV Guide commences in Yangon and Mandalay.

Novel Light Express (Tel: 391186 and 243893) is publishing TV Guide on every Friday.—MNA
Energy Minister inspects laying natural gas pipeline in Twantay Tsp

Minister for Energy Brig-Gen Lun Thi inspects laying of 24-inch diameter natural gas pipelines on Kungyangon-Twantay Twagyiadan section.—SNA

Old students of Shwebo Regional College, Shwebo College to pay respects to faculty members

Yangon, 19 Nov—Old students who pursued education at Shwebo Regional College and Shwebo College from 1977 to 1983 academic years will hold the ceremony to pay respects to faculty members at the building of Shwebo College on 26 December. The faculty members and old students are to attend the ceremony without fail and may contact Professor Daw Tin Aye, Tel: 09-2100177, U Mya Win Aung, Tel: 09-2100058 and 075-21050 and U Chit Ko Ko, Tel: 09-2100143 for more information. Those wishing to make donations may contact U Tin Myint (09-2100831), U Tin Maung Kyi (09-2100053), U Soe Zaw (a) Than Doke (09-2100764), U Tun Tun Oo (09-2100311), Daw Ni Ni Khin (09-2130284), U Thein Win-Daw Khin Mar Kyi (Kyaunkymaung) (09-2450409), U Zaw Win (YeU) (02-70546), U Tin Myint (067-414272), Dr Tun Tun Oo (Mandalay) (09-5153050), Dr Thaung Lin (Mandalay) (02-71861), Daw Moe Moe Win (09-25309), Daw Lin Lin Wa (Mandalay) (02-66817), U Myo Myint Thein (09-2024485), U Win Zaw (a) U Zaw Win (09-5183333), Dr Kyaw Kyaw (Lashio) (082-22402 and 09-5260627), Dr Myint Thaung (Mogok) (086-20279), U Win Myint (Yangon) (09-5200106), U Kyaw Min (Yangon) (09-5311687), U Saw Win Thaung-Daw Myint Myint Win (Yangon) (01-681412), U Myint (Kawlin) (075-42495), U Toe Toe Myint (09-2022949), U Kyaw Min Sein (02-88048) and Daw Chin Kyi (Katha) (075-25142).—MNA

Mandalay Mayor looks into road construction tasks

Nay Pyi Taw, 19 Nov—Chairman of Mandalay City Development Committee Mayor Brig-Gen Phone Zaw Hn inspected the construction of Yangon-Mandalay Highway on 14 November. He also looked into progress of building a bridge beside U Shwe Taung Bridge and construction of reinforced concrete piles, greening of Kandawgyi Region, and nurturing of saplings.—MNA

Nay Pyi Taw-Inter-Ministry Men’s Volleyball Tournament continues

Players vigorously competing in 3rd Nay Pyi Taw Inter-Ministry Men’s Volleyball Tournament.—SNA

Nay Pyi Taw, 19 Nov—The second round matches of the 3rd Nay Pyi Taw Inter-Ministry Men’s Volleyball Tournament continued at the volleyball sports grounds, here, today. Among the spectators were departmental heads, officials and staff families of the respective ministries. In the morning, Ministry of Industry-1 routed Ministry of Rail Transportation 3-0; and Ministry of Home Affairs won over Ministry of Culture 3-0. In the evening, Ministry of Information beat Ministry of Commerce 3-1; and Ministry of Livestock and Fisheries thrashed Ministry of Forestry 3-0.—MNA
**Plane misses runway in east Congo, landing in lava**

The plane was operated by CAA (Compagnie Africaine d’Aviation).

A 2002 volcanic eruption sent lava oozing onto Goma’s runway, truncating it from more than 2 miles (3 kilometers) to less than a mile (1.5 kilometers). Authorities have not removed all of the lava rock.

A cargo plane burst into flames after hitting hardened lava on the airport runway in 2007, killing at least eight.

And in April 2008, a DC-9 rammed into a bustling market after failing to lift off from Goma’s airport, killing at least 40 people, most of them on the ground.

**Suicide bomber kills ten civilians in Afghanistan**

KANDAHAR, 19 Nov—Afghan officials say a suicide bomber targeting an Afghan security forces convoy in the south of the country has killed 10 civilians and wounded another 13.

The deputy police chief of Urugan province, Gulad Khan, says the suicide bomber was on foot and blew himself up in a busy market, before reaching the convoy.

Khan says three of the dead are boys aged between 12 and 14 who were selling shopping bags in the market. He says four of the wounded are in critical condition. Seven shops were also damaged in the Thursday afternoon bombing.

Interior Ministry spokesman Zemari Bashary says a policeman had tried to stop the suicide bomber, who then detonated his explosives. Bashary also said the dead and wounded were civilians.—INTERNET

**Climate change deal must aim to help women**

LONDON, 19 Nov—Women are most at risk from the damaging effects of climate change but are largely ignored in the debate about how to find solutions, the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) said on Wednesday.

In its 2009 state of the world population report, the agency said the world’s poor are the most vulnerable to climate change and the majority of the 1.5 billion people living on 1.0 US dollar a day or less are women.

“Poor women in poor countries are among the hardest hit by climate change, even though they contributed the least to it,” said UNFPA executive director Thoraya Ahmed Obaid. World leaders are due to meet at a UN global warming summit in Copenhagen in December and the UN agency urged them to think about how much women are harmed by climate change and how much they could be engaged in the fight against it.

With the possibility of a climate catastrophe on the horizon, we cannot afford to relegate the world’s 3.4 billion women and girls to the role of victim,” Obid said in a commentary on the report.

**China disagrees to so-called G2, calling for effort to fight protectionism**

BEIJING, 19 Nov—China disagrees to the suggestion of a “Group of Two” (G2), Chinese Premier Wen Jiabao said at a meeting with visiting US President Barack Obama here on Wednesday.

China is still a developing country with a huge population and has a long way to go before it becomes modernized, Wen said, stressing “We must always keep sober-minded over it”.

China pursues the independent foreign policy of peace and will not align with any country or country blocks, Wen said.

“Global issues should be decided by all nations in the world, rather than one or two countries, he added.

“Meanwhile, we believe Sino-U.S. cooperation can play a unique role in advancing the establishment of the new international political and economic order, as well as promoting world peace, stability and prosperity,” Wen said.

**Most Americans do not want A/H1N1 vaccine shot**

WASHINGTON, 19 Nov—A majority of Americans said that they do not want to take A/H1N1 vaccine shot despite the US government’s encour-

agement, according to a poll released on Wednesday.

The survey by CNN and Opinion Research indicated that 55 percent of Americans polled said they don’t want to get the new flu vaccine, while 20 percent said they want to, but have not taken any steps to do so.

Another 14 percent said that they want a shot and also have tried to get it but did not succeed, and only 7 percent have taken the shots.

The major reason why most Americans refuse the flu vaccine, as CNN polling director Keating Holland said, is “the perception that the vaccine has dangerous side effects.”

On the reason why some people did not successfully get shots, Holland said that 5 percent of all polled adults were turned down since they are not in a high-risk group who have priority to take the vaccine, such as pregnant women. Another three percent said they found a facility that ran out of vaccine before they got there.

According to the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), flu had killed nearly 4,000 Americans including 540 children, and infected about 22 million Americans since April.

The White House has released a report, 2009-H1N1 National Preparedness and Response Overview, saying that the United States should make steady progress on developing a safe and effective H1N1 flu vaccine, and adopt a voluntary H1N1 flu shot program available to all Americans.
Navy finds lax behavior aboard sub in collision

GROTON, 19 Nov—The crew of a US submarine made dozens of errors before the vessel collided with an American warship in the Persian Gulf, an accident that exposed lax leadership who tolerated sleeping, slouching and a lack of standards and failure to adequately prepare for navigating the busy Strait of Hormuz.

The Navy Times newspaper first reported the findings Sunday after obtaining a heavily redacted copy of the Navy’s report through a Freedom of Information Act request. A Connecticut newspaper, The Day of New London, made a similar request and reported the findings on Wednesday.

The USS Hartford, a nuclear-powered submarine based in Groton, Conn., collided with the USS New Orleans, a San Diego-based Navy amphibious ship, on 20 March in the narrow, heavily traveled strait at the mouth of the Persian Gulf.

Air pollution at small airports a concern

LOS ANGELES, 19 Nov—Air pollution is well-recognized as a problem at major airports, but air pollution near smaller regional airports may be overlooked, US researchers say.

Suzanne Paulson of the University of California, Los Angeles, and colleagues said smaller regional airports are becoming increasingly important components of global air transport systems.

The study, published in the journal Environmental Science & Technology, suggests that officials should pay closer attention to these overlooked emissions, which could cause health problems for residents. Paulson and colleagues note that scientists have known for years that aircraft emissions from fuel burned during takeoffs and landings can have a serious impact on air quality near major airports.

Don’t use Plavix along with Prilosec

WASHINGTON, 19 Nov—The US Food and Drug Administration is warning patients against using the stomach acid reducer Prilosec with the anti-clotting drug Plavix. FDA officials said new data suggests when patients take both Prilosec (omeprazole) and Plavix (clopidogrel), Plavix’s ability to block platelet aggregation, its anti-clotting effect, might be reduced by about half.

Plavix is used to prevent blood clots that could lead to heart attacks or strokes in at-risk patients, the FDA said. Omeprazole, the active ingredient of Prilosec, is a proton pump inhibitor used to reduce the production of stomach acid and prevent stomach irritation.

The FDA said Plavix does not have anti-clotting effects until it is converted or metabolized into its active form with the help of a liver enzyme. Prilosec blocks that enzyme, thereby reducing the effectiveness of Plavix.

Officials said it’s not known how other medications might interfere with Plavix. But the FDA said other drugs that should not be used with Plavix include Nexium, Tagamet, Diflucan, Nizoral, VPEND, Intolerance, Felbotol, Prozac, Serafem, Symbax, Luvox and Ticlid.

China, Sudan agree on agriculture cooperation

KHARTOUM, 19 Nov—China and Sudan have agreed to further enhance cooperation on agriculture during the visit to Khartoum by Zhou Yongkang, a senior leader of the Communist Party of China (CPC), said sources with the International Department of the CPC Central Committee.

Zhou, a member of the Standing Committee of the CPC Central Committee’s Political Bureau, paid a three-day official goodwill visit to Khartoum from Monday to Wednesday at the invitation of Sudan’s ruling National Congress Party (NCP).

During his visit, Zhou and Sudanese President Omar al-Bashir held talks and agreed to further oil cooperation and tap potentials for cooperation in the agricultural field, the sources said.

Neurosurgeons Alison Wray (L) and Virginia Maizner (C), and anesthetist Andrew Greensmith operate on newly separated twins Trishna and Krishna of Bangladesh in the surgery at the Royal Children’s Hospital in Melbourne in this handout picture taken on 17 Nov, 2009 and made available on 19 Nov, 2009.

Cooling heart patients improves survival

ORLANDO, 19 Nov—Rapidly cooling a person in cardiac arrest may improve the chance of survival without brain damage, researchers in Sweden said.

Dr Maaret Castren of the Karolinska Institute in Stockholm and colleagues at 14 centres across Europe randomly gave 180 patients either standard resuscitation or resuscitation including the use of a battery-powered tool called RhinoChill that introduced coolant through nasal prongs.

The study found 46.7 percent of those cooled survived to hospital discharge versus 31.4 percent of those receiving standard care.

“Our results show that the earlier you can do the cooling, the better,” Castren said in a statement. “When resuscitation efforts were delayed, there was no significant difference in survival.”

16 killed in blast in NW Pakistan’s Peshawar

PESHAWAR, 19 Nov—A suicide bombing killed at least 16 people and injured 36 others in the Pakistan’s northwestern city of Peshawar on Thursday, officials and hospital sources said.

Sixteen bodies and 36 injured were brought to the hospital, Medical Superintendent in main Lady Readings Hospital Sahib Gu told reporters in the hospital premises.

District Coordination Officer Sahibzada Anis said that a suicide bomber wanted to enter the judicial complex on the city’s busy Khyber Road, but the police stopped him for the search.
Panama may build bridge or tunnel across canal

Panama City, 19 Nov—The Panamanian government is planning to build a bridge or a tunnel across the Panama Canal near the Atlantic coast, the Panama Canal Authority (ACP) said on Wednesday.

The authorities will invite bidders for a contract in January. The winning company must analyze and present the feasibility of building a bridge over the Canal or a tunnel across the Canal.

Both alternatives will be studied independently, the ACP said.

“It is estimated that the presentation of the studies will last seven months,” and a committee formed by engineers will be in charge of evaluating the proposals, and it is possible to hire external advisors to guarantee efficiency, the ACP said.

Panama began to modernize the Canal in 2007 and has scheduled to finish its work in 2014 at the latest, to celebrate the 100th anniversary of the Canal. The project will cost about $5.25 billion US dollars.

Oil stays above $79 amid mixed economic signs

KUALA LUMPUR, 19 Nov—Oil prices hovered above $79 a barrel on Thursday in Asia amid mixed signals over the strength of the global economic recovery. Benchmark crude for December delivery was down 18 cents to $79.40 a barrel at midday Singapore time in electronic trading on the New York Mercantile Exchange. The contract was down 18 cents to settle at $79.58 on Wednesday.

Prices were underpinned by US data showing lower crude inventories last week and auto club AAA reporting that more drivers are expected on America’s highways over the upcoming Thanksgiving weekend, suggesting that consumers are more confident in the economy.

Gains, however, were offset by poor economic news stemming from an unexpected drop in US home construction and disappointing forecasts from technology companies.

“The resistance to oil sustaining above the $80 level is very strong. There are signs of economic recovery but so far, the signals have been mixed and the sustainability of the recovery is uncertain,” said Victor Shum, an energy analyst with consultancy Purvin & Gertz in Singapore.

Crude prices have zigzagged around $79 a barrel for more than a month.

Mitsubishi UFJ FG announces profit gains

Tokyo, 19 Nov—Japan’s top bank Mitsubishi UFJ Financial Group (MUFG) announced on Wednesday its first-half net profit for April-September period surged 53.2 percent from a year earlier to 140.95 billion yen (1.6 billion US dollars).

MUFG, which posted losses of 256.9 million yen (2.89 billion US dollars) in net losses in fiscal 2008, cited its gains as well as increased capital gains made through its financial troubles in Asia amid mixed signals over the sustainability of the recovery is uncertain.

However, gains were offset by poor economic news stemming from an unexpected drop in US home construction and disappointing forecasts from technology companies.

The resistance to oil sustaining above the $80 level is very strong. There are signs of economic recovery but so far, the signals have been mixed and the sustainability of the recovery is uncertain,” said Victor Shum, an energy analyst with consultancy Purvin & Gertz in Singapore.

Crude prices have zigzagged around $79 a barrel for more than a month.

Oil stays above $79 amid mixed economic signs

KUALA LUMPUR, 19 Nov—Oil prices hovered above $79 a barrel on Thursday in Asia amid mixed signals over the strength of the global economic recovery. Benchmark crude for December delivery was down 18 cents to $79.40 a barrel at midday Singapore time in electronic trading on the New York Mercantile Exchange. The contract was down 18 cents to settle at $79.58 on Wednesday.

Prices were underpinned by US data showing lower crude inventories last week and auto club AAA reporting that more drivers are expected on America’s highways over the upcoming Thanksgiving weekend, suggesting that consumers are more confident in the economy.

Gains, however, were offset by poor economic news stemming from an unexpected drop in US home construction and disappointing forecasts from technology companies.

“The resistance to oil sustaining above the $80 level is very strong. There are signs of economic recovery but so far, the signals have been mixed and the sustainability of the recovery is uncertain,” said Victor Shum, an energy analyst with consultancy Purvin & Gertz in Singapore.

Crude prices have zigzagged around $79 a barrel for more than a month.

Mitsubishi UFJ FG announces profit gains

Tokyo, 19 Nov—Japan’s top bank Mitsubishi UFJ Financial Group (MUFG) announced on Wednesday its first-half net profit for April-September period surged 53.2 percent from a year earlier to 140.95 billion yen (1.6 billion US dollars).

MUFG, which posted losses of 256.9 million yen (2.89 billion US dollars) in net losses in fiscal 2008, cited its gains as well as increased capital gains made through its financial troubles in Asia amid mixed signals over the sustainability of the recovery is uncertain.

However, gains were offset by poor economic news stemming from an unexpected drop in US home construction and disappointing forecasts from technology companies.

The resistance to oil sustaining above the $80 level is very strong. There are signs of economic recovery but so far, the signals have been mixed and the sustainability of the recovery is uncertain,” said Victor Shum, an energy analyst with consultancy Purvin & Gertz in Singapore.

Crude prices have zigzagged around $79 a barrel for more than a month.

Oil stays above $79 amid mixed economic signs

KUALA LUMPUR, 19 Nov—Oil prices hovered above $79 a barrel on Thursday in Asia amid mixed signals over the strength of the global economic recovery. Benchmark crude for December delivery was down 18 cents to $79.40 a barrel at midday Singapore time in electronic trading on the New York Mercantile Exchange. The contract was down 18 cents to settle at $79.58 on Wednesday.

Prices were underpinned by US data showing lower crude inventories last week and auto club AAA reporting that more drivers are expected on America’s highways over the upcoming Thanksgiving weekend, suggesting that consumers are more confident in the economy.

Gains, however, were offset by poor economic news stemming from an unexpected drop in US home construction and disappointing forecasts from technology companies.

“The resistance to oil sustaining above the $80 level is very strong. There are signs of economic recovery but so far, the signals have been mixed and the sustainability of the recovery is uncertain,” said Victor Shum, an energy analyst with consultancy Purvin & Gertz in Singapore.

Crude prices have zigzagged around $79 a barrel for more than a month.

Mitsubishi UFJ FG announces profit gains

Tokyo, 19 Nov—Japan’s top bank Mitsubishi UFJ Financial Group (MUFG) announced on Wednesday its first-half net profit for April-September period surged 53.2 percent from a year earlier to 140.95 billion yen (1.6 billion US dollars).

MUFG, which posted losses of 256.9 million yen (2.89 billion US dollars) in net losses in fiscal 2008, cited its gains as well as increased capital gains made through its financial troubles in Asia amid mixed signals over the sustainability of the recovery is uncertain.

However, gains were offset by poor economic news stemming from an unexpected drop in US home construction and disappointing forecasts from technology companies.

The resistance to oil sustaining above the $80 level is very strong. There are signs of economic recovery but so far, the signals have been mixed and the sustainability of the recovery is uncertain,” said Victor Shum, an energy analyst with consultancy Purvin & Gertz in Singapore.

Crude prices have zigzagged around $79 a barrel for more than a month.

Oil stays above $79 amid mixed economic signs

KUALA LUMPUR, 19 Nov—Oil prices hovered above $79 a barrel on Thursday in Asia amid mixed signals over the strength of the global economic recovery. Benchmark crude for December delivery was down 18 cents to $79.40 a barrel at midday Singapore time in electronic trading on the New York Mercantile Exchange. The contract was down 18 cents to settle at $79.58 on Wednesday.

Prices were underpinned by US data showing lower crude inventories last week and auto club AAA reporting that more drivers are expected on America’s highways over the upcoming Thanksgiving weekend, suggesting that consumers are more confident in the economy.

Gains, however, were offset by poor economic news stemming from an unexpected drop in US home construction and disappointing forecasts from technology companies.

“The resistance to oil sustaining above the $80 level is very strong. There are signs of economic recovery but so far, the signals have been mixed and the sustainability of the recovery is uncertain,” said Victor Shum, an energy analyst with consultancy Purvin & Gertz in Singapore.

Crude prices have zigzagged around $79 a barrel for more than a month.
NASA gives Hubble hardware to Smithsonian

WASHINGTON, 19 Nov — NASA has given the Smithsonian National Air and Space Museum two key instruments from the Hubble Space Telescope.

The instruments — the Wide Field and Planetary Camera 2 (WFPC-2) and the Corrective Optics Space Telescope Axial Replacement (COSTAR) — were returned to Earth aboard space shuttle Atlantis in May after more than 15 years in space.

“Down Syndrome could aboard space shuttle Camera 2 (WFPC-2) and Wide Field and Planetary Telescope. the Hubble Space Telescope. NASA has given the Smithsonian National Air and Space Museum two key instruments from the Hubble Space Telescope. The instruments — the Wide Field and Planetary Camera 2 (WFPC-2) and the Corrective Optics Space Telescope Axial Replacement (COSTAR) — were returned to Earth aboard space shuttle Atlantis in May after more than 15 years in space. “This was the camera that saved Hubble,” said Ed Weiler, associate administrator for NASA’s Science Mission Directorate. “I have looked forward to this for a long time to stand in front of this very instrument while on display to the public.” After Hubble’s deployment in 1990, scientists realized the telescope’s primary mirror had a flaw that caused fuzzy images. NASA said Hubble’s first servicing mission in 1993 by space shuttle Endeavour provided the telescope with hardware that acted as eye glasses. The mission added the WFPC-2 and COSTAR. The WFPC-2 provided the optical correction, while COSTAR provided corrections for other Hubble instruments.

Boosting neurotransmitter could reverse Down Syndrome

WASHINGTON, 19 Nov — Boosting a neurotransmitter called norepinephrine in sufferers of Down Syndrome could help reverse the condition, which is the most common cause of mental retardation in children, a study showed Wednesday.

“If you intervene early enough, you will be able to help kids with Down Syndrome to collect and modulate information,” said Ahmad Salehi, the lead author of the study, which was published in Science Translational Medicine. “Theoretically, that could lead to an improvement in cognitive functions in these kids,” he said. Salehi was part of a team of scientists at Stanford University School of Medicine and the Lucile Packard Children’s Hospital in California who used a precursor of norepinephrine to reverse learning deficits in mice with symptoms very close to those seen in humans with Down Syndrome.

Switzerland registers first A/H1N1 flu death

GENEVA, 19 Nov — A Swiss baby has died of A/H1N1 influenza, the first fatality from the virus in the country, the official Swisstone.ch news website reported on Wednesday.

The five-month-old baby boy, who died at the weekend in the canton of Basel Country, had other health conditions, including a cleft lip and palate, a heart problem and a possible immune deficiency, health officials were quoted as saying.

The figure has increased 50 percent compared to A/H1N1 flu within this week. “Tonight we have 81 persons under service of the French influenza surveillance system reported on Wednesday. As many as 410,000 cases were newly registered across the country as the national tally of infections reaches 100 in Iran. Meanwhile, reported in the New Light of Myanamar, the PPFK added that South Korea, with a population of 48.3 million people, ranked 26th in terms of total population among 186 countries examined. The nation’s population, however, is expected to hit 44.1 million people in 2050, likely to rank 41st, if the fertility rate stays at the current level, the organization said. — Xinhu
**Sports**

Greece edge Ukraine to reach World Cup

**DONETSK, 19 Nov**

Greece reached the World Cup finals for the first time since 1994 on Wednesday with a hand-fought 1-0 win over Ukraine in the return leg of their European zone play-off. Panathinaikos striker Dimitris Salpingidis netted the only goal of the match sending Greece, the 2004 European champions, into their second World Cup finals after a 16-year absence.—Internet

Slovenia stuns Russia to reach World Cup

**MARIBOR, 19 Nov** — Slovenia qualified for only their second World Cup on Wednesday with a 1-0 win over nine-man Russia in their European zone, second-leg play-off tie.

Striker Zlatko Dedic, who plays his club football 150 kilometres from the capital Ljubljana, scored and conceded the lone goal as Slovenia beat the World Cup semi-finalists Portugal through to the World Cup finals the 39 minutes to give Algeria their first World Cup in 24 years after edging Egypt 1-0 in the World Cup African zone playoff on Wednesday.

Defender Antar Yahya hit a volley in off the underside of the crossbar on 39 minutes to give Algeria victory. The match was played in Khartoum, Sudan, after the two teams finished their group matches level on points and having scored and conceded the same number of goals.—Internet

France advance to World Cup finals

**PARIS, 19 Nov** — France qualified for the World Cup finals after a controversial 1-1 draw in a playoff second-leg match with Ireland on Wednesday.

In the European zone match, France qualified for their fourth straight World Cup finals after collecting 1-0 to qualify for the World Cup. Internet

Meireles seals World Cup qualification for Portugal

**ZENICA, (Bosnia-Hercegovina), 19 Nov** — A second-half strike by Raul Meireles was enough to break Bosnian hearts and send 2006 semi-finalists Portugal through to the World Cup finals on Wednesday.

The Portuguese, once again without the injured Cristiano Ronaldo, had won a hard-fought first leg 1-0 courtesy of a close-range header by Bruno Alves on Saturday and again had to be on their mettle before Meireles’ effort ensured their place at next summer’s showpiece in South Africa.

Despite enjoying the lion’s share of possession in the opening period on a heavy pitch the Bosnians failed to carve out any clear chances as the Portuguese sat back hoping to catch their hosts on the counter in their European zone play-off second leg.—Internet

Spain soars, Germany stutters in friendly action

**PARIS, 19 Nov** — Spain underscored their status as World Cup favourites on Wednesday by swatting Austria 5-1 away in an international friendly encounter, David Villa twice on target.

But three-times winners Germany, who Spain beat in the final of Euro 2008, had to rely on a last-gap goal from Lukas Podolski to secure a 2-2 home draw with Ivory Coast.

Reigning world champions Italy saw a second string side come through 1-0 at home to a Sweden team missing star player Zlatan Ibrahimovic with central defender Giorgio Chiellini netting in Cesena.

While Portugal were coming through their LPGA Championship moves to Locust Hill in New York

**ROCHESTER, 19 Nov** — The LPGA Championship will be held at Locust Hill golf course in suburban Rochester for one year next June, with supermarket chain Wegmans replacing McDonald’s as sponsor of the season’s second major.

The recession-pinched LPGA Tour is shrinking to 24 tournaments in 2010, down from 27 this year and 34 in 2008. With 13 events in the United States, it’s the smallest tour schedule in nearly 40 years.—Internet

Spain’s Pablo Hernandez celebrates his goal during the friendly match between Austria and Spain at Ernst Happel stadium in Vienna.—Internet

Algeria’s Samir Zouari (L) fights for the ball with Egypt’s Ahmed Aboutrika during their World Cup 2010 qualifying soccer match in Khartoum on 18 November, 2009.—Internet

Algeria edge Egypt 1-0 to reach 2010 World Cup

**KHARTOUM, 19 Nov** — Algeria will play their first World Cup in 24 years after edging Egypt 1-0 in the World Cup African zone playoff on Wednesday.

Defender Antar Yahya hit a volley in off the underside of the crossbar on 39 minutes to give Algeria victory. The match was played in Khartoum, Sudan, after the two teams finished their group matches level on points and having scored and conceded the same number of goals.—Internet

Algeria’s Samir Zouari (L) fights for the ball with Egypt’s Ahmed Aboutrika during their World Cup 2010 qualifying soccer match in Khartoum on 18 November, 2009.—Internet

Slovenia’s team celebrate after their World Cup 2010 qualifying play-off second leg soccer match between Slovenia and Russia in Maribor, some 150 kilometres from the capital Ljubljana.

Slovenia won 1-0 and qualified for the WC2010 in South Africa.—Internet

France team celebrate their win against Ireland in their World Cup qualifying playoff return leg match at the Stade de France stadium in Saint Denis near Paris on 18 Nov, 2009.—Internet

Uruguay’s players leave the field at the end of their FIFA World Cup 2010 qualifier match against Costa Rica at Centenario stadium in Montevideo, on 18 November.—Internet

Greece’s Dimitrios Salpingidis reacts after his scoring against Ukraine during their FIFA World Cup 2010 play-off qualification football game in Donetsk. Greece won 1-0 to qualify for the World Cup.—Internet

Portugal’s Pepe and Portugal’s Bruno Alves (top) cheer after winning against Bosnia in their WC2010 play-off football match at Bilino Polje Stadium in Zenica.—Internet
Captain dies and Somali pirates attack again

M ISAIDH, 19 Nov—The captain of a chemical tanker who was shot when his ship was hijacked earlier this week has died, a Somali pirate has said.

The man, who gave his name as Mohamed, confirmed the MV Theresa VIII is now headed for Haradhare with the dead captain on board.

His comments came amid another attack on the US-flagged, Danish-owned container ship MV Maersk Alabama - the ship previously hijacked in April.

Pirates fired automatic weapons on the vessel, which was sailing 350 nautical miles east from the Somali coast.

Private guards from an on-board vessel protection detachment came to the rescue, firing upon and thwarting the attackers in the early-morning exchange.

Aircraft and naval vessels from the EU protection force under the banner of Operation Atalanta are investigating the situation.

The MV Theresa VIII was seized 180 miles northwest of the Seychelles on Monday.— Internet

** WEATHER **

Thursday, 19th November, 2009

Summary of observations recorded at 09:30 hr.

M.S.T. During the past 24 hours, rain or thunder showers have been scattered in upper Sagaing Division, isolated in Kachin, Shan, Chin and Mon States, lower Sagaing, Mandalay, Ayeawaddy and Taninthayi Divisions and weather has been partly cloudy in the remaining States and Divisions. Nighttime temperatures were (3°C) below November average temperatures in Taninthayi Division, (8°C) above November average temperatures in Mandalay Division, (5°C) to (6°C) above November average temperatures in Kachin, Eastern and Southern Shan States, Magway Division, (3°C) to (4°C) above November average temperatures in Chin State, upper Sagaing and Bago Divisions and about November average temperatures the remaining areas. The noteworthy amounts of rainfall recorded were M'gok (0.59) inch, Hinthada (0.47) inch, Kawkh (0.39) inch, Hanaka (0.23) inch. The significant night temperature was Haka (10°C).

Maximum temperature on 18-11-2009 was 96°F. Minimum temperature on 19-11-2009 was 69°F. Relative humidity at (09:30) hours MST on 19-11-2009 was 75%. Total sun shine hours on 18-11-2009 was (7.0) hours approx.

Rainfall on 19-11-2009 was (Nil) at Mingaladon, Kaba-Aye and Central Yangon. Total rainfall since 1-1-2009 was (111.06) inches at Mingaladon, (122.09) inches at Kaba-Aye and (129.41) inches at Central Yangon. Maximum wind speed at Yangon (Kaba-Aye) was (6) mph from North-east at (15:30) hours MST on 18-11-2009.

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

Forecast valid until evening of 20th November 2009:

Rain or thunder showers are likely to be isolated in Kachin, Shan, Chin, Mon and Rakhine States, Sagaing, Mandalay, Ayeawaddy and Taninthayi Divisions and weather will be partly cloudy in the remaining States and Divisions. Degree of certainty is (65%).

State of the sea: Strong easterly wind with moderate to rough sea are likely at times Delticac, Gulf of Mottama, off and along Mon-Taninthayi Coast. Surface wind speed in the strong wind may reach (35) m.p.h. Seas will be moderate elsewhere in Myan mar waters.

Outlook: For subsequent two days: Continuation of likelihood of isolated light rain in the Northern Myanmar areas.


Only with stability and peace will the nation develop
Only with stability and peace will democratization process be successful

Anarchy begets anarchy, not democracy
Riots beget riots, not democracy
Democracy can be introduced only through constitution

People’s Desire
- We favour peace and stability
- We favour development
- We oppose unrest and violence
- Wipe out those inciting unrest and violence

VOA, BBC-sowing hatred among the people
RFA, DVB-generating public outrage
Do not allow ourselves to be swayed
By broadcasts designed to cause troubles

Minkyaung Bridge on Rakhine coastal road for development of Rakhine State

Roads and bridges were constructed to pursue regional development and reduce the gap in living standards of all parts of the nation at the same time. Minkyaung Bridge with 2704.2 ft length on Maei-Kyaukpyu Road Section in Yanbye Township, Rakhine State, was inaugurated on 17 April 2006.

It connects the north and south of Rakhine State for smooth communication of dwellers from Kyaukpyu-Yanbye region.

So, residents of Kyaukpyu, Yanbye and islands who depended mainly on the waterway all the time in the past can now travel by road.

The superior road networks can contribute to regional development and enhanced economic status, improving knowledge of the locals. They can also enhance relations between the national races, forging the Union Spirit of the public.

The dream of Rakhine State becomes true with the boom in agriculture thanks to the emergence of major roads.

Translation: HKA
Myanma Alin (19-11-09)