Chairman of State Peace and Development Council sends message of felicitations to Uzbekistan

YANGON, 1 Sept — 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 Islam Karimov, President of the Republic of Uzbekistan, on the occasion of the Independence Day of the Republic of Uzbekistan which falls on 1st September, 2003. — MNA

PM General Khin Nyunt attends meeting on all-year round greening of 30-mile perimeter of Yangon

YANGON, 31 Aug — A coordination meeting on cultivation of paddy and other crops for all-year round greening of 30-mile perimeter of Yangon was held at Zeya Thin Beikman in Konmyinttha at noon today, attended by Prime Minister General Khin Nyunt.

Also present on the occasion were Chairman of Yangon Division Peace and Development Council Commander of Yangon Command Maj-Gen Myint Swe, the ministers, the Yangon mayor, the deputy ministers, the vice-mayor, officials of the State Peace and Development Council Office, heads of department, the Chairmen of District Peace and Development Councils in Yangon Division and officials.

Prime Minister General Khin Nyunt said plans for greening of 30-mile perimeter of Yangon based on agriculture are being implemented in accord with the guidance of Head of State Senior General Than Shwe. He said the tasks are being undertaken under the leadership of the commander of Yangon Command. Tasks to be done in the rainy season and open season were laid down, he added. He said the ministries concerned are to take part in the tasks in the respective sectors with added momentum.

He said the project for cultivation of paddy and other crops for all-year round greening of 30-mile perimeter of Yangon City is very useful to Yangon Division especially cultivation of paddy in the division. For this purpose, it is necessary to carry out renovation of only the existing canals and sluice gates. By doing so, the project, like Thaphaniseik, Khabaung and Yenwe Dams, will be beneficial to a great deal of acres of farmland, he said.

He said canals, sluice gates and small dams are to be built in some areas and this does not cost much. They will benefit over 400,000 acres of farmland in a short time, he added. He said the project benefits not only Yangon Division but also the State, adding that the Head of State gave guidance on speedy implementation of the project for the people to enjoy better results as early as possible. (See page 9)

Ten main crops of the State as well as kitchen crops have been thriving in Mandalay Division

Lt-Gen Ye Myint attends opening of Thinpon Dam in Mahlaing Township, Mandalay Division

YANGON, 31 Aug — The opening ceremony of Thinpon Dam in Mahlaing Township in Meiktila District, Mandalay Division, was held at the dam this morning, attended by Member of the State Peace and Development Council Lt-Gen Ye Myint.

It was also attended by Chairman of the Mandalay Division Peace and Development Council Commander of the Central Command Maj-Gen Ye Myint, Minister for Agriculture and Irrigation Maj-Gen Nyunt Tin, senior military officers of the Central Command, officials of the State Peace and Development Council Office and departmental officials, Chairman of Meiktila District Peace and Development Council Lt-CoI Myo Myint and members, members of Mahlaing Township Peace and Development Council and social organizations, students and locals numbering over 7,000.

First, Lt-Gen Ye Myint made an opening address. He said that the Thinpon Dam opened today is near Bisaiyon Village in Mahlaing Township. The storage capacity of the dam is great as it will help fulfill water to Taungpalu Dam. That is why it will benefit 6,700 acres of farmland in irrigated areas of Taungpalu Dam. Thinpon Dam opened in 1999 was constructed with the aim of feeding water to each other between itself and Taungpalu Dam. Thus, Thabyeeyoe Dam will surely benefit both Thabyeeyoe Dam and Taungpalu Dam.

Mhaing, Wundwin, Nahtoogyi and Taungtha Townships are in the arid zone, where water is scarce, as they have scanty rainfall of about 20 inches. That is why dams are being built and available water resources are being tapped for agricultural purpose and for human consumption. There are Fozmakyi Dam, Kyintha Dam, Zdaw Dam, Thabyeeyoe Dam, Taungtha Dam and Welaung Dam in the region in addition to Thinpon Dam. Since the new dams have been built near the old ones, they will contribute to the extended cultivation of paddy and other crops and double cropping.

Thinpon Dam is the 38 of its kind in Mandalay Division. The dams could benefit over 300,000 acres of farmland in the region. Dam, diversion wells and river water pumping projects are being implemented. (See page 7)
Projects to bridge the development gap among national brethren

The State Peace and Development Council is endeavoring in all aspects for the peaceful, modern and developed State with the aim of transforming the nation into one where the level of development of the country is comparable to those in the international community; where our national economy will be strong; and where the people will enjoy a high standard of living.

The nation will only be peaceful and tranquil if there is national unity. Likewise, it is only when there is a peaceful environment can there be development of the basic infrastructure for national development. Therefore, the government has been systematically striving for national reconsolidation, peace and tranquility and prevalence of law and order as the first priority task.

At present, the government has already spent 45,762.87 million kyats and over 506 million dollars to build the infrastructures aiming at the development of national races in the border areas.

The government has constructed 151 dams and 265 river water pumping projects for the development of the agriculture sector. Therefore, the targeted output of 1,000 million baskets is realized compared with the yield of only 654 million baskets a year in 1988.

Similarly in the livestock and fisheries sector, production of fish and prawn in 1988 was only 681,000 tons. However, this has increased to 1,579,000 tons in 2003. With regard to the Industrial Sector, the number of state- and private-owned factories increased from 27,430 in 1988 to 51,980 at present and 18 industrial zones have emerged.

Turning to the Education Sector in 1988, the number of basic education schools was 32,311 and the number has increased to 40,049. Similarly, the number of universities and colleges has increased from 32 in 1988 to 154 at present.

Turning to the Health Sector, there were only 617 hospitals and four Institutes of Medicine in 1988, the number has increased to 757 hospitals. Altogether 114 hospitals were upgraded. Today, there are 14 Institutes of Medicine have been opened so far.

In 1988, there were only 461 roads in the country with a total length of 13,600 road miles and only two major bridges namely the Sagaing Bridge and Sittoung Bridge. At present, 55 new roads measuring nearly 2000 road miles have been constructed.

These may be seen as only a few out of many projects that have been implemented. A lot more are being implemented or under the planning stage. In many cases the projects are not designed to gain profits but to serve the interests of the national brethren residing in different parts of the nation. All the projects are aimed at, in one way or another, to bridge the gap of development between one region and another.

Through active and whole-hearted cooperation of the entire people in the implementation of on-going projects the desired goal of the peaceful, modern and developed nation will be achieved.

**Yangon, 31 Aug —**

Minister for Construction Maj-Gen Saw Tun this morning inspected maintenance of the No 2 Highway and Yangon-Bago highway in the rainy season.

Next, the minister and officials proceeded to Kwinchaung Bridge being constructed by Construction Group 1 at mile-post 1300 on Yangon-Mandalay Highway where officials concerned reported on progress of work.

Kwinchaung Bridge is 300 feet long and 48 feet wide. It comprises 6-foot-wide walkways on either side and can withstand 60 tons of load.

**Tatmadaw families, wellwishers donate provisions to Pariyatti Sarthintaiks in three townships**

**Secretary-2 Lt-Gen Thein Sein presents provisions to a member of the Sangha — MNA**

The Tatmadaw families, wellwishers and Tatmadaw families, wellwishers donate provisions to the Pariyatti Sarthintaiks in three townships.

**Secretary-2 Lt-Gen Thein Sein presents provisions to a member of the Sangha — MNA**

**YANGON, 31 Aug —**

Families of Defence Services (Army, Navy and Air) and wellwishers donated rice, edible oil, salt, gram and cash to Pariyatti Sarthintaiks in Ahlon Township, Yangon West District, Ahlon Township, Yangon West District at the Sangha Pitaka Sayadaw’s birthday. Today’s donation was aimed at helping the development of the basic infrastructures in the border areas. In many cases the projects are not designed to gain profits but to serve the interests of the national brethren residing in different parts of the nation. All the projects are aimed at, in one way or another, to bridge the gap of development between one region and another.

Through active and whole-hearted cooperation of the entire people in the implementation of on-going projects the desired goal of the peaceful, modern and developed nation will be achieved.
Fischer says Iraq needs UN force, clear timetable

BERLIN, 31 Aug — German Foreign Minister Joschka Fischer said in remarks published on Friday that the United Nations should be given a leading role in Iraq with a clear timetable for the return of sovereignty to the Iraqi people.

Fischer told Handelsblatt newspaper that Germany, which opposed the US-led war on Iraq, favoured a UN-led process along the lines of that set out for Afghanistan.

“It must be clear that it concerns the liberation and return of Iraqi sovereignty according to an agreed timetable and an agreed course of action,” Fischer said.

He added that the success of any such plan would depend on whether foreign soldiers were viewed as occupiers or liberators.

The United States, facing increasing guerrilla attacks on its troops in Iraq, has opened up the possibility of the United Nations sponsoring a multinational force of peacekeepers to Iraq, albeit subordinate to US military commanders.

Fischer said authorities must be returned to Iraqi control as quickly as possible and that Islamic nations must be bound into the stabilization process.

EU steps up attack on Australia food import rules

BRUSSELS, 31 Aug — The European Union said on Friday it was taking further its trade battle to get Australia to change its quarantine laws, which Brussels says unfairly block agricultural imports.

Its decision comes on top of a challenge by Aus- tralia of the EU’s heavy sub-sidies for sugar producers and other differences over agricultural trade in the run up to a key World Trade Organization (WTO) meet- ing in Mexico next month.

EU Trade Commis- sioner Pascal Lamy said the EU had now formally re- quested the setting up of a WTO panel to rule on the dispute after an initial period of negotiations to solve it failed.

“The EU will continue to use WTO procedures to ensure that Australia lives up to its legal obligations and to its own rhetoric on open trade in agriculture,” Lamy said. — MNA/Reuters

Bangkok to host second Int’l Film Festival next year

BANGKOK, 31 Aug — The 2004 Bangkok International Film Festival is scheduled to kick off in January next year.

Juthamas Siriwon, the governor of the Tourism Authority of Thailand (TAT) was quoted by Thai News Agency as saying the upcoming 12-day event will feature about 150 distinguished local and international movies. Highlights of the event include competition in nine categories of the films, and presentation of the Golden Kimpace Awards.

The first Bangkok International Film Festival was proved very successful last year, said Juthamas.

It attracted more than 200,000 attendees and helped promote Thailand as a shooting location to foreign filmmakers, said Juthamas. — MNA/Xinhua

Study suggests mercury in fish may be less toxic

WASHINGTON, 31 Aug — The mercury that builds up in the flesh of fish may be less dangerous than people feared, scientists said on Thursday. The finding by the researchers, which may come as good news to pregnant women and others who have eaten fish, indicated the structure of the mercury molecules may make them less toxic to people, though they stressed more study is needed.

“There may be reason for cautious optimism,” Graham George, who did the work at the Stanford University Syn- chrotron Radiation Labora- tory in Menlo Park, Califor- nia, said in a statement.

The mercury in fish may not be as toxic as many peo- ple think — but there is a lot we need to find out before we can make this conclu- sion,” added George, now at the University of Saskatch- ewan in Saskatoon, Canada.

Mercury is a potent neu- rotoxin that is especially harmful to developing fe- tuses and can cause sensory loss, tremors, loss of muscu- lar coordination, speech, hearing, and visual problems, as well as increased risk of heart attack.

A metal, it can build up in tissues. It gets into the envi- ronment when toxic waste is burned and the mercury molecules fall from the smoke onto the ground and into water. There it builds up in the bodies of animals that eat contaminated plants and drink contaminated water.

Predatory fish, such as tuna, swordfish and lake bream, are especially likely to have high levels of mercury in their flesh. For this rea- son, the US Government ad- vises pregnant women to limit how much they eat.

But an important factor is what the mercury, a reactive element, binds with and environmental toxicology experiments have presumed it is methylated — tied up with carbon and hydrogen atoms. But George and col- leagues report in this week’s edition of the journal Science that the mercury in fish is actually attached to both a carbon atom and a sulphur atom.

And since sulphur at- taches more tightly to others elements than methyl groups do — it is possible that would make the mercury less likely to be metabolized, or taken up, by the body.

MNA/Reuters

Chirac says Iraq power transfer must start now

PARIS, 31 Aug — French President Jacques Chirac urged the United States on Friday to begin transferring power to an Iraqi provisional government, saying it was a precondition for international help in rebuilding the country.

“The transfer of power and sovereignty to Iraqis them- selves is the only realistic option. It must be implemented immediately in the framework of a process which only the United Nations can fully legitimize, backed by countries in the region,” he said.

“Once this framework is established, the international community can bring full and efficient support to the coun- try’s reconstruction, in a way that should be determined with the Iraqis themselves,” he told a meeting of French diplo- mats. France, the staunchest opponent of the Iraq war, called this week for a UN Security Council resolution setting elections for a constituent assembly by the end of this year.

It has rebuffed US efforts to get back-up for its troops in Iraq, calling for a truly international force with a mandate from the Security Council, where France holds a veto.

US Deputy Secretary of State Richard Armitage said in an interview released on Wednesday that Washington might accept a UN force if the commander was an American.

Even if that stance became US policy, it may fall short of French requirements.—MNA/Reuters

Bangkok, 31 Aug — It is very likely that the Thai economy this year will grow 6 per cent as earlier projected by the government, according to the National Economic and Social Development Board (NESDB) Friday.

NESDB Secretary-General Chakramon Phasukavinich said the central bank reported that the overall economy continued to grow along with the export sector.

Thailand had previously voiced concern the country’s exports would grow at a slower pace in the second half of this year. But in July, the exports continued to enjoy a two-digit growth rate. The central bank had planned to raise this year’s economic growth estimate to 6 per cent as projected by the government, he said.

The plan to revise the growth projection upward was made because the economy grew more than 5 per cent in the second quarter despite the impact of the epidemic of severe acute respiratory syndrome (SARS) and the Iraq war.

“The export sector enjoyed considerable growth in the first half of this year, and the expansion is expected to continue in the second half. For this reason, we will raise our economic growth estimate to 6 per cent from 4.5-5.5 per cent,” he added. — MNA/Xinhua

Thai economy to grow 6% in 2003

Police detained an anti-war protester who shouted slogans outside the US Embassy in Ankara, Turkey, on 29 August, 2003. The Turkish government is considering sending peacekeepers to Iraq, but many Turks oppose the deployment. —INTERNET

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Scientists say youngest in class face stress challenges

LONDON, 31 Aug — The youngest children in any school year face more stress than their older peers and are at greater risk of developing mental illness, scientists have found.

A survey of more than 10,000 children in Britain between the ages of five and 15 showed that regardless of when their school year began, if they were the youngest in the class they faced greater stress.

“It is not a huge stress like family problems, trauma or being in an accident. But it is a moderate stress and, given that it applies to a lot of kids, it is a serious health threat,” research leader Robert Goodman told Reuters.

Goodman and his team at the Department of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry at King’s College London said the study stripped away seasonal factors that can cause stress, clearly exposing the school year effect.

In England and Wales the oldest children in the school year are born in September, with the youngest in August — the middle of the Northern Hemisphere summer.

By contrast in Scotland the oldest are born in March and the youngest in February — the start of spring.

But there were no significant differences in the findings between the different school years.

“They are sufficiently far apart to strip away any seasonal effects, we have been able to rule that out,” Goodman said.

The study, published in the British Medical Journal, involved questions to children, parents and teachers covering all aspects from their emotions to social behaviour and peer relations.

It found a greater incidence of mental health problems among the school year youngesters than among their older colleagues.

“[Youngest children] were more likely to miss school,” Goodman said.

David Hill takes over as Blair’s media aide

LOndon, 31 Aug — David Hill, named as Prime Minister Tony Blair’s top media handler on Friday, is seen as a straight-talking who could help his boss overcome ongoing communications chief Alastair Campbell’s reputation for spin.

Blair’s office said Hill, a former chief spokesman for Blair’s Labour Party, would take over a communications office that will be reorganized to change the way the government deals with the media. It gave no firm date for Hill’s start.

“Hill finds it almost pathologically impossible to deceive or dissemble,” former Labour Party deputy leader Roy Hattersley, Hill’s boss for 20 years, wrote in the Guardian newspaper earlier this month amid speculation Campbell would quit.

“That is why he is the right man to re-establish a relationship of trust between Downing Street and the Press and, in consequence, between Downing Street and the general public.”

A bespectacled, balding 55-year-old with a grey moustache, Hill was Labour’s director of communications and then chief spokesman between 1991-97 and helped the party win a historic landslide behind Blair at the 1997 general election.

He left to run a private public relations firm, but returned briefly to help Blair win a second term in 2001. He has retained close relations with the Prime Minister’s circle, and his wife Hilary Coffman works in Blair’s Downing Street Press Office.

MNA/Reuters

China spends $85.4b on western development strategy

XI’AN, 31 Aug — China has spent over 700 billion yuan (about 85.4 billion US dollars) on the development strategy for its western region, said Chinese official here on Friday.

A host of major infrastructure projects, including the huge Qinghai-Tibet Railway on the “roof of the world” and the west-east natural gas pipeline project, have been launched, said Wang Zhibao, deputy director of the Office of the Leading Group under the State Council for the Development of the Western Regions.

China’s central government funding, 36 major projects have been launched in the western region at a cost of over 600 billion yuan from 2000 to 2002. This year, the central government plans to spend 130 billion yuan on 14 projects.

Wang said, during a summit by Chinese financial experts and private entrepreneurs held in Xi’an, capital of northwest China’s Shaanxi Province.

The western regions on the development list consist of 11 provinces and autonomous regions as well as a municipality, which have a total area of 6.35 million square kilometres and a population of 364 million.

The average per capita GDP in the western region, however, is only about 40 per cent of the more developed eastern coastal regions. China launched the western development campaign in 1999.

MNA/Xinhua

Uncertainty reigns for WNC unit in Iraq

Baghdad, 31 Aug — Riding three abreast, a roof-mounted machine gun at their fingertips, soldiers of the 210th North Carolina National Guard unit work in shifts patrolling the streets of Bagdad, a city of nearly four million people.

They wear bulletproof vests and heavy metal helmets and carry assault rifles while looking for looters and terrorists in what has become one of the war’s deadlest jobs.

On streets they help patrol, two US soldiers last week died in separate attacks where homemade bombs were tossed at their vehicles. A British soldier died Wednesday during a mob attack on his convoy.

“We go down the street and we see all of these Iraqis,” the 210th’s Sgt. Brian Bishop wrote to his wife in a recent letter. “We wonder who hates us and which ones hate us and which ones like us.”

Members of the unit based out of Sylva, Franklin and Murphy arrived in July and do not yet know when they will come home. Through letters, phone calls and one soldier’s account after his emergency return home, the soldiers have detailed daily events in Iraq, the dangers they face and how the war is changing their outlook on life.

Much of their time is spent in Humvees, driven over scorching pavement while the guardsmen scan the road for the homemade bombs and artillery shells rigged to explode under the weight of vehicles.

The devices are the latest danger in what has become an urban war, said Sgt Jamie Ashe, home on emergency leave because of complications with his wife’s pregnancy.

“Such a bomb earlier this month killed the 210th’s Sgt. Bobby Franklin, who was buried Saturday in the northern Georgia town of Mineral Bluff, where he was serviced by his wife and two children.

The unit has not come under fire so far, Ashe said. But when Saddam’s sons were killed at a residence in Mosul, the streets of Baghdad were filled with gun-toting revelers who fired rounds into the air in celebration.

The 210th has scour ed the city for weeks, holding some 700 identical military medals, leftovers from when Saddam commemorated the Iraqi soldiers who fought in the Gulf War.

When the Carolina sun reaches its peak, daylight is dwindling in Baghdad, and it’s a time for shift change. Soldiers groggy from a day of attempted sleep in 120-degree weather suit up and head out, while sweat-soaked colleagues filter in.
Memorial ceremony held at bombed UN HQs in Baghdad

Baghdad, 31 Aug — About 150 UN staff members, looking still frustrated by the deadly bombing 10 days ago, paid their last tribute to the 22 dead colleagues at the debris on Saturday.

Passionately, both Muslims and Christians gathered at the bombed UN headquarters in northeastern Baghdad, performing prayers for the victims.

As at the site, a Muslim imam stood mumuring, with a group of Muslim workers lined behind him asking for blessings for the souls of the dead.

Close by, a Christian preacher was surrounded by another group of staff-ers, some of whom were wearing the trade mark UN blue caps.

"It's important that we do this here at the Canal Hotel," UN spokeswoman Veronique Taveau said, adding that the ceremony was held Saturday because the bodies of the dead had finally all been released.

"I wish to assure you and the people of Iraq that the United Nations remains engaged in Iraq, in full soli-darity with the Iraqi people in this moment of need," said Ramiro Lopez da Silva, the interim head of the UN mission in Iraq.

The former top envoy, Sergio Vieiro de Mello, was among the 22 killed by the devastating truck bomb attack on August 19, which wounded about 100 others and blew down one of the wings at the UN's Canal Hotel headquarters.

Saturday's mourning was the lastest in a series of funeral and memorial services held in various countries recently.

The ceremony was held one day after another massive car bombing in Iraq's holy city of Najaf. 180 kilometres south of Baghdad, which killed 82, including leading Shi'ite leader Ayatollah Mohammed Baqer al-Hakim.

A UN source said that the deteriorating security in Iraq prompted the world body to reassess the situation and reemployment of the international staff.

About 100 foreign expatriate work-ers have chosen to stay since the bomb-ing, although hundreds of injured and those who suffered from trauma were evacuated on a volunteer basis.

Britain promises probe into Princess Diana’s death

London, 31 Aug — Britain on Friday pledged to hold its first inquiry into the events surrounding the death of Princess Diana in Paris in 1997.

But the coroner charged with investigating the death of the estranged wife of heir-to-the-throne Prince Charles and her friend Dodi Al-Fayed declined to give a date for the investigation.

"In time as the law re-quires there will be inquests into the deaths of both the late Dodi Al-Fayed and the late Diana, Princess of Wales," Surrey coroner Michael Burgess said in a statement.

"But it is premature to outline any arrangements or suggest any dates or timescale."

The inquiry will be the first held in Britain into the Paris road crash that killed Diana, Al-Fayed and their chauffeur Henri Paul on August 31, 1997. A French inquiry held in 1999 found that Paul was drunk at the time of the accident and was driving too fast.

WTO seals deal on cheap drugs for poorer countries

Geneva, 31 Aug — The World Trade Organization (WTO) approved a deal on Saturday to let poorer nations import cheaper generic drugs to fight killer diseases such as AIDS and malaria after days of emotionally charged debate.

The deal plugs a gap in world trade law and allows poorer countries unable to manufacture medicines domestically to override international patents and import cheap generic drugs when they need to.

"The decision that you have just taken is an historic agreement for the WTO," WTO Director-General Supachai Panitchpakdi told member states.

The accord, given a final seal of approval by the WTO's 146-member executive Gen-eral Council on Saturday, waives patents owned by multinational firms that are protected by trade rules.

"I find a special satisfaction in the fact that the decision will be of particular value to the smaller and poorer countries... in Africa and elsewhere," Supachai said.

"It will enable them to make full use of the flexibilities in the WTO intellectual property rules in order to deal with the diseases that ravage their peoples." An im-pressed plea on Friday by African states, who said that thousands were dying from trauma and will provide for an effective manage-ment information system for easy retrieval of information and provision of quality serv-ice delivery.

Shikapwasha thanked the Chinese Emb-assy for its good gesture and pledged to make good use of these donating equip-ment.

Chinese Ambassador to Zambia Peng Keyu said the Department of Immigration under the Ministry of Home Affairs has played a crucial role in ensuring the Chi-nese citizens to come, invest and work in Zambia.

Peng said the Chinese Embassy has al-ways instructed all Chinese people here in Zambia to abide by laws and regulation of Zambia, to run their business legally and live in harmony with local people. He hoped the Immigration Department can provide more facilities for the Chinese people to enter into Zambia.

Ambassador believed through joint ef-forts of the Chinese Embassy and the Depart-ment of Immigration, the Chinese people here will make greater contributions to the development of Zambia.

Due to lack of funds, the China Immi-gration Department has to manually process vast amounts of data pertaining to foreign nationals entering and going out of Zambia as well as those staying in Zambia.

China donates computers to Zambia

Lusaka, 31 Aug — The Chinese Embassy in Zambia has donated 20 sets of computers and printers to Zambia Immigration Department to help it computerize information processing system.

Home Affairs Minister Ronnie Shikapwasha said here Friday at the hand-over ceremony, the donation is very timely and will provide for an effective manage-

People inspect the blast site near the Shrine of Imam Ali, one of Shiai Islam’s holiest shrines in the central city of Najaf, 180 kms south of Baghdad. A car bomb killed at least 82 people, including Iraq’s leading Shi’ite politician, Ayatollah Mohammed Baqer al-Hakim, and wounded more than 200. 100 of which are seriously injured. —INTERNET

Spain evacuates 12,000 in Catalonia fire

Madrid, 31 Aug — Spain evacuated 12,000 people from their homes and camp-sites on Friday as a forest fire broke out in the northeastern region of Catalonia, the regional government said.

The fire, which had burned through 340 hectares (850 acres), had not been controlled by Friday afternoon, but was advancing slowly, a spokesman for the Catalan fire service said.

Fires, sparked on by a Europe-wide heatwave, have scorched hundreds of thou-sands of hectares in Spain, Portugal and France in recent weeks, killing more than 20 people. —INTERNET
Blair’s top aide quits amid Iraq storm

London, 31 Aug — Tony Blair’s top aide and pugnacious media handler Alastair Campbell announced his resignation on Friday in a shock decision that comes after the worst crisis of the British premier’s six-year rule.

Campbell had been expected to quit later this year but the timing of his announcement — while both he and Blair are enmeshed in a high-stakes inquiry into whether Britain hyped the threat posed by Baghdad was “modest”, he believed that only regime change could avert the threat of its development of weapons of mass destruction, a British newspaper revealed.

On the eve of a testimony by Kelly’s widow before a judicial inquiry into her husband’s presumed suicide, The Observer weekly published an article penned by the arms expert on Iraq ahead of the US-led war.

The article was written as part of a major report on Iraq in the weeks leading up to war but one of the reasons it was not published was because Kelly did not want to be revealed as the source, the editor of the report Julie Flint told The Observer.

“Iraq has spent the past 30 years building up an arsenal of weapons of mass destruction,” Kelly wrote.

“Although the current threat presented by Iraq militarily is modest, both in terms of conventional and unconventional weapons, it has never given up its intent to develop and stockpile such weapons for both military and terrorist use.”

He added: “War may now be inevitable. The proportionality and intensity of the conflict will depend on whether regime change or disarmament is the true objective.

“The US, and whoever willingly assists it, should ensure that the force, strength and strategy used is appropriate to the modest threat that Iraq now poses.”

The article continued: “The threat from Iraq’s chemical and biological weapons is, however, unlikely to substantially affect the operational capabilities of US and British troops. Nor is it likely to create massive casualties in adjacent countries.

“Perhaps the real threat from Iraq today comes from covert use of such weapons against troops or by terrorists against civilian targets worldwide... The long-term threat, however, remains Iraq’s development to military maturity of weapons of mass destruction — something that only regime change will avert.”

The Observer said Kelly’s article would be presented as evidence to the inquiry into his death, which enters a fourth week on Monday. — Internet

Three arrested in British port bomb alert

London, 31 Aug — British police said on Saturday they arrested three men, called out the bomb squad and closed the southern port of Dover after discovering a suspect device.

Three men are being held in custody at a station in Kent in connection with terrorism offences,” police in the County of Kent said. “A bomb disposal unit is dealing with the device,” a spokeswoman added.

The port was reopen early on Saturday morning and began the task of clearing the backlog of ships carrying thousands of passengers stranded in the English Channel after the discovery of the device in a car at Dover’s eastern docks.

“The port will be functioning as normal quite soon,” said a Port of Dover Police spokesman.

France reports over 11,000 extra deaths in August heat

Paris, 31 Aug — France recorded 11,435 more deaths than usual in the first two weeks of an August heatwave, leaps pressure on the government in a country that prides itself on having the best health service in the world.

The latest official figures released on Friday far exceed any heatwave deaths recorded in France’s European neighbours and have even forced the cash-strapped government to consider axing a public holiday to fund better services for the elderly.

Pensioners were the worst affected by the longest hot spell in three decades that saw temperatures soar over 40 degrees Celsius (104 Fahrenheit), causing dehydration and hyperthermia.

Iraq’s northern oil pipeline on fire

Baghdad, 31 Aug — Coalition forces and Iraqi firemen were struggling to put out a big fire on an oil pipeline in northern Iraq, two weeks after a major export line was cut by saboteurs.

Sources said it could take several days to extinguish the fire in southwest Kirkuk, the northern oilfield, along the way to Basra, where a major refinery is located.

It was not clear whether the affected section was on the export line or if the fire was a result of sabotage, which has plagued Iraq’s northern oil transfer system.

On August 16, a fire caused by explosion on a major pipeline suspended the oil export to Turkey, reopened only three days before.

Iraqi acting Oil Minister Thamer al-Ghadban claimed that “explosives were used to damage the pipeline” which was laid deep underground.

Two days later, a second fire was spotted a few kilometres from the previous site, further fomenting the effort to reconstruct the country’s oil industry.

Iraq, which hosts the second largest oil reserve in the world, now counts much on the oil revenue to rebuild its collapsed economy and ruined infrastructure.

Blair’s top aide quits amid Iraq storm

London, 31 Aug — Tony Blair’s top aide and pugnacious media handler Alastair Campbell announced his resignation on Friday in a shock decision that comes after the worst crisis of the British premier’s six-year rule.

Campbell had been expected to quit later this year but the timing of his announcement — while both he and Blair are enmeshed in a high-stakes inquiry into whether Britain hyped the threat posed by Baghdad was “modest”, he believed that only regime change could avert the threat of its development of weapons of mass destruction, said British newspaper The Observer. — Internet

On the eve of a testimony by Kelly’s widow before a judicial inquiry into her husband’s presumed suicide, The Observer weekly published an article penned by the arms expert on Iraq ahead of the US-led war.

The article was written as part of a major report on Iraq in the weeks leading up to war but one of the reasons it was not published was because Kelly did not want to be revealed as the source, the editor of the report Julie Flint told The Observer.

“Iraq has spent the past 30 years building up an arsenal of weapons of mass destruction,” Kelly wrote.

“Although the current threat presented by Iraq militarily is modest, both in terms of conventional and unconventional weapons, it has never given up its intent to develop and stockpile such weapons for both military and terrorist use.”

He added: “War may now be inevitable. The proportionality and intensity of the conflict will depend on whether regime change or disarmament is the true objective.

“The US, and whoever willingly assists it, should ensure that the force, strength and strategy used is appropriate to the modest threat that Iraq now poses.”

The article continued: “The threat from Iraq’s chemical and biological weapons is, however, unlikely to substantially affect the operational capabilities of US and British troops. Nor is it likely to create massive casualties in adjacent countries.

“Perhaps the real threat from Iraq today comes from covert use of such weapons against troops or by terrorists against civilian targets worldwide... The long-term threat, however, remains Iraq’s development to military maturity of weapons of mass destruction — something that only regime change will avert.”

The Observer said Kelly’s article would be presented as evidence to the inquiry into his death, which enters a fourth week on Monday. — Internet

Iraq’s northern oil pipeline on fire

Baghdad, 31 Aug — Coalition forces and Iraqi firemen were struggling to put out a big fire on an oil pipeline in northern Iraq, two weeks after a major export line was cut by saboteurs.

Sources said it could take several days to extinguish the fire in southwest Kirkuk, the northern oilfield, along the way to Basra, where a major refinery is located.

It was not clear whether the affected section was on the export line or if the fire was a result of sabotage, which has plagued Iraq’s northern oil transfer system.

On August 16, a fire caused by explosion on a major pipeline suspended the oil export to Turkey, reopened only three days before.

Iraqi acting Oil Minister Thamer al-Ghadban claimed that “explosives were used to damage the pipeline” which was laid deep underground.

Two days later, a second fire was spotted a few kilometres from the previous site, further fomenting the effort to reconstruct the country’s oil industry.

Iraq, which hosts the second largest oil reserve in the world, now counts much on the oil revenue to rebuild its collapsed economy and ruined infrastructure.

Three arrested in British port bomb alert

London, 31 Aug — British police said on Saturday they arrested three men, called out the bomb squad and closed the southern port of Dover after discovering a suspect device.

Three men are being held in custody at a station in Kent in connection with terrorism offences,” police in the County of Kent said. “A bomb disposal unit is dealing with the device,” a spokeswoman added.

The port was reopen early on Saturday morning and began the task of clearing the backlog of ships carrying thousands of passengers stranded in the English Channel after the discovery of the device in a car at Dover’s eastern docks.

“The port will be functioning as normal quite soon,” said a Port of Dover Police spokesman.

France reports over 11,000 extra deaths in August heat

Paris, 31 Aug — France recorded 11,435 more deaths than usual in the first two weeks of an August heatwave, leaps pressure on the government in a country that prides itself on having the best health service in the world.

The latest official figures released on Friday far exceed any heatwave deaths recorded in France’s European neighbours and have even forced the cash-strapped government to consider axing a public holiday to fund better services for the elderly.

Pensioners were the worst affected by the longest hot spell in three decades that saw temperatures soar over 40 degrees Celsius (104 Fahrenheit), causing dehydration and hyperthermia.

The K-159, a Russian nuclear-powered 40-year-old submarine, sank in a fierce storm in the Barents Sea on 30 August, 2003 as it was being towed to the scrapyard, killing at least two of the 10-member crew in a further blow to Russia’s naval prestige and a grim reminder of the environmental risks posed by Russia’s aging submarine fleet.

Sudanese bomb attack in Nigeria

Nigeria, 31 Aug — A bomb attack in a northern Nigerian city killed nine people on Monday.

The police said the attack was launched by members of an Islamic group that has been carrying out periodic bombings in the area.

Sudan wants US to respect international legitimacy

Khartoum, 31 Aug — The Sudanese government called on the United States Administration to respect international legitimacy and refrain from any acts that violate the sovereignty of other states.

The K-159, a Russian nuclear-powered 40-year-old subma
Secretary-1 Lt-Gen Soe Win ...

Next, the Secretary-1 at 9.30 am proceeded to the Ministry of Commerce on Strand Road and met with heads of department and officials under the ministry. At the meeting, Minister for Commerce Brig-Gen Pyi Sone reported on work being carried out by the ministry in accord with the market-oriented system, the four objectives of the ministry, the organizational set-up under the ministry and tasks, export and import policies, border trade, kinds of export and import, cooperations with ASEAN nations, other nations and international organizations to the Secretary-1.

Next, Director General of Directorate of Trade U Nyunt Aye reported on the organizational set-up of departments, appointment of staff, work being carried out, arrangements made for holding the trade fairs at home and abroad and staff welfare.

Afterwards, Director General of Border Trade Department U Nyau Win and Managing Director of Myanmar Agricultural Produce Trading U Min Hla Aung reported on tasks of their departments, appointment of staff, implementation of the targeted projects, export and border trade.

In response to the reports, the Secretary-1 gave instructions. He said that they were at the ministries to know about tasks of the ministries, adding that requirements are to be fulfilled after knowing the objectives of and steps being taken by the ministries.

Private sector has made significant progress in production, service and trade of private economic sector has contributed to economic development of the State.

Thus, the Ministry of Commerce is to make efforts with goodwill for development of trade while striving for enabling the private entrepreneurs to abide by rules and regulations for boosting their work efficiencies.

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Ten main crops of the State...

being implemented one after another in Anyar region (Upper Myanmar) including Mandalay Division with the aim of ensuring greening tasks and of creating favourable weather conditions in addition to the agricultural purpose, he noted. To enable the people in Upper Myanmar to enjoy favourable weather and to make the region green and pleasant, Head of State Senator General Than Shwe has designated the nine-district greening tasks as the national tasks nine years ago and effective measures have been taken for environmental conservation, he added.

Covering 57 townships in Mandalay, Magway and Sagaing Divisions, the nine-district greening project was transformed into the area

Greening project. With the active participation of the people, the Anyar region is now becoming a green and pleasant one. The ten main crops of the State as well as kitchen crops have been thriving in Mandalay Division, making the division to be the one on which the State can rely. Mandalay Division constitutes 12 per cent of the 2002-2003 national economy. The national economy depends to an extent on the rise and fall of Mandalay Division’s economy, he pointed out. He stressed the need for the local farmers to choose quality strains and minimize loss and wastage while making efforts for boosting the per-acre yield with the effective use of water from the dam.

Concerted efforts are to be made for meeting the targets of cultivating over 690,000 acres of mono-season paddy, over 190,000 acres of summer paddy, over 300,000 acres of cotton and 1.5 million acres of tree crops, cooperation with the Mahlaing Township. While available water resources are being tapped for ensuring cultivation of mono-season paddy up to 800,000 acres, lands are being reclaimed as well. The State is making progress in all sectors. Progress has been made in the nation without any foreign assistance.

The government, enlisted the strength of the entire national people, has laid down the national objectives and is implementing them for all round development of the State. Only when concerted and collective efforts are being made with goodwill will the nation develop and can the nation stand tall among the nations of the world. It is known to all that some foreign countries, in cahoots with internal and external destructive elements, are putting pressure on Myanmar resorting to various ways and means. That is why all the national people are to guard against the danger posed by the destructive elements while striving for national development.

In conclusion, he thanked the engineers and staff of Irrigation Department under the Ministry of Agriculture and Irrigation who built the dam and the chairman of Mandalay Division Peace and Development Council and local people who provided necessary assistance for the emergence of the dam, and urged them to conserve for the benefits in the catchment areas of the dam. Delivering his speech, Minister Maj-Gen Nyunt Tin said during the time of our government the projects for the construction of dams, reservoirs and river water-pumping stations are being implemented with added momentum. Now, Thingpon Dam which will benefit the region was built in Mahlaing Township in addition to Ponnakyi Dam and Kyintha Dam. As water is provided for cultivation in order to increase the earnings of farmers, the Thingpon Dam will supply water for irrigation, human consumption and greening the environment. Based on agriculture, efforts have to be made to establish an industrial nation. Now, the people have witnessed development in many sectors all over the country thanks to the correct guidance of the Head of State. The minister said building of Thingpon Dam in Mahlaing Township, Meiktila District, will fully supply water to over 7,600 acres of irrigated acreage of Taungpu Dam. Moreover, as water is provided for cultivation of paddy, maize, grains, beans and pulses, oil crops and other crops. Despite the scarcity of water, agricultural work of this region is thriving due to the efforts of the government.

Local farmers are urged, relying on agriculture, to strive to boost the cultivation of paddy, oil crops and other crops for their local self-sufficiency as well as for export of the surplus. Moreover, responsible officials are to participate in the task in cooperation with local people, he added. Next, Commander Maj-Gen Ye Myint made a speech. On behalf of the local people, Daw Win Thida of the Mahlaing Township thanked the government for the construction of dams in the Township.

Afterwards, Lt-Gen Ye Myint unveiled the stone inscription. Next, Maj-Gen Ye Myint and Maj-Gen Nyunt Tin formally opened the dam by cutting a ribbon. Lt-Gen Ye Myint, the commander and minister had a documentary photo taken together with locals and students. Next, they inspected the dam. It is the 151th dam constructed in the time of the present government.

The 5,315-foot-long and 65-foot-high earthen dam, with a storage capacity of 21,000 acre feet, was built at Thingpon Creek near Hseasagon Village in Mahlaing Township in Meiktila District, Mandalay Division. The conduit pipe, which has been constructed with three-foot-wide concrete pipes, is 179 feet long. The reinforced spillway is 50 feet long. The dam can store about 10,500 acre feet of water and will also irrigate 7,636 acres of land in irrigated area of Taungpu Dam. Moreover, more than 441 acres of cultivable land will be benefited.—MNA

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Member of the State Peace and Development Council Lt-Gen Ye Myint formally unveils the stone inscription of the dam.—MNA

 COMMANDER MAJ-GEN YE MYINT—MNA

Secretary-1 Lt-Gen Soe Win meets department heads of Ministry of Forestry.—MNA

Minister Maj-Gen Nyunt Tin—MNA

THE NEW LIGHT OF MYANMAR Monday, 1 September, 2003

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No desire to relapse into miserable life of the past

Tin Than Oo

I experienced a student festival in Mandalay when I was an eighth grader. Our school arranged an excursion to the festival with a call for students, leaving Yangon in one early morning. We all had to wear sweaters as it was in December, the coldest month. When the car we were traveling in approached Daikul, a car behind us tried to overtake us but failed as there was another car coming from the opposite direction. In consequence of the failure to overtake us, it hit our car.

At that time, Yangon-Mandalay highway was full of potholes. Only the careful driving could avoid the accident, whereas another car coming face to face.

The journey to Mandalay took us three days with two night staps, if memory serves me right.

We had to travel in fear as it coincided with the time when the Burmar Communist Party was practising "dismiss, draw and the food they ate; later, with an air of sympathy, caricature Thakhin Soe as a man with a burning candle on his head since born", Mya Zaw said.

"Aung Than" was shown frequently on road side. In like here, you know!, You'll be caught by Thakhin Soe Gyi. You are naughty. What do you think of Thakhin Soe Gyi?"

Thein Hla, who said, "The Red Flag people are operating near the bank of Bagan-NyaungU. At first, we dared not go here and only if there were totally clear of these soldiers also underwent the situation of Myanmar in the past. We all have forgotten the terrible events.

The condition of Myanmar in the past was not like that... Countless sacrifices... The wounds are not yet healed. Some of us have now their own grandchildren. We all have forgotten the miserable life of the past. I want to go back to the past with you".

Minister U Win Aung sends message of felicitations to Uzbekistan

Yangon, 1 Sept — U Win Aung, Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Union of Myanmar, has sent a message of felicitations to His Excellency Mr Sadyq S Salaev, Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Uzbekistan, on the occasion of the Independence Day of the Republic of Uzbekistan which falls on 1st September, 2003. —MNA

Efficient use of electricity

* Use daylight as the main source of light
* Use the least possible amount of electricity only if there is not enough natural light
* Use the least possible amount of electricity required in production and service enterprises
* Preventing waste of electricity benefits the user and others

Efficient use of fuel

* Saving one gallon of fuel per car per month will save the nation one US dollar
* Thus, a total of 455,822 cars in Myanmar can save US$ 5.5 million in a year
* The amount, US $ 5.5 million, can build a major bridge across Ayeyawady River

All this needs to be known

* Do not be frightened whenever intimidated
* Do not be bolstered whenever flattered
* Do not be softened whenever appeased
PM General Khin Nyunt attends meeting on …

(from page 1)

With the successful implementation of the project, paddy can be grown on 400,000 acres of farmlands in Yangon and its environs in summer. In the past, paddy was grown in Thanlyn, Kayan, Thongwa and Kyauktan townships only in the rainy season. The yield of paddy of the four townships will increase considerably he said.

He urged the departments to make efforts for success of the project through coordination under the arrangement of the commander of Yangon Command.

Commander Maj-Gen Myint Swe said that paddy can be grown on nearly 948,181 acres of farmlands in Yangon Division in monsoon and only 20,000 acres are left to be grown. He reported on tasks for cultivation of the remaining 57,000 acres of farmland due to the construction of other crops in Yangon Division.

Next, Deputy Minister U Ohn Myint reported on arrangements to supply irrigation water to Kaying, Thongwa, Thanlyn and Kyauktan townships in Yangon South District.

Next, Deputy Minister for Construction Brig-Gen Myint Thein reported on arrangements for construction of a pipe to supply irrigation water to Thanlyn and Kyauktan townships.

Afterwards, Minister for Forestry Brig-Gen Thein Aung reported on planting of shady trees including teak on either side of the six-lane Yangon-Bago Highway and Yangon-Pathein Highway.

Next, Minister for Transport Maj-Gen Hla Myint Swe also reported on planting of shady trees at the entrance of Yangon International Airport and its environs and future tasks.

Secretary-1 Lt-Gen Soe Win meets officials of the Ministry of Commerce. (News page 16)—MNA

Prime Minister General Khin Nyunt inspects arrangements for rerotation of Maha Pandaw Cave. (News page 16)—MNA

Minister for Information inspects sanitation carried out near Yegu transmission station

YANGON, 31 Aug—Minister for Information Brig-Gen Kyaw Hsan inspected sanitation carried out in the compound of Yegu transmission station of Myanmar Radio and Television in Kaba Aye this morning.

The minister, on arrival at the broadcasting station, was welcomed by Deputy Minister for Information Brig-Aung Aung Thein, Director-General of Myanmar Radio and Television U Khin Maung Htay, Deputy Director-General U Thein Aung, chief engineers, directors and officials.

The minister inspected sanitation carried out in front of the broadcasting station and areas along the road by personnel of MRTV, Yegu transmission station, Yangon City Development Committee and health department.

Minister for NPED to attend 59th Annual Meeting of ESCAP

YANGON, 31 Aug—A Myanmar delegation led by Minister for National Planning and Economic Development U Thein Aung and two groups, supervised Dry Day inspection teams which were discharging duties on 45,000 acres of farmland for the year 2003-2004 of Shwetaung Township, Bago Division which was held at the farm office Maj-Gen Aung Min, Resident Coordinator of UN Agencies and Resident Representative of UNDP Mr Charles James Pettite.

Dry Day inspection teams discharge duties

YANGON, 31 Aug—Chairman of the Dry Day Pass Supervisory Committee Brig-Gen Ohn Myint together with Vice-Chairman Minister at the Prime Minister Office Maj-Gen Thein Swe and members, divided into two groups, supervised Dry Day inspection teams which were discharging duties on use of vehicles of Tamadaw and departments this morning.

The Dry Day inspection teams checked Dry Day Pass, driving licence, wheel tax, drivers’ wearing of departmental uniform of the vehicles of Tamadaw and department concerned at the main points of the city from 9 am to 5 pm. They also took action against those who violated the traffic rules. — MNA

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Completion of ploughing ceremony held in Shwetaung Township

YANGON, 31 Aug—The completion of ploughing ceremony for Hmauby 2 monsoon paddy for the year 2003-2004 of Shwetaung Township, Bago Division (West) was held at the farm of peasant U Hla Kyaw of Paak village, Wartaw village tract on yesterday morning, attended by Chairman of Pyay District Peace and Development Council Lt-Gen Khin Win.

After Lt-Col Khin Win had made a speech on the situation of cultivation of monsoon paddy and other crops. Monsoon paddy targeted for the year 2003-2004 is 52,230 acres and sown acreage is 52,235 in Shwetaung Township.
Since fiscal 2000-2001, the paddy output of Myanmar has exceeded the target of one billion baskets per year thanks to the projects to increase the sown acreage of monsoon paddy and introduction of the large-scale summer paddy cultivation in the appropriate places of the nation. As rice is the staple food of Myanmar, increase in the paddy production not only ensures surplus amount of rice stocks for the nation’s population, but also boosts her foreign currency earnings from the rice export business.

And in line with one of her economic objectives — Development of agriculture as the base and all-round development of other sectors of the economy as well, Myanmar has been in the process of reclaiming more land for cultivation, using high-yield seeds and chemical and natural fertilizers, applying advanced methods and equipment and extending irrigation facilities and network to transform her agricultural sector from conventional farming system to mechanized farming business.

Especially, the country has been concentrating its efforts more on paddy cultivation to become one of the largest rice exporters of the world and to help ease the global or at least the region’s food problem. But the task of raising her paddy production to exceed the one billion baskets is not easy for Myanmar. It is the result of the on-going and energetic efforts of the Government, with the participation of farmers, entrepreneurs, local authorities, officials and the Tatmadaw members. Before 1988, the annual paddy production was just roundabout 654 million baskets, and since assumption of the State duties, the Government has been giving assistance and encouragement to the farmers and paving the way for the local entrepreneurs to set up large-scale farms. It has also built a large number of irrigation facilities including dams, sluice gates, canals and water pumping stations to conduct double cropping, mixed cropping and triple cropping including summer paddy. Due to these endeavours, the nation’s annual paddy output exceeded 800 million baskets during the period from 1995-96 to 1997-98, and in 1999-2000 it was well over 965 million baskets. Beginning fiscal 2000-2001, the nation is producing over one billion baskets of paddy annually.

Now, plans are under way to turn Sagaing Division into another bread-basket of the nation, in addition to Ayeyawady Division, a delta region in the lower Myanmar. Located in upper Myanmar, the land area of Sagaing Division is more than 37,000 square miles, with vast stretches of fallow and virgin land, awaiting reclamation to extend paddy cultivation. As there will be two divisions serving as the bread basket of the nation in the future, we are sure that the nation will be able to provide enough food for its growing population, while exporting the surplus to earn foreign exchange.

Enough food for the growing population

Thiha Tin

Salingyi Textile Factory Project, which is situated on a 339.35 acre plot near Paungson-Setwa Junction, one mile from Salingyi in Salingyi Township, is one of the three projects simultaneously implemented in Pakokku, Salingyi and Pwintbyu by Myanma Textile Industry of the Ministry of Industry-1 in accord with the guidance of the Head of State to fulfil the food, clothing and shelter needs of the people.

The project, launched in June 2001, is now 48 per cent completed, including the main factory, the raw material and finished product godowns, a 33 KV power station, the water-cooler building, water purifier building, the machinery godown, the workshop, the clinic, the water-treatment facility and the boiler shed. Machines for the factory such as spinning machines, cotton ginning machines, cotton rollers and looms were imported from the People’s Republic of China. Till now, 96.8 per cent of iron frames and machinery have arrived at the worksite. To fulfill the yearly cotton requirement of the factory, 2438 metric tons of long staple cotton which is 34/32 inches and above, plans are under way to establish a cotton belt from Thayet to Salingyi on the western bank of the Ayeyawady River. The estimated volume of investment for the factory is K 6,623,362 million, including US$ 23.55 million. The factory will be able to contribute to creating job opportunities for the local people and further developing Salingyi Region. (Translation: MWT) Myanma Alin: 30-8-2003

Textile factory of Salingyi Region

Aung (Set Hmu)
Implementation of projects for socio-economic development of all regions in the country

The government is trying to build the nation to become industrialized one based on agriculture. The photo shows the radiator plant being operated by the Ministry of Industry-2 at Indagaw industrial zone. — PHOTO: INDUSTRY-2

Runways of existing airports are being extended with the aim of enabling the big aircraft to land and take off. The photo shows the unloading of machinery from the ship to be used at the extension project of the Yangon International Airport on 25-8-2003. — PHOTO: TRANSPORT

Village-to-village roads are being built and bridges on the roads are also constructed for better transport in rural areas. The photo shows the bridge built at Zokthok Model Village in Bilin Township, Thaton District, Mon State. — PHOTO: MNA
Singapore unveils $570m aid package

SINGAPORE, 31 Aug — The Singaporean Government unveiled an aid package worth one billion Singapore dollars (about 570 million US dollars) on Friday to help cushion the impact of the Central Provident Fund (CPF) cut announced by Prime Minister Goh Chok Tong on Thursday.

The package falls into six categories, namely, helping with mortgage payments, relaxation of flat subletting rules, help for Singaporeans, help for businesses, acceleration of infrastructure projects and government cost cutting. It was disclosed by Singaporean Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Finance Lee Hsien Loong at a Parliament session Friday afternoon.

Under the help package, the bulk of the aid, some 600 million Singapore dollars (about 340 million US dollars), will go to the construction sector, while the tourism and transport industries will get a 100-million-Singapore dollar (about 57 million US dollars) Tourism Recovery Fund.

Other help measures include utilities rebates, work assistance and training programmes.

“The Singaporean economy has still not fully recovered from the slowdown in the first half of the year,” Lee told the Parliament on Friday.

The Iraq War and the SARS (severe acute respiratory syndrome) outbreak have taken a significant toll on the economy, he said. The CPF changes announced by the Prime Minister on Thursday are “an important step to make ourselves more competitive,” he said. Lee before revealing the details of the aid package.

However, “while we make these strategic changes to the economy, we must not forget the more immediate worries of Singaporeans,” said the Deputy Prime Minister.

The help measures will benefit Singaporeans, especially lower income earners and the unemployed, he said. Businesses will also gain, especially small and medium enterprises, he added.

Lee also said that deficit of the city state this year is likely to be much bigger than the 1.2 billion Singapore dollars (about 690 million US dollars) shortfall he projected in early 2003.

“We expect to run a deficit of 2.3 billion Singapore dollars (about 1.3 billion US dollars) and next year, we are projecting an even larger deficit,” he said.

That is why the government has decided to proceed with the GST (Goods and Services Tax) hike from the current 4 per cent to 5 per cent with effect from January 1, 2004, Lee stressed.

— MNA/Xinhua

Pakistan seizes tons of Holland-bound hashish

KARACHI, 31 Aug — Pakistani authorities have seized six tons of high-quality hashish and arrested three men who planned to smuggle it to Holland, a provincial minister said on Friday.

A truck loaded with the hashish was seized overnight near the southern city of Sukkar. Raouf Siddiqui, Customs Minister in Sindh Province, told reporters.

“The hashish was to be shipped out to Holland,” he said.

Siddiqui said the hashish had come from Afghanistan and had been stashed on the border city of Chaman.

On Wednesday, authorities seized more than a ton of hashish near the lawless tribal region bordering Afghanistan and arrested two men. Most drugs are smuggled to Pakistan in trucks that feed into a major hashish producer. — MNA/Reuters

German smokers getting much younger

BERLIN, 31 Aug — German young people are turning to cigarettes and alcohol at an earlier age, a study released Friday said.

The survey conducted by the University of Bielefeld revealed that boys start smoking at 11.3 years old on the average, and girls begin on average at 11.9 years old.

Five per cent of German pupils already drink alcohol on a regular basis when they are 10 to 11 years old, the study discovered.

Within the past five years the age at which kids start to smoke dropped by one year, it said.

Every third ninth grade student (14-15 years old) smokes.

Every third boy and every fifth girl in ninth grade has tried marijuana or hashish while 40 per cent of the boys and 26 per cent of the girls drink alcohol regularly.

— MNA/Xinhua

US authorities arrest teenage computer virus suspect

WASHINGTON, 31 Aug — US authorities arrested an 18-year-old teenager Friday, who was suspected of creating a version of “Blaster”, the Internet worm that infected hundreds of thousands of computers worldwide.

The teenager was identified by a court official as Jeffrey Lee Parson, of Hopkins, Minnesota, the Associated Press said in a report.

In an interview with the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) agents, Parson admitted modifying the original “Blaster” worm and changing it into a more vicious variant known as the “Blaster B”.

According to court papers, Parson told the FBI that he built into his version a method for reconnecting to victim computers later, and infected computers automatically registered themselves with Parson’s Web site so he could keep track of them. Since their emergence on August 11, different versions of the “Blaster” worm have infected more than 500,000 computers around the world, said Symantec Corp., a security software company.

— MNA/Xinhua

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— MNA/Xinhua
United Nations tries again to ban smoking

UNITED NATIONS, 31 Aug — The United Nations, a last bastion of smoking in New York, said on Friday it will begin following the tough new anti-smoking law of its host city and forbid lighting up anywhere in its headquarters.

But whether the ban — the latest in a string of attempts by the world body to curb smoking — will be enforced is another matter. Some ambassadors, including some chain smokers, have repeatedly violated any smoking ban.

"Because of the agreement with the host country, we are bound to follow the local laws," said Hua Jiang, a deputy director of the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development.

"But whether the ban will be enforced will depend on the enforcement of local laws," she said, alluding to the potential problems in enforcing the ban.

A tough new smoking ban went into effect in New York City earlier this year, pushed by Mayor Michael Bloomberg, a former smoker. The law bans cigarettes and cigarrettes from almost every workplace, including bars and restaurants.

In 1995, the United Nations had once again made a smoking ban for much of its headquarters, only allowing smoking in certain areas such as a portion of the delegates dining room overlooking New York’s East River.

The new smoking ban is intended to eliminate the risks of second-hand smoke, Secretary-General Kofi Annan said in an UN bulletin.

In a message distributed to staff on Friday, the human resources department urged people “to cooperate voluntarily” with the ban, which is to begin next week.

MNA/Reuters

UNSG urges better market access for landlocked developing states

UNITED NATIONS, 31 Aug — United Nations Secretary-General Kofi Annan called Thursday on both landlocked and transit developing countries to forge strong partnerships to boost market access.

Indeed, for landlocked developing countries, shipping and transit costs represent an even greater constraint than tariffs to greater participation in international trade,” Annan said in a message to the opening session of the first global conference on the issue in Almaty, Kazakhstan.

The message was read for him by Anwarul Chowdhury, the UN’s high representative for the least developed countries, landlocked and transit developing countries. The establishment of efficient transit transport systems is vital for their integration into the world economy,” he added.

“The conference, formally titled the International Conference on Transit Transport Cooperation, is expected to give the final stamp of approval to the agreement reached at the end of preparatory talks Wednesday, promising reductions in red tape and transportation costs and time.

The conference will begin following the 15 and 20 UN and international agencies and financial institutions.

With transit costs eating up anywhere between 15 and 50 percent of their trade costs, landlocked and transit countries have repeatedly violated any smoking ban.

Bloomberg, a former smoker, is vital for their integration into the world economy,” he said.

"The grid should never fail again," said: "All lines started up on a few lines but those are for reasons other than a failure to invest in the system.

The unusual event last night was two faults occurring so quickly together," he told BBC Radio. "It's got nothing to do with the investment in the system, due to a failure to invest in the system.

Chief Operating Officer Mark Fairbairn said the blackout was caused by two faults happening in quick succession.

"It's got nothing to do with the investment in the system, due to a failure to invest in the system." The unusual event last night was two faults occurring so quickly together," he told BBC Radio. "It's got nothing to do with the investment in the system, due to a failure to invest in the system.

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Two tourists visit the Diaoyutai State Guesthouse in Beijing on 30 August, 2003.

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Passengers were trapped on underground trains, railway stations were closed and thousands of frustrated travellers took to the rain-soaked streets in a dismal trudge home.

National Grid Transco, the privatized company which runs Britain’s main power lines, said the blackout was caused by two faults happening in quick succession.

Chief Operating Officer Mark Fairbairn said the blackout was a freak event and not due to a failure to invest in the system.

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Two tourists visit the Diaoyutai State Guesthouse in Beijing on 30 August, 2003.

London transport back up after power cut
Beckham seriously considered quitting last year

London, 31 Aug — England captain David Beckham says a combination of factors made him feel so low that he seriously considered retiring from soccer after the birth of his second child Romeo last year.

“I actually did discuss retiring with (wife) Victoria,” the Real Madrid midfielder told the Sun newspaper on Saturday. “There were all sorts of things going on in my life at this time — Romeo had just been born, my parents were divorcing, there was the relationship with the (Manchester United) manager (Alex Ferguson) and the kidnap threats (against Victoria): "It was a serious thought of mine (retirement). I never told anyone else apart from Victoria and my agent Tony Stephens. I really seriously considered it.

"I wasn’t happy going into work every day and I think that contributed to me thinking about that decision,” said Beckham, who left United when he signed a four-year contract with Real Madrid last month. "It wasn’t just a bad day at work, it was quite a few weeks and months."

Beckham said his wife Victoria, a member of the now-defunct band the “Spice Girls,” who enjoyed a string of hits in the 1990s, was shocked that he was contemplating retirement.

"It shocked her because she realized how serious I was about it. She realized there was a problem there and that I really wasn’t happy. "I didn’t want it to start affecting my family life and my children (sons Brooklyn, now aged four, and Romeo, who will celebrate his first birthday next month).” Beckham, 28, said it was his wife who changed his mind about retiring.

"She was the one who changed my mind and turned it all around for me. She explained how important Manchester United was to me and how important football is to so many people.

Answer for yesterday’s Crossword Puzzle

Blackburn complete Ferguson transfer

London, 31 Aug — Blackburn Rovers have completed the signing of Scotland midfielder Barry Ferguson from Rangers for a fee of around 7.5 million pounds (11.84 million US dollars), the English Premier League’s club web site reported on Friday. The 25-year-old, who has agreed a four-year contract, put in a transfer request last week, saying he wanted to test himself in a stronger league.

"He is a player who genuinely excites me. He has been the shining jewel for Scotland, an international player of great experience and an ex-captain of Glasgow Rangers," Blackburn manager Graeme Souness said.

"I would go as far as to say, in my career, this is the most exciting signings I’ve ever made...I believe Barry Ferguson has the ability to become a top, top player in the Premiership.

Tony Stephens. I really seriously considered it.

"We are delighted with the move for Steve as this shows our intent to continue to drive forward," City chairman John Wardle said.

"By bringing in players of the calibre of McManaman and (American midfielder) Claudio Reyna we are showing a real ambition to progress.”

Reyna completed a 2.5-million-pound move from Sunderland earlier on Friday.

McManaman poised to join Manchester City

Manchester, 31 Aug — Former England midfielder Steve McManaman is poised to join Manchester City after being released by Real Madrid, the Premier League club’s web site reported on Friday.

The 31-year-old, who had a year left on his contract with the Spanish champions, will undergo a medical on Sunday and is expected to sign a two-year contract with City before Sunday’s Premiership clash at Goodison Park.

McManaman, who joined Real from Liverpool on a free transfer in 1999, won the Champions League in 2000.

Power play helps Karlsson to 64, early lead in Munich

Munich, 31 Aug — Big-hitting Robert Karlsson reeled off two eagles on his way to an eight-under-par 64 and an early two-shot lead in the BMW International Open second round on Friday.

The 33-year-old Swede, winner at the Nord Eichenried course in 1997, mixed eagles at the par-five sixth and 11th holes with five birdies and a bogey to finish at 15 under 129.

That left him two clear of overnight leader Raphael Jacquelin of France, who tacked a 69 on to his course-record 62 of Thursday.

Karlsson beat Briton Carl Watts in a playoff to win the 1997 title in Munich, but the par-72 layout has not always given him happy memories.

Two years later when Europe’s Ryder Cup team was decided, Karlsson was controversially overlooked as a wildcard picked by captain Mark James, despite finishing just one place outside the top-10 automatic qualifiers.

European Ryder Cup selection for next year’s matches begins next week in the European Masters in Switzerland, and Karlsson is determined to play his way on to Bernhard Langer’s team on merit.

Karlsson has fashioned his power this season on a new driver with less loft, and it worked to full effect for his first eagle at the par-five 11th, where he rifled an eight-iron to just 12 feet.

Although he was finished behind trees off the tee at the sixth, he hooked powerfully around them and then holed from 20 feet for his second eagle.

Jacquelin was in much quieter mood than his previous day’s course-record equalizing 62, but he also eagled the sixth on his way to a 69 which kept him well in contention and a stroke ahead of another Swede, Peter Hedblom, who carded 66.

Britain’s 2000 European number one Lee Westwood continued his steady rehabilitation with a 68 to lie four strokes off the lead, while Langer, due to give a Ryder Cup Press conference in the afternoon, is 10 shots off the lead.

Seventino Ballesteros was 12 strokes better than his opening 84 as he shot a 72 which could lift him from last place of the 156 starters.

Like Ballesteros, Spanish compatriot Jose Maria Olazabal and Nick Faldo both missed the cut when finishing 146 and 145 respectively. Andrew Coltart of Britain boled into one with a four-iron at the second as he began his afternoon round, but the car prize for an ace is at the 17th.

First round leader Jacquelin won a car for a hole-in-one at Nord Eichenried two years ago.

China’s Ma Ning acts in the women’s javelin final at the 9th World Athletics Championships in Paris, France, on 30 August, 2003. Ma ranked 11th with 57.43 metres.

Newspaper on
Minister for Forestry Brig-Gen Thein Aung.
(News page 16) — MNA

Minister for Commerce Brig-Gen Pyi Soe.
(News page 16) — MNA

View today:
Monday, September 1
7:00 am
1. Current News
7:30 am
9. International news
8:45 am
10. Let’s Go
4:00 pm
2. Song to uphold National Spirit
4:40 pm
3. Demonstration Exercises for Correction Pronunciation
4:50 pm
4. Musical programme
5:45 pm
5. Programmes in Kachin
6:00 pm
6. Programmes in Shan
6:15 pm
7. Programmes in Chin
6:30 pm
8. Programmes in Kayin
7:00 pm
9. Programmes in upper Sagaing
7:30 pm
10. Programmes in Bago Division
8:00 pm
11. Programmes in Sagaing
8:30 pm
12. Programmes in Ayeyawady
9:00 pm
13. Programmes in Yangon
9:30 pm
14. Programmes in Tanintharyi
10:00 pm
15. Programmes in Delta
10:30 pm
16. Programmes in Mandalay
11:00 pm
17. Programmes in Magway
11:30 pm
18. Programmes in Kayah State
12:00 am
19. Programmes in掸族 (shan)
12:30 am
20. Programmes in Rakhine
1:00 am
21. The next day’s programme

Chairman of Dry Day Pass Supervisory Committee Minister for Mines Brig-Gen Ohn Myint inspects vehicles.
(News page 9) — MNA

Minister for Commerce
Brig-Gen Pyi Soe
(News page 16) — MNA

WEATHER

Sunday, 31 August, 2003
Summary of observations recorded at 07:30 hours MST:
During the past 24 hours, weather has been partly cloudy in Kayin State and lower Sagona Division. Rain or thundershowers have been isolated in Chin, Kayin States, upper Sagona, Sagaing, Mandalay and Magway Divisions, scattered in Kachin, Shan, Mon States, Bago and Yangon Divisions and widespread in the remaining areas with isolated heavyfalls in Rakhine State. The noteworthy amounts of rainfall recorded were Gwa (4.06 inches) and Maungdaw (2.80 inches).

Maximum temperature on 30-8-2003 was 32.0°C (90°F). Minimum temperature on 31-8-2003 was 21.3°C (70°F). Relative humidity at 9.30. In MST on 31-8-2003 was 85%. Total sunshine hours on 30-8-2003 was (3.9) hours approx. Rainfall on 31-8-2003 was 2 mm at Yangon Airport and at Kaba-Aye and 3 mm at central Yangon. Total rainfall up to 31-8-2003 was 724 mm (67.87 inches) at Yangon Airport, 1885 mm (74.21 inches) at Kaba-Aye and 1915 mm (75.39 inches) at central Yangon. Maximum wind speed at Yangon (Kaba-Aye) was 15 mph from Southwest at (14-10) hours MST on 30-8-2003.

Bay inference: Monsoon is moderate in the Bay of Bengal. Forecast valid until evening of 1-9-2003: Rain or thundershowers will be widespread in Rakhine, Mon States, upper Sagaing, Ayeyawady, Yangon and Tanintharyi Divisions, scattered in Kachin, Shan, Chin, Kayin States and Bago Division and isolated in the remaining areas with likelihood of isolated heavyfalls in Rakhine, Mon States and Tanintharyi Division. Degree of certainty is (80%).

State of the sea: Sea will be moderate in Myanmar waters. Outlook for subsequent two days: Increase of rain in Southern Myanmar areas.

Forecast for Yangon and neighbouring area for 1-9-2003: One or two rains or thundershowers. Degree of certainty is (80%). Forecast for Mandalay and neighbouring area for 1-9-2003: Likelihood of isolated rain or thundershowers. Degree of certainty is (60%).

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Prime Minister General Khin Nyunt attends work coord meeting on organizing Fourth World Buddhist Summit

YANGON, 31 AUG — A work coordination meeting on organizing the Fourth World Buddhist Summit was held at the Maha Pasana Cave, Kaba Aye Hillock here at 9 am today, attended by Prime Minister General Khin Nyunt.

Also present on the occasion were Chairman of Yangon Division Peace and Development Council Commander of Yangon Command Maj-Gen Myint Swe, ministers, the Yangon mayor, deputy ministers, the Yangon vice-mayor, officials of the State Peace and Development Council Office, departmental heads, the pro-rector and officials of the International Theravada Buddhist Missionary University and officials of the leading committee and sub-committees for organizing the summit.

The meeting was opened with the three-time recitation of Namo Tassa.

Secretary of the leading committee for organizing the Fourth World Buddhist Summit, Minister for Religious Affairs Brig-Gen Thura Myint Maung reported that organized by the United Nations, the New Millennium Religious Leaders’ Summit, other religious seminars promoting friendship and peace of all religions and the World Buddhist Summits were held. Under the sponsorship of the Nembutsu Buddhist Sect of Japan, the second and third World Buddhist Summits were held in Thailand and Cambodia respectively. And now the Fourth World Buddha Dhamma Summit is to be held in Myanmar.

The minister said that Myanmar is pure Theravada Buddhist nation and there are about 500,000 monks in the country, the Nembutsu Buddhist Sect recommended that the Fourth World Buddhist Summit be held in Myanmar. Myanmar would like to hold the fourth summit on a grand scale because it coincides with the sixth anniversary celebrations of the International Theravada Buddhist Missionary University.

It was agreed that the government is to hold the Fourth World Buddhist Summit in Myanmar in 2004 in cooperation with the Nembutsu Buddhist Sect and then the International Theravada Buddhist Missionary University.

The respective subcommittees reported on organization of the summit. The General instructed the meeting to form the respective subcommittees so as to hold the summit on a grand scale. The minister said the General also approved the work programme (Draft) for holding the summit submitted by the Ministry of Religious Affairs.

According to the coordinated work programme, Ovadacariya Sayadaws Committee, the leading committee for organizing the Fourth World Buddhist Summit, the work committee and nine subcommittees were formed. The respective subcommittees also held coordination meetings and drew up the work programmes.

In order to open the World Buddhist University in Japan and to hold the Fourth World Buddhist Summit in Myanmar, a Myanmar Buddhist delegation headed by Thidagu Sayadaw arrived in Japan on July 3. The delegation met with the Chief of the Japanese Nembutsu Buddhist Sect General Secretary Sayadaw and coordinated matters on invitations of representatives to the summit. Openings of the World Buddhist University and the work being carried out by the subcommittees. Next, the subcommittees reported on their tasks for holding the summit. Deputy Minister Brig-Gen Thura Aung Ko reported on the tasks carried out and future tasks.

Later, the chairman of the subcommittees and officials reported on arrangements for decoration, invitation and accommodation, transportation, organizing the meetings, information and documentation, financial and religious matters and others. Afterwards, the meeting ended with the three-time recitation of Namo Tassa.

After the meeting, Prime Minister General Khin Nyunt inspected arrangements for renovation of the Maha Pasana Cave.

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Secretary-1 Lt-Gen Soe Win and Secretary-2 Lt-Gen Thein Sein meet departmental heads of Ministry of Forestry

YANGON, 31 AUG—Secretary-1 of the State Peace and Development Council Li-Gen Soe Win and Secretary-2 Lt-Gen Thein Sein, accompanied by the Deputy Director-General of the State Peace and Development Council Office, arrived at the Ministry of Forestry on Kaba Aye Pagoda Road here this morning and met with the heads of department and officials of departments and enterprises under the ministry.

First, Minister for Forestry Brig-Gen Thein Aung reported to the Secretary-1 and the Secretary-2. He said that the ministry is taking measures for conservation of natural forest resources and for generation of foreign currency.

The ministry has laid down six policies and work is well under way for successful implementation of the policies in accord with Myanmar Forest Policies. Tasks are being undertaken sector-wise under one enterprise and four departments.

The ministry is also taking measures for upgrading Kandawgyi Botanical Gardens and Yangon Zoological Gardens, construction of Nannyin Tower in Pyin-Ul-Win, implementation of Pyin Taung and Shwebein Taung agricultural tasks and cultivation of Thisint in addition to its original tasks.

Next, Heads of Department reported on organizational set-up of the departments and enterprise. Strength of the staff appointment of staff, measures being taken by the departments and enterprise, and work being carried out in cooperation with the international organizations.

Afterwards, Li-Gen Soe Win gave instructions. He said that the forestry sector is a major sector in earning foreign currencies, adding that the natural forest resources are to be preserved as they are the wealth of the State, he added. Tasks are to be implemented on a wider scale not only in the interest of the ministry but also in the interest of the State.

While implementing the tasks of the ministry, necessary assistance is to be provided to the related organizations and the people, he stressed.

Next, Secretary-2 Lt-Gen Thein Sein gave instructions. He expressed thanks to heads of department for information on the work being carried out and future tasks of the ministry.

There are 18 ministries that are engaged in generating the State income. Of them, the five ministries play an important role. The Ministry of Forestry is the second largest earner of foreign currency.

The ministry will have to make strenuous efforts for successful implementation of the tasks by conserving the forest resources.

The ministry is to practise stringent measures to meet the target of the ministry, he noted.

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(See page 9)