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Thursday, 30 November, 2006

Four political objectives

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

Four economic objectives

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

Four social objectives

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

Systematic documentation of construction of bridges stressed to hand down bridge construction technologies and experiences to new generation engineers

Vice-Senior General Maung Aye inspects progress of Yangon-Thanyin Bridge No 2 Project

NAY PYI TAW, 29 Nov — Vice-Chairman of the State Peace and Development Council Deputy Commander-in-Chief of Defence Services Commander-in-Chief (Army) Vice-Senior General Maung Aye, accompanied by Members of the State Peace and Development Council Lt-Gen Khin Maung Than and Lt-Gen Tin Aye, Commander-in-Chief (Navy) Vice-Admi-

ral Soe Thein, Commander-in-Chief (Air) Lt-Gen Myat Hein, the ministers and officials of the SPDC Office, left Patheingyi for Yangon yesterday afternoon.

At the briefing hall of Yangon-Thanyin Bridge No 2 being built by Bridge Construction Project Special Group-1 of Public Works, Minister for Construction Maj-Gen Saw Tun reported on imple-

mentation of the bridge, progress of approach bridges and the main section, use of construction materials.

Superintending Engineer (Bridge) U Sein Maung submitted reports on construction of the main bridge, approach bridge and roads of the bridge and progress of tasks with the use of documentary photos and charts.

Chairman of Yangon

Division Peace and Development Council Commander of Yangon Command Brig-Gen Hla Htay Win reported that Yangon-Thanyin bridge No 1 is a rail-cum-road one and its motor road is narrow and

it has limits to heavy-load vehicles. On completion, Yangon-Thanyin Bridge No 2 can contribute to smooth and speedy flow of commodities. Yangon Division is providing necessary assistance for

bridge construction project.

Lt-Gen Myint Swe of the Ministry of Defence reported on arrangements for progress of Thilawa Port, regional development
(See page 4)

The development of Thilawa Port had been undertaken to enable ocean-going vessels to berth.



Vice-Senior General Maung Aye inspects No 2 construction project of Yangon-Thanyin Bridge No 2. — MNA

Emergence of the State Constitution is the duty of all citizens of Myanmar Naing-Ngan.

PERSPECTIVES

Thursday, 30 November, 2006

Build dams meeting the set standards

As Myanmar is an agricultural country, the agriculture sector plays a fundamental role in its food production. Therefore, the government is implementing water supply projects for the agricultural purpose.

Since its assumption of State responsibilities, the present government has built 190 new dams, 298 river water pumping stations and 999 village dams. Moreover, it is building artesian wells and embankments.

At present, Ma Mya dam is being built across Ma Mya Creek in Myanaung Township. It is an earthen dam and going to be 150 feet high and 11,800 feet long. On completion, it will be able to store 70,000 acre feet of water. Up to now, the concrete wall, the main embankment, the conduit, the control tower and the spillway have been completed.

On completion, the dam will have the capacity of supplying water to 10,000 acres of farmland and generating 500 kilowatt hours. Even before the completion, water has been stored as much as possible in the facility. Therefore, it can irrigate the farmland. Last year, it irrigated 300 acres of farmland for the cultivation of summer paddy. This year, it will irrigate 2,000 acres.

We would like to call on all those responsible of the project to work to the best of their ability for speedy completion of the dam and meeting the standards set. Only then will it benefit the local people sooner. Moreover, the hydelpower station being constructed together with the dam will contribute to the development of the region.

Commerce Journal Vol 6 No 22 comes out

YANGON, 28 Nov — The Commerce Journal Vol 6 No 22 comes out today.

The journal carries news on discussions to boost border trade with the Ruili mayor and party in Yunnan Province and merchants in Mandalay and responsible personnel from border trade, prospects of Myanmar organic Shweni bananas, abundance of onions in Bayintnaung Market, sweet Lelon orange, earning K 500,000 at profit from growing of one acre of watermelons, cottage industries from Ngathaingyaung, ministries welcoming complaints if any service personnel found with misconduct, malpractice and bribery and corruption, marketable turmeric, the world biggest golden chocolate and articles written by Maung Sue San, U Han Tun, Dr Khin Maung Nyo, Kyi Shwan, Maung Thant, U Than Maung (Sittway), Maung Pasoe Gyan, local and foreign commodity prices, humor, movies and astrology. — MNA

Peoples' Desire

- * Oppose those relying on external elements, acting as stooges, holding negative views
- * Oppose those trying to jeopardize stability of the State and progress of the nation
- * Oppose foreign nations interfering in internal affairs of the State
- * Crush all internal and external destructive elements as the common enemy

Industry 2 Minister inspects Machine and Machine Tool Factory

NAY PYI TAW, 29 Nov — Minister for Industry-2 Maj-Gen Saw Lwin inspected No 2 Automobile Factory (Htonbo) in Bago Division (West) on 26 November and called for meeting the production target of the factory.

The factory produces Mazda jeeps and wagons. On his tour, the minister inspected assembling of jeeps and wagons at the factory.

Minister Maj-Gen Saw Lwin went to No 1 Machine and Machine Tool Factory

(Nyaungcheydauk) in Padaung Township on 25 November and inspected production of 75-kilowatt turbines for hydro-electric power projects.

At the briefing hall, General Manager of the factory U Thit Lwin Lay reported to the minister on production of CNC Lathe Machine and other machinery parts.

The minister called for meeting the production target of the factory and stockpiling materials.

MNA

Minister receives Chinese guests

NAY PYI TAW, 28 Nov — Secretariat Member of the Union Solidarity and Development Association Minister for Communications, Posts and Telegraphs Brig-Gen Thein Zaw received a six-member Chinese delegation led by Senior Adviser Mr Liu Hongcai of Chinese Association for International Understanding (CAFIU) of the People's Republic of China at his office this morning.

Also present at the call were USDA CEC Member Minister Brig-Gen Maung Maung Thein and responsible personnel and Chinese embassy staff. Next, Minister Brig-



Minister for Communications, Posts and Telegraphs Brig-Gen Thein Zaw meeting with Senior Adviser Mr Liu Hongcai of CAFIU, PRC.

MNA

Gen Thein Zaw and Minister Brig-Gen Maung Maung Thein hosted

luncheon in honour of Chinese delegation led by Senior Adviser Mr Liu

Hongcai at Myat Taw Win Hotel in Nay Pyi Taw Hotel Zone. —MNA

Second Endurance Equestrian Contest on schedule

YANGON, 29 Nov — The Second Endurance Equestrian Contest, to be organized by Myanmar Equestrian Federation, will be held at Bagan Archaeological Region in NyaungU Township on 20 and 21 January.

On 20 January, the opening ceremony and the junior endurance equestrian contest will be held. The route of the junior event will be 30 miles long. Male or female rider may be over 14 years old for the junior event, and the horse must be over three years old.

On 21 January, the 50-mile senior endurance equestrian contest will be held. The riders will start their competitions at YKKO equestrian club in Ngalinpok Village of NyaungU Township at 4 am to ride round Bagan pagodas and they will finish their route at the equestrian club.

Corrigendum

Please read "Chinese Association for International Understanding (CAFIU)" instead of "International Confidence Building Association of China" in the headline, news and caption of the news "USDA Secretary-General receives International Confidence Building Association of China" reported on page-9 of this paper published on 29-11-2006. ED

Over 16 years old riders may take part in the contest and the horse must be over four years old.

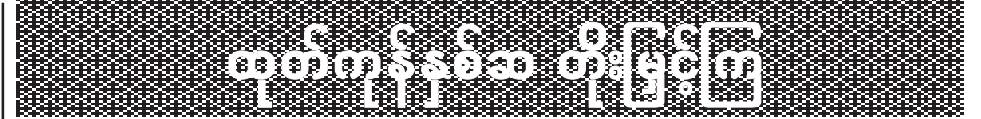
Cash rewards will be presented to the winners — K 500,000 for the first prize, K 300,000 for the second, K 200,000 for the third, K 100,000 for the fourth, and K 50,000 for the fifth.

Those wishing to take part in the contests may enlist at MEF at the corner of Pyidaungsu Road and Pinlon Road in Dagon Myothit (North) Township and YKKO equestrian club in Ngalinpok Village of NyaungU Township.

MNA



Performers march during the 75th Annual Hollywood Christmas Parade in Hollywood city, California, the United States, on 26 Nov, 2006.—XINHUA



Annan says Iraq near civil war

UNITED NATIONS, 28 Nov—Iraq is nearly in civil war and could fall into civil war unless urgent steps are taken to prevent this, UN Secretary-General Kofi Annan said on Monday in a rare comment on the situation in Iraq. “Given the developments on the ground, unless something is done drastically and urgently to arrest the deteriorating situation, we could be there. In fact we are almost there,” Annan told reporters in response to a question.

He made the comment hours before a planned conversation with the Iraq Study Group, a US panel co-chaired by former secretary of state James

Baker that is preparing proposed new policy options on Iraq for the George W Bush Administration.

The group has previously conferred with Deputy Secretary-General Mark Malloch Brown and Ashraf Qazi, Annan’s special representative for Iraq, UN chief spokesman Stephane Dujarric said.

“They are asking to talk to him and he’s talking to them,” Dujarric said, adding they would confer by telephone.

The United Nations has been playing only a minor

role in Iraq since the truck-bombing of its Baghdad headquarters in August 2003 in an attack that killed 22 people including Sergio Vieira de Mello, the UN mission chief in the country.

Annan, whose second five-year term as Secretary-General runs out at the end of the year, has previously made waves by stating in December 2004 that the US-led invasion of Iraq was illegal as it was not approved by the UN Security Council.

MNA/Reuters

Malay contractors urged to go global

PUTRAJAYA, 28 Nov—The construction industry is being monitored with a view to fine-tuning it.

Prime Minister Datuk Seri Abdullah Ahmad Badawi said weaknesses would be rectified and leaks plugged so that no one would be burdened by the shortcomings.

“The government is observing the problems in the sector and we want to overcome them quickly for the good of the industry and for the people who stand to benefit from these projects. The government doesn’t want to be burdened by delayed or abandoned projects, which become liabilities for us,” Abdullah said when opening the Malay Contractors’ Association (PKMM) 27th annual general meeting yesterday.

He said the government was on the losing end every time a project was abandoned or delayed, as more money had to be forked out to revive it.

“We could be spending the money on other new projects,” he added.

Delayed or abandoned

projects also made the public angry as they were a waste of funds, and spoilt the reputation of the contractors.

“You should strive to be contractors who are respected,” Abdullah told the gathering of about 200 contractors.—Internet



An 18th Century Chinese famille rose “swallows” bowl has broken the world record for a Qing Dynasty porcelain piece, selling for 151.3 million HK dollars (19.5 million US dollars) at a Christie’s auction in Hong Kong on 28 Nov, 2006.—XINHUA

22 killed in truck crash in China

BEIJING, 28 Nov—A truck turned over on a mountain road in China’s remote northwest region of Xinjiang, killing 22 people, Xinhua news agency said on Monday. The truck with 25 people on board flipped over in the Altun Mountain area before dawn on Friday, Xinhua said.

“Twenty-two people, including the driver, were killed instantly,” the agency said, adding that 20 of the dead had been riding in the back of the truck.

Xinjiang is home to eight million Uighurs, a largely Islamic people who share linguistic and cultural bonds with neighbouring Central Asia.—MNA/Reuters

US scientists say trained bees can sniff bombs

PHOENIX, 28 Nov— Scientists at a US weapons laboratory say they have trained bees to sniff out explosives in a project they say could have far-reaching applications for US homeland security and the Iraq war.

Researchers at the Los Alamos National Laboratory in New Mexico said they trained honeybees to stick out their proboscis — the tube they use to feed on nectar — when they smell explosives in anything from cars and roadside bombs to belts similar to those used by suicide bombers.

Researchers in the programme, dubbed the Stealthy Insect Sensor Project, published their findings on Monday.

By exposing the insects to the odour of explosives followed by a sugar water reward, researchers said they trained bees to recognize substances ranging from dynamite and C-4 plastic explosives to the Howitzer propellant grains used in improvised explosive devices in Iraq. “When bees detect the presence of explosives, they simply stick their proboscis out,” research scientist

Tim Haarmann told Reuters in a telephone interview. “You don’t have to be an expert in animal behaviour to understand it as there is no ambiguity.”

The findings followed 18 months of research at the US Energy Department’s Los Alamos facility, the nation’s leading nuclear weapons laboratory.

“We are very excited at the success of our research as it could have far-reaching implications for both defence and homeland security,” Haarmann said.

While scientists have trained wasps to respond to the trace of explosives, Haarmann said research with bees appeared to show more promise.

Haarmann said the bees could be carried in handheld detectors the size of a shoe box, and could be used to sniff out explosives in airports, roadside security checks, or even placed in robot bomb disposal equipment. He said the next step would be to manufacture the bee boxes and train security guards in their use.

“It would be great to start saving some lives with this,” he said.—MNA/Reuters



People leave after watching Europe’s tallest Christmas tree structure being lit for the first time on 25 Nov, 2006, at Comercio Square in downtown Lisbon, Portugal. The tree is 75 metres tall (246 feet).—INTERNET



Vice-Senior General Maung Aye hears reports on construction tasks of Yangon-Thanyin Bridge No 2 Project by Minister for Construction Maj-Gen Saw Tun. — MNA

Systematic documentation of construction ...

(from page 1)

and matters related to construction of Yangon-Thanyin Bridge No 2.

In his address, Vice-Senior General Maung Aye said that it is a heavy task to build the bridge with a six-lane motor road. The development of Thilawa Port had been undertaken to enable ocean-going vessels to berth. Likewise, the bridge is being built for ensuring better transport of loaded vehicles. It is necessary not only to systematically build the new bridge but also to use the old bridge observing the disciplines.

He stressed the need to keep systematic documentation of construction of the bridges to hand down bridge

construction technologies and experiences to new generation engineers. All are to always make inspections on bank erosion and changes of water ways near the bridge. Vice-Senior General Maung Aye called on all employees to make utmost efforts for completion of the construction tasks earlier than scheduled to be able to serve the interests of the State and the local people.

Afterwards, Vice-Senior General Maung Aye and party inspected completion of the approach bridge on Yangon bank, progress of the main bridge section and installation of pre-stressed reinforced concrete beams between pier No 7 and pier No 8 of the main bridge.

Yangon-Thanyin Bridge No 2 will have a 72-foot

six-lane motor road. The upper structure of the bridge is being built with pre-stressed reinforced concrete and the lower structure is reinforced concrete type.

The total length of the bridge will be 4,540 feet, and its clearance will be 130 feet wide and 18 feet high. The bridge will withstand 75-ton loads.

So far, the bridge is under construction with 90 per cent completion of the approach bridge on Yangon bank and 85 per cent of another one on Thanyin bank. The main section of the bridge has been completed by 70 per cent, and the whole project, 82 per cent.

After inspecting construction tasks in Ayeyawady Division and progress of Yangon-Thanyin Bridge No 2 Project, Vice-Senior General Maung Aye and party arrived back here by air this morning. — MNA

Delegates of Delegate Group of Representative-elect...

(from page 16)

of the State Peace and Development Council Lt-Gen Thein Sein and Commission members, Chairman of the National Convention Convening Work Committee Chief Justice U Aung Toe and Work Committee members, Chairman of the National Convention Convening Management Committee Auditor-General Maj-Gen Lun Maung and Management Committee members, chairmen and officials of subcommittees, delegates of political parties of National Unity Party, Union Pa-O National Organization, Shan State Kokang Democratic Party, Mro (or) Khami National Solidarity Organization, Lahu National Development Party, Union Kayin League, Kokang Democracy and Unity Party and Wa National Development Party, representatives-elect of National Unity Party and Mro (or) Khami National Solidarity Organization, independent representatives, delegates of national races from Kachin, Kayah, Kayin, Chin, Mon, Rakhine, Shan (South), Shan (North) and Shan (East) States, Sagaing, Taninthayi, Bago, Magway, Mandalay, Yangon and Ayeyawady Divisions, delegates of peasants from Kachin, Kayah, Kayin, Chin, Mon, Rakhine, Shan (South), Shan (North) and Shan (East) States, Sagaing, Taninthayi, Bago, Magway, Mandalay, Yangon and Ayeyawady Divisions, delegates of intellectuals and intelligentsia, delegates of workers from Kachin, Kayah, Kayin, Chin, Mon, Rakhine, Shan (South), Shan (North) and Shan (East) States, Sagaing, Taninthayi, Bago, Magway, Mandalay, Yangon and Ayeyawady Divisions, delegates of State Service Personnel from the State Peace and Development Council Office, the President Office, the Pyithu Hluttaw Office, the Government Office, the Supreme Court, the Attorney-General's Office, the Auditor-General's Office, the Multi-party Democracy General Election Commission Office, the Civil Service Selection and Training Board, the Yangon City Development Committee, the Mandalay City Development Committee and ministries, other invited persons, delegates from

Shan State (North) Special Region-1, Shan State (North) Special Region-2, Shan State (North) Special Region-3, Shan State (East) Special Region-4, Shan State (North) Special Region-5, Shan State (South) Special Region-6, Kachin State Special Region-1, Kachin State Special Region-2, Kayah State Special Region-1, Kayah State Special Region-2, Kayah State Special Region-3, Kayinni National Democratic Party (KNDP) (Dragon) Group, Kayinni National Progressive Party (KNPP) (Hoya), Kayinni National Unity and Solidarity Organization (Ka Ma Sa Nya), Democratic Kayin Buddhist Organization (DKBA) and Haungthayaw Special Region Group, Nyeinchanyay Myothit Group from Hpa-an Township of Kayin State, Burma Communist Party (Rakhine State Group), Arakan Army (AA), Homein Region Development and Welfare

Group, Shwepyiaye (MTA), Manpan People's Militia Group, Mon Peace Group (Chaungchi Region) and Mon Nai Seik Chan Group that had returned to the legal fold.

Before the Plenary Session of the National Convention, Chairman of the NCCC Secretary-1 Lt-Gen Thein Sein and Commission members, Chairman of the NCCWC Chief Justice U Aung Toe and Work Committee members, Chairman of the NCCMC Auditor-General Maj-Gen Lun Maung and Management Committee members, chairmen and officials of the subcommittees, delegates of political parties, representatives-elect, delegates of the National Races, Peasants, Workers, Intellectuals and Intelligentsia, State Service Personnel, and Other Invited Persons, signed attendance books at Pyidaungsu Hall and the recreation hall.

(See page 5)



Meeting Chairman and Members of Panel of Chairmen at Plenary Session of National Convention. — MNA

Delegates of Delegate Group of Representatives-elect...

(from page 4)

U Maung Gyi of Delegate Group of Representatives-elect presided over the Plenary Session of National Convention together with, Member of NCCWC U Myo Thant (Maung Hsu Shin), U Saw Philip (a) U Philip Sam of Delegate Group of Political Parties, U Maung Hla (a) U Hla Myint of Delegate Group of National Races, U Kan Nyunt of Delegate Group of Peasants, U Kyaw Win Tun of Delegate Group of Workers, Dr Maung Maung Wint of Delegate Group of Intellectuals and Intelligentsia, U Tin Kha of Delegate Group of State Service Personnel and Dr Manan Tu Ja of Delegate Group of Other Invited Persons.

Director (Meeting) U Than Aung of NCCWC Office acted as Master of Ceremonies and Deputy Director U Aung Kyi as co-MC.

The MC declared the start of meeting as 1,066 out of 1,080 delegates were in attendance, accounting for 98.7 per cent, and the plenary session commenced with the permission of the meeting chairman.

Concerning the proposals of delegates of National Unity Party of the Delegate Group of Representatives-elect, U Thein Tun, Representative-elect of Ayeyawady Division Ingapu Township Constituency-2 from the National Unity Party, said that the proposals to be submitted to the Plenary Session is the same as the proposals submitted by U Tun Yi of NUP on 27 November and thus to save the time, he would not present it to the Plenary Session and handed it to the Chairman.

Concerning the proposals of Mro (or) Khami National Solidarity Organization, U San Tha Aung, Representative-elect of Rakhine State Kyauktaw Township Constituency-2 from Mro (or) Khami National Solidarity Organization, said that the proposals to be submitted to the Plenary Session is the same as the



Chairman of NCCC Secretary-1 Lt-Gen Thein Sein, commission members and delegates at Plenary Session of National Convention.— MNA

proposals submitted by U Sein Tun of Mro (or) Khami National Solidarity Organization on 27 November and thus to save the time, he would not present it to the Plenary Session and handed it to the Chairman.

Afterwards, Independent Representative-elect Dr Hmu Htan of Chin State Thantlang Township Constituency presented proposals made by three independent representatives-elect from Chin State Thantlang Township Constituency, Shan State (South) Ywangan Township Constituency and Shan State (North) Namsam Township Constituency. The Plenary Session took a break at 9.50 am.

When the Plenary Session resumed at 10.05 am, Independent Representative-elect U Aung Thein of Shan State (South) Ywangan Township Constituency

and Independent Representative-elect U Tun Kyaw of Shan State (North) Namsam Township Constituency presented proposals on detailed basic principles that should be adopted for the chapters "Election", "Political Parties" and "Provisions on State of Emergency" to be included in drafting the State Constitution made by three independent representatives-elect from Chin State Htantalan Township Constituency, Shan State (South) Ywangan Township Constituency and Shan State (North) Namsam Township Constituency.

(The proposals will be reported.)

The Plenary Session went into recess at 11 am.

The Plenary Session of the National Convention continues tomorrow.

MNA

Prisoners at Mopalin Quarry benefit from donations

YANGON, 29 Nov — A 12-member group of a social organization went to Mopalin Quarry on 22 November and provided provisions to prisoners.

The group donated 705 packages of chicken noodles, 750 cakes of Carboloc Soap and 240 assorted magazines worth K 104,175 to male

prisoner workers and chicken noodles, soap, sweets and shampoo worth K 100,445 to female prisoners.

MNA

Proposals of Representatives-elect to be published

YANGON, 29 Nov— Proposals of Independent Representatives-elect Dr Hmu Htan of Chin State Htantalan Township

Constituency, U Aung Thein of Shan State (South) Ywangan Township Constituency and U Tun Kyaw of Shan

State (North) Namsam Township Constituency on detailed basic principles that should be adopted for the chapters "Election", "Political Parties" and "Provisions on State of Emergency" to be included in drafting the State Constitution made at the Plenary Session of the National Convention held at Pyidaungsu Hall of Nyaunhnabin Camp in Hmawby Township, Yangon Division, today, will be published in dailies.

MNA

MDA conference on 24-26 January

YANGON, 29 Nov— Myanmar Dental Association (MDA) will hold its 27th conference and 8th FDI-MDA Joint Educational Meeting at Traders Hotel here, from 24 to 26 January, 2007.

Those who want to participate in the conference and meeting may enrol on 22 to 23 January at the hotel.

Booth of dental medicine and medical equipment will be staged at the conference.

MNA

Press conference on undertakings carried out ...

(from page 16)
(The clarification is reported separately.)

Finally, Director-General Brig-Gen Khin Yi of Myanmar Police Force clarified matters

on drug control, anti-human trafficking and situation in the prisons.

(The clarification is reported separately.)

The press conference concluded in the af-

ternoon after Brig-Gen Khin Yi, Minister Dr Kyaw Myint and Minister Dr Chan Nyein replied to the queries raised by journalists. — MNA

Photographers of IPRD receive digital photographic skills

YANGON, 29 Nov — Information and Public Relations Department under the Ministry of Information conducted the digital photography course No 1/2006 at its office here, on 27

November.

A total of 10 photographers from district/township IPRDs in Yangon Division are attending the four-week course. The senior photographers of

Myanmar Photographic Society will give lectures at the course.

The course was opened with an address by Director-General of IPRD U Chit Naing.

MNA

**Donate
blood**

All this needs to be known

- * Do not be frightened whenever intimidated
- * Do not be bolstered whenever flattered
- * Do not be softened whenever appeased

Ministry of Health aims to uplift health status of the people

NAY PYI TAW, 29 Nov—*The following is the clarification made by Minister for Health Dr Kyaw Myint at the press conference on undertakings carried out in education, health and social affairs sectors of the State held here today.*

First and foremost I would like to welcome you to the press conference of the Government of the Union of Myanmar on Education, Health and Social Sectors Development Activities in Nay Pyi Taw and wish you good health and happiness.

As you are aware, western countries have indicated that Myanmar is a potential threat to peace and security of the region due to drug related problems, HIV/AIDS and other diseases and had been listed in the agenda for discussion at the UN Security Council. The internal and external destructive opponents accused Myanmar with allegations that lack evidence which I would like to respond by presenting to you the real situation of health development in Myanmar.

First and foremost I would like to inform you that the Ministry of Health is implementing all-round development of the health sector to uplift the health standards of the people according to the National Health Plan. According to the social objective which states “Uplift of health, fitness and education standards of the entire nation” development and upgrading of the health care services are implemented in line with the National Health Policy. The Ministry of Health has **two main objectives** — to enable every citizen to attain full life expectancy and enjoy longevity of life and to ensure that every citizen is free from disease. These objectives are being fulfilled by **three strategies** — widespread dissemination of health and information and education to reach the rural areas, enhancing disease prevention activities and

providing effective treatment of prevailing diseases.

Myanmar being one of the member states of the ASEAN developed and is implementing the thirty-year long-term plan: **Myanmar Vision 2030**, according to guidelines of the **ASEAN Vision 2020**.

In line with the objectives of the **thirty-year long-term plan** the Ministry of Health aims to uplift the health status of the people, to render communicable diseases no longer public health problems, aiming towards total eradication or elimination of diseases and also to reduce the magnitude of other health problems, to foresee emerging diseases and potential health problems and make necessary arrangements for the control.

Currently, the fourth five-year short-term **National Health Plan (2006-2011)** is being implemented with 12 major programme areas which encompass 66 projects.

As part of the National Health Plan interventions to improve the health care coverage and provision of quality health care to the entire nation inclusive of the rural areas is being implemented.

The **Special Four Year Plan for Promoting National Education (Health Sector)** is to upgrade the level of medical and health professional education was implemented in 2000-2004. The Ministry of Health carried out faculty development programmes, public health initiative programmes, expansion of teaching hospitals, upgrading and expansion of universities, upgrading of Universities of Traditional Medicine and upgrading Medical Research and Development programmes.

As majority of the total population reside in the rural areas in Myanmar the **Rural Health Development Plan (2001-2006)** was developed and implemented. As this plan is one of the five components of the National Rural Development Plan the

Ministry of Health works in collaboration with other related ministries.

As in many other countries, AIDS, TB and malaria primarily also affect the working group in Myanmar. As these diseases can result in negative impact on economic, social and development of the country, **these three diseases are considered as diseases of national concern and treated as priority**. It is determined to tackle these diseases with the main objectives of reducing the morbidity and mortality related to them, to become no longer a public health problem, and to meet the Millennium Development Goals.

Milestones in HIV/AIDS

- Study on prevention and control activities on HIV and AIDS was initiated in 1985 in Myanmar
- National AIDS Committee was established in 1989
- National AIDS Control Programme was formed in 1989. Working Committee, state/division/district and township level committees were also formed in the same year.
- Short-term plan systematic technical efforts were started in 1989.
- HIV sentinel surveillance was started in 1992
- Prevention of mother-to-child transmission programme was initiated in 2000
- 100% condom use programme started in 2001
- Public sector anti-retroviral therapy for people living with AIDS started in 2005
- Nationwide coverage for blood safety achieved in 2004
- National level exhibition on HIV and AIDS exhibitions conducted in 2003 and 2004
- External review on health sector response to HIV and AIDS

conducted in 2006 — The National Strategic Plan (2006-2010) approved in 2006

The first AIDS case, in Myanmar, is a sailor who came back from abroad in 1991. The Ministry of Health, Myanmar, WHO, UNAIDS Headquarters, Geneva, jointly held an estimation workshop in 2004 to eliminate number of people living with HIV/AIDS in the country. The workshop has estimated that there were a total of 338,911 people living with HIV/AIDS in 2004. In addition, a workshop on HIV/AIDS projection and demographic impact analysis conducted in September 2005, it was noted that **HIV prevalence in Myanmar has reduced from 1.5% in 2000 to 1.3% in 2005**. HIV is a virus that can cause AIDS. After being infected with HIV, a person will develop signs and symptoms and become an AIDS patient on the average of 7 to 10 years. Based on the HIV prevalence study among different population groups, it was found that there is an East-West gradient; HIV prevalence greater in the eastern part than the western part of the country.

The National HIV/AIDS programme has been implementing with 10 major activities.

Educational activities are being carried out in two approaches: general population approach and

targeted population approaches. Workplace education, women to women peer education programme, and youth peer education programme are also conducted through the health workers in collaboration with Union Solidarity and Development Association, Myanmar Women’s Affairs Federation, and international NGOs and local NGOs, to reach the rural population. In 2005, health education on HIV and AIDS has reached a total of 550,000 people. In addition, education messages are being expressed in journals and magazines on the average of 30 published articles per month.

For school health education programme, with the collaboration of Ministry of Health, Ministry of Education and UNICEF, SHAPE (School based Healthy Living HIV/AIDS Prevention Education) programme is implemented a part of the core curriculum in (134) townships since 1998 and 2.4 millions of students had been educated in schools during 2005. Currently, national life skill curriculum containing HIV and AIDS messages are conducted in all schools.

One of the remarkable achievements in health education activity is the outstanding success achieved in National Level HIV and AIDS Exhibitions that were conducted in 2003

and 2004. These are one of a kind among the ASEAN countries. “World AIDS Day” activities were yearly conducted and 15th annual activities will be held in Myanmar this year. Chairman of the National Health Committee, Secretary-1 of the State Peace and Development Council, will deliver the opening address on World AIDS Day.

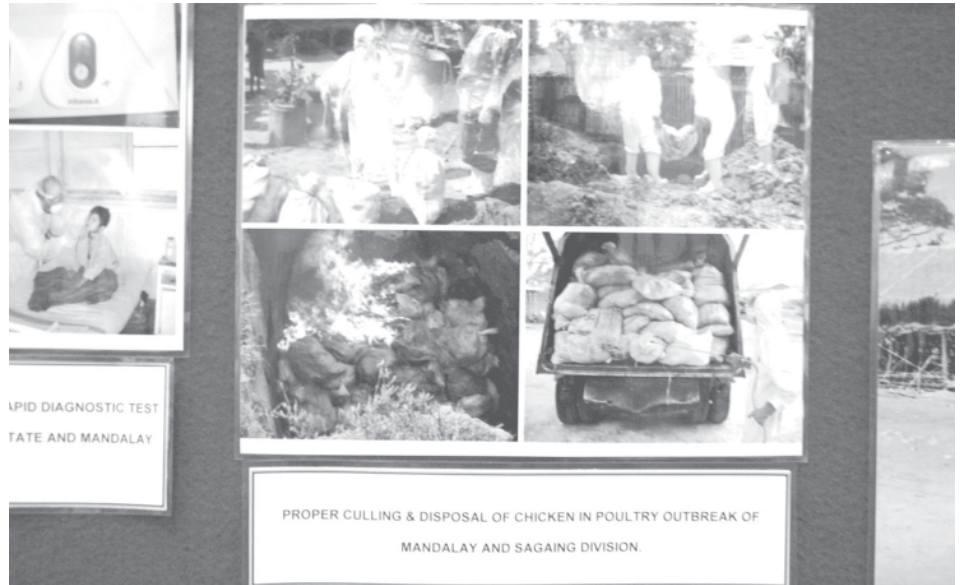
Before 1988 there were only 36 STD teams that carried out the STD prevention and treatment, but currently there are 45 AIDS/STD teams in the country.

Before 1988, **100% targeted Condom Promotion Programme** was hardly implemented. Today, 100% TCP is being implemented in 165 townships in partnership with 4 UN agencies and 15 International NGOs. Although only about 11 million condoms were being distributed in 1999, 40 million condoms were distributed in 2005.

National AIDS Committee and National AIDS Programme have technical and administrative linkages with Central Committee for Drug Abuse Control (CCDAC), Ministry of Home Affairs, Myanmar Anti-Narcotics Association and UNODC.

Harm Reduction Activities for Intravenous Drug Users—With the support of WHO, the Ministry of Health has launched methadone

(See page 7)



Documentary photos showing progress and endeavours undertaken by Ministry of Education, Ministry of Health and Ministry of Home Affairs in education, health and social affairs sectors. — MNA

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maintenance therapy as a harm reduction project in pilot areas such as Yangon, Mandalay, Myitkyina and Lashio since February 2006. These activities are carried out in collaboration with Ministry of Home Affairs, Central Committee for Drug Abuse Control (CCDAC) and this work has been recognized by AusAid. In 2005, a total of 10,000 injecting drug users have been educated and 1.1 million of disposable syringes and needles were distributed.

Prevention of Mother to Child Transmission (PMCT) was launched in 2000-2001, and as of November 2006, in cooperation with UNICEF, UNFPA, WHO and local and international NGOs the community based PMCT has been implemented in (89) townships, and hospital based PMCT in (37) State/Divisional and District Level Hospitals. By doing so, (130,000) pregnant women were tested for HIV during 2005.

Blood Safety Programme—Before 1988, the HIV test kits were not available in all the hospitals. At present, it is now able to conduct blood safety programme in all 324 township hospitals.

According to **Access for all** on HIV and AIDS education, information and prevention and care and support activities, the HIV infected patients and their affected families are now provided with counseling, treatment with antiretroviral drugs and home based care and support.

Voluntary Counseling Confidential and Testing—A total of 200,000 clients received counseling in 122 VCCT centres during 2005. In addition, public sector ART have been provided in 13 hospitals in various townships including Waibagi Specialist Hospital and Mingaladon Specialist Hospital in Yangon. Five international NGOs such as AZG and MSF (Switzerland) were also providing antiretroviral therapy in partnership with Ministry of Health.

During 2006 a total of 2,500 AIDS patients has been treated with antiretroviral treatment and about 10,000 patients have been planned to provide ART to 4000 patients during 2007 and 2008. Treatment for opportunistic infections has been providing through all state and divisional hospitals in the country.

Community Home Based Care—With the collaborative efforts of Ministry of Health, related Ministries, local and international NGOs and community based organizations, Community Home Based Care for PLHIV and AIDS, TB and chronically ill patients are being provided in the country. As community initiatives, the organizations such as Union Solidarity and Development Association, Myanmar Women's Affairs Federation, Myanmar Maternal and Child Welfare Association, Myanmar Red Cross Society, Myanmar Medical Association, Myanmar Nurses Association, Myanmar Health Assistant Association, Auxiliary Fire Brigades, etc are actively involved in such activities. During 2006, with the introduction of such services in Yangon and Magway Divisions now it has been planned to expand these activities throughout the country.

Besides the Ministry of Health, Ministries of Education, Labour, Rail Transportation, Social Welfare, Relief and Resettlement, Mines, Information, Hotel and Tourism are actively implementing HIV and AIDS prevention and control activities, along with private sectors and community based organizations.

Myanmar is also contributing to the regional and international efforts against HIV and AIDS. Myanmar is one of the active members in the ASEAN Task Force on HIV and AIDS (ATFOA) and also **Mekong Region Collaborative Activities**.

A total of 17 local NGOs, 19 international NGOs, 1 bilateral agency and 7 UN organizations have been participating in the national response against HIV and AIDS in the country.

As part of the special project activities, TB-HIV collaborative activities: Myanmar-China, Myanmar-Thailand, Cross border activities are also conducted. As bilateral collaborative activities for AIDS, TB and Malaria, bilateral activities have been carried out in 16 townships of Myanmar-Thai border since 2000.

I would like to quote from the latest **AIDS Epidemic Update, December 2006 issue** published jointly by UNAIDS and WHO — In Myanmar there are early indications that the epidemic might be diminishing

(Wiwat, Brown, Calleja-Gaura, 2005). HIV levels have declined among pregnant women (1.3% from 2.2% in 2000, NAP 2005) and among men seeking treatment for other sexually transmitted infections (from 8% in 2001 to 4% in 2005, NAP 2005)

Tuberculosis remains one of the major public health problems in Myanmar and ranks as a major priority disease to be controlled. It is estimated about 100,000 new TB patients develop annually and about half of them are infectious cases.

Although TB used to be treated as a long term chronic disease the WHO recommended Directly Observed Treatment Short Course (DOTS) strategy was introduced in 1997 requires short term treatment for TB DOTS expansion could cover the whole country (324 townships) by end of 2003. This is due to the joint efforts of the Ministry of Health, WHO and International Union Against TB and Lung Diseases (IUATLD)

Strategies of NTP

1. Intensification of health education
2. BCG immunization to all children under one year
3. Early case detection through direct sputum microscopy of chest symptomatic patients attending health services and also contact tracing
4. Implementing Directly Observed Treatment (DOT) up to the grass-root level
5. Regular supervision and monitoring of NTP activities at all levels.
6. Strengthening partnership
7. Capacity building
8. Promotion of operational research

The DOTS program coverage in 2002 was for 300 townships but with DOTS expansion it now covers the whole country (324 townships) by end of 2003

National TB Reference Laboratory was established in 2001. Case detection has been strengthened by replacing monocular microscopes with binocular microscopes at the township level since 2000. Only 6 State/Divisional TB centers were equipped with **X-ray machines** before 1988. Now all TB centers in 17 States/Divisions are equipped with **X-ray machine**. Community home based care services are provided in collaboration with MWA and MMCWA. Health education on TB, TB contact tracing, referral of TB suspects for diagnosis and treatment (Directly Observed Treatment) by members of local NGOs. NTP aims to improve the case detection in the community and factories by using mobile teams, equipped with X-ray and laboratory facilities in 2006. Free diagnosis and treatment is provided. In 2005, TB and HIV collaborative prevention and control activities were started in Mandalay. In 5 townships of Mandalay District, HIV co-infected TB patients have been assessed and put on Anti-retroviral therapy (ART) since May, 2005 Two hundred and fifty TB/HIV co-infected TB patients are currently on ART. Those activities will be expanded to the areas of mutual concern of NTP and National AIDS Programme (NAP).

TB case detection-Myanmar achieved 95% case detection rate and 84% treatment success rate in 2005.

Malaria-The Global Malaria Programme is a global response to re-emergence of Malaria and in Myanmar is still a disease of national concern. Thus, the following are the strategies for National Malaria programme.

- a. Prevention and control of malaria by providing information, education and communication up to the grass root level.
- b. Prevention and control of malaria by promoting personal protective measures
- c. Provision of early detection and containment of epidemics
- d. Provision of early diagnosis and appropriate treatment
- e. To promote capacity building of malaria control programme (human, financial and technical)
- f. To strengthen the partnership
- g. To intensify community participation, involvement and empowerment
- h. To promote basic and applied field research

Regarding health education programme on malaria control, different approaches have been carried out such as individual and group health talks, by distribution of pamphlets and posters, advocacy and awareness raising activities, mass media, articles and scripts in weekly journals, magazines and development and distribution of special educational materials for national races in border

areas.

Myanmar has adopted **New Antimalarial Treatment Policy** since 2002 and so, supplies such as Rapid Diagnostic Test (RDT) and drugs for Artemisinin Combination Therapy (ACT) have been distributed to 324 townships in Myanmar.

For prevention of malaria, insecticide impregnated nets were not distributed before 1988, 50,000 Long Lasting Insecticidal Nets (LLIN) has been distributed annually since year 2000 to hard to reach areas of national races. 70,000 LLIN was distributed in Kayah State in year 2000. Around 300,000 to 400,000 existing bed nets were impregnated with insecticide annually since year 2000 and 679,000 bed nets were impregnated in 2006.

Malaria epidemic prevention and control activities such as distribution of LLIN, insecticide spray, blood smear examination and provision of appropriate treatment with mobile teams were carried out in border areas, including Wa and Kokang Special Regions during 2000 and 2006.

Due to these efforts trend of malaria morbidity and mortality has been decreasing at present time. Malaria morbidity per 1,000 population was reduced from 24.5 in 1988-1989, 14 in 2002-2003, 11 in 2004-2005 to 9.3 in 2005-2006. Malaria mortality also decreased from 10.4 per 100,000 population in 1988-1989, 4.7 in 2003-2004, 3.6 in 2004-2005 to 3.1 per 100,000 population in 2005-2006.

Malaria epidemics were reported 12 times in 1990s and because of the surveillance, preventive activities like insecticide spray in epidemic prone areas, impregnation of existing bed nets and early diagnosis and appropriate treatment of malaria cases, number of reported malaria epidemics also decreased and only one malaria epidemic occurred in 2005.

The success of malaria control programme in Myanmar is due to the concerted efforts of UN agencies, bilateral partners, national and international NGOs and local communities.

To enhance Myanmar's response to HIV/AIDS, TB and Malaria the Global Fund for Fight Against HIV/TB and Malaria granted 98.4 million US\$ for a period of five years.

However, due to allegations made by internal and external opposing forces the Global Fund had unilaterally terminated without strong grounds or evidence on the 18th August 2005. Termination of the Global Fund to Myanmar has negative impact on the people in need, and the Ministry of Health refutes the reasons given for termination. Myanmar concludes that this termination is against the values and principles embodied in the United Nations Millennium Declaration. However, after the termination the Ministry of Health continues to work in collaboration with the UN systems, national and international NGOs, donors in implementing diseases prevention and control activities nationwide. The effectiveness of concerted efforts is evidenced by successful prevention and control programmes in all three diseases.

In recognition of the efforts and achievements made by the Ministry of Health in the various fields of health six donor countries which are UK, EC, Netherlands, Sweden, Norway and Australia agreed to form the **Three Diseases Fund** which will support the National Strategic Plan developed for HIV/AIDS, TB and Malaria. For implementation of activities a Memorandum of Understanding between the Ministry of Health and UNOPS, as Fund manager was signed on the 12th October 2006 for a total of 99.5 million US\$ over a period of five years.

The success of the Three Diseases Fund is due to the joint efforts of the Ministry of Health, related Ministries, UN organization and NGO partners and the Ministry of Health would like to stress that opposing political party and organizations in no way were contributory towards the success of the three diseases fund.

Leprosy- Myanmar was one of the countries with high endemicity of leprosy and was a public health problem in olden days. The consequences of leprosy are physical deformity which renders the patients to face socio-economic problems. Thus, the National Leprosy Control Programme was started by the government and introduction of Multi-drug-therapy (MDT) has resulted in increased yearly cure rate.

Due to integrated efforts the total number of 204,282 registered cases with the prevalence of 53.4 per 10,000 population in 1987 was dramatically reduced to

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27.6 in 1990, 1.04 in 2002, 0.51 in 2003, 0.49 in 2004, 0.48 in 2005.

In Yangon on the 6th February 2003, at the 3rd Meeting of the Global Alliance for Elimination Leprosy (GAEL) Myanmar declared Leprosy Elimination. In the "Yangon Declaration" issued at this meeting, *the Government of the Union of Myanmar was congratulated for setting a shining example by effectively applying the global strategy and reaching the national goal of elimination in a most cost-effective manner.* After leprosy elimination we are now working to sustain the leprosy elimination level and prevent physical disability for those affected by leprosy, and incorporation of rehabilitation programmes.

Communicable diseases are more common in developing countries and cause high rate of mortality among young children. Prevention of vaccine preventable diseases has been carried out by expanded immunization programme. The expanded immunization programme is given to children all over the nation with a coverage of more than 90% and the programme includes 7 vaccines against Diphtheria, Pertussis, Tetanus, Polio, Measles, TB and Hepatitis B.

In Myanmar **Polio** eradication activities were initiated using the following 4 strategies simultaneously. They are Routine immunization, National Immunization Days, Mopping up immunization and Acute Flaccid Paralysis Surveillance.

National Immunization Days strategy, it was started in 1996 and targeting about 6 million of under 5 years old children including border areas given two times of oral polio vaccine. By 2002, eight years of NIDs have been successfully completed with reported national coverage exceeding 95 % in all the years with two doses of polio oral vaccine.

The mopping up immunization strategy was conducted in the remote areas and border areas, due to the reason of wild polio virus identification in border townships in Myanmar especially in risk of importation of wild polio virus from polio endemic countries and focus is given to Myanmar-China border, Myanmar Bangladesh border and Myanmar-India border townships. These mopping up immunization days were conducted for 6 times and achieved more than 95% coverage.

With reinforcement by the above strategy to routine immunization programme such that 8 years of National Immunization Days and 6 rounds of mopping up immunization with sensitive Acute Flaccid Paralysis Surveillance, Strengthening of AFP Surveillance by active Hospital Surveillance and in 29 sentinel sites activities lead to achieve the Polio Free status in Myanmar. Myanmar had declared as polio free status since 13th February 2003.

For the National Immunization Days, every year support for cold chain and transportation has been received from the government sector. The Ministry of Defence arranged helicopter for transport of vaccines and cold chain equipment for far and hard to access areas such as Kachin State, Putao District and Sagaing Division, hilly Naga area.

Preparedness plan was initiated in Myanmar by Ministry of Health on the 20th January 2004. Joint meetings for detailed Plan of Action of MOH and Ministry of Livestock and Fisheries were conducted and steering committee, work committees and subcommittees were formed and tasks delegated.

From early March to mid-April 2006, the outbreaks of H5N1 bird influenza occurred in 545 chicken and quail farms in 13 townships in Sagaing and Mandalay Divisions. 650,000 birds were culled and 180,000 eggs destroyed and affected farms were disinfected to prevent further spread.

The outbreak situation was immediately announced by the government to the OIE, FAO, WHO and the international community.

The MOH and Livestock Breeding and Veterinary Department investigation and rapid response teams were dispatched to the affected areas within 24 hours after the in-country tests confirmed H5N1 positive.

Ten suspected human cases were observed at the affected divisions by active case search. Samples were also sent to the WHO Reference laboratory in Japan for confirmation and the results were also negative.

During the outbreak hospitals and wards for isolation and quarantine of contacts and suspected patients

were designed. Tamiflu, personal protective equipment (PPE), disinfectants as well as guidelines and protocols in containment, response and laboratory diagnosis, were dispatched to the affected areas.

Due to effective prevention and control measures no new outbreaks in poultry was reported since April 6 and restrictions were on poultry transportation in and out of the effected zone was lifted on 26 April 2006. In **11-9-2006, OIE declared Myanmar was free from H5N1.** As of today there is no confirmed human avian influenza cases reported in Myanmar.

On 18th October 2006, Dr David Nabarro, UN's senior coordinator on avian influenza visited Myanmar to assess country specific efforts on prevention and control of I and pandemic preparedness and response.

During a press conference Dr Nabarro said that, Myanmar's effort against bird flu is impressive & the current level of vigilance is high and Myanmar has been very active in its efforts to contain bird flu. He also said, "There has been total openness in communicating with the officials of the UN system on issues to do with avian influenza, and we are very satisfied with the way in which the Myanmar authorities responded."

Public health services comprising preventive primary health care approach, maternal and child health, and nutrition activities are carried out by the rural health care centres, district health centres with nationwide coverage inclusive of the border areas.

In 1988-89, there are 1337 Rural Health Care Centres which increased in 2005-2006 to 1,456, and the Secondary Health Centres expanded from 64 in 1988-89 to 86 in 2005-06.

The nationwide movement for **Iodine Deficiency Disorder Elimination** included advocacy for adding iodine into salt was started in 1996. The Ministry of Health working in collaboration with the Ministry of Mines has attained considerable level of success. Visible goiter rate among 6-11 year old school children before 1988 is 33 % and in 1997 was 25%, and dropped from 12% in 2000 to 5.5% in 2003-04. The target is less than 5%. Proportion of household consumption of iodated salt was 73% in 2003, target is more than 90%, Median urinary iodine excretion for the whole country was 236ug/l in 2003-4. The target is more than 100ug/l.

The Ministry of Health working in collaboration with local authorities, Ministry of Education, Ministry of Mines, Ministry of Information, and other organizations for a state of Iodine Deficiency Elimination is hoped to be announced in the near future.

Elimination of Drug Abuse Programme- The

Communicable diseases are more common in developing countries and causes high rate of mortality in young children. Prevention of vaccine preventable diseases has been carried out by expanded immunization programme. The expanded immunization programme is given to children all over the nation with a coverage of more than 90 % and the programme includes 7 vaccines against Diphtheria, Pertussis, Tetanus, Polio, Measles, TB and Hepatitis B.

Ministry of Health has a 15 years long term (1999-2013) programme for drug treatment and rehabilitation programme. According to the Narcotic Drug and Psychotropic Substances Law there are 26 major Narcotic Drug Treatment Centres and 40 minor Drug Treatment Centres and two Rehabilitation Centres in Myanmar. Treatment, care, training and research are being carried out in the major DTC in Yangon, Myitkyina, Mandalay, Lashio, Taunggyi, and Kengtung. In places where is no drug treatment centres the township health centres take care of the treatment.

Within the 15 years drug abuse elimination project period, (1999-2003) four major drug treatment centres and 26 minor drug treatment centres were expanded and 30 Township Hospitals were able to provide drug treatment and rehabilitative services to the patients.

Life expectancy- the most important health indicator is an increase of life expectancy at birth in Myanmar. In 1988 rural male is 56.2 years, female 60.4 years, urban male 59.0, female 63.2 years. In 2003, the life expectancy for rural male 61.5, female 67.4, urban male 62.1, female 66.2 years.

Curative Services

After 1988, with development of technology more hospital bed is made available for areas with high population density specially the districts with rapid economic development. Building of new hospitals and upgrading of hospital in terms of technology, specialty, drugs and equipment support. In addition, **Border Health Development Scheme** was development and health personnel, drugs and equipment were support to the new clinic and hospitals in these areas.

The total number of hospitals in 1988-89 is 631 all over the nation and in 2006 October it has **increased to a total of 832.**

In the border areas there are 60 Sub-Township Hospitals and as part of the Border Areas Development Programme 79 hospitals. 105 clinics and 58 rural health centres and 140 sub RHC were opened.

The Government of the Union of Myanmar for all round development designated 24 development zones for implementation of development projects. The Ministry of Health has **at least one 200 bedded hospital** in each development zone and to provide quality health care to the local population. Human resources, diagnostic facility, equipment and drugs are to be supported.

Renal Transplants was conducted in Yangon since 1997 and as of today there are a total of 24 successful kidney transplants. In 1993, successful surgical separation of conjoined twins were conducted.

In 2004 a 35 year old patient had undergone successful liver transplant and the patient is still alive.

The Myanmar surgeons had collaborated with German Interplast, American Interplast, and Singapore Interplast. Japanese Cleft Palate Foundation. Surgical teams from Austria, Belgium and other International institution since 1998 and up till today successfully operated on 2,486 patients with congenital cleft palate deformities.

Myanmar surgeons only, and together with the Maternal and Child Welfare Association operated on 4,527 patients with cleft palate deformities.

The Department of Medical Sciences plans and develops human resources for health which includes doctors, nurses, midwives and other health professionals to provide quality health care according to the National health Plan.

There were only three Medical Universities before 1988 and now we have four under the Department of medical Science. Similarly after 1988, two Universities of Nursing, two Universities of Medical Technology, two Universities of Pharmacy, and one University of Community Health were expanded and opened totaling to 13 Health Professional Universities.

Due to expansion of health professional institutions were able to increase our intake of students and produce more towards our health work force. Before 1988 the annual output of Universities of Medicine is 550 and in 2007 the output will be 2,400. Universities of Dental Medicine used to produce 60 per year are now producing 300. Similarly, Nursing training schools have increased their output from 300 to 1,200, Midwifery training schools from 400 to 1,050.

Post-graduate degrees of international standard are being conferred within the country by conducting 29 Masters degree courses, 23 Diploma courses for in-services training, 2 Diploma courses for private dental surgeons and 3 Diploma courses for private doctors was conducted. 30 Doctoral courses for Clinical subjects and 7 PhD courses for Para clinical subjects were opened in 1997.

The number of medical doctors in 1988-89 is 12,268 increase to 18,725 in 2005-06.

Similarly, the total number of nurses in 1988-89 is 8,349, increases to 19,922 in 2005-06. The midwives produced till 1988-89 was 8,121 were increased to 16,699 in 2005-06.

Conclusion

In spite of all our efforts towards providing comprehensive health care the external and internal opposition, destructive elements, have published, deliberately, deceptive accusations without grounds. The Ministry of Health would like to respond with sincerity and conviction that, with concerted efforts of all our partners of the UN Agencies, the national and international non-governmental organizations and active participation of our communities we will attain higher level of success in providing quality health care to our people according to the changing needs and context of our nation. —MNA

Building a modern and developed nation through education

NAY PYI TAW, 29 Nov — *The following is the clarification made by Minister for Education Dr Chan Nyein on progress of education sector at the press conference on undertakings carried out in education, health and social affairs sectors of the State held here today.*

It is my pleasure to present to you the progress made by the government and the people for the development of Education sector. Purposely neglecting the real progress and good endeavours made by Myanmar Government and the people, a western nation raised at the UN Security Council that Myanmar Agenda should be discussed. In fact Myanmar is making unprecedented

3. use modern teaching aids effectively,
4. to respect and abide by rules, regulations, disciplines and laws,
5. to nurture and strengthen patriotism and Union Spirit.

Next I will introduce to you, opening of new basic education schools in Myanmar for increase in accessibility of basic education.

To give easy access of basic education to every school-age children, irrespective of where they live, many new basic education schools are opened all over Myanmar. Increase in number of basic education schools compared to the number in 1988, that is before this Government, is as follows.

From these statistical data of schools, and school density, it can be clearly seen that the Government and the Ministry of Education of Myanmar are making every effort to deliver right of education to every citizen of Myanmar. This is what the Government is doing for basic education and similarly the Government has built new colleges, universities all over Myanmar for the higher education sector and new hospitals for public health sector. At the same time upgrading of existing schools, universities, colleges and hospitals are taking place.

To promote easy access and to increase transition rate of students

children for the primary schools. Under the Ministry of Education, there are 1,534 Pre-schools and 29,497 children are attending. As you see accessibility to basic education is offered from pre-school level to Matriculation level covering urban as well as rural and border areas. Neglecting or pretending not to know this very important development in accessibility of education, opposing persons are fabricating news that there is not enough accessibility of education especially in border areas.

After opening schools all over Myanmar, the next step is to ensure that all school-age children attend school. According to school calendar, all schools in Myanmar start the academic year on June First of every year, last week of May of each year is designated as "School Enrollment Week" and school enrollment campaigns are launched on a nation-wide scale. Officials of the Ministry of Education, regional authorities, the Union Solidarity and Development Association, Myanmar Women's Affairs Federation and Myanmar Maternal and Child Welfare Association take part in activities of school enrollment week.

Donations are made in cash and kind by wellwishers and NGOs during school enrollment week. Due to these efforts, enrollment of 5+ children in grade I increase from 91% in 2000 to 97.84% in 2006.

It is important that for children who are handicapped or blind or deaf and dumb get special care and attention for education under Inclusive Education Programme. Also for children who, for various reasons, cannot attend formal schools are accepted in learning circles under non-formal education programmes. Under inclusive education programme, there are 21,520 students who are studying under special programmes.

Some workers, such



Minister for Education Dr Chan Nyein. — MNA

as forest workers, move from one place to another with the family frequently, due to the nature of work. Mobile schools are opened to give the opportunity of learning for children of mobile workers. There are 43 mobile schools with 58 teachers and 1,603 students in 15 townships.

The Government and Ministry of Education are paying attention not only to the formal education, emphasis is equally placed on Education for All Programmes. This includes literacy campaigns which have been carried out successfully for decades to raise the literacy rate of the nation.

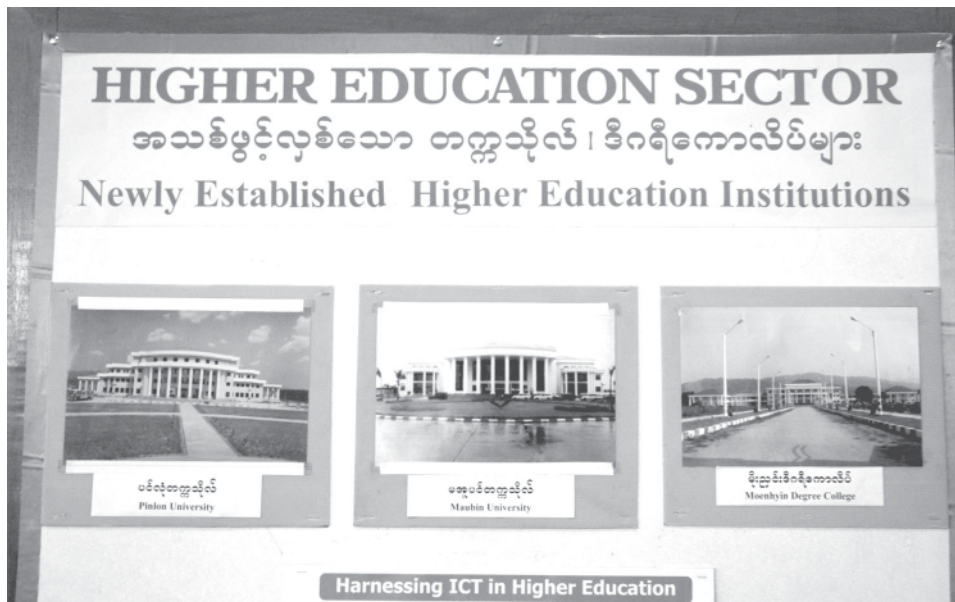
I would like to take this opportunity to draw your attention to the progress and decline of literacy rates in Myanmar from the previous century. During the period of Myanmar Kings, as quoted in 1947 UNICEF Report, literacy rate in Myanmar was 85% before 1886. After that the literacy rate drastically fell to around 35% during the colonial period. After independence the literacy rate rose again to around 63%. Due to continued efforts of successive Governments after independence the adult literacy rate was gradually on the rise year by year, and it now stands at 94.35%. Now it is clearly seen who has done for the Myanmar education and who has degraded or neglected Myanmar education. With the effort of the Government, and the participation of the people and NGOs, Union

Solidarity and Development Association, Myanmar Women's Affairs Federation and Myanmar Maternal and Child Welfare Association, literacy campaigns are carried out in summer every year where thousands of volunteers serve as teachers. Due to its very successful literacy campaigns, Myanmar won the Mohammad Reza Palavi Prize in 1973 and Noma Prize in 1983.

In terms of quality of education, every effort is made by the Government and by the Ministry of Education to ensure that quality education is delivered to the students both at basic and higher education levels. These efforts include teachers' training, teachers' refresher courses, upgrading and updating of curricula and syllabuses, use of modern teaching aids, teaching and assessment methods.

There are 2 education Universities and 20 Education Colleges for teachers' training. Education Universities are offering graduate degrees in Education from Bachelor Degree in Education to Masters levels who are serving as qualified teachers at secondary levels in Basic Education Schools. At the same time, 20 Education Colleges confer Diploma of Education and these Diploma holders are serving as Primary Teachers.

In addition Masters degree holders in other disciplines are recruited and are trained in Education Technology Certificate (See page 10)



Harnessing ICT in Higher Education

The documentary photos show newly established higher education institutions. — MNA

progress in socio-economic sector as well as helping maintain regional peace and stability. This briefing is to present the real social sector progress made by Myanmar Government and the people from education view point.

Let me state with the vision of Myanmar Education, which is "To create Education System that will generate a Learning Society capable of facing the challenges of Knowledge Age". Our Motto is "Building a modern and developed nation through education".

Let me introduce to you the guidance made by the Head of State Senior General Than Shwe: -

1. to ensure teacher quality,
2. to upgrade syllabuses and curricula to international level,

The number of high schools increases from 722 in 1988 to 2,045 in 2006, nearly 3 times that of 1988.

The number of middle schools increases from 1,696 in 1988 to 2,601 in 2006, nearly 1.5 times that of 1988.

The number of primary schools increases from 31,329 in 1988 to 35,893 in 2006. Total number of basic education schools is 40,548, with an average school density of 3 schools per 5 villages or with average of 1 school at 1.4 miles distance.

Special attention has been paid to providing school facility in border areas. In border areas there is a total of 1,034 Basic Education Schools with 5,875 teachers and 183,264 students.

from Primary to Secondary level, Post-Primary Schools are opened. Primary schools are upgraded to Post-Primary Schools in areas wherever necessary. After opening the post-primary schools the transition rate from primary to secondary level increases from 68.5% in 2000 to 78.3% in 2006.

Affiliated Schools and Branch Schools are allowed to open so that students who have difficulty to go to another school to attend higher classes have the opportunity to continue studies at the same schools.

For the development of Primary Education, pre-schools are opened since 1998. Pre-schools are becoming popular among parents to prepare their

Building a modern and developed...

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Courses at Education Universities to serve at secondary levels. Moreover refresher courses are opened for basic education teachers during summer time to upgrade teaching and teachers' quality. These proper training and retraining programmes enhance teachers' quality.

To have effective education system, international level curricula and syllabuses must be in place in line with modern developments and national requirements. Education curricula and syllabuses are reviewed every year and updating and upgrading are made where and whenever necessary. I would like to take this opportunity to say that our basic education curricula and syllabuses are at least in par with "GCE" curricula and Syllabuses, which are widely accepted internationally. In some science subjects our curricula and syllabuses cover more than "GCE" O Level.

In addition to academic subjects, physical education, sports, aesthetics (Arts and Music), Morals and Ethics, Union Spirit, Life Skills (that is health education/HIV/AIDS), and pre-vocational subjects are also taught and emphasized. This clearly shows that Myanmar Education system is in par with regional and international level. Myanmar education emphasizes not only on academics but also on healthy living, morals ethics, union spirit and life skills.

In addition to promoting teachers' quality, every effort is made by the Government and the Ministry to use modern teaching aids to upgrade teaching and learning quality. Modern teaching aids are provided at basic education schools starting from primary levels. Almost all of the primary schools have been equipped with at least audio teaching aids, and some primary schools have full multimedia teaching aids. Almost all of the secondary schools have been equipped with audio, video, computer and multimedia teaching aids. All high schools have been equipped with science laboratories to have hands on experience with science experiments in science teachings.

In line with modern teaching methods and to promote child's creativity, analytical skills, critical thinking and problem solving skills, child-centered approach was introduced beginning from 2004-05 academic year.

Assessment methods also play an important factor in determining the quality of education. Continuous Assessment and Progression System (CAPS) was introduced in Myanmar Education System in 1991 with the collaboration of UNICEF. This system is used up to lower secondary level. Under Continuous Assessment and Progression System, if the students do not progress as they should, immediate remedial measures can be taken and learning be made more effective.

In addition to accessibility and quality, diversity is also an important factor in education sector. In basic education sector, beginning from academic year 2001-02 choice in combination of subjects is offered. High schools students can choose three subject combination from the following subjects:

Physics, Chemistry, Biology, Geography, History, Economics and Optional Myanmar.

As you see, the government is making all-out efforts successfully for its citizens to have universal basic education by opening schools everywhere with qualified teachers, with modern teaching aids and using modern teaching methods. This proves that the accusations made by opposing groups are pure fabrications.

Let me introduce briefly about the development in Higher Education sector as well. Before this Government, there were only 32 universities and colleges, offering limited academic programmes, in Myanmar. With the socio-economic development of the nation, more universities and colleges are opened to give students more chances for tertiary education after Matriculation. Now there are 156 universities and degree colleges located the length and breadth of Myanmar. Ministry of Education has 64 universities and colleges, Ministry of Science and Technology has 56, Ministry of Health has 14, Ministry

of Defence and Ministry of cooperative each has 5, Ministry of Culture has 2 Forestry, Agriculture and Irrigation, Livestock Breeding and Fisheries, and Civil Service Selection each has 1 University. State and Division wise, each State and Division has at least 3 universities or degree colleges for Arts and Science, Technological and computer studies. Development Zones wise, each of the 24 development zones has 1 Arts and Science University, one Technological College, 1 Computer College and two bed Specialist Hospital. You can clearly see the effort and achievements of the Government in the regional development on education and health sectors for its people.

The number of teachers for higher education also increased from 5,638 in 1988 to 11,252 in 2006, while the number of students increased from 36 thousands in 1988 to 428 thousands in 2006. This clearly shows that accessibility to higher education is increased many times or many folds for the citizens for Myanmar irrespective of where they are living. Now students in border and remote areas have the same accessibility as those in urban areas. As the accessibility increases the number of university graduates produced increased from 458 thousands in 1988 to 1.22 million in 2006.

Universities and Colleges in Myanmar are offering, in addition to regular academic programs, diversified, multi-disciplinary, quality programmes in various fields to meet national and regional demands and requirements and for the development of students' careers in new field of studies.

Universities and Colleges under Ministry of Education are now offering 193 academic programmes including 21 PhD programme, 65 Masters Degree programmes. The number of academic programmes offered is ever increasing in line with modern developments.

Under Human Resources Development Programmes, academic and skill development trainings are offered for those who wish to continue to study or acquire additional skill irrespective of the age. Human Resources Development Program is transforming Myanmar into life-long learning society to meet with the challenges of the knowledge age.

Allow me to mention briefly about research programmes of our universities and the established research centres. Universities' Research Centre was established in 1985 and is equipped with latest and Modern Research Equipment, such as Electron Microscopes, X-ray Diffraction Spectrometer, X-ray Reflection Spectrometer, Atomic Absorption Spectrometer, etc so that researchers from Universities and Government Organizations can effectively carry out their research work using these facilities.

Asia Research Center was established in collaboration with Korea Foundation for Advanced Studies or various disciplines in Yangon University.

Aquaculture Research Center was established at

Mawlamyine University to promote research in Aquaculture.

Biotechnology Research Center was established in 2000 at Patheingyi University for biotechnology researches focusing on production of bio-fertilizers and on medicinal plants.

International cooperation and collaboration are important for regional and international developments. Here are some of the international and regional activities:

Yangon University and Yangon Institute of Economics are members of ASEAN University Network and are cooperating in regional Higher Educational activities.

Center for History and Traditional Culture of South East Asian Ministers of Education was established at Yangon in the year 2000, and is the focal center for research and training programmes in history and traditional culture of ASEAN nations.

Recently held international seminars, conferences and workshops are as follows:

- (i) Winter School in Physics,
- (ii) Myanmar German Conference on Scientific Computing,
- (iii) International Workshop on Nuclear Physics,
- (iv) Conference on Environment Impact on Human Kinds,
- (v) Conference on Continuous Assessment on Environmental Development.

To ensure quality and international standards for PhD programmes, experts from international institutions are invited to act as co-supervisors or external examiners. Twenty-eight professors from India, 8 professors from Germany, 6 professors from Japan, 2 professors from Korea, and 1 professor from USA have visited Myanmar for PhD Programmes. Up to this year 706 students have been awarded PhD Degrees while 2,942 students are pursuing for PhD degree.

In conclusion, under the guidance of the Head of State, the Ministry of Education has extended accessibility of Education by opening new schools, universities and colleges in quantity and quality so that Myanmar citizens, irrespective of where they live, can have easy access to quality basic and higher education. Life-long learning opportunities have been created to enable each and every citizen to continue learning and to face the challenges of today and tomorrow.

Thus the accusations by opposing groups that Myanmar Education System has limited accessibility, quality and diversity are totally wrong. Their allegations are without roots and without proofs, just the sheer cheap fabrications aiming to discredit the government and trying to undermine the sincere efforts of the Myanmar people. Their lies and fabrications will not hinder the Myanmar endeavours for development of Myanmar Education nor reduce the momentum for the development of Myanmar socio-economic sector.

MNA



The documentary photos show newly established higher education institutions. — MNA

Ministry of Science and Technology making efforts to carry out research and development programmes for national economic development

NAY PYI TAW, 29 Nov— *The following is the clarification made by Deputy Minister for Science and Technology U Kyaw Soe at the press conference on undertakings carried out in education, health and social affairs sectors of the State held here today.*

The Deputy Minister for Science and Technology presented the present status on the human resources development programmes and activities under the Ministry of Science and Technology.

He said that, the guidance of the Head of State, the Ministry of Science and Technology has been implementing human resources development programmes for Science and Technology since its establishment on 2nd October 1996, in order to build a peaceful, modern and developed nation.

The Ministry of Science and Technology has been making efforts to carry out research and development programmes for the national economic development to strengthen the national economy utilizing the national resources and to raise the living standard of the people; to enhance production in agricultural and industrial sector through technology transfer and distribution of knowledge gained from research and development work; to plan and carry out human resources development so as to get specialists and professionals in science and technology; to carry out tasks such as laboratory analysis, quality control and

standardization of industrial raw materials and finished products; and to conduct applied research on the utilization of atomic energy.

The Ministry of Science and Technology comprises six main Departments. Among them, Department of Advanced Science and Technology and Department of Technical and Vocational Education are conducting undergraduate and graduate courses on various fields in technology and computer studies.

Department of Advanced Science and Technology comprised four Technological Universities, two Universities of Computer Studies, one Myanmar Aerospace Engineering University, and 24 Government Computer Colleges.

Department of Technical and Vocational Education comprises 26 Government Technological Colleges, and 11 Government Technical Institutes.

In line with the guidance of the Head of State, in order for every qualified citizen to be able to learn and study the advanced sciences and technologies, the Ministry of Science and Technology, until March 2006, has established new universities, colleges and institutes, which include Mandalay Technological University, Pyay Technological University, West Yangon Technological University, University of Computer

Studies (Mandalay), Myanmar Aerospace Engineering University, 26 Government Technological Colleges, 24 Government Computer Colleges, and one Government Technical Institute. There are currently 68 Universities, Colleges and Institutes altogether under the Ministry of Science and Technology.

Not only the regular courses that have been available before the establishment of Ministry of Science and Technology, but also new advanced under graduate and post-graduate courses, including doctoral courses in Engineering, Applied Science, Bio Technology and Computer Studies, become available now at the Technological Universities, Colleges, Institutes and Departments under the Ministry of Science and Technology.

The Ministry has been making efforts to provide the qualified scientists, engineers and technicians required for the nation in a short time as much as possible. Altogether 149,651 persons have been trained and offered degrees or certificates by the Universities, Colleges and Institutes under the Ministry of Science and Technology.

The qualified and competent teachers are appointed to fulfill the required teaching staff at the Universities, Colleges and Institutes under the Ministry of Science and Technology. The number of teaching staff has been increased from 269 staff in

1988 to 4,682 staff in 2006. Among them, 361 teaching staff are the holders of doctoral degrees.

The Universities, Colleges and Institutes newly established are providing increased capacity of accepting and training more students and trainees. The number of students attending at these Universities, Colleges and Institutes has become 59,215 in 2006, compared with 5,220 in 1988.

In addition, the Ministry of Science and Technology has sent its staff and qualified students in Engineering and Computer Studies to foreign countries for further studies, training, and for attending international seminars and conference. Altogether about 2034 staff were sent abroad during the period (1997-2006).

Altogether 491 technical papers have been published in the international technical journals, or presented orally in the international Conferences and Seminars, by the staff from Engineering and Computer Studies Departments of Technological Universities, Government Technological Colleges, Universities of Computer Studies, and Government Computer Colleges during the period from 2000 up to the present.

Altogether five international Conferences have been held in Myanmar since the establishment of the Ministry of Science and Technology. Four of these International Conferences were organized by the University of Computer Studies (Yangon) and the other one was sponsored by Japan. In these Conferences, (351) technical papers from Myanmar, and (137) international papers including those from India, Japan, China, Korea, and Australia, were presented.

In accord with the guidance of the Head of State, the Ministry of Science and Technology has constructed the new main three-storey buildings for Universities, Colleges, and Institutes. The total project cost for constructing



Deputy Minister for Science and Technology U Kyaw Soe. — MNA

the main school buildings in 35 Universities, Colleges of Institutes, amounts to about 45,875 million Kyats.

In order to modernize the Technological Universities, Technological Colleges, and Institutes, Universities of Computer Studies, and Computer Colleges in Myanmar so that they will be of international standard, modern advanced laboratory equipment for research work and materials for teaching aids have been imported and supplied to them.

A total of about 19 million US dollars and 4 million Euros has been spent on advanced laboratory equipment, teaching aids, and machines for research, during the period (1999-2006). Moreover, an average of 1,400 million kyats per year has been spent on domestically-produced advanced laboratory equipment, teaching aids, and machines.

For the practical works of the technological students, modern advanced workshop machines including the Computer Numerical Control (CNC) machines, such as CNC Lathe, CNC Milling Machine, and CNC Machining Center, have also been bought and installed. By using these CNC machines, courses that combine theoretical knowledge with practical applications have been conducted and the required equipment for laboratories has also been produced. About

859 trainees have been trained in the courses on Auto CAD and CNC Applications from 2002 up to the present.

As Master's and Doctoral Research Programmes, emphasis is given to those projects that will be useful in rural area development and industrial development of the nation.

For the development of rural areas, under the close supervision of the Minister for Science and Technology, research works are being carried out on the production of natural fertilizers, liquid fish fertilizers, and biofertilizers; Tissue Culture; supplying power to households in the Country side by using biogas; construction of Gasifiers utilizing rice husk and woodchips; production of Biodiesel; the manufacture of 22 HP engine for general applications in Agriculture; etc.

For industrial development, research activities are being carried out on modeling and construction of Computer Numerical Control Machine; modeling and construction of medium-sized Engines and Gear Box; modeling and construction of Electronic devices used in industry; modeling and construction of induction Furnace and induction Hardening Machine, etc.

The research and development activities being carried out at the Universities of Computer Studies include translation (See page 12)



Those attending the press conference on undertakings carried out in education, health and social affairs sectors of the State. — MNA

Myanmar believes peril of narcotic drugs endangering not only the people of Myanmar but can annihilate entire human race

NAY PYI TAW, 29 Nov— *The following is the clarification made by Director-General Brig-Gen Khin Yi of Myanmar Police Force on Myanmar's endeavours to eradicate narcotic drugs at the press conference on undertakings carried out in education, health and social affairs sectors of the State held here today.*

Myanmar unreservedly believes that the peril of narcotic drugs is something that is endangering not only the people of Myanmar but a menace that can annihilate the entire human race around the world. Myanmar has thus embraced the elimination of narcotic drugs as our national cause and has strengthened all our efforts towards this end. Additionally, the endorsement and support of our nationals as well as the friendly cooperation of our international partners have resulted in unremitting achievements in Myanmar's strive to eliminate narcotic drugs.

Although we are triumphant in the drug elimination front, I am sure that the members of press agencies and distinguished guests gathered here recognized that, as recent as in September 2006, there were moves to include in the agenda of the United Nations Security Council, an item entitled "Situation in Myanmar". The reason why we are holding this press conference is for you all to understand the unity that existed between the Government and people of Myanmar throughout the country's history, to counter measures that are directed to interfere in the internal affairs of our country through pressures exerted on the United Nations by turning a blind eye to the country's achievements in eliminating drugs and to fully realize the actual evolution of Myanmar's undertaking to eliminate narcotic drugs.

In the motion tabled by a powerful western country, we find that narcotic drugs is being cited as one of the alleged problems in Myanmar. All these are based on the allegations contained in the "Presidential Determination" submitted annually to the United States Congress which stated that Myanmar:

- has failed to adhere its obligations under international counter narcotic agreements;
- is the second largest producer of illicit opium;
- is not controlling the increased ATS production effectively and is thus threatening its neighbouring countries with the dangers of these drugs;
- has been unable or unwilling to curb drug activities by the United Wa State Army and has failed to take action against (8) UWSA leaders which were indicted by a US District Court;
- has not effectively implemented the money laundering law promulgated since 2002 and;
- has not taken measures against the corrupted officials of judiciary organizations, enforcement agencies and the military.

This calls for an urgent need to plainly understand Myanmar's initiatives to eliminate narcotic drugs to differentiate whether these allegations conform to the actual situation or not.

Insurgent groups active along the border areas then, due to their political, religious and racial prejudices, took arms as their revolutionary process. However, for their daily livelihood and their organizations' long term survival, the majority were involved in narcotic drugs trade in one way or another.

To realize the prescribed national cause, the

Tatmadaw (Military) launched large scale operations in the areas dominated by insurgents during the period of 1976 to 1988. Major operations code-named Moe Hein, Nga-Ye Pan, Taung Yan Shin, Taung Hteit Pan and Aung Moe Hein were launched to destroy poppy fields and opium refineries during which 93 Tatmadawmen lost their lives and 531 injured. In addition, two major operations named Mong Kyut and Bar Gyan were launched after 1988 to wipe out drug traffickers. Following illicit drug elimination operations during the period September 1988 to 1998, 259 Tatmadawmen lost their lives and 937 got injured. These incidents clearly demonstrate the level of sacrifice taken to wipe out the threat of drugs here in Myanmar.

In 1989, the Government established the Central Committee for Development of National Races and relevant Sub-Committees with the intention to develop the border areas that have lagged behind the mainstream of the country. This led the insurgent groups to realize the good intention of the Government and 17 armed groups returned to the legal fold to join hands with the Government to work together for the development of their respective regions. For the effective elimination of illicit drugs, our national leader laid down 2 strategies to strive relentlessly to eliminate narcotic drugs as a national cause and to upgrade the living standards of our national races which will eventually cease and to upgrade the living standards of our national races which will eventually cease the practice of poppy cultivation. To effectively implement these two strategies, three tactics and three implementation methods were also been prescribed.

Three tactics are:

- supply elimination;
- demand elimination;
- law enforcement

The three implementation methods are:

- to change the motives and improve the spiritual well being of the cultivators, producers and users of narcotic drugs.
- to improve access and interactions between the national races living in high and low lands and;
- to enhance the living standards of national of national races residing along border areas.

The ultimate aim for developing border areas is to decrease and eventually to eradicate poppy cultivation. Starting from 1989, this process was initiated through the establishment of the Central Committee for Development of Border Areas and National Races, relevant working committees and subcommittees who will in turn implement short, medium and long term projects nation wide. The Ministry of Progress of Border Areas and National Races and Development Affairs was established with an expanded mandate in 1992 and on 13 August 1993, the Law on Progress of Border Areas and National Races was promulgated and efforts to eradicate poppy cultivation had been an overriding thrust since then.

The increased momentum initiated by the State to develop areas along the borders and to increase the living standards of national races prompted groups of different national races to cooperate earnestly with the Government in eradicating poppy cultivation. In this connection, Eastern Shan State Special Region (4) Mong La launched a six-year project in 1991 and on 22 April 1997, proclaimed their region to be an opium free zone and opened a museum in commemoration of their achievement.

On 27 December 2000, the Kokant Special Region



Brig-Gen Khin Yi of Myanmar Police Force.—MNA

(1) Laukkai also opened a museum to commemorate the efforts of eradication of drugs. This Special Region (1) successfully eradicated poppy cultivation since 2003 and its national leaders have been cooperating with the Government for developing their region through alternative development interventions in both agriculture and livestock breeding sectors.

Like wise, as we all are aware, the Wa Special Region (2) has become a region free from illicit poppy cultivation area since 2005.

We firmly believe that the problem of drug abuse is a grave threat to our entire population of Myanmar. In this context, since 1999 we have embarked upon a 15-year drug eradication program to be totally free of poppy cultivation and drug abuse by 2014.

Similarly, within the ASEAN region, our common objective is to establish a Drug Free ASEAN by 2015. We in Myanmar are determined to make our country freed from illicit drugs by 2014 and will be mobilizing the strength of our fellow country men to work towards this end through our 15-year program.

Our 15-year program comprises three 5-year phases as follows:

- the first 5-year phase is from 1999/2000 to 2003-2004;
- the second 5-year phase is from 2004/2005 to 2008/2009 and;
- the third is from 2009/2010 to 2013/2014.

The first phase covered 22 townships within the northern, eastern and southern Shan States and the second phase will be covering an additional 20 townships within the Shan and Kachin States. With another 9 townships within the Southern Shan, Kachin, Kayah and Chin States to be covered in the third phase, there are a total of 51 townships that are earmarked as priority areas for interventions. Today, we are in the second year of the second 5-year phase of our 15-year program.

The estimated cost for the entire 15-year program is around 33588.14 million kyat and 150 million US dollars. We have yet to receive any concrete commitments to support this program from any foreign countries and would like to take this opportunity to inform you all that Myanmar
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from English to Myanmar language using Myanmar Unicode by Natural Language Processing (NLP) Project; setting up e-Learning Centres, e-Resource Centres, e-Library and Computer Training Centres at universities and colleges under the Ministry; Electronic Data Broadcasting System; and Video-conferencing System.

For science and technological collaboration, the Ministry of Science and Technology signed agreements with People's Republic of China, Republic of India, Republic of Korea, and Islamic Republic Pakistan.

Yangon Technological University and the University of Computer Studies are actively cooperating with international research institutes and organizations by signing the Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) in order to straighten the research and development of science and

technology sector and computer studies.

The Ministry of Science and Technology has been making great efforts to raise the education standard of the nation and has been able to provide highly-qualified graduates in Technology and Computer Studies by nurturing qualified and competent teachers; making the technical education level of students in urban and rural areas equivalent by sending qualified and competent teaching staff to universities and colleges throughout the country; purchasing laboratory equipment, teaching aids, and other research facilities; and carrying out research and development projects.

As a result of the above efforts, highly-qualified students and teachers have been able to carry out research in their relevant specialized fields successfully. They have been able to submit technical papers on their research results to International Journals and International Conferences. The papers have been accepted for publication, as well as presented

in the International Conferences.

In conclusion, with the capacity of qualified and competent teachers we have, utilizing modern academic course syllabus and curriculum, using advanced teaching aids, and carrying out research and development activities, the Ministry of Science and Technology has been making efforts with accelerated momentum to achieve advancement in science and engineering of the country, and to obtain the technological expertise essential for the country to become a modern and developed one.

The Ministry will continue its efforts in human resources development activities, as well as efforts in carrying out research systematically and successfully on rural area development, industrial development, health and education in the nation.

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will nevertheless, rely on our own natural as well as human resources to make this program a success as part of our effort to realize our national cause.

For our first 5-year phase of this drug elimination program, we have spent a total of 676 million kyat for developing the agriculture, livestock breeding, transport, communication, energy, trade, religion, health, education, knowledge dissemination, rehabilitation, law enforcement and international relations sectors.

To supplement our 15-year drug elimination program, we have also launched the New Destiny Project. This pilot project aims to introduce crop substitution programs to replace poppy, and to eventually eradicate poppy cultivation.

Four Deputy Minister from the Ministries of: Agriculture and Irrigation; Livestock Breeding and Fisheries; Home Affairs and; Progress of Border Areas and National Races and Development Affairs are being entrusted with the task of making this New Destiny Project a success.

These four Deputy Ministers who are also members of the Central Committee for Drug Abuse Control are making rounds within the five States that form an integral part of the project to meet with States' authorities at different levels, leaders of national races and native farmers to distributing: seedling free of charge on crops to be substituted; animal stocks for livestock breeding that would thrive well in respective regions and; basic commodities such as rice and salt of farmers who have stopped cultivating poppy.

Myanmar's coordinated efforts to eliminate illicit drugs are being crowned with success and this has been reflected in the annual World Drug Report of the 2005 United Nations Office on Drug and Crime (UNODC) which explicitly stated that:

- A potential of 1097 tons of opium was produced from an estimated 105,000 hectares of poppy cultivated in 2001; A potential of 828 tons of opium was produced from a estimated 81,400 hectares of poppy cultivated in 2002 resulting in reduction 23,600 hectares of cultivation i.e 28% decrease in cultivated areas;

- in 2003, a further decrease of 24% observed in total cultivated areas through a potential production of 810 tons of opium from 62,200 hectares of poppy cultivation;

- only 370 tons of opium was recorded from a total estimated 44,200 hectares of poppy cultivated areas in 2004 i.e 29% reduction in cultivated area and 54% reduction in production;

- in 2005, only 312 tons of opium was potentially produced from a total estimated 32,800 hectares of poppy cultivated areas which is a reduction of 59%. In total there is a decrease of 61% in poppy cultivated areas within a five-year period.

UNDOC, together with CCDAC reported the results of their 2006 yield surveys within the Golden Triangle region that encompasses Myanmar, Thailand and Laos during the press briefing held at the Sedona Hotel in Yangon, Myanmar on 13 October 2006. It reported that in Myanmar.

- production of opium stands at 315 tons from an estimated 21,500 hectares of cultivated areas indicating a decrease 34% compared to last year;

- compared to the total cultivated areas of 130,000 hectares in 1998, the decrease is 83% in total cultivated area in Myanmar.

In addition, the report of Counter Narcotic and Crime (CNC) from the United States officially stated that, compared to 1996 figures, Myanmar produced only 292 tons of opium from its 3,088 hectares of poppy cultivation during 2004 indicating a decrease of 88% in heroin production. From all these reports, we can fairly access the high level of success Myanmar is enjoying through our drug elimination programme.

I would further like to explain the efforts between Myanmar and China to jointly monitor opium cultivation in northern parts of Myanmar through satellite remote sensing. The Deputy Minister of the Ministry of Home Affairs, Central Committee for Drug Abuse Control (CCDAC) of Myanmar, and the Vice Minister of Public Security, National Narcotic Control Commission (NNCC) of China, signed a Memorandum of Intention on Joint Satellite Remote Sensing and Monitoring of Opium Cultivation in the Northern Area of Myanmar on 27 May 2006. This MoU will strengthen the incumbent bilateral cooperation between Myanmar and China and result in extending technical assistance to work towards a gradual decrease in poppy cultivated areas. As part of the programme, representatives from CCDAC and NNCC held discussions in Muse on 23 November 2006 and identified to survey and verify poppy cultivation areas in Kachin and Shan States starting end of December 2006.

Though there is a marked decrease in illicit poppy cul-

tivation, Myanmar is facing an emerging problem of amphetamine type substances (ATS) like all other countries. Myanmar had never encountered ATS problem before 1996 though this issue became a cause for concern within the region since early 1990s. As early as in 1990s, there were reports on illicit trafficking of ephedrine, one of the main precursor chemicals used for manufacturing ATS and these reports were supported by seizures of large amount of ATS tablets.

ATS can only be manufactured with the aid of precursor chemicals and Myanmar is no where close to the level of development produce such chemicals. Only with the chemicals that are commercially produced in foreign countries and smuggled illegally into Myanmar by various modes and means that ATS were manufactured along its borders. Since it is almost impossible to fight the problem of ATS and opiate based drugs single handedly, Myanmar opted for international cooperation in this area.

I would now like to continue with international cooperation.

Myanmar realized that the problem of narcotic drugs cannot be effectively tackled or solved unilaterally and have thus cooperated with neighbouring countries as well as with countries within the region. A Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) or cooperation was signed among China, Laos, Myanmar and Thailand as early as in 1993 which later expanded to include Cambodia and Vietnam in 1995 making the MoU countries within the Mekong Sub-region.

Additionally, Ministerial as well as Senior Officials Meetings are being held regularly between China, India, Laos, Myanmar and Thailand to discuss ways and means to control precursor chemicals used in manufacturing illicit drugs.

Bilateral agreements for cooperation also exist between Myanmar and India (signed in 1993), with Bangladesh (signed in 1994), with Vietnam (signed in 1995), with Russia, Laos and the Philippines (signed in 1997) and with China and Thailand (signed in 2001).

Similarly, I am sure all the members of press agencies and distinguished guests present here are aware of the fact that we have been enjoying close and friendly cooperation with Thailand, China and India based on the MoUs on matters relating to cross-border drug control issues.

Curbing illicit drugs is perceived to be a national responsibility by Myanmar and our relentless efforts in managing the problem coupled with our cooperative efforts within the region has led to successive achievements in the enforcement sector. To cite some of our successful operations, there is Soe San Zone operation that took place in 2004 resulting in the seizure of 592.5 kilos of heroin blocs in Ye Township, Mon State; the seizure of 102.05 kilos of ICE in Yangon on 24 May, 2005 resulting from cooperation between CCDAC, the National Narcotic Control Commission of China (NNCC) and Yunnan Provincial Narcotic Control Committee and the seizure of 496 kilos of heroin blocs again in 2005.

In addition, exchange of information between CCDAC of Myanmar and ONCB of Thailand resulted in a record seizure of 14.9 million ATS tablets, 50 kilos of heroin, more than 100 kilos of No 3 heroin, 28 kilos raw opium, assorted precursor chemicals and 196 assorted arms and ammunition in Tachileik District from December 2005 to April 2006.

Furthermore, following the lead from 0.609 kilos heroin found on a Chinese (Taipei) at the Yangon International Airport in January 2005, the authorities were able to seize additional 176 kilos of ICE and managed to obtain the address of its recipient in Malaysia which was subsequently forwarded to the police authorities in Malaysia. This exchange of information led the Malaysian police to seize a mega lab or the biggest clandestine lab in the world so far in July 2006 together with 112 kilos of methamphetamine and 484 kilos of liquid methamphetamine. Regular exchange of information between Myanmar and countries within the region and neighbours on gangs involved in narcotic drugs led to the discovery of larger organized syndicates operating within the region.

I would also like to brief on some recent successful cases on drug seizures including 2 kilos of ICE, 2 kilos of ATS powder, 13 heroin capsules weighing 0.156 kilos together with 0.637 million Thai Baht and 0.365 million US \$ from 5 foreigners boarding at Mya Shwe Yi Hotel in Tachileik on 11 November 2006. On the same day, 175 capsules of ICE were seized from foreigner boarding at Nyein Chan Ye Hotel also in Tachileik. On 13 November 2006, 0.5 kilos of ICE together with US, Singaporean, Thai and Indian currencies were seized from a foreigner boarding at the old Kengtung hotel in Kengtung. This foreign drug gang has been trafficking heroin and ICE from Tachileik to Bangkok via Yangon by ingesting the drugs to avoid detection. We are working closely with Thailand in the ongoing investigation to arrest the leader hiding in Thailand.

On another case, on 18 November 2006, 2 suspects were arrested on a passenger car travelling from Lashio to Man-

dalay, with 6 blocs of heroin weighing 630 grams hidden in the hollowed out sandals they were wearing and another 600 grams of heroin concealed in their anus. Subsequent investigations by the drug units of Taunggyi, Mandalay and Yangon resulted in the arrest of 12 members of the gang with a total of 3.645 kgs of heroin. The source of the drugs turned out to be from Ruili, China just across the border at Muse and it was destined to be trafficked to Shanghai and Guangzhou of China. This gang has been using a number of couriers and trafficking the drugs by ingestion and concealment in the anus methods. From the interviews from this case, it was found out that due to stringent interdiction by law enforcement agencies in Myanmar since successful cases like Soe San Zone case, 496 case, 102 case, the traffickers have to resort to recruiting a number of couriers to traffic in small rather than big amounts to avoid suspicion and detection and using new trafficking routes. We are now working in collaboration with other law enforcement agencies to smash this international drug syndicate.

In terms of statistics, a total of 3,649.76 kilos of opium, 1,973.78 kilos of heroin, 1,473.51 kilos of No 3 heroin, 319.23 kilos of marijuana, 3019.3389 kilos of ATS tablets, 1,795.2 kilos of ephedrine with a street value of 5.71 billion US\$ were seized between the period 2004/05 to 30 October 2006 through enforcement measures. Through these incidents, you all will be in a position to judge Myanmar's efforts to eliminate narcotic drugs.

Although we have been exerting all out efforts to eliminate narcotic drugs, attempts to place Myanmar on the Security Council agenda - based on unfounded allegation - to obtain a resolution for action against the country are still very much prevalent.

The first allegation is that our country has failed to adhere to its obligations under international conventions. We would like to point out here that Myanmar is a party to international conventions on narcotic drugs. The country became a full fledged party to the United Nations Single Convention on Narcotic Drugs (1961) on 29 July 1963 which mandate the formation of a narcotic control board, determine its structure and designate its functions. Myanmar had also signed the UN Convention on Psychotropic Substances (1971) and became a party to it on 7 June 1994. This convention categorized different psychotropic substance and prescribed the rules, regulations and laws for the control of these substances. In addition we are also a signatory to UN Convention against Illicit Trafficking in Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances (1988) and became a party to the Convention on 11 June 1991. This Convention allows combat action against illicit trafficking of precursors that are connected with both narcotic drugs and psychotropic substances, encourages cooperation and approves legal reciprocal assistance between States. The 1972 Protocol to the Single Convention prescribed treatment and rehabilitation for drug users, extradition of drug criminals and revised the mandate of the International Narcotic Control Board (INCB) to which Myanmar became a party on 22 August 2003 with reservations on extradition and revised mandate of the INCB.

As a party to three UN Conventions and a Protocol, Myanmar has already established a drug control board with relevant responsibilities and put under control, 126 different narcotic drugs, 115 types of psychotropic substances and 25 different precursor chemicals in accordance with the provisions prescribed therein. For precursor chemicals, only 23 different types of chemical are prescribed under category 1 and 2 for international control whereas we have added caffeine and thymol chloride a controlled chemicals.

Members of the International Narcotics Control Board (INCB) have already visited Myanmar three times over the years to discuss its adherence to the international conventions as well as to review the drug treatment and rehabilitation programs. The main task of INCB is to review and discuss whether the parties to the conventions are abiding to the provisions and the problems encountered in this process. A four-member INCB mission visited Myanmar for the first time in March 1998 for four days during which members of the delegation met and discuss with senior officials from CCDAC, Department of Health, Chief Justice's Office, Attorney General's Office and Customs Department. Again in early September 2001, a three-member INCB mission visited Myanmar and had discussions with relevant senior officials. The third three-member INCB mission visited Myanmar recently in October 2006 during which the mission had the opportunity to meet and discuss with the Ministers and Deputy Ministers of the Ministries of Home affairs, Health and Progress of Border Areas and Deputy Ministers of the Ministries of Home affairs, Health and Progress of Border Areas and National Races and Development Affairs, members of the Central Committee for Drug Abuse Control, members of the working committees and responsible authorities of Customs Department.

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Frank and friendly atmosphere throughout the visits provided opportunities to members of the quest to eliminate narcotic drugs and the mission acknowledged the collective efforts of respective Ministries in realizing the proclaimed national cause. The INCB mission later expressed readiness to extend assistance in providing training and technical assistance to combat illicit drugs and in establishing Internet

On-line for Pre Export Notification (PEN) system in order to enhance international cooperation in controlled chemicals.

During these three visits, the INCB delegation have openly acknowledged only the achievements made in combating illicit drugs in Myanmar but failed to mention the shortcomings or problems relating to the issue.

The fact that Myanmar's adherence to international conventions and the provisions in the protocol attached thereto and the achievements made in eliminating narcotic drugs is being recognized and appreciated by the INCB mission who officially visited Myanmar again verifies that the present allegations are nothing but wrong interpretations and a damaging element to Myanmar's noble endeavours to eliminate narcotic drugs.

In addition the 20th Special Session on Narcotic Drugs of the UN General Assembly in 1998 adopted the following "Political Declaration" for member States to comply and abide by in connection with narcotic drugs for the coming decade:-

- To devote particular attention to the new trends in the illicit manufacture, trafficking in an abuse of synthetic drugs and to establish or strengthen national registration and programmes by the year 2003 giving effect to the Action Plan against Illicit Manufacture, Trafficking and Abuse of Amphetamine-Type Stimulants and their Precursors.
- To eliminate or significantly reduce the illicit manufacture of, marketing of the trafficking in the psychotropic substances including synthetic drugs and the diversion of precursors by the year 2008.
- To adopt the 2003 national money-laundering legislation and programmes in accordance with the 1998 UN Convention against Illicit Traffic in Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substance.
- To strengthen by the year 2003 multilateral regional, sub-regional and bilateral cooperation among judicial and law enforcement authorities to deal with criminal organizations involved in drug offences and related criminal activities
- To develop new and enhanced drug demand reduction strategies and programmes in collaboration with public health, social welfare and law enforcement authorities by the year 2003 and to achieve significant and measurable results in the field of demand reduction by the year 2008
- To develop strategies in cooperation with UNDP with a view to eliminating or significantly reducing the illicit cultivation of coca bush, the cannabis plant and the opium poppy by the year 2008.

Myanmar has adhered to all the recommendations and accomplished the objectives set in the Political Declaration. For the effective suppression of ATS and precursor chemicals, Precursor Control Rules had been enacted on 1 July 2004 and appropriate awareness programmes have been undertaken with the chemical industry to prevent illicit diversion. Myanmar has been also training and upgrading the capacity of law enforcement agencies to tackle the trafficking of synthetic drugs like ecstasy and ketamine monitoring the trafficking routes, mode of concealment and familiarization of samples from seizures. To counter money laundering, legislation in line with the 1988 UN Convention had been passed in 5 December 2002 and the effective implementation have been in force since. I will elaborate on this matter later on.

Concerning cooperation in judicial matters in the region, Myanmar has enacted the Mutual Assistance in Criminal Matters Law on 28 April 2004. The Rules to this Law was enacted in the same year in October. Myanmar also signed in to the Mutual Legal Assistance Treaty of the ASEAN to enhance cooperation with countries in the region. On demand reduction activities, the Central Committee for Drugs Abuse Control, the Ministry of Health are working closely with the UNODC, international NGOs expanding to harm reduction and prevention programme on HIV and AIDS from intravenous drug users.

Myanmar is already reducing poppy cultivation significantly over the past 5 years establishing opium free zones with a 15-year plan to totally stop cultivation and drug production by 2014. This has been verified by the UNODC reports which reflected an 83% reduction since 1998.

To date, Myanmar had adhered to all the recommendations and accomplished the objectives set in the Political Declaration and accordingly holds the view that there should not be any complaints from the United Nations itself.

Secondly, it has been alleged that Myanmar is the second largest producer of illicit opium in the world. In this connection, we would like to refer to the statistics highlighted

in the 2006 World Drug Report which stated that, out of the total 4620 tons of opium produced world wide in 2005, Afghanistan tops the list with a total 4000 tons amounting 89% of the overall total production. In the same year, Myanmar produced 312 tons of opium, amounting to only 7% of the worldwide production. Compared with Afghanistan, who is the largest producer of opium, there is a difference of 3788 tons -82% in terms of percentage—or 13 times more than the volume of what is being produced in Myanmar. To allege Myanmar to allege Myanmar as the second largest producer of opium without taking into consideration of the huge disparity between the first and second producers, it is nothing but a one sided fault finding exercise.

The third allegation is that we are not controlling the increased ATS production effectively and is thus threatening neighbouring countries with the dangers of these drugs. The negative vibrations of increased production and extended use of ATS is something Myanmar has to bear together with countries around the world. Almost a decade before the problem reached Myanmar, the increased production and extended use of ATS have taken its tolls in countries within the Asian region such as Thailand, Philippines, Korea and Japan. This problem actually flowed in from the neighbouring countries into Myanmar only in latter years. Unlike any other narcotic drugs derived from plant-based opium, cannabis and coca, ATS are synthetic drugs and can only be produced from precursor chemicals. Myanmar is not an industrialized country to be able to produce such chemicals and here I would like to clarify that ATS has its roots in Myanmar is a wrongful conclusion.

Myanmar had established mechanisms to systematically control precursor chemicals by enacting the precursor chemical control law and there is a close scrutiny on the chemicals imported from foreign sources Memorandums of Understanding exist between Myanmar and its neighbouring countries, China and India, for precursor control and are being implemented in close collaboration with UNODC projects. In addition, Myanmar has been actively conducting awareness programs to educate the chemical industrial as well as to those living in high risk and/or along the border areas. Moreover, Pre-export Notification (PEN) system is in place for effective control.

The volume of ATS tablets seized in Myanmar annually from the illegal influx through its neighbouring countries amounted to 5.9 million in 1996, 5.04 million in 1997, 16.02 million in 1998, 28.89 million in 1999, 26.76 million in the year 2000, 32.43 million in 2001, 9.39 million in 2002, 4.01 million in 2003, 8.4 million in 2004, 3.6 million in 2005 and in 2006 a total of 14.9 million tablets together with heroin, raw opium, affiliated equipment and arms and ammunition were seized in Tachileik District. From the time ATS problem started in Myanmar in 1996 up to this day in 2006, a total of 149.54 million tablets to ATS were seized during this one decade time frame and to allege that Myanmar is not controlling ATS effectively is totally unrealistic.

In addition, the number of tablet pressing punch machines from clandestine labs were seized during the period from 1998 to 2006 amounted to four in 1998, three in 1999, two in 2000, five in 2001, four in 2002 one in 2003, another one in 2004, two in 2005 and seven in 2006 adding to a total of twenty nine machines all together.

The order obvious indicator of stringent law enforcement is the sharp increase in the prices of drugs in Myanmar within a span of 4 years. The price of 1 kg of heroin used to be kyat 400 lakhs in 2002, which has now climbed to kyat 800 lakhs. Similarly, a tablet of ATS cost 700 kyats in 2002 while it costs 4,000 to 5,000 kyats at present. This shows that the scarcity of opium and heroin due to the decrease of poppy cultivation and opium production over the years. It is assessed that the price of ATS also rose dramatically due to successful interdictions of large quantities by law enforcement agencies.

In close collaboration with the United States Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA), the Australian Federal Police (AFP), the Central Committee for Drug Abuse Control had conducted ATS Clandestine Laboratory Investigation Training at the National Drug Museum in Yangon from 2 to 4 November 2006 in order to enhance the capacities of its Anti-drug Units. As Myanmar has continuously cooperated with countries sharing land boundaries in exchanging information and in stepping up activities to control precursor chemicals, the allegation that the problem is becoming a threat to its neighbouring countries is also unsubstantiated. The achievements in cracking down drug related crimes and the various training provided to Myanmar Anti-drug Units for combating narcotic drugs including ATS are living proofs that the allegations are groundless.

There is also an allegation that Myanmar has been unable or unwilling to curb drug activities of the United Wa State Army and has failed to take action against (8) UWSA leaders which the US Government have indicted. It should be noted that through the Government's initiative, a total of 17 armed insurgency groups have unconditionally returned to legal folds to exchange their arms for peace since after 1989. The country is now witnessing joint efforts between these groups and the Government in the quest to eliminate narcotic drugs. In this context, Mongla special region (4), Kokang and Wa special regions have already declared to be drug free zones and UNODC, CNC and World Drugs Report

have all verified that the poppy cultivation have indeed stopped completely in these areas. The Government has invested substantially, both in terms of time and efforts, to forge brotherhood with members of its nationals who have swayed along the wrong tracks in the past. The seizure of 496 kilos of heroin blocs and the punitive action taken against Aik Pan and his 49 soldiers from the UWSA who were found to be involved in this drug trade is a clear indication that Myanmar Government do not consider any groups or organizations to be above the law. This should dispel the allegation that Myanmar Government is unwilling to curb the drug activities of United Wa State Army which is a deliberate cover up of the truth to blindly forge ahead.

The latter part of the allegation by the United States is based on facts and figures dating back to the 1980s. The Wa leaders have pledged to make their region a drug free zone and were able to successfully declare to be one on 5 December 2005. Wa leaders have officially declared that all interested parties are welcomed to come observe their proclamation and requested for support and assistance as a token of understanding their shortcomings. Members of the Wa Army have confessed that there were repeated mistakes in the past but they are now in the process of rectifying them. Instead of pounding on their confessed wrong doings in retrospect, it would be most productive if everybody can come to acknowledge the present state of affairs.

Myanmar has also been alleged that it has not effectively implemented the anti-money laundering law promulgated since 2002. In this connection, the United Nations, during its 20 Special Session of its General Assembly in 1998 urged Member States which do not have existing legislation to enact anti-money laundering laws. This coincided with Myanmar's urgent need to deal with drug related cross border crimes between ASEAN members as well as between close neighbouring countries. This naturally led to the promulgation of Control of Money Laundering Law on 17 June 2002 in order to control and regulate money and property accrued from unlawful activities. For practical implementation, Myanmar subsequently adopted the implementation plan on anti-money laundering.

Later on 5 December 2003, Myanmar enacted the By-Law on Control of Money Laundering. To extend reciprocal assistance between countries on crime related matters, The Mutual Assistance in Criminal Matters Law was promulgated on 28 April 2004 followed by an enactment of By-Law on Mutual Assistance in Criminal Matters on 14 October 2004.

In addition, Myanmar had already formed the Central Control Board and Financial Investigation Unit in compliance with the Control of Money Laundering Law. The Board in turn have issued necessary directives, took steps to amend the Law and By-Law as required, established investigation teams to commence preliminary investigations, initiated international cooperation, held, round table meetings between Myanmar and Asia Pacific Review Group of the Financial Action Task Force (FATF) for closer cooperation, conducted capacity building workshops and training sessions and have established systems to exchange data and information of doubtful nature which are now operational.

As part of international cooperation, Myanmar had also signed an agreement with Anti Money Laundering Office (AMLO) of Thailand on 31 July 2005 to enhance bilateral operation. Another agreement on Mutual Legal Assistance in Criminal Matters was also signed between Myanmar and ASEAN member countries on 17 January 2006.

Additionally, Myanmar is also receiving training from an Australian based centre named AUSTRAC that provides information on money transactions of suspicious nature and has recently signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with Indonesian Financial Transactions Reports and Analysis Centre (PPAK) in Jakarta on 14 November 2006 to exchange information on money laundering and on measures to combat financial assistance towards terrorism. The Financial Action Task Force included Myanmar in the list of Non Cooperative Countries and Territories (NCCT) on 21 June 2000 and further countermeasures were taken again on 3 November 2003.

Starting from May 2004 to May 2006, seven round table meetings were held between Myanmar and the Asia Pacific Review Group of the Financial Action Task Force to discuss developments in Myanmar and the possibilities of enhancing cooperation in the field of money laundering control. This resulted in FATF withdrawing Myanmar from NCCT list recently in October.

Based on the allegations made by the United States Department of Finance, an investigation committee comprising of 8 Myanmar members was formed and launched a 15-month long investigation against the Asia Wealth Bank and Myanmar May Flower Bank. Though the Investigation Team was unable to discover concrete evidence of money laundering, circumstantial evidence from these two banks indicated the possibility and accordingly, a five-member preliminary investigation led by the Deputy Minister of the Ministry for Home Affairs again launched a follow up investigation. Based on the findings, the Ministry of Finance and Revenue revoked the banking licenses of these two banks on 31 March 2005 and were subsequently dismantled.

(See page 15)

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Don't smoke

Asleep in Jesus

Daw Marla Nwe (a) Mary Angela Abreu, Teacher (Retd), No-2 BEHS, Sangyong Aged 70 Years

Daughter of (U Masiah-Daw Nan Tin Nyunt), daughter-in-law of (A P A Abreu-Daw Saw), beloved wife of U Mya Than (Lawrece Abreu), mother of Daw Muyar Kywe (Sweetie)-(Mr Hairon Bin Mat) (Malaysia), Daw Thuzar Nwe (Plumpy), Daw Yupar Thwe (Marlene)-(Ron Marcus) (Australia), Daw Myu Hlwa Nge (Dimple)(Australia), grandmother of Nurol, Zana, Lily, Mya Phu Ngon Hlwa, Mya Phu Pwint Hlwa and Sharna, Daw Marla Nwe (a) Mary Angela Abreu of No (21), Ma Po Street, Myaynigon (North), Sangyong Township passed away at 6 pm on 18th, November, 2006 (Tuesday) at the Mahamyang Specialist Hospital. Funeral service will be held at the Hteinpin Cemetery at 2 pm on 30th, November 2006 (Thursday). Buses will leave the above mentioned resident at 12:30 pm.

Breaved family

**UNION OF MYANMAR
MINISTRY OF RAIL TRANSPORTATION
MYANMA RAILWAYS
INVITATION TO SEALED TENDER**

- Sealed Tender is invited by Myanma Railways, for supply of the following Stores which will be purchased in Myanmar Kyat;

Sr.No.	Tender No.	Description	Quantity
1.	14(T)1/MR(S&T) 2006-2007	UG Cable, Repeater, Transceiver, Relay, Exchange, Rail Joint	1-Lot (10-Items)
- Closing Date & Time -27.12.2006 (Wednesday) (12:00) Hours
- Tender documents are available at the office of the Deputy General Manager (Supply), Myanma Railways, Corner of 51st Street and Merchant Street, Botataung, Yangon starting from 27.11.2006 during the office hours.
- For further details please call: 291982,291985,(201555 Ext-601,605,612) Deputy General Manager
Supply Department, Myanma Railways, Botataung Yangon

Myanmar believes peril of...

(from page 14)

Again in August 2005, the Chairman of Universal Bank was taken action for infringement of 1993 Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances Law and confiscated his assets accrued after 2002 in accordance with Control of Money Laundering Law.

As recognition to Myanmar's efforts in combating money laundering not only within the country but also in the international arena, Myanmar was accepted as a member of the Asia Pacific Group on Money Laundering (APG) on 9 March 2006.

Actions taken in line with 2002 Control of Money Laundering Law and 1993 Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances Law are indicators that determined the allegations to be baseless as Myanmar has never neglected money laundering ventures.

On the allegations on Myanmar's non-action against the corrupted

officials of the judiciary organizations, enforcement agencies and members of its armed forces, reference is made to the Statement of Justification published by the United States Bureau for International Narcotics and Law Enforcement Affairs. It was clearly stated therein that Myanmar Government have taken action against 48 military personnel and 200 policemen during period 1995 to 2003 for their involvement in drug related matters and corruption. The report went on to state that out of 200 policemen, 130 were given prison sentences, 86 dismissed, 7 given early retirement and 47 demoted. Under the circumstances, it is surprising to encounter allegations that diverge from the reported detailed findings of the United States Bureau for International Narcotics and Law Enforcement Affairs.

During the visit of the UN special envoy Mr Ibrahim Gambari, Assistant Secretary General (Political) of the United Nations in May 2006, the ASG noted the developments in Myanmar's efforts to eliminate narcotic drugs in the last four years based on UNODC report submitted to the Security Council. The Assistant Secretary General continued that according to report, there is a 29% decrease in poppy cultivation in 2003/2004 and 26% decrease in 2004/2005. Starting from 2004, Myanmar is striving to become a drug free region and although there are

marked decreases, the country still remained the second largest opium producer in the world and added that it will be a futile exercises to decrease poppy cultivation in the absence of alternative development programmes that can compensate the income of farmers in areas where poppy is traditionally cultivated.

The earlier part of the report stated the achievements stemming from stepped up drug elimination efforts. Myanmar recognized the fact that, with the decrease in poppy cultivated areas, follow up programmes for the farmers to have access to alternative incomes, to develop their own life styles and to enhance their standards of living are fundamental requirements.

Accordingly, joint coordinated efforts between CCDAC and affiliated line Ministries are being initiated to ensure long term actual decreases in poppy cultivation.

For example, the Government has launched educational campaigns for farmers not to cultivate poppy and have distributed seedlings for alternative crops free of charge, animal stocks that will thrive well in respective areas, rice, salt and basic commodities to farmers that have given up poppy cultivation in five different regions that are under the jurisdiction of drug elimination programmes.

China is in the process of donating ten thousand tons of rice for former poppy growers which will be distributed as follows:

- Waspecial region (2)

- 4000 tons
 - Mongla special region (4) 2000 tons
 - Kokang special region (1) 2000 tons
 - Kachin special region (1) 1000 tons and
 - Kachin special region (2) 1000 tons
- Starting from September 2006, the Government has already distributed 980.237 tons of rice to Panghsan area of Wa special region (2), 500 tons to Laukkai area of Kokang special region (1) and 166 tons of rice is now in Lyzar area of Kachin special region (2) which will be further distributed.

The basic needs of the national races residing in the border areas are currently being met through regional development initiatives as well as through human resources capability development programmes. Since 1989, the Central Committee for Development of Border Areas and National Races together with working committees and sub-committees are being formed to implement short, medium and long term programmes. From 1989/90 financial year to end June 2006, the Government has spent a total of 847,53.33 million kyats for border area developments.

From 1988 to 2005, there are marked improvements in the education, health, transport and agriculture sectors. To cite particular examples, in the education sector, the number of schools has increased from 33,747 to 40,521 and the number of Colleges and Universities from 27 to 64. In the health sector, the number of hospitals has increased from 631 to 820, in the transport sector, the length of roads have increased from 13,635 to 18640 miles and the number of bridges with a span of more than 180 feet have increased from 198 to 403 bridges. In the agriculture sector, the total cultivated areas have risen from 24.8 million to 26.6 million acres with the number of dams increasing from 138 to 313 dams.

The Government has been utilizing the strength and unity of all its inherent national races in striving for progress and

development of the nation. The present situation of Myanmar and the fruits of peace and overall development that people are witnessing are incomparable to any eras throughout the country's history. In this particular phase of time when the Government and people have joined hands in unity, the threats and pressure exerted by the United States to take action against Myanmar through the United Nations platform on the pretext that it has become a threat to the stability of the region—all of which are based on unfounded allegations—are unacceptable to the Government and people of Myanmar. Myanmar is thankful to those friendly countries, ASEAN members and neighbours who stood by the truth and have brushed off those false allegations aimed at destroying the peace and tranquillity of the country. All these are expressions of unacceptability to moves aimed towards total devastation of Myanmar.

The country is now at a juncture where the people, the Government and Tatmadaw have already laid a firm foundation to strive for prevalence of law and order, for economic development and for enhanced education and general knowledge of its people which are prerequisites for the establishment of a nation where systematic democratic rule prevails. The situation in Myanmar is something that does not need to be handled by the Security Council. On the contrary, it is the use of the Security Council to interfere in the internal affairs of Myanmar that can destroy the prevailing peace and tranquillity, prevalence of law and order, national unity, multifaceted development and democratic reforms. Only then it will become a threat to peace and security of the region as well as to the international community as a whole.

To counter these developments, the united nationalism and solidarity of Myanmar nationals are much needed strength.

MNA

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Delegates of Delegate Group of Representatives-elect submit proposals on chapters “Elections”, “Political Parties” and “Provisions on State of Emergency” to Plenary Session of National Convention



Plenary session of National Convention in progress at Pyidaungsu Hall of Nyaunghnapin Camp in Hmawby Township.— MNA

YANGON, 29 NOV — Delegates of the Delegate Group of Representatives-elect submitted proposals on the detailed basic principles that should be adopted for the chapters “Election”, “Political Parties” and

“Provisions on State of Emergency” to be included in drafting the State Constitution at the Plenary Session of the National Convention which continued at Pyidaungsu Hall of Nyaunghnapin Camp in Hmawby

Township, Yangon Division, at 9 am today.

Present on the occasion were Chairman of the National Convention Convening Commission Secretary-1
(See page 4)

Press conference on undertakings carried out in education, health and social affairs sectors of the State held

NAY PYI TAW, 29 NOV— A press conference on undertakings carried out in education, health and social affairs sectors of the State was held at the Ministry of Health, here, this morning.

Present on the occasion were Minister for Education Dr Chan Nyein, Minister for Health Dr Kyaw Myint, Deputy Minister for Foreign Affairs U Maung Myint, Deputy Minister for Science and Technology U Kyaw Soe, Deputy Ministers for Education Brig-Gen Aung Myo Min and U Myo Nyunt, Deputy Minister for Health Dr Paing Soe, diplomats led by Dean of the Diplomatic Corps Ambassador of the Philippines to the Union of Myanmar Mme Phoebe A Gomez, charges de affaires ai, resident representatives of UNFPA, UNAIDS, UNICEF, WHO and UNODC, Director-General Brig-Gen Khin Yi of Myanmar Police Force,

departmental heads of ministries, news and information officials, the president, secretary and members of Myanmar Foreign Correspondents Club, editors of local magazines and journals and invited guests.

First, Minister for Health Dr Kyaw Myint clarified matters on undertakings carried out in the health sector of the State.

(The clarification is reported separately.)

Next, Minister for Education Dr Chan Nyein clarified matters on development in the education sector of the State.

(The clarification is reported separately.)

Afterwards, Deputy Minister for Science and Technology U Kyaw Soe clarified matters on undertakings carried out for nurturing human resource development.

(See page 5)



Minister for Health Dr Kyaw Myint clarifies education, health and social affairs sectors of the State at the Press Conference.— MNA