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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

Union of Myanmar
State Peace and Development Council
(Announcement No 5/2008)
2nd Waxing of Kason 1370 ME
(6 May 2008)

1. The State Peace and Development Council announced the following regions as disaster-hit regions that were struck by the cyclonic storm Nargis under Announcement No 4/2008 dated on 3 May 2008.
(a) Ayeyawady Division
(b) Yangon Division
(c) Bago Division
(d) Mon State
(e) Kayin State

2. However, due to the cyclonic storm ‘NARGIS’ that hit Myanmar on 2 May 2008, the State Peace and Development Council announced Ayeyawady, Yangon and Bago Divisions and Mon and Kayin States as the affected areas.

3. Now, some townships in the disaster-hit areas have returned to normalcy. The State Peace and Development Council hereby releases Announcement No 5/2008 on 6 May 2008 that the followings townships remain as the affected areas.
(a) Ngaputaw, Labutta, Mawlamyinegyun, Pyapon, Bogale, Kyaiklat and Dedaye in Ayeyawady Division, totalling seven townships.
(b) Tamway, South Okkalapa, Dagon (Seikkan), Dagon Myothit (South), Dagon Myothit (North), Dagon Myothit (East), Dawbon, Pazundaung, Botataung, Mingala Taungnyunt, North Okkalapa, Yankin, Thakaya, Thingangyun, Kamayut, Kyimyindaing, Kyauktada, Sangyoung, Seikkan, Dagon, Pabedan, Bahan, Mayangon, Lahta, Hline, Lammawad, Ahlon, Thanlyin, Kyauktan, Thongwa, Kayar, Twantay, Kungyangon, Kawthu, Dalla, Seikkyi Khaunaung, Insein, Mingaladon, Shwegyitha and Hlithetha in Yangon Division, totalling 40 townships.

4. The referendum due to be held in the townships stated in para (3) are postponed to 24 May 2008.

(Aung Toe)
Chairman
Commission for Holding Referendum

Let’s go to the polling booth to cast vote.

Emergence of the State Constitution is the duty of all citizens of Myanmar Naing-Ngan.
Rehabilitation tasks being carried out for the people of storm-hit areas

The cyclonic storm (NARGIS) that occurred in Myanmar claimed casualties and property in some areas in Yangon, Ayeyawady and Bago divisions and Mon and Kayin states. Now, relief and resettlement works are being carried out at the national level for rehabilitation of local people in the areas that came under the severe natural disaster.

Members of the Tatmadaw, Myanmar Police Force, fire brigade and social organizations, and staff of development affairs committees and local people are engaged in clearing the blocked roads and railroads and reconstructing tasks for removing the debris, supply of electricity and water, communication service and transport in the affected areas.

At the same time, work is under way to provide relief supplies such as clothes, rice, edible oil and grain and clean water for the victims.

Not only that, temporary clinics have also been opened to provide health care to local residents in the disaster-hit areas. Members of the Myanmar Red Cross Society are participating in the relief and resettlement service and providing relief such as blankets, mosquito nets, aluminum utensils and plates.

Now, various organizations are clearing the blocked roads and carrying out rehabilitation tasks actively under the close supervision of the National Disaster Preparedness Central Committee. So, the people, on their part, have to provide cash and kind for the affected areas to return to normal as soon as possible.

Resource: People's Desires

* 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

Union of Myanmar State Peace and Development Council
(Announcement No 5/2008)
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(6 May 2008)
(from page 1)

2. As the government has been taking relief and resettlement measures in a speedy and effective way, the following affected regions returned to normal and they have now been dropped from the list of disaster-hit regions.

(a) Bago Division
(b) Mon State
(c) Kayin State
(d) Htantaung, Hlegu, Hmawby, Taikkyi and Cocokyun Townships in Yangon Division totalling 5 townships.
(e) Pathein, Kangyidaunk, Thabaung, Kyonpyaw, Yekyi, Kyaukgyi, Thantakya, Myaungmya, Yangon, Maubin, Pantanaw, Yangon and Danbury Townships in Ayeyawady Division totalling 19 townships.

3. The following towns in Yangon and Ayeyawady Divisions continue to be designated as disaster-hit regions, and relief and resettlement measures are being taken in those regions.

(a) Tamway, South Okkalapa, Dagon (Seikkan), Dagon Myothit (South), Dagon Myothit (North), Dentway, Taunggyi, Botataung, Mingala Taungnyunt, North Okkalapa, Yankin, Thakayta, Thingangyun, Kamayut, Kyimyinda, Kyauktada, Sanyo, Seikkan, Dagon, Pabedan, Bahan, Mayangon, Latha, Hline, Lammadaw, Ahlon, Thalyin, Kyauktan, Thongwa, Kayan, Twantay, Kungyangon, Kawmu, Dalla, Seikkyi, Khaungau, Insein, Mingaladon, Shwepyitha and Hlinethaya Townships in Yangon Division totalling 40 townships.
(b) Ngaputaw, Labutta, Mawlamyine, Pyapon, Bogale, Kyai and Dedaye Townships in Ayeyawady Division totalling 7 townships.

By order
Sd / Tha Thura Tin Aung Myint Oo
Lieutenant-General
Secretary-1
State Peace and Development Council

Disaster victims in Hlinethaya Township provided with rice and cash

Minister Brig-Gen Kyaw Hsan meeting with storm victims at No 2 BEHS in Hlinethaya Township.

YANGON, 6 May — Secretariat Member of the Union Solidarity and Development Association In-charge of Hlinethaya Township Minister for Information Brig-Gen Kyaw Hsan donated bags of rice and cash to ‘Nargis’ victims in Hlinethaya Township yesterday.

He met with the storm victims at the relief camps at Basic Education Middle School Nos 7 and 8, Basic Education High School No 2 and Basic Education Primary School No 15 and provided bags of rice and cash.

In his words of encouragement, the minister said: officials concerned are arranging relief, clearance and resettlement activities in the disaster-hit areas. With the guidance of the Head of State, officials supervised by the Prime Minister visited the areas stricken by the disaster and performed tasks of relief and resettlement with great efforts. Helicopters were being used for emergency relief.

He continued that Tatmadawmen, members of Union Solidarity and Development Association and social organizations played a part in the activities. The government has been providing food, medicines and other relief supplies in time to the victims in the disaster-hit areas.

Later, the Secretariat Member cordially met those at the relief camps.

The minister donated 120 bags of rice and cash for the victims in Hlinethaya Township through officials concerned.—MNA
Azerbaijan frees Russian cargo for Iran atom plant

BAKU, 6 May — A Russian cargo detained in Azerbaijan on its way to Iran’s Bushehr nuclear plant has been allowed to cross the border into the Islamic Republic, the Azeri Foreign Ministry said on Thursday.

“The cargo has been allowed to cross over the border,” a ministry spokesman said.

Heat insulators for the nuclear plant were stopped at Astara, on the Azeri-Iranian border on 29 March, Russian officials said.

The delay raised tension between Russia and Iran, with each saying the other should do more to persuade Azeri authorities to free the cargo.

Azeri officials had said it did not have the right permit. Russia said the correct documents were supplied with the cargo.

Russia has already delivered nuclear fuel under a one-billion-US-dollar contract to build the Bushehr plant, on the Gulf coast in southwest Iran, and Iranian officials say the reactor is likely to be started up in 2008.

Russia signed a contract to build the plant in 1995 based on an earlier project begun in the 1970s by the German firm Siemens. The project was disrupted by Iran’s 1979 Islamic Revolution and the 1980-88 Iran-Iraq War.

MNA/Reuters

Nicaragua’s Ortega says US financing opponents

MANAGUA, 6 May — Nicaraguan President Daniel Ortega, a former Marxist guerrilla, accused the United States on Wednesday of financing opponents to topple his government.

Ortega, who fought US-backed Contra rebels during his first stint as head of state in the 1980s, said officials at the US Embassy in Managua were helping opponents “to try to organize protests and paralyze the country”.

“At some point we will name those members of the Yankee embassy who are putting forward millions in financing for false union leaders and fake political leaders to organize protests against the revolutionary government,” Ortega told thousands of workers ahead of Labour Day on Thursday.

Ortega, an ally of leftist Venezuelan President Hugo Chavez, said Nicaragua was still open to US investment.

He said he wants good relations with Washington since taking office in January last year, almost 17 years after he was voted out of office.

MNA/Reuters

UNSC holds open debate on threat of small arms

UNITED NATIONS, 6 May — The UN Security Council held an open debate on the threat posed by the illicit flow of small arms to international peace and security. During the meeting, Hannelore Hoppe, deputy to the high representative for disarmament affairs, presented UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon’s first-ever report on small arms.

In the report, the UN chief said that, while a build-up of small arms alone may not create the accumulation and universal availability that tends to aggravate conflicts and lengthen them. Most present-day conflicts are fought mainly with small arms and light weapons, he said. They are broadly used in inter-State conflict and are the weapons of choice in civil wars and for terrorism, organized crime and gang warfare, he noted. The report stressed the need for collaboration between the Council and the General Assembly to curb the illicit flows of arms and ammunition to crisis and conflict areas.

Additionally, it presented several recommendations directly involving the Council, including strengthening the ties between its arms embargoes and its disarmament, demobilization and reintegration efforts, as well as to further apply its practice of tying arms embargo exceptions to security sector reform.

MNA/Reuters

First talks on judiciary issue ends in Dubai

ISLAMABAD, 6 May — The first round of crucial talks aimed at resolving the judiciary issue has ended in Dubai between Pakistan People’s Party (PPP) Co-Chairman Asif Ali Zardari and Chief of Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N), Mian Nawaz Sharif, local newspaper The News reported Wednesday.

Both parties agreed to keep their coalition intact like before. However, no decision has been made with regard to the deadline of judges’ restoration, the report said.

The two parties met Monday in Dubai in a bid to work out a way to restore the judges who were sacked after 3 November, 2007 when President Pervez Musharraf declared a state of emergency in the country.

The PPP claimed that a constitutional package which would fix the tenure of office Chief Justice of the Supreme Court would go with the resolution to restore the judges. However, the PML-N insisted that the reinstatement of judges should not be linked with the constitutional package. Thus talks failed on Tuesday.

Nawaz Sharif on Tuesday evening flew to Dubai for talks with Zardari to settle the judiciary issue.

Before his departure to Dubai, Sharif said that the deadline for the restoration would expire on 30 April.

The PPP and PML-N on 9 March made a joint declaration in Murree of Rawalpindi. According to the Murree Declaration, the two parties agreed to form a coalition government in the centre and reinstate the deposed judges within 30 days since the formation of the government.

MNA/Xinhua

Democratic presidential candidate Senator Hillary Clinton speaks during a campaign stop in High Point, North Carolina, on 5 May, 2008.—INTERNET

A Russian policeman guards in front of Topol-M ICBM during a rehearsal for the nation’s Victory Day parade in Moscow. Fighter jets circled over Red Square on Monday as Russia prepared a huge patriotic display around this week’s presidential inauguration, amid rising tension with pro-Western neighbour Georgia.—INTERNET

Demonstrators shout slogans outside Bakara market in Mogadishu, on 5 May, 2008.—INTERNET

The New Light of Myanmar Wednesday, 7 May, 2008

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Relief and rehabilitation works under way in Kayin State

NAVP TAW, 6 May—Maj-Gen Tha Aye of the Ministry of Defence and CEC Member of the Union Solidarity and Development Association Minister for Mines Brig-Gen Ohn Myint together with Chairman of Kayin State Peace and Development Council Brig-Gen Zaw Min paid homage to Nyaungbintha Monastery Presiding Sayadaw Bhaddanta Vajiramuddhi and members of the Sangha and donated alms to the Sayadaw following the inspection of regional general condition along Thaton-Hpa-an motor road in a motorcade yesterday.

Next, they viewed round Nyaungbintha village and inspected minor damages of the ceiling of portico at Thaton Sub-power Station.}

Next, Maj-Gen Tha Aye together with Chairman of Mon State PDC Commander of South-East Command Maj-Gen Thet Naing Win and officials supervised clearing of fallen trees by Tatmadawmen and members of USDA and power lines repaired by staff of the Ministry of Electric Power No 2 in Thaton and gave instructions to officials to supply electricity. Next, they looked into the clearing of fallen trees by Tatmadawmen and power lines repaired by staff of the Ministry of Electric Power No 2 and gave necessary instructions.

Upon arrival at Thaton Sub-power Station, they oversaw power supply tasks and gave instructions to officials concerned to focus on power supply tasks not to cause power outage and made arrangements to fulfill the requirements. —MNA

Commander Brig-Gen Kyaw Swe distributing food and medicines donated by Royal Thai Armed Forces to a storm victim in Labutta. —MNA

Storm victims consoled and provided with relief aids

YANGON, 6 May—Chairman of Yangon Division Peace and Development Council of Yangon Command Maj-Gen Hla Htay Win went to the relief camp opened at No 15 Basic Education Primary School in Hlimethaya Township this afternoon. Chairperson of Hlimethaya Township PDC U Khin Maung Thein briefed on losses and damages caused by the storm, opening of 27 relief camps and distribution of relief supplies to the storm victims.

After hearing the report, the commander said that with the assistance of the Government, the 1 helicopter carrying cooperation with wellwishers are providing relief aids to the storm victims. Tatmadawmen, policemen, staff of Yangon Division Power Supply Board and members of social organizations are taking cooperative measures for electricity supply to enable the industrial zones to resume their operation in order that the employees will be back at work.

Next, the commander and party went to relief camps of No 7 Basic Education Middle School in Swinthu Township and No 8 Basic Education High School in No 20 Ward in Hlimethaya Township, met with storm victims and provided them with relief aids.

The Yangon Division PDC is working hard for electricity supply to enable the industrial zones to resume their operations besides carrying out the rescue works for the storm victims. —MNA

Medicines and food sent to Ayeyawady Division

YANGON, 6 May—Medicines and food donated by Royal Thai Army of Thailand were sent to Pyapon, Daytay, Bogale and Mawlamyine gun townships in Ayeyawady Division by helicopter. Director-General U Myint Tun of Fire Services department under the Ministry of Social Welfare, Relief and Resettlement, Commandant Brig-Gen Tin Maung Aye of No 1 Defence Services General Hospital (Mingaladon), Deputy Commander of Mingaladon Air Base Col Thein Naing and officials and members of Tatmadaw accepted the medicines and food donated by Thailand systematically. And these supplies were loaded onto helicopters from 2.30 pm to 3.30 pm.

On arrival at Pyapon, Chairman of Pyapon District Peace and Development Council U Myo Myint Zaw and party welcomed the arrival of No 2 helicopter and distributed food and medicines to victims.

In Bogale, Minister for Forestry Brig-Gen Thein Aung and officials welcomed the arrival of No 3 helicopter and distributed food and medicines to victims.

Likewise, No 4 helicopter carrying medicines and household goods arrived at Mawlamyine gun.

The materials donated by Thailand to those townships in Ayeyawady Division are all sorts of medicines, sausages, canned fishes and purified drinking water and noodle packages and sachets. —MNA

Minister Maj-Gen Hla Htay Oo distributes food and medicines donated by Royal Thai Armed Forces to a victim in Labutta.—MNA
Nargis victims in Ayeyawady...

(From page 16)

Moreover, the Adjutant-General saw to the transfer of fourteen patients who needed emergency medical treatment to Pathein General Hospital by helicopter.

He then handed over relief supplies, medicines and drinking water collected in Pathein Airport to the commander who supervised the rescue works in Pyinsalu.

The commander distributed them to the storm victims and arranged the transfer of 24 patients by helicopter to People’s Hospital in Labutta Township.

With relief supplies on board, the Adjutant-General and the minister inspected the transfer of Ahma in Pyapon Township and the Nargis victims in Kyaklat and unofficially instructed officials concerned to uplift the momentum of relief works.

They airdropped the supplies for the victims in Satsan village-tract in Pyapon Township. They met and comforted the storm victims in Kyaklat and instructed officials concerned to uplift the momentum of relief works.

Minister Brig-Gen Thein Aung inspects unloading of goods and medicines donated by Royal Thai Armed Forces from a helicopter in Bogale. — MNA

Staff of Myanma Railways remove trees fallen on railroads.

Clean water for Yangonites

YANGON, 6 May—Chairman of Yangon City Development Committee Mayor Brig-Gen Aung Thein Lin and officials inspected supplying clean water by cars to people of Lanmadaw, Latha, Pabedan, Kyauktada, Botataung, and Pazundaung Townships on 5 May and attended to the cyclone Nargis and fulfilled the requirements.

The Mayor inspected providing clean water to people of the 11th Street, between Anawratha Street and Bogyoke Street, and the 20th Street, between Maha Bandoola Street and Strand Road and attended to the needs.

Water available in six townships in downtown Yangon

NAY PYI TAW, 6 May—Water has been distributed to six townships in downtown Yangon.

People in Yangon experienced water shortages due to power outage caused by the storm Nargis. Respective departments made efforts to address the problem. Yesterday, with the use of two generators in the morning and three generators in the afternoon, water was fed into Mya Yeik Nyo water tank and then distributed to six townships in downtown Yangon.

So the people in these areas were able to fetch water.

Minister inspects power supply tasks in Hlinethaya, Mingaladon, Hmawby

YANGON, 6 May—Minister for Electric Power No 2 Maj-Gen Khin Maung Myint went to Hlinethaya Main Sub-Power Station in Hlinethaya Township yesterday and inspected preparations for power supply to the station.

The minister also inspected production of concrete posts at Yangon Concrete Post Production. Afterwards, the minister and party went to Mingaladon Township and inspected repairing and installation of cables.

Minister Maj-Gen Khin Maung Myint held a meeting with officials concerned at the office of Yangon Power Supply Board and gave instructions on power supply to the four districts in Yangon. — MNA

Regular rail services resume

YANGON, 6 May—There run now regular trains after rail services had suspended temporarily due to cyclonic storm Nargis on 2 May. Staff of Myanma Railways have already cleared the trees that fell on the rails. This being so, trains are running as before from Yangon to Mandalay, from Yangon to Nay Pyi Taw, and from Yangon to Dawei through Mawlamyine on 4 May evening, and from Yangon to Pyay and some commuter trains in Yangon on 5 May.

Yangon commuter trains run regularly as from today. — MNA

Mayor Brig-Gen Aung Thein Lin inspects supply of drinking water to residents in Latha Township. — VCDC
Steps being taken in two phases for regular power supply

Press conference on ‘relief measures’ held

Minister Brig-Gen Kyaw Hsan briefs on condition of relief works in areas hit by cyclonic storm ‘Nargis’. — MNA

YANGON, 6 May—A press conference on conditions of some regions of Myanmar that were struck by the cyclonic storm ‘Nargis’ and relief measures being taken was held at the Myanmar Radio and Television’s Studio (A) Hall on Pyay Road here at 11 am today.

It was attended by Chairman of Information Committee of the State Peace and Development Council Minister for Information Brig-Gen Kyaw Hsan, Minister for Social Welfare, Relief and Resettlement and for Immigration and Population Maj-Gen Maung Maung Swe, heads of departments and enterprises under the Ministry of Information, chief-editors of dailies, the Chairman of Myanmar Writers and Journalists Association, the Vice-Chairman and executives, the Patron of Myanmar Foreign Correspondents Club, the President and member correspondents, members of editorial boards of magazines and journals and guests.

In his clarification, Minister Brig-Gen Kyaw Hsan said that the severe cyclonic storm Nargis originated in Bay of Bangal as a low pressure area. The low pressure area became stronger on 27 April and a low pressure area became stronger on 2 May morning to 3 May evening. There were losses and damages in Ayeyawady Division, Yangon Division, Mon State and Kayin State, he added.

The government issued warnings to the people as to the severe cyclonic storm Nargis since 24 April through newspapers, radio and TV. The warnings of radio and TV on 1 May and that of newspapers on 2 May said that the cyclone could bring damages to north-eastern regions such as Thayawady and Yangon and to north regions such as Gwa, Pathein, Myanmarmya, Labutta, Mawlamyine, Kyun and Konmangay, Chaungtha, Ngwehsaung and Bogale, and there can be strong wind during the cyclonic storm.

The National Disaster Preparedness Central Committee was informed of the cyclone. The NDPCC was formed in 2005 to take necessary measures in case of disaster drawing lessons from the incident of Tsunami that occurred in South-east Asian region in December 2004.

In line with the warnings, cyclonic storm Nargis struck Ayeyawady Division, Yangon Division, Mon State and Kayin State from 2 May morning to 3 May evening. Therefore, there were losses and damages in Ayeyawady Division, Yangon Division, Mon State and Kayin State, he added.

Members of NDPCC led by Prime Minister General Thein Sein rushed to the cyclone-hit areas from Nay Pyi Taw soon after the meeting of NDPCC held on 3 May morning and started launching a drive for clearing debris and carrying out reconstruction and relief works. Similarly, the State Peace and Development Council issued An-nouncement No 4/2008 on 3 May and designated the affected regions, namely, Yangon, Ayeyawady and Bago Divisions and Mon and Kayin States as disaster-stricken regions under the announcement so as to be able to take the national level relief measures, he noted.

In the meantime, senior military officers led by Prime Minister General Thein Sein together with some NDPCC members are supervising the clearing and relief works in Yangon Division and other cyclone-hit states and divisions. Together with the Prime Minister, Commander-in-Chief (Air) Lt-Gen Myat Hein is supervising the relief measures by helicopter, he said.

Lt-Gen Myint Swe of the Ministry of Defence, Commander of Yangon Command Maj-Gen Hla Hay Win, members of NDPCC Ministers Maj-Gen Khin Maung Myint, Brig-Gen Lun Thu, Brig-Gen Maung Maung Thein, Maj-Gen Hla Tun, Maj-Gen Maung Maung Swe, Maj-Gen Aung Kyi, Brig-Gen Kyaw Hsan, Brig-Gen Tin Naing Thein, Brig-Gen Thein Zaw and Col Zaw Min, Deputy Ministers Brig-Gen Myint Thein, Brig-Gen Phone Swe and Dr Mya Oo are supervising the clearing and relief tasks in Yangon Division.

Tatmadaw members of No 11 LID and No 77 LID, members of Myanmar Police Force, Tatmadawmen of Yangon Command, members of Yangon Division USDA, Myanmar Women’s Affairs Federation, Maternal and Child Welfare Association, Red Cross, Fire Brigade and War Veterans Organization are participating in the campaign. Tatmadaw helicopters are being used wherever necessary, he disclosed.

In a similar manner, Commander-in-Chief (Navy) Vice-Admiral Soe Thein, Adjutant-General Maj-Gen Thura Myint Aung, Commander of South-West Command Brig-Gen Kyaw Swe and members of NDPCC Ministers Maj-Gen Aung Htut, Brig-Gen Thein Aung and Col Thein Nyunt are making field trips to supervise the clearing and relief works in Ayeyawady Division with the use of Tatmadaw helicopters wherever necessary.

Tatmadaw members of No 66 LID and Western Command, MPF members, USDA members, members of Women’s Affairs Federation, Maternal and Child Welfare Association, Red Cross, Fire Brigade and War Veterans Organization in Ayeyawady Division are participating in the drive.

Commander of Southern Command Maj-Gen Ko Ko, members of NDPCC Ministers Maj-Gen Aung Min, Brig-Gen Thura Aye Myint, Deputy Ministers Thura U Thaung Lwin and U Ohn Myint are supervising the clearing and relief tasks in Bago Division being carried out by Tatmadawmen of Southern Command, MPF members, USDA members, members of Women’s Affairs Federation, Maternal and Child Welfare Association, Red Cross, Fire Brigade and War

(See page 7)
Steps being taken in two phases for regular…

(from page 6)

Veterans Organization in Bago Division.

Maj-Gen Tha Aye of the Ministry of Defence, Commander of South-East Command Maj-Gen Thei Naing Win, members of NDPCC Ministers Brig-Gen Ohn Myint and Brig-Gen Thura Myint Maung are supervising the clearing and relief tasks in Mon State being carried out by Tatmadawmen of South-East Command, MPP members, USDA members, members of Women’s Affairs Federation, Maternal and Child Welfare Association, Red Cross, Fire Brigade and War Veterans Organization in Mon State.

Owing to collective efforts of the Tatmadaw and the people, motor roads, railroads and waterways can be serviceable and foreign and domestic airlines return to normal while the storm-hit roads and highways are now used by with traffic.

For electricity, steps are being taken in first and second phases for power supply. In the first phase, power supply to No 2 Defence Services General Hospital, Children’s Hospital, Central Women’s Hospital, Yangon General Hospital, Western General Hospital, Insein Communication Station, Insein GSM Station, Mayangon Overseas Communication Station, five CNG Filling Stations, Yangon International Airport, University of Computer Studies, Phugi Water works, Yayku Water works and Shwedagon Pagoda can be carried out.

In the second phase, 4,000 employees are repairing the power supply system and power will be distributed to complete power supply network.

Out of five water supply stations in Yangon, Gyoobyu Water Supply Station supplies water to Yangon regularly, and Phuay, Hlawa and Yegu start water supply as they have been repaired. Nyangupin Water Supply Station is under repair and it is expected to supply water within one or two days.

Seven generators — two 100-KV generators in Hlinethaya Township, two generators in Thingangyun Township, two generators in Thaketa Township and one generator in Latha Township — are being used to supply water to residents in Yangon. Arrangements have been made to bring 35-KVA, 360 KVA and 500-KVA generators to Yangon to be used in water supply tasks in Yangon.

Water supply stations on Maha Bandoola Street, at City Hall, in Thaketa, Yeku and Ahlon townships are supplying water to residents in Yangon. The connection of mobile phone system is restored to its good condition, and 100 CDMA phones have been installed in Yangon for public use and more CDMA phones will be installed in Yangon.

Regarding the prices of consumer goods, officials concerned are closely supervising the sales of household goods and foods.

Regarding loss and casualties caused by the cyclonic storm Nargis, 59 dead and 504 went missing in Yangon Division, two dead in Emme, Ayeyawady Division, 1,835 dead and 2,187 went missing in Mawlamyinegyun Township, 975 dead on Hlaingyi Island, 253 dead and 16 went missing on Khatta Island, Ahna Township, 789 dead and 172 went missing in Dedaye Township and five dead in Pyapon Township. Over 10,000 dead in Bogyale Township and over 1,000 dead in Labutta Township.

The Government earmarked K 5 billion to be spent on relief works, and aids, and assistance from the people and businessmen are required to turn the situation into normal situation as the storm caused heavy loss and damages.

Relief aids from local as well as foreign countries are needed to help victims. The Minister for Foreign Affairs, the Minister for Social Welfare, Relief and Resettlement and I also briefed Diplomats and officials of UN agencies and NGOs on conditions of the loss and damages and relief works.

Thailand will donate US $ 100,000 and relief aid to the victims and a plane loaded with relief aid from Thailand will arrive Yangon International Airport today and a plane loaded with relief aids from the People’s Republic of China will arrive here today. Relief aid from Singapore is expected to arrive here within a week and other countries have made arrangements to donate relief aid to Myanmar. We also want to express thanks to those countries which show sympathy for loss and damage of Myanmar due to the storm.

Items that are in need are tents, plastic, tarpaulin, CI sheets, clothes, drinking water, medicines, instant foods, blankets, clothes, nails and zinc sheets.

There are rumours related to the loss and damage and people should not believe them. The State-owned media has released information and news. Relief and rehabilitation works are being carried out as a national duty. People are to inform the local authority if they find those who spread rumours.

As the affected area is large, tasks to be carried out are huge. Therefore, there would be difficulties to perform these tasks. Joining hands with NGOs, the people and donors from local and abroad, the government will work hard to carry out relief and rehabilitation works until these efforts meet with success, the minister said.

Officials concerned replied to queries raised by journalists and the press conference ended.

MNA

Food and medicines donated by Royal Thai Armed Forces arrive at Yangon International Airport. — MNA

Members of the Tatmadaw remove trees on U Wizara Road in Yangon. — MNA
International organizations donate medicines, foods, cash and relief items to storm victims in Myanmar

YANGON, 6 May — Local and international organizations are donating relief supplies such as food, medicines and cash to storm victims at the rehabilitation and reconstruction sub-committee office opened at the Fire Service Department (Head Office) in Mayangon Township, Yangon Division.

Among those relief supplies are instant foods worth US$ 20,000 and tarpaulin worth US$ 30,000 donated by UNHCR; foods and medicines worth US$ 300,000 donated by World Vision.

Moreover, contacts are being made to the sub-committee office to donate relief items to the storm victims. The relief items donated are tents, medicines, water purifiers, plastics and cutters by the Bangladeshi Ambassador; 330 tent-sets each holding six people and 50 generators and accessory wires worth US$ 260,000 by the Japanese Government; instant foods and tarpaulin worth US$ 50,000 by UNHCR; rice and 18 tons of biscuit worth US$ 5 million by World Food Programme (WFP); tents, foods, clothes, mosquito nets and water purifiers worth US$ 3 million by World Vision; clothes, medicines, construction materials and tents by Save the Children Myanmar; medicines by Forciv Myanmar; tents and medicines by Mercy Relief of Singapore; US$ 100,000 by the Thai Government; two plane-loads of relief items and two war ship-loads of relief items by the Indian Government; one plane-load of relief items by the People’s Republic of China; one plane-load of relief items by Lao People’s Democratic Republic; foods, medicines and water purifying items by UNICEF (Myanmar); and tents, medicines, blankets, warm clothes and water purifiers by Universal Navigation Pte Ltd (UNPL).

Other international organizations are making offer to provide such relief aid to Myanmar. —MNA

Wellwishers may donate cash and kind to storm victims

NAY PYI TAW, 6 May — The storm cyclone, Nargis caused many losses and damages to Ayeyawady and Yangon Divisions. Those wishing to donate cash and kind to storm victims may contact District and Township Peace and Development Councils in states and divisions. —MNA

Yangon International Airport serves regular international and domestic flights

NAY PYI TAW, 6 May — Yangon International Airport was temporarily closed on 3 and 4 May. As from 5 May morning, domestic and international airlines have resumed their flights.


Deputy Minister inspects Medical Universities

YANGON, 6 May — Deputy Minister for Health Dr Paing Soe inspected University of Medicine-1 (Yangon), University of Pharmacy (Yangon) this morning. In the afternoon, he also inspected University of Medicine-2 (Yangon), University of Community Health and University of Nursing (Yangon) which were damaged by the cyclonic storm Nargis.

He instructed those responsible to continue carrying out the respective work. —MNA
NAY PYI TAW, 6 May— Military commands, social organizations and wellwishers from states and divisions are donating relief aids to the storm victims out of the national spirit.

Tatmadawmen and their families of the Eastern Command and the people of Shan State (South) donated 100,000 viss of potatoes worth K 29 million; Tatmadawmen and their families of the Central Command and the people of Mandalay Division, 90 rolls of tarpaulin, 22,000 packets of noodle, 16440 packets of varieties of snack, 4800 tins of soft drinks, 4,000 men’s wear, 4,000 women’s wear, 2500 shirts and kinds of clothing worth K 33,354,500; Tatmadawmen and their families of the Triangle Region Command and the people of Shan State (East), 150 packets of noodle, 3000 tinned fish, 72 viss of edible oil, 79 packets of kinds of snack, clothing and 3 portable sewing machines worth K 4,236,940; Tatmadawmen and their families and the people of Magway Division, 7400 viss of pulses and beans, 15000 viss of onion, 5000 viss of potatoes, 330 viss of edible oil, 300 men’s wear, 300 women’s wear and 300 blankets worth K 10,224,800 and Kanbawza Company Limited, 54000 viss of potatoes and 400,000 chicken eggs worth K 45,660,000.

YANGON, 6 May — Central Executive Committee Member of Union Solidarity and Development Association Vice-Chairman of Yangon City Development Committee Vice-Mayor Col Maung Pa went to relief centres in Dagon Myothit (East) and Thaketa townships and comforted the storm victims and distributed rice and foodstuffs to them. He also went to South Okkalapa Township and inspected the removal of trees which were fallen during the storm and supply of drinking water to storm victims in Thimgangyun Township.

NAY PYI TAW, 6 May—There have been deaths, injuries and missing in Ayeyawady and Yangon Divisions caused by severe cyclonic storm (Nargis) on 2 and 3 May. According to the latest figures of the victims up to 12 noon on 6 May, a total of 21,793 people died and 40,695 went missing in Ayeyawady Division while 671 lost their lives, 259 missing and 670 injured in Yangon Division. There have been 22,464 deaths, 670 injuries and 41,054 missing in all storm-hit regions up to now.

A ceremony to donate relief aids to storm victims organized by MWAF in progress. — MNA

Red Cross members and volunteers unloading food and medicines donated by Royal Thai Armed Forces in Labutta Township. — MNA

MWAF presents supplies in Ayeyawady Division

YANGON, 6 May — A ceremony to donate relief supplies to storm victims in Ayeyawady division by Myanmar Women’s Affairs Federation was held at the meeting hall of Ayeyawady Division Women’s Affairs Organization office on 4 May afternoon.

Patron of Ayeyawady Division WAO Daw Win Maw briefed on donation of MWAF to the victims and presented aids to each district through officials of Pathein, Myawmya and Payapun districts.

Donations included were clothes, noodles and biscuits worth K 2 million.

Red Cross members and volunteers unloading food and medicines from a helicopter in Bogale, Ayeyawady Division. — MNA

Latest casualty figures in cyclonic storm ‘Nargis’

NAY PYI TAW, 6 May — According to the latest figures of the victims up to 12 noon on 6 May, a total of 21,793 people died and 40,695 went missing in Ayeyawady Division while 671 lost their lives, 259 missing and 670 injured in Yangon Division. There have been 22,464 deaths, 670 injuries and 41,054 missing in all storm-hit regions up to now.

A ceremony to donate relief aids to storm victims organized by MWAF in progress. — MNA
Minister discusses rehabilitation tasks in Kyaihtko Township

NAY PYI TAW, 6 May—Minister for Finance and Development Association and town elders of Kyaihtko Township at the local regiment of the Township on 4 May. They cordially met with those creating unrest in his town and put their demands for the unrest in his town.

On 5 May, the minister entered the rice and provisions donation ceremony of Fatkalate village Panjyati Sarthikack of the township and donated $1 million for Dhammayan of the monastery.

Next, the minister met and gave a speech to members of the township Peace and Development Council, township commission, the secretary, executives of Union Solidarity and Development Association and town elders and officers of the ministry at the meeting hall of the township PDC.

The minister presented cash donation to the storm-hit victims.

Then, the minister inspected Myanmar Small Loans Department of the township and gave necessary instructions.—MNA

Unscrupulous persons manufacturing rumours in some townships of Yangon Division

People urged not to believe rumours and slanderous news, help expose rumour-mongers, inform immediately to authorities if they hear rumours

NAY PYI TAW, 6 May—The cyclonic storm ‘Nargis’ cost lives and property in some townships in Yangon State level officials, members of the Tatmadaw, Myanmar Police Force and social organizations and the people are carrying out relief and resettlement tasks in collaboration.

Nevertheless, some unscrupulous persons are now manufacturing rumours.

A rumour spread among those who visited Shwewodigne Specialist Clinic on Shwewodigne Street in Bahan Township, Yangon, at 6 am yesterday that an earthquake would occur soon. So, authorities concerned warned them that the rumour was groundless, saying that the people should judge the rumours with reasoning power.

Similarly, a rumour went around at midnight on 4 May that about 400 people were heading for Sanyu Township to commit robbery and terrorist acts. So, the dwellers of Linlun Ward (South), Linlun Ward (North), Moultaasanayangon Ward and Wailuwun Ward got together, strengthening security measures.

On 4 May, a rumour spread that a news market was burglarized. So, authorities concerned investigated the case and found out that it was just a rumour invented by some unscrupulous persons. In like manner, a rumour came out in Kyiymyindine Township about 6 pm yesterday that some looters would come from the other side of Kyiymyindine to the evening open air market in Eastern Magyeedantaung Ward. Therefore, officials concerned and security members had to take security measures.

A rumour that an earthquake would happen, local people came down to the streets from their houses near the corner of Strand Road and Natsin Street at about 5 pm yesterday, and about 500 people gathered. Officials concerned made an explanation that was merely a rumour. So, the people returned home at 6.30 pm.

At about 5pm yesterday in Bogalay Market in Botataung Township, a rumour spread that a news agency aired a news story that there was an earthquake between 4 pm and 6 pm. Officials concerned explained to them that it was just an invented story. Considering the storm victims to be the relatives, the government is carrying out relief and resettlement services effectively.

However, destructive elements are committing destructive activities by manufacturing rumours with the intention of creating public panic and destabilizing the State.

Therefore, the people are cautioned that they should not believe the rumours and should trust in the news stated in the newspapers and aired on radio and TV, and they are urged to inform authorities concerned if they hear rumours and help expose the rumour-mongers.—MNA

BBC journalist holding visa deported

NAY PYI TAW, 6 May—A journalist who is working for BBC was deported yesterday as he broke visa rules and regulations. Mr Andrew William Harding, a British citizen, arrived Yangon International Airport on Thai airway TG 3069 flight at 12.45 pm yesterday and showed his tourist visa to enter Myanmar. He was deported on the same flight.

Andrew William Harding also entered Myanmar with tourist visa in 2006. During his stay in Myanmar from 6 to 13 June 2006, he interviewed anti-government groups and aired false accusations and fabricated news in his undercover Burma programme. He showed his tourist visa and entered Myanmar again in 2007.

During the stay in the country from 7 to 12 September, he met with those creating unrest in Yangon and put their demands for the unrest in his broadcast.

As he broke the visa rules and regulations and entered Myanmar, he had already been black-listed.

His previous passport number when he entered the country was PP No 706358621, and he held PP 761225197 and tried to enter Myanmar yesterday. Journalists from news agencies in western countries illegally entered the country very often and made fabricated news with the help of anti-government groups.

Without taking action against the British journalist, the government deported him for the sake of friendly relations between the two countries. —MNA

Members of the Tatmadaw removing fallen trees caused by storm on U Wizara Road. —MNA
Dear Friend,

As you know, the draft State constitution is going to be approved through a referendum this May. This is the process of laying the foundation for a new era for the nation and the entire people, isn’t it? So, I believe it is vital to ensure the successful holding of the referendum for the approval of the constitution.

I think you have heard that internal and external anti-government groups are instigating the people to boycott the referendum, not to cast vote, and to cast ‘No’ vote. In addition, they are criticizing the constitution with negative attitude. As a matter of fact, they are bearing jealousy because they know they will not come to power. The people have taken a similar lesson. When our country regained independence in 1948, Communists said that the independence the colonialists gave willingly was merely a sham. And they claimed that they had to launch a fight for true independence and rose against the government, didn’t they? In reality, they were desperate to seize the power, but their dream didn’t come true. So, they were shouting that the independence was a sham to mislead the people, and they disrupted the processes. Now, they are using the Communists’ method. In other words, the opportunists are trying to disrupt the processes the people are carrying out for democracy. So, it is up to the people to decide whether they will rely on the opportunists at the expense of the referendum or they will continue to work till they achieve the processes.

Openly speaking, it is a long time they have been trying to disrupt the processes. So, however much internal and external saboteurs are saying no vote or vote no, the people should say will vote yes.

Actually, the constitution is not the concern of a particular person, party or society alone, nor is that of the Tatmadaw or the State Peace and Development Council. That is the concern of the whole nation and the entire people, in other words it is the national concern.

If the nation is going to exercise democracy, a constitution is essential. Similarly, whatever system the nation practices such as Communism, Socialism or Capitalism, a constitution is a must. That is why the government is now working hard for the emergence of a State constitution. However, destructive elements at home and abroad are misleading the people into misunderstanding that the government is trying for the approval of the constitution just in its interest. It is true that the Tatmadaw government is playing a leading role in this regard. But, that is not for it, but for the entire people. That is the national concern. So, we people are responsible for helping approve the constitution. We have to see to it.

You and me are both service personnel and we have realized that service personnel are to be free from party politics. However, the approval of the constitution is just national duty, not party politics. So, Tatmadaw and the entire nation have to contribute towards the drive for approval of the constitution.

Let’s discuss the draft constitution. It is not too much if I say that now this constitution is the most appropriate for our nation and the people. I would say, according to the time and condition, this constitution is the most suitable one for the nation and the people.

I have many reasons to approve it. First, that is based on the prevailing conditions of the nation and is free from fiction, craving, and attachment. Secondly, it is also based on the fact guaranteeing the nation will not suffer bitter experiences again. So, it is sure that our posterity will not face any forms of the bitter experiences we have gone through. Thirdly, it is based on Our Three Main National Causes which is the national political policy of the entire people. So long as Our Three Main National Causes is upheld, our country and the people have a prosperous future. That is why I say that this constitution is the most suitable one for the people.

The delegates made a thorough study and held discussions according to the conditions of the nation and took time to adopt the constitution. As you know, more than 1000 representatives from the eight delegate groups wrote the constitution at the National Convention. It is common knowledge that the delegates included representatives of national races from various townships across the nation, well-experienced intellectuals and intelligentsia, representatives of the people from all walks of life, and representatives of the national race armed groups that had returned to the legal fold. And they took time to hold discussions thoroughly. Moreover, they studied the 1947 constitution and 1974 constitution and the constitutions of many other countries thoroughly and repeatedly. Then, they referred to suitable principles and omitted unfit ones. So, I would say, it is impossible to better this constitution.

But, I don’t mean there is no need to make any amendments to the constitution. It can be amended according to the conditions and circumstances. It prescribes Chapter (12) “Amendment of the State Constitution”. If the constitution has some weaknesses, amendments can be made in accordance with the provisions. For example, the democracy practices of the US are different from that it exercised when it regained independence. When it regained independence in 1776, only White men had the right to vote. Even White men who met education standard and wealth standard could enjoy the right. White women, Black men and Black women had no right to vote. About 80 years after that, Black men had the right to vote and over 100 years after that, Black and White women had the right to vote. So, we have to understand and accept the evolution process of democracy practice.

We have to bear in mind that democracy practice can improve slowly according to how much the people are mature in view and knowledge. I am sure, we have to take time to improve democracy practice in our country according to these two requirements. The chapter “Amendment of the State Constitution” has been prescribed. So, we will have to make some necessary amendments in accordance with the prevailing conditions of our country.

The draft constitution guarantees a prosperous future of our country and people. You can notice that if you study it thoroughly. Regarding the first point, you will know that the constitution guarantees stability and peace of the Sate, and all due rights of national races. It prohibits secession from the Union. It prescribes Our Three Main National Causes and independent, active and non-aligned foreign policy. It guarantees that our country will honour the principles of peaceful co-existence among international community. Moreover, Tatmadaw member representatives make up 25 per cent of the total representatives in blittaws and governing bodies. That is aimed to ensure checks and balances in order to avert unnecessary conflicts. The draft constitution can guarantee stability and peace of the State best. So, I would say, every citizen who favours stability and peace of the State should cast ‘Yes’ vote for it.

Another point is that the draft constitution guarantees development of the nation and the people and a brighter future of an individual and every family. Every citizen by nature wants to see the nation and the people enjoy development and every citizen wants to have a prosperous future and is desirous of development of their families. This is the desire of every citizen. By the way, the nation went through the period in which there was no guarantee for development of the nation and the people. Please, look back to the conditions of the nation from 1948 to 1988. A period of 40 years is quite enough to develop a nation whatever system it exercises: the parliamentary democracy system or one-party Socialist system. But, there was no hope for development of our country. Due to activities for coming to power of the party concerned, political conflicts, and internal armed insurrection, our country was reduced to a least developed country (LDC), wasn’t it?

Unlike in the past, now the nation has developed at the unprecedented level. There have been tangible changes for the better in various sectors such as agriculture, transport, education, health, economy and communication. We are both sons of farmers. So, let’s evaluate the agriculture sector. As you know, ours is an agricultural country. So, our country will develop if the agriculture sector improves. Water is the major requirement for agriculture. Our country will never develop if we rely on rain water like our forefathers. I am sure you know that. So, today, the government has materialized many projects for development of the agriculture sector. Our country had only 138 dams in more than 900 years from the time of King Anawrahta to 1988. In 19 years, the Tatmadaw government has constructed 210 dams, over 300 river water pumping stations and over 7000 underground water tapping stations. How amazing it is! As a result, we can do the multiple cropping pattern and we have enjoyed better income and a higher living standard. It is a tangible proof. I can present many other similar examples if I compare figures and data of other sectors in the past and at present. They are known to all people, so I don’t want to mention them. Overall, our country is now enjoying development. If we can maintain this development momentum, our country will develop to a greater degree. Now, the people have opportunities to enjoy the fruits of development equally. So, I would like the entire people to realize that the draft constitution guarantees sustainable development of our country. That is why I said that the draft constitution is the most appropriate for the people. I will tell you some more points about that later. What is important in this regard is that we know what are suitable for us and we value them. Let me stop here. I will write you again later.

Translation: MS
United Nations, 6 May — UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon paid tribute on Tuesday to victims of chemical warfare, calling for the elimination of all chemical weapons.

In a message marking the Day of Remembrance for Victims of Chemical Warfare, Ban urged the world to use this “solemn occasion” to honour the victims and ensure their suffering will not be forgotten nor repeated.

Citing the Chemical Weapons Convention, which entered into a force on 29 April, 1997, Ban reminded all states parties to the convention of their obligation to destroy existing chemical weapons stockpiles by 29 April, 2012.

“I call upon all possessor states to complete their destruction according to the agreed deadlines,” he said.

The Secretary-General also expressed grave concern that some key states have not adhered to the convention.

“I urge those states that have not yet ratified or acceded to it to do so without further delay,” he stressed.

Since 1997, the membership of the Chemical Weapons Convention increased to 183 states parties, covering 98 per cent of the world’s population.

“Achieving complete elimination of chemical weapons and universal adherence to the Chemical Weapons Convention are genuine ways of honouring the memory of all victims of chemical warfare,” he said.

Ban pledged the world organization’s cooperation with relevant international bodies to “promote full implementation and universality of the convention”.

Spain refuses to extradite former Argentine president

Madrid, 6 May — Spain’s National Court on Monday rejected requests from Argentine judges to extradite former Argentine president Isabel Peron charged with human rights abuses.

The court ruled that there was insufficient evidence to back the accusations against Peron and that the statute of limitations had expired after 20 years.

Argentina accuses Peron of links with the Argentine anti-Communist alliance or the “Triple A” death squad, held responsible for the death or disappearance of at least 1,500 people during Peron’s 1974-1976 rule.

In January 2007, the Spanish authorities arrested the former Argentine president, who has lived in Madrid in exile for decades, and asked her to report to a police station every 15 days.

Peron, 77, the wife of three-time President Juan Domingo Peron, ruled the country after his death and was overthrown in a March 1976 coup.

US funds more emergency aid to ease food crisis

Washington, 6 May — The US Government has released an additional 40 million US dollars in emergency food aid to help ease the global food crisis, the State Department said on Tuesday.

The fund from the US Agency for International Development (USAID) was provided to the World Food Programme after President George W Bush authorized the USAID 200 million dollars earlier this month, the State Department said in a statement.

It said that with the 240 million dollars, the USAID will provide emergency food aid to countries including Zimbabwe, Ethiopia, Afghanistan, Kenya and Haiti.

According to the State Department, the country has set aside 1.36 billion dollars to help reduce the food crisis in the world.

Norway, Sweden conduct cross-border air exercise

Stockholm, 6 May — Norway and Sweden conducted a cross-border Air Force exercise in Norwegian air space for the first time, reports from Oslo said on Wednesday.

Three Swedish Jas Gripen aircraft crossed the border Monday afternoon to participate in a joint exercise with the Norwegian Air Force in an area of Nordland county in northern Norway, the Norwegian public broadcaster NRK reported.

“Earlier, we needed consent from both the Norwegian and Swedish governments each time we crossed the border. Now both that is needed is for me and my counterpart in Norway to agree before we carry out the exercise,” Edstroem added.

Norway is a member of NATO while Sweden is a military non-aligned country.
Artificially bred red ibis reproduce in wild

Xian, 6 May — A pair of artificially bred red ibis that were among the first batch of 26 released into the wild a year ago in northwest China have successfully produced three chicks.

The pair began to build their nest on a tall Chinese pine tree near Shaanxi Province, in Ningshan County of Shaanxi, in February, and the female produced three eggs between 15 and 19 March. The chicks hatched about one month later.

“The successful breeding of red ibis in the wild indicates the end of its endangered status is nearing,” said Chang Xuyuan, Shaanxi Wildlife Conservation Association’s deputy secretary-general. “It also provides very good experience for the restoration of this species in its historical habitats.”

Thirteen pairs of artificially-bred red ibis, aged two to three years, were released on 31 May last year at Zhaigou village, Ningshan, in an area with a dense population of loach, eel and fingerlings, typical prey of the red ibis.

Twelve birds had adapted to the wild, said Zhang Shoucheng, Ningshan Forestry Bureau’s director. Six returned to the release base, five have been confirmed dead and three missing.

Zhang said another batch of red ibis would be released into the wild at the end of May or beginning of June.

“At this period, the most important thing is the nutrition of the young birds,” said Chang. “To solve the problem, we have frequently put food near their habitat to ensure rich food sources.”

Scientists puzzled over intense swarm of earthquakes

Los Angeles, 6 May — An unusually intense swarm of earthquakes has struck beneath a small suburb of Reno in Nevada, leaving residents shaken and scientists puzzling over the cause, the Los Angeles Times said on Thursday.

“Totaling more than 1,000 over the last two months, more than 20 quakes of magnitude 2 or higher have hit on some days, and the intensity and frequency of the quakes have been increasing rather than following the normal pattern of tailing off, according to the paper.”

Researchers say they have never seen anything quite like the “Mogul earthquake sequence,” as they have named it.

Canada pledges extra $49.5m in food aid

Ottawa, 6 May — Canada pledged an extra 50 million Canadian dollars (49.5 million US dollars) for international food aid on Wednesday and said it would also allow its money to be used to buy food abroad and not tie it to purchases of Canadian produce.

Responding to a UN plea for extra help to offset the terrible impact that rising food costs are having on the world’s most vulnerable people, International Cooperation Minister Beverley Oda said in a statement.

The untying of aid means that it can be purchased outside Canada. Previously, half of all the food shipped to poorer countries had to be bought within Canada but Oda said such a condition meant the aid was about 30 percent less efficient.

Canada is responding to the terrible impact that rising food costs are having on the world’s most vulnerable people, International Cooperation Minister Beverley Oda said in a statement.

“We don’t know what is going to happen next,” said geologist James Dolan of University of Southern California, who has been watching the unfolding seismic activity. But a swarm like this “makes you perk up your ears and start considering the possibility that you might be in a heightened period of hazard.”

The swarm of quakes has unnerved the roughly 30,000 residents who live around Mogul, a sparsely populated area with about two miles (3.6 kilometers) west of Reno, the report said. —Xinhua

Indian man gets life term for raping British tourist

Jaipur (India), 6 May — An Indian court sentenced a guesthouse owner to life in prison on Wednesday for raping a British tourist last December.

The sentencing comes after an increase in attacks on foreign tourists in India and after the government ordered the police to provide more protection to foreigners.

In February this year, Scarlett Keeling, a 15-year-old British girl, was raped and murdered in coastal Goa, prompting criticism of the police for failing to protect her.

On Wednesday, a court in Rajasthan state found a 32-year-old man guilty of raping a British tourist on the pretext of supplying a blanket to her room last December.

“The court has also imposed a fine on him,” BS Rao, the public prosecutor said from Udaipur City, where the sentencing took place.

The Udaipur police arrested the man after the British tourist, who is in her forties, sent an e-mail to the British High Commission in India, detailing what happened to her. — MNA/Reuters

A textile worker weaves raffia at her handloom workshop in Divo, Ivory Coast on 5 May, 2008. Raffia is widely used by several African peoples, particularly the Dida people in Ivory Coast’s southern region of Divo. The palm fibre material is used to make loincloth, dresses and skirts. —INTERNET
**SP R O T S**

Real Madrid fought their way back after a sending off and going a goal down to snatch a dramatic 2-1 victory at Osasuna and win their 31st Spanish league title on Sunday. — **XINHUA**

**Power of top four concerns Keegan**

**London, 6 May** — Newcastle boss Kevin Keegan fears the domination of the Premier League’s top four is a threat to the top flight.

Manchester United, Chelsea, Arsenal and Liverpool will again head the division for the third season running as they leave the rest trailing in their wake.

"Maybe the owner thinks we can bridge that gap - but we can’t," said Keegan after Monday’s 2-0 loss to Chelsea.

"This league is in danger of becoming one of the most boring but great leagues in the world.”

Keegan replaced Sam Allardyce at St James' Park in January and his comments will have extra resonance as he is renowned as one of the game's eternal optimists.

He feels fifth is the best the clubs outside the big four can realistically aim for, even with plenty of funds.

"But these are the sort of difficulties that should get easier to address once we build a squad that competes at the right end of the table."

And Keegan is positive he will get the funds he needs from owner Mike Ashley to improve his squad, saying: "I have no proof of that yet but I have no doubts he will back me."

"If I can get three or four players in to add to what I have got here - and we have that bit of luck you need with no injuries to key players - then we might be able to win the second division of the Premier League."

**British women to take on Germany**

**London, 6 May** — Britain’s women have been drawn alongside defending Olympic champions Germany at this summer’s Beijing Games.

The Germans, surprise winners in Athens four years ago, are also the reigning European champions.

Britain, currently ranked 10th in the world, will face world number two Argentina, Japan (sixth), New Zealand (seventh) and the USA at the London 2012 Olympic Games.

The other pool sees world champions Germany face Spain, Korea, New Zealand, Belgium and hosts China.

The pools were organised on world rankings, with GB (eighth) having to face three teams rated above them.

**Croatia coach Biloc agrees new two year contract**

ZAGREB, 6 May — Coach Slaven Bilic has agreed to extend his Croatia contract for two more years, local media reported on Wednesday.

The new deal is worth 1.2 million kuna (257,300 US dollars) a year and will take the former Croatia defender up to the 2010 World Cup finals in South Africa.

Bilic will sign the contract on Friday, according to the Vecernji List daily.

"The coach’s salary will have a fixed value but additional rewards will depend on his team’s successes," national soccer federation (HNS) vice-president Ivan Brlekovic told the daily.

Bilic, who has been linked with several top European teams, previously said he wanted to stay with Croatia for two more years before moving to a foreign club.

Croatia have been drawn alongside Austria, Poland and Germany in Euro 2008 Group B in June.

Bilic’s side plan two warmup games, at home to Moldova on 24 May and against Hungary in Budapest on 31 May. — **MNA/Reuters**

**Nadal wins fourth Barcelona title**

**Barcelona, 6 May** — Rafael Nadal continued his domination of the clay-court season with victory over fellow Spaniard David Ferrer in the final of the Barcelona Open.

The world number two took the title for the fourth straight year with a 6-1 4-6 6-1 win over the second seed. After starting strongly and dominating the first set, Nadal dropped serve twice as Ferrer took the second.

But the champion stepped up a gear in the deciding, moving 5-0 up and sealing the title in two hours 14 minutes.

Having also won the Monte Carlo Masters last Sunday, Nadal heads to next week’s Rome Masters as a strong favourite.

He has now won 103 of 104 matches on clay since 2005, with the only defeat coming against Roger Federer in Hamburg last year.

"The first set I played very well, almost perfect, but he was very strong in the second set and I am just very happy to have won here again," said Nadal.

"When I did make mistakes, in the second set, David was unstoppable but I kept very focused throughout and I am very happy to be the first man to win four years in a row."

Ferrer admitted: "The one thing I wanted to do was to not let him dominate early on but he started so strongly.

"I think I played a good match but what can you do? That’s Rafa.

"He has been playing at this level for four years now and you never have a moment to relax against him." — **Internet**

**Pressure now on Man Utd, Grant says**

**Manchester, 6 May** — Chelsea boss Avram Grant believes title rivals Manchester United are under more pressure going into Sunday’s final game of the Premier League season.

Chelsea’s win at Newcastle moved them level on points with leaders United, who are favourites for the title because of a superior goal difference.

United travel to Wigan on the final day, while Chelsea play host to Bolton.

"Now we must beat Bolton and see what United Do. The pressure is on them," said Grant.

"I said we will never give up. We have given a good, good battle. Nobody thought about us as a candidate for champions. We will keep on fighting." — **Internet**

**Lawrie wins Spanish Open play-off**

**Seville, 6 May** — Ireland’s Peter Lawrie beat Ignacio Garrido at the second play-off hole to win the Spanish Open in Seville.

After four birdies in his last six holes, Lawrie looked set to win without sudden death until Garrido closed with a 30ft birdie putt to tie on 15-under.

Both men birdied the first extra hole, but Garrido then saw his pitch to the same green spin back into the water.

Garrido had been aiming to follow in the footsteps of his father, Antonio, who won the Spanish title in 1972.

But the wind was knocked out of his sails on the first play-off hole when Lawrie made a 25ft putt to match his birdie three.

Lawrie’s victory makes it three Irish wins in a row on the European Tour after Darren Clarke’s Asian title in 2000 and Damien McGrane’s China Open victory.

"It’s nice to keep it in the Irish contingent," he said. "It spurs you on— you play practice rounds with them and think ‘why can’t I do it’?" — **Internet**

**INTERNET**

"I have to stay positive. We will fight until the last moment."

Chelsea have rallied in the second half of the season in which they also booked a spot in the Champions League final against United.

And Grant hailed his players’ efforts this season, saying: “We have to battle with things on and off the pitch but the team have got better and better, especially in recent months."

The men booked their place at the Olympics via a qualifying tournament in Chile last month.

England women’s team secured Britain’s Beijing place at the EuroHockey Nations Championship last August.

The pools were organised on world rankings, with GB (eighth) having to face three teams rated above them.

The other pool sees world champions Germany face Spain, Korea, New Zealand, Belgium and hosts China.

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Bus catches fire in Shanghai, leaving three dead

SHANGHAI, 6 May — Three people died and 12 were injured when a bus caught fire in Shanghai at about 9:00 a.m. on Monday, said police.

The cause of the fire was still under investigation. The injured have been sent to hospital, according to the police.

The fire was put out within half an hour. Fire fighters estimated there were about 50 passengers on board the route 842 bus. The fire broke out when the bus was running along the Huaxing Road in Yangpu District, in the northeast of Shanghai.

Normal traffic around the accident site resumed at around 10:30 a.m, as police had moved away the wreckage.

France’s Le Pen selling bullet-proof car on eBay

PARIS, 6 May — French far-right leader Jean-Marie Le Pen is looking to make a bit of extra cash by putting his old bullet-proof car up for sale on eBay.

Le Pen, who stunned France in the 2002 presidential election when he finished second, put his party headquarters up for sale earlier this year after humiliating defeats in presidential and legislative elections last year left his group deep in the red.

Another drain on Le Pen’s finances was the 10,000 euro (15,580 U.S. dollars) fine he incurred in February when a court found him guilty of “contesting crimes against humanity” for saying the Nazi occupation of France was “not particularly inhumane.” Asked why the car was up for sale, a National Front spokesman said: “Money, money, glorious money.” — MNA/Reuters
Royal Thai Armed Forces donates food, medicines to storm victims

YANGON, 6 May — Royal Thai Armed Forces donated food and medicines to victims of cyclonic storm Nargis today.

At the ceremony held at Yangon International Airport, Lt-Gen Myint Swe of the Ministry of Defence accepted the donation.

At the ceremony, General Songkitti Jakkabatr of Thailand expressed sympathy for the storm victims, and said that more relief aid from Thailand will be donated to the victims. Lt-Gen Myint Swe thanked Thailand for the donation handed over by General Songkitti Jakkabatr.

Afterwards, four helicopters airlifted nine tons of foodstuffs and medicines to Mawla-Myinegyun, Labutta, Bogale and Pyapon townships which were hit hard by the storm.

General Songkitti Jakkabatr and party left here for Thailand by Royal Thai Air Force flight at 4.15 pm.

The donation ceremony was also attended by Deputy Minister for Social Welfare, Relief and Resettlement Brig-Gen Kyaw Myint, Deputy Minister for Health Dr Mya Oo, senior military officers, Ambassador of Thailand to Myanmar Mr Bansarn Bunnag and officials.—MNA

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