

The Economic Times, 1 May 2008

### **Malaysian PM urges workers to be more innovative**

KUALA LUMPUR: Malaysian Prime Minister Abdullah Ahmad Badawi urged workers to be more innovative and creative to ensure the country remains competitive, in a statement marking May Day on Thursday. Abdullah said Malaysia could no longer rely on its cheap labour to attract investors and should focus instead on creating a better quality and educated workforce in the face of increasing regional competition.

The Straits Times, 1 May 2008

### **Golf courses, developers nibble at Asia's rice paddies**

TANAH LOT (Indonesia) - THE tourists who tee off at this golf course on Bali's west coast are probably unaware that the ground beneath their feet is connected to a global panic over rice supplies. Once this golf course was a patchwork of rice fields. Now just a few remain, and villagers work as caddies or waiters at Le Meridien Nirwana resort and its Greg Norman-designed greens. From Bali to Vietnam, rice paddies are being replaced by golf courses, hotels, villas and industrial parks as Asian economies surge ahead, the standard of living rises and locals opt for higher-paying, less labour-intensive work away from farming.

The Bangkok Post, 1 May 2008

### **US views the South**

The annual US report on terrorism around the world says Thailand's biggest threat remains the insurgency in the South, where efforts at reconciliation have had limited impact at best. It credits a new strategy begun last year by Army chief Gen Anupong Paojinda with allowing better coordination among military units, but said prosecutors still struggle to bring charges that can stick against the men behind the southern violence.

Channel News Asia, 1 May 2008

### **Indonesian workers hold rallies to protest against rising food, fuel costs**

JAKARTA: Thousands of Indonesians took to the streets of the capital Jakarta for Labour Day rallies on Thursday, with rising food prices and an expected cut in fuel subsidies weighing heavily on workers' minds. "We are expecting more than 40,000 people demonstrating today," policeman Hariyadi said as thousands of workers gathered at the central Imam Bonjol traffic circle.

The Hindu, 2 May 2008

### **Charge filed against Thaksin**

BANGKOK: The People's Network Against Corruption, a Thai anti-corruption civil group, on Thursday filed charges against the former Prime Minister, Thaksin Shinawatra, for his alleged involvement in an incident involving the word "Thaksin" seen on Thailand's national flag during a football match in England last week. It said the word offended the Thai people, said the Bangkok Post.

The Bangkok Post, 2 May 2008

### **Opinion: Burma's army digs in**

When Burmese vote in a May 10 referendum on the country's new constitution, they will be getting a bitter foretaste of the "discipline-flourishing democracy" the military has in store for them. The referendum, Burma's third in the past five decades, will theoretically decide the fate of the country's new charter, a document that promises to cement the dominant role of the military in Burmese politics following the next general election, planned in 2010.

Channel News Asia, 2 May 2008

### **PM Lee cautions S'poreans to prepare for economic slowdown**

SINGAPORE : Prime Minister Lee Hsien Loong has cautioned Singaporeans to be prepared for a slowing economy in the next few quarters. Speaking in Malay, Mandarin and English at the May Day Rally, Mr Lee told workers that Singapore's economy may have done well so far in 2008, but developments in the US economy may still have an impact on the country.

The Jakarta Post, 2 May 2008

### **The rule of bad law**

Historically, Ahmadiyah entered Indonesia in 1925 and established legal existence in Indonesia in 1953. Ahmadiyah existed before the revolution and fought for the independence of this country. But the Indonesian Ulema Council (MUI) has declared Ahmadiyah a heretical sect and demanded the government disband it. The edict is supported by new emerging groups such as the Islamic Defenders Front and Hizbut Tahrir Indonesia who never fought for Indonesian independence.

The Bangkok Post, 2 May 2008

### **Philippines must move to restart peace talks with Muslim group, Malaysian mediator says**

Stalled peace negotiations between the Philippine government and Muslim guerrillas cannot advance unless Manila stops harping on technical points, a Malaysian official brokering the talks said Friday. The Philippine government may have to back off on its insistence that any accord conform with its constitution if it hopes to restart negotiations, said Othman Abdul Razak, the chief Malaysian mediator. Malaysia's decision to start pulling out cease-fire monitors from the southern Philippines is "meant to send a signal" that Philippine authorities should speed up efforts to sign a formal peace pact with the Moro Islamic Liberation Front, Othman said.

The Indian Express, 3 May 2008

### **'Conversion to Islam should not be abused in Malaysia'**

Kuala Lumpur, May 2: : A leader of a multi-religious body in Malaysia has demanded that the government act urgently to remedy legal loopholes so that citizens could freely profess their faith while preserving family harmony. "Conversion to Islam should not be abused as a means to evade one's legal obligations to one's family. A person's conversion to another religion should not cause pain and suffering for other members of the family," said A. Vaithilingam, President of the Malaysian Consultative Council of Buddhism, Christianity, Hinduism, Sikhism and Taoism (MCBCHST).

The Financial Express, 3 May 2008

### **Asian inflation jumps to multi-year highs**

Singapore, May 2: Inflation across Asia is rising sharply to levels that some countries have not experienced in several years. The increasing price pressures are leaving central banks with a dilemma because there are equal concerns that Asian economic growth will be hit by a US slowdown. If central bank raise interest rates to control inflation, that could undermine growth. If they fail to bring inflation under control, rising prices could dampen demand and harm economic growth.

The Economic Times, 3 May 2008

### **Asian countries adopt measures to tame spiraling rice prices**

MANILA: Asian countries sought to tame the spiraling rice market, with Thailand proposing an OPEC-style cartel for exporters and the Philippines shoring up supplies while aiming to end its status as the world's largest importer. The moves came as prices for rice and other food staples have been rising rapidly around the world, sparking violent protests in Haiti and Egypt along with concerns of unrest elsewhere amid profiteering and hoarding.

The Bangkok Post, 3 May 2008

### **No rice cartel - yet**

Hanoi - Vietnamese officials have rebutted Prime Minister Samak Sundaravej's claim that a controversial rice price-fixing cartel was close, saying that Thai negotiators scheduled to visit Vietnam to discuss the issue last month had not even shown up. The cartel also has come under strong opposition in Thailand, where rice exporters say such a monopoly would be hard to implement, as rice is a politically sensitive commodity and production is relatively hard to control, according to rice exporters.

The Economic Times, 3 May 2008

### **Cyclone slams into main Myanmar city, airport shut**

YANGON: A tropical cyclone slammed into Myanmar's main city on Saturday, ripping off roofs, felling trees and power lines and forcing the military authorities to close the airport. The electricity supply -- hit-and-miss at the best of times in one of Asia's poorest countries -- failed after Cyclone Nargis, packing winds of up to 120 mph, first started to lash the former capital on Friday evening. There were no reports of deaths, although meteorological officials in the former Burma said the cyclone could trigger a storm surge of up to 12 feet (3.5 metres) in coastal areas.

The Hindu, 4 May 2008

### **India, Malaysia hold naval exercise**

SINGAPORE: India and Malaysia on Saturday took their increasing defence cooperation a step forward by holding a naval exercise that involved targeted live firing. This marked a scale-up of the regular "passage exercise." Two India-built missile corvettes, INS Kora and INS Kirpan, were joined by Malaysian corvettes, KD Amin and KD Nadim, in the "passage exercise."

The Economic Times, 4 May 2008

### **Malaysia to impose travel curbs on women to check drug trade**

KUALA LUMPUR: Malaysia is planning to make it mandatory for women travelling abroad alone to have a letter of consent from parents or employers following a spurt in their arrests in India and other countries after being duped or forced into smuggling drugs.

The Economic Times, 4 May 2008

### **Malaysia mulls using ID to stop foreigners buying cheap fuel**

KUALA LUMPUR: Malaysia on Sunday said it was considering using its chip-based national identity card to prevent visitors from Singapore and Thailand buying cheap subsidised fuel meant for locals. Its latest plan comes as the government begins radically reviewing its fuel subsidies, expected to cost 43 billion ringgit (13.6 billion dollars) this year if oil prices hover around 120 dollars per barrel.

The Economic Times, 4 May 2008

### **Capital flows will return to Asia once credit crunch ends: ADB**

MADRID: Once the global credit crunch eases Asia will see the return of the large capital inflows which put the squeeze on their economies, a senior Asian Development Bank (ADB) official said Saturday. "We can expect massive capital inflows into Asia once financial stability is restored," Masahiro Kawai, the bank's head of regional economic integration, said at a the ADB's annual meeting in the Spanish capital Madrid.

The Economic Times, 4 May 2008

### **Malaysia delays public projects to use money for food**

KUALA LUMPUR: The Malaysian government will delay nonessential public projects and use the money instead to build up food stockpiles amid a global food crisis, the prime minister said on Saturday. If measures are not taken now "it will be difficult later," Prime Minister Abdullah Ahmad Badawi was quoted as saying by national news agency Bernama.

The Indian Express, 5 May 2008

### **ON THE RECORD: George Yong-Boon Yeo, Foreign Minister, Singapore**

'India will never have a revolution. China will need one every two-three centuries, their society is hierarchical, has one call centre. India is diverse.' Singapore Foreign Minister George Yong-Boon Yeo takes a keen interest in India - something he says goes back to his first visit here in the eighties. He also lays an active role in the Nalanda project. In an interview with The Indian Express Editor-in-Chief Shekhar Gupta on NDTV 24x7's Walk the Talk, he talks about the difference in the ways in which tiny Singapore and large India deal with diversity, about how India has changed over the last few decades, and about how the world looks at China.

The Indian Express, 5 May 2008

### **Cyclone kills hundreds in Myanmar; junta response a concern**

YANGON, Myanmar (AP) -- A powerful cyclone killed more than 350 people and destroyed thousands of homes, state-run media said Sunday. Some dissident groups worried that the military junta running Myanmar would be reluctant to ask for international help. Tropical Cyclone Nargis hit at a delicate time for the junta, less than a week ahead of a crucial referendum on a new constitution. Should the junta be seen as failing disaster victims, voters who already blame the regime for ruining the economy and squashing democracy could take out their frustrations at the ballot box. But state media indicated Monday the referendum was still on.

The Indian Express, 5 May 2008

### **Cyclone rips through Myanmar, 351 dead**

Yangon, MAY 4 : More than 350 people have died in Myanmar in a powerful cyclone that knocked out power in the impoverished country's commercial capital and destroyed thousands of homes, state-run media said on Sunday. Military-run Myaddy television station said five regions had been declared disaster zones following Saturday's storm, which packed winds of up to 190 km per hour.

The Hindu, 5 May 2008

### **Powerful cyclone kills at least 351 in Myanmar**

Yangon (AP): Residents of Myanmar's biggest city lit candles on Monday, lined up to buy water and hacked their way through trees felled in a cyclone that killed more than 350 people, destroyed thousands of homes and caused widespread power cuts. Older citizens said they had never seen Yangon, a city of some 6.5 million, so devastated in their lifetimes. Despite the havoc wreaked by tropical cyclone Nargis across wide swaths of the Southeast Asian country on Saturday, the government indicated that a referendum on the country's draft constitution would proceed as planned on May 10.

The Times of India, 5 May 2008

### **Over 350 dead as cyclone hits Myanmar**

YANGON: A cyclone killed more than 350 people in military-ruled Myanmar, ripping through Yangon and the Irrawaddy delta where it flattened at least two towns, officials and state media said on Sunday. The death toll is likely to climb as the authorities manage to contact outlying islands and villages that felt the full force of Cyclone Nargis, a Category 3 storm packing winds of 190 km (120 miles) per hour when it hit early on Saturday.

The Times of India, 5 May 2008

### **Red Cross rushes aid to Myanmar cyclone victims**

BANGKOK: Aid agencies on Monday rushed emergency food and water supplies to victims of a massive storm in Myanmar which killed hundreds of people and left tens of thousands homeless, a Red Cross spokesman said. Tropical cyclone Nargis left at least 351 dead after hitting southwest Myanmar at the weekend, packing winds of 190 kilometres (120 miles) per hour, razing thousands of buildings and knocking out power lines, state media reported.

The Economic Times, 5 May 2008

### **Promoters miss call on Spice's future**

MUMBAI: Relations between the promoters of Spice Communications, the Modis and Telekom Malaysia (TM), seem to have soured recently over ways to finance the company's expansion plans and management control in the loss-making venture. TM is learnt to be looking at increasing the Spice stake to at least 51% from 39.2% through a combine of open offer and acquisition of shares from the Modis. The BK Modi family holds a 40.8% stake in Spice through Modi Wellvest and public and financial institutions hold the balance 20%.

The Economic Times, 5 May 2008

### **Vietnam to curb credit growth to battle inflation**

HANOI: Vietnam, where annual inflation rates have been in double digit figures for six consecutive

months, is stepping up efforts to rein in price pressures by limiting loans to stock and property investors and consumers, the central bank said.

The Economic Times, 5 May 2008

### **Malaysia's Maybank to buy stake in Pakistan's MCB**

KUALA LUMPUR: Malaysia's largest lender, Malayan Banking Bhd (Maybank), is buying a strategic stake in Pakistan's biggest listed lender, MCB Bank, according to Maybank presentation material seen by Reuters on Monday.

The Economic Times, 5 May 2008

### **Philippines lowers 2008 growth target: Report**

MANILA: The Philippines has lowered its 2008 growth target to between 6.0 and 6.7 per cent from the original range of 6.3 to 7.0 per cent, a cabinet secretary was quoted on Monday as saying. Socioeconomic Planning Secretary Augusto Santos said the new figures reflected the global economic slowdown, particularly in the United States, and the sharp rise in food and fuel prices, the Philippine Daily Inquirer reported.

The Economic Times, 5 May 2008

### **No Malaysian minimum wage despite inflation fears: report**

KUALA LUMPUR: Malaysia's prime minister is not yet prepared to introduce a minimum monthly wage despite mounting pressure from trade unions amid inflationary fears, reports said on Sunday. Malaysia is one of Asia's largest importers of cheap foreign labour and has about 2.3 million workers from Indonesia, Bangladesh, India and elsewhere to clean homes, construct buildings and gather crops.

The Economic Times, 5 May 2008

### **Thai Central bank watching inflation, no rate hike now: Dy Governor**

MADRID: Thailand's central bank is monitoring inflation closely but would wait before raising interest rates, deputy governor Atchana Waiquamdee said on Sunday. Speaking on the sidelines of the annual meeting of the Asian Development Bank, Atchana said: "At the next MPC (Monetary Policy Committee) meeting we have to watch (inflation) very closely."

The Business Standard, 5 May 2008

### **Power Grid to foray into Myanmar**

Buoyed by the recently acquired navratna status from the government, transmission major Power Grid Corporation India Ltd (PGCIL) is planning to foray into neighbouring countries, beginning with Myanmar. "PGCIL is planning to go in a big way to the neighbouring countries. We are setting up transmission lines in Myanmar," PGCIL Chairman and Managing Director RP Singh said.

The Hindu, 6 May 2008

### **Death toll could reach 10,000: Myanmar Minister**

Yangon appeals for international assistance. Yangon: The death toll from a devastating cyclone that swept through Myanmar is 4,000 and could rise to 10,000, Foreign Minister Nyan Win said on Monday. State radio said the number of dead in the country's low-lying Irrawaddy River delta from Saturday's Cyclone Nargis had reached 3,939, and that almost 3,000 people in a single town there were unaccounted for.

The Indian Express, 6 May 2008

### **Myanmar cyclone death toll rises to 15,000**

Yangon, May 6: At least 15,000 people were killed in the Myanmar cyclone and the toll was likely to rise as officials made contact with the worst-hit areas, the military government's foreign minister said on Tuesday. Foreign Minister Nyan Win said on state television that 10,000 people had died in just one town, Bogalay, as he gave the first detailed account of what is emerging as the worst cyclone to hit Asia since 1991, when 143,000 people were killed in Bangladesh.

The Times of India, 6 May 2008

### **13,000 feared dead in Myanmar cyclone**

YANGON: Myanmar's military junta believes at least 13,000 people may have died in a cyclone that ripped through the Irrawaddy delta, triggering a massive international aid response for the pariah southeast Asian nation. "The basic message was that they believe the provisional death toll was about 10,000 with 3,000 missing," a Yangon-based diplomat said in Bangkok, summarising a briefing from foreign minister Nyan Win. "It's a very serious toll."

The Times of India, 6 May 2008

### **Hundreds of thousands without shelter in Myanmar: UN**

YANGON: Hundreds of thousands of people have been left without shelter and drinking water in military-ruled Myanmar after a devastating cyclone tore through the Irrawaddy delta, a United Nations official said on Monday. Aid agencies scrambled to deliver plastic sheeting, water and cooking equipment from stockpiles in the former Burma. The government says at least 351 died in the cyclone, which slammed into the delta region on Saturday before devastating Yangon.

The Times of India, 6 May 2008

### **India sends relief ships to cyclone-hit Myanmar**

NEW DELHI: India on Monday dispatched two naval ships carrying food and medical supplies to Myanmar, where 13,000 people are feared dead after cyclone 'Nargis' hit on Saturday. The cyclone has left thousands of people homeless in Yangon and the Irrawaddy delta. According to sources, more than 3,000 people are also missing.

The Hindustan Times, 6 May 2008

### **India rushes aid to Myanmar, helping warming ties**

India rushed relief and medical supplies to cyclone-hit Myanmar on Monday, underscoring warming ties between the two neighbours. Hundreds of labourers were loading food items, blankets, clothing and tents into two naval ships at Port Blair, the capital of Andaman and Nicobar Islands, a spokesman for the Ministry of External Affairs (MEA) said.

The Times of India, 6 May 2008

### **Red Cross rushes aid to Myanmar cyclone victims**

BANGKOK: Aid agencies on Monday rushed emergency food and water supplies to victims of a massive storm in Myanmar which killed hundreds of people and left tens of thousands homeless, a Red Cross spokesman said. Tropical cyclone Nargis left at least 351 dead after hitting southwest Myanmar at the weekend, packing winds of 190 kilometres (120 miles) per hour, razing thousands of buildings and knocking out power lines, state media reported.

The Hindu, 6 May 2008

### **Referendum as scheduled**

SINGAPORE: The National League for Democracy (NLD) on Monday called for the postponement of the May 10 referendum on the military-scripted constitutional draft. Speaking to The Hindu from Yangon, NLD spokesman U Nyan Win expressed concern over the havoc wrought by the cyclone. "This is not the right time to hold the referendum," he said.

The Hindustan Times, 6 May 2008

### **US: Myanmar junta failed to warn people on cyclone**

US First Lady Laura Bush accused Myanmar's military rulers on Monday of failing to warn their citizens in time about a killer cyclone and pressed the junta to accept US aid in the disaster's wake. "Although they were aware of the threat, Burma's state-run media failed to issue a timely warning to citizens in the storm's path," Bush said in an unusual appearance at the White House briefing room podium.

The Hindustan Times, 6 May 2008

### **India can help Myanmar in a better way than US: Laura Bush**

As a neighbour to cyclone-ravaged Myanmar, India can help Yangon in a much better way than the United States, American First Lady Laura Bush has said. Speaking at a news conference at White House, the wife of US President George Bush said that Myanmar's military junta might accept help from New Delhi "more readily", even as she urged India and some other nations to "use their influence to encourage a democratic transition" in that country.

The Indian Express, 6 May 2008

#### **Allah a synonym for God? Malaysia will battle it out**

Kuala Lumpur, May 5: A Malaysian High Court ordered a judicial review of the government's ban on use of word 'Allah' as a synonym for God by a Catholic publication. The matter came to court after The Herald weekly challenged the government's order banning it from using Allah for god in its Malay section. High Court Judge Lau Bee Lan ruled that prosecutors' objection to a lawsuit by weekly was 'without merit'. He said the paper will be allowed to contest the ban.

The Economic Times, 6 May 2008

#### **Indonesia auto sales to top 500,000, even with fuel price hike**

JAKARTA: Indonesian vehicle sales should increase at least 15 percent to more than 500,000 units this year, even if the government raises subsidised fuel prices by up to 30 percent, the country's automotive industry association said on Tuesday. Bambang Trisulo, the chairman of Gaikindo, said the fuel price hike would not hit the automotive industry as long as the central bank kept the key interest rate at no higher than 8.5 percent and inflation was below 10 percent.

The Economic Times, 6 May 2008

#### **Citigroup starts Singapore Airlines as 'sell'**

SINGAPORE: Citigroup has started coverage of Singapore Airlines with a "sell" investment rating and a share target price of S\$13.40, citing slower global traffic, cargo overcapacity, record jet fuel prices and strong competition from other airlines.

The Business Standard, 6 May 2008

#### **Adlabs forays into Malaysia**

Anil Ambani group firm Adlabs Films on Monday said it will acquire majority stake in Malaysia-based Lotus Five Star Cinemas following which it will become the third largest chain in that country. "The company plans to venture wherever there is market for Indian movies, be it USA or Malaysia. The said acquisition was because there exists a huge market for Tamil movies," Reliance Big Entertainment senior vice-president Anil Arjun said.

The Economic Times, 6 May 2008

#### **Philippine rice tender fails with only 1 bidder**

MANILA: The Philippine government failed to buy rice Monday after a tender to increase its buffer stock attracted only one bidder, highlighting global anxiety over the staple. The National Food Authority, the state-run grain importer, was seeking to buy 675,000 tons of rice to shore up its stockpiles. The government said last week it has already secured enough volume to make up for a 10 percent domestic shortfall.

The Economic Times, 6 May 2008

#### **Malaysia may ban local rice from being taken out of country due to shortage fears**

KUALA LUMPUR: Malaysia might ban taking locally grown rice out of the country in a bid to stave off fears of a shortage caused by a global food crisis, a Cabinet minister said Monday. The measure is aimed at cracking down on shoppers from neighboring Singapore and Thailand who cross over to buy cheaper rice and other food in Malaysia.

The Hindu, 7 May 2008

#### **Malaysia shelves plan to curb women's travel**

KUALA LUMPUR: A Malaysian Minister has shot down a colleague's plan to require women travelling abroad alone to carry a letter from their parents verifying the reason for their journey.

Foreign Minister Rais Yatim proposed the move as a way of deterring the use of Malaysian women as couriers for illicit drugs, but the plan immediately drew criticism by women's rights groups as being repressive.

The Times of India, 7 May 2008

### **More than 22,000 dead in Myanmar cyclone: Report**

YANGON: Myanmar's military government raised its death toll on Tuesday from the devastating Cyclone Nargis to just under 22,500 people, state media reported. An additional 41,000 people were missing as a result of the cyclone, which ploughed into the Irrawaddy delta on Saturday, triggering a massive storm surge that swept inland.

The Indian Express, 7 May 2008

### **Cyclone exposes myth of 'strong' Myanmar junta**

YANGON, May 6 : For decades, Myanmar's ruling generals have defended the military's iron grip on power as vital to keeping the former Burma intact and on the road to prosperity. This week's devastating cyclone, which has killed at least 22,500 people in the Irrawaddy delta, has exposed the fragility of that myth with potentially major long-term implications for the junta, analysts say. Many survivors of Cyclone Nargis's 190 km per hour winds criticised the army for a sluggish response, especially when compared with its willingness to flood the streets of Yangon with troops to crush last September's monk-led protests.

The Indian Express, 7 May 2008

### **First international aid reaches Myanmar after cyclone**

YANGON, Myanmar (AP) -- International aid began to trickle into Myanmar on Tuesday, but the stricken Irrawaddy delta, the nation's rice bowl where 22,000 people perished and twice as many are missing, remained cut off from the world. In the former capital of Yangon, soldiers from the repressive military regime were out on the streets in large numbers for the first time since Cyclone Nargis hit over the weekend, helping to clear away rubble. Buddhist monks and Catholic nuns wielded axes and long knives to remove ancient, fallen trees that were once the city's pride.

The Indian Express, 7 May 2008

### **Disease stalks Cyclone Nargis survivors**

Yangon, May 7: Disease, hunger and thirst pose a major threat to hundreds of thousands of survivors of Cyclone Nargis, aid agencies said on Wednesday, urging Myanmar's military rulers to open the doors to international humanitarian relief. With 22,500 dead and 41,000 missing, most of them from a massive storm surge that washed over the Irrawaddy delta, it is the most devastating cyclone to hit Asia since 1991, when 143,000 people died in neighbouring Bangladesh.

The Indian Express, 7 May 2008

### **Myanmar bamboo village resists cyclone's wrath**

When the full force of Cyclone Nargis passed overhead, people in this one village in southwest Myanmar could do little but sit tight and pray their lightweight bamboo shacks stood up to the ferocious winds. For the most part, they did. Elsewhere, deep in the vast marshlands of the Irrawaddy delta, people were less fortunate as winds of 190 km (120 miles) per hour caused a sea surge that swept inland, killing most of the cyclone's 15,000 victims, according to the military government.

The Times of India, 7 May 2008

### **95% of Bogalay city wiped out**

YANGON: The cyclone that hit Myanmar at the weekend destroyed 95% of the homes in the city of Bogalay, where more than 10,000 people died, the minister for social welfare told reporters on Tuesday. Most of the 1,90,000 residents of Bogalay were homeless after the storm swept through the Irrawaddy river delta in the early hours of Saturday, Maung Maung Swe told a press conference.

The Times of India, 7 May 2008

### **Suu Kyi now an honorary Canadian**

OTTAWA: Canada on Tuesday conferred honorary citizenship to Myanmar pro-democracy activist and Nobel laureate Aung San Suu Kyi, while demanding her release from house arrest in her homeland. Suu Kyi "personifies the struggle to bring freedom, democracy, human rights and the rule of law" to Myanmar, said foreign minister Maxime Bernier in presenting a framed certificate to Suu Kyi's cousin, Sein Win. "It is in recognition of Aung San Suu Kyi's long and courageous struggle to promote freedom and democracy in Burma," Bernier said, referring to Myanmar by its old name.

The Economic Times, 7 May 2008

### **US offers \$3 mn in aid for Myanmar**

WASHINGTON: The White House announced on Tuesday it was offering three million dollars in aid to help Myanmar recover from a deadly cyclone. "The US Agency for International Development (USAID) has allocated an additional three millions dollars in funding" to help Myanmar