

THE NEW LIGHT OF MYANMAR (Thursday 17 April, 1997)

- (1) Senior General Than Shwe sends felicitations to President of Syrian Arab Republic**
 - (2) Thingyan Festival ends with prize distribution; closing ceremonies in Yangon**
 - (3) Myanmar study group led by Minister for Sports leave for PRC**
 - (4) Minister inspects mangrove forests, conservation work in Ayeyawady Division**
 - (5) Mining projects, factories inspected in Mandalay Division, southern Shan State**
-

- (1) Senior General Than Shwe sends felicitations to President of Syrian Arab Republic**

YANGON, 17 April - Senior General Than Shwe, Chairman of the State Law and Order Restoration Council of the Union of Myanmar, has sent a message of felicitations to His Excellency Mr Hafez Al-Assad, President of the Syrian Arab Republic, on the occasion of the National Day of the Syrian Arab Republic which falls on 17 April 1997.

- (2) Thingyan Festival ends with prize distribution; closing ceremonies in Yangon**

YANGON, 16 April- Pandals of the ministries, organizations, companies and markets here presented entertainment programmes such as 'yein' dances and songs today, Thingyan Atet Day. Today being the final day of the Water Festival, revellers at the water throwing pandals and on board motor vehicles in the townships and new towns in Yangon Division also enjoyed water throwing the whole day. In the evening, prize distribution ceremonies were held at various pandals before the successful conclusion of the Myanmar traditional cultural Thingyan Water Festival. Bogyoke Aung San Street, Anawrahta Street, Merchant Street, Strand Road, Theinbyu Road, Shwedagon Pagoda Road, Sule Pagoda Road, Kyimyindine Strand Road, Pyay Road, Kaba Aye Pagoda Road, Yankin Road, Ahlon Road and Kandawgyi Ring Road were mostly packed with both stationary and mobile revellers. Especially the Kandawgyi Ring Road, Yegyaw Road and Bogyoke Aung San Street were the busiest and active areas today.

Myanma Thingyan Festival has been held since the time of Myanmar monarches preserving the cultural traditions.

As in the previous years, Myanmar nationals were joined by foreigners in the festival this year.

Thingyan Festival this year enabled government employees to enjoy long l holidays. Many have taken : this opportunity by meditating at the respective meditation centres and taking Sabbath at pagodas and monasteries.

(3) Myanmar study group led by Minister for Sports leave for PRC

YANGON, 16 April - Under the cultural exchange programme between the two countries and at the invitation of the People's Republic of China, a five-member study group led by Chairman of Myanmar Olympic Committee Minister for Sports Brig-Gen Sein Win left here by air at 1 pm for the People's Republic of China.

They were seen off at Yangon International Airport by Minister at the Office of Prime Minister U Than Shwe, Minister at the Office of Deputy Prime Ministers U Khin Maung Yin, Director General Col Hla Myint Kyaw of Sports and Physical Education Department, Deputy Director-General Lt-Col Thein Aung, Adviser to the Ministry of Sports Col NgoCiin Pau and officials, Presidents of Myanmar Sports Federations, Ambassador of the People's Republic of China Ms Chen Baoliu and officials, and the family members.

Members are Lt-Col Than Zaw of the Ministry of Sports, Principal of Institute of Sports and Physical Education and Director U Kyaw Soe Myint, Coach U Mya Than Htaik (Competition/ Training), PSO to the Minister Capt Htain Lin and Assistant Director U Tin Aung of International Sports Affairs Division as Secretary.

(4) Minister inspects mangrove forests, conservation work in Ayeyawady Division

YANGON. 16 April - Minister for Forestry Lt-Gen Chit Swe inspected mangrove forests in Ayeyawady Division from 10 to 12 April.

Accompanied by departmental officials, the minister inspected mangrove forests in Bogalay Township, forest nurseries set up by farmers in Setsan Township and mangrove forests on Mainmahla Kyun sanctuary.

Officials of Forest Department briefed the minister on Mainmahla Kyun sanctuary.

The minister stressed the need to conserve mangrove forests including Mainmahla Kyun sanctuary and said that if the forest are depleted, production in the agriculture and meat and fish sectors will decline. He also called on the officials to carry out nature tourism or eco-tourism for long-term benefits.

At Byonmway Kyun mangrove plantations in Kadon Kani reserved forest. the minister told the departmental officials to take-up systematic measures for development of State-owned forests.

He said that just as the Government conserves forests under its own plans, so also the- Mangrove Forests Conservation Project is being Implemented in cooperation with UNDP and FAO.

The minister explained to them that the Government does not solely depend on the assistance of international agencies: it also lays stress on internal strength and called on the officials to organize the people for the cooperation.

The minister viewed over 1.5 million saplings planted in the Kadon Kani reserved forest and cordially conversed with the forest planters.

The minister and party inspected growth of trees and prevention of erosion in Kadon Kani reserved forest in Bogalay Township and Kakaryan, Pyin Alan and Kyargan Kwinbawk reserved forests in Labutta Township.

On 12 April, the minister had discussions with local authorities departmental officials in Labutta Township Law and Order Restoration Council Office and Union Solidarity and Development Association members

In his address, the minister said regional economy has developed in Ayeyawady deltaic region as paddy is mainly cultivated with the breeding of fish and prawns and as the population is gradually increasing, extraction of forest and aquatic resources has become greater.

He went on to say that forests are depleted due to the extension of land for cultivation to be able to meet the food demand of the growing population and remarked that development of agriculture, meat and fish and forest sectors depends on correct land utilization.

Forest development must be in parallel with the socioeconomic development of u the local people, he said,

adding 'community forestry' system has been adopted for f establishing community owned forests with the aim of extracting more forest products keeping the present resources intact.

The minister and party met personnel of Labutta Township Forest Department and their families and inspected saplings to be planted for greening the township in 1997-98 and areas along Labutta-Myaungmya road where forest nurseries will be set up.

The minister also inspected Pinlelay (Kanyingaing) River Bridge under construction.

(5) Mining projects, factories inspected in Mandalay Division, southern Shan State

YANGON, 16 April- Minister for Mines, Lt-Gen Kyaw Min, accompanied by Director-General of Geological Survey and Mineral Exploration Department U Soe Myint, Managing Director of No 3 Mining Enterprise U Mya Soe and Senior Engineer of Planning and Inspection Department U Myint Kyi, inspected mining projects and factories in Mandalay Division and southern Shan State from 8 to 13 April.

The minister inspected brite rock powder factory of Myanmar E C I Joint Venture Co of No 3 Mining Enterprise in Thazi on 9 April and Bawsaing Mining Project of No1 Mining Enterprise on 10 April.

The minister spoke of discharging duties at the respective role with confidence after realizing Our Three Main National Causes and the Twelve Objectives in meeting with service personnel at the factory and also spoke of the need to be loyal to the State.

The State Law and Order Restoration Council is endeavouring with added momentum for emergence of a peaceful, modern developed nation, laying down political, economic and social objectives, he said.

He expressed pleasure for exceeding targets and called for more sale of brite powder to foreign oil companies.

The minister presented gifts to service personnel. He also discussed welfare of service personnel.

On 12 April, The minister and party inspected Antimony Concentrating Plant in Kalaw.

He spoke of increase of price for more purchase of ores in 1997-98 fiscal year and earning of foreign exchange for export of high quality antimony powder.

The minister inspected pilot production of zinc and lead at Metallurgy Research and Development Centre in Ela.
