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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

Take part in border areas development undertakings

The Tatmadaw has been placing unusual emphasis on development of border areas and national races since its assumption of State responsibilities. Nowadays, a series of significant achievements have been made in rural regions. You are to take part in development tasks with much of goodwill in wherever regions you are to raise the living standard of rural people.

Senior General Than Shwe

Chairman of the State Peace and Development Council

Commander-in-Chief of Defence Services

(From address at the graduation parade of the 46th Intake of Defence Services Academy)



Prime Minister inspects development projects in Bago Division

YANGON, 16 March — Prime Minister General Khin Nyunt and party, accompanied by of Bago Division Peace and Development Council Chairman Southern Command Commander Maj-Gen Ko Ko, arrived at Nyaunglaybin via Shwegyin, Bago Division, on 14 March afternoon.

They were welcomed there by local authorities and departmental officials.

The Prime Minister and party proceeded to Nyaunglaybin Township

People's Hospital (50-bed) and inspected wards, operation theatre and medical store.

At Thiri Yadana Hall in Nyaunglaybin, the Prime Minister met with local authorities, departmental officials and members of social organizations.

At the meeting, the chairman of Township PDC reported on location, area and population of the region, average annual rainfall, cultivation of summer and monsoon paddy, beans

and pulses, extended growing of kitchen crops, ensuring regional food security, fish breeding, education and health sectors and requirements.

The Prime Minister attended to the needs for upgrading educational and health facilities.

The township now has a basic education high school, a BEMS, three BEPSs and a rural health care centre (branch). He then delivered a speech, saying that being situated in a strategic place on Yangon-Mandalay Union Highway and possessing fairly sound economic and social foundations, Nyaunglaybin Township

has potential for greater regional development. Irrigation facilities are being constructed by damming creeks and canals that rise from Bago Yoma mountain range, the cultivable acres in Bago Division is growing and it has reinforced the development momentum of Nyaunglaybin Township, he said.

Development of townships relies much on supervision, efforts, innovative measures and goodwill of those in charge of respective townships and departments. With less endeavours, goodwill and innovation of responsible persons, regional development momentum will be slow, he

pointed out.

The more personnel concerned strive for people's socio-economic development, while working hand in hand with them, the greater public cooperation and success they will achieve, he remarked.

With a view to ensuring harmonious efforts in implementing development of respective townships, respective committees have been formed in all areas, he said.

In conclusion, the Prime Minister called on the departmental officials to effectively implement regional development drive through collective leadership and responsibility.

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Circulation

22,735

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Prime Minister General Khin Nyunt meets with local authorities, departmental officials and members of social organizations in Nyaunglaybin on 14-3-2004. — MNA

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

PERSPECTIVES

Wednesday, 17 March, 2004

Inauguration of new runway at Patheingyi Airport

Development of a nation or a region depends on its smooth and secure transportation. Therefore, the Government is giving special emphasis to ensuring smooth and secure transport all over the country in its endeavour for all-round development of the Union.

As smooth and secure transportation is the sine qua non for improving the living standard of the national people, extending and upgrading motor roads, railroads and airports are being carried out. The inauguration of the new runway at the Patheingyi Airport took place on 14 March in Patheingyi, Ayeyawady Division, and Member of the State Peace and Development Council General Thura Shwe Mann of the Ministry of Defence attended the opening ceremony and delivered a speech. In his address on the occasion, General Thura Shwe Mann said that, due to the cooperation between the people in Ayeyawady Division and the government, the region is now enjoying all-round development and it is necessary for the local people to make continued efforts for its sustainable development. The concrete runway of the airport is 8,500 feet long and 100 feet wide and it can be used by Fokker F-28's, Airbus and Boeing-737's. It is planned to extend the length of the runway up to 12,000 feet. Just a small military airstrip in 1942, it was extended in 1979, 1986 and 1993 and so it was 4,800 feet long and 100 feet wide. As the new runway has been opened, tourists, foreign businessmen and national people will be able to travel from one place to another easily and quickly and visit such beach resorts as Ngazun and Chaungtha in Ayeyawady Division.

In the past, the people in Ayeyawady Division where there are numerous rivers and creeks had to rely on waterways for travelling from one place to another. But now, they can travel not only by car and train but also by plane. We believe Ayeyawady Division will develop socially and economically because the government is building the infrastructures for the regional development as well as for higher living standard of local people.

59th Anniversary

Armed Forces Day Objectives

- To strive hand in hand with the people for successful realization of the State's seven-point policy programme
- To crush internal and external destructive elements hindering the stability and progress of the State through people's militia strategy
- To implement border area development tasks and the five rural development tasks hand in hand with the entire people
- To build up a strong and efficient Tatmadaw to uphold 'Our Three Main National Causes'

People's Desire

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

MWAF meets Chin State Organization for Women's Affairs

YANGON, 16 March

— Myanmar Women's Affairs Federation President Dr Daw Khin Win Shwe, teaming with officials of MWAF including Vice-Presidents Daw Khin Lay The and Daw Than Nwe, arrived at Kale by air on 14 March to clarify the organizational setup of the federation and its functions.

Dr Daw Khin Win Shwe and party were welcomed there by Daw Wai Khine, wife of the Chairman of Sagaing

Division Peace and Development Council and Commander of North-West Command and also Patron of the Sagaing Division Organization for Women's Affairs, Brig-Gen Khin Maung Aye of Kale Station and wife, Chin State Peace and Development Council Chairman's wife Dr Khin Saw Mu, members of the panel of patrons of the Chin State Organization for Women's Affairs, and departmental officials.

The ceremony to clarify the functions of MWAF by Dr Daw Khin Win Shwe and party took place at Aung San Hall in Kale Station. Speaking on the occasion, Dr Daw Khin Win Shwe said that MWAF came into existence on 20 December 2003; that being a social organization, it



MWAF President Dr Daw Khin Win Shwe delivers an address at the meeting. — MNA

could work for development of women sector on a broader and more effective scale; and that prioritizing its fine seven objectives, it could not only participate in nation-building tasks, but it also had set high aim on the development of women's sector by making contact with international organizations as well as with NGOs. She continued it would be necessary to play any parts in the drive to curb the human trafficking cases as Kale was situated in border area, adding that the entire mass of women were to uphold the goodwill of the State that helped raise their effective ability and fine traditions.

Later, MWAF Secretary Dr Daw Khin Ma Tun, explained the organizational pattern of the federation and the way of accepting membership appli-

cations; MWAF Vice-President Daw Khin Lay The, education, health, economy, environmental conservation, propagation, and the tasks of the financial and administrative working groups; and Vice-President Daw Than Nwe, the protection of young women from being subjected to violence, and the tasks of the working groups of rehabilitation and resettlement.

Next, wellwishers donated K 6 million to MWAF. Dr Daw Khin Win

Shwe accepted the donations and presented certificates of honour to the wellwishers and spoke words of thanks.

Dr Daw Khin Win Shwe and party also met with members of the Chin State Organization for Women's Affairs at the guest house of Kale Station at 5 pm and replied to queries about the unclear facts concerning the organizational setup of the federation, tasks to be carried out in the future.

MNA

Hailing the 59th Anniversary Armed Forces Day:

Book Fair



Sarpay Beikman

378,384 Upper Bo Aung Gyaw Street, Yangon
(former PPE head office)
19 to 28 March 2004 (from 9 am to 5 pm)

The 41st Myanmar Gems Emporium

Article and photos by Thauing Win Bo

An uncut ruby weighing 1.13 kilograms (5,650 carat) is the most attractive stone at the 41st Myanmar Gems Emporium, being held for nine days from 13 to 21 March. It will be sold with a reserve price of 50,000 euro. The quality uncut stone with crimson colour can be cut into a fine ruby stone.

Of the gem lots at the emporium, the reserve price of Lot No 1057 comprising two quality uncut jade with dark green colour is the highest at 1,810,000 euro. The lot has captivated the local and foreign merchants.

The reserve price for the 69 pieces of rare pearls of gold hue is 22,300 euro.

Invitations were sent to over 500 merchants of 26 countries to attend the emporium where 1,254 lots of jade will be sold through competitive bidding at a reserve price of 13.5 million euro. Moreover, 0.11 million euro worth of polished jade stones and figurines will be sold at fixed prices at the Gems Mart on Kaba Aye Pagoda Road, Yangon, the venue of the emporium.

On the first floor of the mart are the shops of the Myanmar Gems Enterprise and private companies selling gems, jewellery, jade figurines and mosaics, and the quality jade boulders can be seen displayed in the compound.

On the third floor are gem and pearl lots that will be sold through competitive bidding. At the emporium, the joint-venture enterprises are displaying 146 lots of

jade, with a total reserve price of 2.37 million euro; the Union of Myanmar Economic Holdings Ltd, 130 lots of jade, with a total reserve price of 1.3 million euro; and other organizations and individuals, 972 lots of jade at a reserve price of 9.58 million euro. In addition, 289 pearl lots at a reserve price of 1.8 million euro, 318 lots of gems at a reserve price of 8.9 million euro, and 1,207 items of jewellery will also be sold there. Furthermore, 90 gem lots will be sold on competitive bidding, and their reserve price is 8.7 million euro. The reserve price of another 89 gem lots to be sold under tender system is 180,555 euro.

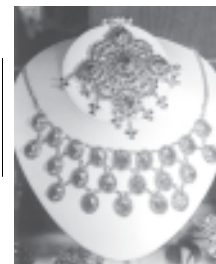
Most of the foreign merchants to this year's emporium are from the People's Republic of China and Hong Kong. As the Chinese love and value jade so much, they are being captivated by the numerous jade lots. Chinese often carve religious figures with jade.

The discovery of a huge jade boulder weighing over 3,000 tons, the largest on earth, has made Myanmar renowned as a nation rich in mineral resources. Since the time of ancient Myanmar kings, the people have been proud of their nation for yielding a large number of valuable gems including the Nga Mouk Ruby stone. And we hope that as in the previous emporiums, the present one will benefit both the buyers and the nation.

(Translation: TMT)



The raw ruby found in alabaster weighs 1.13 kilos. Its floor price is 50,000 euro. It is catching eyes at the emporium.



A necklace and a pendant studded with sapphires, rubies, emeralds and diamonds is priced 18,000 euro.



Two quality jades (Lot No 1057) with the highest reserve price of 1.81 million euro.

US casualty in Iraq sharply rises to 564

BAGHDAD, 16 March—564 US service members have died since the beginning of military operations in Iraq, according to the Department of Defence. Of those, 385 died as a result of hostile action and 179 died of non-hostile causes, the department said.

The British military has reported 58 deaths; Italy, 17; Spain, eight; Bulgaria, five; Ukraine, three; Thailand, two; Denmark, Estonia and Poland have reported one each.

Since May 1, when President Bush declared that major combat operations in Iraq had ended, 426 US soldiers have died — 270 as a result of hostile action and 156 of non-hostile causes, according to the military.

Since the start of military operations, 2,814 US service

members have been injured as a result of hostile action, according to the Defence Department's figures. Non-hostile injured numbered 427. The latest identifications reported by public officials and family members:

— National Guard Spc Jocelyn Carrasquillo, 28, Wilmington, NC; killed Saturday when his convoy hit a land mine; assigned to 120th Division; Wilmington, NC.

Internet

Spain's troops heading out of Iraq under Zapatero

MADRID, 16 March—Spain's incoming leader Jose Luis Rodriguez Zapatero indicated on Monday he would pull his troops out of the "disastrous" occupation of Iraq in a major swing from his predecessor's pro-American foreign policy.

The European Union (EU), concerned by growing signs that Thursday's Madrid train bombings may have been carried out by Islamist militants, called emergency counter-terrorism talks. Spain also said it would host a meeting of anti-terrorist services from across the bloc in the next few days to coordinate the investigation and exchange information into the attacks.

Zapatero's Socialists swept to office on Sunday in a shock victory over Prime Minister Jose Maria Aznar's conservatives.

Some analysts said it could be an alarming first case of Islamist militants influencing, by violence, the outcome of a major Western election.

But Zapatero called his triumph a first consequence of the Iraq war's unpopularity with Spaniards. "The second will be that the Spanish troops will come back," he told Spanish radio.

Spain has 1,300 soldiers in parts of south-central Iraq. Critics of the government have argued that the Madrid bombings were the price Spain paid for backing the Iraq occupation.

"We have been very clear about the risk and the threat

that we were all facing with this illegal war in Iraq, and unfortunately Spain has paid the price," Spain's likely next foreign minister Miguel Angel Moratinos told Reuters.

Internet



Spain's Prime Minister-elect Jose Luis Rodriguez Zapatero vowed to withdraw troops from Iraq and criticized US President George W Bush after Spanish voters ousted governing conservatives who took the country into the controversial war.—INTERNET

Sun exposure increases chance of developing cataracts

CANBERRA, 16 March—Australian scientists have discovered that exposure to the sun increases a person's chances of developing eye cataracts, which was once thought to be caused by aging.

Queensland Institute of Medical Research (QIMR) scientists believe nuclear cataracts are caused by exposure to ultra-violet radiation. Eighty per cent of those who develop eye cataracts in the world have nuclear cataracts.

"Our results also suggest that the majority of ultraviolet induced lens damage occurs before 30 years of age," said QIMR Associate Professor David Purdie.

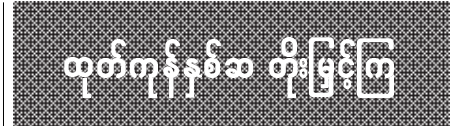
"People who had high sun exposure in their 20s but low in subsequent decades had consistently higher risks than those with low exposure between 20 and 29," he said.

The discovery is believed to be a breakthrough in how to prevent cataracts. "Our study indicates that cataracts may not be natural, but that they are preventable," said Purdie.

MNA/Xinhua



Peaceful protesters against the US military involvement in Iraq gather one-block from the White House in Washington, on 15 March, 2004. Police blocked access to the front of the mansion and protesters remained down the street.—INTERNET



Three US civilians killed in Iraq shooting

BAGHDAD, 16 March—Three American relief workers were killed and two were wounded in a drive-by shooting Monday in the northern city of Mosul, the US military said. Hospital officials said two of the dead were women.

The victims worked for a non-governmental organization, said Air Force Lt Col Tom Gilroy, a military spokesman in Baghdad. No identities were provided nor was the name of the organization for which the victims worked.

Lt Col Joseph Piek, a spokesman for American forces in Mosul, said in an e-mail that the victims were travelling in one car on the eastern side of the city when they were attacked. An off-duty Iraqi policeman found the car shortly after the late afternoon shooting, and took the wounded to an Iraqi hospital. US Army air medevac helicopters later transported them to a combat support hospital in Mosul.

"One person is currently in surgery; the other is in the intensive care unit in guarded condition," Piek said.

Iraqi officials at Al-Razi hospital in Mosul said one man and two women were killed.

"All five US citizens belong to a private volunteer organization. Coalition Forces are working to contact the organization. When appropriate next of kin notification is complete, more information will be provided," Piek said.

"We do not know what the five US citizens were doing at the time of the attack, but we do know they were in the Mosul area to deliver relief supplies," he said.

Iraqi police and the FBI were involved in the investigation. The victims were attacked by two or three men in a car, witnesses said.—Internet

No democracy is perfect, Putin tells America

MOSCOW, 16 March — Russian President Vladimir Putin on Monday rebuffed US criticism of his landslide re-election, saying no democracy was perfect, not even America's.

Putin won a second Kremlin term on Sunday with over 70 per cent of the vote, but only after US Secretary of State Colin Powell said it was "not good" that Putin's rivals had been denied equal access to the media during the campaign. "I think nobody has the right to think that if they criticize others, that they shouldn't be criticized themselves," Putin told a post-election news conference.

"We have a saying that some people, who see a speck of dust in the eye of another, don't see the log in their own eye."

"In many so-called developed democracies there are also many problems with their own democratic and voting procedures. And we, nearly four years ago, saw in amazement how the American system voting system suffered glitches."

Putin was referring to the cliffhanger US presidential election in 2000, when

George W Bush beat Al Gore only after a series of court rulings over the validity of punch-card ballots in the swing state of Florida.

Powell told Fox News Sunday he did not understand why opposition candidates had been prevented from taking full part in the Russian presidential race. "It's not good, but I don't think it's the end of democracy in Russia," Powell said.

But the riposte of the Russian leader, who has forged a close personal relationship with Bush during the past four years, was low-key. He put Washington's chiding down to the pressure of Bush's own bid to win a second term in November. "We won't overlook this critical observation. We will analyze it and if we find that there is something to reflect on. We won't only take note of it, but also draw the appropriate conclusions," Putin said.—MNA/Reuters

China, India could tackle problems left over from history

BELING, 16 March—Chinese Premier Wen Jiabao on Sunday hailed the recent "healthy" pace of development in Sino-Indian ties and expressed confidence in resolving "problems" left over from history, including the boundary issue, amicably.

"As long as the two countries stick to peaceful co-existence, respect for each other and mutual understanding, China and India could tackle the problems left over from history and maintain lasting friendship and cooperation," Wen told reporters at his annual Press conference on the sidelines of the Parliament session which concluded its annual sitting here.

Speaking highly of the

recent positive developments in bilateral ties, Wen, who has completed one year in office this month, stressed that the friendship between the two countries stretched for more than 2,000 years whereas conflicts between them lasted for only two years.

Recalling the visit of Indian Defence Minister George Fernandes to China in April last year, Wen said he told Fernandes during a

meeting that throughout the India-China interactions over 2,000 years, the two countries had conflict only during 0.01 per cent of the time while 99.99 per cent of the time, they remained friendly.

Wen also recalled Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee's visit to China in June last year and described it as "very friendly".

MNA/PTI

Toll rises as Iraq guerillas use new bombing tactics

BAGHDAD, 16 March—Guerilla bombmakers, whose roadside explosives claimed the lives of six more American soldiers at the weekend, have adopted new and grimly devious tactics.

The tactics include setting multiple charges along convoy routes, disguising bombs inside animal carcasses and planting hollow artillery shells to draw troops into an ambush, military officers said.

One American soldier was killed on Sunday when his convoy west of Baghdad was blasted by a roadside explosive. Three soldiers died late on Saturday when their patrol in south-east Baghdad also fell victim to a homemade bomb.

Those deaths, announced by a military spokesman on Sunday, followed an attack on Saturday with an improvised explosive device and small-arms fire in Tikrit that left two soldiers dead.

Explaining the spike in deaths this

weekend from improvised explosive devices, military officers in Iraq described vast improvements in the deadliness and effectiveness of the weapons over recent weeks.

Early in the insurgency, the handcrafted bombs tended to be bulky weapons, usually discarded artillery shells wired with a detonator and wired to a garage door opener or doorbell. Attackers laboriously buried or hid the homemade bombs along roadways between midnight and dawn.

As ground patrols and surveillance planes put the pressure on this labour-intensive strategy of concealing booby traps, the guerillas learnt to create smaller bombs that could be planted quickly, military officers said.

"We call them 'drop and pop'," said an American officer in Iraq who briefs arriving soldiers on the threat from the improvised explosive devices.

"We used to be able to look for a signature," the officer said. "Anybody out doing road work before the sun came up was probably digging a hole to plant a bomb. Now, they just roll by or walk alongside and dump them out."

Guerillas have also adopted a tactic of planting empty shell casings and wiring in an obvious spot to draw American forces.

The fake explosives appear intended to waste the time of explosive-disposal squads or to draw soldiers into an ambush of small-arms fire.

Internet

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New Spanish leader lashes out at Bush, Blair over Iraq war

MADRID, 16 March—US President George W Bush and British Prime Minister Tony Blair "need to engage in some self-criticism" on their decision to launch a war against Iraq, Spain's prime minister-elect Jose Luis Rodriguez Zapatero warned.

"Mr Bush and Mr Blair need to engage in some self-criticism. 'You can't just go ahead and do things. You can't bombard a people just in case' they pose a perceived threat," Zapatero said.

"You can't organise a war on the basis of lies," he added, in an allusion to the insistence by Washington, London and Madrid that the conflict was justified by their belief Iraq possessed weapons of mass destruction. —Internet

Soldier explains why he refused to return to Iraq

BAGHDAD, 16 March—This week marks the one-year anniversary of the start of Operation Iraqi Freedom. Although the US bombing of Iraq was short-lived, the war is proving to have far-reaching consequences both abroad, and at home.

NewsCentre Five's Amalia Barreda reported that one Florida soldier surrendered to authorities in Massachusetts after refusing to return to his military duties in Iraq.

There were tearful farewells between staff Sgt. Camilo Mejia and his parents at the gates of Hanscom Air Force Base. Mejia's civil lawyer turned over his military credentials and then the 28-year-old soldier—who never returned to duty in Iraq following a 14-day leave in October—surrendered to military police with plans to seek status as a conscientious objector.

"By conscience I can-

not continue to do the things I was doing in Iraq. I'm not here to say that a certain commander or a certain leader over there was evil or was making me do bad things. What I have to say is war itself is evil, and violence only leads to more violence, and I have chosen not to be a part of it," said Mejia.

Mejia made his statements at the Peace Abbey, a centre for non-violence in Sherborn surrounded by supporters and family. A native of Nicaragua who holds a green card, Mejia served in the Army for three years. He served five years in the National Guard in Florida when his unit was

activated for duty in Iraq.

"It's very different when you have an abstract idea of what war is like, and when you don't know what it's like to push your principles to the limit as when you go there, and you actually see human beings are dying. And when you find justification for it, all you find is lies. All you find is this thing about weapons of mass destruction which we never found," said Mejia.

Internet



US troops in armoured vehicles patrol the Baghdad to Fallujah highway.

INTERNET

Kerry challenged over comments on foreign leaders

BETHLEHEM (Pennsylvania), 16 March—Democratic White House candidate John Kerry was challenged on Sunday over his comments that some foreign leaders wanted him to beat President George W Bush, but he refused to reveal any of their names.

Reacting to comments made by Secretary of State Colin Powell in a television interview, and a question raised by a persistent Republican at a town hall meeting in Pennsylvania, Kerry repeated his contention that foreign leaders were encouraging his presidential bid because of unhappiness with US policy.

But he refused to name the leaders and said some of the conversations were by telephone, not face-to-face. "No leader would obviously share a conversation if I started listing them," Kerry told reporters after Powell suggested he name some names or stop implying foreign leaders wanted him to beat Bush.

"I don't think Colin Powell or the President would start listing names of people who had said some-

thing critical of something or somebody. I'm not going to do that," he said.

Kerry, who visited Pennsylvania to criticize Bush's health care policy, said last week he had "met foreign leaders who can't say this publicly, but boy they look at you and say 'you've got to win this, you've got to beat this guy, we need a new policy'".

Powell took issue with the comments on "Fox News Sunday", saying, "if he feels it is that important an assertion to make, he ought to list some names. If he can't list names, then perhaps he should find something else to talk about".

The Massachusetts senator also was challenged by Cedrick Brown, owner of a small business in Bethlehem, Pennsylvania, and a registered Republican who de-

manded at a town hall meeting to know who the leaders were.

Kerry, who last travelled overseas in late 2002, insisted to reporters that he both talked to and met with foreign leaders who were rooting for him. He said during the town hall that he talked to "several" in the past week.

He said the leaders were "at all different levels" of government and said their support was fuelled by dissatisfaction with US unilateralism and an "arrogant" foreign policy.

"I'm talking about our allies, I'm talking about people who were our friends nine months ago," Kerry told Brown. "I'm talking about people who ought to be on our side on Iraq and aren't because this administration has pushed them away."

MNA/Reuters

Iran rebuffs US complaints about Iraq border

TEHERAN, 16 March—Iran insisted on Sunday it had strict border controls with Iraq, a day after US officials accused it of doing too little to keep out "undesirables" they suspect of mounting attacks on occupying forces in Iraq.

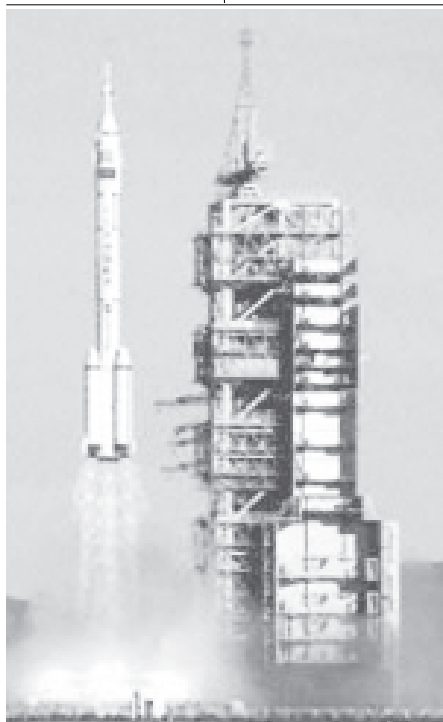
US officials said on Saturday they would close all but three of Iraq's 19 official border crossings with Iran. Iran's Foreign Ministry spokesman denied Iran's border controls were too lax and pinned the blame for any security lapses on the US-led forces in Iraq.

"We control our borders and prevent any illegal border crossing," Hamid Reza Asefi told a weekly news conference.

"America and other occupiers have control of the other side of the border and it is their responsibility to close the border and they should do it," Asefi said.

Asefi said Iran would discuss border issues with a visiting delegation of Iraq's US-appointed Governing Council which arrived in Teheran on Saturday.

MNA/Reuters



Experiments being carried out in the orbiting capsule of China's historic Shenzhou V space flight have ended after 152 days of tests related to space environmental monitoring. Here an earlier launch.—INTERNET

Spanish election costs Blair his main EU ally on Iraq

LONDON, 16 March— Britain said it will be business as usual with Spain's incoming Socialist government, despite the stunning defeat of Prime Minister Tony Blair's main ally in Europe on Iraq and the war on terror.

Blair was to telephone the incoming Spanish leader Jose Luis Rodriguez Zapatero during the day to congratulate him on his Socialists' trouncing of Jose Maria Aznar's centre-right People's Party.

Aznar, defying Spanish public opinion, stood four-square behind the US and British invasion of Iraq last year. Within the European Union he was Blair's principal ally both on Iraq and the US-led campaign against Al-Qaeda.

Foreign Secretary Jack Straw played down any negative consequences of Sunday's elections, recalling that the Spanish Socialists and Blair's Labour party have "very good fraternal relations".

"It is actually quite a forward looking, modernist social-

ist party so we look forward to doing business with them," he said.

Editorialists said the Spanish election results would create shockwaves in Downing Street, as Blair aims to seek a third term in office in elections likely to be held in the first half of next year.

The Daily Telegraph said: "The (Spanish) election will be remembered as heralding the rise of 'euro isolationism'."

"Large numbers of Spanish voters succumbed to the delusion that if Mr Aznar had not lent support for the Anglo-American coalition (in Iraq), then their homeland would be safer".

Internet

သားငါးပွဲဖြိုး ပြည်အကျိုး

Two Fort Riley soldiers killed in Iraq

KANSAS, 16 March—Two Fort Riley, Kan, soldiers were killed last Thursday in Fallujah, Iraq when their vehicle was hit by improvised explosives.

Staff Sgt Joe L. Dunigan, 37, of Belton, Texas, and Spc Christopher K. Hill, 26, of Ventura, Calif., were assigned to the 1st Battalion, 16th Infantry, 1st Brigade, 1st Infantry Division.

Both men were deployed to Iraq in September 2003.

Officials said that 30 Fort Riley soldiers have died while serving in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom. —Internet



Spanish soldiers patrol a street in the Iraqi town of Diwaniya. Spain's prime minister-elect, Jose Luis Rodriguez Zapatero, vowed to withdraw troops from Iraq and criticized US President George W. Bush after Spanish voters ousted the government that dragged their country into the controversial war. —INTERNET

Huge car bomb found near US Consulate in Pakistan

KARACHI, 16 March— A van packed with explosives was found outside the US Consulate in the Pakistani city of Karachi on Monday, two days before US Secretary of State Colin Powell visits the country, police said.

The car bomb was discovered by police and towed away from the consulate to a sports ground where investigators defused it, police in the volatile port city said.

"If this exploded it would have caused massive destruction. God saved us," said Munir Ahmed Sheikh, a sub-inspector at the city's bomb disposal unit.

A 750-litre drum contained a mixture of chemi-

cals, including ammonium nitrate, he said.

A car bomb outside the same consulate killed 12 Pakistanis and wounded 45 in June 2002. Powell is due to visit the Pakistani capital, Islamabad, but not Karachi on Wednesday.

A young man had parked the van in front of the consulate, telling guards the vehicle had broken down. He then drove away in another

car, police said.

Police were called and discovered the detonators and the drum of chemicals. The van was taken to the sports ground, about one mile from the consulate.

Powell is visiting Pakistan this week on a tour that also takes him to India and Afghanistan.

MNA/Reuters

Zapatero will probably pull troops from Iraq

MADRID, 16 March — Election winner Jose Luis Rodriguez Zapatero said on Monday he would probably withdraw Spain's 1,300 troops from the "disaster" in Iraq and attacked US and British leaders George W. Bush and Tony Blair.

He also indicated a swing away from Madrid's recent pro-American stance towards a "pro-European" foreign policy.

"The war has been a disaster, the occupation continues to be a disaster. It has only caused violence," Zapatero said in his first interview after a surprise triumph on Sunday.

"There must be consequences. There has been one already — the election result. The second will be that the Spanish troops will come back," he said.

"Mr Blair and Mr Bush must do some reflection and self-criticism. You can't bomb a people, you can't organize a war with lies," he added in a lengthy chat with Spain's Cadena SER radio.

While he sounded definitive in parts of his interview, at others Zapatero repeated a previous campaign pledge to pull out troops if the United Nations does not take charge by mid-year.

"If there is no new developments, the soldiers will return on July 1," he said, adding he did not expect any new develop-

ments on a UN takeover.

At another point, however, Zapatero said no precise pullout plan would be set until he was in power and without wide political consultation.

The Socialists are not expected to take office for around a month until overseas votes are counted, legislators take their seats in parliament and Zapatero receives the approval of King Juan Carlos to form a government.

Under Aznar, Spain became a staunch ally of the United States but Zapatero said one of his chief foreign policy priorities would be to deepen relations with Europe.

"I want Europe to see us again as pro-European, my feeling is that the election result has caused surprise but a lot of satisfaction in Europe," he said.

He pledged to try to help break the diplomatic deadlock over a new European Constitution. "I think we can reach an agreement which will maintain the balance of power for an enlarged Europe," he said.

MNA/Reuters

Blitz operation to ensure work safety

HONG KONG, 16

March— Hong Kong's Labour Department has launched a blitz to ensure the work safety on lift installation and maintenance works on construction sites, in large housing estates and

commercial buildings.

Permanent Secretary for Economic Development and Labour Matthew Cheung Kin-chung, said Sunday at the presentation ceremony of the Construction Industry Safety Award Scheme

that his department was greatly concerned about a recent spate of serious industrial accidents relating to lift works.

He said with much effort, the number of industrial accidents in the trade plunged 68.1 per cent from 19,588 in 1998 to 6,239 in 2002 and the number of fatal accidents decreased by 57.1 per cent from 56 in 1998 to 24 in 2002. He said, in order to remind contractors and workers of the necessary safety precautions to ensure work safety, his department has launched a six-week blitz inspection.

In addition, the department will take vigorous enforcement action to remind contractors and workers of the safety issues involving truss-out bamboo scaffolding. Cheung pointed out that the award scheme had been well received since its inception. This year, a total of 104 construction sites, 55 sub-contractors and 60 safety teams joined the scheme. —MNA/Xinhua

Six die in blaze near Cape Town

JOHANNESBURG, 16 March — Six people died and two others were reported missing after a fire razed about 1,000 informal housing structures in the Joe Slovo settlement in Langa near South Africa's Cape Town on Sunday.

Cobus Dowry, Western Cape provincial minister of local government, said thousands of people were left homeless.

Dowry had been briefed by the Disaster Management component of the Department of Local Government and had been told that the Disaster Management component of the City of Cape Town had the situation under control.

The Red Cross and the Salvation Army were involved to assist with blankets, food and shelter.

Dowry was quoted by the South African Press Association as saying, "After the last fire in Imizamo Yethu in Hout Bay I have held a series of meetings with provincial ministers and senior officials from their departments, as well as the mayor of the City of Cape Town with the aim of finding a long-term solution to these fires. This will be an ongoing process, but it is clear that more urgency is now required."

MNA/Xinhua



A natural calamity that is expected to see tonnes of mud, ash and water sweep down the slopes of a volcano in New Zealand is sparking a political row as allegations fly that the government was coddling minority interests. Here New Zealand's most active volcano, Whakari. —INTERNET

Iraq in the aftermath of US invasion

Civilian deaths



An Iraqi man lies injured inside a hospital in the Kazimiya district of Baghdad, Iraq on 3 March, 2004. He was injured in the suicide attacks which killed 58 people.



A crowd of Iraqis look over the scene of an explosion at a police station in Iskandariyah, south of Baghdad, on 18 Feb, 2004.



An Iraqi doctor treats a wounded man who was injured in a cross fire between US troops and Iraqi guerillas on 8 March 2004 in Mosul, 400 kilometers north of Baghdad, Iraq.

Up to March this year, more than 10,000 Iraqi civilians have died due to US-led invasion against Iraq and Iraqi civilians are facing many difficulties under alien's occupation.



Iraqis walk around destroyed cars south of Baghdad on 19 Feb 2004.

Civilian deaths up to March (2004)		
1.	Cluster bomb (From March to April 2003)	279
2.	Air strikes (From March to September 2003)	1169
3.	Gunfire (From March 2003 to February 2004)	291
4.	Mortor round (In February 2004)	3
5.	Tank round (In February 2004)	2
6.	Others (From March 2003 to March 2004)	
8349Total		10093



At least 55 people were killed and 65 wounded when a suicide bomber detonated a pick-up truck packed with explosives outside a police station south of Baghdad on 17 Feb, 2004.

Hailing the 59th Anniversary Armed Forces Day:

Tatmadaw always striving for national development in the interest of the people



Tatmadaw members contributing towards a road project that links Shan State (North) and (South).

Roads constructed or upgraded with the endeavours of Tatmadawmen

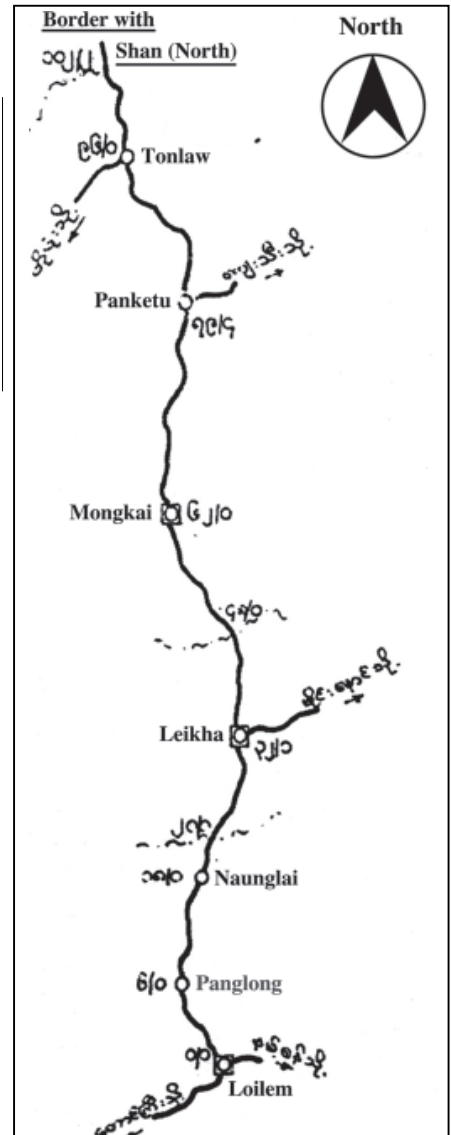
North-East Command Headquarters

Mongyai-Namlaung	24 miles
Hsipaw-Namlan-Tonlaw	53.25 miles
Tangyan-Mongkaung-Monghsu	55 miles

Eastern Command Headquarters

Loilem-Leikha-Mongkai-Panketu-Tonlaw	102 miles
Leikha-Mongnaung	46 miles
Mongnaung-Kehsi-Panketu	52 miles
Kholan-Wanhsin-Mongnaung-Pachee (Phakhee)-Monghsu	77 miles
Pachee (Phakhee)-Wanhai-Kenglun-Namlaung	27 miles
Kehsi-Nampok	16 miles

A Tatmadaw
which always
upholds Our
Three Main
National
Causes



Map showing the project for upgrading Loilem-Leikha-Mongkai-Panketu-Tonlaw Road for better transport between Shan State (North) and (South).



Tatmadaw members participating in the 53.25-mile Hsipaw-Namlan-Tonlaw road section extension project for better transport between Shan State (North) and (South).

The Tatmadaw (Armed Forces) in perpetual service of the people



It was around 1970-71 when the Tatmadaw was building and safeguarding the nation after taking up the State responsibilities forming the Revolutionary Council.

The Tatmadaw and local people made combined and concerted efforts in crushing the Burma Communist Party Headquarters in Bago Yoma Mountain Range. Meanwhile, the expatriate BCP established its branch in Indawkyaukgu region.

However, the Tatmadaw took the pre-emptive step by launching an offensive on the BCP and crushed them on 27 July 1970.

The Tatmadaw captured dead the BCP (branch) secretary and seven of its men and also on 8 September it captured dead five BCP members including the branch's chairman dead along with 38 assorted arms and ammunition. And the branch was thus annihilated.

The victory had been due to the launching of just battle by the Tatmadaw that always undergoes military training to defend and safeguard the nation while always preparing itself for the combat-readiness with constant military vigilance.

However, the BCP continued to extend its domination area and strength. As a result, it had been able

to mobilize up to over 3,000 men in the North-East region. The BCP waged a fierce battle with the Tatmadaw in Kunlong region. The battle lasted forty days from 19 November until 28 December 1971.

Under the political and military strategy laid down in 1971, the BCP launched military operations with the aim of establishing the liberated area on the west bank of Thanlwin River after occupying Kunlong.

In its bid to translate the

363 members and about 200 women. And they began their attack on Kunlong on 19 November 1971.

During the period, Kunlong and its environs were reverberated day and night with the sounds of firing of assorted weapons.

At dawn on 20 November, the BCP started the attack on Lwemankha camp. The Tatmadaw put up a strong resistance in which eight bayonet fights were involved. Upholding the oath "I will sacrifice my



Tatmadaw members resist the offensive of the BCP insurgents in the 40-day Kunlong battle.

Shaungtilin camp that stands at an altitude of over 6,000 feet on 26 November.

On 30 November 1971, the Tatmadaw members were engaged in the decisive battle at the Haikkampa camp. Meanwhile, Tatmadaw reinforcements on Lwe-mankha and Panyethan mountain range

the insurgents were piling up.

The BCP tried hard to seize the Haikkampa camp. They used all their manpower and fire power since the seizure of the camp was crucial for occupying Kunlong.

The Tatmadaw is firmly resolved to sacrifice their lives, blood and sweat with the belief that this will bring honour to the State, the people, the Tatmadaw, and Tatmadawmen who have sacrificed their lives for the nation and the people.

Therefore, the Tatmadaw members confronted

the Haikkampa Camp battle was a great credit to the Tatmadaw. In the battle, the Tatmadaw had been able to change the defensive position into offensive one in no time.

As soon as the BCP troops fled in disarray following the collapse of their offensive, the Tatmadaw members launched the counter-offensive and were on hot pursuit of the insurgents on 11 December. The Tatmadaw reoccupied Lwemankha Camp. Again on 18 December, the Tatmadaw launched Kaungkye battle, and the BCP troops fled, leaving

Victorious Tatmadaw

strategic aim into action, starting from 13 November 1971, the BCP launched military operations in the region on east bank of Thanlwin River

life for the sake of the State, the people and the Tatmadaw", the Tatmadaw members had made a strong determination to defeat the BCP. The

provided supporting artillery fire for the Tatmadaw members. The BCP troops forming themselves into groups of some 200 men stormed the camp.

The Haikkampa Camp battle reflected the twelve Nobel traditions of the Tatmadaw — a patriotic Tatmadaw, a Tatmadaw with good discipline, a loyal Tatmadaw, a united Tatmadaw, an efficient Tatmadaw, a Tatmadaw which makes heroic sacrifices, a Tatmadaw which does not seek personal gain, a Tatmadaw of noble spirit and high morale, a Tatmadaw which possesses true quality of overcoming obstacles, a Tatmadaw which can endure hardship, a tenacious and persevering Tatmadaw and a Tatmadaw which always upholds Our Three Main National Causes.

with over 2,000 of its men, and on the west bank of Thanlwin River with over 1,000 men plus an artillery unit made up of seven machine-guns. It comprised

BCP with supporting artillery fire continued its attack on Lwemankha camp that stands at an altitude of over 4,000 feet on 22, 25 and 26 November, and

The Tatmadaw members had to shoot the incoming waves after waves of the BCP insurgents. The area was filled with the smell of carbide, and the bodies of



Tatmadaw members brilliantly fight against the BCP troops in Chushwe-Pankok battle.

Sitthi Nanda

the BCP insurgents and penetrated into them and crushed them. The insurgents were in no position to carry the dead and wounded of their men. They had to flee in disarray.

The Tatmadaw crushed the BCP offensive and recaptured the Haikkampa Camp. Then, the State Flag was fluttering at the camp. The Haikkampa Camp battle reflected the twelve noble traditions of the Tatmadaw — a patriotic Tatmadaw, a Tatmadaw with good discipline, a loyal Tatmadaw, a united Tatmadaw, an efficient Tatmadaw, a Tatmadaw which makes heroic sacrifices, a Tatmadaw which does not seek personal gain, a Tatmadaw of noble spirit and high morale, a Tatmadaw which possesses true quality of overcoming obstacles, a Tatmadaw which can endure hardship, a tenacious and persevering Tatmadaw and a Tatmadaw which always upholds Our Three Main National Causes.

As a matter of fact, the victory over the BCP in

the dead bodies of their fellow members.

In the 40-day Kunlong battle, the Tatmadaw with love for the motherland, equipped with patriotism and nationalistic spirit fiercely resisted the attack of the BCP troops who encroached upon the territory and sovereignty of the nation.

As a consequence, over 1,200 BCP troops were killed. A total of 85 officers and other ranks of the Tatmadaw sacrificed their lives and 274, their limbs.

Through patriotism and nationalistic spirit, the Tatmadaw has the fine tradition of overcoming the dangers posed from inside and outside the country. This has been due to its patriotism, nationalistic spirit, abidance of the military codes of conduct, the concept to defend and safeguard the nation, the people and the Tatmadaw at risk to life, always building up national solidarity and unity in the Tatmadaw, and always making concerted efforts to fortify military skill, administrative skill and organizing skill.

(See page 9)

Hailing the 59th Anniversary Armed Forces Day



Haikkampa camp which made the BCP, lackeys of foreign destructive elements, suffer a heavy loss of the lives of its members in Kunlong battle.

(from page 8)

Accordingly, the Tatmadaw has won every battle. Among them was Chushwe-Pankok battle fought in the North-East Command area and the battle went down in history.

After the 40-day Kunlong battle, the BCP troops were thrown into complete disarray. However, they tried with might and main to dominate Hopang region, east of Kunlon, in 1977, after regrouping their men.

Under the strategy to dominate Hopang region, a 300-strong force of the BCP made a surprise attack on a platoon of Tatmadaw in Lwela Ywathit near Chushwe outpost at about 6 pm on 2 October 1977. Similarly, over 100 BCP insurgents attacked a section on defence duty at Chushwe outpost. So the section had to temporarily withdrew from the camp.

In another incident, around 200 BCP members with the support of artillery fire attacked the 20-member unit of the Tatmadaw, at 6.20 am on 3 October 1977. The Tatmadaw unit had to retreat in groups to Hopang.

Likewise, a combined force made up of 37 Tatmadaw members and People's Police Force members had to withdraw temporarily from the Pankok outpost as the BCP attacked them with supporting artillery fire. The 12-member unit of Tatmadaw did the same under continued BCP attack on the lower Pankok outpost.

Hearing the battle at Chushwe camp, a Tatmadaw section of Lwemalonman outpost



The map showing Chushwe-Pankok battle of "Operation Ye Min Aung".

and the 13-member militia readied themselves for the possible battle, and no sooner had over 100 BCP troops approached the outpost than they opened fire on the insurgents at the first opportunity.

Moreover, a reinforcement section of the Tatmadaw arrived and the battle raged for two days. Finally, the BCP troops withdrew.

With a view to crushing the attacks of the BCP by making counter-offensives, the Tatmadaw regrouped the troops in the North-East Command area and launched "Operation Ye Min Aung" on the insurgents in the Chushwe front. The Tatmadaw opened the military fronts — Chushwe front from 3 to 27 October, Yinkwetaung front from 8 to 28 October, Phakyut front from 8 to 28 October, and Binhinho front from 29 October until 1 November.

Even though BCP troops defended their camps using a wide range of weapons such as 75mm, 57mm, 82mm and 60mm

artilleries, .5 launchers and machine guns in the battles, they could no longer resist the fierce and brilliant attacks of the Tatmadaw which was assisted by the artillery fire and air-to-surface fire of the Tatmadaw (Air). And at last, the BCP troops withdrew in disarray from their camps.

The Tatmadaw recaptured Chushwe and Pankok camps. Along the retreating route to the edge of Binhinho, the BCP suffered a great loss of its members owing to the hot pursuit attacks of the Tatmadaw.

Then, the BCP's hopes of dominating the regions on east bank of Thanlyin River were dashed.

The Operation "Ye Min Aung" which lasted from 3 to 27 October 1977 covered 25 fierce battles including 10 bayonet fights. The BCP had to leave 373 dead bodies of its members at the battlefields.

Furthermore, the Tatmadaw unearthed 426 dead bodies of the BCP troops, and a platoon commander and a private of the BCP surrendered.

A total of 13 Tatmadaw officers and 113 other ranks lost their lives and 237 Tatmadaw members their limbs.

In fact, the victory over the BCP that was much stronger in fire power and manpower indicated and reflected the might of the Tatmadaw fully equipped with ten noble strengths — loyalty, obedience, strong morale and perseverance, good discipline, being well-trained, possessing brilliant combat skill, health and fitness, having esprit de corps, making sacrifices and endeavouring to meet the aim with strong determination.

Therefore, the 40-day Kunlong battle and the Chushwe-Pankok battle were a testament to the victorious Tatmadaw that serves the interests of the nation and the people throughout the history sacrificing lives, blood and sweat of its members to defend the State and enable the people to lead a peaceful life.

(Translation: MS)

Hailing the 59th Anniversary Armed Forces Day

Poem

About Soldiers

- * His clothes...
In tatters, drab.
- * His shoes
Torn leather, opening up
Mud-covered, pierced by nails.
- * His bedding...
No proper place, anywhere for a nap
By bush, on lawn and in bunker
Or farmer's hut, monastery compound
On battleground, just anywhere
- * His food...
Whatever is curry, may be stuck in throat
Bereft of oil, gravy, what cooks quick
White rice balls, anything to gush down
Sometimes boiled rice, no proper setting.
- * His features
Hair disheveled, rendered reddish poor
Dirtied, sticky, rough-skinned
Gun-powder burned, blackened
With torn bandages
Beard overgrown, bristled
Likened to dump of trees.
- * His life...
With little money, with family
Having just enough, and in emergency
Depart from loved ones, for days and months.
- * His work...
For people's peace, not endangered
To battlefield, in search of danger
To thoroughly
Crush them.
- * His morale...
High and noble, souring sky-high
For personal gain, there's not a bit
Even then, in the people's interest
Going near-death, on military advances
Uncomplaining, though danger-prone
Facing poverty, yet knowing duty
Dare to sacrifice...
Belief is truly bravery.

Ko (Tekkatho) (Trs)



Tatmadaw members attacking the forts of the BCP.



Minister for Information Brig-Gen Kyaw Hsan delivers an address at the meeting. — MNA

Minister stresses cost-effective publishing of textbooks

YANGON, 16 March — The Textbook Publishing Committee held its work coordination meeting at the Ministry of Information here this morning.

Speaking on the occasion, Committee Chairman Minister for Information Brig-Gen Kyaw Hsan said that in accord with the guidance of Head of State, textbooks should be distributed right into the hands of students swiftly and systematically. Moreover, officials concerned should try to reduce the publishing and distribution cost, he said. The subcommittees will have to coordinate with respective ministries to distribute textbooks to remote places in time, he stressed. He also spoke of the need to use all possible means to reduce their prices.

Managing Director of Printing and Publishing Enterprise U Myint Thein read out the minutes of the previous meeting. Chairman of the Textbook Printing Sub-

committee Deputy Minister for Information Brig-Gen Aung Thein and Chairman of the Textbook Distribution Subcommittee Deputy Minister for Education Col Aung Myo Min explained the arrangements of their respective bodies, followed by a general round of discussions.

The minister looked into the requirements. — MNA

Jade lots fetch over 2m euro

YANGON, 16 March — Patron of the Central Committee for organizing the 41st Myanmar Gems Emporium Minister for Mines Brig-Gen Ohn Myint visited this afternoon the 41st Myanmar Gems Emporium at Myanmar Gems Mart on Kaba Aye Pagoda Road here. On arrival there, the minister was welcomed by Chairman of the Central Committee Deputy Minister for Mines U Myint Thein, Secretary Myanmar Gems Enterprise Managing Director U Khin Oo and members of the central committee. On the ground floor, the minister viewed round the private gems and jewellery shops, and greeted foreign gem merchants.

Next, the minister looked into jade lots which are being sold through tender system and left the emporium. Up to 5 pm today,

160 lots of jade worth 2,059,987 euros were sold, and 1062 gem merchants — 601 foreigners and 461 locals visited the emporium and bought the jade lots. Lots of jade will continue to be sold through tender system and competitive bidding on 17 and 18 March. — MNA



26th ISD Golf Team C'ship opened

YANGON, 16 March — Organized by Sports and Physical Education Department and Myanmar Golf Federation, and mainly sponsored by ISUZU Motors Ltd, Japan, the 26th Inter-State and Division Golf Team Championship 2004 was opened this morning at Yangon Golf Club in Danyingon here.

Present at the opening ceremony were MPGA and MGF President Maj-Gen Win Hlaing, Myanmar Olympic Committee General Secretary SPED Director-General U Thaung Htaik and officials, MGF General Secretary U Aung Kyi, MPGA General Secretary U Chan Han, guests and fans.

While golfers from 15 teams took their positions at designated places, Maj-Gen Win Hlaing made an opening speech. Next, Maj-Gen Win Hlaing greeted the teams from states and divisions.

The first day round of 18-hole was held today. In team scratch match, defending champion Yangon Division was leading with 229 strokes, followed by Shan State (East) with 231 strokes and Sagaing Division with 234. In team handicap, Shan State (East) was leading with 201 strokes, followed by Yangon Division with 202 strokes and Bago Division with 207. In individual scratch, Aung Win of Sagaing Division was leading with 73 strokes, followed by Khin Zaw Win of Shan State (East) with 74 strokes and Naing Naing Lin of Yangon Division with 74. In individual handicap, Khin Zaw Win of Shan State (East) was leading with 62 strokes, followed by San Oo of Bago Division with 65 strokes and Naing Naing Lin of Yangon Division with 65.

The second day round of 18-hole event continues tomorrow morning. — MNA



Resident Representative of Isuzu Motors Ltd U Aye Cho tees off the tournament. — MGF

MAI launches new route to New Delhi

YANGON, 16 March — Myanmar Airways International (MAI) launched a new route to New Delhi in India from Yangon yesterday evening at a ceremony held at Airport Restaurant of Yangon International Airport.

Minister for Transport Maj-Gen Hla Myint Swe attended the ceremony and launched the new route by cutting a ribbon. Also present on the occasion were Deputy Ministers U Pe Than and Col Nyan Tun Aung, departmental heads, Myanmar Ambassador to India U Kyi Thein, responsible personnel of the Indian Embassy here, officials from tourism industries and airlines, and guests.

First, MAI Chairman U Maung Maung Ohn gave an account of the background history of MAI, its existing air routes, and the newly launched Yangon-New Delhi-Yangon air route. Next, the minister and party greeted passengers on board. The plane No 8M 601 carrying 70 passengers flew to New Delhi at 9.35 pm. The airline will leave Yangon for New Delhi at 9.35 pm on Monday, Wednesday and Friday every week and return to Yangon from New Delhi at 1.50 am on Tuesday, Thursday and Saturday every week.

The Yangon-New Delhi-Yangon flight is a new service MAI has extended in 2004. Until recently, MAI also spread its wings to Hong Kong. — MNA



U Sein Win Hlaing being seen off at the airport. — MNA

မိုးကြိုဂုဏ်လျှော်/ချည်ပေါင်လျှော် စိုက်ပျိုးရေးနိုးဆော်ချက်

- ၁။ စိုက်ပျိုးရာသီချိန်အမိ စိုက်ပျိုးပါ။ မိုးကြိုဂုဏ်လျှော်/ချည်ပေါင်လျှော် များကို စရာဝတီတိုင်းနှင့် ရန်ကုန်တိုင်းတို့တွင် မေမော်ဝါရီလလယ်မှ ဧပြီလလယ်အတွင်းတွင်လည်းကောင်း၊ ပဲခူးတိုင်းတွင် မတ်လဆန်းမှ ဧပြီလကုန် အတွင်းတွင်လည်းကောင်း အပြီးစိုက်ပျိုးပါ။
- ၂။ ထယ်ရေနက်နက်နှင့် ထွန်ရေညက်ညက်ရအောင် ဆောင်ရွက်ပါ။
- ၃။ မြေခဲမြေဩဇာကို မမြစ်မနေထည့်သွင်းသုံးစွဲပါ။
မြေခဲမြေဩဇာအဖြစ် တစ်ဧကလျှင် သဘာဝမြေဩဇာ လှည်း(၅)စီးမှ (၁၀)စီးအထိလည်းကောင်း၊ ယူရီယာ ဓါတ်မြေဩဇာအနည်းဆုံး(၂၅)ကီလိုနှင့် ပိုတက်ရှ်မြေဩဇာ (၁၂.၅)ကီလိုကို ထည့်သွင်း သုံးစွဲပါ။
- ၄။ စိုက်ပျိုးရေပြည့်ပြည့်ဝဝတင်သွင်းပါ။ ရေတင်သွင်းရာတွင် အောက်ရေဆက်သည့်အထိ ပြည့်ပြည့်ဝဝ တင်သွင်းပါ။
- ၅။ မျိုးကောင်းမျိုးသန့် ရွေးချယ်စိုက်ပျိုးပါ။
အပင်ပေါက်ရာခိုင်နှုန်း(၈၀)နှင့် အထက်ရှိသောမျိုးများကို ဂုဏ်လျှော် တစ်ဧကလျှင် မျိုးစေ့(၂)ပြည်နှုန်း၊ ချည်ပေါင်လျှော် တစ်ဧကလျှင် မျိုးစေ့(၄)ပြည်နှုန်း သုံးစွဲပါ။
- ၆။ အစိုဓါတ်အချိန်မီအောင် စိုက်ပျိုးပါ။မျိုးစေ့ချစိုက်ပျိုးရန်အတွက် မြေအစိုဓါတ်သင့်တင့်ချိန်တွင် စိုက်ထွန်ရေဖွင့် ထွန်ယက်၍ စိုက်ပျိုးပြီး ဩမ်ဖုပါ။
- ၇။ ပိုးမွှားအန္တရာယ်ကာကွယ်နှိမ်နင်းပါ။ ပုရစ်အန္တရာယ်မှ ကင်းဝေးရန်အတွက် စိုက်ခင်းအနီးရှိ အမှိုက်သရိုက်များကို မီးရှို့ ဖျက်ဆီးပါ။ ပုရစ်ကျရောက်မည့် အန္တရာယ်ရှိပါက မွှားစာအဆိပ်တုံး ပြုလုပ်၍ စိုက်ခင်းပတ်ပတ်လည်နှင့် တွင်းအတွင်းတွင် ချထားပါ။
- ၈။ နည်းပညာနှင့်အကူအညီရယူလိုပါက နီးစပ်ရာ မြန်မာ ဂုဏ်လျှော် ပစ္စည်းလုပ်ငန်း ဒေသရုံးများနှင့်ဆက်သွယ် အကူအညီရယူပါ။

လယ်ယာစိုက်ပျိုးရေးနှင့်ဆည်မြောင်းဝန်ကြီးဌာန



Minister Maj-Gen Hla Myint Swe launches MAI's new air route to New Delhi by cutting a ribbon at the Yangon International Airport.

NLM

Seminar on fertilizer for oil palm

YANGON, 16 March — A seminar on "Hi-Kay Plus", the No 1 fertilizer for oil palm was held at the Traders Hotel here this morning. Managing Director of Pengerdar Bhan Pertanian Sdn Bhd Mr Peter Sze delivered a welcoming address. Next, Malaysian Ambassador to Myanmar Dato Cheah San Kip delivered an address. Dr David Lee of PBP gave an overview of PBP (Kuok Group) which is one of the leaders involved in various sectors such as shipping, hotels, plantation, industrial, trading and manufacturing. — (H)

UMFCCI official leaves for Japan

YANGON, 16 March — General Secretary of the Union of Myanmar Federation of Chambers of Commerce & Industry U Sein Win Hlaing left here by air yesterday evening for Japan to attend COE networking meeting in Tokyo from 17 to 19 March. UMFCCI President U Win Myint and officials saw him off at the Yangon International Airport.

UMFCCI Calls

U Sein Win Hlaing together with Joint-Secretary-2 Dr Maung Maung Lay and CEC members met with Minister Counsellor (economic section) of Indonesian embassy in Yangon Mr Johannes Suripto at the UMFCCI head office yesterday morning. They discussed investment and economic cooperation between the two countries. The 8-member delegation headed by the vice-chairman of Jiangsu Provincial Committee of the Chinese Political Consultative Conference also called on U Sein Win Hlaing, Dr Maung Maung Lay and CEC members at the UMFCCI head office yesterday afternoon. They discussed investment, trade, and industrial cooperation. — MNA

Prime Minister attends ceremony to present Ma Myat Lay Scholarship

YANGON, 16 March—A ceremony to present Ma Myat Lay Scholarship was held in conjunction with the ceremony to raise the trust fund at the Higher Education Department (Lower Myanmar) in Kamayut Township at 4.30 pm today, attended by Chairman of Myanmar Education Committee Prime Minister General Khin Nyunt.

Also present on the occasion were Vice-Chairmen of MEC Secretary-1 of the State Peace and Development Council Lt-Gen Soe Win and Secretary-2 Lt-Gen Thein Sein, member of the State Peace and Development Council Chief of Armed Forces Training Lt-Gen Kyaw Win, ministers, the Auditor-General, the

Chairman of Civil Service Selection and Training Board, deputy ministers, the MEC members, officials of the State Peace and Development Council Office, heads of department, scholarship wellwisher Daw Thein Hsaing (pen-name Ma Myat Lay) and family, the scholarship winners, guests and others.

First, family member of Daw Thein Hsaing (Ma Myat Lay) Col Nyan Tun Oo explained matters related to the emergence of Ma Myat Lay scholarship.

Next, scholarship wellwisher Daw Thein Hsaing (Ma Myat Lay) explained the purpose of the presentation of the scholarship. After that, Prime Minister General Khin Nyunt

accepted K 300,000 presented by Daw Thein Hsaing (Ma Myat Lay) for the trust fund.

Next, Daw Thein Hsaing (Ma Myat Lay) presented scholarships to scholarship winners. On behalf of scholarship winners, scholarship winner Ma Yu Yu Tin of Yangon University spoke words of thanks and the ceremony ended.

After the ceremony, Prime Minister General Khin Nyunt, Secretary-1 Lt-Gen Soe Win, Secretary-2 Lt-Gen Thein Sein, ministers and scholarship wellwisher Daw Thein Hsaing (Ma Myat Lay) had a group photo taken together with scholarship winners.—MNA



Prime Minister General Khin Nyunt accepts cash donation of K 300,000 from wellwisher Daw Thein Hsaing (Ma Myat Lay). — MNA

Prime Minister inspects development ...

(from page 1)

Next, Chairman of Myanmar Education Committee Prime Minister General Khin Nyunt presented a TV set, a video cassette player and a computer set each to Nyaunglaybin BEHS Nos 1 and 2 through the principals.

The Prime Minister and party headed for Moeyungyi Bird Sanctuary, where they were welcomed by Yangon Division Peace and Development Council Chairman Yangon Command Commander Maj-Gen Myint Swe and officials. On the occasion, Minister for Forestry Brig-Gen Thein Aung presented a report, saying that the sanctuary is located between Waw and DaikU Townships in Bago Division with an area of 40 square miles. In the sanctuary are about 26 species of plants but no forests. Around 125 species of birds

inhabit in the area. There are also various species of fish, amphibious animals, insects, reptiles and mammals in the sanctuary. The township is six furlongs far away from Yangon-Mandalay Highway on right-hand side. The sanctuary is beneficial to eco-tourism with good prospects for recreation, he said. The minister also reported on arrangements for upgrading the area.

Deputy Minister for Agriculture and Irrigation U Ohn Myint reported on water storage capacity of Moeyungyi Lake and irrigation, filling the lake with water from Moeyungyi, Kawliya and Bawni dams and Zaungtu Diversion Weir, tasks for reinforcing the embankment of the lake, and measures being taken for supply of more water for the lake after damming Shwelaung and Lugwe

creeks.

The Prime Minister responded to the reports, calling for co-ordination of respective departments for long-lasting of the lake. Commander Maj-Gen Ko Ko reported on cultivation of summer paddy in Bago, Kawa and Thanatpin townships; and Commander Maj-Gen Myint Swe, on tasks being implemented for greening of 30-mile radius of Yangon City. The Prime Minister gave instructions.

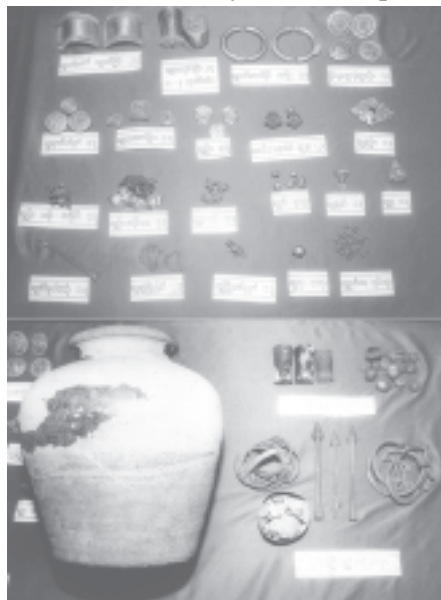
Next, the Prime Minister went to Min village in Thanatpin Township and looked into Minywa-Kyaungsu Bridge. Deputy Minister for Progress of Border Areas and National Races and Development Affairs Col Tin Ngwe reported on facts about the facility.

The Prime Minister and party arrived back here in the evening. — MNA

15th Century artifacts found in Myeik Township

YANGON, 16 March—An ancient glaze pot, measuring 11 inches in height, eight inches in diameter at the centre and three inches diameter at the mouth, was found while two villagers were digging a sand pit at Kalwingsaung village, Myeik Township, Taninthayi Division, on 12 February 2004.

The pot contained 20 pieces of jewellery in gold weighing over 23 ticals and also 23 kinds of jewellery cast with silver, bronze and lead, weighing 56 ticals, and three amber earrings and 19 amber beads. The villagers who found the ancient artifacts presented them to the regional Military Intelligence unit on 15 March. The Ministry of Culture is making arrangements to present them handsome cash awards for handing over the 15th Century Myanmar cultural artifacts. — MNA



The ancient gold and silver artifacts found from Kalwingsaung village. — MNA

Modern, developed nation ...

(from page 16)

As the Government has been giving priority to the education development, all the officials will have to remedy the weaknesses and strive in harmony and union to reach the goal.

The national goal — a modern and developed nation — can be reached only if education sector sees quantitative as well as qualitative development.

As the development of the highly qualified human resources is of paramount importance, the MEC is holding meetings to review and promote its functions.

As the central level has been implementing the projects with greater acceleration, the levels at state/division, district and township should also strive in harmony to realize the aims laid down by the central. Because of the defects found in some basic levels in making innovative efforts, the projects cannot be fully materialized at the primary stage.

Universities and colleges and schools are located in townships of the states and divisions all over the country. So, those in charge of the states and divisions should tour down to the basic levels to ensure a step-by-step supervisory system to realize the education aims.

Later, those present at the meeting approved of the resolutions passed at the meeting No 2/2003 of the Myanmar Education Committee.

Next, Minister for Education U Than Aung, in his report on matters related to progress of higher education sector in the 2003-2004 fiscal year, said as regards the higher education sector of the ministry, the population of teachers reached 10,832 in 2004, up from 5,638 in 1988, an increase of 5,194 teachers, as measures are under way to upgrade universities and colleges. Moreover, the number of students also increased from 134,325 in 1988 to 631,276 in 2004, an increase of

496,951 students. As for teaching programmes, there were only 59 institutions capable of offering degree and post-graduate degree courses in 1988, but now the number has stood at 157. A total of 159 kinds of masters courses, degree courses, post-graduate degree courses and certificate courses were conducted at the respective human resource development centres at universities and colleges during the period from 1998 to 2003. There are now 316 courses when the number of courses conducted at universities and colleges and the number of courses conducted at human resources development centres were put together. When compared with the number of courses available in 1988, there is an increase of 257 more courses at present.

The minister also reported on the teaching of specializations at universities and colleges under the higher education department and the combined specializations for the four-year BEd degree at education universities.

In his report on the basic education sector for the 2003-2004 academic year, the minister said there are 1,840 high schools, 3,067 middle schools, 3,829 post-primary schools and 31,751 primary schools totalling 40,487 all over the country. Under the 'education for all children of school age' programme, one week prior to the start of academic year has been designated as the 'school enrolment week' since the 1999-2000 academic year. As the school enrolment rate of children of school age is on the rise year after year, the percentage of school children enrolling for kindergarten nationwide reached 95.05 per-

cent in 2003-2004 academic year. Moreover, 144 townships covered by the programme also saw 97 or 98 percent of school enrolment.

Regarding the opening of post-primary schools, the minister continued, 512 post-primary schools offering up to the seventh grade, 1,868 schools offering up to the sixth grade and 1,449 offering up to the fifth grade totalling 3,829 were opened in the 2003-2004 academic year.

For multimedia classrooms, there were altogether 16,810 schools which have multimedia devices — 1,152 schools with multimedia classrooms, 358 schools with 3-platform device, 985 schools with 2-platform device, and 14,315 schools with 1-platform device. Arrangements have been made to facilitate one platform to each of the schools.

Concerning the basic literacy programmes, the minister reported that efforts are being made continuously to raise the rate of adult literacy. As a result, an improvement of 92.2 percent in the rate of adult literacy was seen in 2003. However, arrangements have been made to bring the present percentage of adult literacy rate to 95.5 percent by the 2004-2005 fiscal year.

Measures are also being taken by opening 481 libraries in villages so that adult literati can have access to books and earn more incomes. Next, Minister for Transport Maj-Gen Hla Myint Swe reported on arrangements to be made for the upgrading of the two science institutions under the ministry. After hearing the reports, Prime Minister General Khin Nyunt gave instructions and made concluding remarks. — MNA

**The best time to plant a tree
was 20 years ago.
The second best time is now.**

ဝဠာရေပြင် ခေတ်မီဖွံ့ဖြိုးတိုးတက်သော နိုင်ငံတော်ကြီး တည်ဆောက်အံ့

Wen Jiabao pledges continuous support to HK

BEIJING, 16 March — Chinese Premier Wen Jiabao said here Sunday that the central government will do everything conducive to the prosperity and stability of Hong Kong and to the common development of Hong Kong and the inland of China.

Wen made the remarks during a meeting with the Press following the closing session of the annual session of the National People's Congress.

"Our principle is that whatever is conducive to the prosperity and stability of Hong Kong, to the common development of Hong Kong and the inland, we will actively do it and give our full support to it," he said when answering a question from Hong Kong Press.

The Premier said the central government holds an active attitude toward the upcoming issuance of 20 billion Hong Kong dollars of bonds in Hong Kong.

Wen reiterated that the central government will un-

sparingly uphold the principles of "one country, two systems", "Hong Kong people governing Hong Kong" and a high degree of autonomy as well as the Basic Law of Hong Kong.

The Premier hoped that Hong Kong residents can be more united and work together for a better future.

"I sincerely hope that Hong Kong residents can take into consideration the broad situation of the long-term prosperity and stability as well as the long-term and fundamental interests of Hong Kong residents, be united and work together with firm determination for a better future of Hong Kong," he said.

MNA/Xinhua

Chinese Premier confident in energy cooperation with Russia

BEIJING, 16 March — Chinese Premier Wen Jiabao said he was confident in the prospects of energy cooperation with "friendly neighbour" Russia at a Press conference here Sunday.

Although there were some ups and downs in Sino-Russian cooperation in constructing oil pipelines, the Premier still believed Russian President Vladimir Putin and the Russian people will strengthen cooperation with China in "exploring and developing" energy resources such as oil and natural gas, and constructing oil pipelines.

The Premier described Russia as a "friendly neighbour" sharing a common boundary line of 4,300 kilometres and said "the two countries should be friends forever and never fight again".

According to Wen, Chi-

nese and Russian economies are "complementary" and a series of measures have been taken to enhance economic and trade cooperation between the two countries.

The Premier also referred to regular meetings of Chinese and Russian leaders, Sino-Russian Strategic Part-

nership of Cooperation, and efforts to enhance "political mutual trust", promote "strategic consultation" and strengthen "non-governmental exchanges" between the two countries to prove a "sound momentum" in Sino-Russian relationship.

MNA/Xinhua



The area named the 'Berry Bowl' is seen in this image released on 13 March, 2004 and taken by NASA's Mars Exploration Rover Opportunity. Many spherical rocks, dubbed 'blueberries' by NASA scientists, are in the area; scientists are looking for clues as to their chemical composition.—INTERNET

Shadow play still popular in China's rural areas

JINAN, 16 March — Shadow play, a traditional Chinese folk art with a history of more than 2,000 years, has embarked on a path towards revival after a period of marked decline, thanks to conservation efforts and lasting interest in rural areas.

Known as a precursor of modern cinema, shadow play is a kind of drama in which silhouettes made of hard paper and buffalo and donkey hide are projected onto a white screen. The performer manipulates the characters behind the screen while singing the libretto to tell the story. The story-telling is accompanied by music.

Chinese shadow play, which came into being during the Han Dynasty (206 BC-220 AD) in northwest China's Shanxi Province, spread to South Asia, Central Asia, West Asia and

North Africa in the 13th Century. The ancient Chinese art spread to Europe in the 17th Century. The famous German poet Goethe staged European opera in the form of Chinese shadow play, and modern movies derived, in part, from the ancient art.

Shadow play, with distinctive folklore styles, had long been almost the only entertainment in Chinese villages till two decades ago.

But the ancient art gradually fell from the limelight due to the impact of modern audio-visual media such as television and movies. Many

shadow play groups have been disbanded, and many of the most talented artists have died. In many areas, certain types of plays and the art of performance are actually nearing extinction.

Fortunately, shadow play is still alive and warmly welcomed among people in some rural areas in China.

A creaking shoulder pole, three shabby cases of stage properties, and six simple-hearted performers who look like local villagers—all these constitute a Chinese shadow play troupe named Shanhu.

MNA/Xinhua



One of the rarest bats in the world, a completely white (albino) micro bat, nestles on the thumb of carer Pam Tully while recovering from a cat attack at the Batreach Bat Rescue and Rehabilitation Centre at Kuranda, near Cairns in northern Australia, on 14 March, 2004. The bat, a Little Northern Freetail nicknamed 'Starshine', is now in recovery and at four months old, weighs just 6 grams—less than a quarter of an ounce. Little or no research has been done into albinism in bats, with discovered examples almost none existent.—INTERNET

More Ghanaians evacuated from Equatorial Guinea

ACCRA, 16 March — Ghana flew more than 40 of its citizens home from Equatorial Guinea on Sunday and will send a Navy ship to fetch more after a harsh clampdown on foreigners in the former Spanish colony, the government said.

Security forces in the tiny oil-rich nation of Equatorial Guinea launched a crackdown on immigrants last weekend amid talk of a coup, locking up dozens of Africans from neighbouring countries and expelling hundreds more.

"This is the second group to be evacuated. The first batch of 37 came back yesterday," said Kwabena Agyepong spokesman for President John Kufuor. "We're expecting a naval vessel to sail on Monday... to bring some more of our citizens."

Once an impoverished central African nation, Equatorial Guinea began pumping crude in the 1990s and is now the third biggest producer in sub-Saharan Africa after Nigeria and Angola.

Thousands of foreigners from neighbouring countries in the Gulf of Guinea flocked to the country, attracted by the new-found oil wealth and the prospect of work.

MNA/Reuters

Death toll of Kazakh mudslide hits 28

ALMATY, 16 March — The death toll from a powerful mudslide in southeastern Kazakhstan rose to 28 on Monday and Emergency Agency officials said 20 people were still missing.

The mudslide of over one million cubic metres, triggered by heavy rains, swept away a two-floor apartment house and a barracks-type building at the foothills of the Tien Shan mountains close to Kazakhstan's financial centre Almaty.

"We have so far recovered 28 bodies, including 15 women and six children," Emergency Agency spokesman Kairzhan Turezhanov said by telephone from Taldybulak, the affected village. "Several people may still be buried under the mud," he said.

Turezhanov said those killed by the landslide in the early hours of Sunday included nine Chinese nationals. He said the Chinese were construction workers repairing a nearby sanatorium.

MNA/Reuters

Stem cells offer baldness cure hope in US study

WASHINGTON, 16 March — Scientists who found long-living master cells in the hair follicles of mice said on Sunday they may now be able to pinpoint the same cells in people — providing future treatments for baldness and perhaps a range of diseases, too.

They said they had shown that the hair follicles of mice contain true adult stem cells, which have the potential to grow not only new hair but various types of tissue.

When they transplanted the cells in mice, hair sprouted where none had been before.

Careful work showed the cells were stem cells, Dr George Cotsarelis of the University of Pennsylvania Medical Centre and colleagues reported.

Writing in the April issue of *Nature Biotechnology*, Cotsarelis said certain genes were activated in the stem cells that were not activated in other hair follicle or skin cells. Drugs that affect these genes in people might lead to new ways of controlling hair growth, they said. And tracking the genes will allow them to find the same cells in people.

"By defining these molecular markers, we will be able to isolate human stem cells from hair follicles," Cotsarelis, a dermatologist and molecular biologist, said

in a telephone interview.

His team showed several years ago that human hair follicles contained stem cells — they just did not know how to identify them and single them out.

The immediate hope is for a cure for baldness and a more serious medical hair-loss condition called alopecia, but Cotsarelis said the findings could lead to better treatment for burns and wounds and may offer insight into the aging process and the development of cancer.

"One problem with a burn is that the wound is never covered with hair follicles," Cotsarelis said. "These cells have that capability so if we can isolate them and seed them onto a wound we can constitute skin that is more normal than currently possible." And because they are stem cells, they have the ability to grow and proliferate more than mature cells, so it may be possible to use them to grow a better skin graft faster, he said.

MNA/Reuters

S P O R T S

Deportivo defeat opens door to Barcelona

MADRID, 16 March— Third-placed Deportivo Coruna missed their chance to make up ground on leaders Real Madrid when they went down 4-2 at struggling Real Mallorca in the Primera Liga on Sunday.

The Galicians, who qualified for the quarterfinals of the Champions League with a 2-0 aggregate win over Juventus in midweek, never looked comfortable against the islanders after falling behind to a Fernando Correa goal in the seventh minute.

They pulled level when winger Pedro Munitis netted from close range on 23 minutes, but a headed goal from defender Ivan Ramis and a penalty from Cameroon striker Samuel Eto'o put the home side 3-1 up on the hour. Deportivo substitute Djalminha pulled one back nine minutes from time, but Mallorca forward Jesus Parera put the result beyond doubt with a well-taken effort soon after.

Barcelona can replace Deportivo in third if they win their match against basement side Murcia later on Sunday.

Champions Real Madrid, who were held to a 1-1 draw at home to Racing Santander on Saturday, lead the table on 61 points.

Valencia, who play struggling Celta Vigo in Sunday's late match, have 54 and Depor are a further three points adrift in third.

MNA/Reuters



Justine Henin-Hardenne of Belgium, seen in her match against Samantha Reeves, returns to the court on 15 March to take on Spain's Marta Marrero at the Pacific Life Open at the Indian Wells Tennis Garden.—INTERNET

Lippi gives up chase after Juve lose to Milan

TURIN (Italy), 16 March— Dutch international Clarence Seedorf scored twice as AC Milan tightened their grip at the top of Serie A with a convincing 3-1 win at champions Juventus on Sunday.

European champions Milan have a seven-point lead over second-placed Roma, who drew 0-0 with Reggina, while Juventus trail the leaders by nine points with nine games of the season remaining.

It will require some unlikely results for injury-hit Juve to come back to claim their third straight "scudetto" and coach Marcello Lippi said it was no longer realistic to talk of his side as potential title winners.

"The objective now is to finish in second place," said Lippi. "Nine points is a big gap and it seems a bit far-fetched to talk about catching them. Second place, however, is a realistic goal."

"This is the eighth season I've had here and we've won trophies in six of them. If we don't win anything this year, it's not the end of the world," added the Juve coach.

The defeat to a Milan side who beat Juve in last season's Champions League final and are coached by former Juve boss Carlo Ancelotti was a bitter blow for the Turin team, following their midweek exit from Europe to Deportivo

Coruna. Seedorf, so often is at his best in the biggest games, created Milan's opener in the 25th minute, providing a perfect cross for Andriy Shevchenko who thundered a header past Juve keeper Gianluigi Buffon.

MNA/Reuters

Larsson strike preserves Celtic home record

GLASGOW, 16 March— Substitute Henrik Larsson helped preserve Celtic's 75-match unbeaten home record with a goal 20 minutes from time to earn a 1-1 draw against Motherwell on Sunday.

The point extended Celtic's league lead over champions Rangers, who drew 1-1 with Hearts on Saturday, to 16 points with both sides having played 27 games.

Celtic boss Martin O'Neill rested several regulars and a shadow home side fell behind to a 26th minute goal from Derek Adams.

But Celtic raised the pace after Larsson's arrival early in the second half and the Swedish striker headed them level 20 minutes from time from Ross Wallace's corner.

It was Celtic's first dropped points since their 0-0 draw at Dunfermline Athletic on the opening day of the season and halted their British record of successive league wins at 25.

MNA/Reuters

Stuttgart close in on Champions League spot

BERLIN, 16 March— VfB Stuttgart kept alive their hopes of returning to the Champions League next season with a 2-0 victory over troubled TSV 1860 Munich on Sunday.

Stuttgart, in their first outing since losing to Chelsea in the first knockout round of the Champions League, remained third but closed the gap on second place, the direct route into the showcase competition, to just three points.

Second-placed champions Bayern Munich, who also exited the Champions League by going down to Real Madrid, fell nine points behind leaders Werder Bremen with a 3-3 home draw with Hansa Rostock on Saturday.

Leaders Werder closed in on the title with a 3-2 win over bottom club Cologne, also on Saturday.

Stuttgart set up their win with first-half goals in quick succession from midfielder Zvonimir Soldo and striker Marco Streller.

TSV 1860 Munich, whose president Karl-Heinz Wildmoser is suspected of bribery relating to the construction of a new city stadium and was released from prison on bail on Friday, drop to 14th place just two spots above the relegation zone.

The "other" Munich club had defender Fernando sent off for a second booking in the 76th minute.

Surprise package VfL Bochum needed an own goal from defender Sladan Asanin with two minutes left to beat strugglers Borussia Moenchengladbach 1-0 in Sunday's other game.— MNA/Reuters

City end Man Utd's title hopes with 4-1 win

LONDON, 16 March— Manchester United's slim hopes of retaining the Premier League title disappeared in the most painful way possible on Sunday when they were beaten 4-1 by arch rivals Manchester City.

With 10 games left United, who were knocked out of the Champions League on Tuesday, are now 12 points behind league leaders Arsenal and three behind second-placed Chelsea.

Unbeaten Arsenal were 2-0 winners at Blackburn Rovers on Saturday while Chelsea triumphed 2-0 at Bolton Wanderers.

After Sunday's defeat in the first derby to be played at the new City of Manchester Stadium, United have only the FA Cup, where they face Arsenal in the semifinals, as a realistic chance of silverware this season.

Earlier on Sunday Aston Villa cruised to an easy 4-0 win at Midlands rivals Wolverhampton Wanderers.

In later games Tottenham Hotspur host Newcastle United while Liverpool visit Southampton.

The game of the day was at the City of Manchester Stadium, however, and United will wonder how they ended up losing 4-1 after making most of the running.

City took a surprise lead with a close-range goal by Robbie Fowler after three minutes and, after United looked to be taking control, doubled the lead when former Old Trafford trainee Jon Macken hooked the ball in from just inside the box after 32 minutes.

United pulled one back three minutes later when superb work by Ryan Giggs set up Paul Scholes to drive home his fourth goal in three games against City this season.

Giggs could have had three himself with better finishing while Cristiano Ronaldo, who was a constant threat on the left, saw a

sublime curler rebound off the bar just after Scholes' reply.

The second half was tighter but City found a way through after a blunder by Mikael Silvestre allowed Trevor Sinclair a chance he gleefully took in the 73rd minute.

The home team finished in style when Shaun Wright-Phillips lashed a spectacular shot into the roof of the net from wide on the right in stoppage time.

As the City fans danced in celebration of their second successive home derby win — they won the last to be played at Maine Road 3-1 last season — United's players trudged off after a week they want to forget.

Earlier Wolves were blown away by Villa in a one-sided Midlands derby.

They took the lead after six minutes when German midfielder Thomas Hitzlsperger rifled home a left-foot drive and made it 2-0 in the 18th minute when Swedish defender Olof Mellberg scored with a free header from a Hitzlsperger corner after Wolves keeper Paul Jones failed to connect.

Another blunder by the home side six minutes later gifted Villa a third goal as Colombian striker Juan Pablo Angel nipped in bravely to hook the ball past Jones after a mix-up between the struggling Wolves keeper and his defender Lee Naylor.

Midfielder Lee Hendrie almost made it four when his curling shot rattled the bar while Wolves then missed the chance to cut the deficit when Ioan Ganea's penalty was expertly tipped round the post by Villa's Danish keeper Thomas Sorensen.

MNA/Reuters

Roma's title challenge dented by 0-0 draw with Reggina

ROME, 16 March— AS Roma's challenge for the Serie A title was dealt a heavy blow as they drew 0-0 with relegation-threatened Reggina on Sunday.

The result gave the 2001 champions 57 points from 25 games, four behind Milan, who have the opportunity to increase their cushion at the top of the division by beating champions Juventus in a later match.

Roma's city rivals Lazio held on to fourth place with a lively 2-2 draw against Udinese.

Their challenge for Italy's final Champions League berth was helped by former European and World Footballer of the Year Roberto Baggio, who struck the 200th Serie A goal of his career to help Brescia tie 2-2 with fifth-placed Parma.

MNA/Reuters

Bahrain upset Japan 1-0 in Asian Olympic soccer qualifier

TOKYO, 16 March— Defender Abdulla Abbas Adel Abbas scored a lone goal to pace an upset for Bahrain over Japan in the Asian Olympic soccer qualifier in Saitama, Japan on Sunday.

Under heavy pressure from the Japanese side, Bahrain only made their counter attacks and were awarded a free kick after forward Abdulla Hasan Aziz was pulled down in the 71st minute.

Skipper Ali Hasan Hussain made the free kick, which hit a Japanese defender and Adel Abbas fired the deflection to beat keeper Takuto Hayashi.

With the win, Bahrain kept themselves alive as they collected seven points from two wins, one draw and one defeat, the same record as Japan and the United Arab Emirates in the four-team Group B round robin.

MNA/Reuters



Sampdoria's Morris Carrozzi, left, and Bologna's Iglu Tare of Albania challenge for a ball during the Italian League soccer match between Sampdoria and Bologna in Genova, northern Italy, on 13 March, 2004. Sampdoria beat Bologna 3-2.—INTERNET



Col Than Aung presents certificate of honour to Sayadaw U Canda Vamsa. — MNA

Medical equipment donated to DSOH

YANGON, 16 March — Sayadaw U Canda Vamsa from Singapore donated medical equipment to Defence Services Orthopedic Hospital (500 bed) at a ceremony at the hospital this morning.

Present on the occasion were Director of Medical Services Col Than Aung, Commandant of the hospital Lt-Col Tun Tun and officials.

The Sayadaw explained the purpose of donations and presented medical equipment to Col Than Aung, who presented a certificate of honour and spoke words of thanks. — MNA

Sitagu Sayadaw leaves for Lao PDR

YANGON, 16 March — Sitagu World Buddhist University Chancellor, International Theravada Buddhist Missionary University Honourable Professor, Agga Maha Saddhammajotikadhaja Agga Maha Pandita Sitagu Sayadaw Bhaddanta Dr Nanissara (D. Lit) left here by air for Laos this morning on his four-nation visit — Laos, Cambodia, Vietnam and Indonesia — to carry out missionary work there.

The Sayadaw was seen off at Yangon International Airport by Director-General of the Religious Affairs Department Dr Myo Myint and members of Sitagu Missionary Centre, and officials. The Sayadaw was accompanied by World Buddhist University's Chief Administrative Officer U Mahosadha Pandita and 24 members of Sitagu Missionary Centre. — MNA



Myanmar CP Inter-Club Tennis Tournament to be held

YANGON, 16 March — Hailing the 59th Anniversary Armed Forces Day, Myanmar CP Inter-Club Tennis Tournament will be held at Theinbyu Tennis Court here from 27 March to 2 April. The sponsors are Myanmar Tennis Federation and Myanmar CP Co Ltd.

The national selections and state/division level players may take part in the A class team-wise matches of the tourney, while the B class matches are for the players of other levels lower than that of the state/division. Women's team-wise matches will also be held. Players may contact the MTF through Tel: 372360, 381991 or Fax 381992 for information. The last entry date is 24 March. — MNA



Minister for Health Dr Kyaw Myint delivers an address at the launching of Ziawaka mobile health train. — MNA

Ziawaka Mobile Health Train launched

YANGON, 16 March—In honour of the 59th Anniversary Armed Forces Day, a ceremony to launch Ziawaka Mobile Health Train jointly sponsored by the Ministry of Rail Transportation and the Ministry of Health was held at the No 1 Platform of Yangon Central Railway Station this morning, attended by Chairman of Yangon Division Peace and Development Council Commander Maj-Gen Myint Swe.

Also present on the occasion were Minister for Cooperatives Maj-Gen Htay Oo, Minister for Rail Transportation Maj-Gen Aung Min, Minister for Health Dr Kyaw Myint, Chairman of Yangon City Development Committee Mayor Brig-Gen Aung Thein Linn, deputy ministers, officials of the ministries concerned and guests.

First, Minister for Health Dr Kyaw Myint made a speech. He said that with the aim of providing health care services to the people of rural areas which is the guidance of the Head of State, the ceremony to launch Ziawaka Mobile Health Train jointly sponsored by the Ministry of Rail Transportation and the Ministry of Health was held in honour of the 59th Anniversary Armed Forces Day.

With the train, professors, heads of department and specialists left here today for Nyaunglaybin to provide health care services to the people there; that the medical team on the train comprises EENT specialists, musculoskeletal specialists, dental and oral specialists, OG specialists, radiologists, paediatricians, pathologists and anaesthetists supported by technicians and nurses; that the health train full of specialists and medical professionals will serve like a specialist hospital and it will give medical treatment to patients free of charge, he added.

The health train will also leave for other states and divisions where it will provide health care services to both urban and rural people and conduct educative talks on health at every opportunity, he stressed.

He said that in Myanmar, it is the first time that the specialists and medical professionals at central levels make field trips right down to grassroots levels and give medical treatment by train; that he thanks the Ministry of Rail Transportation and the Ministry of Health for successful launching of the mobile health train.

Afterwards, Minister for Rail Transportation Maj-Gen Aung Min and Minister for Health Dr Kyaw Myint formally opened the ceremony to launch the mobile health train. Next, Commander Maj-Gen Myint Swe and ministers, deputy ministers and officials inspected the mobile health train. Later, the mobile health train with Minister for Rail Transportation Maj-Gen Aung Min, Minister for Health Dr Kyaw Myint, Deputy Minister Thura U Thauk Lwin, the directors-general of the Ministry of Health, professors, heads of department, specialists and officials on board left Yangon Central Railway Station for Nyaunglaybin at 8.30 am. The health train arrived at 12.15 pm in Nyaunglaybin Station where it was welcomed by the chairmen of Bago District and Nyaunglaybin Township Peace and Development Councils, departmental offi-

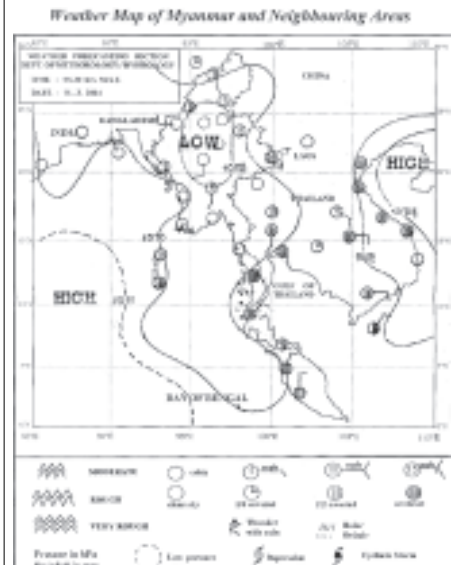
cials, Nyaunglaybin Township USDA members, red cross members, the medical superintendent of Nyaunglaybin Hospital and health staff, officials of the Ministry of Health and the Ministry of Rail Transportation and local people.

Starting from 12.30 pm, the mobile health team gave medical treatment to patients. They will continue to give medical treatment in Nyaunglaybin region up to tomorrow evening. —MNA

ASLEEP IN JESUS Sister Fidelis Cotton

(Aged 95)

A Sister of St. Joseph (Former Teacher at St. Joseph's Convent, Patheingyi) passed away on Tuesday, 16 March 2004. Funeral service at St. Theresa's Church, Ahlon, on Thursday, 18 March 2004 at 10:00 am and thence for burial to the cemetery in St. Francis Church Compound, Tamwe. — Sisters of St. Joseph



WEATHER

Tuesday, 16 March, 2004

Summary of observations recorded at 09:30 hours MST: During the past 24 hours, rain has been isolated in Shan State and weather has been generally fair in the remaining areas. Day temperatures were (3°C) to (4°C) above normal in Kachin, Chin, Shan, Kayah and Kayan States, Sagaing, Mandalay, Magway, Ayeyawady and Tanintharyi Divisions, (5°C) above normal in Bago Division and about normal in the remaining areas. The significant day temperature was (42°C) in Magway, Aungmye and (41°C) in Minbu.

Maximum temperature on 15-3-2004 was 38.5°C (101°F). Minimum temperature on 16-3-2004 was 20.8°C (69°F). Relative humidity at 9:30 hrs MST on 16-3-2004 was 77%. Total sun shine hours on 15-3-2004 was (9.0) hours approx. Rainfall on 16-3-2004 was nil at Yangon Airport, Kaba-Aye and central Yangon. Total rainfall since 1-1-2004 was 3 mm (0.12 inch) at Yangon Airport and nil at Kaba-Aye and central Yangon. Maximum wind speed at Yangon (Kaba-Aye) was 15 mph from South-Southwest at (10:30) hours MST on 16-3-2004.

Bay inference: Weather is partly cloudy to cloudy in South Bay and generally fair elsewhere in the Bay of Bengal.

Forecast valid until evening of 17-3-2004: Weather will be generally fair in the whole country. **State of the sea:** Seas will be slight to moderate in Myanmar waters. **Outlook for subsequent two days:** Slight increases of day temperature are likely in the whole country.

Forecast for Yangon and neighbouring area for 17-3-2004: Fair weather. **Forecast for Mandalay and neighbouring area for 17-3-2004:** Fair weather.

* ကော်ဖီစိုက်ပျိုးဝင်ငွေထိုး

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ယှဉ်တွဲစိုက်ပျိုးဒေသဖွံ့ဖြိုး

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Prime Minister General Khin Nyunt addresses the meeting No 1/2004 of the Myanmar Education Committee. — MNA

Modern, developed nation can be reached only if education sees quantitative as well as qualitative development

Myanmar Education Committee holds meeting

YANGON, 16 March — The Myanmar Education Committee held its No 1/2004 meeting at the Universities Central Council here this afternoon, with an address delivered by Chairman of MEC Prime Minister General Khin Nyunt.

Also present were Vice-Chairmen of the MEC Secretary-1 of the State Peace and Development Council Lt-Gen Soe Win and Secretary-2 Lt-Gen Thein Sein, member of the State Peace and Development Council Chief of Armed Forces Training Lt-Gen Kyaw Win, the ministers, the chief justice, the attorney-general, the auditor-general, the chairman of Civil Service Selection and Training Board, the deputy ministers, MEC members, the director-general of the State Peace and Development Council Office, heads of department and officials.

In his address, Prime Minister General Khin Nyunt said after laying down the seven-point future political pro-

gramme for emergence of a discipline-flourishing democratic nation, the Government has been fulfilling all the requirements. The rule of law and the community peace and tranquillity are the most basic requirements for successful implementation of the political programme. The second requirement is the sound economic foundations flourishing harmoniously in all branches of economy. And the third is a balanced development of all sectors. The Government has been striving in all sectors for fulfilling the three most basic requirements.

All the personnel concerned of the education sector should understand the cardinal importance of the human resources development in the nation's march towards the goal. The Government has been extending and upgrading institutions of higher learning and basic education schools in combination with the launching of the education pro-

motion programmes for human resources development. And the Government has not made any regional discrimination in doing so. Its conviction is for ensuring a proportionate improvement in the education standard in the whole nation from the plains and the hill regions to the remote corners and the inner regions of the nation.

In addition, the Government has been spending a large amount foreign exchange in launching the special four-year education promotion project in order to provide all teaching aids and other necessities to the institutions of higher learning and schools. Hence, the Government is conducting PhD courses in the nation and producing a greater number of doctorate degree holders. But more doctorate degree holders are needed if their number is compared with the nation's population.

(See page 11)

General Thura Shwe Mann inspects development of Patheingyi region

YANGON, 16 March — Member of the State Peace and Development Council General Thura Shwe Mann, accompanied by Secretary-2 of the State Peace and Development Council Lt-Gen Thein Sein, member of the State Peace and Development Council Lt-Gen Tin Aye, Commander-in-Chief (Air) Maj-Gen Myat Hein, Chairman of Ayeyawady Division Peace and Devel-

opment Council Commander of South-West Command Maj-Gen Soe Naing, the ministers, the deputy ministers, senior military officers, officials of the State Peace and Development Council Office and heads of departments arrived at the site of Patheingyi Bridge being constructed on Patheingyi-Shwemyintin-Wayachaung Road on 14 March after attending the

opening of the runway at Patheingyi Airport.

General Thura Shwe Mann and party inspected construction of the bridge on Patheingyi side.

Deputy Minister for Construction Brig-Gen Myint Thein reported on the project, Ayeyawady Division Deputy Superintending Engineer U Khin Maung Win and Superintending Engineer U Soe Tint on

bore piling, construction of pillars installation of iron trusses and frames and approach roads.

Deputy Minister Brig-Gen Myint Thein and Commander Maj-Gen Soe Naing gave a supplementary report.

General Thura Shwe Mann gave instructions on supply of construction materials, safety at the worksite and working with goodwill.

Next, General Thura Shwe Mann and party inspected regiments and units and toured Patheingyi.

General Thura Shwe Mann and party went to Eya Shwewa Co Ltd in Daka Village in Kangyidaung Township and met farmers. General Thura Shwe Mann discussed cultivation of paddy and oil crops in low-lying areas, Thabaung, Kyaunggon, Yekyi and

Kangyidaung Townships.

The commander and farmers reported on conditions of cultivation. They then inspected Shwemyinta biofertilizer produced by Eya Shwewa Co Ltd.

General Thura Shwe Mann and party went to Shwemyinta Swan-ar-pyi fertilizer plant and inspected the production process.

They proceeded to Kyaunggon Bridge in Kyaunggon Township and met officials of departments and social organizations.

General Thura Shwe Mann and party arrived at Bo Myat Tun Bridge in Nyaungdon Township. Maubin District Senior Engineer U Sai Kyaw Moe reported on maintenance for durability of the bridge. Deputy Minister U Pe Than gave a supplementary report.

General Thura Shwe Mann called for durability of the bridge. Deputy Minister U Pe Than reported in detail on preventive measures against bank erosion on Kyeinbin side being undertaken by Directorate of Water Resources and Improvement of River Systems.

Next, General Thura Shwe Mann gave necessary instructions.

The General and party arrived back here in the evening.—MNA



General Thura Shwe Mann gives instructions to officials at Bo Myat Tun Bridge Project in Nyaungdon Township. — MNA