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New Year Day of 1367 ME

Sunday, 17 April 2005

Senior General Than Shwe sends message of felicitations to Syrian Arab Republic

YANGON, 17 April — Senior General Than Shwe, Chairman of the State Peace and Development Council of the Union of Myanmar, has sent a message of felicitations to His Excellency Mr Bashar Al-Assad, President of the Syrian Arab Republic, on the occasion of the National Day of the Syrian Arab Republic which falls on 17 April 2005.—MNA

To bring about equitable development in all parts of the nation, measures are being taken to improve all the sectors such as transport, economy, education and health in combination with the implementation of the five rural development tasks and the 24 special development regions projects.

With proper natural resources and population ratio, Rakhine State is blessed with promising opportunities for development
Senior General Than Shwe meets military officers, other ranks, their families of Sittway Station



Senior General Than Shwe gives guidance to departmental officials at the meeting hall of Sittway Station.— MNA

YANGON, 16 April — Chairman of the State Peace and Development Council Commander-in-Chief of Defence Services Senior General Than Shwe met military officers and other ranks and their families at Bandoola Hall of Sittway Station in Rakhine State yesterday morning and gave guidance.

Also present on the occasion were member of the State Peace and Development Council General Thura Shwe Mann, SPDC members Lt-Gen Khin Maung Than and Quartermaster-General Lt-Gen Thiha Thura Tin Aung Myint Oo, Commander-in-Chief (Navy) Vice-Admiral Soe Thein, Commander-in-Chief (Air) Lt-Gen Myat Hein, Rakhine State PDC Chairman Western Command Commander Brig-Gen Min Aung Hlaing, ministers, deputy ministers, Rakhine State PDC Vice-Chairman Brig-Gen Than Tun Aung, Director General of the SPDC Office Lt-Col Pe Nyein

and departmental heads.

Before the arrival of the Senior General there, General Thura Shwe Mann delivered a speech, saying the Tatmadaw has placed emphasis on the trans-

formation of the nation into a peaceful, modern and developed discipline-flourishing democratic one. At the same time, he said, efforts are being made to (See page 8)



USDA members and students douse Senior General Than Shwe and wife Daw Kyaing Kyaing at Thandwe Airport.— MNA

INSIDE

Only when a national knows Myanmar traditions and customs very well, will he realize why he should cherish and adore his motherland and people. Myanmar have been able to preserve own national heritages of fine traditions, culture, and customs.

(Page 7) U KYAW SEIN (LIVESTOCK & FISHERIES)

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

PERSPECTIVES

Sunday, 17 April, 2005

New Year with stronger resolutions

Today, Myanmar New Year 1367 ME begins after four days of joyous Thingyan revelry. Myanmar New Year adds a sombre note to the preceding merrymaking with both the young and old making their way to pagodas and monasteries where they offer *soon*, flowers, water and incense to gain merit.

On this auspicious day, the young pay respects to elderly. They also shampoo and manicure the aged. Religious associations of some townships set free fish and other animals such as cows, goats and birds. Most people take Sabbaths. In general, New Year Day as a whole is marked with deeds of merit with expectations for a better future for all.

There are fine traditions which we in Myanmar have observed since time immemorial. In Myanmar, there reigns goodwill towards one another. Overwhelmed by this positive attitude, we have been able to surmount hardships and difficulties.

Upholding these values, we in Myanmar encompassing the public, the government and the Tatmadaw are building today a new modern and developed nation while implementing the four political, the four economic and the four social objectives in all seriousness.

Determined and dedicated efforts of the trio have already produced tangible results in numerous sectors. The rule of law, smooth and secure transport, national reconsolidation and better living conditions have already been in place.

Much headway has been made by the National Convention to formulate fundamental principles to serve as the base in drafting the State Constitution, and prospective contents of some chapters have already been agreed on.

Common weal and lasting peace and progress are on the chosen path which will not be strewn with roses. There still exist elements with hostile intent. Be that as it may, all are to march on with due vigilance against overt and covert attempts of destructive elements.

Time and again, the government, the people and the Tatmadaw have proved to be a strong and united force to tackle all kinds of problems effectively. Given the vigour, dedication and cooperation, all brethren of the Union can look forward to a brighter future for the citizen and the State in the Myanmar New Year which begins today, and in the years ahead.

With unity of purpose and unity of action, all are bound to have a more peaceful and prosperous New Year.

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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

Maj-Gen Tha Aye inspects development tasks in Mindat, Matupi

YANGON, 16 April — Chairman of Sagaing Division Peace and Development Council Commander of North West Command Maj-Gen Tha Aye together with departmental personnel inspected crops plantations in Bawche farm in Mindat Township, Chin State on 10 April morning.

They next inspected extension of Mindat-Matupi road and bridges along the road.

On 11 April morning, the commander met with local authorities in Mindat Township and heard reports on development tasks in District and Township. The commander attended to their needs and presented the officials stationery, sports gear and cloths.

They inspected development tasks in Matupi Township and tea plantation implemented by Myanma Agriculture Service. After hearing the report, they fulfilled requirements.—MNA

POEM

New Year Resolution

- * One year older in our age Diaries setting a new page We, the performers on life stage Time to decorate with foliage
- * Life boat's voyage for the new year Keeping our conscience clear For failures, we don't fear Try to maneuver and steer
- * Temptations now-a-days so great New gadgets and new things of late Popping at an alarming rate None, without a grey side to date A little discipline to keep To remind us, we need a beep Like a brake, not to overeat, Nor overuse and oversleep
- * Individual self-control To improve own family role To help in community goals Should be resolutions to hold

Aye Phyu

Maj-Gen Myint Hlaing participates in Maha Thingyan Festival

YANGON, 16 April — The opening ceremony of 1366 Myanmar Traditional Maha Thingyan Festival was held in front of the city hall of Lashio Township in Shan State (North) on 13 April morning.

It was attended by Chairman of Shan State (North) Peace and Development Council Commander of North East Command Maj-Gen Myint Hlaing and

wife Daw Khin Thant Zin, the deputy commander and senior military officers and local people.

First, Chairman of Lashio District PDC Lt-Col Than Htun formally opened the ceremony.

Next, the commander, his wife and the audience merrily douse the scented water on each other and they brought the celebration to a close.

MNA

Int'l singing festival to be held in June on Yellow River

TAIYUAN, 16 April — The first international singing festival on Yellow River will be held at the Yellow River's Hukou Waterfalls in north China's Shanxi Province from June 10 to 12, the festival's organizing committee announced here on Thursday.

The festival is designed to mark the 60th anniversary of the victory of the War of Resistance Against Japanese Aggression (1937-1945) and the centennial birth anniversary of Xian Xinghai, a great Chinese musician.

The organizing committee has sent letters of invitation to professional and amateur choruses in more than 10 countries, including Singapore and New Zealand.

The festival will be organized jointly by the Shanxi Provincial Tourism Bureau and the People's Government of Linfen City, where the Hukou Waterfalls are situated. The festival intends to bring together Chinese singers from home and abroad to sing songs in praise of the mighty Yellow River, the "mother river of the Chinese nation", according to a brief release dispatched by the

organizing committee.

The festival will be held simultaneously with a ceremony of mixing water taken from eight provinces along the Yellow River into a big bottle, symbolizing the union of the Chinese nation, an official from the organizing committee said.

MNA/Xinhua

Foreign Affairs Minister sends felicitations to Syrian counterpart

YANGON, 17 April — On the occasion of the National Day of the Syrian Arab Republic which falls on 17 April 2005, U Nyan Win, Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Union of Myanmar, has sent a message of felicitations to Mr Farouk Al Sharaa, Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Syrian Arab Republic.—MNA

Minister for Sports Brig-Gen Thura Aye Myint presents a certificate to a newly-completed trainee at the conclusion of Kokkaing Swimming Club's summer swimming course (2004-2005) on 11-4-2005. — NLM



Chinese Premier's South Asia trip produces very positive results

DHAKA, 15 April — Chinese Premier Wen Jiabao's 10-day swing through four South Asian countries ended on 12 April produced very positive results, a weekly newspaper said on Thursday.

While the Chinese Premier's visits to Pakistan, Bangladesh and Sri Lanka also produced very positive results, the visit to India has been quite appropriately called "historic" for its long-term political implications, not only in India but also in the whole region, the *Holiday* said in its commentary.

The two Asian giants have agreed to develop "a strategic and cooperative partnership for peace and prosperity", which will obviously have significant impact on other smaller countries in the region, the commentary said.

China has lately been taking a lot of initiative in South Asia as the

country's two top leaders, President and Premier, have visited the region twice in the last three years, it noted, adding the Chinese leaders are making similar advances in other regions as well, apparently to consolidate their remarkable gains in economic development and also to smoothen and stabilize any possible political hiccups.

Of the 11 odd agreements that China and India signed during the tour, the one on border dispute is of special significance as it has charted a road-map to resolve it, the commentary stressed, adding that both have agreed to sort out the unsettled border disputes amicably through negotiations.

Both the countries

have agreed to take their relations "to a new level", and adopt measures to boost their current two-way trade of 13.6 billion US dollars to 20 billion US dollars in 2008 and further to 30 billion US dollars in 2010, it said.

The goal may be ambitious, but given the two countries' recent development and track record, it is not impossible, the commentary observed.

As regards the visit to Bangladesh, the commentary said the Chinese Premier's description of the nine agreements signed during his short visit to Dhaka as "a landmark" in the two countries' relations is quite significant for more reasons than one.

MNA/Xinhua

Indonesia issues \$1b global bond

JAKARTA, 15 April — The Indonesian Government announced Thursday it has completed the issuance of one-billion-US-dollar bond for a ten-year term.

The global bonds carry an interest rate of 7.25 per cent and offer an effective yield of 7.375 per cent, Minister of Finance Jusuf Anwar said in a statement.

Jusuf said investors have raised bids to 2.2 billion dollars but the government agreed to issue only one billion, with 54 per cent issued to Asian investors, 28 per cent to European investors and 18 per cent to US investors.

MNA/Xinhua

Singapore to crack down on loan shark syndicates

SINGAPORE, 15 April — Singapore police should crack down on illegal money lenders and their runners as organized criminal syndicates, said Minister for Home Affairs Wong Kan Seng on Thursday.

Speaking at a seminar on police affairs, Wong called on the police to critically review loan shark syndicates since they systematically use criminal intimidation and harassment in their trade.

"They (police officers) must not only learn new knowledge and skills to deal with both conventional and unconventional terrorist threats, they also need to review their traditional thinking about certain familiar crimes," Wong said.

He urged the police to take initiatives in adjusting their work methods, as well as in revitalizing established strengths and resources.

To strengthen the country's security measures against potential terrorist attacks, the police force has set up a Bomb and Explosive Investigation Division to better its post-blast investigation capabilities.

MNA/Xinhua



Tourists look at fish at Singapore's underwater world on 14 April, 2005 in Singapore.—INTERNET

166,000 Nepali kids to go to school under enrollment drive

KATHMANDU, 15 April — A two-week long school enrollment campaign beginning from Friday aims to enroll 166,000 among 486,896 Nepali children aged between five and nine, who are still away from school, a government official said on Thursday.

"If the targeted numbers of students are admitted, the net enrollment rate will reach 86 per cent as per the government's 'Education for All' goals to enroll 100 per cent by 2015," Mahashram Sharma, deputy director of the Education Department, told reporters.

Currently, the net enrollment rate in Grade One is 84.2 per cent, with 3.08 million children between five and nine years studying in primary schools across the country.

The campaign will be mainly aimed at bringing those children from the hardcore groups, who were deprived from access to schools, Sharma said.

Each student from such families will be given 500 Nepali rupees (7.15 US dollars), and 85 per cent of text books to be distributed free have reached the regional and district depots, he noted.

To provide educational materials to the students, the Education Ministry will give 3,000 rupees (42.86 dollars) to

each school and 100 rupees (1.43 dollars) to each student.

"We will also focus on retaining the students from dropout in lower secondary and secondary levels," he said, adding, "Friendly environment is a must to discourage the dropout, which is being tried to create in schools."

There are about 6 million students in more than 26,000 government schools in the kingdom. The literacy is only about 58 per cent among the total population of 24.8 million.

MNA/Xinhua

Bombs kill 4 policemen as Iraq violence surges

BAGHDAD, 15 April — A suicide bomber steered his car into an Iraqi police patrol south of Baghdad late Thursday night, killing four officers, and three bomb attacks in the capital wounded at least nine people on Friday, Iraqi officials said.

The attacks followed two deadly car bombings in the capital on Thursday morning, and extended the recent surge of violence that ended two months of relative calm after the January elections.

The American military on Friday announced the deaths of two American marines.

One was killed on Wednesday by enemy mortar fire at an American base near Hit, near the Syrian border, military officials said. The other was killed on Thursday by small arms fire in Ramadi, west of the capital.

The suicide attack on the police patrol took place Thursday night near

Hilla, in the Mahaweel district. Three police officers and five civilians were also wounded in the attack, witnesses said. Mahaweel is about 40 miles south of Baghdad, just south of a Sunni Arab area where attacks on American and Iraqi patrols have been common.

Internet



A flat panel screen displays the logo of Samsung Electronics in the lobby of its main office, in Seoul on 15 April 2005.—INTERNET

China to host 22nd World Law Congress in September

BEIJING, 15 April — The 22nd Congress on International Law will be held in Beijing and Shanghai from 4 to 10 September, Vice-President of China's Supreme People's Court Wan E'xiang announced here on Thursday.

This will be the second time China hosts the Congress, following its successful hosting of the 14th congress in Beijing in 1990.

The theme of this Congress will be "the Rule of Law and Harmony in International Society", focusing on the profound connotation of the rule of law as well as its roles and challenges in establishing harmonious society, according to Wan.

Under the theme, 22 topics in six categories will be discussed during the Congress, involving the

legal system of each country and international judicial cooperation, the issues deserving international concerns, issues emerging in the development of the world economy and trade and issues related to social life and environmental protection.

The Congress will also include a mock trial, during which a hypothetical case with realistic significance in the international community will be argued by lawyers from various countries before a collegial panel composed of chief

justices from different countries and justices from the International Court of Justice.

A total of 1,500 delegates to attend the Congress, including more than 500 foreign judges, attorneys, senior lawyers, law professors and high-ranking officials of judicial departments, Wan said.

He said the Shanghai Declaration would be published during the closing ceremony to reflect the common understanding reached by the world legal profession and the latest research achievements.

The Congress on International Law is an important non-governmental international Congress initiated by the World Jurist Association (WJA). The WJA, founded in 1963, aims to help create "a new world of law, where the weak are secure, and peace is preserved forever".

MNA/Xinhua

China to export \$100b of textiles in 2005

GUANGZHOU, 16 April — China will export 100 billion US dollars of textiles in 2005, five billion dollars more than in 2004, said a document issued by the Ministry of Commerce here on Friday.

The white paper that the ministry released today analyses the domestic and overseas trade environment of China's textiles.

According to the white paper, China's textile industry will face the following problems in 2005: The United States and the European Union will further restrict China's exports, malignant competition tends to spread in domestic market and China still suffers from shortages of power and energy supply.

However, it says, though difficulties remain, as the international market still needs China's textile and clothing, exports will grow steadily.

Lu Jianhua, director of the MOC's foreign trade sector, said the ministry is researching on setting more regulations to prevent the orderless competition among textile producers.

Cao Xinyu, vice-chairman of China Textile Import and Export Chamber, said that according to the survey that the chamber made, most companies hope the government issues such regulations for a better market order. — MNA/Xinhua



A Chinese girl wears traditional Japanese clothes to get her picture taken by a professional photographer who rents costumes and makes souvenir pictures for tourists in a park in China's capital Beijing on 15 April, 2005.—INTERNET

ဝက်မုခ်းအား ခေတ်ကျော်လွှား



Thai people spray water from water tube in Prachinburi Province, 95 kilometers (59 miles) east of Bangkok on 14 April, 2005, the second day of the Thai New Year Festival.—INTERNET

81 countries confirmed participation in Asian-African Summit

JAKARTA, 15 April — The Indonesian Government said on Thursday 81 countries have confirmed their participation in the Asian-African Summit scheduled for 22-24 April here and in the West Java capital of Bandung.

As an addition, UN Secretary-General Kofi

Annan and representatives from six major international organizations also will attend the meeting, which will mark the golden jubilee of the 1955 Asian-African Conference, Foreign Minister Hassan Wirajuda told reporters at the State Palace here.

Hassan said the summit will be co-chaired by President Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono and his South African counterpart Tabo Mbeki.

He claimed that 52 Heads of State have confirmed their participation in the summit.

MNA/Xinhua

China sets rigid rules on MBO in SOEs

BEIJING, 15 April — China's Ministry of Finance and the State-owned Assets Supervision and Administration Commission (SACAC) jointly issued a draft regulations here Thursday on prohibiting management buyouts (MBO) of large state-owned or state-controlled enterprises.

In small- and medium-sized state enterprises, however, MBO reform is allowed but strictly regulated by the draft regulation on Management Buyouts of State Owned Enterprises (SOEs).

Anonymous sources from SACAC told Xinhua that the decision was made to secure an ordered transfer of state properties and to facilitate the SOE

reform.

While MBO has been increasingly used to make state-owned companies into private ones in recent years, managers were often found cheating or engaged in malpractice damaging the interests of employees, investors and financial institutions but bringing themselves private gains.

To remedy the situation, this regulation

stipulates that MBO reform in small- and medium-sized companies must be strictly supervised by ownership holders. Management is not allowed to interfere with the establishment of transfer plans, liquidation, financial auditing, assets evaluation and the choice of intermediary agencies.

The regulation requires all MBO operations to be

conducted through ownership exchange agencies designated by the ownership holders. Meanwhile, all transfer information must be made public. No exclusive clauses favourable to a special management level will be allowed.

The regulation also forbids indirect ownership transfer through the third party because of the difficulty of finding out the identity and financial status of the real transferees.

Besides, management that auditing authority finds responsible for their companies' economic losses or involved in deliberate transfer of companies' net assets and other malpractice jeopardizing the security of state properties will have their qualifications revoked. The regulation does not apply to the ownership transfer of SOEs in financial sectors and the state equities transfer of listed SOEs.

MNA/Xinhua

Annan says US, UK to blame for Iraq scam

UNITED NATIONS, 16 April — In a statement that could lead to fresh confrontation with Washington and London, UN Secretary-General Kofi Annan has said US and Britain bore part of the blame for Iraq earning billions of dollars in illicit money as they never stopped it from smuggling oil.

The US could have stopped the smuggling as they had interdiction forces, but they decided to close their eyes to oil smuggling to Turkey and Jordan in mid-1990s because they were allies, Annan told a reunion of past and present spokespersons of the UN.

The reason, Annan said, was that no one had money to compensate the two countries for the losses they had suffered after economic sanctions were put on Iraq in the aftermath of its attack on Kuwait.

He said the Americans and British could have

stopped the smuggling but did not and that most of the money Iraqi leader Saddam Hussein made illegally when his country was under UN sanctions in the 1990s was from smuggling oil, not from kickbacks under the UN oil-for-food programme.

Internet

China owns most franchise stores in the world

BEIJING, 16 April — With more than 2,000 franchise stores and over 120,000 outlets, China has seen its franchises growing into the world's largest within the past decade.

Statistics from the China Chain Stores and Franchise Association (CCSFA) show the franchise business model is prospering in nearly 50 sectors including convenience stores, automobile maintenance, home decoration, education and training, laundry, attire, books and audio-visual products and the catering business.

Approximately 1.8 million people are working in franchises now. Last year alone, more than 600,000 job opportunities were created. Guo Geping, chairman of CCSFA, told the Economic Daily on Tuesday that the aggregate turno-

ver of China's franchises grew by 41.5 per cent last year while the growth rate of outlets slowed down by 38 per cent.

"This means having as many outlets as possible is not as paramount as it used to be. Most Chinese franchise store owners have turned to seek a more solid and sustained development, such as defending the value of their brand names, optimizing internal management and improving the efficiency of distribution," Guo said. "Although China has made phenomenal achievements in developing franchise businesses since the late 1990s, there

are still some problems waiting to be tackled, especially in the rectification of market order."

Since all previous restrictions on franchise businesses in China were eliminated in 2004 as required by the World Trade Organization, industrial analysts held that China's franchise industry has entered its best ever period in history.

MNA/Xinhua



A shopper, left, and a worker walk past Samsung's products on display at an electronic shop in Seoul, on 15 April, 2005.—INTERNET

China, India launch financial dialogue mechanism

BEIJING, 16 April — The Chinese Ministry of Finance has said it has set up a financial dialogue mechanism with its India counterpart in a bid to boost their exchanges and cooperation in major international financial issues.

The mechanism will help promote the global economy in a balanced and orderly manner, according to a statement posted on its web site by the Chinese ministry.

The move also indicates that China has made new progress in cementing financial exchanges and cooperation with other developing countries. The Chinese and Indian Government officials signed a memorandum of understanding on financial dialogue during the just-concluded visit to India by Chinese Premier Wen Jiabao.

The Chinese ministry said the dialogue between the two countries will be held once every 12 to 18

months at a deputy ministerial level or other levels the two sides agreed upon.

Their dialogue will cover the economic situation of the two coun-

tries, their financial policies, financial reform and exchanges on matters related to international economic forums and institutions, according to the statement. China has set

up financial dialogue mechanism with the United States, Britain and the European Union, Britain, France on a regular basis at ministerial levels.

MNA/Xinhua

Over 78,000 residents in Indonesia still live in refugee camps

JAKARTA, 15 April — More than 78,000 residents of Simeuleu Island in Indonesia still live at refugee camps more than two weeks after the on 28 March earthquake destroyed their homes, a government official said on Thursday.

Simeuleu Deputy Regent Ibnu Aban Ulma said most of the refugees have their homes destroyed by the 8.2-magnitude quake.

"Only 25 per cent of them take refuge because of tsunami fear," he was quoted by the Antara news agency as saying. More than 9,000 children and babies are among the refugees, he said.

The quake killed 33 people in Simeuleu and more than 620 others in nearby Nias Island. It came only three months after a powerful earthquake off Sumatra Island triggered a tsunami and left more than 220,000 people in Aceh and North Sumatra dead or missing.

MNA/Xinhua

Two giant pandas sent to Sichuan Province for exchange programme

FUZHOU, 16 April — Two under-age male giant pandas have been sent by plane from Wolong in southwestern Sichuan Province, the ancestral home of the rare species, to this capital city of east China's Fujian Province.

The move is part of China's panda exchange programme, which aims to maintain the biodiversity of the country's giant panda population, said Dong Li, director of animal keeping department of the Wolong Panda Research Centre in southwest China's

Sichuan Province, on Wednesday.

The two, named Linyang and Fufu, were born in 2001 and weighed 81 kilos and 109 kilos. Their arrival brought Fuzhou's total number of giant pandas in captivity to five.

Dong Li said the exchange will help avoid inbreeding and improve the reproduction capacity of giant pandas in captivity.

"Inbreeding among giant pandas in the same region easily leads to the species' degeneration," Dong Li acknowledged.

The Wolong centre has dispatched a team of zoo keepers to the Fuzhou Giant Panda Research

Centre.

And the Fuzhou centre will work together with the special team to keep a close watch of Linyang and Fufu, said Chen Yucun, head of the Fuzhou centre.

According to Wei Rongping, a senior researcher with the Wolong centre, China launched a giant panda and habitat protection programme in 1993. Under the programme, giant pandas living in wild have since been effectively protected and their population is on the rise.

MNA/Xinhua

China Eastern Airlines to launch Beijing-Shanghai-Mumbai flight

SHANGHAI, 15 April — China Eastern Airlines announced on Wednesday that it will launch a new Beijing-Shanghai-Mumbai flight on 18 April, the second direct flight linking Chinato India. The other goes to Delhi.

The new flight will be set on regular timetable of every Monday, Wednesday, Thursday and Saturday. A300 carriers will be put into operation for the flight.

China Eastern Airlines opened the Beijing-

Shanghai-Delhi flight on 28 March, 2002. It flies every Tuesday, Friday and Sunday. Passengers include IT people, immigrants and travellers from India and North America.

Mumbai, the largest

city of India, is the rail and air hub of the country's west part, and plays a key role in politics, economy, finance, culture and military affairs of India. The opening of the new flight is expected to promote trade and boost business and tourism.

MNA/Xinhua



A bee flies off a rose after collecting pollen from the flower, in Islamabad on 15 April, 2005.—INTERNET

Ukraine starts second wave of troops withdrawal from Iraq

KIEV, 15 April — Ukraine withdrew 69 soldiers from Iraq on Friday in the second pullout wave after the first batch of troops returned home in mid-March, said the Ukrainian Defense Ministry.

An additional 67 soldiers will follow suit on Saturday, the ministry said, noting that their pullout had also been scheduled for Friday but was postponed due to the technical problem of one plane.

Ukraine began its troops withdrawal from Iraq on March 15, and Ukrainian President Viktor Yushchenko signed a decree ordering that the pullout shall be completed by the year's end, his office announced on Wednesday. Ukraine sent about 1,650 soldiers to Iraq under the Polish command in August 2003 and 18 of them were killed and dozens injured.—Internet

Suicide bomber attacks US intelligence base in Iraq

TIKRIT (Iraq), 15 April — A suicide bomber driving a booby-trapped fuel tanker attacked Thursday what believed to be a US intelligence base in Tikrit, north of Baghdad, causing many casualties, police said. The hit building used to be a house of Kharallah Telfaah, uncle of Saddam Hussein, and was believed to have been taken by a special US investigative unit, a police source speaking on condition of anonymity told Xinhua.—MNA/Xinhua



A local shopper pushes a cart past shelves displaying dairy products at a supermarket in Shanghai recently.—INTERNET

ပြေးခြံရွှေတာ၊ ထိန်းပါလေလွင့်၊ ထုတ်ကုန်မြင့်

S'pore emphasizes community preparedness for emergencies

SINGAPORE, 16 April — Singapore's Minister for Home Affairs Wong Kan Seng on Friday urged individuals and communities in the country to get prepared for emergencies such as natural disasters and terrorist threats.

Speaking at a Singapore Civil Defence Force (SCDF) seminar, Wong stressed that a community's survival ultimately hinges on its resilience and SCDF must

maximize its finite resources to meet the public needs.

"Reaching out to the public effectively and getting them on board to take personal

responsibility for being ready and prepared for emergencies will be a key challenge for the SCDF in the years ahead," he noted.

MNA/Xinhua

Scientists keep eye on five raging volcanoes in Indonesia

JAKARTA, 16 April — Scientists anxiously watched five volcanoes nationwide on Thursday, as fears over more natural disasters escalated with five mountains rumbling into life over the past three days, the Jakarta Post reported on Friday.

Volcanologists were paying the closest attention to five among the 11 mountains in the country on "watch status": Mt Tangkuban Perahu in West Java Province; Mt Anak Krakatau in Lampung Province; Mt Talang in West Sumatra Province; Mt Semeru in East Java Province; and Mt Merapi in Yogyakarta Province, the paper said.

"It seems that Tangkuban Perahu and Anak Krakatau are more unstable than those that have been inactive for thousands of years," said Syamsul Rizal, the chief of a volcanology team stationed at an observation post near Mt Talang and Mt Tangkuban Perahu.

The eruption of Mt Talang and the increased activities of Mt Tangkuban Perahu and Mt Anak Krakatau were triggered by the giant earthquakes on the Nias Island and in the Aceh Province recently, he said.

Mt Anak Krakatau, which blew itself apart in 1883 in one of the country's worst-ever natural disasters, was put on alert status late Wednesday amid warnings of poisonous gas emissions. No one lives on Krakatau but the peak is a popular tourist spot.

While petty traders on the sides of Mt Tangkuban Perahu have been evacuated, hundreds of thousands of people living nearby the slopes of the volcano stayed put in their houses, warily watching the smoking giant.

There have been 21 minor eruptions on the mountain since 1986.

Mt Tangkuban Perahu is located near densely populated Bandung, the capital city of West Java Province and only a few hundred kilometers east of Jakarta.

Next week, Bandung will host more than 50 heads of state at the Asian-African Summit.

While activity on the mountain decreased Thursday compared to the day earlier, biggest crater on the volcano spewed hot ash into the air 21 times.

The 11 volcanoes under the watch of volcanologists are among at least 129 active volcanoes in the country that are part of the Pacific "Ring of Fire" — a series of volcanoes and fault lines encircling the Pacific Ocean and the United States, Japan, some other Southeast Asian countries and New Zealand.

MNA/Xinhua

Large quantity of drug tablets seized in Australia

CANBERRA, 16 April — More than one ton of MDMA (ecstasy) tablets with an approximate street value of more than 195 million US dollars has been seized in Australia, representing the largest drug seizure in the country.

The seizure is also one of the world's biggest ever single detections of the street-ready drug.

Four men have also been arrested following a joint operation by the Australia Federal Police (AFP) and Customs in Melbourne, capital of the State of Victoria.

A joint statement by AFP and Customs released on Friday said the investigation began in January this year and intelligence led Customs to identify and examine a shipping container of ceramic tiles which arrived in Melbourne from Italy earlier this week.

X-ray examination revealed anomalies inside eight pallets which were stacked with the tiles.

Further inspection

revealed that dozens of packets of five million MDMA tablets were concealed inside a cavity surrounded by the boxes of tiles.

Two men, who attempted to access the consignment after it was sent to a factory, were arrested and were charged with aid and abetting a commercial quantity of MDMA and attempt to possess a prohibited import, namely a commercial quantity of MDMA.

Police executed 12 search warrants at homes and businesses across Melbourne on Thursday night and Friday morning, arresting the other two men. They were charged with aid and abetting a prohibited import.

MNA/Xinhua

Vehicle arrivals down drastically in Tianjin

TIANJIN, 16 April — Tianjin, a major automobile port near Beijing, witnessed a dramatic decline in its vehicle arrivals in the first quarter of this year, despite China's discontinuation of its import quota system and an import-duty reduction for the automotive industry.

Local Customs sources said that Tianjin imported 10,699 motor vehicles from January to March, down 50 per cent from the level one year earlier.

In the first three months, Tianjin imported 4,065 motor vehicles from Japan, down 44 per cent year-on-year; 2,134 vehicles from South Korea, down

76 per cent; and 2,249 units from Germany, down 31 per cent.

Industry analysts owed the import decline largely to a robust growth in China's

vehicle production and a shift in industrial policy.

MNA/Xinhua

Malaysia's natural rubber production declines in February

KUALA LUMPUR, 16 April — Malaysia's natural rubber production in February this year decreased by 21 per cent to 92,876 tons compared to the previous month, the Statistics Department said on Friday.

The production dropped by 12.4 per cent when compared with the same period last year, the department said in a Press release issued here.

The department said the smallholding sector contributed 94.4 per cent to the production while the remaining 5.6 per cent came from the estate sector.

It added that exports of natural rubber in February 2005 totalled 82,658 tons, a decline of 11.5 per cent compared to the previous month and 9.6 per cent lower compared to the same month last year.

The main rubber type exported was the Standard Malaysian Rubber (SMR) which accounted for 91.1 per cent of the total exports.

During the first two months of this year, exports of natural rubber were mainly to China (47,658 tons), Germany (19,056 tons), South Korea (11,859 tons), the United States (10,582 tons), France (10,135 tons) and Iran (9,432 tons).

Total exports to these six countries accounted for 61.8 per cent of the overall natural rubber exports, the department said.—MNA/Xinhua

A woman rides a bicycle past a billboard promoting electric products in Nanjing, the capital of Jiangsu Province recently.

INTERNET



Thingyan, transition from the old to new year

U Kyaw Sein
(Livestock & Fisheries)

Since the beginning of civilization, every nation and religion in the world has had their own systems by which time is divided into fixed periods, showing the beginning and the end of a year. Since then, the term transition (from the old to the new year) has come into existence. The transition from the old things to new ones is pleasant to the minds of people. Therefore, most of the people assume that the transition from the old to the new year brings auspiciousness to human beings. However, there is difference between the nations and peoples in fixing a period of a calendar year, and marking and celebrating the transition. Some nations and peoples' transition periods fall in April, while the others in January. The systems by which they welcome and observe the New Year Day are based on respective customs and traditions. To mark the New Year, some douse water on one another, some lit lights, some perform dances, some say prayers at churches, and some display firecrackers. But, their purposes are the same in essence — to clean the misdeeds in the past, to mark the New Year wholeheartedly, to pay respects to the elderly persons, parents and grandparents, and to cultivate good morality and perform meritorious deeds.

The day which enters the New Year is called the New Year Day. Some call the New Year Day the transition day. Regarding the New Year Day as an auspicious day, all nations observe the day with respective customs, and designate the day as a public holiday. Myanmar has a good habit of saving the money that they earn or get on the New Year Day and practising thrift. Yearly, Myanmar's New Year Day falls on 16 or 17 April. The National Calendar Advisory Board has to fix the period in which the transition would fall.

The festival of Myanmar people is called Thingyan, which comes from the Pali term Sankanta that means transition from the old to the new year. As a gesture of welcoming the New Year, Myanmar people douse water on each other with the aim of enabling those poured water to be free from dangers, harm and misdeeds, and to be cool and clean as water. Myanmar nationals pay respects to the aged, parents and teachers, doing cleaning work inside and outside the residences, shampooing, keeping Sabbath and making charity at pagodas and monasteries, and cleaning pagodas and Buddha images.

Out of the festivals in the 12 months of Myanmar calendar, Thingyan Festival is one held on

Only when a national knows Myanmar traditions and customs very well, will he realize why he should cherish and adore his motherland and people. Myanmar have been able to preserve own national heritages of fine traditions, culture, and customs.

a grander scale than any other festivals. There is a belief of Myanmar people that the Thagyamin (King of the Celestial Abode) comes on a sojourn to the human abode when the Water Festival is in progress in Myanmar. One should study the old treatises on astrology such as Thuriya Theiddanta treatise and Thandeit-ha treatise if one wants to know when the period the Thingyan begins and ends. Since the times of Myanmar kings, national astrologers and Brahmins compiled Thangyansars (bulletin predicting the time of transition into the new year and climatic and

crop conditions to be expected in that year) referring to the astrological treatises.

According to the treatises on Thingyan, the interval between two Thingyan Festivals lasts a year. And it takes a year in which the Earth, one of the planets in the Universe, goes round the Sun one time. To be exact, it lasts 365 days, six hours, 12 minutes and 37 seconds. In the process, the time is divided into 12 periods or zodiacs. At the beginning of the first zodiac, Thingyan falls when Assavani lunar mansion meets with Sunday Ravipttha planet, and Thingyan ends when Assavani lunar mansion meets with Ravimadja planet.

All peoples have their own traditions, culture and customs. The ancestors of we Myanmar have handed down the heritages of own culture and customs to new generations in order to prevent them from extinction. Only when a national knows these characteristics very well, will he realize why he should cherish and adore his motherland and people. Myanmar have been able to preserve own national heritages of fine traditions, culture, and customs.

In conclusion, I would like to exhort the national people to preserve the fine traditions, and to wish for well-being of the world people free from undesirable things and effects, for enabling the world people to be free from all kinds of dangers and harm, for enabling the world people to discard evil spirits and to cultivate good morality, for flourishing of deterrent principles of shame and fear which guard the world from falling into chaos, for flourishing of four cardinal virtues of sublime states of mind, and flourishing of the 38 ways to blessings.

Translation: MS

Scientist find bird-like eggs in China's dinosaur fossil

LOS ANGELES, 16 April — The discovery of a pair of shelled eggs inside a female dinosaur found in China sheds new light on dinosaur reproductive biology, an international group of scientists said on Thursday.

The rare finding is also consistent with the assumption that modern birds have dinosaur ancestors, although it does not answer the ultimate question of whether birds descended from dinosaurs, scientists wrote in their paper in the latest on-line version of the journal *Science*.

The specimen found near Ganzhou, in China's southern Jiangxi Province, is comprised of a three-dimensional pelvis that contains a single pair of shelled eggs within the dinosaur's body cavity.

The researchers identified the creature as an oviraptorosaurian, which is a subgroup of the theropods, the dinosaurs that are thought to be ancestors of modern birds.

Like birds, the dinosaur probably would not have been able to lay its entire clutch at once, but like a crocodile, she had two ovaries to make eggs, according to Tamaki Sato, lead investigator at the Canadian Museum of Nature in Ottawa, Canada.

The fossil will help answer questions about how birds, reptiles and dinosaurs are related, scientists said.

The dinosaur retained two ovaries and oviducts, a primitive condition seen in crocodiles and other reptiles. In contrast, modern birds only have one set.

These dinosaurs were known to have made nests with more than a dozen eggs inside. The discovery of two mature eggs inside suggests this species made two eggs at one time, laid them, and then repeated the process until her nest was full. Birds lay one egg at a time, but reptiles such as crocodiles lay a full clutch at once. The crocodiles' eggs have leathery shells, while the shells of these dinosaur eggs were hard, more like birds' egg shell.

And the shape of the eggs, pointed at one end like pineapple-sized potatoes, suggests that the females came to the centres of the nests to lay neat, multilayered, ring-shaped clutches. Scientists suggested that aspects of this dinosaur's reproductive system shares similarities with both primitive reptiles and modern birds.

The site of the fossil dates to the Upper Cretaceous period, which lasted from 98 million to 65 million years ago, when many different dinosaurs arose.

MNA/Xinhua

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

Singapore, India at "last half-mile mark" of CECA

SINGAPORE, 16 April— Singapore and India are at the "last half-mile mark" of concluding a Comprehensive Economic Cooperation Agreement (CECA), Singapore's Ministry of Trade and Industry said on Friday.

Teams from the two countries are engaging in the renegotiation of an Avoidance of Double Taxation Agreement signed in 1994, as well as in resolving issues concerning financial and telecommunications services.

Singapore has put forward proposals addressing India's concerns after their last round of talks in March, and is waiting for the official response from the Indian side, according to the ministry.

It said it hoped that the two countries will reach a swift and mutually beneficial resolution, which will lead to the conclusion of a substantive CECA.

So far, teams from the two sides have finished 12 rounds of negotiations and legal experts have met twice for legal scrubbing of the agreement since talks began in April 2003.

MNA/Xinhua

India-based Jet Airways' maiden flight to Singapore arrives

SINGAPORE, 16 April— The maiden flight of the Mumbai-Singapore route operated by India's private carrier Jet Airways landed in the city state on Friday.

A statement by the Civil Aviation Authority of Singapore (CAAS) said that the island state is Jet Airways' first destination in Southeast Asia and third in Asia as a whole, only after Sri Lanka's Colombo and Nepal's Kathmandu.

With the added 14 Mumbai-Singapore flights operated by Jet Airways, the total number of weekly passenger flights between Singapore and 11 Indian cities will reach 218.

"We are looking forward to be part of a new growing business opportunity between the two countries in promoting each other's business and tourist offers," said Peter Luethi, Jet Airways' chief operating officer, at the welcome ceremony at Singapore's Changi Airport.

CAAS hoped that the entry of Jet Airways will contribute to the further growth of the Singapore-India market and make air travel between the two countries more convenient.

MNA/Xinhua

Excerpts from Senior General Than Shwe's speech

- * We have taken responsibility to run the country at central level and military commanders have been assigned duties to implement the development work at regional level.
- * Under the leadership of the commander, military officers and other ranks are to strive for the defence of the nation and development of the State, and to safeguard the independence and sovereignty.
- * A Tatmadaw member has to be dutiful not only as a Tatmadawman but also as a good citizen of the State.

Senior General Than Shwe meets with officers, other ranks and families of Sittway station at Bandoola Hall in Sittway. — MNA



With proper natural resources and population...

(from page 1)

enable the Tatmadaw to become the efficient, capable and strong one. Peace and stability and development of the State, and the strong and efficient Tatmadaw are interrelated. Only when the Tatmadaw is strong and efficient, can the independence and sovereignty of the State be safeguarded, the General added. He next urged those present to participate in the nation-building tasks as well as in the effort for

with the implementation of the five rural development tasks and 24 special development regions projects. There must be three main forces — the State, the people and the Tatmadaw — if the country is to develop. Only when these forces are to unitedly and actively work hard, will any difficulties be overcome and the nation develop.

In striving for the development of the State, the Senior General said, we have taken responsibility to run the country at central level and military commanders have been assigned duties to implement the development work at regional level. So, under the leadership of the commander, military officers and

tion. Present at the meeting were member of the State Peace and Development Council General Thura Shwe Mann, SPDC members Lt-Gen Khin Maung Than and Quartermaster-General Lt-Gen Thiha Thura Tin Aung Myint Oo, Commander-in-Chief (Navy) Vice-Admiral Soe Thein, Commander-in-Chief (Air) Lt-Gen Myat Hein, Rakhine State PDC Chairman Western Command Commander Brig-Gen Min Aung Hlaing, ministers, deputy ministers, Rakhine State PDC Vice-Chairman Brig-Gen Than Tun Aung, Director-General of the SPDC Office Lt-Col Pe Nyein and departmental heads.

Commander Brig-Gen Min Aung Hlaing reported on the location and area of Rakhine State, land utilization, cultivation of main crops in 2004-2005, extended acreage of monsoon paddy and pepper, plan for planting rubber, extended breeding of prawn, export of fishery products, kinds of forest, construction of roads and bridges and development of social sector.

(See page 9)



Senior General Than Shwe cordially greets officers and other ranks and their families of Sittway station at Bandoola Hall in Sittway.— MNA

the build-up of the Tatmadaw upholding 'Our Three Main National Causes in the fore.

Next, Senior General Than Shwe arrived at the venue and gave guidance. He said our Tatmadaw is the force which is the most responsible for the development of the State. To bring about equitable development in all parts of the nation, measures are being taken to improve all the sectors such as transport, economy, education and health in combination

other ranks are to strive for the defence of the nation and development of the State, and to safeguard the independence and sovereignty. He said a Tatmadaw member has to be dutiful not only as a Tatmadawman but also as a good citizen of the State.

Afterwards, Senior General Than Shwe cordially greeted those present.

Later, the Senior General met state level departmental officials at the meeting hall of Sittway Sta-



General Thura Shwe Mann reviews reports of departmental officials.— MNA

With proper natural...

(from page 8)

In reviewing the reports, General Thura Shwe Mann delivered an address, saying that Rakhine State is making progress with concerted efforts to take measures for ensuring peace and stability and development like other states and divisions. Head of State Senior General Than Shwe has given guidance that efforts are to be made for gaining more progress in the state.

Rakhine State's food sufficiency performance exceeds 140 per cent. The Head of State has given guidance that Rakhine State is to boost production of rice and paddy. Concerning cultivation crops, Rakhine State has performed 140 per cent while performance of the entire nation stood at 154 per cent. Therefore, Rakhine State needs to increase its cultivation capability.

He said he would compare development of the economic sector of the whole country with that of Rakhine State. As the Government has laid down short- and long-term eco-

conomic plans systematically, it gains economic progress gradually. In the third five-year plan period, the economic sector increased 11.3 per cent in 2001-2002, 12.0 per cent in 2002-2003, 13.8 per cent in 2003-2004 and 12.6 per cent in 2004-2005. In 2004-2005 fiscal year, per capita income stood K 165,729. The national economy has increased 1.4 times in 2003-2004 fiscal year which is the third year of the third five-year plan if compared to the basic year.

The data and accounts firmly indicate development of the State. These are tangible results of economic development and improvement of infrastructures of the State.

At the time of the Tatmadaw Government, 172 dams have been built to benefit 2,294,569 acres of farmlands. And, 35 dams are under construction. Likewise, 271 river water pumping projects have been implemented and 34 projects are being implemented.

In the transport sector,

the Tatmadaw Government has built 196 bridges that are 180 feet and above long and 41 bridges are under construction.

A total of 1,066 miles of railroad have been built in the rail transportation sector. In the education sector, basic education schools, universities and colleges have been opened in the entire nation in accord with the guidance of the Head of State that the education sector which plays a vital role in development of the State is to be upgraded.

Nowadays, there are 40,521 basic education schools throughout the nation, and the number of universities and colleges increased to 156 from 32.

In the health sector, there were 631 hospitals in the past and there are 819 at present. Similarly, there were 1,337 health care centres in the past and the number of health care centres reached 1,450 today.

Improvement of the industrial sector in accord with the aims of the Government.

Likewise, boosting production is to be carried out in the meat and fish sector. Rakhine State should make more progress because average per capita income of the division stands ninth among States and Divisions of the country.

Cultivation of paddy is to be extended for ensuring local food sufficiency of the increased population.

In conclusion, the General said that Rakhine State must strive for development of not only itself but also for the entire nation by using development infrastructures.

Minister for Agriculture and Irrigation Maj-Gen Htay Oo reported on the prospects of the region for achieving the targeted output of paddy, and modern agricultural methods and quality species to be



General Thura Shwe Mann gives instructions to officers, other ranks and families of Sittway Station.—MNA

being rendered by the ministry to the region.

In response, the Senior General gave guidance, underscoring the need of absolute unity and harmony to be forged among local people in shouldering regional development undertakings under the close supervision of the commander, also in charge

of the rich national resources and the innovative measures and zealous efforts of locals will result in significant regional development. In the process, departmental heads and service personnel are responsible for meeting the target.

The region will definitely develop earlier than expected if those playing a leading role could effectively organize the local populace.

He also stressed the need of those present to exert greater efforts for regional development for raising the living standard of local people as well as the State's economy, and for achieving the objectives laid down by the State through systematic combination of the rich natural resources, the strength of local people, innovative steps and strenuous efforts.

In conclusion, the Senior General pointed out that with a vast territory, moderate population, rich natural resources, high prestige and integrity and high intellectual power of the national people, the nation will transform itself into a modern and developed one before long if the entire national people do their work with heart and soul.

On arrival at Sittway Airport, the Senior General and party were doused scented water by Vice-Chairman Brig-Gen Than Tun Aung, senior military officers, departmental heads, officials of social organizations, and members of Rakhine national cultural troupes.

Next, they arrived at Thandwe Airport later that morning. They were also doused there by local authorities, departmental officials, USDA members, and students.

Then, they arrived at Annawa Yeiktha in Thandwe.

MNA

Rakhine State contributes 4.6 per cent to the State economy, and greater efforts are to be exerted to effectively perform higher percentage. In connection with regional development, the region is blessed with promising opportunities for development since it has proper ratio of rich natural resources and population. The aquatic resources are inexhaustible, and a lot of oil and gas deposits have been discovered in the region which is also a source of fertile soil and a large area of forests.

This indicates tangible results in economic development of the State. The Head of State has given guidance that though Myanmar is an agricultural country, it is necessary to make all-out efforts for uplift of the industrial sector that plays an important role for emergence of a modern and developed nation.

Rakhine State, on its part, is to strive for im-

proved for growing rubber in the region; Minister for Construction Maj-Gen Saw Tun, on the roads and bridges the government has built, and construction projects under way in Rakhine State; Minister for Livestock and Fisheries, Brig-Gen Maung Maung Thein, on progress made in the region's fish and meat sector and in breeding domestic species of chicken, and assistance

of the region. The development of a region mainly rests on combined endeavours of departmental personnel and local people. Now, Rakhine State contributes 4.6 per cent to the State economy, and greater efforts are to be exerted to effectively perform higher percentage. In connection with regional development, the region is blessed with promising opportunities for development since it has proper ratio of rich natural resources and population. The aquatic resources are inexhaustible, and a lot of oil and gas deposits have been discovered in the region which is also a source of fertile soil and a large area of forests.

If the region's natural resources in abundance are combined with the efforts of local residents and departmental personnel, the region will be able to enjoy proportionate progress in a short time.

The Senior General highlighted the extended cultivation of cash crops that have ready-market in the world such as rubber, pepper, onion and garlic in addition to paddy.

The proper combina-



Commander Brig-Gen Min Aung Hlaing.—MNA

1366 Rakhine Traditional Thingyan Festival held

YANGON, 16 April—The Thanakha (fragrance) grinding ceremony was held at Theinbyu Driving Training Centre in Mingala Taungnyunt Township on 12 April before the 1366 Rakhine Traditional Thingyan Festival.

On 13 April, the ceremony to wash Buddha image was held at the same venue. Present on the occasion were Kuthinayon Sayadaw Agga Maha Saddhamma Jotikadhaja Bhaddanta Nanissara of India, Minister for Home Affairs Maj-Gen Maung Oo and wife Dr Daw Nyunt Nyunt Oo, Deputy Minister for Culture Brig-Gen Soe Win Maung, Di-

rector-General of Myanmar Police Force Brig-Gen Khin Yi and wife, and officials.

Next, Sayadaw Bhaddanta Nanissara, Min-

ister Maj-Gen Maung Oo and wife, Deputy Minister Brig-Gen Soe Win Maung, MPP Director-General Brig-Gen Khin Yi and wife and guests washed the Bud-

dha images with scented water. The 1366 Rakhine Traditional Thingyan Festival was held from 13 to date on a grand scale.

MNA



Rakhine Traditional Thingyan Festival in progress at Theinbyu Driving Training Centre.—MNA

Vice-Senior General Maung Aye ...

(from page 16)

up to now, 10 acres have been put under coffee and 15 acres under macadamia, that 300 acres of land are prepared to put under crops in 2005-2006 cultivation season. He also reported to Vice-Senior General Maung Aye and party on collection of seeds, machines and vehicles.

Vice-Senior General Maung Aye, after hearing the report, gave instructions. He said that there are many cultivable land left in the country. National entrepreneurs are allowed to reclaim virgin and fallow land, he noted. Encouragements has been given to entrepreneurs in Taninthayi Division to grow oil palm and rubber. Those interested are invited to grow rubber on a commercial scale in Rakhine State where rubber can be grown. Plans are to be made to grow perennial crops suitable to the region.

Out of perennial crops such as coffee, macadamia, mango and orange, the most suitable ones are to be chosen to grow on a commercial scale. It takes time to grow perennial crops and vast amount of investment is needed, he said.

Therefore, seasonal crops such as beans and pulses, maize and seasmum are to be grown, while plans are being made to grow perennial crops, he pointed out.

As entrepreneurs are permitted to export seasonal crops, they who are engaged in growing perennial crops can earn more income, he stressed.

Vice-Senior General Maung Aye spoke of the need to conserve the natural forests while engaging in land reclamation tasks and rural development tasks.



Vice-Senior General Maung Aye inspects macadamia and coffee nursery of Shwe Thanlwin Co Ltd.—MNA

After signing the visitors' book, Vice-Senior General Maung Aye inspected planting of macadamia and coffee, land preparation, and cultivation of crops.

On the way to agriculture project of Htoo Trading Co.Ltd by helicopter, Vice-Senior General Maung Aye and party viewed Dokhtawady Bridge (Tapalan) Construction Project. At the Perennial Crops Project of Htoo Trading Co.Ltd, Managing Director U Te Za reported to Vice-Senior General Maung Aye on growing of crops, arrangements being made to send staff abroad and welfare of employees.

Vice-Senior General Maung Aye gave instructions on systematic growing of perennial crops and

establishment of industries based on the success in growing of the crops.

After inspecting agricultural tasks of the company, Vice-Senior General Maung Aye and party arrived back in Bhatoo.

During the trip, Secretary of the Union Solidarity and Development Association U Thaung and Brig-Gen Thein Zaw and the CEC member Brig-Gen Ohn Myint went to Yaksawk USDA office on 11 April and met with USDA executives, organizers and members and fulfilled the requirements.

The ministers also inspected the auto exchange of Myanmar Posts and Telecommunications.—MNA

Information Minister inspects maintenance of presses at dailies



Minister Brig-Gen Kyaw Hsan oversees maintenance of the printing press at Myanmar Alin Daily.—MYANMA ALIN

YANGON, 16 April—Minister for Information Brig-Gen Kyaw Hsan inspected maintenance of presses at Myanmar Alin and Kyemon Dailies and Myanmar Alin Press under News and Periodicals Enterprise of the Ministry of Information during the holidays of Maha Thingyan Festival, yesterday and today.

On 15 April morning, Minister Brig-Gen Kyaw Hsan arrived at Myanmar Alin Daily on Natmauk Lane in Bahan Township where the minister was welcomed by Deputy Minister for Information Brig-Gen Aung Thein, Managing Director of NPE Col Soe Win, Deputy Director (Admin) U Mya Hlaing, Chief Editor U Ye Myint Pe, Manager U Zaw Win and offi-

cial of the daily.

First, the minister went to the press room of the daily and inspected the plan for maintenance of the press and keeping of spare machinery parts for emergency use.

The minister oversaw cleaning of water and ink form rollers at respective units of the press, installation and adjustment, substitute of roller ball bearings at ink and water form rollers, adjustment of blankets and plate cylinders, sanitation and electrical maintenance tasks. Managing Director Col Soe Win, Chief Editor U Ye Myint Pe and officials conducted the Minister round the establishment.

Next, the minister cordially conversed with employees.

This evening, the

minister arrived at Kyemon Daily at 77, 52nd Street, Pazundaung Township. Managing Director Col Soe Win, Director (Admin) U Soe Win, Chief Editor U Zaw Min Thein and Manager Daw Khin Nyo Win welcomed the minister.

Afterwards, the minister looked into the record on servicing and general maintenance of the press during the Maha Thingyan period and keeping of spare machinery parts for emergency use.

The minister inspected adjustment of machines and electrical maintenance at respective units of the press. The managing director and officials conducted the minister round the press. After leaving necessary instruction, the minister cordially met with staff.

period, general maintenance and keeping spare machinery parts and electrical renovation. The minister gave necessary instructions.

Next, the minister left there after greeting the staff.

In his inspection of the presses, he gave instructions on keeping of spare parts for emergency use, giving priority to keeping the machines parts which often break down. He said priority is to be given to the use of local products at the press as they can be obtained at the industrial zones in the country. The minister also gave instructions on inviting the technicians of the industrial zones to look into the machines and to get necessary machines for the press. The minister said that seminars and workshop are to be held

to manufacture import-substitute products. He also gave instructions on continuous maintenance of the machines and keeping a record of the repair of the machines, arrangements to be made for conducting courses and sending trainees abroad for their improvement of technical skills, keeping the machines and the press room neat and tidy, taking fire prevention measures and providing of staff welfare services.

During the period of Maha Thingyan Festival, the Myanmar Alin, the Kyemon and the New Light of Myanmar dailies are being published alternatively. Workers of the Kyemon, Myanmar Alin, NLM and Myanmar Alin Press performed maintenance of the machines during the holidays of the dailies.

MNA



Minister for Information Brig-Gen Kyaw Hsan inspects maintenance of the press at Kyemon Daily.—MNA

Festivities pick up tempo on last day...



A pandal on Anawrahta Street is swarmed with people on Atet day of Thingyan. —NLM

(from page 16)
Kandawgyi Park, at the People's Square and People's Park and along Inya Lake bank.

Such pagodas as the Shwedagon Pagoda, the Sule Pagoda, the Botahtaung Kyaikdayup Pagoda, the Thirimingala Kaba Aye Pagoda, the Tooth Relic Pagoda (Yangon), the Mahawizaya Pagoda, the Lawka Chantha Ahbhaya Labha Muni Buddha Image, the Kyaikkasan Pagoda, the Shwephonpint Pagoda, the Ngahtatgyi Pagoda, the Chauktatgyi Pagoda, the Kohatgyi Pagoda, the Melamu Pagoda, the Shwepyitha Thadukan Pagoda, the Kyaikkalaw Pagoda, the Thanhlyin

Kyaikkhauk Pagoda and Kyauk-hmawun Pagoda were packed with devotees paying hom-

age to them and observing Sila (moral precepts) today.

There were similar

devotees practising meditation at the monasteries and meditation centres.

MNA



Damsels perform a dance at a pandal on Theinbyu Road in Mingala Taungnyunt Township. —NLM



Mayor Brig-Gen Aung Thein Lin presents prizes to winners who take part in competitions held in Mayor's Pandal on 16-4-2005. — MNA



Col Tin Soe of YCDC announces the closing of Mayor's Pandal on 16-4-2005.

MNA

Thingyan revellers throng Mandalay on Akyat Day

YANGON, 16 April — Myanmar traditional Thingyan festival continued in Mandalay on Akyat Day, 15 April.

Thingyan revellers thronged pandals on the circular road of the moat in Mandalay.

Chairman of Mandalay Division Peace and Development Council

Commander of Central Command Maj-Gen Ye Myint and wife Daw Myat Ngwe, Mandalay Mayor Brig-Gen Phone Zaw Han and wife, Deputy Commander Brig-Gen Nay Win and wife and officials visited Nanmyothu Pandal, Mandalay Mayor's Pandal and others partici-

pated in the water festival.

Revellers from various regions of the country enjoyed the water festival. The merry-makers took rest at Mandalay Hill, Kuthodaw Pagoda, Taungthaman Lake and U Pein Bridge.

MNA



Merry makers seen on Atet Day of Thingyan in Yangon. —MNA



Dance troupe of a neighbouring country entertain the audience with their traditional dance. —MNA



A street of Mandalay is swarmed with Thingyan revellers. —MNA

ADVERTISEMENTS



NEW YEAR GREETINGS

Hninzigone Home for the Aged wishes happy, peaceful and prosperous New Year to all our donors and well-wishers for all their meritorious deeds.

Management Committee
Hninzigone Home For the Aged

Shell, ChevronTexaco join hands for Nigerian gas project

LAGOS, 15 April — Oil giants Shell and ChevronTexaco have joined hands with the state-run Nigerian National Petroleum Corp (NNPC) for a liquefied natural gas project, an NNPC statement said on Thursday.

Under a memorandum of understanding signed this week by the firms together with BG International Ltd, the project is expected to have a capacity of 20 million tons per annum from four production lines.

Two of the lines will be owned by Shell and the NNPC while the others by ChevronTexaco, BG and the Nigerian company.

According to the statement, the plant to be known as "OKLNG" is sited in the Olokola free trade zone in the southwestern Nigerian state of Ondo and may start production as early as 2009.

With a proven reserve of 187 trillion cubic feet, the ninth largest in the world, OPEC member Nigeria has targets of attaining zero-gas flare by 2008 and earning 6.5 billion dollars yearly from the gas sector by 2010.

The Olokola plant is part of its efforts to realize the ambitious targets.

"The federal government is very committed to this and other gas projects not only as a way of increasing the country's revenue base, but also to reduce environmental hazards occasioned by gas flaring for which Nigeria was known in the past," the statement noted.

It said that the Olokola project is an outcome of two separate studies conducted by ChevronTexaco and BG, and Shell, for the development of their respective liquefied natural gas projects at Olokola. — MNA/Xinhua

Zimbabwe enjoys good relations with Asian countries

HARARE, 15 April — Zimbabwean President Robert Mugabe said on Wednesday that his country is enjoying good relations with Asian countries like China, Malaysia and Singapore.

Speaking during the commissioning of six K-8 jet trainer aircraft in Gweru, about 280 kilometres southwest of Harare, Mugabe said Zimbabwe's Look East Policy has seen a significant growth in joint venture agreements between the countries and several Southeast and East Asian countries, expected to contribute significantly to the country's development.

He added that the Look East Policy resulted in agreements such as the one that was signed between the Air Force of Zimbabwe (AFZ) and a Chinese company.

"The country's Look East Policy which has seen Zimbabwe enjoy cordial relations with such countries as the People's Republic of China, Malaysia, Singapore, Indonesia, India and Pakistan has given birth to several successful joint agreements with various countries, one of which culminated in the supply of the K-8 aircraft," he said.

Mugabe said the K-8 aircraft would go a long way in helping the AFZ defend the country's airspace and also perfect the skills of the Air Force personnel.

The introduction of the K-8 trainer aircraft into Number 2 Squadron, whose primary function is teaching the pilot to employ the jet aircraft as a fighting platform, has modernized the AFZ. — MNA/Xinhua

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S.P.A., a company incorporated in Italy of Via Robert Koch 1.2-20152 Milan, Italy, is the Owner of the following Trade Mark:-

SERMION

Reg. No. 2845/1991
in respect of "Pharmaceuticals for human use".

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Wu Mo Tin,
M.A., H.G.P., D.B.L.
for PHARMACIA ITALIA
S.P.A.
P. O. Box 60, Yangon
Dated: 17 April, 2005

Kenyan firms make profit from crime prevention service

NAIROBI, 15 April — Private security companies earned more than 30 billion shillings (about 395 million US dollars) a year from crime prevention service in Kenya, local media reported on Thursday.

Most of the firms had experienced rapid growth in the past five years as more Kenyans sought protection, local newspaper *Daily Nation* reported on its web site.

"They are earning over 30 billion shillings each year for protection services, way above the 5 billion shillings (about 66 million dollars) paid to the police force," *Daily Nation* quoted a participant of a workshop on small arms as saying.

He said at the workshop on Wednesday the Kenyan Government should act fast and stop the spread and misuse of small arms, which had contributed to the rise in crime.

Agusta Muchai, a senior researcher with the Security Research and International Centre, said at the workshop that more effort should be put in training the police to reduce illegal arms.

She said Kenya's long and porous borders had led to the flow of arms from Ethiopia and Somalia and sparked a booming cross-border trade.

MNA/Xinhua

Religious leaders call for fair global trade system for Africa

NAIROBI, 15 April — Religious leaders from Africa on Thursday appealed to religious and secular civil society leaders in developed countries to continue joining Africa in solidarity to campaign against injustice in the current global trading system.

"We are deeply concerned at the lack of transparency and democracy in the World Trade Organization (WTO) system and processes, its rule-making, negotiations, monitoring and dispute settlement," the prelates said in a statement released here Thursday.

The leaders who comprised Catholic and Anglican Bishops from eastern and southern Africa regions have also called for the suspension of talks between their governments and the European Union, calling the 25-member EU trade negotiation terms as "overly

dictatorial".

Rich nations have been calling for the removal of tariff barriers erected by African nations to allow them free access to African markets.

"Since 15 per cent of annual revenues accrue from import duties in most African nations, further tariff cuts will seriously undermine government's ability to attain Millennium Development Goals," said the statement.

They said special and differential treatment is a right established in the global trading system to correct the imbalances of the system, which works

against poor countries.

A lot of eastern and southern Africa nations are currently locked in talks with the EU on a new market access treaty known as the Economic Partnership Agreements, which will replace the existing Lome Accord.

In Africa, more than 72 per cent of people derive their livelihood from agriculture-related activities yet developed countries have continued to increase domestic support for their farmers, leading to the dumping of cheap agriculture goods on the market.

MNA/Xinhua



A Greenpeace activist shows the genetically engineered (GE) rice during a press conference in Hong Kong recently. —INTERNET

Ethiopian PM heads for Paris to boost ties

ADDIS ABABA, 15 April — Ethiopian Prime Minister Meles Zenawi left here on Wednesday for Paris, leading a high-level delegation to pay a three-day official visit to France.

Meles is scheduled to hold talks with French President Jacques Chirac on issues of common interest, said a Press release from the Foreign Ministry, adding that he is also scheduled to meet leaders of the French Upper and Lower Houses of Parliament. The Ethiopian delegation will hold talks with French investors and business people on ways of strengthening the trade and investment ties of the two countries, it said.

The visit is expected to bring about increased French support to Ethiopia's capacity building endeavours by upgrading the relations of the two countries, according to the Press release. The French invest-

tors are encouraged to invest in leather and leather products, textiles, agro-processing, horticulture and floriculture fields of investment in Ethiopia.

Discussions will also be held on ways that France

can assist in the peace, development and democratization activities in the Horn of Africa region as well as in the realization of NEPAD (New Partnership for Africa's Development) programmes. —MNA/Xinhua

Germany's industrial turnover increases

BERLIN, 15 April — Germany's industrial turnover increased by 3.7 per cent in the first two months of 2005, the Federal Statistics Office said on Thursday.

The manufacturing and mining sector earned about 220.52 billion euros (about 283.9 billion US dollars) in turnover, the office announced.

In February only, the industrial turnover rose 2.1 per cent to 112.1 billion euros (144.3 billion US dollars).

On Tuesday, the International Monetary Fund (IMF) forecasts that Germany, the biggest economy in Europe, can only see a 0.8 per cent growth in 2005.

MNA/Xinhua

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“APSTAR VI” equipped with anti-jamming feature

BEIJING, 16 April — APSTAR VI satellite launched on Tuesday from southwestern China is equipped with anti-jamming feature, according to a Press release issued by the Hong Kong-based APT Satellite Holdings Limited, which owns the satellite.

APSTAR VI, which was incorrectly named AsiaSat 6 in previous reports, was launched at 8:00 pm on 12 April, 2005 from the Xichang Satellite Launch Centre aboard a Long March 3B launch vehicle.

The satellite is expected to be operational in June, this year, according to the statement posted on APT web site.

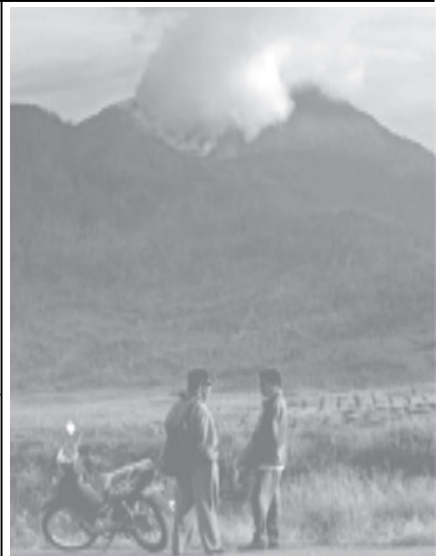
Manufactured by French satellite giant Alcatel Space, APSTAR VI is the fifth in-orbit satellite of the company and a powerful addition to the APSTAR fleet.

APSTAR VI is planned for operation from 134 degrees East Longitude as a replacement satellite to APSTAR IA.

Chen Zhaobin, executive director of APT Satellite Holdings Limited, described the successful launch of APSTAR VI as a great leap of the company.

According to Winnie Pang, corporate affairs manager of Asia Satellite Telecommunications Co (AsiaSat), AsiaSat now operates 3 in-orbit satellites, AsiaSat 2, AsiaSat 3S and AsiaSat 4.

MNA/Xinhua



Residents chat on the street side as volcanic clouds spews from the crater of Mount Talang on the background, in Lembah Gumanti near the town of Solok, West Sumatra, on 15 April, 2005. — INTERNET

Earthquakes jolt western Java

JAKARTA, 16 April — Four earthquakes shook western Java of Indonesia on Friday, with the strongest one measuring at 6.2 on the Richter Scale, according to the Indonesian meteorology and geophysics agency (BMG).

Two earthquakes were felt in the West Java capital of Bandung and two others, centred beneath the Sunda Strait, rocked Jakarta, Banten and the Sumatra province of Lampung.

BMG staff Budi Waluyo said the latest quake at 11:18 local time (04:18 GMT) measured at 6.2 on the Richter Scale and was centred in the Sunda Strait, which separated the main islands of Java and Sumatra.

MNA/Xinhua

Construction of Indian style temple welcomed in Henan

ZHENGZOU, 16 April — Constructing of an Indian style Buddhist temple in Henan Province, agreed to recently by the governments of China and India, has received a warm welcome in this central China province.

Ma Jinyong, director of the Religious Affairs Bureau of Luoyang, said Thursday that China and India share a long history in Buddhist cultural exchanges and construction of the Indian style Buddhist temple is an important symbol of enhanced exchanges of Buddhist culture between the two countries under the new historical period. “We welcome the temple very much,” Ma told Xinhua.

During Chinese Premier Wen Jiabao’s recent visit to India, the two governments signed the memorandum on construction of an Indian Style Buddhist Temple on the Western Side of the White Horse Temple in Luoyang, Henan Province. The memo was in-

cluded in the joint statement of the two countries, which were signed by Wen and his counterpart, Indian Prime Minister Manmohan Singh.

The memo said in a bid to carry forward India-China Buddhist cultural links, the two countries would jointly construct the Indian style Buddhist temple in Luoyang. Ma said, the White Horse Temple, or Baimasi in Chinese pinyin, is an important witness of Sino-Indian friendship and Sino-Indian Buddhist cultural exchanges, which have been further enhanced since the 1990s.

Shi Yinle, abbot of White Horse Temple, said the temple is the starting point where Buddhism was introduced into China

from India. He called the construction of the Indian style temple an important and happy event as well as a sacrament to both China and India, with the relationship between the two countries entering a new development period.

According to the memo, the Indian side would provide the main architectural design of the temple project, its blue print, materials used for the temple and the landscape planning. Once the temple was completed, India would also provide the Buddha Idol and other accompanying materials.

China will provide 2,667 square metres of land for the temple and offer support and advice on construction.

MNA/Xinhua

Fried food, instant coffee contain chemicals may cause cancer

BEIJING, 16 April — The Chinese Ministry of Health recently said that people should eat less fried and fatty food including French fries, potato chips and instant coffee, warning acrylamide, a chemical these foods contain, may cause cancer.

Cereal-based products including biscuits and bread also have acrylamide, Thursday’s Beijing Daily Messenger quoted a statement posted on the ministry’s web site as saying. Studies show that acrylamide is formed when certain foods, particularly plant-based foods that are rich in carbohydrates and low in protein, are cooked at high tem-

peratures, said the statement.

Tests on animals show that acrylamide may cause cancer, but more research is needed to clarify the specific impact of the chemical on human health.

Still, the ministry warns that it is potentially hazardous for people to ingest acrylamide even in very small amounts for a long period of time.

MNA/Xinhua



A Toshiba researcher displays a prototype model of their new three-dimensional LCD screen which is able to show 16 different angles of an image, making it appear three dimensional. Toshiba is expected to put the screens on the market at the end of 2006. — INTERNET

Rhinoceros horn cups put on show at HKBU

HONG KONG, 16 April — Two intricately carved rhinoceros horn cups, reputed to be Chinese national treasures, are on show in Hong Kong starting from Thursday.

They are being displayed at the Chinese Medicines Centre (CMC) of the Hong Kong Baptist University (HKBU) until March 2005.

The two exhibits, the black rhinoceros horn cup carved with a chidragon motif and the yellow-beige cup carved with a grape motif, belong to Lee Chun-hung, a Chinese medicine collector.

Speaking at the opening ceremony Thursday afternoon, President and Vice-Chancellor of HKBU Ng Ching-fai said it was the

university’s honour to exhibit the rhinoceros horn cups.

According to Lee, rhinoceros horns have been rare ever since ancient times, and used to be carved into objects of artistic value or used in medical treatment.

Lee said the most surviving samples of the craft date from the Ming and Qing dynasties. As for the medical properties of rhinoceros horn, it is beneficial for treatment of high fever and as an antidote for a wide variety of poisons. CMC has a collection of

over 6,000 medical herb specimens.

Distinctive exhibits include the world’s tallest herba cistanches with the height of 1.75 metres, which is certified as one of the Guinness World Records and a “man of longevity” made from 2,374 ginseng roots etc.

MNA/Xinhua

Platform software association set up in Beijing

BEIJING, 16 April — A platform software association was set up here Thursday, with tens of billions of yuan expected to come in to boost Beijing’s software industry development.

With the support of the Beijing Government, the Changfeng standardized platform software will focus on software application, platform software technological innovation and electronic administration presentation. Officials with the Beijing Government said that the government will shift more focus from software R&D to application and promotion.

MNA/Xinhua

DON'T SMOKE

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Zidane stays in retirement

PARIS, 15 April — Three-times World Player of the Year Zinedine Zidane will not come out of retirement to help struggling France qualify for the 2006 World Cup finals.

"I have made a decision and I will not reconsider it, full stop," the Real Madrid playmaker said in a brief statement on his web site.

The 1998 World and Euro 2000 champions, are going through difficult times after drawing four of their opening six qualifiers.

Having won their other two games, France top Group 4 on equal points with Israel, but Switzerland and the Republic of Ireland are a point behind with a game in hand. — *MNA/Xinhua*

Sporting, Parma, Alkmaar, CSKA reach UEFA Cup semis

LONDON, 15 April — Sporting Lisbon burst back from a goal down to thrash Newcastle United 4-1 and qualify for the UEFA Cup semifinals on Thursday while Parma, AZ Alkmaar and CSKA Moscow also made the last four.

The English club, 1-0 up from the first leg, seemed to have one leg in the semifinals when England midfielder Kieron Dyer found the net in the 20th minutes.

Sporting, though, hit back to equalize through striker Marius Nicolae before halftime and turned the tie around after the interval with goals by Sa

Pinto (71 minutes), Beto (77) and Fabio Rochemback in stoppage time to seal a 4-2 aggregate win.

In the two-legged semifinals, the Portuguese side will play AZ Alkmaar who held Villarreal 1-1 to go through 3-2 on aggregate.

The Dutch team, who extended their run of European home games without defeat to 19 matches, looked to have killed off

the encounter when Kenneth Perez opened the scoring after eight minutes.

But Luciano Figueroa levelled with 18 minutes left for the Spaniards to set up a grandstand finish.

Both teams were reduced to 10 men after 20 minutes of the first half. Italian referee Roberto Rosetti showed AZ central defender Barry

Opdam a second yellow card and in the ensuing melee Villarreal's Jose Mari was sent off for pushing over and kicking Barry van Galen.

Struggling Serie A side Parma's home goalless draw with Australia Viennaleft the tie balanced 1-1 on aggregate, giving the Serie A side victory on the away goals rule.

It was a doggedly defensive display by the twice former champions who were let off the hook by the visitors' failure to capitalize on a string of chances, particularly during the first half.

Vienna came closest to taking the lead just before the interval, when home keeper Luca Bucci pulled off a superb diving save to push Libor Sionko's free kick onto the post.

Parma had Bucci to thank again in the closing stages, when he pounced on a close-range effort by defender Sasa Papac.

Parma will in the semifinals meet CSKA Moscow who moved a step closer to their first European final by sealing a 4-2 aggregate win over AJ Auxerre.

The Russian side, who had crushed the French side 4-0 in the first leg, lost the game 2-0 but never looked like relinquishing their aggregate lead.

MNA/Xinhua

Gonzalez, Lopez join Porto

LISBON, 15 — Defending champions Porto have signed Argentine players Lucho Gonzalez and Lisandro Lopez for the next season, sports daily *O Jogo* reported on Thursday.

The newspaper said Rivers Plate's midfielder Lucho and Racing club de Avellaneda's striker Lopez had passed medical tests and signed a contract with Porto for five seasons. — *MNA/Xinhua*



Igor (9) of Brazil fights for the ball against Cristian Minda (3) of Ecuador during the U-17 South American soccer final round match in Maracaibo, on 15 April, 2005. — INTERNET

Juventus to play Yokohama, FC Tokyo

TOKYO, 15 April — Italian giant Juventus will play J-League champions Yokohama F Marinos and FC Tokyo in a Japan tour this summer, *Kyodo* news service reported on Thursday.

The 27-time Serie A champions will take on Yokohama on June 1 at Nissan Stadium while the FC Tokyo match will be held on June 7 at Ajinomoto Stadium. Both games will kick off at 7 pm.

Yokohama will also play Spanish First Division leaders Barcelona at Nissan Stadium on June 12 before Barcelona take on last year's J-League runners-up Urawa Reds at Saitama Stadium 2002 on 15 June.

MNA/Xinhua

NFL prospect admits use of banned drug before draft

WASHINGTON, 15 April — Northwestern University baseball team player Luis Castillo had admitted he took steroids after failing a dope test before this month's National Football League draft, the *Chicago Tribune* reported.

The defensive tackle, a first or second round pick hopeful, admitted in a letter to all NFL teams saying that he took steroids after last season to help a nagging elbow injury heal

faster.

Castillo failed the drug-test portion of a scouting session in February at Indianapolis and said he took androstenedione to help his performance. Andro is considered a steroid under NFL doping policy.

MNA/Xinhua

First World Cup goal scorer dies at 97

PARIS, 15 April — Frenchman Lucien Laurent died on Monday aged 97, 75 years after he scored the first goal in World Cup, sports daily *L'Equipe* reported on Wednesday.

Left winger Laurent scored in the 19th minute in France's 4-1 defeat of Mexico in Montevideo on 13 July, 1930.

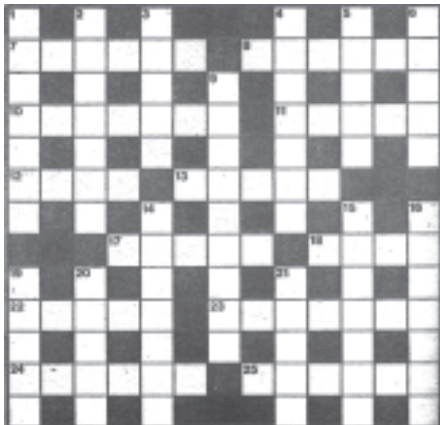
"I did not realize it was the first World Cup goal

ever scored," he once said in an interview with French soccer magazine *France Football*. Laurent was one of the first players to switch clubs, playing for nine teams in a

25-year career. Nicknamed "Little Lulu", he scored twice in 10 appearances for France between 1930 and 1935.

He earned his first monthly salary of 2,200 old francs (about 380 US dollars) when he signed for Peugeot-sponsored Sochaux in 1935 at a time when the carmaker was signing players from all over the country for the team. — *MNA/Xinhua*

CROSSWORD PUZZLE



ACROSS

- 7 Roar
- 8 Looks intently
- 10 Lured
- 11 Farewell
- 12 Outlet
- 13 Shelf
- 17 Humped animal
- 18 Footwear
- 22 Unsited
- 23 Make up
- 24 Fruit
- 25 Mythical monster

DOWN

- 1 Notice
- 2 Conspicuous
- 3 Trainer
- 4 Unusual
- 5 Small particle
- 6 Progeny
- 9 Dance here (anag.)
- 14 Design
- 15 Crowds
- 16 Fate
- 19 Sorceress
- 20 Cob or colour
- 21 Irate

Athens controversial gymnastic winner takes Sullivan Award

WASHINGTON, 15 April — American gymnast Paul Hamm was named winner of the 75th Sullivan Award in New York on Wednesday as the top American amateur athlete for 2004.

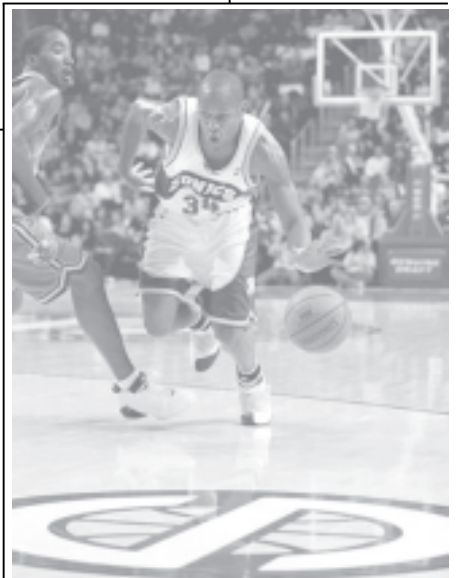
The Athens Olympic Games gold medalist fended off strong challenge from six-gold winner Michael Phelps to win the event.

Hamm became the first American man to capture the Olympics all-around title but his victory was marked with controversy.

South Korea protested the outcome as International Gymnastics Federation (IGF) officials discovered that South Korea's Yang Tae-Young had his parallel bars routine improperly scored and would have won without the error.

Hamm's gold medal margin .012 of a point was the closest in Olympic history.

Yang went to the Court for Arbitration of Sports to force a change in the results and give him the victory and Hamm the silver. CAS rejected the motion, leaving Yang with the bronze medal. — *MNA/Xinhua*



Seattle SuperSonics' Ray Allen drives around New Orleans Hornets guard JR Smith during the fourth quarter of the Sonics' 97-72 win on 15 April, 2005, in Seattle. The win clinched the Northwest Division title for the Sonics. Allen led the team with 32 points. — INTERNET

Wolfensohn named US special envoy for Gaza withdrawal

WASHINGTON, 16 April— Retiring World Bank president James Wolfensohn was named on Thursday international "special envoy" to help coordinate Israel's planned withdrawal from the Gaza Strip and to spearhead reconstruction efforts once the Palestinians take over the area.

US Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice made the announcement on behalf of the "Quartet" of Middle East peace mediators — the United States, the European Union, Russia and the United Nations — to which Wolfensohn would report. Rice said Wolfensohn's mission would include reviving the Palestinian economy after the withdrawal, as well as helping decide the fate of Israeli housing blocks and other "assets that will be left behind" when Israel evacuates all 21 settlements in Gaza and four of 120 settlements in the West Bank. Rice said Wolfensohn would try to rebuild Israeli-Palestinian trust, noting "The parties have shown good faith and political courage in recent months. But the obstacles

before them remain substantial."

Wolfensohn, 71, was born in Australia before becoming a US citizen. He arrived at the World Bank from Wall Street following a high-level career as an investment banker. — MNA/Xinhua

Greek eco sentiment lowest in 20 months

ATHENS, 16 April— Greece's Economic Sentiment Index fell to the lowest level in 20 months in March, reflecting declines in business expectations in the construction, manufacturing and consumer indexes, the Institute for Economic and Industrial Research (IOBE) said on Thursday.

IOBE, in its monthly report, said business expectations in the manufacturing sector worsened in March with the index falling to 96.1 points from 98.4 in February. The decline reflects relatively flat demand and increased inventories, while prospects remain cautiously positive.

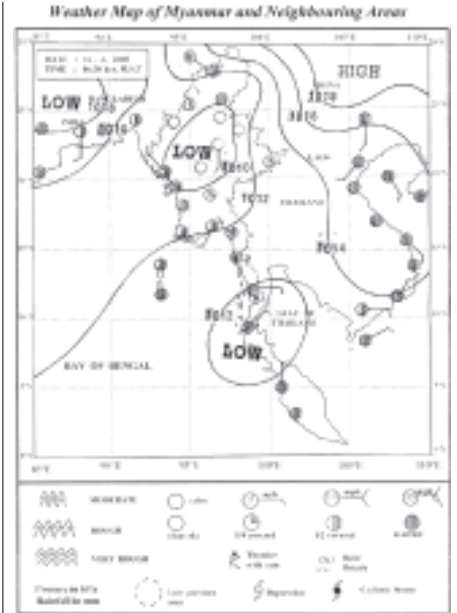
In the construction sector, the business expectations index eased to 59.6 points in March from 62 points in the previous month, reflecting negative forecasts over activity and employment in the sector. However, IOBE said the economic sentiment index improved in the services and the retail sectors in March.

In the retail sector, the index rose to 107 points, reflecting improved sales despite higher than expected inventories.

In the services sector, the index jumped to 93.8 points in March from 90.9 points in February, the highest level in six months.

Greece's Economic Sentiment Index rebounded in January after a steady decline in the second half of 2004.

MNA/Xinhua



WEATHER

Saturday, 16 April, 2005

Summary of observations recorded at 09:30 hours MST: During the past 24 hours, rain or thundershowers have been scattered in Taninthayi Division, weather has been generally fair in the remaining areas. The noteworthy amount of rainfall recorded was Myeik (0.31) inch. Day temperatures were (3°C) to (4°C) above normal in Kachin, Shan, Chin and Kayin States, lower Sagaing, Mandalay, Magway, Yangon and Taninthayi Divisions, (5°C) above normal in upper Sagaing and Ayeyawady Divisions and about normal in the remaining areas. The significant day temperatures were in Minbu and Magway (42°C) each.

Maximum temperature on 15-4-2005 was 102°F. Minimum temperature on 16-4-2005 was 70°F. Relative humidity at 9:30 hrs MST on 16-4-2005 was 71%. Total sunshine hours on 15-4-2005 was (10.6) hours approx. Rainfalls on 16-4-2005 were nil at Yangon Airport, Kaba-Aye and central Yangon. Total rainfalls since 1-1-2005 were (0.63 inch) at Yangon Airport, (1.69 inches) at Kaba-Aye and (0.32 inch) at central Yangon. Maximum wind speed at Yangon (Kaba-Aye) was (12) mph from North at (13:15) hours MST on 15-4-2005.

Bay inference: Weather is partly cloudy in the Andaman Sea, Southeast Bay and generally fair elsewhere in the Bay of Bengal.

Forecast valid until evening of 17-4-2005: Possibility of isolated light rain or thundershowers are in Kachin and Mon States, upper Sagaing and Taninthayi Divisions and weather will be partly cloudy in Chin and Kayin States, Bago Yangon and Ayeyawady Divisions and generally fair in the remaining areas. Degree of certainty is (40%).

State of the sea: Seas will be slight to moderate in Myanmar waters.

Outlook for subsequent two days: Slight increase of isolated light rain or thundershowers in Southern Myanmar areas.

Forecast for Yangon and neighbouring area for 17-4-2005: Partly cloudy.

Forecast for Mandalay and neighbouring area for 17-4-2005: Partly cloudy.

European Parl to help fight drought, fires in Portugal

LISBON, 16 April — The European Parliament approved on Thursday a resolution to help Portugal cope with the damage caused by drought and fight fires. Under the resolution, the Portuguese Government will receive money and resources to prevent fires in the summer season, Portugal's Lusa news agency said.

Portugal, along with other nations, is asking the European Solidarity Fund to be reviewed so the southern European countries suffering from the drought in the previous months can get support. Due to scanty rainfall, drought in Portugal has worsened last month, hitting some 60 per cent of the territory. If the situation does not improve, Portugal could record the most severe drought in 300 years. — MNA/Xinhua



Sunday, 17 April
View on today:

7:00 am

1. ရော့ဖူးရင်မင်းကွန်းဆရာတော် ဘုရားကြီး၊ နိုင်ငံတော်သံယမဟာ နာယကအဖွဲ့အစည်းတော်တော်စုံနှင့် အတိတ်မဟာရဋ္ဌဂုဏ်၊ အတိတ်မဟာ အဂ္ဂမဟာ သဒ္ဓမ္မဓမ္မတော်တော်၊ တိပိဋကဓမ္မ၊ ဓမ္မာဏ္ဍာဂါရိက၊ ဆရာတော် ဘဒ္ဒန္တဝိမိတ္တသာရာ ဘိဝံသ၏ ဝရိတ်တရားတော်
2. Morning news
3. နိုင်ငံတော်သံယမဟာ နာယက အဖွဲ့ (အဖွဲ့ဝင်) ဧရာဝတီတိုင်း၊ ပုသိမ်မြို့၊ အမှတ်(၂) ရပ်ကွက်၊ နိဂြောမိရုဏ္ဏာပိတင်သာဝန်ယဉ်တီဇာသင်တိုက်၊ ပဓာနနာယက ဆရာတော် ဘဒ္ဒန္တဝိသုတ (အနုပညာပညာရေးအဖွဲ့အစည်းမှ ဓမ္မတော်တော်) ဟောကြားတော် မူသော "အမော်နီ" နှစ်သစ်ဦး တရားတော်နှင့် "မဂ်လသုတ် ပါဠိတော်များ"

6:00 am

1. မေဂ္ဂဇာတေးအစီအစဉ်

8:10 am

5. ယဉ်ကျေးလိမ္မာ (၃၀) ဖြာမင်္ဂလာ

8:20 am

6. ဝါသကြိန်အဆိုအကများ

8:30 am

7. International news

8:45 am

8. ဘဒ္ဒန္တဂုဏ် (အဘိဓမ္မာပဏ္ဍ

- ဂုဏ်၊ အဘိဓမ္မာပဏ္ဍ သဒ္ဓမ္မ ဓမ္မတော်) ဥက္ကဋ္ဌ ဆရာတော်၊ နိုင်ငံတော် သံယမဟာနာယက အဖွဲ့၊ ဟောသံသုတာရာဇာဓိပတိသံဃိ ဓမ္မကွမ်းခြံမှ နဂါးဂူပေါသထ သီလဓမ္မဆောက်တည်ခြင်း
- 4:15 pm
2. မေဂ္ဂဇာတေးအစီအစဉ်
- 4:30 pm
3. သာယာရိုးမေး (၃၀) ဖြာ မင်္ဂလာတေး
- 4:45 pm
4. အထူးသင်တန်းသို့လှည့်ရေး ရုပ်မြင်သံကြား သင်ခန်းစာ -၃တိယနှစ် (ရက်စဉ်၊ သတ္တဓမ္မအထူးပြု) (ရက်စဉ်)
- 5:00 pm
5. Song of national races
- 5:15 pm
6. Musical programme
- 5:25 pm
7. Agricultural Source Country's Development
- 5:35 pm
8. Sing and Enjoy
- 6:30 pm
9. Evening news
- 7:00 pm
10. Weather report
- 7:05 pm
11. ရွှေတောင်မြို့ ကျီးသဲလေးထပ် ဆရာတော်ဘုရားကြီး၏ဝတ်စွဲတန့် ဓမ္မာရမ္မဓိန္ဒြေယူဘုရား ရိုးရိုးကြီး ခါရိုက်တာ-ဦးသူဇော်၊ ဓမ္မဓိနိဂါး
- 7:35 pm
12. ဦးစိုးကျီးမွှေးရွှေမော်စော ဇော်တော်
- 8:00 pm
13. News
14. International news
15. Weather report
16. "ဓမ္မထူထောင်မှု" (ဆရာကြီး-ဦးသူဇော်)
17. The next day's programme

11:00 am

1. Martial song

11:10 am

2. ဝါသကြိန်အဆိုအကများ

11:25 am

3. Round up of the Week's International News

11:35 am

4. ရုစီစရာတာသကြိန်

12:00 pm

5. Teleplays:

- "မြန်မာ့နှစ်ဦးလတန်းစား" ကျော်သူ၊ မေသတ္တဦး၊ ခါရိုက်တာ-မောင်နှင်းမိုး

12:50 pm

6. ဂုဏ်ယူဖွယ်ရာ စံတေးထိုးဆောင်၊ ကျေးဇူး သွေးလျှင်ကျေးဇူး

1:00 pm

7. Musical programme

1:15 pm

8. ပိုင်ကျဲကျဲထိန်းတံခါး

1:25 pm

9. အတီးပြိုင်ပွဲ(၃)

1:35 pm

10. လောကနီတိ "အမေ့သား" ဇမ်းဇမ်းကွန်း၊ ပြေးတီဦး၊ နိုးမြတ်နိုးစွာ၊ စမ်းစမ်းဝင်း၊ ခါရိုက်တာ-ခင်ဇော်

2:35 pm

11. ရုပ်မြင်သံကြားအရွှေ့ပိုင်း နှစ်ဦးစာတေး

2:45 pm

12. International news

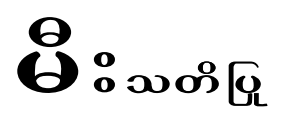
4:00 pm

1. သံယာတော်အပါး (၅၀၀) တ



Sunday, 17 April
Tune in today:

- 8:30 am Brief news
- 8:35 am Music: -Sunshine
- 8:40 am Perspectives
- 8:45 am Music: -I'm just light
- 8:55 am National news/Slogan
- 9:05 am Music: -Falling in love
- 9:10 am International news
- 9:15 am Cultural Images of Myanmar -a wonderland of pagoda -Pago & its environs
- 1:30 pm News/Slogan
- 1:40 pm Story for children -The prince & the ogress
- 1:50 pm Songs for children
- 9:00 pm Weekly news review
- 9:10 pm Music
- 9:15 pm Article
- 9:25 pm Rakhine Traditional Thingyan Loyalty of Padauk
- 9:45 pm News/Slogan
- 10:00 pm PEL



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

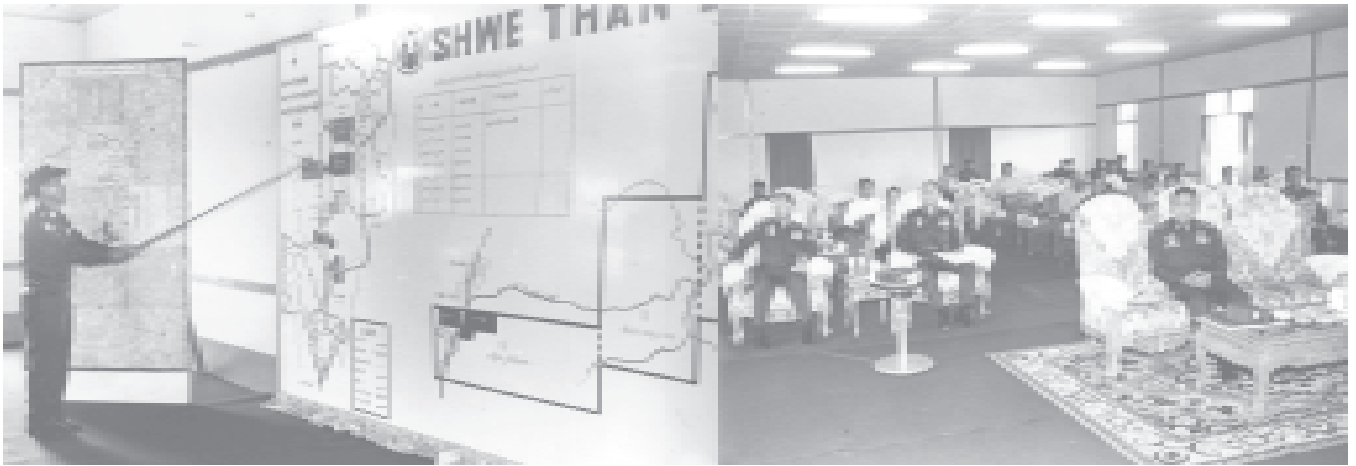
Four economic objectives

- * 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

Vice-Senior General Maung Aye inspects agri projects in Yaksawk



Vice-Senior General Maung Aye hears a report by Commander Maj-Gen Khin Maung Myint on topography of Yaksawk Township. — MNA

YANGON, 12 April— Vice-Chairman of the State Peace and Development Council Deputy Commander-in-Chief of Defence Services Commander-in-Chief (Army) Vice-Senior General Maung Aye, accompanied by Secretary-1 of the SPDC Lt-Gen Thein Sein, members of SPDC Lt-Gen Ye Myint, Lt-Gen Thiha Thura Tin Aung Myint Oo, Lt-Gen Kyaw Win and Lt-Gen Tin Aye, Chairman of Shan State PDC Commander of Eastern Command Maj-Gen Khin Maung

Myint, ministers and officials of SPDC office, yesterday inspected agriculture projects being implemented in Yaksawk Township.

Vice-Senior General Maung Aye and party arrived at Land Reclamation Project of Shwe Thanlwin Company in Kyaukgu village-tract in Indaw, Yaksawk Township.

The commander reported to Vice-Senior General Maung Aye and party on area of Yaksawk Town-

ship, allotment of virgin and fallow lands to national entrepreneurs enabling them to grow perennial and seasonal crops.

Next, Chairman of Shwe Thanlwin Company Ltd U Kyaw Win made reports saying that the company obtained 8,100 acres of land to be reclaimed, that arrangements are being made to grow coffee and macadamia and other crops suitable to the region, that (See page 10)

Yangon Mayor's Maha Thingyan pandal closes

YANGON, 16 April — A ceremony to close the Yangon Mayor's Maha Thingyan pandal was held at the pandal in front of the City Hall, here, this evening.

Joint-Secretary of Yangon City Development Committee Col Tin Soe announced successful conclusion of the Yangon Mayor's Maha Thingyan Festival 1366 at 5 pm and closed the pandal. At that time, all the yein troupes and artistes sang the song titled 'Mantaungyeikkho' and presented dances.

At 7 pm, Mayor Brig-Gen Aung Thein Lin, Vice-Mayor Col Maung Pa, Secretary of Yangon City Development Committee Col Myint Aung and Joint-Secretary Col Tin Soe presented prizes to winners in the Ozi Contest, Dohbat Contest and yein troupe contests.

Later, prize-winning troupes presented dances and songs to the audience.

MNA



The closing of Yangon Mayor's Maha Thingyan pandal in progress with a dance of damsels. — MNA

Festivities pick up tempo on last day of Maha Thingyan Festival

YANGON, 16 April— Today being 16 April 2005 (8th Waxing of Tagu, 1366 ME), Saturday, is the last day or Atet day of the Maha Thingyan Festival as well as the last day of the old year as the 1367 new year will be ushering in.

The new year festivals are always held in accordance with traditions and customs of national peoples. Myanmar new year festival is held merrily by dousing water.

Anawratha Street, Bogyoke Aung San Street, Maha Bandoola Street, Merchant Street, Strand Road, Insein Road, Bayintnaung Road, Inya Road, University Avenue, Kaba Aye Pagoda Road, Upper Kyimyindine Road, Lower Kyimyindine Road, Baho Road, Theinbyu Street, Kyaikkasan Road, West Race Course, U Chit Maung Road, Saya San Road, Parami Road, Laydauntkan Road, Wayzayanda Road and Thanthuma Road of Yangon City housing Thingyan water throwing pandals were packed with revellers on car and pedestrian revellers from morning to evening today.

Likewise, revellers from Shwepyitha, Hlinethaya, Dagon Myothit (South), and Dagon Myothit (North) in Yangon Division also took part in the Maha Thingyan Festival by dousing water on one another.

Similarly, there were entertainment programmes and refreshments at the pandals of companies.

In the afternoon, the revellers took rest at the (See page 11)