Established 1914

Senior General Than Shwe meets Chinese PLA goodwill delegation

NAY PYI TAW, 18 March — Senior General Than Shwe, Chairman of the State Peace and Development Council, Commander-in-Chief of Defence Services, received a Chinese goodwill delegation led by Chief of General Staff General Chen Bingde of the People’s Liberation Army of the People’s Republic of China at Bayintnaung Yeiktha, here at 11 a.m. today.

Also present at the call were 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, Member of SPDC General Thura Shwe, Mann of the Ministry of Defence, Secretary-1 of SPDC Quarmaster-General Lt-Gen Thiha Thura Tin Aung Myint Oo, Commander-in-Chief (Navy) Rear-Admiral Nyan Tun, Commander-in-Chief (Air) Lt-Gen Myat Hein, Lt-Gen Ye Myint of the Ministry of Defence, Myanmar Military Attaché to PRC Col Tint Wai, Chinese Ambassador to Myanmar Mr Ye Dabo and Military Attaché Senior Colonel Gao Tiejun.

The delegation members the ministers, the deputy ministers, departmental heads, Charge d’Affaires of the Indonesian Embassy Mr. Totok Priyambodo and Charge d’Affaires of the Singaporean Embassy Mr. Sim Siong Chye.

The delegation members the ministers, the deputy ministers, departmental heads and officials also arrived back on the same flight.

19-3-09 NL 18/8/9, 11:03 AM
Open more self-reliant libraries to enhance the socio-economic status of rural people

In its drive for building a modern developed and discipline-flourishing democratic nation the government is making all-out efforts to bring about equitable development the length and breadth of the nation.

Literacy for all plays a pivotal role in enhancing the economic and social status of a nation.

At present, strenuous efforts are being made throughout the nation including rural and border areas for everyone to have basic literacy skills.

In that regard, self-reliant rural libraries have been opened in villages and libraries established in those regions where there are no libraries to broaden the horizons of local people. The project also covers Rakhine State where the stake driving ceremonies have been held in Ngalapway Village, Kyaukpyu Township and Letpan-awa Village in Yanbye Township recently.

The extended opening of libraries in different regions larges helps equip local people with education and knowledge and develop their reading habits. As 70 per cent of the nation’s population are rural people, more rural libraries are to be established to widen the scope of their knowledge.

Library science is indispensable in successful implementation of the nation’s political, economic and social objectives, for it can provide a wide array of knowledge keeping pace with changes and developments.

At a time when efforts are being made for rural development it is incumbent upon all-out efforts to bring about equitable development the length and breadth of the nation. Enhancing the economic and social status of rural people with education and knowledge and will they be able to equip the socio-economic status of rural people improve and will they be able to equip themselves with education and knowledge.

Goodwill delegation led by Chief of General Staff of PRC People’s Liberation Army arrives

YANGON, 18 March—

A goodwill delegation led by Chief of General Staff of People’s Liberation Army of the People’s Republic of China General Chen Bingde arrived here by air at 2.30 yesterday.

They were welcomed at Yangon International Airport by Chairman of Yangon Division Peace and Development Council Commander of Yangon Command Brig.-Gen Win Myint and senior military officers, Ambassador of People’s Republic of China to the Union of Myanmar Mr Ye Dabo, Chinese Military Attaché Senior Colonel Gao Tiejun, the military attaché of Myanmar and officials. Accompanied by officials concerned, the Chinese goodwill delegation visited Shwedagon Pagoda in the evening.

‘KHinD’ brand Nano Hygiene fans introduced

YANGON, 18 March—

Monarch Company introduced its different kinds of new fans at a ceremony held at KHinD Electro World on Alanpya Pagoad Road here yesterday.

The Nano Hygiene fans include 16 inch stand fans, 16 inch wall fans, 16 inch table fans and 12 inch table fans. Those facilities are most suitable to factories and mills, hospitals and clinics, restaurants and shops where there is air pollution as well as conference and meeting halls, departmental establiishments, nursery schools and classrooms.

Also available along with the above-mentioned items at reasonable prices are 99 different kinds of air coolers, air conditioners, kitchen appliances. And the company will also offer special prices for deep freezers of various sizes, ‘macc’ freezer (single door) and semi auto washing machines.

Contact the KHinD Electro World, United Condo, No 39, Alanpya Pagoad Road near Lapyiwun Plaza, Dagon Township, Yangon (Tel 242307 or 380475) and other super markets and electronic stores.—MNA

KHinD brand Nano Hygiene fans put on display.—MNA

Beware of Fire
Iran official says US ties don’t affect Afghan unrest

KABUL, 18 March—An improvement in Iran’s relationship with the United States would have no effect on Afghan-istan’s Taliban militancy or the country’s booming drug trade, an Iranian diplomat said Tuesday.

The comments came ahead of a conference to discuss the deteriorating situation in Afghanistan, proposed by US Secretary of State Hillary Rodham Clinton. Afghan Foreign Minister Rangeen Dadfar Spanta has said that any decrease in tensions between Iran and the West would benefit Afghanistan.

But Peda Hussein Maliki, Iran’s ambassador to Kabul, said he wasn’t even sure that Iran would attend the 31 March conference, adding that Tehran has yet to receive an invitation. Dutch Foreign Ministry spokesman Christoph Proimmersberger says an invitation has been delivered by the Dutch embassy in Teheran and to the Iranian Embassy in The Hague.

“Our relation is a strategic relation with Afghanistan ... a deep relation that has no links with other relations, whether America would or wouldn’t be in Afghanistan,” Maliki said on the sidelines of a ceremony marking a trade pact to import Iranian cars to Afghanistan.

Three people killed in northern Iraq

MOSUL, 18 March—Three Iraqis were killed in the northern city of Mosul on Tuesday, a provincial police said.

A student in Management and Administration College in Mosul University was shot dead by unknown gunmen in a southwestern neighbourhood of the city’s capital Nineveh Province, the source told Xinhua on condition of anonymity.

An Iraqi soldier was also shot dead in the day when unknown gunmen open fire on an Iraqi army checkpoint in Almuharbin neighbourhood in eastern Mosul, the source said.—Internet

Explosion shocks Afghan capital, wounds 3

KABUL, 18 March—A powerful blast rocked west of Afghan capital Kabul Wednesday morning, injuring at least three persons, all of them civilians, a police officer aid.

“It was 7:00 am local time when the blast hit Katai Sangi area in 5th precinct inuring three civilians,” the police officer told Xinhua but declined to be identified.

He further added that the terrorists planted explosive device close to a police checkpoint and detonated by remote control. The blast also shattered windowpanes of buildings and shops next to the site.

Police have cordoned off the area and do not allow journalists and ordinary people to visit the place of the incident.—Internet

Chavez preparing ‘artillery’ for Americas summit

CARACAS, 18 March—Venezuelan President Hugo Chavez said Tuesday that he is preparing plenty of verbal “artillery” for his first encounter with President Barack Obama at an upcoming summit.

Chavez — long a fierce critic of Washington — said he expects that the future of US relations with Latin America will begin to take shape at April’s summit of leaders from across the Americas in Trinidad and Tobago.

“Our artillery is being prepared. There’s going to be good artillery,” Chavez said during a televised Cabinet meeting.

“What will Mr Obama come with? I don’t know. We’re going to see. We’ll see what the pitcher throws,” Chavez said.

Chavez said that immediately before the Americas summit in Trinidad, he will host leaders of nations in his Bolivarian Alternative trade pact for talks in Caracas on 16 April. He also said he plans talks with the leader of Paraguay, and possibly Uruguay, before the summit.

Chavez called the US embargo against Cuba “absurd and stupid,” saying he hopes to see the new US administration define its stance on the issue.—Internet

US military deaths in Afghanistan region at 591

WASHINGTON, 18 March—As of Tuesday, 17 March, 2009, at least 591 members of the US military had died in Afghanistan, Pakistan and Uzbekistan as a result of the US invasion of Afghanistan in late 2001, according to the Defence Department. The department last updated its figures on Tuesday at 10 am EDT.

Of those, the military reports 435 were killed by hostile action. Outside the Afghan region, the Defence Department reports 67 more members of the US military died in support of Operation Enduring Freedom. Of those, three were the result of hostile action. The military lists these other locations as Guantanamo Bay Naval Base, Cuba; Djibouti; Eritrea; Ethiopia; Jordan; Kenya; Kyrgyzstan; Philippines; Seychelles; Sudan; Tajikistan; Turkey; and Yemen.

There were also four CIA officer deaths and one military civilian death.

A 3-year-old Iraqi girl who was blinded and disfigured in a Baghdad car bombing in 2006, sits with her relatives outside her home in Baghdad, Iraq, on 9 March, 2009.—INTERNET

Blood stains are seen at the spot following a suicide attack in Lashkar Gah, the capital of Helmand Province, south of Kabul, Afghanistan, on 16 March, 2009. —INTERNET

A 3-year-old Iraqi girl who was blinded and disfigured in a Baghdad car bombing in 2006, sits with her relatives outside her home in Baghdad, Iraq, on 9 March, 2009.—INTERNET

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There were also four CIA officer deaths and one military civilian death.
Russia says US, NATO actions mean new arms are needed

MOSCOW, 18 March—Russia’s defence minister on Tuesday accused the United States of beefing up its military presence near Russian borders and poaching for mineral wealth there, signaling that Moscow could take a tough position in upcoming talks with Barack Obama’s new administration.

Anatoly Serdyukov’s statement — made alongside President Dmitry Medvedev at a meeting of the military’s top brass — reflected deeply entrenched Russian suspicions despite Obama’s desire to improve relations with Moscow.

Medvedev, meanwhile, cited NATO expansion, international terrorism and regional conflicts as reasons why upgrading Russia’s nuclear forces was the top priority in an ambitious military modernization plan that he pledged to pursue despite the worst economic crisis in a decade.

Relations with Russia plunged to a post-Cold War low under the previous US administration, whose plans to build missile defence sites in eastern Europe and bring ex-Soviet republics into NATO angered Moscow. “Active support was given to the processes aimed at pushing Russia out of the sphere of its traditional interests.”

France opposes global role for NATO

PARIS, 18 March—Closer ties with Washington, and an olive branch for Moscow: France’s defence minister on Tuesday laid out French plans to rejoin a crucial post in US-led NATO, while insisting that Russia must have a say in constructing European security.

Herve Morin said in an interview that France has no regrets about rejoining NATO’s integrated military command, a position it quit 43 years ago.

This step is designed so that we find our full place in the decision-making,” he told The Associated Press from under 17th-century portraits in his sun-dappled Paris office. “We are actors, and we want to write the script.”

President Nicolas Sarkozy, a firm believer in close friendship with the United States, first announced plans to rejoin the command in late 2007. But with criticism of that proposal building in recent weeks, his government called a no-confidence vote in the lower house of parliament on the subject on Tuesday. It was assured passage — and slid through at 329 to 238 votes — because fellow conservatives have a majority in parliament on the subject on Tuesday. It was as-

Sexual assaults on rise among US soldiers

WASHINGTON, 18 March—Reports of sexual assaults among members of the US military increased by 8 percent in fiscal year 2008 that ended on 30 Sept, from the previous fiscal year, according to a Pentagon report revealed on Tuesday.

Among US troops stationed in Iraq and Afghanistan, such reports rose by 26 percent during the same period, according to the report.

Kaye Whitley, director of the Pentagon’s Sexual Assault Prevention and Response office, told reporters the increases can be attributed to improved reporting methods and officials’ belief that military personnel are less fearful of backlash from commanders and peers after reporting an assault.

Five west African countries to take Nile carp

ABIDJAN, 18 March—Experts from five west African countries gathered on Tuesday in Ivory Coast to discuss a plan to introduce tilapia, or the Nile carp, into waters of the Volta basin for fish farming.

“We need to take precautions before undertaking such a large enterprise,” Ivory Coast’s Minister of Animal Production and Fisheries Alphonse Douati told AFP on the sidelines of the meeting.

Douati said that if successfully managed in line with a fish farming scheme drawn up by the UN Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO), the “TIVO project” could deliver a fivefold increase in freshwater fish supplies in the region.

The nations involved in the project are Benin, Burkina Faso, Ghana, Mali and Togo. The three-day Abidjan meeting was to assess studies of the environmental and biodiversity risks of introducing the carp into the Volta.

Four arrested as hundreds protest Bush speech in Canada

OTTAWA, 18 March—Four people were arrested in Canada’s western city of Calgary during a protest against an address by former US president George W Bush on Tuesday.

A crowd of roughly 400 noisy protestors gathered outside the Telus Convention Centre in downtown Calgary where Bush was making his first official speech since leaving office, local reports said on Tuesday. Blowing whistles and chanting “war criminal,” demonstrators carried signs and shouted “shame on you” at people attending the event at a cost of 400 Canadian dollars (about 310 US dollars) each.

At the protest pinnacle, four people were arrested, Calgary police said. Two men were charged with obstructing a peace officer and resisting arrest. Another man was charged with breaching the peace, while the fourth was issued a ticket for violating a public behavior bylaw.

An invitation-only crowd of about 1,500 listened to the former US president. Security was tight as all guests were searched before entering the convention center. Media were not allowed inside.
General Thura Shwe Mann holds talks with Chief of General Staff of People’s Liberation Army of PRC

Yangon, 18 March — Member of the State Peace and Development Council General Thura Shwe Mann and military officers, Ambassador of the PRC to Myanmar Mr Ye Dabo and Military Attaché Senior Col Gao Tiejun.

At the meeting, the two sides cordially discussed matters related to mutual cooperation and strengthening friendship between the two countries. — MNA

Road inaugurated in Kyaiiko to hail 64th Anniversary Armed Forces Day

Yangon, 18 March — As a gesture of hailing the 64th Anniversary Armed Forces Day, an asphalt road was inaugurated in Kyaiiko Township, Mon State, on 17 March, 2009. The road constructed by the Kyaiiko Township Development Affairs Department was formally opened by Chairman of Kyaiiko Township Peace and Development Council and Executive Officer of the township DAD U Nay Htet Shein. Officials concerned inspected the road after opening the ceremony. — MNA

Medical forum of MMA on 25 March

Yangon, 18 March — Myanmar Medical Association (Central) invited doctors to attend the Continuing Professional Development Forum conducted by the generalists’ group of MMA here on 25 March. At the forum, resource persons will read out their papers and there will be Q & A on Common Childhood Infections Family Practice programme by a specialist. The forum will be held at MMA from noon to 3 pm on 25 March. — MNA

FSD gets new fire engine

Yangon, 18 March — A ceremony to donate an Isuzu fire engine worth US$ 5000 to the Fire Services Department of the Ministry of Social Welfare, Relief and Resettlement was held at Maykhalaba hall of the Fire Services Department (Head Office) this morning.

Firstly, wellwisher U Maung Maung explained the purpose of donation. Then he handed over documents related to the fire engine to Director-General U Myint Tun of the department. — MNA

Talks on DHF held in Mawlamyine

Yangon, 18 March — Mawlamyine Township Peace and Development Council organized the educative talks on dengue haemorrhagic fever at Shwemyaing Hall of the Township PDC on 2 March. Chairman of the Township PDC U Thein Win explained preventive measures to be taken against dengue haemorrhagic fever in township, wards and villages. Dr Nyan Hsint of Mon State malaria specialist discussed the methods for taking DHF control measures. — MNA

Objectives of the 64th Anniversary Armed Forces Day

1. To work hard together with the people to accomplish the State’s seven-step Road Map in building a peaceful, modern and developed nation
2. To uphold Our Three Main National Causes as the national policy at risk to life
3. To crush, in cooperation with the people, internal and external subversive elements that are disrupting stability, peace and development of the nation
4. To build a strong and patriotic modern Tatmadaw capable of safeguarding the sovereignty and territorial integrity of the nation

GRSR Billiards and Snooker Championship 2009 (Yangon) opens

Yangon, 18 March — The opening ceremony of Grand Royal Special Reserve Billiards and Snooker Championship 2009 (Yangon) was held at Diamond Condominium this morning. Vice-President of Myanmar Billiards and Snooker Federation U Tin Maung Win opened the ceremony. A total of 79 participants competed in the first day’s events. The championship will continue till 22 March. — MNA

Director General U Myint Tun of Fire Services Department accepts Isuzu fire engine donated by wellwisher U Maung Myint of Hmwe plastic bag industry. — FSD

General Thura Shwe Mann welcomes... (from page 16)

At the airport, General Thura Shwe Mann and the Chief of General Staff of the PLA also cordially greeted General Thura Shwe Mann and party.

Afterwards, the PLA Chief of General Staff and party left for Nay Pyi Taw Hotel Zone in a motorcade. — MNA

NAY PYI TAW, 18 March — Member of the State Peace and Development Council General Thura Shwe Mann left for Nay Pyi Taw Chief of General Staff and party.

Thura Shwe Mann and also accompanied.

of the PLA delegation who took the salute of the Guard of Honour.

of the Guard of Honour.

of the PLA and members

of China Col Tin Wai

and military officers.

of Defence, Deputy Min-

ister for Foreign Affairs

U Maung Myint, Milit-

ary Attaché of Myanmar

to the People’s Republic

of China Col Tin Wai

and military officers.

of Defence, Lt-Gen

Myint Hlaing, Lt-Gen Ye

Myint and senior mili-

tary officers of Ministry

of Defence.

General Chen Bingde at

Bayintnaung Yeiktha

here today.

General Thura Shwe

Mann cordially greeted

General Thura Shwe

Mann and

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of Defence U Myint Tun

of the department.

ment was formally

opened by Chairman of

Kyaiiko Township Peace

and Development Council

and Executive Officer of

the township DAD U Nay

Htet Shein. Officials

concerned inspected the

road after opening the

ceremony. — MNA

General Thura Shwe Mann of Ministry of Defence meets with Chief of General Staff of the PLA General Chen Bingde at Bayintnaung Yeiktha in Nay Pyi Taw. — MNA

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The Prime Minister was welcomed at the airport by Indonesia Minister of Communications and Information H.E Mr Mohammad Nuh, Governor of Jakarta Hon. Dr Ing Fauzi Bowo and officials, Myanmar Ambassador to Indonesia U Nyan Lin and wife Daw Khin Mar Nwe, Military Attaché Col Aye Thaw and wife Daw Khin Oo May, staff of Myanmar Embassy and Office of Military Attaché and their families.

Myanmar delegation led by Prime Minister General Thein Sein together with the Indonesian Minister of Communications and Information went to Kalibata National Heroes Cemetery in Jakarta where they were welcomed by Deputy Commander of Jakarta Military Region Brig-Gen Avianto Saptono and officials.

Next, Prime Minister General Thein Sein laid the wreath at the National Heroes Cemetery.

At 3.15 p.m., Prime Minister General Thein Sein and delegation members together with the Indonesian Minister of Communications and Information left Hotel Borobudur and they were welcomed by Acting Chief of the Presidential Palace Mr Winata Supritha at the Istana Merdeka Presidential Palace.

President of the Republic of Indonesia Dr Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono cordially welcomed Prime Minister General Thein Sein. A ceremony to welcome the Myanmar delegation led by Prime Minister General Thein Sein was held in front of the Istana Palace.

First, Prime Minister General Thein Sein and Indonesian President Dr Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono took the salute of the Guard of Honour. At that time, the State Band played the National Anthems of the Union of Myanmar and the Republic of Indonesia, and the Prime Minister was honored with 19-gun salute.

MNA
Prime Minister General Thein Sein calls on Indonesian President Dr Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono

NAY PYI TAW, 18 March—Prime Minister General Thein Sein paid a courtesy call on President of the Republic of Indonesia Dr Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono at Istana Merdeka Presidential Palace at 3.35 pm on 16 March.

Also present on the occasion were Minister for National Planning and Economic Development U Soe Tha, Minister for Hotels and Tourism Maj-Gen Soe Naing, Minister for Commerce Brig-Gen Tin Naing Thein, Minister for Transport Maj-Gen Thein Swe, Minister for Forestry Brig-Gen Thein Aung, Deputy Minister for Foreign Affairs U Maung Aye, Deputy Minister for Home Affairs Brig-Gen Phone Swe and Myanmar Ambassador to Indonesia U Nyan Lin.

The President was accompanied by State Secretary Mr M Hatta Rajasa, Cabinet Secretary Mr Sudi Silalahi, Minister for Foreign Affairs Dr N Hassan Wirajuda, Minister of Communications and Information Mr Mohammad Nuh and Indonesia Ambassador to Myanmar Mr Sebastianus Sumarsono.

First, President Dr Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono extended greetings.

Next, Prime Minister General Thein Sein made a speech. He expressed thanks for a warm welcome extended to his delegation, and expressed his belief that his visit would further strengthen the existing friendship and cooperation between the two countries.

Prime Minister General Thein Sein conveyed the message of Chairman of the State Peace and Development Council Senior General Than Shwe wishing the President health and happiness, and the message of Vice-Chairman of the State Peace and Development Council Vice-Senior General Maung Aye wishing the President a physical and mental well-being. He continued to say that friendship, close cooperation and mutual help between Myanmar and the Republic of Indonesia have existed since the pre-independence period, and Myanmar thanked the Republic of Indonesia, for it stood firmly by her in regional and international spheres.

And he expressed hope that the President would stand by Myanmar against pressures imposed on the country in the international arena turning a blind eye to objective and positive and developments in Myanmar.

He said that the Tatmadaw government after assuming the State responsibilities had to overcome a series of hardships and difficulties; that after addressing those problems it tried its utmost to transform the nation into a modern and developed one; that meanwhile, it has laid down and is implementing the seven-step Road Map phase by phase in the process of transition to democracy.

He added that the National Referendum was held in 2008 for approval of the new State constitution written in accord with fundamental principles laid down by the National Convention; and that the new State constitution was successfully approved with 92.48 per cent of votes in favour at the National Referendum.

He said that in the Tripartite Core Group.

He said that at present the fourth step of the seven-step Road Map was successfully completed and the multi-party democracy general election, the fifth step of the seven-step Road Map, will be held in 2010 according to its schedule that has already been announced; and that the remaining steps will be implemented in line with the seven-step Road Map. The Prime Minister also elaborated on aid and assistance provided to Nargis’ storm-hit regions and work carried out by the Tripartite Core Group.

Afterwards, the President expressed thanks for the explanation about the objective conditions of Myanmar, and added that ASEAN member nations and the Republic of Indonesia supported the seven-step Road Map being implemented by Myanmar and hoped that Myanmar will be able to successfully implement it; and that only Myanmar people will be able to carry out the internal affairs of Myanmar.—MNA

Indonesian President hosts dinner to Myanmar goodwill delegation

NAY PYI TAW, 18 March—President of the Republic of Indonesia Dr Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono hosted a dinner to the visiting Myanmar delegation led by Prime Minister General Thein Sein at Negara Hall of Istana Merdeka Presidential Palace in Jakarta on 16 March evening.

Prime Minister General Thein Sein was accompanied by Minister for National Planning and Economic Development U Soe Tha, Minister for Hotels and Tourism Maj-Gen Soe Naing, Minister for Commerce Brig-Gen Tin Naing Thein, Minister for Transport Maj-Gen Thein Swe, Minister for Forestry Brig-Gen Thein Aung, Deputy Minister for Foreign Affairs U Maung Myint, Deputy Minister for Home Affairs Brig-Gen Phone Swe, Myanmar Ambassador to Indonesia U Nyan Lin, the director-general of the State Peace and Development Council Office and heads of department.

Together with the Indonesian President were Indonesian ministers, high-ranking officials, and Indonesian merchants and industrialists.

Indonesian President Dr Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono cordially greeted Prime Minister General Thein Sein. (See page 8)
Mutual understanding and friendship further strengthened between Myanmar, Indonesia

NAY PYI TAW, 18 March—Myanmar goodwill delegation led by Prime Minister of the Union of Myanmar General Thein Sein held discussions with President of the Republic of Indonesia Dr Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono and party at Reception Hall of Istana Merdeka Presidential Palace in Jakarta of Indonesia on 4 pm on 16 March.

Also present at the meeting together with Prime Minister General Thein Sein were Minister for National Planning and Economic Development U Soe Tha, Minister for Hotels and Tourism Maj-Gen Soe Naing, Minister for Commerce Brig-Gen Tin Naing Thein, Minister for Transport Maj-Gen Thein Swe, Minister for Forestry Brig-Gen Thein Aung, Deputy Minister for Foreign Affairs U Maung Myint, Deputy Minister for Home Affairs Brig-Gen Phone Swe, Myanmar Ambassador to Indonesia U Nyan Lin, Director-General of the SPDC Office Col Kyaw Kyaw Win and Heads of Departments and together with Indonesian President Dr Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono were Minister of Political, Legal and Security Affairs Mr Wido AS, State Secretary Mr M Hatta Rajasa, Cabinet Secretary Mr Sudi Silalahi, Minister of Foreign Affairs Dr N Hassan Wirajuda, Minister of Trade Dr Marie Elka Pangestu, Minister of Forestry Mr MS Kaban, Minister of Transportation Mr Rusman Syafii Djamil, Minister of Culture and Tourism Mr Jero Wacik, Minister of Information and Communication Mr Mohammad Nuh, Minister of State Enterprises Mr Sofyan A Djatil, Indonesian Ambassador to Myanmar Mr Sebastianus Sumarsono and high ranking officials.

At the meeting, Indonesian President Dr Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono said bilateral relations and friendship would continue for a long time besides being a milestone in history. Myanmar and Indonesia have maintained friendly ties for a long time and the two countries are members of ASEAN. He expressed hopes of holding discussions on regional issues apart from the bilateral relations. Next, Prime Minister General Thein Sein said Indonesia and Myanmar have been working closely together. In addition, mutual understanding and friendship have been further strengthening between the two countries. Close cooperation between the two countries have started since the struggle for independence. Forming the joint commission of Myanmar and Indonesia contributed a lot to the systematic cooperation in several areas.

Moreover, at the meeting matters relating to trade, investment, finance, hotel and tourism, agriculture, livestock, forestry, oil and natural gas and information sectors were also discussed. Next, the Indonesian President expressed thanks for the discussions beneficial to both countries. He welcomed the discussions of the Myanmar Prime Minister to promote bilateral relations and carry out economic cooperation. The Indonesian President expressed hopes of creating opportunities for cooperation between the entrepreneurs of the two countries.

Next, the Prime Minister expressed thanks for the discussion about bilateral relations and economic cooperation cordially and frankly.

Indonesian President hosts dinner to Myanmar goodwill

NAY PYI TAW, 18 March—Myanmar goodwill delegation led by Prime Minister General Thein Sein held discussions with President of the Republic of Indonesia Dr Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono and party at Reception Hall of Istana Merdeka Presidential Palace in Jakarta of Indonesia.—MNA

Indian President extended greetings, saying that the two countries have established friendly relations for long; that the two countries have jointly implement the advice and suggestions made at the meeting and other meetings of the twonations; that bilateral cooperation will be boosted in the agricultural, trade, investment, tourism industry, energy, health, communication, information and transport sectors; that the two countries are collaborating with each other in security, legal affair, and combating cross-border criminal cases; that Indonesia supports the Road Map Myanmar has laid down for democracy transition; and that he believes that Myanmar’s future can be shaped with the strength of unity of Myanmar people.

The Indonesian State orchestra played the National Anthem of the Union of Myanmar.

Prime Minister General Thein Sein in his speech expressed thanks for invitation and the grand dinner; and that the warm welcome and friendship Indonesia has demonstrated to the delegation reflects the friendly relations that have existed between the two nations for decades.

He said that it is required to promote the friendly relations the State leaders of the two nations have maintained and promoted with farsightedness; and that very soon, the bilateral relations will be boosted notably in the programmes of the two countries but also in the regional and international programmes.

He added that the bilateral trade is on the increase, but it has yet to pickup greater momentum; and that he believes the discussions will serve as the strength to promote bilateral cooperation, and friendly relations.

The trip to Indonesia was short, he said, but he has great chances to witness the development of Indonesia firsthand, to set up personally friendly relations, to let the president of Indonesia know the development of Myanmar, and boost mutual understanding; and that so the trip provides great benefits.

He said that while currently in Indonesia, a beautiful nation, he wishes the Republic of Indonesia greater development and Indonesian people a prosperous future.

Next, the band played the National Anthem of the Republic of Indonesia.

Prime Minister General Thein Sein and party and the Indonesian President and party enjoyed Indonesian traditional dances presented by the Indonesian troupe at the cultural hall of the Presidential Palace.

After the entertainment programme, Prime Minister General Thein Sein presented a basket of flowers to the cultural troupe members.

Next, the Indonesian President and the Prime Minister posed for documentary photos.
Prime Minister General Thein Sein meets Indonesian Vice-President

Maj-Gen Thein Swe, Minister for Forestry, Brig-Gen Thein Aung, Deputy Minister for Foreign Affairs U Maung Myint, Deputy Minister for Home Affairs Brig-Gen Phone Swe and Ambassador of Myanmar to Indonesia U Nyan Lin. At the meeting, the vice-president of Indonesia was accompanied by Minister for Foreign Affairs Dr. N. Hassan Wirajuda, Minister for Communications and Information Mr Mohammad Nuh, Ambassador of Indonesia to Myanmar Mr Sebastianus Sumarsono and high ranking officers.

At the meeting, Prime Minister General Thein Sein briefed on matters related to transition to democracy in Myanmar.

The Indonesian vice-president expressed wishes for successful implementation of the seven-step Road Map of Myanmar and for the success of the election in 2010 in Myanmar. The two sides cordially discussed matters related to mutual cooperation between the two countries. — MNA

Prime Minister General Thein Sein presents gifts to Myanmar Ambassador U Nyan Lin and wife and staff families.—MNA

Sports Ministry holds coordination meeting

Chairman of Myanmar Olympic Committee Minister for Sports Brig-Gen Thura Aye Myint delivered an address at the coordination meeting of the Ministry of Sports at the hall of the ministry, here, this morning.

The Director-General of the Sports and Physical Education Department reported on functions of the State/Division SPEDs. Officials of Institutes of Sports and Physical Education (Yangon) and (Mandalay) submitted reports on their respective sectors. Directors of the respective divisions of SPED discussed the reports of the officials at the division and state levels. The director-general and the deputy directors-general gave supplementary reports.

The meeting ended with the concluding remarks by the minister.—MNA

Myanmar, Indonesian entrepreneurs meet

The entrepreneurs of the Union of Myanmar Federation of Chambers of Commerce and Industry (UMFCCI) who accompanied the Prime Minister held discussions with the entrepreneurs of Indonesian Chambers of Commerce and Industry (KADIN) at the KADIN Office in Jakarta of Indonesia at 1.30 p.m. on 16 March.

It was attended by 11 Myanmar entrepreneurs led by UMFCCI President U Win Myint, Deputy Director-General U Myo Oo of the Directorate of Trade, Vice-Governor of the Central Bank of Myanmar U Maung Maung Win, Director-General U San Thaung of the Customs Department and Managing Director U Thein Htay of the Myanmar Port Authority.

Also present were UMFCCI Chairman Mr Juan Gondo Kusumo of KADIN of Indonesia and party.

They discussed trade promotion between Myanmar and Indonesia, bilateral cooperation between the entrepreneurs of the two countries and individual meetings between the entrepreneurs of the two countries for trading in agricultural produce, garments, hotel and construction industries.

Mr Thomas Hartono, in-charge for Myanmar section of CLMV Committee of KADIN of Indonesia said that the coordination meetings are being held for organizing the 60th Anniversary Ceremony to mark the Indonesia-Myanmar diplomatic ties in Yangon in September 2009 and a trade show between 30 companies each of Indonesia and Myanmar. KADIN will hold the MoU signing ceremony between the two CCIs at the trade show. Myanmar and Indonesian entrepreneurs discussed the trading of goods between two sides. — MNA
International standard Yangon-Mandalay Highway
Yangon-Nay Pyi Taw road section to be inaugurated soon

(from page 16) When asked about construction of concrete road, Assistant Engineer U Wunna Zaw (Civil), in charge of work for laying concrete in the road sections being undertaken by Public Works, said, “To build a standard concrete road, the work of all the steps must meet the set standards. They are: stockpiling quality raw materials for mixing and producing concrete; mixing and producing concrete; laying concrete; and controlling the quality of concrete. “So far, the project has been completed by 202 miles and one furlong. Of them, Public Works constructed the 83 miles and six furlongs long section between No (3) Junction and Myochaung and the 29 miles long section between Thagara and Nay Pyi Taw C Junction, totalling 112 miles and six furlongs. To complete the sections, we inspected the ground to know whether the ground was dense enough or not, before confirmation. We used 25 concrete mixers and produced 1,321,000 cubic metres of concrete for the structures Public Works constructed.

We used six concrete laying machines to construct the four-lane concrete road with the concrete the concrete mixers had produced. We took great care in working to be able to avoid mistakes. The quality control group provided constant supervision to meet the standards in mixing and laying concrete.

“The Road Research Department of Public Works of the Ministry of Construction drew the design of the concrete road. The road has two concrete layers: a 27 feet wide and six inches high under layer, and the 25 feet wide and 12 inches high upper layer. The road can withstand 80 tons of loads.”

In the workforce of the Directorate of Military Engineering that constructed the road sections with a total length of 172 miles and three furlongs of the 352 miles and six furlongs long Yangon-Mandalay Highway, Lt-Col Soe Si and Lt-Col Myint Oo supervised the tasks being carried out by the two groups consisting of over 500 officers and other ranks and over 1000 units of heavy machinery.

Regarding work progress and difficulties faced in the project, Project Engineer Lt-Col Soe Si said, “In Yangon-Nay Pyi Taw section, we removed was about 100 feet high, and the depth was about 80 feet, so the size of the work was very huge and we could not make much work progress. Moreover, in Nay Pyi Taw-Mandalay the ravines and gorges we filled earth with was about 80 feet. In section (1), the road went along the foot of the Yoma, but in section (2), it not only went along the foot but also passed through the Yoma. So, we had to demolish the top parts of the young rock mountains as high as about 80 feet. The most difficult part was Pantin-Hsinthay section. We demolished the young rock mountains as high consolidation work has been completed 100 per cent.

“In Nay Pyi Taw-Mandalay section (2) the Directorate of Military Engineering undertakes, we have already begun the land consolidation work. The volume of the earth we removed in the upper parts of heights and filled the ravines and gorges in Nay Pyi Taw-Mandalay section was much greater than that in Yangon-Nay Pyi Taw section. At that time, we will need to do concrete work only, because the ravines and gorges were more than that in Yangon-Nay Pyi Taw section.

“For the time being, we are constructing the two-way t two-lane road considering the number of the traffic. When the road copes with more traffic, we will have to upgrade it to an eight-lane one. At that time, we will need to do concrete work only, because the road will have to cope with greater traffic.
International standard Yangon-Mandalay Highway
Yangon-Nay Pyi Taw road section to be inaugurated soon

Article and Photos: Tin Htwe (MNA)

(from page 10)

the airport projects in Homalin, Kyaukhtu, Bokpyin, Amisakhan, Elar and Dawei and they were reinforced by the services the Directorate of Military Engineering had chosen. So, many servicemen gained experiences of building concrete roads.

“The group of the Directorate of Military Engineering for the highway launched its constructing the main road on 1 October 2005, after conducting preliminary engineering work such as seeking the alignment and drawing the design. In the first phase, we filled one furlong wide and about 100 feet deep Danyingon ravine by Thewah Creek near Myochaung Village and dammed the creek.

“In that regard, we removed the mud and silt of the swamp lakes, constructed reinforced concrete retaining walls on the sides of ravines, and filled the ravines and gorges with earth, and compacted the sites, step by step. The two miles long section between mile posts 96 and 98 near Penwegon was full of ravines, gullies and gorges. Filling about 80 feet deep ravines with earth was very challenging.

“It took very long if we removed the silt alone from the swamp lakes. So, we put earth into the swamp lakes, and then we removed the mixture of earth and silt with the use of heavy machinery. Earth to fill the ravines was not available around the work site, so we had to get the earth from long distance. The work we did between mile post Nos 118 and 120 was the same as that near Penwegon.

“The silted-up lake between mile post Nos 123 and 125 persisted in spouting water even though we filled it with earth in a normal way. So, we had to use geotextile. We again had to use geotextile to fill about one mile long Peikswe lake near mile post No. 166 with earth. At mile post No. 171 near Thagara, we had to cut a rock mountain and build about 20 feet high embankment for the highway to pass through low-lying areas. The region gets an average annual rainfall of over 100 inches, so the earth is of clay type. In the rainy season, we could do nothing more than construction of bridges, culverts and concrete structures.

“Now, the highway has taken its shape without many uphill and downhill parts and bends, but to achieve that success, we had to complete dealing with steep valleys, swamp lakes, lakes, and creeks with swift currents in a short time.

“In constructing the highway, the drawing engineers group constantly checked to find out whether the route met with the imaginary line on the map and mended it if the alignment diverted a little from its real course. We collaborated with the engineering group that had a lot of experience to ensure that vehicles can use the highway in safety. We could avoid mistakes only if construction tasks were constantly checked under close supervision. Otherwise, it will be a little risky to use the road.

“In laying concrete, the surface must be even and smooth and meet the standard of fixed tonnage of loads. To make sure that the surface is even for a long period, we took great care in laying the lower and upper concrete layers and doing land consolidation work in a systematic way. And to make the bends and uphill and downhill parts of the road smooth, we used level instrument and the odolite instrument in laying concrete with the use of concrete laying machine.

“The cement, gravel, sand and water in concrete are to be pure for the road to meet the standard. We had to see that materials used were fine free from sub-standard earth, rock and wooden particles at the rock grinding machine. And we had to supervise the work for filtering the rubbish with the use of threefold sieve in producing sand. We used only pure water in mixing concrete. Moreover, we used chemical liquid in mixing concrete. We constantly check to find out and mend the holes and cracks in the concrete road that appeared due to pieces of impure rock. Constantly repairing the shoulders is important for durability of the concrete road. In repairing the road, we have to make sure that the road does not hold water and there is proper drainage.

“We spent about 600,000 tons of cement, about 39,000 tons of iron rods, 106,900 feet wide steel girders, 60 million cubic feet of broken rock, and 0.47 million cubic feet of sand. The Myanmar Economic Corporation provided us with cement and iron rods. All the construction materials we used to construct the road and the bridges are domestically-produced ones and the project is being implemented without any foreign experts and assistance.

“Throughout the project, officials closely supervised the tasks and fulfilled the requirements, so we managed to complete the two-way/two-lane road in a short time. It will be put into service soon.

Translation: MS
(To be continued)
Southern Chinese city to reinvent the wheel

BEIJING, 18 March—China is planning to build the world’s highest ferris wheel in the southern city of Guangzhou to give tourism in the city a lift, state media said on Wednesday, stealing thunder from the capital Beijing.

The wheel, the highest if not the largest in the world, will be built on the sloping roof of the 450-metre Guangzhou TV tower and open before 1 October, 2010, when the city, capital of the once booming province of Guangdong, hosts the 16th Asian Games.

Caterpillar cuts another 2,454 jobs

CHICAGO, 18 March—Caterpillar Inc, the world’s largest maker of construction and mining equipment, notified an additional 2,454 workers in three states on Tuesday that they were losing their jobs as the company continues to try to bring production in line with plummeting demand.

The bulk of the job cuts — nearly 1,600 in all — will come in Illinois at the company’s plants in East Peoria, which makes track-type tractors and pipe layers, and Aurora, where it makes hydraulic excavators and wheel loaders.

The company also said it is closing a fuel systems factory in Jefferson, Georgia, and moving production to two other Caterpillar plants. It is also cutting jobs in Indiana.—Internet

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“The ferris wheel will withstand an earthquake of magnitude 8, owing to its quake-resistant design,” the China Daily said. “Lightning arresters will form part of the design to make sure there is little damage during storm and lightning.”

Air Force nurse charged in three patients’ drug deaths

SAN ANTONIO, 18 March—An Air Force nurse has been charged with murder for allegedly giving lethal amounts of medication to three terminally ill patients in his care over one month last summer, military officials said on Tuesday.

Capt Michael Fontana, 35, was formally charged on Monday by the Air Force with three patients’ drug deaths.

The Air Force began investigating after another staff member at the San Antonio hospital discovered irregularities in Fontana’s administration of medications that may have resulted in the death of a terminally ill patient.

The Air Force nurse, who is stationed in Indiana, has been charged with murder for allegedly giving lethal amounts of medication to three terminally ill patients in his care over one month last summer, military officials said on Tuesday. Capt Michael Fontana, 35, was formally charged on Monday by the Air Force with three patients’ drug deaths.

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Egypt pressured to end underground organ trade

CAIRO, 18 March—The poverty of Cairo’s slums forced a young couple to sell nearly everything they had. When that wasn’t enough, each of them sold a kidney. The clandestine pre-dawn operation in a small private hospital ended with the man and wife being dumped semiconscious in taxis — the payment for their kidneys tucked into their clothes, they say.

Now, a year later, penniless once more, they are too weak to even move around their apartment. Unable to afford follow-up care, their health is so fragile they spend much of the day in bed in a dark room. “If anyone had made clear to me the danger, I wouldn’t have done it,” said Abdel-Rahman Abdel-Aziz, gaunt and looking older than his 24 years as he lay in bed beside his wife. He pulled up his sweatshirt to show the scar from the operation.

For years, word has spread among Egypt’s destitute that selling a kidney — sometimes for as little as $2,000 — can be a quick way out of a debt or to keep from sinking deeper into poverty. At rundown cafes, they are hunted by middlemen working for labs that match donors and recipients, many of whom are foreigners drawn to Egypt’s thriving, underground organ trade. Egypt is one of a half dozen countries identified by the World Health Organization as organ-trafficking hot spots.

Polar bears’ plight subject of closed-door talks

OSLO, 18 March—Northern nations trying to find ways to protect the world’s polar bears in a warming climate resolved on Tuesday to hold their talks behind closed doors — over Norway’s objections.

“The polar bear ... has become politically dangerous,” WWF’s Norway chief Rasmus Hansson said as the five nations that have polar bears on their Arctic tundra began political talks in the Norwegian city of Tromso.

“The polar bear has become the very symbol of climate change,” he told The Associated Press by telephone from the meeting. Climate change is so touchy for some countries that they balked at public debate on it before December’s climate treaty talks in Copenhagen, he said.

Norway, the United States, Canada, Russia and Denmark, which has polar bears on its Greenland territory, are reviewing for the first time in 28 years their accord on protecting the world’s estimated 20,000-25,000 polar bears.

Indonesian mud volcano victims rally for payment

JAKARTA, 18 March — Over 200 victims of Indonesia’s mud volcano staged a rally outside of the state palace on Wednesday, demanding the payment of compensation at once by a politically connected energy firm blamed for the catastrophe.

The furious protesters rejected the payment with the way of installment of 15 million rupiah (some 1,250 US dollars) per month to each displaced family as it was already decided in February by Lapindo, part of the business empire controlled by the family of Indonesian Welfare Minister Aburajab Bakti. Until all outstanding compensation is paid.

Carrying a banner saying “Cash and Carry,” the protesters chanted asking for the complying of their request.

“We demand the government to pay the compensation at once, not through installments,” said a protester. Over one hundred policemen are on guard to secure the rally.

Mud burst during the drilling of a gas well in East Java three years ago, killing 13 people and displacing 36,000 others.

First sighting of humpback whale in Hong Kong

HONG KONG, 18 March—A humpback whale has been spotted in Hong Kong waters, a government spokesman said Wednesday, in the first reported sighting of the giant mammal off the southern Chinese city.

The Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department said it received a report on Monday that a 10 metre (33 feet) whale was seen swimming in the East Lamma Channel, a busy sea channel to the west of Hong Kong Island. “It is the first time we have seen a humpback whale in Hong Kong waters,” the spokesman told AFP.

Discovery shuttle docks with space station

WASHINGTON, 18 March — The shuttle Discovery has docked with the International Space Station on a mission to deliver the orbiting lab’s first Japanese crewmember and key parts to complete construction of the station.

The two vessels linked up at 2119 GMT as they flew over southern Australia, around six minutes behind the estimated docking time but, barring minor communication issues between the ISS and mission control in Houston, without a hitch.

During their 13-day mission, the Discovery crew, including Koichi Wakata, who will become the first long-stay Japanese crewmember on the ISS, will install two pairs of solar panels to the space station, one of the last major tasks of the more than decade-long effort to construct the orbiting outpost.

Installing the solar panels was to have taken a two-astronaut team four space walks of more than six hours each to complete, according to NASA’s original plans.

But after lift-off was delayed last week because of a hydrogen leak, the solar panels are now due to be installed during three space walks, the first one set for Thursday, NASA said.

The pairs of solar panels contain 32,800 solar cells and measure 35 metres (115 feet) long.

Adobe 1Q profit, sales drop, squeezed by downturn

NEW YORK, 18 March — Adobe Systems Inc. the company behind the popular Photoshop software, posted a decline in fiscal first-quarter profit and sales on Tuesday, squeezed by the economic downturn.

However, adjusted earnings slightly exceeded Wall Street’s expectations, and the company’s forecast for the current quarter was in line with analysts’ estimates.

San Jose, Calif based Adobe had already warned this month of revenue falling below its previous target.

The recession has slowed sales of Creative Suite 4, the latest version of the software package that brings in the majority of Adobe’s revenue. The product launched last fall, coinciding with the worsening economic downturn.

For the December-February period, Adobe earned $156.4 million, or 30 cents per share, down 29 percent from $219.4 million, or 38 cents per share, a year earlier. Excluding one-time items such as stock-options compensation with the way of installment of 15 million rupiah (some 1,250 US dollars) per month to each displaced family as it was already decided in February by Lapindo, part of the business empire controlled by the family of Indonesian Welfare Minister Aburajab Bakti. Until all outstanding compensation is paid.

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A polar bear mother and her two cubs in Wapusk National Park on the shore of Hudson Bay near Churchill, Manitoba, are seen in this 6 Nov, 2007 file photo.

INTERNET

The Space Shuttle Discovery is shown docked to the International Space Station with the earth in the background in this image from NASA TV on 17 March, 2009. —INTERNET

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**SPORTS**

**F1 champion to be determined by race wins**

**PARIS, 18 March—**Formula One’s championship will be decided by the number of race wins and not accumulated points.

Governing body FIA decided on Tuesday that the current points system will remain in effect to determine the driver’s title in the case of a tie, with points also determining the order of the drivers who finish the season behind the overall champion.

Under the new system, Ferrari’s Felipe Massa would have won the 2008 championship instead of Lewis Hamilton of McLaren. The Brazilian driver won six grand prix races to Hamilton’s five.

The 10 F1 teams had been looking to change the points to a 12-9-7 scoring system for first through third place, from its current 10-9-8 allocation. F1 boss Bernie Ecclestone had initially preferred a medals tally, but FIA approved Ecclestone’s revised proposal, which will not affect the constructors’ championship.

FIA’s World Motor Sports Council also approved further regulation changes to decrease costs in the face of the worldwide economic crisis. —Internet

**Gamba on fire, China, Australia celebrate**

**BEIJING, 18 March—**Reigning champions Gamba Osaka maintained their red-hot form to stun FC Seoul 4-2 on Tuesday at China’s Shandong Lvung got their AFC Champions League campaign back on track in emphatic fashion.

Elsewhere, Newcastle Jets handed Australia its first win of the tournament with a 2-0 victory over Korea’s Ulsan Hyundai, while the clash between J-League stalwarts Nagoya Grampus and Beijing Guoan ended goalless.

Japan’s Gamba have been impressive recently, following up on their 3-0 win over Shandong in the Champions League last week by moving to the top of the J-League over the weekend.

Brazilian forward Montera Leandro was their dangerman in Korea, bagging a brace as Gamba’s dominance grew.

Top-seeded Nadal triumped 6-3, 6-3 in a tricky encounter with Russian Tommy Haas 6-2, 7-6 (7/1).

Nadal had little time to savor the victory, which earned him a fourth-round match on Wednesday night against Argentina’s David Nalbandian, who hasn’t dropped a set in two rounds of the French Open. Nadal won 7-5, 7-6 (7/1).

The 35-year-old played the round of 16 against Argentina’s Guido Pella, who come back with a strong display in the first set.

**Arsenal advance in FA Cup amid controversy**

**LONDON, 18 March—**Cesc Fabregas has been accused of spitting at Hull’s assistant manager after Arsenal progressed to the last four of the FA Cup in a blaze of controversy.

Late goals from Robin van Persie and William Gallas sent Arsenal into a blaze of controversy.

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**Bayern’s Hoenes suggests football levy**

**MUNICH, 18 March—**Bayern Munich general manager Uli Hoensess has suggested each household in Germany pay an extra two euros (2.5 US dollars) per month to put German league football back on terrestrial television.

Hoensess has suggested an additional levy to the 17.98 euros (23 US dollars) German TV licence fee to help the professional game here close the yawning gap between its TV revenue and the three others.

**Nadal, Djokovic on course for semi-final clash**

**INDIAN WELLS, 18 March—**World number one Rafael Nadal and defending champion Novak Djokovic have stayed on course for a semi-final showdown with third-round triumphs in the Indian Wells Masters series.

Top-seeded Nadal triumped 6-3, 6-3 in a tricky encounter with Russian Dmitry Tursunov, while third-seeded Serbian Djokovic beat German veteran Tommy Haas 6-2, 7-6 (7/1).

The 35-year-old played the round of 16 against Argentina’s Guido Pella, who come back with a strong display in the first set.

**Eleven bids for 2018, 2022 World Cups**

**LONDON, 18 March—**There are a total of 11 announced bids, including combined bids, for the 2018 and 2022 World Cups, FIFA said on Tuesday after the deadline for candidates expired on Monday.

England, Australia, joint bids from Belgium/Netherlands and Spain/Portugal, also the USA, Indonesia, Japan, Mexico and Russia have applied for both tournaments while South Korea and Qatar have targeted solely 2022.

Roberto Carlos mulling Real return

**MADRID, 18 March—**Defender Roberto Carlos says he is ready to move back to Real Madrid from Turkish side Fenerbahce after the Brazilian international football trophy

**Women’s boxing champ unveils Sports Laurels in Lima**

**LIMA, 18 March—**Kina Malpartida, women’s boxing world champion in super featherweight, will see her name written in the National Stadium of Lima since on Tuesday as she unveiled the Sports Laurels. Peruvian Institute of Sports (IPD) chief Arturo Woodman hailed Malpartida’s strength and courage.

The 35-year-old played the round of 16 against Argentina’s Guido Pella, who come back with a strong display in the first set.

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OBITUARY
Meena Das (a) Daw Khin Myint
43 Yrs
Meena Das (a) Daw Khin Myint, 43 yrs, daughter of Mr. Shyam Lal (a) U San Mya and late Kaushalya Devi, wife of Rajen Das (a) U Tun Lin, Bosun, Bernhard Schulte Ship Management, mother of Shailem Das (a) Maung Pyae Soan and Jeevan Das (a) Maung San Myint Tun, expired on Monday, 16 March, 2009. Cremation at Yeway Cemetery on Friday, 20 March, 2009 at 4 p.m. Buses will leave from No. 8 Setkyar Street, Kyaukmyaung, Tamwe Yangon at 3 p.m.

INC B urges efforts to combat internet drug trafficking
VIENNA, 18 March — The international community must increase efforts to fight drug trafficking through the Internet, Hamid Ghodse, president of the International Narcotics Control Board (INCB), said on Tuesday.
He said in an INCB report that illicit drugs are increasingly being divided into small packages and distributed directly to drug addicts through the Internet trade has developed quickly. It said the Internet trade has developed quickly because of its convenience and rapidness, and "Internet pharmacies", with "point to point" mode of ordering and perivate postmen, have been increasingly used by criminals to transfer drugs and controlled narcotics spreading through the Internet.—MNA/Xinhua

WEATHER
Wednesday, 18 March, 2009
Summary of observations recorded at 09:30 hr MST: During the past 24 hours, rain or thundershowers have been isolated in Shan, Kayin and Mon States, Mandalay, Ayeyawady, Yangon and Taninthayi Divisions, weather has been partly cloudy in the remaining States and Divisions. Day temperatures were (3°C) to (14°C) above March average temperatures in Kachin State, Bago and Taninthayi Divisions, (3°C) below March average temperatures in Shan State, upper Sagaing and Mandalay Divisions and about March average temperatures in the remaining areas. The significant day temperatures were Thayawady (40°C). The Noteworthy amounts of rainfalls recorded were Khayan (1.57) inches, Ye and Belin (0.55) inch each, Coco Island (0.35) inch, Minesat (0.32) inch and Kawthong (0.19) inch...

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THE NEW LIGHT OF MYANMAR Thursday, 19 March, 2009
General Thura Shwe Mann welcomes Chief of General Staff of PLA and party

NAY PYI TAW, 18 March—At the invitation of Member of the State Peace and Development Council of the Union of Myanmar General Thura Shwe Mann of the Ministry of Defence, a goodwill delegation led by Chief of General Staff General Chen Bingde of the People’s Liberation Army of the People’s Republic of China arrived at Nay Pyi Taw this morning by special aircraft to pay a goodwill visit to the Union of Myanmar.

At 9.05 a.m., the special aircraft carrying the PLA goodwill delegation of the PRC arrived at Nay Pyi Taw Airport where they were welcomed by SPDC member General Thura Shwe Mann of the Ministry of Defence and party.

(See page 5 )

Prime Minister General Thein Sein arrives in Indonesia for goodwill visit

NAY PYI TAW, 18 March —At the invitations of President of the Republic of Indonesia Dr Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono and Prime Minister of the Republic of Singapore Mr. Lee Hsien Loong, Prime Minister of the Union of Myanmar General Thein Sein together with Minister for National Planning and Economic Development U Soe Tha, Minister for Hotels and Tourism Maj-Gen Soe Naing, Minister for Commerce Brig-Ten Naing Thein, Minister for Transport Maj-Gen Thein Swe, Minister for Forestry Brig-Gen Thein Aung, Deputy Minister for Foreign Affairs U Maung Myint, Deputy Minister for Home Affairs Brig-Gen Phone Swe, Director-General of the State Peace and Development Council Office Col Kyaw Kyaw Win and departmental heads left for Indonesia by special flight on 16 March and arrived at Halim Perdanakusuma Airport in Jakarta at 11.10 a.m local time the same day.

Myanmar Ambassador to Indonesia U Nyan Lin and Head of Protocol Department Mr. Aminrufi Rauf of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Indonesia welcomed Prime Minister General Thein Sein on board the aircraft.

Next, Indonesian Minister of Foreign Affairs H.E Dr N. Hassan Wirajuda welcomed Prime Minister General Thein Sein. Then, an Indonesian schoolgirl garlanded the Prime Minister.

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