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Senior General Than Shwe, wife Daw Kyaing Kyaing attend ceremony to enshrine Maha Muni Buddha Image (Hniphaya) in Lashio

NAY PYI TAW, 19 April — Chairman of the State Peace and Development Council Commander-in-Chief of Defence Services Senior General Than Shwe and wife Daw Kyaing Kyaing, accompanied by Member of the State Peace and Development Council General Thura Shwe Mann, SPDC members Lt-Gen Ye Myint, Lt-Gen Kyaw Win and Lt-Gen Tin Aye, Commander-in-Chief (Navy) Vice-Admiral Soe Thein, Commander-in-Chief (Air) Lt-Gen Myat Hein, Chairman of Mandalay Division PDC Commander of Central Command Maj-Gen Khin Zaw, ministers, senior military officers of the Ministry of Defence and officials of the SPDC Office, left PyinOoLwin by air on 18 April morning and arrived at Lashio Airport in Lashio of Shan State (North) at 10 am.

The Senior General and party were welcomed by Chairman of Shan State (North) PDC Commander of North-East Command Brig-Gen Aung Than Htut, Brig-Gen Thet Oo of Hsenwi Station, Deputy Commander Brig-Gen Hla Myint and officials.

At Thiri Mingala Manhsu Shan Monastery in Lashio, the Senior General, wife and party attended the ceremony to enshrine Maha Muni Buddha Image (Hniphaya).

Also present on the occasion were departmental personnel, members of the Union Solidarity and Development Association, social organizations, religious associations and townselders. State Ovadaçariya Kanmein Monastery Sayadaw Agga Maha Pandita Bhaddanta Muninda administered the Nine Precepts. Members of the Sangha recited Parittas.

Senior General Than Shwe and wife Daw Kyaing Kyaing offered religious objects dedicated to the pagoda to the Sayadaw. The Senior General and wife donated provisions to the Sayadaw of Kanmein Monastery and rice, edible oil and salt to members of the Sangha of monasteries in Lashio. They also presented provisions and robes to nuns.

General Thura Shwe Mann and party offered alms to members of the Sangha. On behalf of the Senior General and wife, Lt-Gen Kyaw Win and the commander kept religious objects into the reliquary of the pagoda.

(See page 8)

Maha Muni Buddha Image in Manhsu Shan Monastery in Lashio. **MNA**

The congregation led by Senior General Than Shwe and wife Daw Kyaing Kyaing receive Nine Precepts from a Sayadaw. — **MNA**

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

PERSPECTIVES

Friday, 20 April, 2007

For ensuring food security of growing population

The government has been building irrigation facilities necessary for agriculture such as dams, reservoirs, sluice gates, river water pumping stations and underground water tapping stations throughout the nation.

The newly-built irrigation facilities benefit more than seven million acres of farmlands and increase the sown acreage.

Ongoing Kadaik Dam Project near Kadaik Village in Paung Township, Mon State, is nearing completion. Upon completion, the earthen type irrigation facility will be able to irrigate 10,000 acres of arable lands.

Better ways and means are to be sought to extensively grow major crops such as paddy, sugarcane, beans and pulses and corn along with crops suitable for the region concerned and to ensure boosting per acre yields of the crops.

Due to the emergence of more and more irrigation facilities, mixed cropping and multiple cropping patterns can be carried out on a larger scale and local people are enjoying better socio-economic life.

The government is now taking necessary steps in the states and divisions for production of vegetables and fish and meat in addition to rice in surplus in the region concerned.

Simultaneously, it is making all possible provisions for food security of both present Myanmar's population of more than 55 million and growing population.

Upholding the national policy and objectives being implemented for food sufficiency of the growing population, national people are to make earnest efforts in concert for the emergence of a peaceful, modern and developed nation.

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**

Ceremony to donate cash for fourth all-round renovation tasks of Shwephonepwint Pagoda held

YANGON, 19 April — A ceremony to donate cash for third time to carry out fourth all-round renovation tasks of Shwephonepwint Pagoda was held at the Dhammayon of the pagoda, in Pazundaung township this morning.

It was attended by Chairman of Leading Committee for Fourth All-round Renovation Tasks of Shwephonepwint Pagoda Secretariat Member of the Union Solidarity and Development Association Pazundaung Township In-charge Minister for Information Brig-Gen Kyaw Hsan and CEC Member of USDA Minister for Rail Transportation Maj-Gen Aung Min. Next, they accepted cash donations and presented certificates of honour to donors.

Minister Brig-Gen Kyaw Hsan accepts cash donated by a wellwisher.

MNA

First, the congregation opened the ceremony with three-time recitations of *Namo Tassa*. Next, Brig-Gen Kyaw Hsan made clarification on benefits to be gained for the construction of the religious buildings and carrying out of five construction tasks for fourth all-round renovation of the pagoda.

Under the patronage of father U Tha Sein, Minister for Rail Transportation Maj-Gen Aung Min and wife Daw Wai Wai Tha and families donated one gold foil and one gold bell worth K 1 million.

Under the patronage of mother Daw Than Kyi, Minister for Information Brig-Gen Kyaw Hsan and wife Daw Kyi Kyi Win and families donated a gold bell worth K 400,000.

A total of 62 wellwishers donated cash K 17.546 million towards the pagoda.

With the intention of implementing renovation tasks for the pagoda, wellwishers and pilgrims have already donated K 145,082,960 in total so far. — *MNA*

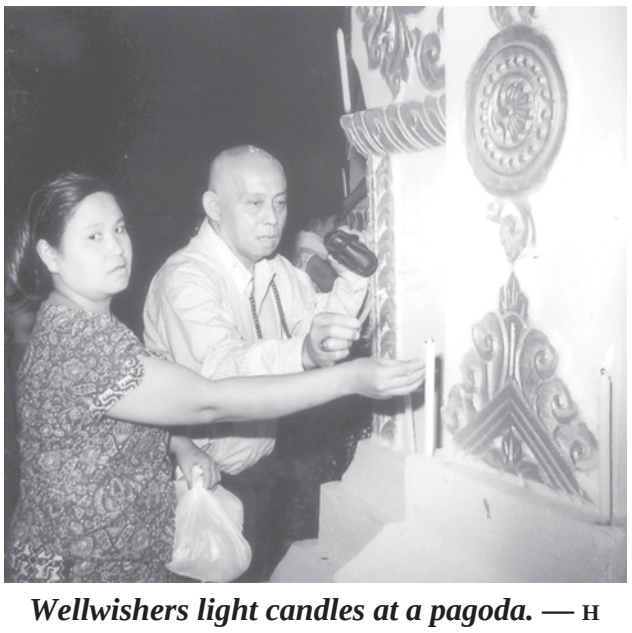
Collective ordination ceremony held in Sagu Township

YANGON, 19 April — Twenty-seven men were ordained as monks, 114 were novitiated and one girl was initiated into nunhood at Sagu Monastery in Sagu Township on 15 April sponsored by wellwishers Thiri Thudhamma Manijota Dhara U Myint Soe and Daw Mya Mya Soe of Mayangon Township.

The ordination and novitiation ceremony was held at the monastery and wellwishers offered 1,800 candle lights to three pagodas on Sagu-Singaung Road.

Wellwishers also offered meals to monks, novices and local residents and shared merits gained.

On 15 April, water pumps and lakes built at a cost of K 250,000 were unveiled in Singu, NyaunOo township. —*MNA*



Wellwishers light candles at a pagoda. — H

Sawmill burnt down, one injured in mine blast

YANGON, 19 April — A sawmill in Thandaung Township was burnt down by KNU insurgents and a villager was injured on his foot as the mine near the sawmill exploded last week.

Ko Tun Tun of Thabyaynyunt Village, who took part in extinguishing the fire on the night of 10 April, stepped on the mine the next day planted by the insurgents near the sawmill.

The victim was rushed to Taungoo Hospital.

Insurgents have disturbed peaceful life of the people. They are in hot pursuit by the regional Tatmadaw columns. — *MNA*

Meditation camp in Insein on 5-14 May

YANGON, 19 April — The 10th 10-day meditation camp will be organized at Myothit Dhammayon Monastery in Insein Township from 5 to 14 May.

Devotees are invited to arrive at the monastery on 4 April at 5 pm.

Those wishing to donate cash to the funds of the meditation camp may contact the monastery.

Sayadaw Bhaddanta Kusala of Alin Young Monastery and Sayadaw Bhaddanta Saddhamma Jotika Dhaja Bhaddanta Kasava of Barwana Monastery in Thayet, Sayadaw Maha Saddhamma Jotika Dhaja Bhaddanta Paññavara of Myothit Dhammayon Monastery in Insein will teach the devotees ways of doing meditation.

MNA

INTERNATIONAL NEWS

Malaysia supplies oil palm seedlings to Pakistan

KUALA LUMPUR, 18 April — Malaysia is supplying oil palm seedlings to Pakistan to establish a 40,000-hectare oil palm plantation in the province of Sindh, local Press reported Tuesday.

Plantation Industries and Commodities Minister Peter Chin Fah Kui said he is going to Karachi, southern Pakistan, to meet the provincial government in Sindh on the government-to-government initiative.

"So far, this plantation in Sindh is still at trial stage. About 5,000 hectares have been planted with seeds provided by the Malaysian Government," Chin told the *New Straits Times* Monday in a telephone interview.

This initiative will help build better trade relations among Islamic nations, said Chin. Pakistan is Malaysia's third biggest buyer of palm oil products.

Currently, Pakistan buys about 950,000 tons of palm oil from Malaysia annually. The bulk of it is refined, bleached and deodorized (RBD) palm oil, according to the English daily. Chin will be leading a 50-member delegation to Karachi from 18 April to 21 April to participate in the Malaysia-Pakistan Palm Oil Trade Seminar (POTS) there. Malaysian Palm Oil Board (MPOB) figures show that in the first quarter of this year, China, the Netherlands and Pakistan are still the top three buyers of Malaysian palm oil products.—*MNA/Xinhua*

Iranian President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad attends a military parade to commemorate Army Day in Teheran on 18 April, 2007. —INTERNET

Cruise ship fuel threatens isle

ATHENS, 19 April — Hundreds of tons of oil trapped in the tanks of a sunken cruise ship near the Greek island of Santorini must be pumped out immediately to avert an environmental disaster, Greenpeace said on Tuesday.

The Sea Diamond, owned by Louis Cruise Lines, sank on 6 April a day after running aground off the island, forcing more than 1,500 passengers and crew to evacuate it.

A French tourist and his daughter are missing and feared drowned.

Several special vessels have been battling a limited oil spill for 12 days but fears of a much bigger spill grow as about 400 tons of fuel oil remain inside the ship.

"The most serious concern is the fuel inside the cruise ship," said Nikos Charalambidis, director of the Greek branch of the environmental group Greenpeace. "This spill we are dealing with now is minor, just some oil and other fluids but not from the fuel tanks."

"Too much time has been wasted and not a day more should be lost. Over 400 tons of oil in the sea would mean 70 square kilometers of oil spill and pollution along 25 kilometres of coastline," he told *Reuters*.

Internet

US soldier goes on trial in Italy for murder

ROME, 18 April — A US soldier goes on trial in Rome on Tuesday accused of killing an Italian intelligence agent in Iraq, but will be prosecuted in absentia because Washington has ruled out handing him over. Mario Lozano, from the US Army National Guard in New York, denies wrongdoing in firing at Nicola Calipari's car when the agent was escorting a newly freed hostage to Baghdad airport in 2005. He says the driver ignored warnings to slow down or stop.

The US and Italian governments said the shooting was an accident, but an Italian judge charged Lozano with voluntary homicide and two counts of attempted murder of others in the car.

His trial will take place at a courtroom inside Rome's maximum security prison, Rebibbia, the largest in the Italian capital. Lozano will have a privately hired attorney to represent him, legal sources said.—*MNA/Reuters*

Conservation not desalination for WA: Green group

PERTH (Australia), 19 April—A conservation group is calling on Western Australians to make water-saving changes in their homes, saying they would conserve about as much water as a new desalination plant could produce.

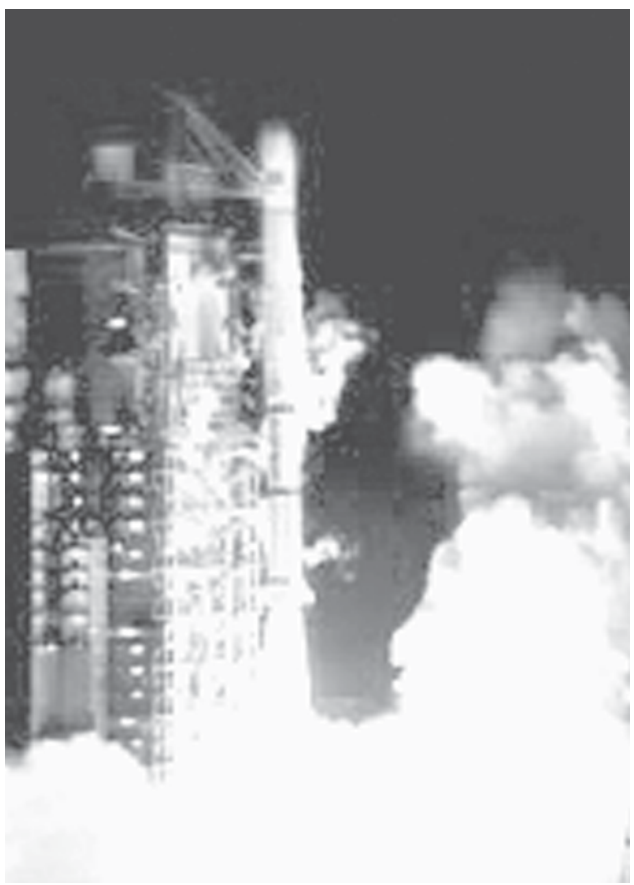
Premier Alan Carpenter says he has no doubt there will be several more desalination plants built along WA's coast in the future to meet the state's growing water needs.

However, Chris Tallentire from the Conservation Council says there are better ways of managing water resources.

"We could easily save 30 gigalitres, about the equivalent of a new desalination plant, just by having people convert half of their garden to native plants" he said.

"Then there are much bigger initiatives as well, like managed aquifer recharge and the Wellington Dam proposal and also just making people pay a little bit more for water. "As well we've got to start and ask questions about the limit that should be imposed on Perth's population growth."

Internet



The carrier rocket Long March 3-A blasts off from the Xichang Satellite Launch Center in southwest China's Sichuan Province on 14 April , 2007. China successfully launched a navigation satellite aboard Long March 3-A early Saturday.
INTERNET

A 25-metre-long bullet bus is displayed at Beijing Exhibition Centre in Beijing, capital of China, on 18 April, 2007. The Sixth Beijing International Commercial Vehicle and Accessories Exposition opened here on Wednesday. The bullet bus produced by Zhengzhou Yutong attracted visitors' attention. Capacity of the bus is 230 persons. —INTERNET

The photo taken on 12 April , 2007 shows the sculpture on an ancient building in Meibei village in Ji'an City, south China's Jiangxi Province. Meibei village, 22 kilometres southeast of downtown Ji'an City, has a history of about 800 years since its establishement during the Southern Song Dynasty (1127-1279 AD). —XINHUA

Nicaragua, Costa Rica argue over boat seizure

MANAGUA, 18 April —Nicaragua's Foreign Minister Samuel Santos on Monday defended the Navy's seizure of Costan Rican leisure boat *El Privilegio*, saying the boat had violated Nicaraguan waters, and rejected Costa Rica's demand for the boat's immediate return.

The boat "was in clear violation of international security norm... No one aboard had verifiable official documentation", Samuel Santos in a statement.

Last Tuesday's detention was "in the context of fulfilling fishing resource protection plans and fighting crimes at sea", he added.

He also said that Costa Rica's previous allegation was "an improper territorial claim".

Costa Rican Foreign Minister Bruno Stagno on Wednesday accused Nicaraguan military of trespassing Costa Rican waters to seize the boat, and illegitimately detaining four Costa Ricans and two US citizens.

MNA/Xinhua

Car collision kills five, injures two in east China

HANGZHOU, 18 April — Five people were killed and two others injured in a traffic accident in east China's Zhejiang Province on Sunday, police said on Monday.

The accident occurred at an intersection in a downtown area of Ningbo, a major port city in Zhejiang, at around 11 pm on Sunday when a Toyota sedan crashed head on into a Santana carrying five people. The five passengers in the Santana died at the scene, police said.

The Toyota collided with a taxi right after its collision with the Santana, injuring two others, the police said.— *MNA/Xinhua*

Cast members Hayden Panettiere (L) and Adrian Pasdar pose at the wrap party for season one of their NBC television series 'Heroes' in Hollywood California on 17 April, 2007.
INTERNET

Hungarian motorway blocked by escaping rabbits

BUDAPEST, 18 April — Hungary's busiest highway, connecting Budapest with the Austrian capital Vienna, was closed early on Monday after a truck carrying rabbits crashed, letting 5,000 of the animals loose on the road, police said.

The M1 motorway was closed around 40 kilometres (25 miles) west of Budapest and could remain closed for hours while police try to capture the escaped animals, highway police spokeswoman Viktoria Galik said.

"There are thousands of them on the road but they're not using their newfound freedom well; they're just sitting around, eating grass and enjoying the sun," Galik told *Reuters*.

MNA/Reuters

Sandstorm strikes N-W China

XINING, 18 April — Northwest China's Qinghai Province was blanketed in dust as a large-scale sandstorm struck the province on Monday afternoon, according to the provincial meteorological station.

In most areas, the sky turned grey and visibility was reduced to less than 100 metres, officials with the station said. "The storm was caused by a cold front which developed from Xinjiang and moved eastward. It was the largest sandstorm to strike the province this year," a spokesman said.

According to a previous forecast by the China Meteorological Administration, northern and northwestern China should expect 11 to 15 sandstorms this spring.

MNA/Xinhua

Car bombs kill almost 170 in Baghdad after PM's pledge

BAGHDAD, 19 April — Car bombs killed nearly 170 people in Baghdad on Wednesday in the deadliest attacks in the city since US and Iraqi forces launched a security crackdown aimed at halting the country's slide into civil war.

One car bomb alone in the mainly Shiite Sadriya neighbourhood killed 118 people and wounded 139, police said.

The apparently coordinated attacks — there were five within a short space of time — occurred hours after Shiite Prime Minister Nuri al-Maliki said Iraq would take security control of the whole country from foreign forces by the end of the year.

More than 230 people were wounded in total.

Sunni Islamist al-Qaeda are blamed for most of the major bombing attacks targeting Shiites in Iraq.

Maliki is under growing pressure to say when US troops will leave, but the attacks in mainly Shiite areas of Baghdad underscored the huge security challenges.

MNA/Reuters

Residents gather at the scene of a car bomb attack in Baghdad's Sadr City, on 18 April, 2007. Nearly 170 people were killed and more than 230 others injured when a series of bombs rocked Baghdad on 18 April.—XINHUA

12 killed, 29 injured in traffic accident in Brazil

RIO DE JANEIRO, 18 April — At least 12 people were killed and 29 others injured Monday when a bus plunged into an abyss in northern Brazil, the Highway Police said Monday.

The accident took place in Ibiapaba Sierra, a rural region in the northern state of Ceara, and rescuers had to use a helicopter to help the passengers out of the crashed bus.

The passengers started their trip early Monday from Teresina, the capital of Piaui state, to Fortaleza, the capital of Ceara. Witnesses said the bus rolled several times before falling into the 100-metre-deep abyss.

MNA/Xinhua

ECONOMIC NEWS

Palm oil boon may well be biodiesel bane

KUALA LUMPUR, 19 April—Malaysia's crude palm oil (CPO) prices have soared to record levels, but, ironically, may also hurt another equally lucrative and rejuvenated sector — palm oil-based biodiesel.

This is because CPO, the main raw material needed to make biodiesel, is set to become more expensive than the selling price of biodiesel.

Industry players said that demand for biodiesel as well as earnings of the companies may be affected if CPO prices remain too high in the near term.

As at March, the Government had approved 90 biodiesel licences, of which five plants are already operating with a total palm oil feedstock requirement of 350,000 tonnes. Five more plants are set to come on stream this year.

"Biodiesel prices are now ranging between RM2,400 and RM2,600 a tonne compared to CPO current price levels of RM2,200.

"CPO prices still have the potential to climb further to RM2,300 and RM2,400, and when that happens, biodiesel players' profit margin will be squeezed and their pockets will be hurt," said a Malaysian Palm Oil Association official.

Frost & Sullivan's vice president for growth consulting, Chris De Lavigne, said that with CPO prices at RM2,200 a tonne and biodiesel being sold at no more than RM2,550 a tonne, the latter is barely viable.

Internet

A yacht sails in the Victoria Harbor in Hong Kong, south China on 12 April , 2007. Hong Kong has recovered from days of cloudy and cold, and turned sunny.—INTERNET

China confiscates millions of pirated products in 2006

BEIJING, 18 April — More than 73 million pirated products were confiscated by copyright administrative authorities in 2006, a spokesman for the State Intellectual Property Office (SIPO) said here Tuesday.

The confiscated products include more than 18 million pirated books, 1.1 million periodicals, 48 million audio-visual products, 2.01 million electronic publications and 3.79 million software discs, spokesman Yin Xintian said at a Press conference.

Customs offices across the country investigated and handled a total of 2,473 intellectual property infringement cases in 2006, involving nearly 200 million items of goods valued at more than 200 million yuan (25.6 million US dollars).

Yin said there was a remarkable growth in patent applications and patents granted in 2006.

Statistics show that the SIPO received a total of 573,000 patent applications in 2006, an increase of 20 per cent over 2005. A total of 268,000 patents were granted, up 25 per cent on the previous year.

MNA/Xinhua

Singer Avril Lavigne performs at the Virgin Megastore in Times Square to promote her new album "The Best Damn Thing", in New York on 18 April, 2007.—INTERNET

Itochu to build coal railway in Indonesia's Kalimantan

JAKARTA, 18 April — Japan's Itochu Corporation plans to build a 700-kilometre railway network for coal transport in Indonesia's resource-rich island of Kalimantan with a total investment of one billion US dollars, local Press said Tuesday.

The company will conduct feasibility study and prepare preliminary design in Central Kalimantan Province for four months.

The project is a partnership with the local government, which will hold a share of 70 per cent, reported leading economic daily *Bisnis Indonesia.*

"We are confident that a smooth collaboration (with the local government) will help speed up the feasibility study," Itochu Indonesia Director Yasuo Ichimura was quoted as saying.

The project will commence in 2009 and is set to begin operating in 2012.— *MNA/Xinhua*

Two tourists wearing clothes of Miao ethnic group in Lijiang City of southwest China's Yunnan Province, on 9 April , 2007. The city of Lijiang, bearing a rich culture of China's ethnic Naxi and Miao people, is one of the most popular tourism destinations for tourists home and abroad. —INTERNET

Venezuela, Brazil lay foundation stone for petrochemical complex

CARACAS, 18 April — Presidents from Venezuela and Brazil Monday laid the foundation stone for a new petrochemical complex in eastern Venezuela, part of a series of joint ventures launched to tap deeper into the region's fossil fuel resources.

The new 3.4-billion-dollar complex, to be built in Venezuela's northeastern Anzoategui State, will "increase the capacity to transform gas into liquid, liquid into solids and solids into thousands of products," said Venezuelan President Chavez, who made the remarks at the site with presidents Luiz Inacio da Silva of Brazil, Evo Morales of Bolivia, and Nicanor Duarte of Paraguay.

The project is a "brother to brother, 50 per cent to 50 per cent" joint venture between Venezuela's state-owned oil company Petroleos de Venezuela (PDVSA) and Brazilian petrochemical giant Braskem, said Chavez. It was launched shortly after last month's US-Brazil ethanol agreement, which Chavez, sharing his concerns with Cuban leader Fidel Castro, called a "cartel" that would monopolize arable lands and starve the poor.

Chavez defended what he said is a new Venezuelan strategy to integrate South America and end a historic economic dependency on the United States. He also called on South American entrepreneurs to invest in his country. "We are South Americans before anything else," he said. — *MNA/Xinhua*

Southern Shan State where 1000 flowers bloom

Yadanasi Sayadaw **(Loilem)**

Taunggyi in 1980 was crowded only at its centre where Myoma Market was located. Sao San Htun Hospital was in the uptown area and the ground accommodating the Coach Station at present was covered with shrubs and bushes. The hill on which the Culhamuni Lawkachantha Pagoda is located was the camp of the garrison. What's more, most of the surface area of Inlay Lake was covered with colonies of water hyacinth as the task of clearing the plants was done only once a year at the time of PhaungDawOo Pagoda Festival.

The Tatmadaw government serving as a new gardener has changed everything for the better.

"The first requirement is the emergence of robust foundations for prevalence of peace and stability and the rule of law. The whole nation including border areas will enjoy peace and stability only if national unity flourishes. As the government is able to make peace with national races groups, the sound foundations of peace and stability and the rule of law can be established even in border areas.

"The second requirement is the healthy economic infrastructure as our nation will be able to catch up with others only if its economy enjoys a robust growth.

"As a means to strengthen the nation's economic power, the government has already built adequate highways, bridges large and small, dams, power plants and other development infrastructures for the whole nation including border areas to see the emergence of sound economic foundations. And in the border areas, it has been building development infrastructures covering roads, bridges, farms and small-scale power stations in accord with the requirement of the specific region.

"The third is the high education standard of the people, so that they will be able to practise the discipline-flourishing democracy for the firmness of the Union. The people will have the capacity to correctly differentiate between right and wrong and determine which is constructive and which is destructive.

"Now is the time people will have to join hands and harmoniously strive with the strength of unity and Union Spirit for development of their community, region and nation and perpetuation of the Union, which is our heritage."

Senior General Than Shwe

25-1-2007: Anawrahta Hall, Ministry of Defence.

Since its assumption of the State power, the Tatmadaw government has been striving day and night for the nation to blossom. In this article, I will present the development I have witnessed in southern Shan State.

Myanmar engineers and architects, with the leadership of the government and the assistance of the people built Culhamuni Lawkachantha Pagoda in Taunggyi, the capital of southern Shan State. The sacred umbrella hoisting ceremony held on 25 November 1996 was graced by the attendance of Deputy Commander-in-Chief of Defence Services Commander-in-Chief (Army) Vice-Senior General Maung Aye. Pilgrims from southern Shan State came to Taunggyi on Langkho-Loilem road, those from eastern Shan State on Tachilek-Kengtung-Loilem road and others from northern Shan State on Hsipaw-Panketu-Loilem road.

Vice-Senior General Maung Aye also attended the sacred umbrella hoisting ceremony of a Shwedagon-design pagoda in Kunhein on 22 December 1999.

The Tatmadaw government renovated an old road in Homein region on the east bank of Thanlwin River at the border with Thailand after the entire U Khun Sa-led MTA exchanged arms for peace unconditionally. Thanks to the upgraded road, Pyinyeinaye Pagoda was built in the region.

Mongpang, Mongton and Monghsat lie in the region where southern Shan State and eastern Shan State meet. Transport began to improve only after the completion of Tarhsan Bridge on Thanlwin River. The government built a 108-foot Shwedagon replica pagoda in Mongpang.

The 135-foot Maha Rathabhithamaggi Pagoda was built in Panglong where the historic Panglong Agreement was reached. Prime Minister General Soe Win took part in the sacred umbrella hoisting ceremony of the pagoda held on 10 February 2006.

The Tatmadaw government has renovated and preserved Kekku pagodas which have become a new tourist attraction of southern Shan State. It also installed a lift for tourists to easily reach the entrance to the famous ShweOoMin Cave in Pindaya in which a large number of ancient Buddha images are kept.

In addition to renovating the PhaungDawOo Pagoda in Inlay, another famous tourist destination of Myanmar, the government has been providing financial and other necessary assistance to the Sasana, members of the Sangha and nuns. Up to 1988, there were only four title-recipient Buddhist monks in southern Shan State. The Tatmadaw government has conferred religious titles on over 90 Buddhist monks in southern Shan State up to now. A grand religious examination has been held in Taunggyi.

The number of pariyatti schools and patipatti centres has been increasing in the towns of the entire southern Shan State. The people with the leadership of Chairman of Shan State Peace and Development Council Commander of Eastern Command Brig-Gen Thaung Aye and wife and the sponsorship of eminent Sayadaws are striving to promote and propagate the Sasana.

(Translation: TMT)

In addition to renovating the PhaungDawOo Pagoda in Inlay, another famous tourist destination of Myanmar, the government has been providing financial and other necessary assistance to the Sasana, members of the Sangha and nuns. Up to 1988, there were only four title-recipient Buddhist monks in southern Shan State. The Tatmadaw government has conferred religious titles on over 90 Buddhist monks in southern Shan State up to now. A grand religious examination has been held in Taunggyi.

Consecration, merit sharing ceremonies held at Shwephonepwint Pagoda

YANGON, 19 April — To mark the completion of offering gold foils, the ceremony to consecrate Shwephonepwint Pagoda was held at the new prayer hall of the pagoda in Pazundaung Township this morning, attended by Lt-Gen Myint Swe of the Ministry of Defence.

In commemoration of the completion of the fourth all-round renovation task, Vice-Chairman of State Sangha Maha Nayaka Committee Agga Maha Pandita Agga Maha Saddhamma Jotikadhaja Bhaddanta Tejaniya and members of the Sangha consecrated the pagoda.

Chairman of Central Committee for Fourth All-Round Renovation of the pagoda Minister for Information Brig-Gen Kyaw Hsan supplicated on the purpose of holding the consecration ceremony and merit sharing ceremony.

Lt-Gen Myint Swe and party took the Five Precepts from the Vice-Chairman Sayadaw. Next, members of the Sangha recited Parittas.

Lt-Gen Myint Swe offered eight requisites to the Vice-Chairman Sayadaw. Chairman of Yangon Division Peace and Development Council Commander of Yangon Command Maj-Gen Hla Htay Win, ministers, guests and wellwishers donated eight requisites to members of the Sangha.

Joint Secretary Agga Maha Pandita Bhaddanta Manitasiri Bhivamsa delivered a sermon, and the congregation shared merits gained.

After the ceremony, Lt-Gen Myint Swe and party offered 'soon' to members of the Sangha.

Also present on the occasion were Minister for Information Brig-Gen Kyaw Hsan and wife, Minister for Rail Transportation Maj-Gen Aung Min and wife, Deputy Minister Thura U Thaung Lwin, local authorities, chairmen and responsible persons of Myanmar Writers and Journalists Association, Myanmar Motion Picture Asiayon and Myanmar Traditional Artists and Artisans Asiayon, members of the pagoda board of trustees and wellwishers. — *MNA*

Seinbudaw (Diamond Orb) of Shwe-phonepwint Pagoda. **MNA**

***Congregation led by Lt-Gen Myint Swe shares merits gained at ceremony to mark completion of fourth all-round renovation of Shwephonepwint Pagoda.* — MNA**

Study shows Britain's drug problem worst in Europe

LONDON, 19 April — Britain has the worst level of drug abuse in Europe and the second-highest rate of drug-related deaths, according to a study published on Wednesday.

Despite years of anti-drug campaigns, government policy has had "minimal" impact on the level of drug abuse in Britain, the report said.

The government insists however that its strategy to tackle drug abuse has been a success, with record numbers of people entering and staying in treatment.

Dame Ruth Runciman, who chairs the UK Drug Policy Commission, the new think-tank behind the research, said there were signs of progress but not enough had been done to see what policies were working well and why.

She said Britain was "doing badly" when compared to the rest of Europe and more research was needed to tackle the problem. "The commission does not start from the position that all UK drug policy has failed, but rather that we do not know enough about which elements of policy work, why they work and where they work well," she said.

The study found little evidence that longer jail sentences, more arrests, education and treatment had cut the number of addicts or the availability of drugs.

The number of heroin users in England alone is estimated at 281,000, compared to just 5,000 in 1975, the study found. A fifth of all people arrested are heroin addicts. A quarter of those born between 1976 and 1980 have tried a Class A drug, a category that includes heroin, cocaine and ecstasy. Nearly half of young people have smoked cannabis.

The price of drugs has fallen, despite a rise in arrests of dealers and increased seizures. A gramme of heroin typically cost 54 pounds in 2005, compared to 70 pounds in 2000.

In 2005, there were 1,644 drug-related deaths. An estimated four out of 10 people who inject drugs have Hepatitis C.

Prime Minister Tony Blair said his government had doubled funding for the treatment of drug addicts and had overseen a 16 per cent fall in drug misuse since 1998.—*MNA/Reuters*

Malaysian Ministry to present liberalized distributive trade rules

KUALA LUMPUR, 19 April— Malaysian Ministry of Domestic Trade and Consumer Affairs will present a more liberalized set of guidelines on foreign participation in distributive trade to the Cabinet in three weeks' time, local Press reported on Wednesday.

Its minister Mohd Shafie Apdal said the guidelines will be amended to be more acceptable to investors. Distributive trade is the distribution of material goods to consumers through retailing and wholesaling.

"We have made a lot of adjustments and quite a lot of liberalization in the guidelines which will be palatable to investors, but we have not yet got the endorsement (from the Cabinet)," Shafie was quoted as saying by the *New Straits Times.*

The minister made the remarks at a Press conference after opening the Corporate Registers Forum 2007 here on Tuesday.

MNA/Xinhua

Senior General Than Shwe, wife Daw Kyaing Kyaing …

(from page 1)

Vice-Chairman of Shan State (North) Sangha Nayaka Committee Manhsu Phayagyi Monastery Sayadaw Agga Maha Pandita Bhaddanta Kodañña delivered a sermon, and the Senior General, wife and party shared merits gained. After the ceremony, they offered 'soon' to members of the Sangha.

Maha Muni Buddha Image (Hniphaya) from the base to the headdress is 11 feet and six inches high, and the length between both edges of the knees are 8 feet and 4.5 inches. — *MNA*

***Senior General Than Shwe and wife Daw Kyaing Kyaing present religious objects to be enshrined in Maha Muni Buddha Image in Lashio to Kanmein Monastery Sayadaw.* — MNA**

***Senior General Than Shwe and wife Daw Kyaing Kyaing offer a day meal to Sayadaws.* — MNA**

***Daw Kyaing Kyaing, wife of Senior General Than Shwe, donates provisions and robes to nuns.* — MNA**

Cornerstones laid for ancient Zeya Theikdi Pagoda

YANGON, 19 April — A ceremony to lay cornerstones for construction of ancient Zeya Theikdi Pagoda in the compound of Panditayama Monastery in Dagon Myothit (South) Township was held in conjunction with the cash donation ceremony this morning, attended by Religious Affairs Minister Brig-Gen Thura Myint Maung.

First, the congregation took the Nine Precepts from State Ovadacariya Agga Maha Kammathanacariya Agga Maha Saddhamma Jotikadhaja Tawtaik Dhamma Yeiktha Sayadaw Bhaddanta Dhammasara. Next, members of the Sangha recited the parittas. The minister, Vice-Mayor Col Maung Pa and officials offered the gem casket, the stone plaque, bricks and provisions to members of the Sangha.

Next, the minister and the vice-mayor accepted cash donations from wellwishers and those present shared the merits gained. At the auspicious time, the minister laid the gem casket and stone plaque at the designated places and sprinkled scented water on them.

Later, the minister, the vice-mayor and officials put bricks in the designated places and sprinkled scented water on them.

MNA

Minister Brig-Gen Thura Myint Maung accepts cash donated by a wellwisher.

MNA

Ceremony to honour Dvipitaka Sayadaw

YANGON, 19 April — A ceremony to pay homage to Sayadaw Ashin Çandana who passed the Dvipitaka in the Tipitakadhara Tipitakakovida Selection Examination will be held at Kyaunggyi Monastery in Pauktaw Village of Bago Township on 29 April.

Any person may attend the ceremony to pay homage to the Sayadaw. — *MNA*

ကျေးရွာတိုင်း ကိုယ့်အားကိုယ်ကိုးစာကြည့်တိုက်များ ထူထောင်ဖို့၊ ဝိုင်းဝန်းကူညီဆောင်ရွက်စို့။

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ကျေးလက်ပြည်သူအများ ပညာဗဟုသုတတိုးပွားစေရန် ကျေးရွာကိုယ့်အားကိုယ်ကိုး စာကြည့်တိုက်များအတွက် စာအုပ်များကို ပြန်ကြားရေးနှင့်ပြည်သူ့ဆက်ဆံရေးဦးစီးဌာန၊ ခရိုင်/မြို့နယ်ရုံးများသို့ လှူဒါန်းနိုင်ကြပါသည်။

ပြန်ကြားရေးဝန်ကြီးဌာန

ပြန်ကြားရေးနှင့်ပြည်သူ့ဆက်ဆံရေးဦးစီးဌာန

***Senior General Than Shwe hears report presented by Minister for Electric Power No 1 Col Zaw Min.* — MNA**

Senior General Than Shwe inspects...

(from page 16)

At Shweli Hall, Minister for Electric Power No 1 Col Zaw Min reported that Shweli (1) Hydropower Project is to generate 600 megawatts. Preliminary engineering works such as construction of the approach road and Shweli Bridge have been completed. Furthermore, the concrete embankment the diversion tunnel, the pilot channel and power intake building, and the approach tunnel are under construction.

Next, the minister presented reports on arrangements for implementation of 460-megawatt Shweli (2) Hydropower Project and 360-megawatt Shweli (3) Hydropower Project to be implemented in Momeik of Shan State, 240-megawatt Tarpein (1) Hydropower Project and 168-megawatt Tarpein (2) Hydropower Project in Momauk Township in Kachin State and 2400-megawatt Upper Thanlwin Hydropower Project in Kunlong region of Shan State.

Director-General Dr Thein Tun of Electric Power Department briefed the Senior General and party on installation of 180 miles long 230-kv power line Shweli-Mansan-Shwesaryan (Mandalay). The commander gave a supplementary report.

After hearing the reports, the Senior General gave guidance. He stressed the need to implement Upper Thanlwin Project, Shweli Project and Tarpein Project as soon as possible. In addition to water resources that have been surveyed, survey tasks are to be conducted to search more resources. While generating hydropower with utmost efforts, the power grid is to be installed on schedule to supply electricity from the projects to the nation.

Next, the Senior General presented the fruit basket to Executive Vice President Mr MA Lipeng of YUPD Co and Vice President Mr He Wen of YMEC Co of the People's Republic of China that are carrying out joint venture tasks with Hydropower Implementation Department.

The Senior General and party viewed progress in construction of the concrete embankment measuring 531 feet by 154 feet, the power intake building and the diversion building.

Tasks of Shweli (1) Hydropower Project have been completed by 51 per cent.

Arrangements are being made to implement Shweli (2) and Shweli (3) Hydropower Projects. On completion, 1420 megawatts can be generated from three Shweli hydropower projects.

Afterwards, the Senior General and party left for Lashio by helicopter, and they proceeded to PyinOoLwin by air.

MNA

Domestically-produced 1200-HP diesel engine locomotive launched

YANGON, 19 April— The 1200-HP diesel locomotive made on self-reliant basis by the Myanma Railways under the Ministry of Rail Transportation was launched at Yangon Central Railway Station at 1 pm today, with the attendance of Lt-Gen Myint Swe of the Ministry of Defence.

Also present were Yangon Division Peace and Development Council Chairman Yangon Command Commander Maj-Gen Hla Htay Win, Minister for Information Brig-Gen Kyaw Hsan, Minister for Rail Transportation Maj-Gen Aung Min, Chairman of Yangon City Development Committee Mayor Brig-Gen Aung Thein Lin, Deputy Ministers for Rail Transportation Thura U Thaung Lwin and U Pe Than, Managing Director of MR U Min Swe, and heads of department under the Ministry of Rail Transportation.

In his report, Minister for Rail Transportation Maj-Gen Aung Min said that the Myanma Railways transports passengers, commuters and goods through 222 long runs and 185 commuter runs with the use of 295 diesel locomotives. Due to the rise in oil prices, people and those engaged in the transportation industry come to depend more on rail transportation, so this calls for more locomotives.

At the start, Insein and Ywahtaung locomotive factories under the Myanma Railways were aimed just to repair locomotives. Formerly, the Myanma Railways produced spare parts of machines, but no locomotives. In his inspection tour of Insein Locomotive Shed in 1994, Head of State Senior General Than Shwe gave guidance on production of locomotives domestically. In compliance with the guidance, experts and technicians from related ministries and private industries coordinated and cooperated and extensively produced spare parts of locomotives with higher quality. In 2005-2006, the MR imported a one-used DD.51 Brand two-1100 HP-engine locomotive from Japan and studied the assembling processes. Then it succeeded in transforming from the two-1100 HP-engine locomotive into two locomotives installed with one-1100 HP-engine each. The Head of State again gave guidance on production of six

(See page 10)

***Lt-Gen Myint Swe and party attend launching of a diesel locomotive.* — MNA**

Minister for Rail Transportation Maj-Gen Aung Min briefs on a ceremony to launch a 1200-HP diesel engine. — MNA

Domestically-produced 1200-HP diesel…

(from page 9)

locomotives and 36 modern passenger coaches locally by 2007-2008. The 1200 HP locomotive is the first one produced through own designs to realize the guidance, he said.

He said that in his two inspection tours of Insein Locomotive Shed on 3 June 1994 and on 20 May 2003, the Head of State gave guidance laying down a goal of producing large locomotives locally, production of three or four specific kinds of locomotives, innovative measures to be taken to achieve the goal by extensively producing more types of import-substitute spare parts of locomotives stage by stage in the nation, cooperation with the Ministry of Industry-2, and production of six locomotives and 36 modern passenger coaches in 2007-2008.

Upholding the guidance as work guidelines, the MR will produce locomotives with added momentum, he said.

He expressed his thanks to those who had contributed towards the plan.

In conclusion, he pledged that the MR will make continued efforts to spread its wings for the comfort and convenience of the people.

General Manager of the shed U Saw Valentine gave an account of building a DF 1200-01 Brand 1200 HP diesel-fired electric locomotive with own design in the factory and follow-up plans.

Lt-Gen Myint Swe gave instructions on the plan and inspected documentary photos of the production process. He sprinkled scented water on the locomotive with coaches carrying goods weighing 720 tons standing on platform No 1.

So did the commander, ministers, the Yangon mayor, deputy ministers and officials.

Lt-Gen Myint Swe and party inspected the locomotive. When the train made its first run to Mandalay, Lt-Gen Myint Swe and party and staff of the MR waved to the passengers.

The locomotive is 11 feet and four inches high, nine feet and three inches wide and 44 feet long with 66 tons in weight. With 783 kilowatts of diesel engine power, it runs 60 mph at the highest speed.

MNA

1200-HP diesel engine manufactured by Myanma Railways. — MNA

Commander attends opening ceremony of No-023 CNG Filling Station

Commander Maj-Gen Hla Htay Win and Deputy Minister Brig-Gen Than Htay inspect CNG filling station No 023. — ENERGY

YANGON, 19 April — An opening ceremony of No-023 CNG Filling Station took place in front of the station on Kyansittha Road in Dagon Myothit (East) Township this morning, attended by Chairman of Yangon Division Peace and Development Council Commander of Yangon Command Maj-Gen Hla Htay Win, Deputy Minister for Energy Brig-Gen Than Htay, departmental heads, officials concerned and members of the social organization.

Firstly, the general manager of Myanma Oil and Gas Enterprise explained about the filling station. The commander and the deputy minister unveiled the signboard of the filling station.

Next, the commander and the deputy minister observed the facility of the filling station.

MNA

Singapore's PM urges US to improve Asia ties

SINGAPORE, 19 April — Singapore's Prime Minister said the United States risks losing influence in Southeast Asia to China because of its increasing focus on the conflicts in Iraq and Afghanistan, the *Wall Street Journal* reported on Wednesday. The newspaper quoted Prime Minister Lee Hsien Loong as saying that while the United States had many friends and strategic interests in Southeast Asia, it was China which has increased its political and economic clout in the region by improving ties with US allies such as the Philippines, Singapore, and Thailand.

"It's important for us to continue to nourish this, and to make sure attention is focused in America on cultivating this relationship and developing it," Lee said in an interview ahead of talks with President George W. Bush in Washington next month.

"The Chinese are very active, assiduously promoting their relationship with Southeast Asia," he said. "They're very good at it." Lee said the perceived waning of US interest in the region could affect cooperation against terrorism.

MNA/Reuters

*Russian women show Russian food at the 2007 China Yangzhou International Trade and Tourism Festival in Yangzhou, east China's Jiangsu Province, on 18 April, 2007. —*XINHUA

Chinese Premier urges cooperation with Greece in economy, culture

BEIJING, 18 April— Chinese Premier Wen Jiabao on Tuesday called for comprehensive cooperation with Greece especially in the economic and cultural fields and regarding the Olympic Games.

Meeting Anna Psarouda Benaki, President of the Greek Parliament, Premier Wen said Sino-Greek ties comprised frequent high-level exchanges, close legi-slative communication and two-way trade.

As this year marked the 35th anniversary of the establishment of diplomatic relations, and the "Year of Greece" would be staged in China next year, the two nations should enlarge and deepen cooperation so as to promote bilateral relations, Wen said.

Greece had hosted the Olympic Games in 2004 and China would host the 2008 Games, which provided important opportunities for both sides to enhance cooperation, Wen said.

Benaki, who is on a week-long visit to China as the guest of China's top legislator Wu Bangguo, said Greece would like to play an active role in developing relations.

MNA/Xinhua

Abu Dhabi bans fishing by encircling nets to protect Spanish mackerel

ABU DHABI, 18 April — The Emirate of Abu Dhabi, the largest one of the United Arab Emirates (UAE), issued a decision banning fishing by encircling nets to protect the Spanish mackerel, *Emirates News Agency* reported on Tuesday.

The decision which took effect immediately was issued by The Environment Agency — Abu Dhabi (EAD), the report said. The prohibition of the method of fishing by encircling nets, known as "Al Halaq" in Arabic, will help prevent the unsustainable exploitation of Abu Dhabi's fisheries, the report said.

The Spanish Mackerel (Kingfish), a migratory species locally known as Kan'aad, is a major commercial species in the Gulf Region. Al Halaq is considered an alternative to the fishing method using the drift net or the "web of death", which was known to destroy rare and endangered species such as sea turtles and dugong and has been banned by international law. — *MNA/Xinhua*

Malaysia open to joint patrol talks in Malacca Strait

KUALA LUMPUR, 18 April — Malaysia's defence minister urged neighbouring states on Tuesday to consider joint sea patrols in the busy Malacca Strait.

Piracy has dropped since Indonesia, Malaysia, Thailand and Singapore began joint air patrols as well as coordinated sea patrols in the Strait two years ago. But the threat still remains.

Joint sea patrols by the four countries lining the strait will mark a major shift in regional maritime policing. But it will also spark the sensitive issue of territorial rights.

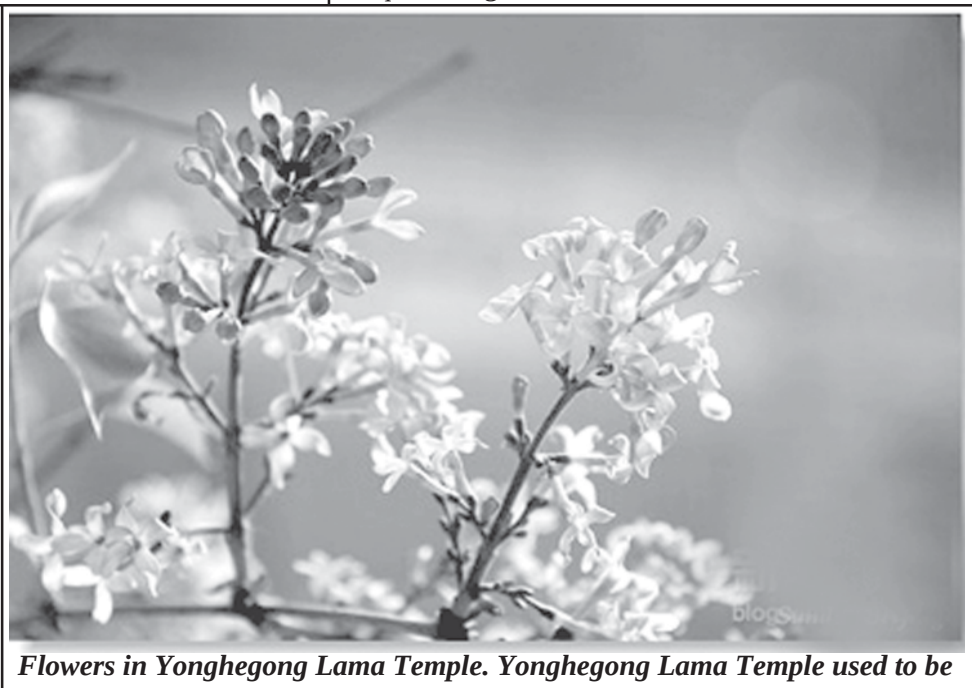
"We have to think out of the box," Defence Minister Najib Razak told reporters after addressing a conference on military legal issues co-sponsored by Malaysia and the US military.

"It is up for conferences like this to discuss new ideas, new initiatives and then we can examine them.

"But of course we have to overcome some sensitivities but at the end of the day, the objective is to make the Strait of Malacca very, very secure," he added.

Analysts said allowing joint patrols could also help overcome the issue of pursuits in the Strait. Currently, there are no clear guidelines on chasing suspect ships once vessels cross into another territory.

MNA/Reuters



*Flowers in Yonghegong Lama Temple. Yonghegong Lama Temple used to be the mansion of Emperor Yongzheng (Qing Dynasty, 1644-1911) when he was a prince, and transformed into a lama temple when Emperor Yongzheng's son, Emperor Qianlong ruled. —*XINHUA

Mainland, HK sign "IT" cooperation pact

HONG KONG, 18 April — Hong Kong and the Chinese Mainland have signed an agreement on exchange and cooperation in information technology, a government Press release said on Tuesday. The two sides will enhance technology cooperation in areas such as automobile electronics, radio frequency identification technology, mobile communications, integrated circuit design, technologies relating to consumer electronic products, digital TV, broadband wireless access technology, digital content, radio management and the next-generation Internet.

Enterprises, research institutes and experts from Hong Kong will participate in formulating national information technology standards.

The two sides will also strengthen the exchange and sharing of innovative talent, equipment and technology information resources, and enhance the cooperation between science and industrial parks, research institutes, intermediary service organizations and tertiary institutions.

MNA/Xinhua

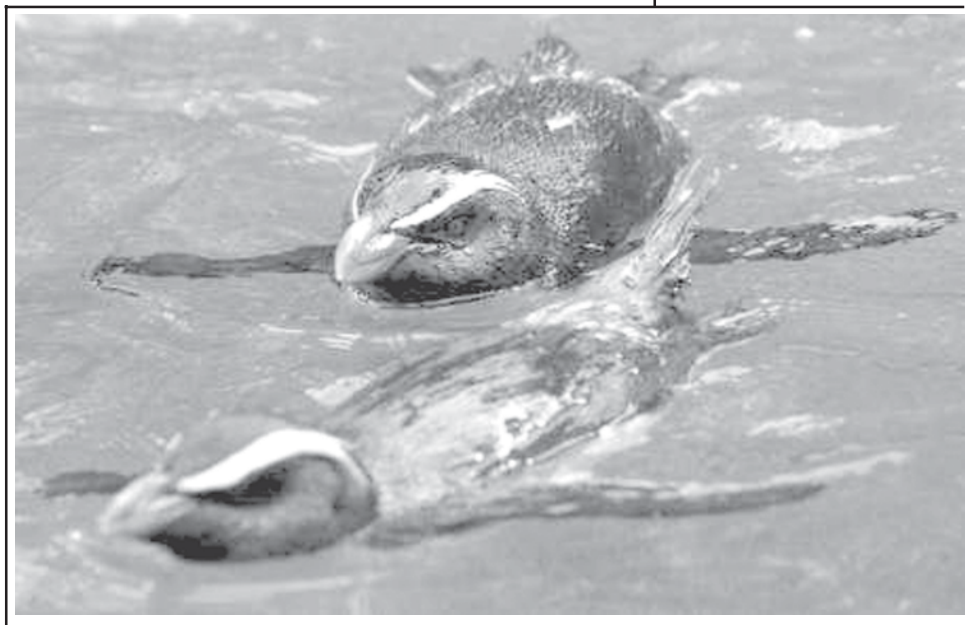
Swiss military acquits journalists in secrets case

GENEVA, 18 April — A Swiss military tribunal on Tuesday acquitted three Swiss journalists on charges of violating state secrets for publishing a document revealing the existence of secret CIA-run prisons in Europe.

Swiss news agency *ATS* said the tribunal had rejected the prosecutor's call to impose heavy fines on the three journalists from the Zurich weekly *Sonntags-Blick.*

Swiss journalists' unions welcomed the ruling, handed down at the end of a one-day trial in the city of St Gallen, as a "stage victory for liberty of the Press".

MNA/Reuters



*Mr Munro (rear), a Fiordland Crested Penguin, swims with one of two females of his species during their first meeting at Taronga Zoo in Sydney on 19 April, 2007. —*INTERNET

ADVERTISEMENTS

Power form tells Mumbai to turn down A/C

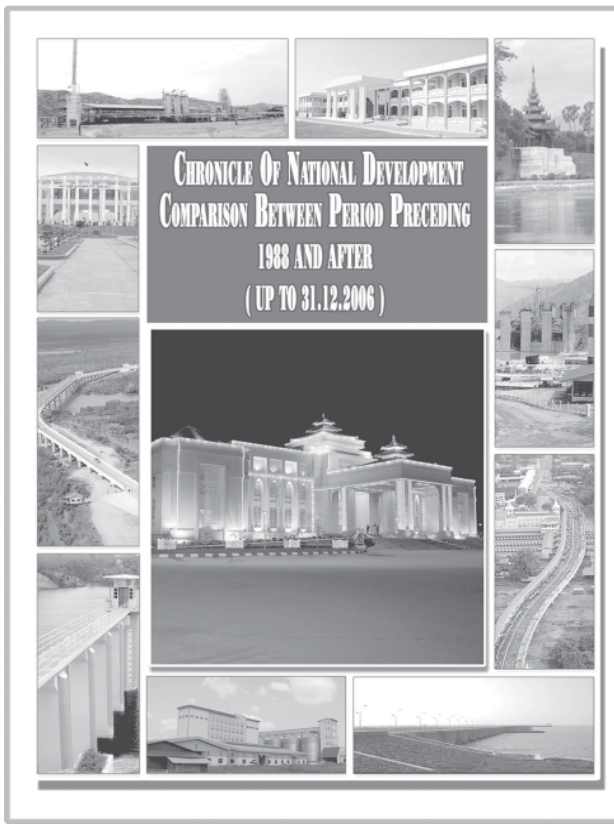
MUMBAI, 18 April— Businesses in India's financial capital, Mumbai, are being asked to keep down air conditioning use, change light bulbs and put computers on sleep mode in a drive to conserve energy and prevent severe power shortages.

Power supplier Tata Power Co Ltd said the city, which aspires to be a global financial hub and normally enjoys uninterrupted electricity, faced potential power cuts as demand peaks in April and May — the hottest months in the Mumbai calendar.

Demand for power has risen with shopping malls, cinemas and new luxury apartments springing up across the city, reflecting an economic boom that encourages spending on everything from refrigerators to plasma televisions.

In a letter sent to businesses this week, Tata Power Co urged office workers not to use electricity at peak times, switch the air conditioning on an hour after starting work and flip off televisions and mobile phone chargers at the plug.

The company called on office workers to replace incandescent bulbs with compact fluorescent lamps to save electricity. — *MNA/Reuters*



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Hormone replacement therapy raises cancer risk in women

BEIJING, 19 April— Studies done both in the US and UK showed women who take hormones after menopause — hormone replacement therapy (HRT) — will have a much higher risk of breast cancer and a slightly higher risk of ovarian cancer, according to media reports Thursday.

From 2001 to 2004, breast cancer rates fell almost 9 percent in US — a dramatic decline, researchers reported in New England Journal of Medicine.

Government statisticsshowed breast cancer rate plunged in 2003 as millions of women stopped taking hormones aftera major-study tiedhormones use to higher heart, stroke and breast cancer risks; and in 2004 the rate leveled off.

The numberr suggestedthe drop was due to not using the drug, not a fluke.

A study in the Lancet medical journal found women who used HRT were 20 percent more likely to die from ovarian cancer than those who did not use HRT in UK.

Dr Valerie Beral and colleagues at the Cancer Research UK Epidemiology Unit in Oxford said their findings suggested that 1,000 extra women in Britain had died from ovarian cancer between 1991 and 2005 because they were using hormone replacement therapy.

They used data from the "Million Women Study," which looked at just under a million women, about half of whom were current of former HRT users.

"The effect of HRT on ovarian cancer should not be viewed in isolation, especially since use of HRT also affects the risk of breast and endometrial cancer," they wrote.

Internet

Ethanol cars may not be healthier

LONDON, 18 April– Ethanol vehicles may have worse effects on human health than conventional petrol, US scientists have warned.

A computer model set up to simulate air quality in 2020 found that in some areas ozone levels would increase if all cars were run on bioethanol.

Deaths from respiratory problems and asthma attacks would increase with such levels, the researchers reported in Environmental Science and Technology.

The EU has agreed that biofuels should be used in 10% of transport by 2020.

***Ethanol is made from crops such as sugar beet.*—INTERNET**

Mark Jacobson, an atmospheric scientist at Stanford University in California, used a computer model which took into account factors such as temperatures, sunlight, clouds and rain to simulate air quality in 2020 for two different scenarios.

In one simulation all vehicles were fuelled by petrol and in the other all vehicles were fuelled by E85 — a mix of 85% ethanol and 15% petrol.

If all cars were run on E85, he found that in some parts of the US there were significant increases in ozone — a pollutant with harmful effects on the human respiratory system —compared with petrol cars. In the study, the increase in smog translated to an extra 200 deaths per year in the whole of the US, with 120 occurring in Los Angeles alone. —*Internet*

An Indonesian girl presents special stamps named Dancing Dragons and Lions during a first-day issue ceremony in Jakarta recently. —XINHUA

Actress Kitty Carlisle Hart dies at 96

BEIJING, 19 April — Kitty Carlisle Hart, a Broadway actress, singer, arts patron, and the widow of noted writer and director Moss Hart, died from heart failure at the age of 96, according to media reports Thursday.

Hart died peacefully Tuesday night and had been in and out of the hospital since contracting pneumonia over the Christmas holidays, according to her son, Christopher. —*Internet*

Actress Kitty Carlisle Hart arrives at the the opening of a play in Los Angeles in this 20 April, 2005 file photo. Carlisle Hart died at the age of 96, her son announced on 18 April , 2007.

XINHUA

ပညာရေးဖွင့် ခေတ်စီမံဖွံ့ဖြိုးတိုးတက်သော နိုင်ငံတော်ကြီး တည်ဆောက်ခဲ့

Mel Pyatt (R), president of Volvo event management, presents the China Open trophy to 2007 winner Markus Brier of Austria during the winner's ceremony at the China Open golf tournament in Shanghai on 15 April, 2007. —INTERNET

NASA aims for four shuttle flights in 2007

WASHINGTON, 18 April — The United States will cut down its scheduled shuttle flights in 2007 from five to four, NASA officials said on Monday.

The revised launch dates for this year's targeted space mission will be June 8 for *Atlantis;* August 9 for *Endeavour*; 20 October for *Discovery* and 6 December for *Atlantis*.

The US space agency also set dates for two missions in early 2008, for *Endeavour* on Valentine's Day and *Discovery* two months later, but gave few hints for flights after *Discovery's* space odyssey on 24 April , 2008.

However, shuttle and station programme officials, who have a final say on the launch, will still consider options for further shuttle flights and the scheduled launch dates may change according to circumstances, NASA said.

Earlier in the year NASA managers had hoped to squeeze five shuttle flights into 2007, but the first flight, originally scheduled for 15 March, had to be postponed to early June after a hailstorm damaged the fuel tank of *Atlantis*, creating a domino-effect of launch delays for the rest of the year.

MNA/Xinhua

Mainland pandas to leave for Hong Kong on 26 April

BEIJING, 18 April — The Chinese State Forestry Administration (SFA) has announced that a pair of pandas selected as gifts for Hong Kong will leave for the special administrative region on 26 April.

The pandas will travel by plane from Wolong in Sichuan Province via Chengdu, capital of Sichuan, to Hong Kong International Airport, said an official with the SFA on Monday.

"The pandas are in good condition and almost ready for the flight," said the official.

A handover ceremony will be held in Hong Kong between the SFA and the Home Affairs Bureau of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region (SAR).

Both pandas were born in 2005 at the China Panda Protection and Research Centre in Wolong. The male panda weighs 60 kilogrammes and the female 61 kilogrammes.

The pandas are leaving in time for the 10th anniversary of the Hong Kong SAR.

The Hong Kong SAR government has appointed the Ocean Park to take care of the pandas alongside An An and Jia Jia, another pair of pandas presented to Hong Kong in 1999.

MNA/Xinhua

Marilyn Bergman (R), president and chairman of the board of American Society of Composers, Authors and Publishers (ASCAP), presents singer Kelly Clarkson with the ASCAP Song of the Year award for "Because of You" at the ASCAP Pop Music Awards in Hollywood April 18, 2007. — INTERNET

92-year-old granny skydives in S Africa

JOHANNESBURG, 18 April — For Georgina Harwood, the age of 92 years is not too old to take a plunge straight down 9,000 feet (2,700 metres).

The South African granny on Sunday did this, happily, to fulfil a promise to her grandchildren to go skydiving in Cape Town, a South African newspaper reported on Monday.

"Wonderful, wonderful, wonderful," she was quoted as saying by *The Star*, after she and grandchildren Lynette (28) and Johan (24) went skydiving on Sunday.

Harwood performed the feat while strapped to an instructor, and could be the oldest person to have skydived in South Africa, said the newspaper.

Skydivers in their 60s and 70s were fairly common, said Anton Schalabrino, a founding member of Skydive Cape Town, which operated the dive.

Jumpers in their 80s were rarer, but still popped up from time to time. Nonagenarians, however, were almost unheard ofSchalabrino said Harwood was the oldest South African skydiver he or anyone at Skydive Cape Town was aware of. Before her, the record holder was a 90-year-old from Johannesburg.

The oldest skydiver in the world is a 101-year-old from Australia, who took the plunge in 2004.

Harwood's age was not a concern, Schalabrino said. "She was sprightly, she did not even look like an old woman."

The newspaper said skydiving has been a long-time goal for Harwood. The 10-year-widow, mother-of-four and granny-of-14 keeps a full schedule — swimming and playing tennis as well as competitive croquet in a relatively youthful under-80 team. She also teaches bridge.

MNA/Xinhua

Strong gales, hail hit S-W China

CHENGDU, 18 April — Strong gales and hailstones have lashed southwest China's Sichuan Province, destroying houses and farmland, local authorities said on Monday.

The extreme weather conditions hit 27 counties, cities and districts of Sichuan on Saturday when the wind speed reached 100 kilometres per hour and the largest hailstones measured five centimetres in diameter, a spokesman with the Provincial Disaster Relief Office said. Latest statistics show that 1.76 million people were affected. A total of 123,000 people were relocated and 165,000 houses and 38,000 hectares of farmland were ruined, the spokesman said.

The direct economic losses are estimated to be 380 million yuan (47.5 million US dollars), including 320 million (40 million US dollars) in agriculture, he said.

MNA/Xinhua

Polar bear cub Knut shakes off water at an enclosure in Berlin zoo on 17 April, 2007. Knut, born on 5 December, 2006, had to be hand fed by employee Thomas Doerflein after its mother Tosca refused the baby.—XINHUA

US approves first bird flu vaccine

BEIJING, 18 April — US Food and Drug Administration on Tuesday approved a bird flu vaccine, the first of its kind with US approval.

The Sanofi-Aventis vaccine could be used to prevent people from becoming infected with the H5N1 bird flu virus.

It would be used if the strain mutated into a form that spreads easily from person to person, sparking a pandemic, according to media reports.

Norman Baylor, director of the FDA's Office of Vaccines Research and Review, said the vaccine is "sort of an interim measure" until better ones are developed.

"The threat of an influenza pandemic is, at present, one of the most significant public health issues our nation and world faces," FDA commissioner Dr Andrew von Eschenbach said.

"The approval of this vaccine is an important step forward in our protection against a pandemic."

The vaccine will not be sold commercially. The government plans to buy and stockpile enough bird flu vaccine for 20 million people, including emergency and health care workers.

MNA/Xinhua

SPORTS

Arsenal wins a 3-1 home victory over Manchester City during their English Premier League soccer match at the Emirates Stadium in London on 17 April, 2007. — INTERNET

Soederling knocks out Davydenko in Monte Carlo

MONTE CARLO, 19 April — Swede Robin Soederling upset Russian third seed Nikolay Davydenko 6-4, 6-7, 6-3 on Wednesday to reach the third round of the Monte Carlo Masters Series.

Big-serving Soederling next meets Max Mirnyi of Belarus or Argentine Sergio Roitman for a quarterfinal spot.

World number four Davydenko, who reached the French Open quarterfinals last year, lost the first set and was allowed back into the contest in the second when his opponent wasted two match points.

But Soederling finally emerged triumphant on his fifth match point.

Novak Djokovic overcame a loss of concentration to advance with a 6-1, 3-6, 6-1 win over former French Open champion Gaston Gaudio.

Sixth seed Djokovic, who won the Masters Series event in Miami earlier this month, next faces Frenchman Julien Benneteau or Spaniard David Ferrer ahead of a potential quarterfinal clash with world number one Roger Federer.

The 19-year-old Serb only conceded 11 points in the first set.— *MNA/Reuters*

DFB says German referees need more protection

BERLIN, 19 April — German referees should be given civil servant status to help protect them from attacks by angry fans, the German football association's (DFB) top referee said on Wednesday.

Volker Roth, chairman of the DFB's referee committee, said giving referees in Germany civil servant status would mean stiffer punishments for anyone caught attacking a referee.

"I'd welcome a law like that in Germany," Roth told *Sport-Bild* newspaper, saying France could serve as a role model.

"A former German referee, Bernd Heynemann, is a member of Parliament. That would be a good project for him."

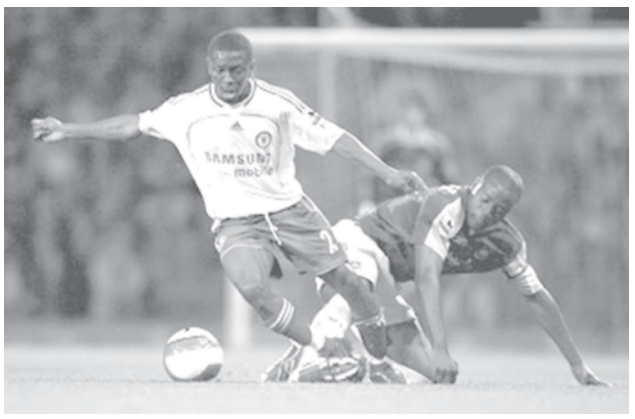
Separately, the DFB announced on Wednesday it had fined Borussia Dortmund 4,000 euros (5,437 US dollars) for not protecting referees sufficiently and for unsportsmanlike conduct for incidents at a match in Dortmund against Energie Cottbus on March 4 and on March 10 in Bochum.

Several items were thrown at a referee's assistant in the 88th minute of the March 4 match, while plastic beer containers were thrown on to the pitch from the Dortmund fan section in the March 10 match.

Dortmund accepted the punishment from the DFB.

MNA/Reuters

Guillermo Beraza (L) of Venezuela's Union Atletico Maracaibo controls the ball against Xaves of Brazil's Parana during their Libertadores Cup soccer match at the Durival Brito stadium in Curitiba on 18 April, 2007.—INTERNET



West Ham United's Nigel Reo-Coker (R) challenges Chelsea's Shaun Wright-Phillips during their English Premier League soccer match at Upton Park in London on 18 April, 2007.Chelsea beat West Ham 4-1 on Wednesday to move within three points of Premier League leader Manchester United.— INTERNET

Nadal extends claycourt record in Monte Carlo

MONTE CARLO, 19 April — Rafael Nadal extended his record claycourt winning streak to 63 matches with a 6-3, 6-1 victory over Argentine Juan Ignacio Chela in the Monte Carlo Masters Series second round on Wednesday.

The double French Open champion, who also won in the principality in 2005 and 2006, wrapped up a straightforward win on his third match point.

Following an early exchange of breaks, the left-handed Spaniard twice stole his opponent's serve to get a grip on the contest.

Second seed Nadal broke again in the third game of the second set before going on to secure a meeting with Belgian Kristof Vliegen.

Sixth seed Novak Djokovic overcame a loss of concentration to advance with a 6-1, 3-6, 6-1 win over former French Open champion Gaston Gaudio.

The 19-year-old Serb only conceded 11 points in the first set.

Argentine Gaudio, who won at Roland Garros in 2004, took advantage of several unforced errors from Djokovic to level the match before the Serb regained his focus to open a 4-0 lead in the third set.

"I got off to a good start but in the first game of the third set I was lucky to save a break point," said Djokovic.

MNA/Reuters

Golden State Warriors guard Baron Davis (R) goes up for a shot as Portland Trail Blazers guard Jarrett Jack (L) defends during first quarter NBA basketball action in Portland, Oregon on 18 April, 2007. — INTERNET

Inter title celebrations on hold after loss to Roma

ROME, 19 April — Inter Milan missed the chance to clinch the Serie A title after they were beaten 3-1 by second-placed AS Roma on Wednesday.

Inter's hopes of sealing their second successive crown were dashed as late second-half goals from Francesco Totti and Marco Cassetti sealed Roma's win at the San Siro.

It was Inter's first league defeat of the season. Simone Perrotta had fired Roma ahead before Marco Materazzi levelled from the penalty spot.

Inter remain on 81 points, 13 ahead of Roma with six matches to play.

In other matches, third-placed Lazio (57 points) were held to a 0-0 draw by relegation-threatened Chievo Verona. AC Milan tightened their grip on fourth and a Champions League qualifying place as Alberto Gilardino and Kaka grabbed a brace apiece in a 5-2 win over Ascoli. — *MNA/Reuters*

Poland, Ukraine chosen to host Euro 2012

CARDIFF, 19 April — Poland and Ukraine have been chosen to co-host the European Championship soccer tournament in 2012, UEFA announced on Wednesday.

European soccer's governing body said it had selected the two countries ahead of Italy and another joint bid from Croatia and Hungary to stage the finals.

The Poland and Ukraine bid received eight votes to Italy's four. Croatia and Hungary got none. It is the first time either country has been chosen to host a major tournament.

The European championship finals, held every four years, are second only to the World Cup in importance in the world of soccer. Greece are the current European champions after pulling off a surprise victory in Portugal in 2004.

Austria and Switzerland are co-hosting Euro 2008.

"There are 85 million people now waiting for this big football event," Polish FA chairman Michal Listkiewicz said after UEFA president Michel Platini had revealed the winner.

"The friendship between our nations has a very long history. This big tournament will be an important milestone in the history of our two Slavic nations."

His comments were echoed by Ukrainian soccer federation president Hryhory Surkis.

"This is a decisive day for our country. It will provide new opportunities for our country as it strives to integrate with Europe," he told Ukrainian television in Cardiff.

The decision of UEFA's Executive Committee to choose the Ukraine and Poland bid dashed the hopes of Italy, who had been slight favourites to be named host nation for a third time.

Poland and Ukraine's bid appeared to have been undermined on two fronts.

MNA/Reuters

Zoo urges visitors to stop staring at chimps

BEIJING, 19 April — It's a well known rule not to feed animals when visiting zoos. But now the Antwerp Zoo in Belgium, one of the oldest in Europe, has urged visitors to stop staring at the chimpanzees, media said on Thursday.

A sign posted on the glass outside the chimp enclosure requests onlookers not to stare at the apes. "Look away when an animal seeks to make contact with you, or take a step back," the sign reads. "Some individuals are more interested with visitors than their own kind."

The sign especially urgesvisitors not to form a bond with a particular male chimp named "Cheetah."

"He was raised by humans but is now trying to forge a social bond with the other seven apes at the animal park," a zoo official said.

"We ask, we inform our daily visitors and other visitors that one of the monkeys is particularly open for human contact," the official told Associated Press Television. "He is raised by humans in a family and therefore we are trying to integrate him, to try to get more social integration with the group."

Cheetah's continued interaction with humans was "delaying the social integration of the animal in the group," and isolating the ape from the others, she said.

The zoo was not barring visitors from looking at the chimps altogether, she added. "Of course eye contact is not forbidden. We have more than one million visitors a year and of course they are very welcome still to have a look at the animals."

Internet

The acrobatic show of two bears of the Jinan Zoo of Shandong Province was put on stage on 17 April, 2007. It can be estimated that the two of them will provide a marvellous show to the visitors during the forthcoming May Day holiday. — INTERNET

TV Myanmar

Friday, 20 April
View on today

7:00 am
1. Recitation of Parittas by Missionary Sayadaw U Ottamathara

7:25 am
2. To be healthy exercise

7:30 am
3. Morning news

7:40 am
4. Nice and sweet song

7:55 am
5. ရိုးရာကျေးလက်ကစားနည်း

8:00 am
6. အကပြိုင်ပွဲ

8:10 am
7. မအီချောင်းတံတား

8:20 am
8. The mirror images of the musical oldies

8:30 am
9. International news

8:45 am
10. Happy and educational English summer course MRTV

4:00 pm
1. Martial song

4:15 pm
2. Song to uphold National Spirit

4:30 pm
3. အဝေးသင်တက္ကသိုလ် ပညာရေး ရုပ်မြင်သံကြား သင်ခန်းစာ–ပထမနှစ် (သချိုင်၊ ဓာတုဗေဒ၊ ရူပဗေဒ အထူးပြုများ)(ရူပဗေဒ)

4:45 pm
4. Song of national races

5:00 pm
5. လက်ဆင့်ကမ်းပေးဂီတတေး

5:10 pm
6. Song of yesteryear

5:20 pm
7. "ဆုံစည်းခွင့်" (မင်းထက်ကျော်ငေ၊ ဖိုးသောကြာ၊ မြတ်ကေသီအောင်၊ ချစ်သုဝေ) (ဒါရိုက်တာ–သိန်းဟန်–ဖိုးနစ်)

5:30 pm
8. ရသပေါ်လွင် သရုပ်ဆောင်လွင်ပြင်

6:00 pm
9. Evening news

6:30 pm
10. Weather report

6:35 pm
11. သုတစုံလင်ရွှေဥဏှာင်

7:00 pm
12. မြန်မာမှုပန်းဆယ်မျိုး (ပန်းချီ)

7:10 pm
13. နိုင်ငံခြားဇာတ်လမ်းတွဲ "သစ်ရွက်ကလေး၏ ရင်ခုန်သံ"(အပိုင်း–၁၅)

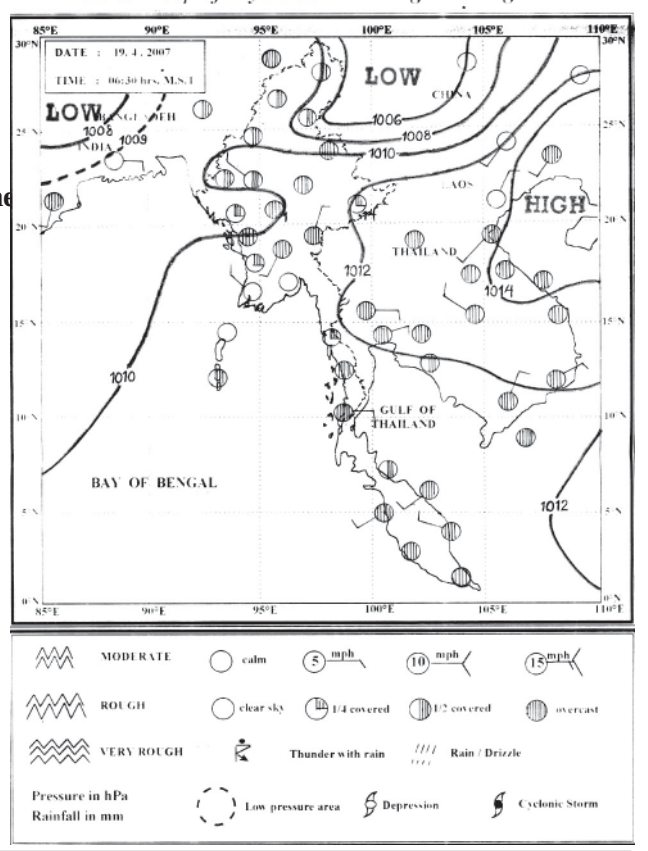
8:00 pm
14. News
15. International news
16. Weather report
17. နိုင်ငံခြားဇာတ်လမ်းတွဲ "အကြင်နာနွေဦး" (အပိုင်း–၂၈)
18. The next day's programme

Radio Myanmar

Friday, 20 April
Tune in today

8:30 am Brief news
8:35 am Music:
-For all that you want … Gary Barlow
8:40 am Perspectives
8:45 am Music:
-I do cherish you … 98
8:50 am National news / Slogan
9:00 am Music:
-Girl on TV … Lyte Funkie Ones
9:05 am International news
9:10 am Music:
-Back here … BB Mark
1:30 pm News / Slogan
1:40pm Lunch time music:
-This I promise you … N'sync
-Everytime … Gil
9:00pm WOM
9:15 pm Article
9:25 pm Music at your request
- Right back at ya … Spice Girls
-See it in your eyes … Gil
9:45 pm News / Slogan
10:00 pm PEL

Weather Map of Myanmar and Neighbouring Areas



WEATHER

Thursday, 19 April, 2007

Summary of observations recorded at 09:30 hours MST: During the past 24 hours, rain or thundershowers have been widespread in Shan and Chin States, isolated in Kachin and Kayah States, Sagaing and Mandalay Divisions and weather has been partly cloudy in the remaining areas. Day temperatures were (5°C) below normal in Shan State, (3°C) to (4°C) above normal in Chin and Kayin State, Lower Sagaing, Mandalay, Magway and Yangon Divisions, (5°C) to (6°C) above normal in Kachin State,upper Sagaing, Ayeyawady and Taninthayi Divisions and about normal in the remaining areas. The significant day temperatures were Nay Pyi Taw, Myingyan, Pyinmana, Minbu, Magway and Aunglan (42°C) each. The noteworty amount of rainfall recorded were Haka (0.74) inch, Thipaw (0.71) inch, Kengtung (0.55) inch, Heho (0.47) inch and Pyin Oo Lwin (0.32) inch.

Maximum temperature on 18-4-2007 was 102°F. Minimum temperature on 19- 4-2007 was 78°F. Relative humidity at 09:30 hours MST on 19- 4-2007 was 61%. Total sunshine hours on 18- 4-2007 was (9.5) hours approx.

Rainfall on 19-4-2007 was (nil) at Mingaladon, Kaba-Aye and Central Yangon. Total rainfall since 1-1-2007 was (nil) at Mingaladon, Kaba-Aye and Central Yangon. Maximum wind speed at Yangon (Kaba-Aye) was (6) mph from West at (14:30) hours MST on 18-4 -2007.

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

Forecast valid until evening of 20-4-2007: Isolated rain or thundershowers are likely in Kachin, Chin and Shan States, upper Sagiang and Taninthayi Divisions and weather will be partly cloudy in the remaining areas. Degree of certainty is (60%).

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

Outlook for subsequent two days: Likelihood of continuation of isolated rain or thundershowers in the Northern Myanmar areas.

Forecast for Nay Pyi Taw and neighbouring areas for 20-4-2007: Partly cloudy.

Forecast for Yangon and neighbouring areas for 20-4-2007: Partly cloudy.

Forecast for Mandalay and neighbouring areas for 20-4-2007: Partly cloudy.

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Four political objectives

* Stability of the State, community peace and tranquillity, prevalence of law and order
* National reconsolidation
* Emergence of a new enduring State Constitution
* Building of a new modern developed nation in accord with the new State Constitution

Four economic objectives

* Development of agriculture as the base and all-round development of other sectors of the economy as well
* Proper evolution of the market-oriented economic system
* Development of the economy inviting participation in terms of technical know-how and investments from sources inside the country and abroad
* The initiative to shape the national economy must be kept in the hands of the State and the national peoples

Four social objectives

* Uplift of the morale and morality of the entire nation
* Uplift of national prestige and integrity and preservation and safeguarding of cultural heritage and national character
* Uplift of dynamism of patriotic spirit
* Uplift of health, fitness and education standards of the entire nation

Senior General Than Shwe inspects progress of Shweli (1) Hydropower Project

Upper Thanlwin Project, Shweli Project and Tarpein Project to be implemented as soon as possible

Commander-in-Chief of Defence Services Senior General Than Shwe inspects Shweli-1 Hydropower Project. — MNA

* Tasks of Shweli (1) Hydropower Project have been completed by 51 per cent.
* Arrangements are being made to implement Shweli (2) and Shweli (3) Hydropower Projects.
* On completion, 1420 megawatts can be generated from three Shweli hydropower projects.

NAY PYI TAW, 19 April — Chairman of the State Peace and Development Council Commander-in-Chief of Defence Services Senior General Than Shwe yesterday inspected progress of Shweli (1) Hydropower Project being implemented by No 2 Construction of Hydropower Implementation Department of the Ministry of Electric Power No 1 on Shweli River, 17 miles southwest of Mantet Village in Namhkam, Shan State (North).

Accompanied by Member of the State Peace and Development Council General Thura Shwe Mann, SPDC members Lt-Gen Ye Myint, Lt-Gen Kyaw Win and Lt-Gen Tin Aye, Commander-in-Chief (Navy) Vice-Admiral Soe Thein, Commander-in-Chief (Air) Lt-Gen Myat Hein, Chairman of Shan State (North) PDC Commander of North-East Command Brig-Gen Aung Than Htut, Chairman of Mandalay Division PDC Commander of Central Command Maj-Gen Khin Zaw, ministers, senior military officers and officials of the SPDC Office, Senior General Than Shwe left Lashio by air and arrived at the project site in Namhkam Township at 11.50 am.

(See page 9)