

Vice-Senior General Maung Aye and wife attend religious title-offering ceremony

YANGON, 21 March—The State Peace and Development Council yearly confers religious titles on national and foreign Sayadaws and nuns for their outstanding performances in Pariyatti (Ganthadhura) and Patipatti (Vipassana-dhura) and on laity for their generous donations for the flourishing of the Sasana.

In the colonial days, the Buddha Sasana in Myanmar was somewhat diminished due to the suppression of colonialists. However, since the post-independence period, successive governments have every year conferred Agga Maha Pandita Title and Abhidhaja Maha Rattha Guru Title not only on

prominent monks at home but also on missionary monks residing abroad.

On 24 October 1991, the State Law and Order Restoration Council

promulgated 20 more religious titles through Notification No 42/91. Since then, old and new religious titles have been conferred on outstanding monks,

nuns and lay persons at home and abroad. On 4 January 2008, the SPDC issued a list of religious title recipient persons through Notification

No 1/2008.

The ceremony of presenting certificates of religious titles to title recipient monks, nuns and lay persons was held along

with the offering of provisions to members of the Sangha at Maha Pasana Cave on Kaba Aye Hill, here, this afternoon, (See page 16)



Vice-Senior General Maung Aye, wife Daw Mya Mya San and congregation receive the Five Precepts from a Sayadaw.—MNA



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

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

PERSPECTIVES

Saturday, 22 March, 2008

Strive in unison for health and fitness

Health and fitness are indispensable for everybody. Only when one is healthy and fit will he be able to do what he wants to.

The Ministry of Health is extensively engaged in public health care services. In this regard, it is taking systematic measures for the prevention of leprosy, polio, tuberculosis (TB) and malaria. As a result, it has been able to get rid of some of those major diseases.

The government is cooperating with WHO and social organizations at home and abroad in the fight against HIV/AIDS, TB and malaria, thereby contributing to the elimination of some of those ailments.

Over 40 AIDS/Venereal Disease Control Teams—seven UN agencies, 18 INGOs, 17 NGOs and six ministries—are actively taking part in the fight against AIDS and venereal diseases. As a result, the rate of the occurrence of AIDS dropped to 0.7 per cent in 2007 from 1.5 per cent in 2000.

The DOTS strategy that was introduced in 1997 in the fight against TB in the nation covered altogether 325 townships in 2003. It is learnt that the strategy was able to find out 70 per cent of the disease and eliminate 85 per cent of the disease the percentage set by the global objective.

As the government is cooperating with WHO and social organizations at home and abroad in the fight against those major diseases with added momentum, the entire national people will be able to live long and will be healthy and fit.

Man injured in mine blast

NAY PYI TAW, 21 March — A man sustained injuries in his left leg in a mine blast in Kyaukkyi Township, Bago Division, on 16 March.

On his way to the woods with companions to get Ingyin leaves, Maung Aung Khine Tun, 27, son of U Nyo of Ward 3 at Kaukpyin Village in Kyaukkyi Township, stepped on a mine planted by insurgents. The mine exploded, leaving injuries on his left leg.

The victim was rushed to the Mone Station People's Hospital where he received necessary treatments. The authorities concerned are investigating the case.

Insurgents, undermining the stability of State, peace and tranquillity and prevalence of law and order, are committing the destructive acts causing death and panic among the innocent people.

MNA

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

Hockey Training Course concludes

NAY PYI TAW, 21 March—The concluding ceremony of Hockey Training Course No (1/2008) was held at the training hall of Nay Pyi Taw station this morning, with an address by Commander of Nay Pyi Taw Command Maj-Gen Wai Lwin.

The Commander enjoyed the demonstration of the trainees and presented gifts and cash to the coach and trainees. The 5-week course, attended by 43 trainees, started from 18 February and completed on 20 March.—MNA

Book on Nepalese Literature introduced

YANGON, 21 March — A ceremony to introduce a book about Nepalese literature (Poem) written by Writer Saya Myo Win was held at Ruby hall of Central Hotel yesterday, attended by Nepali Ambassador Ms Guna Laxmi Sharma (Vishwakarma) and embassy staff, officials of Myanmar Writers and Journalists Association and reporters from journals and magazines. At the ceremony, Writer Htilar Sithu made an address and Sayagyi U Tin Maung (Shudaunt Myanmarsar) gave a speech of praise.

Next, writer Phyo Tharra introduced the book and biography of the writer. The book contains poems which are translated from Nepalese to Myanmar language. Writer Myo Win translated the poems of nine Nepalese Literati into both English and Myanmar. The book also covers Lumani Garden in Nepal. Next, writer Myo Win spoke words of thanks and donated K 100,000 to MWJA. — MNA



Writer Myo Win speaking at book launching ceremony to introduce Nepalese literature (poem). — MNA

Water supply facilities inspected in Hpa-an, Mawlamyine

NAY PYI TAW, 21 March—Director-General U Myo Myint of Development Affairs Department inspected water tanks on Bar-mae Hill in Hpa-an on 16 March.

About 36,000 people in Hpa-an are being supplied with 730,000 gallons of water daily.

The director-general viewed the repaving of Thukhamein road and beautifying of the urban area.

On 17 March, he inspected water supply facilities at Shwenattaung

Dam in Mawlamyine. About 6.3 millions gallons of water are being supplied

to 180,000 people in Mawlamyine daily.

MNA



Director-General U Myo Myint of Development Affairs Department views water tank for supply of water to Hpa-an. — DAD



PEOPLE VISIT RELIGIOUS BUILDINGS: Buddhist devotees and people visited famous pagodas, monasteries and religious buildings in Yangon and its downtown on Fullmoon Day of Tabaung on 21 March. The photo shows a religious edifice being packed with devotees and pilgrims. — NLM



Penitents wearing the traditional Mantilla wait before participating in a procession during Holy Week in Seville, Spain, on 20 March , 2008.

INTERNET

INTERNATIONAL NEWS

CA election candidate shot dead in southern Nepal

KATHMANDU, 21 March—An armed group in southern Nepal shot dead a candidate of the National People’s Front Nepal (NPFN) contesting the upcoming Constituent Assembly (CA) elections, the news website nepalnews.com reported Wednesday.

The deceased Kamal Prasad Adhikari was contesting for the CA elections slated for April 10 from constituency number 2 of Banke District, situated some 365 kilometres southwest of capital Kathmandu. The local media reported that the masked group comprising some six persons came to his house and fired several rounds of bullet on late Tuesday night. — MNA/Xinhua

US-led force kills Afghan civilians in raid

MUQIBEL (Afghanistan), 21 March—US-led coalition troops killed three men, two children and a woman, in a raid in southeastern Afghanistan, provincial officials and village residents said on Wednesday.

They said the victims, from the families of two brothers, were all civilians, but the US military said the two brothers were involved in conducting bombing operations using improvised explosive devices.

The issue of civilian casualties is a sensitive one as it undermines public support for the presence of foreign troops and the pro-Western government of President Hamid Karzai. — MNA/Reuters



Migratory birds fly above the Dongting Lake in central China’s Hunan Province, on 19 March, 2008. Migratory birds mass to fly to the north after spending winter in the eastern Dongting Lake National Conservation area. —XINHUA

Clinton overtakes Obama in national survey

WASHINGTON, 21 March — US Democratic presidential candidate Hillary Rodham Clinton overtook her rival, Barack Obama, in a latest national poll released on Thursday.

According to the Gallup poll conducted from March 14 to 18, about 48 per cent of 1,209 American adults surveyed favours New York Senator Clinton to be the party's presidential nominee, five percentage points more than Illinois Senator Obama.

The poll has an error margin of 3

percentage points.

Gallup said that it was the first statistically significant lead for Clinton over Obama since a daily tracking poll conducted February 7 to 9, days after the Super Tuesday primaries and caucuses.

The lead coincided with controversy caused by Obama's relations with his long-time Chicago pastor, Jeremiah Wright, who has been heard criticizing the US government for its “racist policies”.

MNA/Xinhua

Flooding swamps US Midwest, killing at least 13

CHICAGO, 21 March— Spring flooding swamped much of the US Midwest on Thursday, after heavy rains swelled rivers, swallowed roadways and filled homes and businesses with murky waters.

At least 13 deaths were blamed on the rain and floods and scores more were plucked from rushing rivers or rescued from their homes by boat.

Sandbag barriers set up to protect homes and businesses as the rains began to fall on Monday and Tuesday were overwhelmed as floodwaters crested on Thursday. Some 15 states from Texas to Ohio remained under a flood advisory, the National Weather Service said.

But with no more rain predicted for the next few days people ought to have a chance to mop up the damage as soon as the waters recede.



Traffic is diverted (L) along US Highway 60 after floodwaters spilled over a section of the roadway east of Springfield, Missouri, on 21 March, 2008. —INTERNET

“There is some rain in the forecast by the weekend though it appears it’ll be mostly focused on Texas so it shouldn’t have any impact on the areas that are in flood,” hydrologist Ben Weiger told AFP.—Internet



Conditions not in place yet for UN troops to Somalia

UNITED NATIONS, 21 March—UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon said Tuesday that the conditions for the deployment of a possible UN peacekeeping operation in Somalia are still not in place.

The conditions included “a viable and inclusive political process and an agreement on the cessation of hostilities”, Ban said in a report to the Security Council.

Ban said the UN Secretariat is in the process of updating its contingency plan for a possible integrated UN peacekeeping operation to succeed the African Union (AU) peacekeeping force, known as AMISOM, currently in Somalia.

“In the meantime, contingency planning for an integrated peacekeeping operation should be continually updated, so that we are prepared for deployment as soon as the conditions permit,” he said.

These conditions, as noted by a fact-finding mission led by the Department of Peacekeeping Operations (DPKO), “are regrettably not in place”, the Secretary-General added. —Xinhua

Young pioneers of the fifth primary school carry wasted paper in Qionghshan District of Haikou, south China's Hainan Province, on 20 March, 2008.
XINHUA

All items from Xinhua News Agency

3rd Marine charged with killing prisoners in Iraq

LOS ANGELES, 20 March — A third Marine sergeant has been charged in the alleged killing of prisoners during the battle in Falloujah in late 2004, it was reported on Wednesday.

Sergeant Ryan G Weemer, called back to active duty to face the charges, was charged by the military with murder and dereliction of duty in the killing of a prisoner on 9 November, 2004, according to the *Los Angeles Times*. Before Weemer's case, Sergeant Jermaine Nelson was charged by the military in December with murder in the same case; former Marine Jose Nazario faces manslaughter charges in federal court in Riverside, California.

The three are charged with killing prisoners after the Marines received an urgent call to rush to the aid of other Marines pinned down in a firefight, according to the report.

Xinhua

US says its embassy in Yemen closed as precaution

WASHINGTON, 20 March — The United States said Tuesday its embassy in Yemen's capital Sanaa was closed after a mortar attack took place near it.

“As a precaution, of course, the embassy did close in light of this incident and remained closed throughout the day today. My understanding is they have decided also to remain closed to the

public for tomorrow as well,” State Department deputy spokesman Tom Casey said.

There were no injuries to US citizens or embassy personnel in the incident, Casey said, adding that three mortar rounds were fired in the vicinity of the US Embassy in Yemen.

According to media reports, the mortar attack took place near the US

Embassy in Yemen's capital Sanaa earlier Tuesday.

A schoolgirl and a policeman were killed in the attack and about 19 others wounded.

The United States has said the US embassy might be a potential target.

Yemeni officials have described the attack as a criminal incident.

Xinhua

China, Peru issue joint Press communique after meetings

BEIJING, 21 March—China and Peru issued a joint Press communique marking Peruvian President Alan Garcia's state visit to China, vowing to continuously promote their bilateral partnership.

The communique said that Garcia and his Chinese counterpart Hu Jintao pledged to continuously enrich the comprehensive bilateral partnership to strengthen and expand strategic cooperation.

The Peruvian Government reiterated its firm adherence to the one-China policy and believed

that the Taiwan authorities' plan to hold a "UN membership referendum" violated Resolution 2758, adopted by the United Nations General Assembly, said the communique.

The communique

said the two countries will strengthen cooperation in the fields of economy and trade, infrastructure, culture, education, science and technology, health, tourism and poverty relief.

Xinhua



Ou Chengcai, a retired teacher, teaches children nursery rhymes to welcome the upcoming World Nursery Rhyme Day at Yaomiao Central Elementary School in Xianzong Township of Hanshan County, east China's Anhui Province, on 20 March, 2008. —XINHUA

China's biggest purple clay teapot completed



The diameter at the teapot's widest point is 1.6 metres.—XINHUA

BEIJING, 21 March — Yixing is a small city in east China renowned for a unique type of clay, used for creating fine pottery.

The clay is called Zisha. It's been used for pottery making in the area for over 3,000 years.

The properties of the material allow artisans to create the perfect vessel for brewing tea. And artist Cheng Miaogen has just completed China's biggest Zisha teapot. It's so big, it's hard for three people to surround the teapot in an embrace. The diameter at its widest point is 1.6 metres. There's enough room inside for four or five people to climb right in. The surface is inscribed with the Book of Tea—all 8646 character. The book was the first ever written on tea culture. —Xinhua



Visitors view rosewood sculptured Forbidden City which occupies a floor space of 60 square metres at the 11th Dalian China Curio Fair held in Dalian, a coastal city in northeast China's Liaoning Province, on 20 March, 2008. It takes over 50 artists six years to finish this craftwork. —XINHUA

Asia Pacific tourism revenues set to rise by 2010

SINGAPORE, 20 March—Tourism revenues in the Asia Pacific Region will increase to 4.6 trillion US dollars with visitor arrivals reaching close to 500 million by the end of 2010, the Pacific Asia Travel Association (PATA) said on Wednesday.

In its newly-published Asia Pacific Tourism Forecasts 2008-2010, officially launched here on Wednesday in partnership with the Singapore

Tourism Board (STB), the PATA said that despite concerns over a US recession, it predicts a bright future for the region, with China and South Korea set to generate strong outbound growth to Asia Pacific destinations.

Despite regional stock market volatility and uncertainty over local impacts of a possible US recession, the PATA predicts robust average

annual growth rates of between 7 per cent and 8 per cent in the region.

John Koldowski, director of PATA's strategic intelligence centre, said that as much as two-thirds of all international arrivals into Asia Pacific are generated from within the region. He said that Asian markets will inevitably be impacted by a slowdown in the US economy triggered by the credit crunch. —MNA/Xinhua



Crew members of BMW Oracle racing team carry out a training session on a catamaran in Valencia, Spain, on 20 March, 2008 after winning a court case against Alinghi which set them up to race the 33rd America's Cup in 90-foot catamarans. —INTERNET



Belongings of a Palestinian family are seen outside their house as an Israeli army bulldozer demolishes it, south of the West Bank town of Hebron on 19 March, 2008. The house was built without construction permission. —INTERNET

Fed cuts key interest rate to 2.25%

WASHINGTON, 20 March—The US Federal Reserve decided on Tuesday to cut a key interest rate by 75 basis points to 2.25 per cent in order to prevent the economy from slipping into recession.

“Today’s policy action, combined with those taken earlier, including measures to foster market liquidity, should help to promote moderate growth

over time and to mitigate the risks to economic activity,” said the Fed in a statement. The Fed has cut overnight rates by 2.25 percentage points to 3 per cent since mid-September as a rise in defaults on subprime mortgages has escalated into a financial crisis.

The Fed decision on Tuesday had been expected by Wall Street.

In the minutes just before the Fed decision, the Dow Jones industrial average jumped some 200 points.

In the statement, the Fed explained that recent information indicates that the outlook for economic activity has weakened further. “Growth in consumer spending has slowed and labour markets have softened. Financial markets remain under considerable stress, and the tightening of credit conditions and the deepening of the housing contraction are likely to weigh on economic growth over the next few quarters,” it said.

MNA/Xinhua

ECONOMIC NEWS

Vietnam to have two more airlines

HANOI, 20 March—Vietnam is expected to license its second private airlines named Air Speed Up this month, and a third one called Phu Quoc Air in the next few months, according to local newspaper Youth on Tuesday.

Air Speed Up, which has already signed contracts on leasing three Boeing 737-800s to serve routes linking Hanoi, central Da Nang City and southern Ho Chi Minh City, plans to launch first flights in late October. It will offer fare rates which are lower than those of national flag carrier Vietnam Airlines.

With registered capital of 600 billion Vietnamese dong (37.5 million US dollars), Phu Quoc Air will

both buy and lease either Bombardier CRJ900 NextGen or ATR 72 to serve routes linking some southern localities. Its first flights, one or two a week, are expected to take place in the second quarter of 2009.

MNA/Xinhua

Oil falls \$6 as dealers eye weak US demand

NEW YORK, 20 March—Crude prices fell more than six US dollars on Wednesday on concerns that a big US-led economic slowdown could further undermine global energy demand.

The steep losses come in the midst of a volatile week in commodity and equity markets as dealers try to weigh signs of recession against aggressive interest rate cuts by the US Federal

Reserve to counter a liquidity crisis.

US crude CLC1 fell 6.01 US dollars to 103.42 US dollars a barrel by 1732 GMT, down from a record 111.80 US dollars hit Monday. London Brent crude LCOc1 fell 4.96 US dollars to 100.60 US dollars.

“People are looking at the macro picture and are worried about the economy,” said Mike Fitzpatrick, vice president at MF

Global in New York. But he added “the wide swings in prices during the past few days point to uncertainty both for bulls and bears.”

A report from the US Energy Information Administration on Wednesday showed US demand for gasoline running 0.1 per cent below last year, while demand for other fuels like diesel, jet fuel and heating oil lags by 5.4 per cent.

MNA/Reuters

Delta looks to cut 2,000 jobs

NEW YORK, 20 March—Delta Air Lines Inc is looking to cut 2,000 jobs, or more than 3 per cent of its workforce, as the No 3 US airline struggles with high fuel costs.

Delta, which has been unable to seal a merger with rival Northwest Airlines Corp, will offer voluntary retirement and buyout packages to 30,000 employees.

Delta is looking to cut 1,300 rank and file jobs and 700 administrative and management jobs.

In a regulatory filing on Tuesday, Delta also said it will cut flights in the United States, aiming to reduce 2008 domestic capacity by an additional 5 per cent by August, resulting in a 10-per-cent year-over-year capacity reduction.

MNA/Reuters



A large portion of town is covered in floodwater after a breach in the Coon Island levee on 20 March, 2008 in Poplar Bluff, Mo. INTERNET



Bollywood actress Mallika Sherawat stands during the shooting of her forthcoming film "Maan Gaye Mughal-E-Azam" at a studio in Mumbai on 21 March, 2008. The Sanjay Chhel directed film also stars actors Paresh Rawal and Rahul Bose.—INTERNET

Cuba, Iran slam US in UN terrorism debate

UNITED NATIONS, 20 March — Envoys from Cuba and Iran sharply criticized the United States on Wednesday at a UN Security Council debate on counter-terrorism, accusing it of supporting “terrorists” bent on

attacking their countries. The Cuban Ambassador to the United Nations, Rodrigo Malmierca Diaz, called on the Council to urge the United States to take action against Luis Posada Carriles, 80, who is wanted in Cuba and

Venezuela on suspicion of masterminding the 1976 bombing of a Cuban airliner that killed 73 people.

The anti-Castro militant entered the United States illegally in 2005 and sought asylum. A judge dismissed the immigration case in June but the government is appealing.

“There is no doubt today that the true intention was to prevent the details of his criminal actions under CIA orders from becoming public,” Malmierca Diaz said during a Council debate on counter-terrorism.

The Security Council “must demand that the US Government immediately sentence Luis Posada Carriles for his terrorist acts or extradite him to — Venezuela, where he has long been wanted by the justice (authorities),” Malmierca Diaz said.

MNA/Reuters

Canadian says US interrogators threatend rape

MIAMI, 20 March — A young Canadian prisoner held at Guantanamo said in legal documents that US interrogators repeatedly threatened to rape him and Canadian Government visitors told him they were powerless to do anything.

The claims were part of an affidavit sworn by Omar Khadr, 21, who is

charged in the Guantanamo war court with murdering a US soldier with a grenade during a firefight in Afghanistan when Khadr was 15.

Khadr has long claimed he was abused by American interrogators in Bagram, Afghanistan, after his capture in July 2002 and at the Guant-

anamo Bay US Naval base in Cuba, where he was taken a few months later.

The previously undisclosed allegations of the rape threats were part of a nine-page affidavit released by the US military on Wednesday, with some of the names and details blacked out.

MNA/Reuters

Two rebels killed in Thailand’s province of Yala

BANGKOK, 20 March — Two suspected insurgents were killed by security forces on Wednesday morning during fire exchange in Thailand’s southernmost province of Yala.

The two insurgents were on their way fleeing after shot a 71- year-old man in Raman District early Tuesday morning while clashed with local security force and policemen who were hunting them. The two side exchanged fire and the two were finally shot dead on the spot.

Local news network *The Nation* said one of the two insurgents has a bounty on his head for 500,000 baht (about 15,600 US dollars). —MNA/Xinhua

Suicide car bombing hits Army base in N Iraq, 14 wounded

MOSUL (Iraq), 20 March — A suicide car bomb attacked an Iraqi Army base in the city of Mosul, the capital of Nineveh Province, on Wednesday, wounding 14 people, including soldiers, a provincial police source said.

The attacker struck the military base in the al-Intisar neighbourhood in southeastern Mosul, wounding 11 soldiers and badly damaging their base, Brigadier Khalid Abdul-Sattar, spokesperson of Nineveh’s police command, told *Xinhua*.

Three civilians were also wounded by the blast, Sattar said. —MNA/Xinhua

US forces mistakenly kill three Iraqi policemen

BAGHDAD, 20 March — US soldiers accidentally killed three policemen and wounded another in the northern Iraqi province of Kirkuk on Wednesday, the US military said.

US forces fired on the policemen when their vehicle drove at high speed into a cordoned-off area in the province, 250 kilometres (155 miles) north of Baghdad, the military said.

“Coalition forces make every effort to engage only hostile threats and we sincerely regret when a tragic accident like this occurs,” a military spokeswoman, Specialist Megan Burmeister, said in a statement. — MNA/Reuters



Italy’s Federica Faiella and Massimo Scali perform during the ice dancing original dance programme at the World Figure Skating Championships in Gothenburg on 20 March, 2008.

INTERNET

Kuwait dissolves Parliament, sets May election

KUWAIT, 20 March — Kuwait’s ruler dissolved Parliament and set an election for 17 May on Wednesday after a political crisis that delayed economic reforms forced the oil exporting state’s government to resign.

“We were hoping that our brothers in the two authorities, legislative and executive — would achieve the aspiration of our people—and we were patient for a long time,” Sheikh Sabah al-Ahmad al-Sabah said in a speech.

Sheikh Sabah, who has the final say in the mainly Sunni Muslim country’s politics, said repeated calls for cooperation between lawmakers and the

government were not heeded.

“To protect our homeland and citizens from irresponsible conduct that has crossed boundaries and did not

take into consideration past experiences—and to safeguard national unity I have decided to dissolve Parliament,” said Sheikh Sabah.

MNA/Reuters

Pakistani protesters rally to condemn the presence of US troops in Iraq, on 20 March, 2008, in Multan, Pakistan.

INTERNET



Belgian new government sworn in

BRUSSELS, 21 March —Nine months after the general elections, Belgium’s new government was finally sworn-in Thursday with Flemish Christian Democrat Yves Leterme appointed as the country’s new Prime Minister.

King Albert II swore in the new administration in the royal palace in the afternoon. Leterme, whose party was the biggest winner in the polls in June, succeeded Guy Verhofstadt as Prime Minister.

MNA/Xinhua



Bhutanese musicians perform during the annual Tsechu festival in Paro on 21 March, 2008.

INTERNET

China sets up space observatory on South Pole

ABOARD XUELONG, 21 March—China’s automatic space observatory at Dome Argus, the highest point of the Antarctic ice sheet, has been successfully completed.

The observatory was set up China’s 24th inspection team on the

South Pole at Dome Argus, the Antarctic icecap peak at 4.093 metres above sea level. It has undergone more than one month of tests and examinations and now transfers back nearly 10M of astronomic data every day.

MNA/Xinhua

Singapore’s Health Ministry to regulate beauty treatments

SINGAPORE, 21 March—Singapore’s Health Ministry has decided to advise doctors to stop a range of controversial, unproven beauty treatments, local newspaper reported Thursday.

Tan Chor Hiang, the ministry’s head of regulations, told English language daily *The Strait Times* Wednesday that they will advise doctors to “stop these practices immediately”.

The profession’s watchdog is already investigating the aesthetic medicine practices of six doctors,

including a specialist, said the report.

Over 1,000 general practitioners (GPs) and specialists have taken to offering a wide range of unproven treatments, including fat-busting injections, skin treatments, remove flaws or “whiten” the complexion, as well as applications of growth hormones or stem cells for a more youthful appearance.

The official told the newspaper “this is not medicine”, saying “Such services should never be offered on the pretext that they are medical in nature and are medically beneficial”.

MNA/Xinhua



Pakistani women carry water collected from a near by well on the eve of ‘World Water Day’ on the outskirts of Islamabad, Pakistan, on 21 March, 2008. ‘Sanitation’ is the theme for World Water Day 2008, which is celebrated each year on 22 March.—INTERNET

Venezuela says Exxon Mobil must pay for court case

CARACAS, 21 March —Exxon Mobil must pay 380,000 British pounds (nearly 767,000 US dollars) in legal costs after a judge overruled the US oil giant’s earlier freeze order on billions of dollars of Venezuelan assets, Venezuelan Energy Minister Rafael Ramirez said on Tuesday.

Exxon has to pay the money within 21 days, Ramirez said. However, Venezuela is willing to restart negotiations with Exxon at the World Bank’s International Centre for Investment Conflict Settlement, he added.

“We will go back to arbitration in New York, seeking fair compensation for companies that have seen their interests affected,” he said.

Venezuela and Exxon are in international arbitration over the 2007 takeover of an oil project Exxon once ran. The company wants at least five billion dollars in compensation, but Venezuela insists the assets are worth less than one billion.

Exxon had won a temporary freeze of assets belonging to Venezuela’s state-run energy giant Petroleos de Venezuela (PDVSA) in British jurisdiction on 24 January.—MNA/Xinhua



An avalanche slides down a mountain after it was triggered by mountaineers using explosives near a ski slope outside Almaty on 21 March, 2008. The avalanches were triggered to remove the danger posed to skiers.—INTERENT

US to scour India jungles for lost WWII planes

NEW DELHI, 21 March— The United States will search for remains of several World War II aircraft and airmen lost over the forested mountains of India’s northeast, a US commander said on Wednesday.

The US military says it lost some 430 Americans in 90 planes in India while they were on missions to resupply China’s besieged Army in the city of Kunming, desperately trying to hold out against the invading Japanese during World War II.

The wreckage of six US planes have been found in the jungles of India’s Arunachal Pradesh State, giving the US Joint Prisoners of War/Missing in Action

(POW/MIA) Accounting Command (JPAC) a starting point for its first recovery mission in India.

JPAC’s commander, Rear Admiral Donna L Crisp, met Indian defence officials on Wednesday, and said she was hopeful of mounting the expedition before the snows set in this year.

“We go as a team into the areas to find the remains,” said Crisp, adding the Indian military would also help with the search.

She also appealed to Indians in areas where the planes are believed to have crashed to report sightings of any wreckage.

MNA/Reuters



Vice-Senior General Maung Aye offers a religious title to a lay person.— MNA

(from page 16)

Deputy Minister for Religious Affairs Brig-Gen Thura Aung Ko supplicated on opening of the ceremony.

Chairman Sayadaw Bhaddanta Kumara administered the Five Precepts.

Maha Withuta-yama Zaygon Monastery Sayadaw Abhidhaja Maha Rattha Guru Bhaddanta Kavisara of Nay Pyi Taw Pyinmana read out the Ovadakatha of Saddhammayanthi Monastery Presiding Nayaka Sayadaw Agga Maha Kammathana-çariya Abhidhaja Maha Rattha Guru Bhaddanta Kundalabhivamsa of Mayangon Township.

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 offered Abhidhaja Maha Rattha Guru title and certificates to Saddhammayanthi Monastery Presiding Nayaka Sayadaw Bhaddanta Kundalabhivamsa of Mayangon Township, Kawhlar Pariyatti Monastery Sayadaw Bhaddanta Obhasa of Mawlamyine and Maha Withutayama Zaygon Monastery Sayadaw Bhaddanta Kavisara of Nay Pyi Taw Pyinmana.



Daw Mya Mya San offers a religious title to a lay person. —MNA

Vice-Senior General Maung Aye and wife attend religious title-offering ceremony



Prime Minister General Thein Sein offers a religious title to a lay person. —MNA

Prime Minister General Thein Sein presented Abhidhaja Agga Maha Saddhammajotika title and certificates to Taungmaw Missionary Sayadaw Bhaddanta Ñana of Loikaw, Shwewawin Monastery Sayadaw Bhaddanta Sasanabhivamsa of Myataung Taik in Mahaaungmye Township and Pali Takkatho Yayle Monastery Sayadaw Bhaddanta Kovida of Pyawbwe.

Secretary-1 Lt-Gen Thiha Thura Tin Aung Myint Oo donated Abhidhaja Agga Maha Saddhammajotika title and certificates to Maha Bonsan Monastery Sayadaw Bhaddanta Pandita of Aungmye Chanthaya Monastery in Pyapon Township, Ngagyigway Monastery Sayadaw Bhaddanta Vilasa of Swa in Yedashe Township, Mahasi Sasana Yeiktha Myakyin Nayaka Monastery Sayadaw Bhaddanta Vasava of Bahan Township and Agga Maha Saddhamma Jotikadhaja title and certificate to Sanhmitaw Monastic Education Sayadaw Bhaddanta Sumana of NyaungU Township.

SPDC member Lt-Gen Maung Bo offered Agga Maha Pandita title and certificates to four Sayadaws; SPDC member Lt-Gen Tin Aye presented Agga Maha Saddhamma Jotikadhaja title and certificates to five Sayadaws; Commander-in-Chief (Navy) Vice-Admiral Soe Thein donated Agga Maha Pandita title and certificates to five Sayadaws; Commander-in-Chief (Air) Lt-Gen Myat Hein offered Agga Maha Saddhamma Jotikadhaja title and certificates to five Sayadaws; Lt-Gen Myint Swe of the Ministry of Defence presented Agga Maha Pandita title and certificates to five Sayadaws; Lt-Gen Myint Hlaing of the Ministry of Defence donated Agga Maha Saddhamma Jotikadhaja title and certificates to six Sayadaws; Lt-Gen Ye Myint of the Ministry of Defence offered Agga Maha Pandita title and certificates to six Sayadaws;

(See page 9)

Lt-Gen Thiha Thura Tin Aung Myint Oo offers a religious title to a lay person.

MNA

Daw Khin Saw Hnin offers a religious title to a lay person.

MNA



Daw Khin Khin Win offers a religious title to a lay person. —MNA





Daw Mya Mya San donates alms to a Sayadaw.— MNA



Daw Mya Mya San offers a religious title to a nun. —MNA

Vice-Senior General Maung Aye ...

(from page 8)

Adjutant-General Maj-Gen Thura Myint Aung gave Agga Maha Saddhamma Jotikadhaja title and certificates to six Sayadaws; and Commander Maj-Gen Hla Htay

Dhamma Wihayi Pariyatti Nunnery of Aungmyethazan Township and Nun Daw Kesari of Sasana Myinzuyi Nunnery of North Okkalapa Township.

Daw Khin Khin

Sagaing Township.

Daw Khin Lay Myint, wife of Lt-Gen Maung Bo and Daw Aye Aye, wife of Vice-Admiral Soe Thein, offered Saddhamma Jotikadhaja title, Ganthavaçaka Pandita titles and certificates to the title recipient



Daw Khin Khin Win donates alms to a Sayadaw.— MNA

Win presented Agga Maha Pandita title and certificates to six Sayadaws.

The ministers, the Chief Justice, the Attorney-General, the Auditor-General, the Chairman of Civil Service Selection and Training Board, the Yangon Mayor, senior military officers, the deputy ministers, the vice-mayor and departmental heads offered religious titles and certificates to respective Sayadaws.

Next, Daw Mya Mya San, wife of Vice-Senior General Maung Aye, presented Agga Maha Ganthavaçaka Pandita title and certificates to Nun Daw Hemari of Sasana Myinzu Yinmamyang Nunnery of Monywa, Nun Daw Çandari of Taybatikayama Nunnery of Bago, Nun Daw Mittatheri of

Win, wife of Prime Minister General Thein Sein, offered Maha Saddhamma Jotikadhaja title and certificates to Nun Daw Dhammari of Mahabo Pariyatti Nunnery of Kawkaik Township, Nun Daw Yuçanda of Sandayama Nunnery of Mogaung and Nun Daw Rupatheri of Hsandawshin Zeyawady Nunnery of Pyigyidagun Township.

Daw Khin Saw Hnin, wife of Secretary-1 Lt-Gen Thiha Thura Tin Aung Myint Oo, presented Maha Ganthavaçaka Pandita title and certificates to Nun Daw Indasiri of Taungpaw Nunnery at Buddha Yeiktha Corner in Katha, Nun Daw Kulañani of Saddhammapala Nunnery of Aungmyethazan Township and Nun Daw Indasingi of Sasana Beikman Corner of

nuns.

Afterwards, Vice-Senior General Maung Aye conferred Agga Maha Thiri Thudhamma Manijotadhara title on U Naing Oo (Mibayeik) of Dagon Myothit (South) Township, U Bo Gyi of Bahan Township and U Soe Han Lin of Botahtaung Township.

Prime Minister General Thein Sein also presented Agga Maha Thiri Thudhamma Manijotadhara title and certificates to U Nyunt Htay of Kyimyindine Township, U Zaw Min Zin of Kamayut Township and U Khin Myint of Thayawady Township.

Secretary-1 Lt-Gen Thiha Thura Tin Aung Myint Oo gave Thiri Thudhamma Manijotadhara title and certificates

to U Kyi Lwin of Mahaangmye Township, U Ba Khant of Bahan Township and U Tin Win of Bahan Township, Thiha Thudhamma Manijotadhara title and certificates to U Bo Gyi (a) U Aung Ngwe of Shwebo Township, U Tin Aung of Insein

Daw Mya Mya San conferred Agga Maha Thiri Thudhamma Theingi title on Daw Daw Kyin of Mingala Taungnyunt Township, Daw Khin Nan Mon of Yankin Township and Daw Aye Aye Khant (a) Daw Khin San Kyi of

and certificates to Daw Yin Kywe of Shwedaung and Daw Myint Myint of Pyigyidagun Township.

Daw Khin Saw Hnin also presented Thiha Thudhamma Theingi title and certificates to Daw Than Than Nwe of Aungmyethazan Town-



Daw Khin Khin Win offers a religious title to a nun.—MNA

Township and U Aung Mon of Thakayta Township.

SPDC members Lt-Gen Maung Bo and Lt-Gen Tin Aye, Vice-Admiral Soe Thein and Lt-Gen Myat Hein offered Thudhamma Manijotadhara title and certificates to title recipient lay persons.

Thanlyin Township.

Daw Khin Khin Win presented Agga Maha Thiri Thudhamma Theingi title and certificates to Dr Daw Myat Myat Ohn Khin of Bahan Township and Daw Khin Mi Mi Hlaing of Insein Township, and Thiri Thudhamma Theingi title

ship, Daw Mya Thein (a) Daw Ahmar Sein of Bahan Township and Daw Than Sein of Bahan Township, and Thiha Thudhamma Theingi title and certificates to Daw Swe Thazin of Chanayethazan Township and Daw Nu Nu Nge of Yankin Township.

(See page 10)



Daw Khin Saw Hnin offers a religious title to a nun.— MNA



Prime Minister General Thein Sein donates alms to a Sayadaw.—MNA

(from page 9)
Daw Khin Lay Myint, wife of Lt-Gen Maung Bo; Daw Aye Aye, wife of Vice-Admiral Soe Thein; Daw Htwe Htwe Nyunt, wife of Lt-Gen Myat Hein; Daw Khin Thet Htay, wife of Lt-Gen Myint Swe

plicated on religions affairs. He said that he was pleased to have an opportunity to pay homage to members of the Sangha including title recipient Sayadaws led by the State Ovadacariya Sayadaws, the State Sangha Maha Nayaka Sayadaws

tivals and Buddha pujaniyas as well as the grand ceremony to mark the entering of the Buddha into Kapilavatta City are usually held in the Fullmoon of Taboung. This being the case, it is very auspicious to be able to hold the ceremony to confer religious titles on



Vice-Admiral Soe Thein offers a religious title to a Sayadaw.—MNA

and Daw Khin Thant Zin, wife of Lt-Gen Myint Hlaing handed Thudhamma Theingi title and certificates to lay women. Next, Minister for Religious Affairs Brig-Gen Thura Myint Maung sup-

and Tipitakadhara Tipitakakovida Sayadaws. He added that there were days of religious significance in the month of Taboung in the time of the Buddha. And in Myanmar where Buddhism flourishes Thebonzedi fes-

prominent monks residing abroad and laymen in the month of Taboung in which the climate is dry and pleasant. At such a time, it is also auspicious to honour those who deserve honour, he said. In the time of the Buddha, it is learnt that such ceremonies to confer religious titles on prominent monks, Beikkhunis and lay persons for their outstanding performance were held, and the titles were conferred on altogether 41 monks, 13 Beikkhunis, ten men and ten women. He said it is learnt that similar ceremonies were held in Sri Lanka. In Myanmar also, ceremonies to confer religious titles to prominent monks, nuns and laymen for their outstanding performance in the religious



Minister Brig-Gen Thura Myint Maung supplicates on religious matters.—MNA

field are held yearly from the Bagan period up to date. In the time of the State Law and Order Restoration Council and the State Peace and Development Council, 20 kinds of religious titles more were presented in addition to the already-existed two kinds

foundations for realization of Nibbana and the government and the people to be able to serve the interests of the Sasana all the more, accepting the Ovada of the Sayadaws. Next, the congregation shared merits gained and the ceremony con-

to offer rice and provisions, Daw Mya Mya San, wife of Vice-Senior General Maung Aye, Prime Minister General Thein Sein and wife Daw Khin Khin Win, Secretary-1 Lt-Gen Thiha Thura Tin Aung Myint Oo and wife Daw Khin Saw Hnin, members of SPDC



Secretary-1 Lt-Gen Thiha Thura Tin Aung Myint Oo and wife Daw Khin Saw Hnin donate alms to a Sayadaw.—MNA



Lt-Gen Myint Swe and wife donate alms to a Sayadaw.—MNA

of titles, and different kinds of religious titles were conferred on altogether 4263 monks, nuns, men and women from 1992 to 2007. On 4 January 2008 (Independence Day), the State Peace and Development Council issued Announcement No 1/2008 and conferred religious titles on 438 monks, nuns and lay persons for their outstanding performance in purification, perpetuation and propagation of the Sasana based on their attributes of Sila, Samadhi and Pañña. In conclusion, he wished the merits gained from the contributions of the government, the ministries, the Yangon Division Peace and Development Council, the departments concerned, well-wishers and others to be the sound

cluded. After that, the families of the Ministry of Defence, the Prime Minister Office, the SPDC Office, the Central Offices, the Adjutant-General's Office, the Quartermaster General's Office, the Tatmadaw (Navy) and (Air), the Yangon Command, the ministries, the Chief Justice and the Attorney-General's Offices, the Auditor-General's Office, the CSSTB Office, Yangon Division PDC, YCDC, District and Township PDCs, members of religious and social organizations, traditional medicine practitioners, traders, companies and wellwishers offered rice and provisions to the title recipient Sayadaws and nuns. At the ceremony

Lt-Gen Maung Bo and Lt-Gen Tin Aye, Commander-in-Chief (Navy) Vice-Admiral Soe Thein, Commander-in-Chief (Air) Lt-Gen Myat Hein, Lt-Gen Myint Swe, Lt-Gen Myint Hlaing, Lt-Gen Ye Myint of the Ministry of Defence, Adjutant-General Maj-Gen Thura Myint Aung, the commander of Yangon Command and their wives, the ministers, the Chief Justice, the Attorney-General, the Auditor-General, the Chairman of CSSTB, the Yangon Mayor, senior military officers, the deputy ministers, the vice-mayor and their wives, the director-general of SPDC Office, the departmental heads and the wellwishers donated rice and provisions worth K 56,093,082 to the members of the Sangha.—MNA

Images of the Day



Olympic torchbearer Liu Hongliang and singer Wang Lee Hom (R) hold torches of the Beijing Olympic Games while posing for photos during a news conference in Beijing on 21 March, 2008. Liu and Wang are selected as Olympic torchbearers for the Games.—XINHUA

Bhutanese people watch traditional dance during the annual Tsechufesti-val in Paro on 21 March, 2008.

INTERNET



Students dance as they celebrate "Basant Utsav" or Spring festival at Shantiniketan, 200 km (124 miles) north of Kolkata on 21 March, 2008. The tradition of Holi, also known as Festival of Colours, which is celebrated by Hindus falls on Saturday.—INTERNET



This photo provided by The Maryland Zoo in Baltimore shows a 290-pound male elephant calf, left, standing next to its mother, 24-year-old Felix, right, on 20 March, 2008, in Baltimore. Felix delivered the calf in the Elephant Barn on Wednesday after a relatively short labor. The delivery is the first elephant birth in the zoo's 132-year history.

INTERNET

NASA finds new clues to search for life on Mars

WASHINGTON, 21 March —The US National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA) announced on Thursday that its Mars Odyssey orbiter has found evidence of salt deposits on Mars, giving hope that the environment could have supported primitive life.

These deposits point to places where water once was abundant and where evidence might exist of possible Martian life from the red planet's past, said NASA on its website.

A team led by Mikki Osterloo of the University of Hawaii found approximately 200 sites, ranging from about a square kilometres to 25 times that size on southern Mars that show spectral characteristics consistent with chloride minerals.

Chloride is part of many types of salt, such as sodium chloride or table salt.

Scientists looking for evidence of past life on Mars have focused mainly on a handful of places that show evidence of clay or sulfate minerals.

MNA/Xinhua

Study says booster patch helps bird flu vaccine

WASHINGTON, 21 March — A skin patch helped boost a bird flu vaccine so well that people appear to be protected by a single dose, researchers at biotechnology firm Iomai said on Thursday.

The so-called adjuvant patch, designed to be used with an injected vaccine, could help stretch the supply during a pandemic, the Maryland-based company said.

Current approved vaccines against the H5N1 avian influenza virus require two doses to be fully effective.

Iomai is testing its adjuvant patch on 500 volunteers in a phase 1/2 trial looking at the safety and efficacy of the patch. The patch, which is applied after gently scraping the skin with a light, sandpaper-like device, is being used to boost an H5N1 vaccine made by the Belgian drug company Solvay.

MNA/Reuters

Methane found on planet outside Solar System

LONDON, 21 March — Scientists have found the organic compound methane for the first time in the atmosphere of a planet outside our Solar System, orbiting a star some 63 light years away from the Earth.

The discovery, made by Giovanna Tinetti from University College, London, and Mark Swain and Gautam Vasisht from NASA's Jet Propulsion Laboratory in Pasadena, California, was unveiled in the journal *Nature* available on Wednesday. The scientists found the signature of methane in the planet's atmosphere using the Hubble Space Telescope, the *Nature* said.

The scientists detected the gas in the atmosphere of a Jupiter-sized planet known as HD 189733b, located 63 light years from the Earth, in the constellation Vulpecula — the little fox. The planet orbits closer to the parent star in its Solar System than Mercury does in our own and temperatures there reach 900 degrees Celsius.

MNA/Xinhua

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CLAIMS DAY NOTICE

MV KOTA TAMPAN VOY NO (177)

Consignees of cargo carried on MV KOTA TAMPAN VOY NO (177) are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on 22.3.2008 and cargo will be discharged into the premises of A.W.P.T where it will lie at the consignee's risk and expenses and subject to the byelaws and conditions of the Port of Yangon.

Damaged cargo will be surveyed daily from 8 am to 11:20 am and 12 noon to 4 pm up to Claims Day now declared as the third day after final discharge of cargo from the vessel.

No claims against this vessel will be admitted after the Claims Day.

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Beijing, Tianjin hit by worst dust weather this spring

BEIJING, 20 March—Northern parts of China, including Beijing and Tianjin, were hit on Tuesday by the second and worst dust storms this spring, the State Forestry Administration (SFA) said. Owing to a cold current from Inner Mongolia Autonomous Region, dust swept Beijing and lingered in the northern and western suburbs in the daytime. Some people wore masks or scarves outdoors.

According to the China Meteorological Administration (CMA), the dust covered a large area in the northern part of the country, including middle and western Inner Mongolia, northern parts of Shannxi and Shanxi provinces, Hebei Province and western area of northeast China.

Strong sandstorms hit parts of Inner Mongolia, with a visibility of less than 200 metres.

MNA/Xinhua

Chile police arrest nearly 1,000 in nationwide raid

SANTIAGO, 20 March—Chilean police arrested nearly a thousand people in the dawn hours on Tuesday in a nationwide raid in which they also seized arms, ammunition, drugs and stolen vehicles.

Police said 844 people were arrested, many of them in the nation's capital Santiago, in the sweep that came amid reports of rising crime in one of Latin America's most vibrant economies.

A spokesman for the Interior Ministry said more than 1,000 police participated in the sweep that came just days after the government announced new measures to clamp down on crime.

Chile's economy is booming on the back of soaring copper prices, but the Andean country is also experiencing social tensions as some complain the newfound wealth is not fairly distributed.

MNA/Reuters

FAO says Indonesia needs help fighting bird flu

MILAN, 21 March—Major efforts have done little to control H5N1 avian influenza in Indonesia and the country needs more help in controlling the virus, the United Nations' Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) said on Tuesday. Surveillance and response teams are working in 193 out of 448 districts in Indonesia, yet birds in 31 out of 33 provinces are affected, FAO Chief Veterinary Officer Joseph

Domenech said in a statement.

By June 2008, more than 2,000 surveillance and response teams will be active in more than 300 districts in disease-endemic areas of the country, he said. But that may not be enough.

"Indonesia is facing an uphill battle against a virus that is difficult to contain. Major human and financial resources, stronger political commitment and

strengthened coordination between the central, provincial and district authorities are required to improve surveillance and control measures," Domenech said. "We have also observed that new H5N1 avian influenza virus strains have recently emerged creating the possibility that vaccines currently in use may not be fully protecting poultry against the disease," Domenech added.

MNA/Reuters



An Indian shopkeeper arranges a display of ginger as he waits for customers in a wholesale vegetable and fruit market in New Delhi.—INTERNET

UN says poor countries need help as food prices rise

DHAKA, 21 March—Donor nations should increase financial assistance to developing countries such as Bangladesh to cope with rising food and oil prices, the head of the United Nations Development Programme said on Wednesday.

Kemal Dervis made the appeal at the end of a visit to Bangladesh to review programmes for rehabilitation of millions of people hit by a cyclone last year.

"Support from oil-rich countries, as well as other donors, could have positive benefits for Bangladesh and other lower income countries," Dervis said in a statement.

MNA/Reuters

Icy start, but 2008 may be in top 10 warmest years

OSLO, 21 March—After the coldest start to a year in more than a decade, spring will bring relief to the northern hemisphere from Thursday.

Bucking the trend of global warming, the start of 2008 saw icy weather around the world from China to Greece. But despite its chilly start, 2008

is expected to end up among the top 10 warmest years since records began in the 1860s. This winter, ski resorts from the United States to Scandinavia have deep snow. Last year, after a string of mild winters, some feared climate change might put them out of business.

In many countries crops and plants are back on a more "normal" schedule. Cherry trees in Washington are on target to blossom during a 29 March-13 April festival that has sometimes mistimed the peak blooms. "So far 2008, for the globe, has been quite cold, only just above the 1961-90 average," said Phil Jones, head of the Climatic Research Unit at the University of East Anglia which supplies global temperature data to the United Nations.

MNA/Reuters

Thai rice to be grown in zero-gravity farm

BANGKOK, 21 March—Three Thai rice species will be soon grown in a zero-gravity farm on board a Japanese Experiment Module in an international space programme, according to Thailand's National Centre for Genetic Engineering and Biotechnology (BIOTEC).

BIOTEC director Morakot Tanticharoen said Thursday that Pathum Thani 1, Rice Jasmine 105, Kor Khor 6 breeds and a Japanese rice breed will be tested on board Kibo Module how well they can cope with harsh surroundings in which illumination, temperature, ultraviolet and carbon-dioxide would be constantly altered.

Theoretically, it is possible that the rice breeds can still grow under the zero-gravity condition. The test may produce a new rice breed that can grow well under harsh conditions, Morakot said.

MNA/Xinhua

India culls chickens to stop bird flu spreading

KOLKATA, 21 March—Authorities in eastern India on Wednesday started culling thousands of chickens, fearing the spread of bird flu in another district after a fresh outbreak in poultry this month.

About 1,000 chickens in a state-run poultry farm in West Bengal State's Malda District died in the last few days, prompting authorities to examine blood samples, officials said.

MNA/Reuters

Airports body says

Air travellers up 6.4% in 2007

GENEVA, 21 March—Air travellers on domestic and international flights totalled 4.5 billion in 2007, up 6.4 per cent on 2006 and marking a "banner year" for the industry, the global airports body ACI said on Wednesday.

ACI, the Geneva-based Airports Council International, said international freight traffic—an indication of the

health of world trade—was up by 3.6 per cent. But it warned that 2008 might not be so good for passengers or freight.

"The remarkable spurt of growth in international passenger and freight traffic made 2007 a banner year for air transport, particularly in thriving new markets in Asia-Pacific, Africa and the Middle East," ACI

Director General Robert Aaronson said.

The world's top airports were the two leading US hubs of Atlanta, which processed nearly 90 million travellers, and Chicago O'Hare, which handled over 76 million, and London's Heathrow which saw 68 million pass through.

MNA/Reuters

Ad giant focus of phone spam backlash



Mobile phone user shows a spam message.—INTERNET

BEIJING, 21 March — Focus Media, the advertising giant behind outdoor ads nationwide, has recently found itself the focus of attention instead.

Through ads put out in elevators, supermarkets and cell phones, the Shanghai-based, NASDAQ-listed company became a runaway success and has maintained more than 150 percent revenue growth annually.

But media reports recently exposed what many now see as the dark side of the ad agency. Focus Media Wireless, the mobile advertising subsidiary of Focus Media, has sparked a furor for sending more than 100 million spam text messages to cell phone users in the country, every day, without their consent.

In a CCTV television show on 15 March — which also happened to be World Consumer Rights Day — a general manager with the subsidiary told a reporter that the company has in its possession the private information of more than 200 million cell phone users in China, accounting for close to half of the country's mobile phone users. This means it has about 80 percent of the domestic short message advertising market. — *Internet*



A wallet used ostrich skin is seen at the Tan Dat ostrich store in Hanoi, Vietnam, on 13 March, 2008. In Vietnam, Ostrich are raised for meat, skins which are used to make handbags, shoes and its eggs, which are used to make handicrafts.—INTERNET

“Hobbit” first edition sold for auction record

LONDON, 20 March — One of the first editions of JRR Tolkien's classic *The Hobbit* was sold for a record 60,000 pounds at auction in London on Tuesday.

Auctioneers Bonhams said the book, signed by Tolkien and dedicated to his close friend Elaine Griffiths, was bought by a telephone bidder who wished to remain anonymous.

It said the price — twice the pre-sale estimate — was a record for a signed copy of the novel, published in 1937 and featuring a range of black and white sketches.

Tolkien first wrote *The Hobbit* for his children but

after reading the transcript, Griffiths thought it was so good she handed it to publisher, George, Allen and Unwin.

The story, which follows the quest of Bilbo Baggins to reclaim stolen treasures from the dragon Smaug, went on to sell more than 100 million copies in nearly 50 languages.

Just 1,500 copies of the first edition were printed.

The Hobbit is expected to be turned into a Hollywood film.

It was the precursor to Tolkien's “Lord of the Rings” trilogy which went on to become a cinema blockbuster.

MNA/Reuters

Indonesia accuses US of abusing bird flu virus

JAKARTA, 21 March — Indonesian Health Minister Siti Fadhilah Supari has accused the United States of abusing Indonesian bird flu virus for commercial purposes, *Antara* news agency reported on Thursday.

“We sent the virus (to them) for the sake of humanity but they have turned it into vaccines sold everywhere on the pretext of keeping watch for pandemic,” *Antara* news agency Thursday quoted the minister as saying at a discussion on her book titled “It's Time for the World to Change, Devine Hands behind Bird Flu” in Surabaya, the second largest city in the country.

On the pretext of keeping watch for pandemic, she said the US and WHO had produced vaccines and sold them to third world countries for millions of dollars.

“They made third world nations laboratories. They want us to be ill while at the same time selling the vaccines. Don't let this continue,” she said

MNA/Xinhua



An eagle ray lies in a boat off the Florida Keys, 20 March, 2008, a Florida Wildlife investigator said. The eagle ray leaped onto a boat on Thursday and stabbed a woman with its barb, knocking her to the deck and killing her, a Florida wildlife investigator said.—INTERNET

Saudi Arabia opens its first women-only hotel

RIYADH, 21 March — For a country that goes to such great lengths to segregate unrelated men and women, it took Saudi Arabia a long time to hit on the idea of women-only hotels.

The kingdom's first hotel exclusively for females opened on Wednesday, offering plush lodgings with a full-range of health and beauty facilities for ladies to pamper themselves away from the accusing eyes of a male-dominated society.

“Inside this physical structure, we are all women. We even have bell-women. We are women-owned, women-managed and women-run, from our IT engineer to our electrical engineer,” Executive Director Lorraine Coutinho told *Reuters*.

“This is meeting a very big demand. There are women's hotels all over the world, from Berlin to the United States to everywhere,” she said.

MNA/Reuters



A physician loads DNA samples onto a gel while searching for variations in genetic samples. An explosion in genetic research is helping physicians detect and treat deadly diseases and could soon lead to genetic prescreening to assess risk and design personalized preventative treatments, researchers said on 20 March, 2008.—INTERNET

Strong quakes rock northwest China's Xinjiang

BEIJING, 21 March — The Chinese Seismological Network detected the fifth minor tremor in Yutian County, in southwest China's Xinjiang Uygur Autonomous Region, at 8:26 am Friday (Beijing Time). Four quakes had rocked the Kunlun Mountain region earlier on Friday with the first and the strongest measuring 7.3 on the Richter scale and occurring at 6:33 am. The epicenter of the quakes was located at 35.6 degrees north latitude and 81.6 degrees east longitude. The first jolt was followed by four minor ones measuring between five and 5.2 on the

Richter scale between 7:00 a.m and 8:26 am.

An official in Hotian Prefecture told *Xinhua* the earthquakes affected the townships of Aqqan and Bostan, where the total population is about 13,400.

“The jolts occurred in the early morning in the mountainous region sparsely populated by people of ethnic groups, mainly Uygur. There were no immediate reports of casualties,” he said. Executive deputy commissar of the Hotian Prefecture Zhang Jinbiao has led a group of medical workers and public security staff to the region.—*Internet*

SPORTS

Real striker van Nistelrooy to have ankle surgery

MADRID, 21 March — Real Madrid striker Ruud van Nistelrooy is to have arthroscopic surgery for a problem with his right ankle, the Spanish champions said on Wednesday. The Netherlands international has flown to Amsterdam for the operation, Real said in a statement on their website (www.realmadrid.com).

Van Nistelrooy has missed Real's last four matches in all competitions with a persistent swelling around the ankle joint and was absent from Wednesday's training session. The club do not know how long he will be out of action though his presence at Euro 2008 is unlikely to be threatened.

The 31-year-old has scored 12 league goals for

Real this term and his absence will be a major setback as they close in on a second consecutive Primera Liga title. Real lead second-placed Barcelona by seven points with 10 matches left.

MNA/Reuters

FIFA confirms Madagascar suspension

BERNE (Switzerland), 20 March — FIFA has announced the suspension of Madagascar's football association in the latest row over alleged political interference in the running of the sport.

World soccer's governing body said on Wednesday it would immediately enforce the sus-

pension which its executive committee had threatened to impose last Friday.

The executive committee had given the Malagasy Government three days to revoke a Sports Ministry decree aimed at dissolving the Malagasy Football Association (FMF) but on Wednesday FIFA said its demands had not been met.

"FIFA has today been informed of the decision taken by the Supreme Court of Madagascar to reject an appeal from the (FMF) to defer (the) ministerial order," a statement said. — MNA/Reuters



Mexico's Atlante Jose Cardenas (L) fights for the ball with Costa Rica's Deportivo Saprissa Jervis Drummund during their CONCACAF Champions' Cup soccer match at Ricardo Saprissa stadium in San Jose, 20 March, 2008.—INTERNET



Tiger Woods chips a shot on the 17th green during the first round of the CA Championship golf tournament in Doral. —INTERNET

Tempers flare as Aris reach Greek Cup semifinals

ATHENS, 21 March — Aris Salonika booked their place in the Greek Cup semifinals with a 1-0 win over Xanthi that was marred by a late fracas on Thursday.

Goalless after the first leg, the quarterfinal second leg in Thessaloniki was going the same way until Bosnian midfielder Sanel Jahic volleyed home a loose ball in the 72nd minute.

Xanthi pressed for an equalizer and tempers flared when they continued with an attack in the last minute despite Aris captain Costas Nebegleras having gone down injured.

Aris defender Avraam Papadopoulos was sent off for his part in the subsequent pushing and shoving before the final whistle.

Aris now take on fellow Super League club Atromitos Athens, while Olympiakos Piraeus face second division Thrasyvoulos in the other semifinal.

MNA/Reuters

Winning goal disputed as Eintracht beat Cottbus

BERLIN, 21 March — Eintracht Frankfurt came from behind to snatch a controversial 2-1 home win over lowly Energie Cottbus in the Bundesliga on Thursday.

Cottbus, who beat leaders Bayern Munich last weekend, took a 48th minute lead when Eintracht keeper Oka Nikolov allowed a seemingly harmless 25-metre shot from Timo Rost to slip through his hands. Brazilian Caio levelled from 18 metres out after a neat one-two with Czech striker Martin Fenin, but there was controversy in the 65th minute over whether the ball had crossed the line when defender Marco Russ struck the winner.

Cottbus keeper Gerhard Tremmel dived to his right to parry Russ' shot and the ball hit the post before bouncing back down the goal line before being smothered by Tremmel. Referee Michael Kemptner showed no hesitation in awarding the goal but television replays appeared to show that only part of the ball had crossed the line. Frankfurt moved up to sixth place with the win, while 15th-placed Cottbus are just above the drop zone.

MNA/Reuters



Spain's Rafael Nadal returns a shot against James Blake of the US during their match at the Pacific Life Open tennis tournament in Indian Wells, California on 20 March, 2008. INTERNET

Getafe reach second consecutive King's Cup final

SANTANDER (Spain), 20 March — Getafe reached their second consecutive King's Cup final after drawing 1-1 away to Racing Santander in their semifinal second leg on Wednesday.

Michael Laudrup's side won the first leg 3-1 at

home last month and survived a torrid time at the Sardinero after Pedro Munitis gave Racing an early lead.

They withstood intense pressure until the second-half dismissal of Racing striker Oscar Serrano, after which Francisco

Casquero snatched a late equalizer.

Getafe, who face Bayern Munich in a UEFA Cup quarterfinals next month, lost 1-0 to Sevilla in their first final appearance last season.

They will meet either Valencia or Barcelona, who play the other semifinal second leg at the Mestalla on Thursday. The scores are level at 1-1. The final is on April 16.

Getafe were penned back as last-four debutants Racing piled forward in search of an early breakthrough which they got after seven minutes.

Jorge Lopez collected a short corner and drilled a low ball across the face of the goal for forward Munitis to stab in from close range.

MNA/Reuters



Ana Ivanovic of Serbia hits a return during her 6-1, 6-4 win over Russia's Vera Zvonareva at the Pacific Life Open tennis tournament in Indian Wells, California.—INTERNET

Bordeaux reach French Cup quarters

PARIS, 20 March — Ligue 1 title contenders Girondins Bordeaux needed two goals in extra time to beat Lille 2-0 on Wednesday and advance to the French Cup quarterfinals.

Brazilian midfielder Fernando exploited a blunder by the visitors's defence to put Bordeaux in front 96 minutes into a dull affair.

Bordeaux, lying second in the league standings, then needed a superb save from goalkeeper Ulrich Rame from a close-range effort by Lille striker Nicolas Fauvergue to stay in front.

Forward David Bellion put the issue beyond doubt by heading home a Franck Jurietti cross on 114 minutes. —MNA/Reuters

Kuznetsova cruises into last four at Indian Wells

INDIAN WELLS (California), 20 March — Second-seeded Russian Svetlana Kuznetsova swept past Polish teenager Agnieszka Radwanska 6-2, 6-4 to reach the last four at the Pacific Life Open on Wednesday.

Kuznetsova, who was upset by Radwanska in the third round of the Australian Open in January, broke her 19-year-old opponent in the first and third games of the opening set on the Stadium Court.

MNA/Reuters

At least two dozen wounded in Kashmir blast

SRINAGAR (India), 21 March — At least two dozen people were wounded on Wednesday when suspected separatist rebels set off a powerful bomb in the heart of Kashmir's main city, police said.

No militant group has claimed responsibility for the explosion, the first in past five months, which took place near Jehangir Chowk, a busy area in Srinagar, the summer capital of Jammu and Kashmir state.

"Nearly 25 people have been treated in the hospital. One among the injured is serious," Altaf Ahmad, a doctor in a Srinagar hospital, said.

Witnesses said the explosion shook the area and damaged several vehicles and window panes of nearby buildings.

MNA/Reuters

Chinese man detained for airport bomb hoax

BEIJING, 21 March — A Chinese man has been detained for making a bomb hoax at a Beijing airport, local media reported Wednesday.

The man, identified only by his surname Tie, claimed that the toothpaste he was insisting that he carry on to the Shandong Airlines plane was "explosive material", when crossing the security checkpoint at the Beijing Capital

International Airport, the Beijing Youth Daily said Wednesday.

According to the paper, Tie was found to be carrying a bottle of Crest toothpaste in his bag at a security check point on Monday. Violating the new regulation that banned passengers from carrying liquids onto airplanes, he was told by the inspectors to put it into the hold.

MNA/Xinhua

Chile arrests 849 amid nationwide crackdown on crime

SANTIAGO, 21 March — Chilean police arrested 849 people during a nationwide crime crack-down on Monday and Tuesday, a government official said.

Nine guns, amm-union and drugs were also seized during the operation, the first of a string of government-led crack-downs on crime, Deputy Interior Minister Felipe Harboe said.

MNA/Xinhua



A file photo shows an Iraqi girl fills a tin with water from a water pipe crossing an uncovered sewage canal in Baghdad. Many of Baghdad's neighbourhoods lack essential infrastructure like power and clean water. Two UN agencies have said that in the developing world, lack of access to toilets is a serious issue that puts lives at stake.

INTERNET

"Untimely Rainfall Warning"

Issued at (11:00) hours MST on 21st march, 2008

According to the observations at (09:30) hours MST today, due to the influence of the western disturbances, rain or thundershowers are likely to be isolated in northern Rakhine, Northern Shan, Kachin and Chin States, Sagaing and Mandalay Divisions within next (48) hours commencing noon today.



Saturday, 22 March
View on today

7:00 am

1. မင်းကွန်း
ဆရာတော်ဘုရားကြီး၏
ပရိတ်တရားတော်

7:25 am

2. To be healthy exercise

7:30 am

3. Morning news

7:40 am

4. ပြည်ထောင်စုတိုင်းရင်းသား

ရိုးရာအက

7:55 am

5. ရုပ်မြင်သံကြားစုကဏ္ဍ

8:00 am

6. (၆၃)နှစ်မြောက်တပ်မတော်နေ့
ဂုဏ်ပြုအစီအစဉ်

8:30 am

7. International news

8:40 am

8. Local Talent

8:50 am

9. "ဖြတ်လျှောက်ရုံလေးပဲ
လျှောက်ဖြတ်တော့မှာပါ"
(ကျော်ဇေယျ၊မေသန်းနု၊ပန်းဖြူ၊)
(ဒါရိုက်တာ-မောင်မောင်ဦး)
(စန်းစိုက်)

11:00 am

1. Martial song

11:15 am

2. Musical programme

11:30 am

3. ချစ်စရာအရွယ်ကစားကြမယ်

12:00 noon

4. တစ်ပတ်အတွင်းရုပ်မြင်သံကြား

ပြည်တွင်းသတင်းစဉ်

12:30 pm

5. နိုင်ငံခြားဇာတ်လမ်းတွဲ

"စစ်သူကြီးဆွန်ကြီး"

(အပိုင်း-၁၄)

1:30 pm

6. (၆၃)နှစ်မြောက်တပ်မတော်နေ့

ဂုဏ်ပြုအစီအစဉ်

1:45 pm

7. အကပြိုင်ပွဲ

2:00 pm

8. နိုင်ငံစီပွားအလေးထား

ကျေးလက်ထုတ်ကုန်များ

(ပင်လောင်းလက်ဖက်

နတ် သစ်ရွက်)

2:15 pm

9. "ချစ်လွန်းလို့"
(မိုးဖြူ၊ ခင်စိုးပိုင်)
(ဒါရိုက်တာ-ကြည်စိုး)

2:25 pm

10. ပြည်ထောင်စုတိုင်းရင်းသားရိုးရာ

တေးသံသာ

2:35 pm

11. တေးဂီတအစီစဉ်

2:45 pm

12. International news

4:00 pm

1. Martial song

4:10 pm

2. တပ်မတော်နေ့ဂုဏ်ပြု

တေးသံချင်းပြိုင်ပွဲဆုရတေးများ

4:20 pm

3. အဝေးသင်တက္ကသိုလ်

ပညာရေး ရုပ်မြင်သံကြား

သင်ခန်းစာ-ပထမနှစ်

(မြန်မာစာ၊မြန်မာမှုရသစာပေ

အထူးပြုများ)

(အရှေ့တိုင်းပညာ)

4:35 pm

4. မျိုးချစ်စိတ်ဓါတ်ရှင်သန်

ထက်မြက်ရေးတေးများ

4:45 pm

5. မြန်မာ့ဓလေ့ရိုးရာလက်ငွေ

5:00 pm

6. ချစ်စရာအရွယ်ကစားကြမယ်

5:20 pm

7. ရာသီလွင်သရုပ်ဆောင်လွင်ပြင်

5:50 pm

8. (၆၃)နှစ်မြောက်တပ်မတော်နေ့

ဂုဏ်ပြုအစီအစဉ်

6:00 pm

9. Evening news

6:30 pm

10. Weather report

6:35 pm

11. အလှူရှာမယ်လှူကမ္ဘာဝယ်

7:00 pm

12. "သားကောင်းမိခင်"

(အပိုင်း- ၁)

(လွင်မိုး၊နေတိုး၊ဇင်ဝိုင်း၊

ထွန်းထွန်း(Examplez)၊

စိုးမြတ်သူဇာ၊မေသညာဦး၊ပန်းဖြူ၊

သက်မွန်မြင့်၊ပုလဲဝင်း)

(ဒါရိုက်တာ-ပန်းချီမိုးမိုး)

8:00 pm

11. News

12. International news

13. Weather report

14. "သားကောင်းမိခင်"

(အပိုင်း- ၂)

(လွင်မိုး၊နေတိုး၊ဇင်ဝိုင်း၊

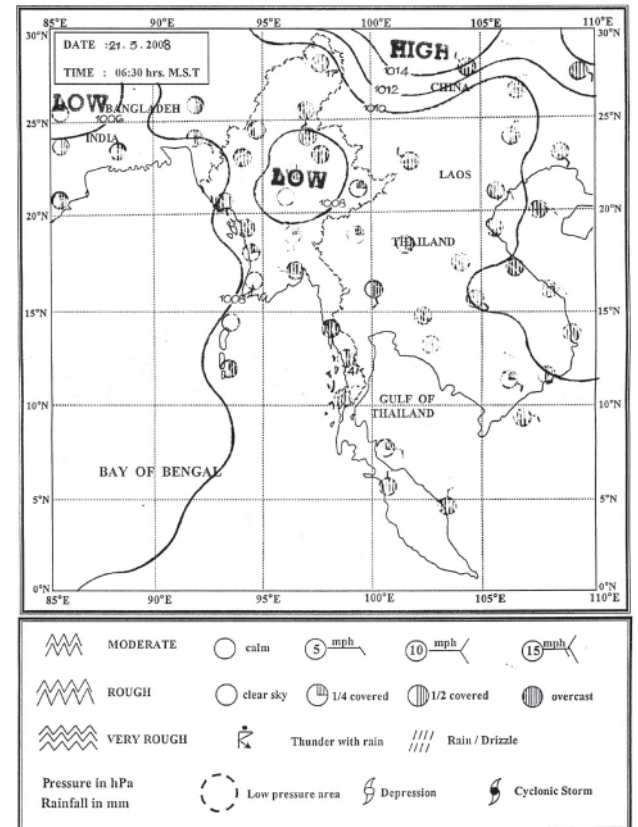
ထွန်းထွန်း(Examplez)၊

စိုးမြတ်သူဇာ၊မေသညာဦး၊ပန်းဖြူ၊

သက်မွန်မြင့်၊ပုလဲဝင်း)

(ဒါရိုက်တာ-ပန်းချီမိုးမိုး)

Weather Map of Myanmar and Neighbouring Areas



WEATHER

Friday, 21 March, 2008

Summary of observations recorded at 9:30 hours

MST: During the past 24 hours, rain or thundershowers have been fairly widespread in Kachin State, scattered in upper Sagaing Division and isolated in Chin State, Mandalay and Taninthayi Divisions, weather has been partly cloudy in Shan State and Yangon Division and generally fair in the remaining areas. Day temperatures were (3°C) to (4°C) above March average temperatures in Mandalay, Magway, Bago and Taninthayi Divisions, (6°C) above March average temperatures in Chin State, (3°C) below March average temperatures in Kachin State and about March average temperatures in the remaining States and Divisions. The significant day temperatures were Chauk (42°C), Nay Pyi Taw, Mandalay, Myingyan, Nyaung U, Pyinmana, Minbu, Magway, Aungmye, Taungthaingyi and Thawawady (40°C) each. The noteworthy amounts of rainfall recorded were Putao (0.67) inch, Machanbaw (0.55) inch, Mogoke and Mawlaik (0.16) inch, Haka (0.08) inch and Katha (0.04) inch.

Maximum temperature on 20-3-2008 was 101°F. Minimum temperature on 21-3-2008 was 72°F. Relative humidity at (09:30) hours MST on 21-3-2008 was 74%. Total sunshine hours on 20-3-2008 was (9.1) hours approx.

Rainfall on 21-3-2008 was (Nil) at Mingaladon, Kaba-Aye and Central Yangon. Total rainfall since 1-1-2008 was (0.67) inch at Mingaladon, (0.47) inch at Kaba-Aye and (0.35) inch at Central Yangon. Maximum wind speed at Yangon (Kaba-Aye) was (5) mph from Southwest at (15:30) hours MST on 20-3-2008.

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

Forecast valid until evening of 22-3-2008: Likelihood of isolated rain or thundershowers in Northern Rakhine, Northern Shan, Kachin and Chin States, Sagaing, Mandalay and Taninthayi Divisions, weather will be partly cloudy in Mon, Kayin States and Yangon Division and generally fair in the remaining areas. Degree of certainty is (60%).

State of the sea: Seas will be 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 area for 22-3-2008: Likelihood of isolated rain or thundershowers in the afternoon/evening. Degree of certainty is (60%).

Forecast for Yangon and neighbouring area for 22-3-2008: Partly cloudy.

Forecast for Mandalay and neighbouring area for 22-3-2008: Likelihood of isolated rain or thundershowers in the afternoon/evening. Degree of certainty is (60%).

Weather Outlook for forth weekend of March 2008: During the coming weekend isolated rain or thundershowers are likely in Nay Pyi Taw and Mandalay Division and weather will be partly cloudy in Yangon Division.



Vice-Senior General Maung Aye offers a religious title certificate to a title-recipient Sayadaw.—MNA

(from page 1)
attended by Vice-Chairman of the SPDC Deputy Commander-in-Chief of Defence Services Commander-in-Chief (Army) Vice-Senior General Maung Aye and wife Daw

recipient monks and nuns. Also present were Prime Minister General Thein Sein and wife Daw Khin Khin Win, SPDC Secretary-1 Lt-Gen Thiha Thura Tin Aung Myint Oo and wife Daw Khin Saw

Gen Myint Hlaing and Lt-Gen Ye Myint of the Ministry of Defence, Adjutant-General Maj-Gen Thura Myint Aung and their wives, the chairman of Yangon Division PDC as well as the commander of

Vice-Senior General Maung Aye and wife attend religious title-offering ceremony



Prime Minister General Thein Sein offers a religious title certificate to a title-recipient Sayadaw.—MNA



Secretary-1 Lt-Gen Thiha Thura Tin Aung Myint Oo offers a religious title certificate to a title-recipient Sayadaw.—MNA

Mya Mya San.

The religious occasion was graced by the presence of members of the State Sangha Maha Nayaka Committee, Tipitakadhara Tipitaka Kovida Sayadaws, title-

Hnin, SPDC members Lt-Gen Maung Bo and Lt-Gen Tin Aye, Commander-in-Chief (Navy) Vice-Admiral Soe Thein, Commander-in-Chief (Air) Lt-Gen Myat Hein, Lt-Gen Myint Swe, Lt-

Yangon Command and wife, ministers and their wives, the chief justice, the attorney-general, the auditor-general, the chairman of the Civil Service Selection and Training Board, the chairman of

Yangon City Development Committee the Mayor, deputy ministers, members of the Committee for Holding the Referendum, heads of department, ambassadors and officials of foreign embassies in Yangon, members of the boards of trustees of famous pagodas in Yangon, officials of social organizations, service personnel, title recipient lay persons, wellwishers and guests.

At 11.30 am, officials ushered SSMNC member Sayadaws, Tipitakadhara Tipitaka Kovida Sayadaws, Abhidhaja Maha Rattha Guru title recipient Sayadaws, Abhidhaja Agga Maha Saddhamma Jotikadhaja, Agga Maha Pandita and Agga Maha Saddhamma Jotikadhaja title recipient Sayadaws were ushered into the cave through the southern archway.

Sayadaws, and Agga Maha Saddhamma Jotikadhaja title recipient Sayadaws to the recreation centre, and the remaining title recipient Sayadaws, nuns and lay persons to the designated places in the cave.

At 11.45 am, SSMNC member Sayadaws, Tipitakadhara Tipitaka Kovida Sayadaws, Abhidhaja Maha Rattha Guru title recipient Sayadaws, Abhidhaja Agga Maha Saddhamma Jotikadhaja, Agga Maha Pandita and Agga Maha Saddhamma Jotikadhaja title recipient Sayadaws were ushered into the cave through the southern archway.

Deputy Director U Tin Aung Tun ushered Tipitakadhara Tipitaka Kovida title recipient

Sayadaws; Deputy Director U Myint Naing, three Abhidhaja Maha Rattha Guru title recipient Sayadaws; Director U Aung Thein Nyunt, six Abhidhaja Agga Maha Saddhammajotika title recipient Sayadaws; Assistant Director U Than Naing, 28 Agga Maha Pandita title recipient Sayadaws; and Director U Than Win, 34 Agga Maha Saddhamma Jotikadhaja title recipient Sayadaws.

The ceremony commenced at noon today. Deputy Director U San Thin Hlaing of the Department for Promotion and Propagation of the Sasana under the Ministry of Religious Affairs acted as MC.

(See page 8)



Religious title-offering ceremony in progress at the Mahapasana Cave on Thiri Mingala Kaba Aye Hill.—MNA