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Senior General Than Shwe sends message of felicitations to President of Islamic Republic of Pakistan

NAY PYI TAW, 23 March — On the occasion of the anniversary of the Pakistan Day, which falls on 23 March, 2008, Senior General Than Shwe, Chairman of the State Peace and Development Council of the Union of Myanmar, has sent message of felicitations to His Excellency Mr Pervez Musharraf, President of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan. — *MNA*

Prime Minister General Thein Sein felicitates Pakistani counterpart

NAY PYI TAW, 23 March — On the occasion of the anniversary of the Pakistan Day, which falls on 23 March, 2008, General Thein Sein, Prime Minister of the Union of Myanmar, has sent message of felicitations to His Excellency Mr Mohammedmian Soomro, Prime Minister of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan. — *MNA*

Maintain fine tradition of the Tatmadaw

Our Tatmadaw has proved capable of adequately dealing with any crisis due to its good discipline, loyalty, unity, capability, willingness to make sacrifices, willingness to give priority to national interests over individual interests, high morale, courage in the face of difficulties, endurance and perseverance. As these points constituted the noble traditions of the Tatmadaw, it is incumbent on all of us to maintain these characteristics forever.

Senior General Than Shwe
Chairman of the State Peace and Development Council
Commander-in-Chief of Defence Services
(From address delivered at the 58th Anniversary Armed Forces Day Parade)

Kyauktan Bridge inaugurated on An-Sittway section of Yangon-Sittway Highway

Minister for Construction Maj-Gen Saw Tun, Vice-Chairman of Rakhine State Peace and Development Council Brig-Gen Than Tun Aung and Brig-Gen Ye Aung of local station formally open Kyauktan Bridge. — MNA

NAY PYI TAW, 22 March — A ceremony to inaugurate Kyauktan Bridge built by Bridge Construction Project Special Group-10 of Public Works was held at the pandal near the bridge on An-Sittway section of Yangon-Sittway Highway yesterday.

Speaking on the occasion, Vice-Chairman of Rakhine State Peace and Development Council Brig-Gen Than Tun Aung said that Kyauktan Bridge is 452 feet and five inches long and 32 feet wide. It has 24 feet wide motorway flanked by four-foot-wide pedestrian ways. The bridge can withstand 60-ton loads. After realizing the goodwill of the Head of State, the government, the Tatmadaw and the people are joinning hands in carrying out all-round development tasks of Rakhine State. The government has spent a large amount of money on construction of roads, bridges, hospitals and schools in Rakhine State. Therefore, departmental personnel and local national people are to safeguard the bridge for its durability.

Speaking next, Minister for Construction Maj-Gen Saw Tun said the State set the target to build

(See page 10)

SPECIAL FEATURES TO HAIL THE 63rd ANNIVERSARY ARMED FORCES DAY

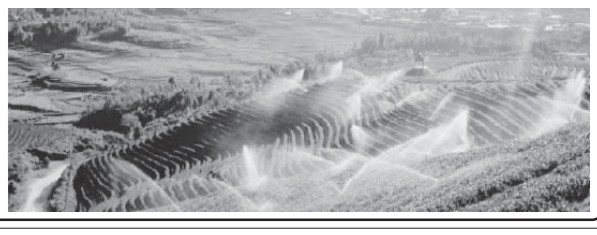
ARTICLE

To shoulder the duties

Soon, a referendum will be held to approve the draft of the State constitution. It is virtually impossible that the draft constitution wins the satisfaction of all the national people. U Ba Hman hopes that it will win the satisfaction of the majority of the people.

PAGES 8+9

Progress of Agriculture Sector in the Time of Tatmadaw Government



POEM

* A breeze in early summer
A cooing sound of the cuckoo
With flags and banners fluttering
Launched on 27 March
The Fascists Resistance

CARTOON

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

PERSPECTIVES

Sunday, 23 March, 2008

Tatmadaw safeguarding the interest of the State and people

The Tatmadaw has been upholding national politics and it has also been performing the three major duties— duty to defend the nation, duty to undergo training and the duty to serve the interest of the people.

It was documented that the Tatmadaw born during the independence struggle, hand in hand with the people made efforts for regaining independence. The Tatmadaw members were determined to sacrifice their lives for the sake of the country and its people. The patriotic Tatmadaw is so named because it has been safeguarding the national interest at the risk of their lives.

Nowadays the Tatmadaw hand in hand with the people is participating in the tasks for building a peaceful, modern, developed and discipline-flourishing democratic nation. At the same time, it is building strong capable modern patriotic Armed Forces in accord with the dignity of the State.

Every Tatmadaw member is trying to gain qualifications such as strong morale, perseverance, making sacrifices, having esprit de corps, unity, strong and brilliant combat skill and three capabilities, following the four oaths.

The Tatmadaw that has safeguarded the State during the successive periods is also serving the national interest and safeguarding lives and property of the people.

The Tatmadaw will have to continue to safeguard the land territory, air space and territorial waters of the State and ensure perpetuation of sovereignty forever.

USDA Joint Secretary-General on tour of Magway Division

NAY PYI TAW, 22 March — Union Solidarity and Development Association Joint Secretary-General U Zaw Min and Chairman of Magway Division Peace and Development Council Col Phone Maw Shwe attended the physic nut plant growing ceremony at No 2 nursery farm on bypass near Dahatkan village in Magway Township, on 17 March.

A total of 10,000 physic nut seeds has been sown and 500 physic nut grafts planted. Magway Township has put 5,280 acres of Land under phyic nut agaist the target of 7,115 acres.

Joint Secretary-General U Zaw Min and Col Phone Maw Shwe met departmental officials, Division/ District/ Township level USDA executives, organizers and members, members of social organizations, townselders and local people at Magway, Minbu, Pwintbyu and Salin Township PDC offices. Joint Secretary-General U Zaw Min and Col Phone Maw Shwe gave instructions on regional development tasks.—*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**

Shwephonepwint Pagoda holds Buddha Pujaniya

YANGON, 22 March — The 51st Buddha Pujaniya of Shwephonepwint Pagoda was held in conjunction with alms offering ceremony at the Dhammayon of the pagoda in Pazundaung Township yesterday evening.

Chairman of the Board of Trustees of the Pagoda U Tint Lwin explained matters on organizing the ceremony.

Next, the congregation received the Five Precepts from Sayadaw Agga Maha Pandita Agga Maha Ganthavacaka Pandita Bhaddanta Kesara of Mya Thein Dan Monastery.

Those present offered provisions to 108 members of the Sangha including State Ovadacariya Sayadaws and 29 nuns.

MNA

Foreign Minister felicitates Pakistani counterpart

NAY PYI TAW, 23 March — On the occasion of the anniversary of the Pakistan Day, which falls on 23 March, 2008, U Nyan Win, Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Union of Myanmar, has sent message of felicitations to His Excellency Mr Inam-Ul- Haque, Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan. — *MNA*

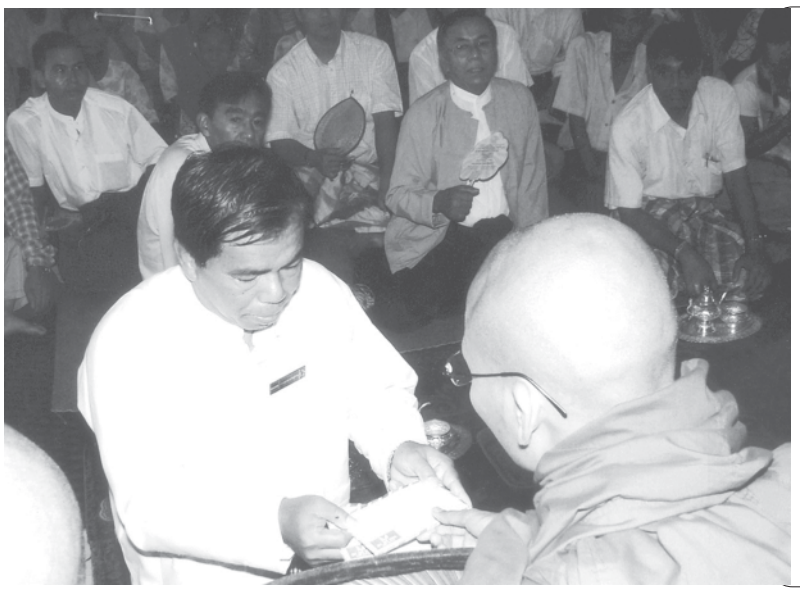
Ordination, novitiation ceremony held in Wakema Township

YANGON, 22 March — Wellwishers Thiri Thudhamma Manijotadhara U Myint Soe and wife Daw Mya Mya Soe and family held a ceremony to ordain 6 men and to novitiate 130 boys at Mahasi Shwegyin monastery of Kyungon village in Wakema Township, yesterday.

At the ceremony, the Chairman of Myaungmya District Peace and Development Council and members, the chairman of Kyungon village PDC and members and the congregation received the sermon delivered by Sayadaw Bahddanta Tejasara of Kyungon Monastery and offered provisions to the members of the Sangha. They shared the merits gained.

Next, the wellwisher family offered day meal to the Sayadaw and members of the Sangha and sponsored a pilgrimage for lay persons to Zalun Pyidawpyan Man Aung Myin Buddha Image.

MNA



An official offers alms to a Sayadaw.
MNA

Horizon League Basketball Tournament continues

YANGON, 22 March — The Horizon League Basketball Tournament 2007-08 jointly organized by Myanmar Basketball Federation and Horizon International Education Center continued at Kyaikkasan Gymnasium here on 16 March.

In the men's event, KKS won over Furious on 101-45 points and Blueboys edged out The Gyuts 80-74 points. In the women's event, Ballababies passed through Precious on 41-28 points.

After the matches, KKS was at the top position on the chart by seven wins in seven matches, Red Star stood up in second and Cow Boy third.

NLM

Kite-flying festival 1 to 3 April

YANGON, 22 March — The fourth kite-flying festival 2008 organized by Myanmar Traditional Sports Federation will be held from 1 to 3 April at the Youth Training Centre (Thuwana) here.

Interested persons may obtain application forms at MTSF office at Aung San Stadium from 25 to 29 March. Enquires can also be made at the MTSF office.

MNA

Women players of Balla-babies and Precious competing in Horizon League Basketball Tourna-ment.
NLM

Russia's Lavrov in Mideast preparing for peace talks

DAMASCUS, 22 March — Russia is preparing to host a Middle East peace conference this year that will try to relaunch talks between Israel and Syria about the occupied Golan Heights, Russian officials said in Syria on Thursday.

"We have not issued invitations but we're working out how to incorporate different suggestions," Russian Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov said after meeting President Bashar al-Assad.

He told reporters the conference would be a follow-up to a US-hosted meeting in Annapolis in November that resumed peace talks between Israel and the Palestinian Administration, led by President Mahmoud Abbas. Lavrov had announced plans to host the next Middle East peace conference after the Annapolis talks. He said on Thursday that everyone in Annapolis had agreed to the Moscow conference.—*MNA/Reuters*

***A handcuffed protestor in a Tony Blair mask demonstrates outside Downing Street in London, on 20 March, 2008 . Demonstrators gathered in Whitehall on the fifth anniversary of the invasion of Iraq by Britain and the US.—*INTERNET**

INTERNATIONAL NEWS

Israeli soldiers kill Palestinian farmer in S Gaza

GAZA, 22 March — A Palestinian farmer was shot dead on Thursday morning by Israeli troops" gunfire east of the city of Khan Younis in southern Gaza Strip, medics and witnesses said. Mo'aweya Hassanein, chief of emergency and ambulance services in the Palestinian Ministry of Health, told reporters that Israeli soldiers shot dead 65-year-old Hassan Abu A'bed in southern Gaza Strip.

Witnesses said Israeli soldiers stationed near the borders between southern Gaza Strip and Israel opened fire at the farmer when he approached his farm which is close to the border area.— *MNA/Xinhua*

***Jalal Khalid, who was just released from detention, holds his five-year old daughter Suha at a US base inside Baghdad's Sunni neighborhood of Azamiyah, on 21 March, 2008.—*INTERENT**

Annan says military action in Iran would be disaster

NEW YORK, 22 March — Military action against Iran over its nuclear ambitions would be "a disaster" and the only way to solve the impasse is through dialogue, former UN secretary-general Kofi Annan said on Thursday.

Over the past year, US President George W. Bush and Vice-President Dick Cheney have ratcheted up the rhetoric against Iran, which is defying international demands to halt uranium enrichment. They say Washington wants a diplomatic solution to the Iran standoff but refuse to rule out military options.

Uranium enrichment can be used for generating electricity or bomb-making. Teheran says its nuclear purposes are peaceful but Washington and other countries fear this is not the case. "We cannot, I'm sure, take on another military action in Iran, and I hope no one is contemplating it," Annan said at a briefing with UN correspondents in New York.

MNA/Reuters

Car bomb explodes in N Spain after ETA warning

MADRID, 22 March — A car bomb exploded close to a police station in the northern Spanish town of Calahorra on Friday after a warning from the Basque separatist group ETA, but only one person was hurt, the town's mayor said.

ETA has launched sporadic attacks in Spain since it ended a ceasefire it announced in March 2006 by bombing Madrid Airport in December 2006, killing two people.

Javier Pagola, mayor of Calahorra in the Rioja region, said a policeman had been slightly hurt by flying glass. "One Guardia Civil has been hurt by glass which entered his home," Pagola told state television. "There is a lot of damage."

The police station and surrounding area—crowded with people attending the Holy Week religious procession — had been cleared and cordoned off before the explosion.

MNA/Reuters

A car bomb exploded close to a police station in the northern Spanish town of Calahorra on Friday after a warning from the Basque separatist group ETA, but only one person was hurt, the town's mayor said.
INTERNET

Curfew imposed in S Pakistan following violence

ISLAMABAD, 22 March —The local administration of southern Pakistan's Sindh Province imposed a curfew after violence erupted on Friday, local TV channel Geo reported. The violence erupted and situation spiraled out of control after the unidentified armed men resorted to heavy firing in Khairpur city in Sindh Province, said the report.

Several people were feared injured in firing. A police vehicle and a fire-brigade vehicle were also burnt during the violence in Khairpur. Security forces have started to patrolling in the city after the violence took place.

MNA/Xinhua

Rainfalls, floods cause 42 deaths in Ecuador

QUITO, 22 March — The two-month long heavy rainfalls and consequent floods in Ecuador have killed 42 people while eight others were missing, said the Civil Defence on Thursday.

Some 12,372 families abandoned their houses due to the floods and 3,168 were lodged in temporary shelters throughout 13 provinces, said the Civil Defence, noting the floods have caused losses of over 82 million US dollars in the agricultural sector.

Ecuadorean Interior Minister Gustavo Larrea said the heavy rainfalls have affected some 3.5 million Ecuadoreans, almost one third of the country's total population.

MNA/Xinhua

Egyptian media slam US policy in Iraq

CAIRO, 21 March — Major Egyptian newspapers on Wednesday strongly criticized the US policy in Iraq on the eve of the fifth anniversary of the US-led invasion on the Mideast and Arab country.

"Iraq is experiencing the worst stage of its modern history and is living under a brutal military occupation," Al Ahram said in its editorial on Wednesday.

Five years ago, the United States launched the Iraqi war under the pretext of its disarmament and bringing freedom and democracy to Iraqi people, the influential Egyptian newspaper said.

However, Iraqis now are not free as the United States claimed, they do not enjoy democracy and their daily life is full of bombing, torture and assassinations, Al Ahram said.

Citing a report issued by Amnesty International, the newspaper said every three of four Iraqis are deprived of drinking water, one third of the Iraqis depends on urgent aid to live and half of the population is unemployed.

Voicing its regret to the current situation in Iraq, Al Ahram said this tragic reality would not change except the United States pulls its troops out of Iraq.

On Monday, US Vice President Dick Cheney said during his visit to Iraq that the United States has made a "successful endeaver" in Iraq on the eve of the fifth anniversary of the US-led invasion that falls on 20 March.

MNA/Xinhua

A Cambodia woman and her child look at an illuminated fountain at the Independent Monument in Phnom Penh on 21 March, 2008.—INTERNET

Students apply coloured powder on each other during the celebration of "Basant Utsav" or Spring festival at Shantiniketan, 200 km (124 miles) north of Kolkata on 21 March , 2008.—INTERNET

Thai suspect in Swedish tourist murder surrenders

BANGKOK, 21 March — A Thai man suspected of killing a Swedish tourist on the southern resort island of Phuket has surrendered to police after a three-day manhunt, police said on Wednesday.

Hanna Charlotta Backlund, 27, was found stabbed to death on Saturday near her bungalow on Mai Khao beach in northern Phuket where she had gone for a walk.

"Initially I just wanted to rape her," a handcuffed Akaradech Tangae said with a smile as he was brought to Phuket police headquarters on Wednesday. "But she resisted and I had to kill her," said the 31-year-old labourer who surrendered to police on Tuesday.—*MNA/Reuters*

Syria, Russia call for just solution to M-E conflicts

DAMASCUS, 21 March — Syrian Foreign Minister Walid al-Muallem and his visiting Russian counterpart Sergei Lavrov called on Wednesday for a just and comprehensive solution to the Arab-Israeli conflicts.

The two ministers stressed the necessity to find such a solution to all peace tracks, including the Syrian-Israeli one, the *SANA* news agency reported.

They agreed that the Palestinian issue is the focal point in the region, pledging efforts to achieve unity among the Palestinians.

Both sides also pointed out that the forthcoming Arab Summit in Damascus on 29-30 March provides an opportunity in this regard.

On the situation in Lebanon, the two sides expressed support to the Arab League initiative and the efforts by Arab League Secretary General Amr Moussa, and their willingness to see it implemented on the ground. —*MNA/Xinhua*

US soldier dies in vehicle accident in Iraq

BAGHDAD, 21 March — An American soldier died in a vehicle accident in the volatile Diyala Province, northeast of Baghdad, the US military said on Thursday.

The accident occurred on Wednesday when the soldier's vehicle rolled over in an area in the province, a brief military statement said without specifying the exact location.

The statement added that the accident is under investigation.

Since the US-led war in Iraq broke out in March 2003, more than 3,990 US soldiers have died in Iraq, according to media count based on Pentagon figures.

MNA/Xinhua

Pakistan's Chief of Army Staff General Ashfaq Parvez Kayani (C) poses for a photograph with officials and technicians during the test flight of an Unmanned Aerial Vehicle (UAV) at an undisclosed location on 20 March , 2008. Pakistan successfully conducted a final test flight of its indigenously developed UAV. —INTERNET

Pakistan successfully test flies UAV

ISLAMABAD, 21 March — Pakistan on Thursday successfully conducted a final test flight of its indigenously developed Unmanned Aerial Vehicle (UAV) "Uqaab".

A statement issued by the army said that the flight data collected indicated that all design parameters had been successfully validated. The performance of the UAV "Uqaab" can be compared to any of modern state of the art UAV in its category, said the statement.—*MNA/Xinhua*

Bulgaria police nab 350,000 euros in fake notes

SOFIA, 22 March — Police arrested two Bulgarians and seized 350,000 euros (541,100 US dollars) in counterfeit notes aimed for distribution in the European Union, the Interior Ministry said on Friday.

In a joint operation with EU police agency Europol and German, Austrian and Bosnian police, the officers raided several sites in the Bulgarian capital Sofia, uncovering also a printing Press for counterfeit passports and illegal weapons. The Interior Ministry said in a statement the fake euros were of high quality, copying perfectly seven of eleven recognition signs.

"We carried the raids late on Thursday to prevent the tangible risk of distributing the forged money in the European Union," Interior Ministry official Pantaley Panov said. — *MNA/Reuters*

Economist: unjust trade must be countered

BEIJING, 22 March — The current global trade regime is unfair to developing countries and runs counter to their development, an economist said on Friday.

And China has fallen victim to US double standards, as the United States repeatedly imposes dumping charges on Chinese products, professor of economics at Columbia University Joseph Stiglitz said.

The world is watching the ongoing Doha Round — the WTO initiative started in 2001 to develop a global trade agreement easing trade in agriculture, manufacturing and services — but developed and developing countries are profoundly divided on some key issues. Agricultural subsidies, in particular, have cast a shadow over the talk's prospects.

The process has been stalled by an unfair global trade system that jeopardizes the interests of developing countries, which have stood up to safeguard what they deserve, Stiglitz said at the ceremony celebrating the anniversary of the Hanqing Advanced Institute of Economics and Finance at Renmin University of China.

Through WTO negotiations in recent years, he said, developed countries have continued selling "the old wine in the new bottle" to developing nations.

The US and European Union have reneged on their promises to import products from developing countries, such as agricultural products.

Xinhua

A staff member shows a new clock during the 6th China International Gifts, Premium and Houseware Exhibition in Beijing, capital of China, on 20 March, 2008. More than 400 producers and companies attended the exhibition, opened on 20 March.
XINHUA

*The yellow interior of the Nissan Denki Cube electric concept car is seen at the 2008 New York International auto show on 19 March, 2008.—*INTERNET

Land Rover recalls defective vehicles in China

BEIJING, 22 March — Land Rover is recalling 4,304 vehicles exported to China for sunroof flaws, a quality official said here on Friday.

According to the General Administration of Quality Supervision, Inspection and Quarantine (AQSIQ), the recall covered 4,304 Freelander two cross-country vehicles, manufactured between November 2006 and January 2008.

Land Rover started to recall the defective vehicles on Friday, AQSIQ said.

If not repaired, the vehicle's sunroof may get jammed, distorted or even fall off when attempting to open on some occasions.

Owners of the recalled vehicles will receive free repairs or replacement of sunroofs to solve the problem. *–MNA/Xinhua*

OECD revises US growth forecast downwards

PARIS, 22 March — The Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) Thursday revised downwards its 2008 growth forecast for the United States, whose economy is believed to be contracting, at the same time projecting an optimistic outlook for Europe.

Henceforth, the OECD is projecting that the US economy will record a growth rate of 0.1 per cent and 0 per cent in the first and second quarters of this year respectively, compared to the 0.3 per cent and 0.4 per cent that had been published previously. The annual growth forecast, which is currently estimated at 2 percent, is set to be revised during the semi-annual forecast that is expected to be issued in May, according to reliable sources.

"The American economy is stagnant, if it is not already contracting," said the OECD. "It may be premature to talk about a recession, but with the pace of economic activity being well below the growth potential," it is clear that it "is slowing down very quickly", the OECD said in a statement. *—MNA/Xinhua*

Toshiba to drop profit by quitting HD DVDs

BEIJING, 22 March -- Toshiba Corp, Japan's largest chipmaker, fell in Tokyo trading yesterday after the company cut its full-year profit forecast 31 percent on falling chip prices and costs to quit the HD DVD business.

Toshiba lost 1.9 percent to close at 677 yen (6.83 U.S. dollars) on the Tokyo Stock Exchange, compared with a 1.8 percent gain by the Nikkei 225 Stock Average, Bloomberg News reported.

Net income would probably decline nine percent to 125 billion yen in the 12 months ending on 31 March, less than the 180 billion yen October forecast, Toshiba said.

Xinhua

*An artist from the contemporary "Liquid Theatre" performs at a former printing plant in Moscow, late 20 March, 2008.—*XINHUA

China's CNPC suffers $5.4b of refining loss in '07

BEIJING, 22 March — China National Petroleum Corporation (CNPC), the country's leading oil producer, lost 36.2 billion yuan (5.4 billion US dollars) in its oil refining and processing businesses last year, according to a company report released on Thursday. The company attributed the loss to the huge gaps in soaring world oil prices, the low state-set domestic price and its "overloaded operation" to ensure domestic supply.

Despite the surging prices in the international market, China last year ordered the country's oil producers and refiners to collect their strengths in combating the shortages caused by extreme weather conditions.

In 2007, the CNPC devoted about 100 billion yuan to oil prospecting and another 32.2 billion yuan in oil refining projects in a bid to ensure domestic supply.

Also last year, CNPC processed 120 million tons of crude oil, representing an increase of 5.86 million tons over the previous year.

It produced 107.65 million tons of crude oil and 54.2 billion cubic metres of natural gas at home, representing an increase of 1.01 million tons and 10 cubic metres, respectively.

MNA/Xinhua

PPP Chairman to declare party's PM candidate

ISLAMABAD, 21 March — Pakistan People's Party (PPP) chairman Bilawal Bhutto Zardari would announce the party's candidate for the office of the Prime Minister, party spokesman Farhatullah Babar said on Wednesday.

Farhatullah did not disclose the time and date for the announcement, saying "Zardari House will unveil the candidate at an appropriate time".

The Associated Press of Pakistan (APP) quoted PPP sources as saying that the announcement was expected within a couple of days as Bilawal Bhutto-Zardari had already arrived in the country from London on Wednesday.

Makhdoom Amin Fahim, vice chairman of the PPP, was one of the front-runners for the PM slot, however, the political scenario suddenly changed as Zardari House hinted it was also considering "some other options", said the *APP* report.— *Xinhua*

An Afghan police man walks near a police damaged vehicle after it was hit by a road side bomb explosion in Lashkar Gah the provincial capital of Helmand province south of Kabul, Afghanistan on 21 March, 2008.— INTERNET

Strong quakes jolts N-W China's Xinjiang

BEIJING, 22 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 am 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. —*Xinhua*

Britain confirms first case of XDR-TB strain

LONDON, 22 March — Britain has confirmed its first diagnosed case of the extremely drug-resistant (XDR) strain of tuberculosis (TB), local media reported on Friday.

Doctors in Glasgow, Scotland, are treating a man with the XDR-TB strain, who reportedly came to Britain from Somalia and is now in isolation at the Gartnavel General Hospital, BBC reported.

This is the first case of its kind reported in Britain since the revised definition of XDR-TB was published by the World Health Organization (WHO) in 2006.

"We have taken very prompt measures to try and manage the chances of this person spreading the infection to others," Jim McMenamen from Health Protection Scotland was quoted as saying.

The doctors said there is no risk to the general public. The XDR-TB strain is extremely resistant to traditional antibiotics and has to be treated with a combination of antibiotics to ensure that the treatment is successful in preventing transmission to others.

Xinhua

Turkish warplanes bomb PKK bases in Northern Iraq

DIYARBAKIR (Turkey), 21 March — Turkish warplanes bombed bases of the banned Kurdish Workers' Party (PKK) in northern Iraq on Thursday, local sources told *Xinhua.*

The sources said that some Turkish warplanes flew over the areas of Haftanin, Kanemase, Amadiyah and Nerve-Rekan in northern Iraq.

Soon after scouting flight, the Turkish warplanes bombed the PKK bases, said the sources. Turkey has been fighting with the PKK, which took up arms against the country in 1984 with the aim of creating an ethnic homeland in southeastern Turkey.

More than 30,000 people have been killed in the over-two-decade conflict between the Turkish Army and the PKK, which is listed as a terrorist organization by Turkey and the United States. — *Xinhua*

Bomb explodes in Bulgaria, no injuries reported

SOFIA, 21 March — A bomb was detonated late on Tuesday near the building where Bulgarian regional police chiefs were holding their annual meeting in Plovdiv, the country's second-largest city, local *Sofia News Agency* reported on Wednesday.

Bulgarian Interior Minister Rumen Petkov and Chief Prosecutor Boris Velchev were also at the meeting, authorities said. The explosive device was detonated to destroy a lawyer's office, situated in a newly constructed residential building. Fortunately, the blast did not claim any victims but caused serious damage to the whole building.

The area has been cordoned off by police while officers make a second analysis of the scene. An investigation into the incident is underway.

Xinhua

Russians can inspect Czech-based US radar base

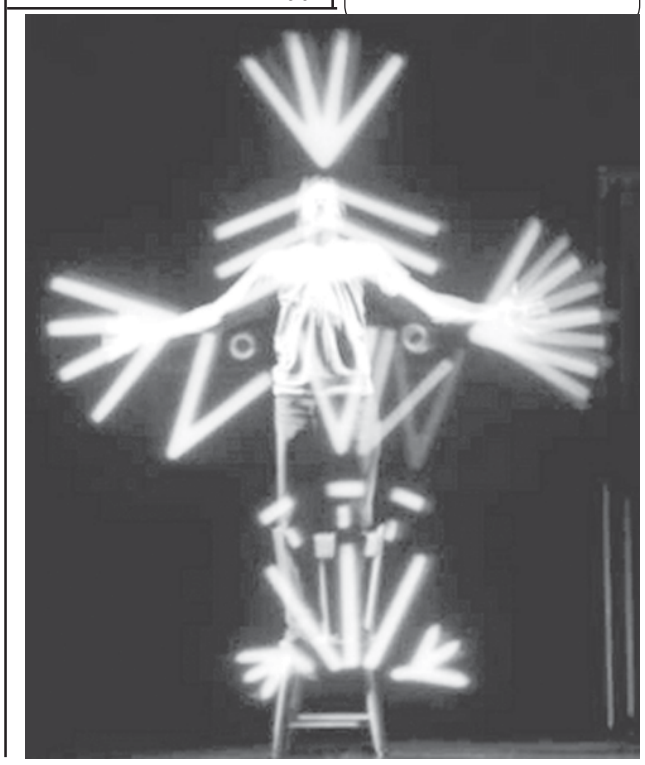
PRAGUE, 22 March — Czech Deputy Prime Minister Alexandr Vondra said on Friday that he would not mind granting one or two authorized Russian officers access to the planned US radar base on Czech soil for inspection.

The reciprocal principle would have to be observed, Vondra told a forum in Prague. Access to the base, which is planned to be built in 2010, would allow Russians to see for themselves that the system is not directed against them,

However, Russia's access would be possible only after the two sides reached agreement on the issue, he said, noting that no such agreement has yet been reached. Vondra shared the view of Prime Minister Mirek Topolanek, who said earlier that he considered such a mutual monitoring mechanism feasible.

MNA/Xinhua

An artiste of the Lemieux.pilon 4D Art group from Canada performs in the play titled "Norman" during a dress rehearsal at the XI Iberoamerican Theatre Festival in Bogota on 20 March, 2008. Over 100 theatre companies are presenting their shows during the festival.
INTERNET



A two-day-old kitten is bottle fed at the Clarion County Animal Shelter in Shippenville, Pa on 18 March, 2008. Hundreds of animals, mostly cats , were seized in a raid of a cat sanctuary in Tarentum, Pa Friday. Over 300 diseased cats are being treated at this facility.—INTERNET

Progress of Agriculture Sector in the Time of Tatmadaw Government

Sr.	Subject	1988	2007	Progress
1.	Arable land	23.8	53.78	29.98
2.	Vacant land acres (million)	26.1	10.4	increased
3.	Complete Dams	138	344	206
4.	Dams under construction	-	40	40
5.	Complete river water pumping stations	-	305	305
6.	River water pumping stations being built	-	298	298
7.	Total benefited acres (million)	1.35	5	3.65
8.	Double cropping acres (million)	3.89	16.8	12.91
9.	Monsoon paddy acres (million)	11.81	17	5.2
10.	Summer paddy acres (million)	-	0.58	0.58
11.	Total production of paddy baskets (million)	630	1500	870
12.	Percentage of food sufficiency of the nation	-	152%	152%
13.	Beans and pulses acres (million)	1.8	9.89	8.09
14.	Edible oil crops acres (million)	1.36	8.75	7.39

An aerial view of thriving poppy-substitute crops plantations in Mongla region of Shan State (East).

Hailing 63rd Anniversary Armed Forces Day

The water supply facilities seen at Alwansuk River Water Pumping Project site built in Thanlyin Township of Yangon Division.

Daseik River Water Pumping Project

Daseik River Water Pumping Station built for agricultural purpose in Daseik Village of Langkho Township, Shan State (South).

Wagatok Supporting Dam

Wagatok Supporting Dam constructed to irrigate farmlands in Bago Township of Bago Division.

HAILING THE 63RD ANNIVERSARY ARMED FORCES DAY:

To shoulder the duties

Hlaing Aung

Only when the Tatmadaw is strong, will the nation be strong

Sitting in a sling chair, war veteran U Ba Hman was watching the broadcasts of the training sessions being undergone by the parade columns of the servicemen for the Armed Forces Day parade. He watched on screen that at dawn the parade columns were reciting the Four Oaths of Tatmadaw members in chorus in the parade ground.

We will be loyal to the State and the people,
We will be loyal to the Fallen Comrades,
We will conscientiously obey the orders and responsibilities given by our superiors,
We vow to sacrifice our lives for our country, our people, and our Armed Forces.

While reciting the four oaths in a low murmur together with the Tatmadaw members on screen, he had a total recall of his past experiences.

In the 1960s

Gunfire shattered the silence of the nighttime and flames appeared in the darkness. A piece of bad news spread that Kyungalay Village was under the raid of insurgents. Lowering his head, primary schoolboy Maung Ba Hman had to stay hiding under the house. Ballonkwin Ward in Letpadan where Maung Ba Hman lived was a little distant from Kyungalay Village. However, the residents were in a state of panic, thinking what they should do if the insurgents would also raid the town. The insurgents were said to be KNDO members. It was said that they came from Bago Yoma mountain range and they were accompanied by those ready to rob the houses and carry the stolen property with the use of elephants. It was also said that the insurgents were Kawthulay with long hair; that they had decided that they would not have their hair cut until Kawthulay revolution was successful; and their hair was touching their shoulders. Maung Ba Hman wondered if their revolution was to burn down the villages and rob the houses of the people. Their revolution is nothing more than planting mines, launching bomb attacks and firing small weapons to kill innocent people and committing terrorist acts, so the revolution is still far from victory. U Ba Hman happened to visualize how long their hair would have grown if they are still alive. The armed groups that have realized the benevolent attitude of the government have made peace.

In the 1970s

Private Ba Hman was on duty under the Operation "Ye Min Aung" at a place on the western bank of the Thanlwin river in Naunglai Paphan region, Shan State (North). The platoon that included Private Ba Hman was stationed near the edge of a rock mass. At that time, the platoon was locked in a battle with the Burma Communist Party (BCP) and was surrounded by the enemies. Before withdrawing, the BCP troops were firing heavily. And the bullets of the 0.5 machine-gun and the shells of 0.57mm recoilless gun were falling behind the platoon of Maung Ba Hman. Shan Yoma mountain range was completely covered with cordite smells and rank smells of blood. The rations of the platoon had run out for a long time. Three or four days ago, a small amount of leftover rice was given to a wounded private. Since then, they had lived on water. They had to take risks to fetch that water. After fetching water in the ravine near an abandoned farm, the troops climbed up the hill. At that time, they came under machine-gun attacks. So, they had to crawl uphill and carried the water bottles. Many hillside farms had been destroyed, and villages had been reduced to ashes. Having a yam root to ease his hunger, Maung Ba Hman wondered when the internal armed conflicts would end.

In the 1980s

Maung Ba Hman was one of the troops that engaged in the Operation "Moe Hein (12)" that was launched to crush down the drug smuggling of insurgents around Monekyut, Lwema Ankham, and Kyet-hinkhathi hill in the border area of Shan State (East). The enemies were said to be drug smugglers, but at that time they were very strong, taking a stronghold in border areas. A brigade-level operation was thus launched with supporting fire of 105mm and 76mm artillery. The members had to climb up the rock mountains with no pathways and pass through the rough and hard hillsides to occupy the camps of the enemies. Before long they had occupied the enemies' military camps, sacrificing lives of many members. When the 1988 unrest broke out, they had to leave the camps and went back to the towns for security, thus giving opportunities to the drug smuggler insurgents to reoccupy these camps.

(See page 9)

U Ba Hman is now an elderly person. Those who will have to carry out national development tasks and shoulder the duties are young Tatmadaw members, intellectuals and intelligentsia, farmers, workers, and national race people. Only when all the youth of the nation remain united in discharging nation-building tasks will it be possible for the nation, which has lagged behind other countries in development in successive periods due to disintegration of national solidarity, to stand tall in the world. Now, the people have passed the nightmares. U Ba Hman believes that he will soon witness the transformation of the nation into a new one soon.

HAILING THE 63RD ANNIVERSARY ARMED FORCES DAY:

To shoulder the duties

Hlaing Aung

(from page 8)

In the 1990s

Ko Ba Hman, an old soldier, was contributing voluntary services at a work site of a railway project in the central part of Myanmar. Following Mongyan, Methawaw and Marnel Palaw battles, many national race armed groups made peace. Then, Tatmadaw members, who had defended the motherland at risk to their lives, were engaged in nation-building tasks. Tatmadaw members contributed their labour to the road and bridge projects being implemented in the central part of Myanmar plus many regions including Chin, Kayah, Shan and Rakhine states, and Taninthayi Division. He still remembers that some TE and Hino trucks overturned in the explosions of mines planted by insurgents near Monelaik Creek on Kengtung-Mongphyat-Mongyawng Road. At that time, it took about ten days for a truck to run 100 miles on the muddy road in Shan State (East). Moreover, under the guard of two battalions, Tatmadaw members had to repair the bridges destroyed and clear all the earth piled by insurgents along the 18-mile road section to send rations to the frontier military camps. Now, Mongyawng and Mongyu roads are coping with Hilux passenger buses. Ko Ba Hman was pleased to watch on TV that the distance is now less than an hour's drive. He recalled his sadness, when he was transferred from Shan State to Mon and Kayin states, he found that trees, as thick as a thigh of a man, were growing along the old gravel road beside Donthami Creek and wrecks of bridges on the banks of the creeks due to the bomb blasts committed by insurgents. The regions then were under the reign of insurgents, so smooth transport was not possible. In consequence, the regions were not in a position to enjoy development, and insurgents took refuge in those regions. Therefore, the regions were under the threat of insurgents. Ko Ba Hman wishes local national race people of the states suffering from the evil consequences would enjoy the taste of peace and development as soon as possible.

Now, war veteran U Ba Hman no longer worries about that. He has witnessed that the whole nation has developed at the unprecedented level. The State constitution has been drafted that can guarantee multi-party democracy aspired by the people as well as self-administration aspired by some national races.

Soon, a referendum will be held to approve the draft of the State constitution. It is virtually impossible that the draft constitution wins the satisfaction of all the national people. U Ba Hman hopes that it will win the satisfaction of the majority of the people.

U Ba Hman does not want at all to see any situations in which the people have to stay hiding under the houses following the sounds of gunfire. And local people have to leave their farmlands, lands, homes and villages to avoid the evil consequences of armed conflicts. He wants to see the people building a new nation in collaboration.

U Ba Hman is now an elderly person. Those who will have to carry out national development tasks and shoulder the duties are young Tatmadaw members, intellectuals and intelligentsia, farmers, workers, and national race people. Only when all the youth of the nation remain united in discharging nation-building tasks will it be possible for the nation, which has lagged behind other countries in development in successive periods due to disintegration of national solidarity, to stand tall in the world. Now, the people have passed the nightmares. U Ba Hman believes that he will soon witness the transformation of the nation into a new one soon.

Translation: MS

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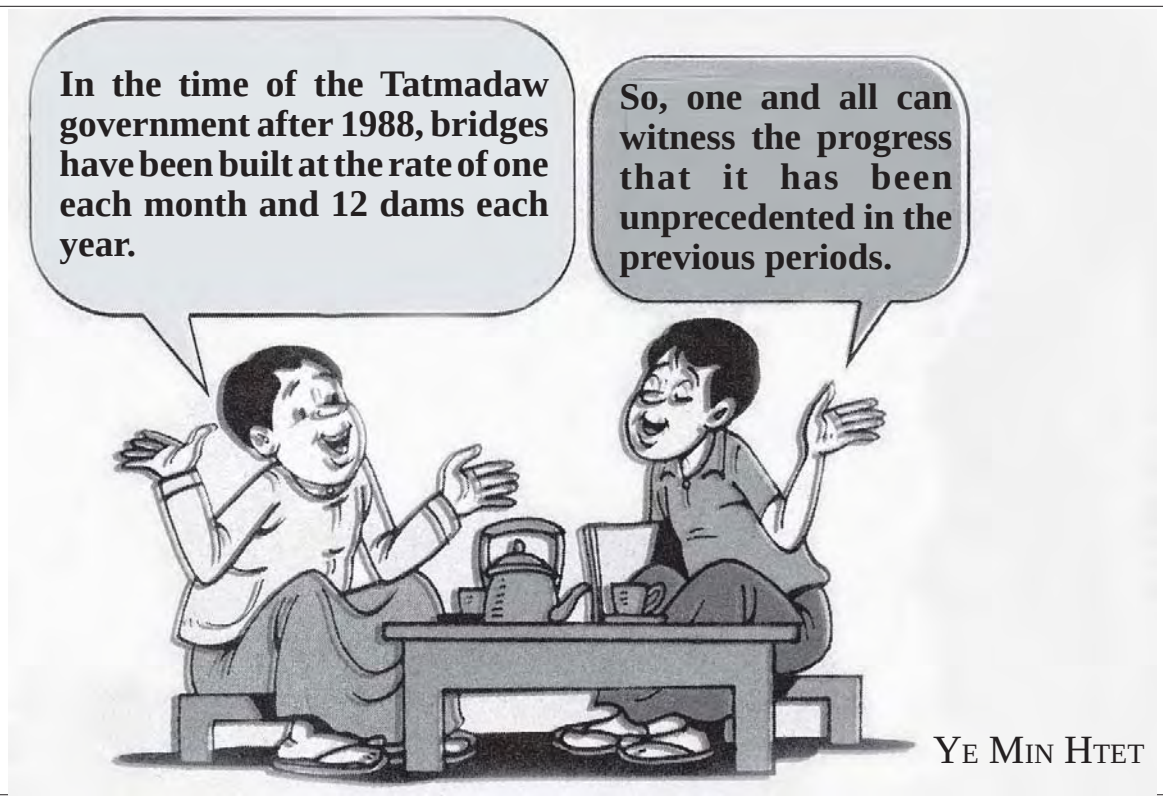


Objectives of the 63rd Anniversary Armed Forces Day

* **To work in concert with the people in building a peaceful, modern, developed and discipline-flourishing democratic nation**
* **To realize the seven-step Road Map of the State joining hands with the people**
* **Joining hands with the people and based on Union Spirit to crush internal and external destructive elements sabotaging stability and development of the State**
* **To build a strong, capable and modern patriotic Tatmadaw to safeguard Our Three Main National Causes**

POEM:

From March Resistance to eternity

* A breeze in early summer
A cooing sound of the cuckoo
With flags and banners fluttering
Launched on 27 March
The Fascists Resistance

* People joined in every battle
Mass guerrilla tactics
Practised in whole nation
Winning support of
People, monks, students

* Defeating the Fascists
Colonialists afraid of Myanmar
Brethren cementing unity
Independent Myanmar
Entering golden era

* For independence
Sacrificed blood, lives they
Heroes countless
Like stars in the sky
Shared merits for them
Only after nation is free
So honourable are they

* Tatmadaw born of people
Freed nation from subjugation
Army, Navy, Air Force
United as true brothers
So dutiful for nation

* For the entire nation
Beautifying and developing
And safeguarding

(Hailing the 63rd Anniversary Armed Forces Day)

Zaw Min Min Oo

(Translation)

Commander opens Buddha Pujaniya of Zalun Man Aung Myin Buddha Image

Commander Brig-Gen Kyaw Swe cuts the ribbon to open Man Aung Myin Pyidawbyan Buddha Image Pujaniya in Zalun. — MNA

NAY PYI TAW, 19 March — Chairman of Ayeyawady Division Peace and Development Council Commander of South-West Command Brig-Gen Kyaw Swe met with servicemen and their families at the hall of local battalion in Hinthada on 14 March and inspected eugenia and rubber plantations.

On 15 March, the commander attended the opening of Buddha Pujaniya of Man Aung Myin Pyidawbyan Buddha Image in Zalun and opened the ceremony. The Buddha Pujaniya of the Buddha Image commenced on 15 March and it would last till 22 March.

Next, the commander went to the office of Zalun Auto Telephone Exchange and looked into the installation of equipment.

At mile post 12/7 on Danubyu-Taunggyi road, the commander inspected road works and gave necessary instructions.

Next, the commander viewed growing of summer paddy and harvesting of mung at Akyaw village in Danubyu Township and met with local farmers.

Afterwards, the commander inspected harvesting of summer paddy at Sakkotaung village in Nyaungdon Township and fulfilled the requirements.

MNA

Information Minister meets PPE, MMPE staff

YANGON, 22 March — Minister for Information Brig-Gen Kyaw Hsan met with the personnel of Printing and Publishing Enterprise and Myanma Motion Picture Enterprise at the meeting hall of Central Press of the PPE under the Ministry on Theinbyu Road here on 20 March afternoon.

It was attended by Managing Director of Myanma Motion Picture Enterprise U Aung Myo Myint, the directors, the deputy-directors, officials and staff.

The minister said that the PPE and MMPE have successfully carried out their tasks and he acknowledged their work efficiency. Achievements have been made due to the united efforts of the staff. He called for cooperation in the years to come.

Next, the minister discussed works of the two enterprises and gave necessary instructions to them.—*MNA*

Minister for Information Brig-Gen Kyaw Hsan cordially converses with personnel of Printing and Publishing Enterprise and Myanma Motion Picture Enterprise. — MNA

USDA CEC member inspects regional development tasks in Ayeyawady Division

YANGON, 21 March — CEC member of the Union Solidarity and Development Association Minister for Forestry Brig-Gen Thein Aung looked into progress of construction of new school building for Yongyi Basic Education Primary School in Dedaye yesterday and gave necessary instructions.

At the hall of Dedaye Township General Administration Department and Education College in Bogale, the CEC member met with townselders, departmental personnel and members of social organizations and presented cash donation for the college.

Next, the CEC member went to construction site of new school building for Sitkon Basic Education Primary School in Bogale and presented cash donation.

The CEC member also inspected implementation of opening Bogale Tint Aung Library and gave necessary instructions.

Next, the CEC members met with local people, departmental personnel and members of social organizations at Thiri Annawah hall in Pyapon and Shwe Wah Latt hall of Kyaiklat Township General Administration Department.

The CEC member Minister Brig-Gen Thein Aung also inspected construction of new school building for No 3 Basic Education Primary School in Kyaiklat Township and attended to the needs.

MNA

USDA CEC member Minister for Forestry Brig-Gen Thein Aung meets local people, departmental personnel and social organization members in Pyapon. —MNA

Kyauktan Bridge inaugurated…

(from page 1)

roads and bridges in Rakhine State as rivers and hills in the region limited the transportation services in the state. A total of 212 bridges with the length of 180 feet and above and 5,679 miles of road have increased across the nation. In Rakhine State, a total of 36 bridges with the length of 180 feet and above including Kyauktan Bridge and 592 miles of road have been constructed. The over 452-foot long Kyauktan Bridge is located on Yangon-Sittway Road and it is an iron reinforced type. It is also a two-way bridge and can withstand 60 tons of load.

In Rakhine State, over 202-mile and three-furlong long An-Sittway road section and 120-mile long Taungup-Maei-Kyaukpyu road section have been constructed. Meanwhile, 9-mile long Painhnetaung-Yanbye Road, 7-mile long Padekyaw-Tattaung Road, 41-mile long An-Padekyaw-Maei Road have also been upgraded to gravel roads.

As roads and bridges have been constructed in Rakhine State, townships in the state can be now easily accessible from Ayeyawady, Yangon, Bago, Magway and Mandalay divisions. The commodity flow in Rakhine State has picked up speed thanks to newly constructed roads and bridges.

Afterwards, a resident spoke words of thanks.

Next, Minister Maj-Gen Saw Tun, Vice-Chairman of Rakhine State PDC Brig-Gen Than Tun Aung and Brig-Gen Ye Aung of local station formally opened Kyauktan Bridge.

Next, Brig-Gen Than Tun Aung unveiled the stone inscription of Kyauktan Bridge.

Kyauktan Bridge is an iron reinforced type and 452 feet and five inches long. The bridge is flanked by 4-foot wide walkways and its motorway is 24 feet wide. The bridge can withstand 60 tons of load.

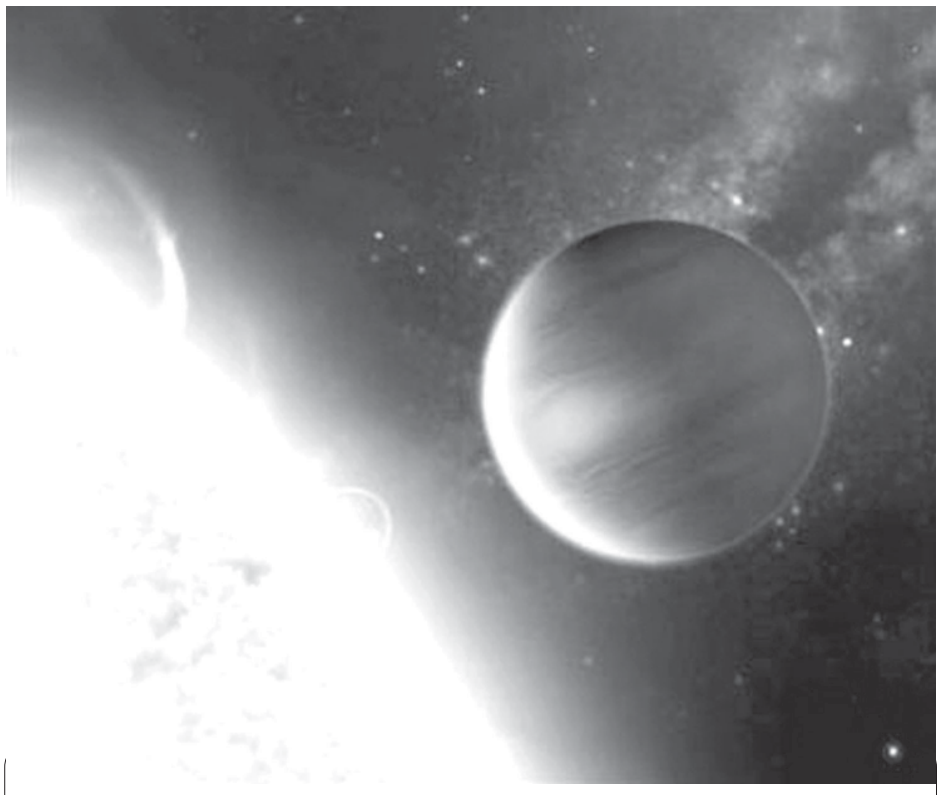
Out of bridges constructed by the Public Works, Kyauktan Bridge is the 212th one, and 36th bridge in Rakhine State. Kyauktan Bridge is located on An-Sittway Road Section of Yangon-Sittway Road and the bridge will speed the commodity flow and transportation between Rakhine State and other regions.

MNA

Images of the Day

An Easter egg installation is displayed at a Hong Kong mall on 22 March, 2008.

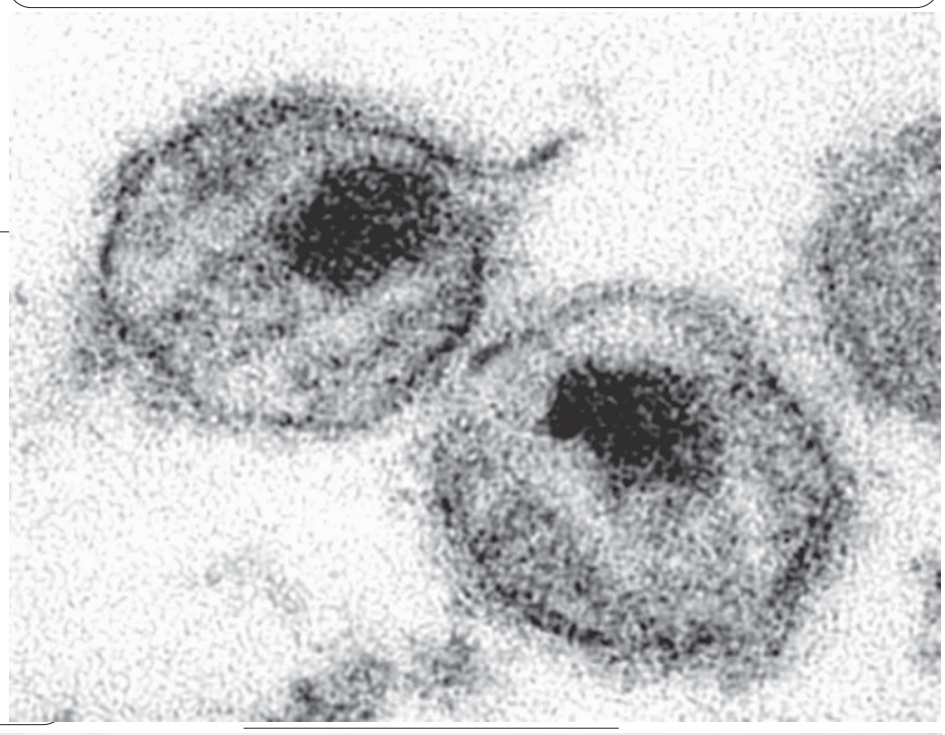
INTERNET



The Jupiter-like extrasolar planet known as HD 189733b, orbiting close to its star about 63 light years from Earth, in an undated illustration. Astronomers used the Hubble Space Telescope to detect methane in this planet's atmosphere — the first organic molecule found on a planet outside our solar system. Hubble also confirmed the presence of water vapor in the planet's atmosphere. The findings are published in the journal Nature.—INTERNET

Feeding time : The three white Lion cubs which were born last week in the zoo of Olmen, Belgium wait to be fed.

INTERNET



An undated thin-section transmission electron micrograph shows two HIV virus particles. People with a genetic variation that slows down HIV may also be causing a mutation to the AIDS virus that makes it less potent if transmitted to others, researchers said on Friday.—INTERNET

Ice dance gold medalist Isabelle Delobel and Olivier Schoenfelder from France salute the crowd during victory ceremonies at the World Figure Skating Championships in Goteborg, Sweden,on 21 March, 2008.

INTERNET

Ice blocks are seen floating in the Weddell Sea near the Argentine Base Marambio in the Antarctic Peninsula on 8 March , 2008.—INTERNET

ADVERTISEMENT

CLAIMS DAY NOTICE
MV XIANG FENG VOY NO (8015)

Consignees of cargo carried on MV XIANG FENG VOY NO (8015) are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on 23.3.2008 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.

SHIPPING AGENCY DEPARTMENT
MYANMA PORT AUTHORITY
AGENT FOR: M/S CHINA SHIPPING (MALAYSIA) AGENCY SDN BHD
Phone No: 256908/378316/376797

Mine blast victims' families compensated in S-W China

KUNMING, 21 March — The families of 14 miners killed in a colliery gas outburst in southwest China's Yunnan Province have been compensated, the local government said on Wednesday.

Each family received 200,000 yuan (28,304 US dollars) in compensation from the owners of Shuidongping coal mine in Weixin County, Zhaotong City, where the gas outburst on Friday evening also injured four.

The injured were in stable condition. The mine owners promised to pay for their medical fees.

A preliminary investigation revealed the colliery, with a designed annual production capability of 60,000 tons, was a fully-licensed private enterprise.

Investigators were still trying to ascertain the cause of the accident. People responsible for the tragedy were under police control.

MNA/Xinhua

Egypt, Russia draft deal for nuclear power tender

MOSCOW, 21 March — Egypt and Russia on Wednesday drafted a nuclear energy deal, which could be signed next week in Moscow, to allow Russia to take part in the tender to build nuclear reactors in Egypt, the Egyptian negotiator said.

"This agreement is for the usage of nuclear energy for peaceful means. We have concluded all the technical work of it. It is ready for signing," said Egypt's Industry and Energy Minister Rachid Mohamed Rachid.

Rachid spoke by telephone from Cairo after talks with Russian Energy Minister Viktor Khristenko, who is on a two-day visit to Egypt laying the ground for Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak's visit to Moscow early next week. "The agreement could be signed by President Mubarak at that time," Rachid said.

Through the construction of several nuclear power plants, Egypt is planning to revive its civilian atomic energy programme, shut down in 1986 in the wake of the Chernobyl disaster.

The London-based International Institute of Strategic Studies said the first 1,000-megawatt reactor could be built at Dabaa on the Mediterranean in eight to 10 years if foreign investment was secured.—*MNA/Reuters*

South Korea arrests man sought by FBI for 10 years

SEOUL, 21 March — South Korean police said on Wednesday they have arrested a Korean-American suspected of murder and wanted by the Federal Bureau of Investigation after he fled the United States 10 years ago and went to South Korea. US-born David Nam, 29 was apprehended in suburban Seoul, where he had been teaching English, police said.

According to the FBI, Nam was freed on bond pending trial in Pennsylvania and then fled to South Korea in 1998. He was arrested about a year later but released from custody because there was no formal extradition treaty between the two countries at that time. This led to one being reached a few months later, the FBI said in a Web posting.

Nam, who uses the alias "Solid", is suspected of shooting to death an elderly man during a home robbery in Philadelphia in 1996, the FBI said.

Nam will be handed over to US authorities after a Seoul court rules on the date of his extradition, a decision likely to be made in the next few days, the investigator said.

MNA/Reuters

British troops kill Afghan policeman

KABUL, 21 March — British troops shot dead one Afghan policeman and wounded another in southern Afghanistan, the officials said on Thursday.

NATO forces opened fire on an Afghan National Police (ANP) checkpoint in the provincial capital of Helmand overnight, the Afghan Interior Ministry said.

British troops in Helmand confirmed the incident.

"I can confirm that an ANP was sadly killed and another wounded.

Also a British soldier was wounded," said Lieutenant-Colonel Simon Miller, a spokes-man for British forces in Helmand. "The investigation is ongoing."

Afghanistan's Interior Minister has travelled to Helmand for the investigation.

Britain has some 7,800 troops in Afghanistan, most of them in Helmand, a largely desert province cut in two by a strip of lush fertile land which produces nearly half the world's opium.

MNA/Reuters

France to cut nuclear arsenal

CHERBOURG (France), 22 March — French President Nicolas Sarkozy announced cuts in France's atomic arsenal on Friday but vowed to keep a strong enough deterrent against threats such as the possibility of a nuclear-armed Iran.

Speaking at the launch of France's fourth of its latest generation of nuclear-armed sub-marines, the "Terrible" (Fearsome), Sarkozy said his naton had to face new security threats, including Iran, and needed to be able to strike back forcefully if attacked.—*MNA/Reuters*

Suicide bomber kills five Pakistani paramilitary

WANA (Pakistan), 21 March — A suicide bomber killed five Pakistani troops and wounded five in an attack at the entrance to a paramilitary base in South Waziristan on Thursday, intelligence officials said.

The incident took place at the Zari Nur base in Wana, the main town in a Pakistani tribal region on the border with Afghanistan, which has long been regarded as a haven for al-Qaeda and Taleban militants.

"The bomber was on foot. He exploded the device when he got to the gate of the camp," an intelligence official, who declined to be identified. He said five troops died on the spot.

The attack came days after US aircraft fired missiles at a house in Wana, killing at least nine militants, including one Arab and two Turkmen.

MNA/Reuters

Eight killed by heavy rains in Sri Lanka

COLOMBO, 22 March — At least eight people died, six others were injured and 174,214 people displaced by heavy rains since last week in different parts of the island, the Disaster Relief Services Centre said on Thursday.

The heavy rains since last Saturday caused flash floods, landslides, felling of trees and lightening.

"At the moment we have accommodated around 7,500 people from 1,870 families in temporary welfare camps," Rishath Bathiyutheen, the Minister of Disaster Relief told reporters.

The affected districts were Ampara, Batticaloa and Trincomalee in the east, Jaffna and Mannar in the north, Gampaha and Puttalam in the north west, Gampaha in the west, Badulla in the central and Moneragala in the southeastern area, officials said.

Bathiyutheen said 41,000 US dollars, or 4.5 million Sri Lanka rupees, had been provided by the government to provide relief to the affected.

MNA/Xinhua

Children ride on a boat through a flooded street after rainfall in Riau Province, Indonesia, on 20 March, 2008. —INTERNET

World's oldest schoolboy stuck in Kenya refugee camp

ELDORET, (Kenya), 21 March — Kenya's post-election crisis has forced the oldest schoolboy on the planet, 88-year-old peasant farmer Kimani Maruge, into a refugee camp — but there's still no dampening his quest for knowledge.

From his white tent at an agricultural showground housing 14,000 displaced people, Maruge rises each morning to collect his books, don his uniform — shorts and all — and walk four kilometres (2.5 miles) to his beloved Kapkenduiywo Primary School.

"I had to come here when people started fighting and burning houses," said Maruge at the end of the day, as rain beat on his tarpaulin tent provided by the Red Cross.

"But I have not stopped studying. School is too important."

Members of his Kikuyu tribe, who have in recent decades moved into the mainly Kalenjin area of Eldoret in west Kenya to farm, were attacked by gangs after the disputed re-election of President Mwai Kibaki in December.

MNA/Reuters

Hong Kong movie star Andy Lau holds a fan written 'Three Kingdom' during an event to promote his latest film 'Three Kingdoms: Resurrection of the Dragon' in Hong Kong on 21 March, 2008.—INTERNET

A girl who was wounded in a mortar attack cries as she receives treatment in a hospital in Tikrit on 21 March, 2008. The attack wounded four civilians in the town of Dour near Tikrit on Friday, police said.—INTERNET

Jumping eagle ray kills boater off Florida Keys

MIAMI, 21 March — An eagle ray leaped onto a boat off the Florida Keys on Thursday and stabbed a woman with its barb, knocking her to the deck and killing her, a Florida wildlife investigator said.

"It's a bizarre accident," said Jorge Pino, an agent with the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission.

The woman and her family were aboard a boat in the Atlantic Ocean, off the city of Marathon in the Florida Keys, he said.

"A large ray jumped out of the water and collided with the victim and somehow the barb penetrated some part of her body, which caused her to fall back and hit her head on some portion of the vessel," Pino said. "We don't know exactly which one of those things caused her death." Local media said the animal's barb had impaled the woman through the neck.

Eagle rays are common in warm or tropical waters and are often seen near coral reefs. The spotted creatures can grow to more than eight feet (2.5 metres) across and have two to six short, venomous barbs near the base of their whip-like tails, according to the Florida Museum of Natural History's website.

MNA/Reuters

30 injured in 116-car collision in Czech

PRAGUE, 21 March — Thirty people were injured, six of them seriously, in a chain collision accident involving 116 cars on Thursday in a heavy snowstorm on D1 motorway between Prague and Brno in the Czech Republic.

The injured have been rushed to the nearest hospitals. Thousands of others were blocked in the tailbacks along the motorway.

The accident occurred between the 91st and the 134th kilometre of D1, regional rescue squad deputy head Edita Richterova said.

Helicopters assisted on the spot, while several ambulances have got stuck in the traffic jam, the Czech news agency *CTK* quoted witnesses as saying.

Fire fighters and police officers also took part in the rescue operation, while Czech Interior Minister Ivan Langer was reportedly considering sending the military for assistance.

Queues are dozens of kilometers long along D1, which is not only the oldest and the longest, but also the busiest and the most dangerous motorway in the country, the *CTK* said.

Up to 100,000 cars use the D1 in rush hours a day. Around 3,000 accidents occur on the motorway annually.

MNA/Xinhua

29 die in Easter holiday in El-Salvador

MEXICO CITY, 21 March — A total of 29 people have been killed so far during the Easter holiday in El Salvador and most of them died in traffic accidents, according to reports reaching here from the country's capital San Salvador.

Apart from the 29 deaths, 326 were injured in traffic accidents, the major killer during the holiday season, which took 21 lives, according to statistics from Sunday to Thursday. The rest eight were drowned. The civil protection service has called on citizens to drive carefully during the Easter vacations and behave responsibly to avoid all kinds of accidents.

The call will alert people against accidents, so they can better enjoy their vacations, said officials from the Interior Ministry, adding that the forthcoming days from Thursday to Sunday are more accident prone as thousands more are to join the vacation.

MNA/Xinhua

Australian woman faces death in Vietnam over drugs

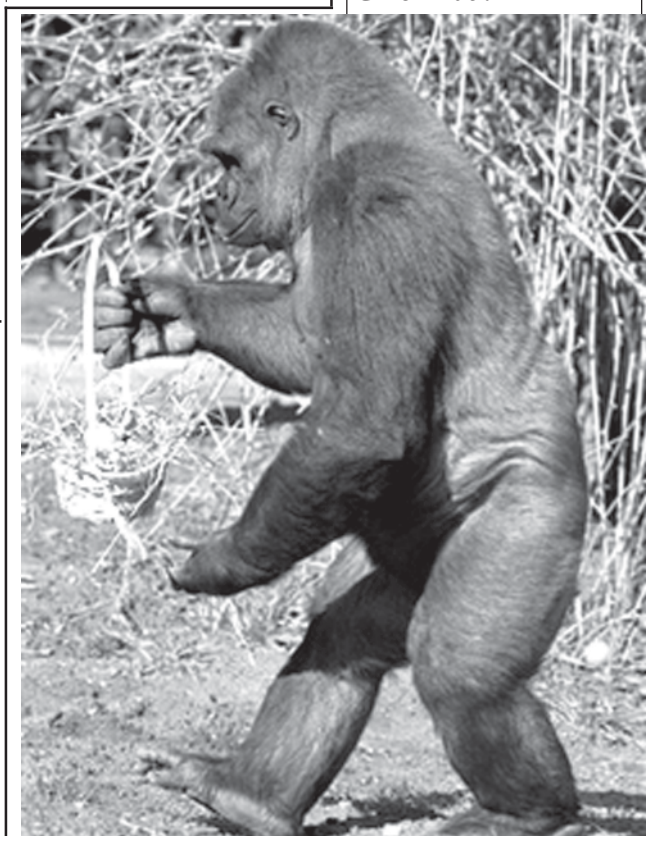
HANOI, 21 March — An Australian woman of Vietnamese origin lost her court appeal and will face a firing squad in Vietnam instead of serving a life term in prison, state-run newspapers reported on Wednesday.

The Court of Appeals accepted a proposal by prosecutors in Ho Chi Minh City on Tuesday to change the sentence for Jasmine Luong, 34, who was found guilty by a Lower Court of trafficking heroin to Australia, the *Liberation Saigon* newspaper said. She now has 15 days to appeal the sentence to the President.

Luong was arrested at the city's Tan Son Nhat International Airport while boarding a flight to Melbourne in February 2007 after the Customs found 1.55 kilos (3.4 pounds) of heroin in her shoes and luggage, the city's Customs reported.

MNA/Reuters

A gorilla carries an Easter basket filled with eggs and treats at the Cincinnati Zoo, on 20 March, 2008, in Cincinnati.—INTERNET



SPORTS

Cannavaro says humble Italy can emulate France double

ROME, 22 March — Italy captain Fabio Cannavaro believes his country can emulate France by winning the European championships after lifting the World Cup, if they stay humble at Euro 2008.

"If we go to the European championships without too much euphoria, with humility and a desire to take advantage of our qualities, we are in the running," the Real Madrid defender told Friday's La Gazzetta dello Sport.

"The example (to follow) is that of France, who were good when winning the 1998 World Cup and lucky to double up at Euro 2000."

MNA/Reuters

Teenager gives modest Luqueno draw with Sao Paulo

RIO DE JANEIRO, 22 March — Seventeen-year-old Adriano Duarte scored in injury time to give modest Paraguayan side Sportivo Luqueno an unlikely 1-1 draw at home to Brazilian champions Sao Paulo in the Libertadores Cup on Thursday.

In Santiago, meanwhile, Juan Roman Riquelme limped off as titleholders Boca Juniors were beaten 2-0 at Chilean champions Colo Colo.

Luqueno, taking part in only their third Libertadores, were playing at their own Feliciano Caceres stadium for the first time in the competition against the powerful Brazilians, whose line-up included on-loan striker Adriano.

A 20,000 crowd packed a stadium which often sees attendances of less than 1,000 for domestic games, providing a festive atmosphere as they let off fireworks from the terraces. —*MNA/Reuters*

Ferguson backs call for respect to referees

MANCHESTER (England), 22 March — Manchester United manager Sir Alex Ferguson has backed the campaign for players to show greater respect to referees.

The Football Association has launched an initiative to improve behaviour towards officials, which has also been backed by England coach Fabio Capello.

And even though Ferguson has been asked by the FA to explain his criticism of referee Martin Atkinson following United's FA Cup defeat by Portsmouth earlier this month, the United manager labelled the haranguing of match officials by players as "ridiculous".

"We had a pivotal moment some years ago when my players surrounded Andy D'Urso," the United manager told a news conference on Friday.

"I went off my head with them about that. I thought it was ridiculous and it never happened again."

"We tell them to shake the hand of the referee at the end of the game. It's sometimes difficult but they have to do it."

"In the same way if you lose a game we invite the opposing manager for a drink after the game. We do it because we think it's important. Life goes on." —*MNA/Reuters*

Ferrari Formula One driver Felipe Massa of Brazil leads McLaren Mercedes Formula One driver Heikki Kovalainen of Finland during the first timed practice session for the Malaysian Grand Prix at the Sepang Formula One Circuit in Sepangnear Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia, on 21 March, 2008. The second race of this year's Formula One season will be held here on 23 March.—INTERNET

Federer enjoys walkover, Fish ousts Nalbandian

INDIAN WELLS (California), 22 March — World number one Roger Federer reached the last four of the Pacific Life Open without hitting a shot on Friday when his quarterfinal opponent Tommy Haas pulled out with a sinus infection.

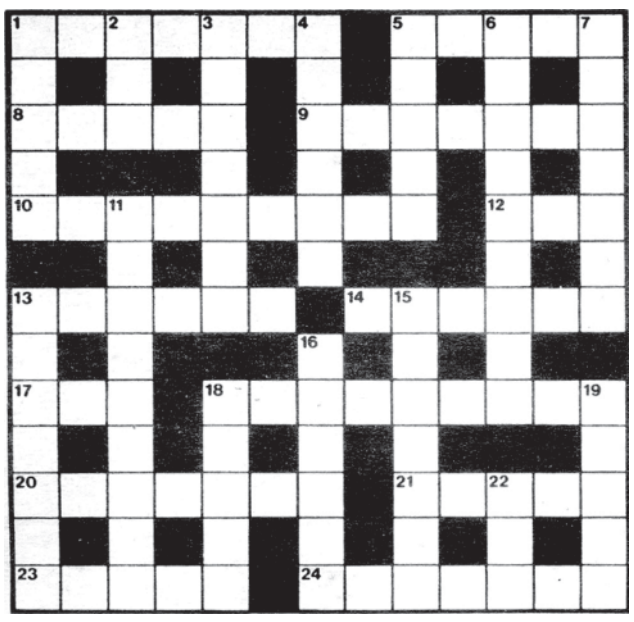
Swiss Federer, three times champion at Indian Wells and seeking his first ATP title of the year, will next meet unseeded American Mardy Fish, who scraped past seventh-seeded David Nalbandian of Argentina 6-3, 6-7, 7-6.

"I deeply regret that I have to withdraw," German Haas said in a statement. "I was playing my best tennis of the season and was looking forward to playing Roger this afternoon. "I am sure the tennis will be incredible this weekend and I look forward to returning again next year."

The 29-year-old, a former world number two whose career has been dogged by injuries, produced an impressive run this week, knocking out sixth-seeded American Andy Roddick and Britain's number 11 seed Andy Murray.

Top seed Federer, who has beaten Haas eight times in 10 career meetings, said: "I am very sorry for Tommy as I was looking forward to another great match with him." —*MNA/Reuters*

CROSSWORDS PUZZLE

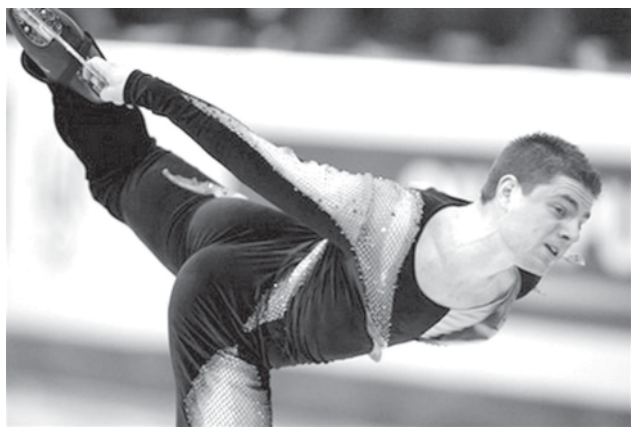


ACROSS

1 More sedate
5 Darkness
8 Bring on oneself
9 Concerning reality
10 Commercail rep.
12 High ball
13 Wily
14 Image
17 Mineral spring
18 "Sleep well!" (4,5)
20 Fruit tree garden
21 Artillery salute
23 Work dough
24 China town

DOWN

1 Gulliver's creator
2 Part of curve
3 English river
4 Prize lottery
5 More pleasant
6 Severe, exhausting
7 High chest of drawers
11 Snow-slip
13 Chorister's robe
15 Artifice
16 Squalid
18 Watch
19 Spiny plant
22 Pot cover



France's Yannick Ponsero performs his short programme on the fourth day of the World Figure Skating Championships in Goteborg, Sweden, on 21 March, 2008.—INTERNET

Van der Sar left out of Dutch squad

NOORDWIJK (Netherlands), 22 March — Netherlands coach Marco van Basten left goalkeeper Edwin van der Sar out of his squad to play Euro 2008 co-hosts in a friendly on Wednesday.

Van Basten has told the 37-year-old, who has missed Manchester United's last two league matches with a groin strain, to concentrate on regaining full fitness with his club.

"I spoke with Edwin (van der Sar) and he told me that he still is recovering from his injury but will possibly play (against Liverpool) on Sunday, though he still is vulnerable," Van Basten told reporters.

MNA/Reuters

Van Pelt stays ahead in Puerto Rico

MIAMI, 22 March — American Bo van Pelt led by a stroke from compatriot Jerry Kelly after the second round of the Puerto Rica Open in Rio Grande on Friday. Van Pelt, seeking his first PGA Tour win, shot a four-under round of 68 in windier conditions than on Thursday when he fired a 64.

"I got a little bit tentative on the back nine," said Van Pelt. "I fought on a couple swings and had to kind of nick that in the bud and go ahead and stay aggressive, and did that when I came over to the front side and was able to make quite a few more birdies."

The 32-year-old posted six birdies and two bogeys to stay top of the leaderboard but the field is wide open heading into Saturday's third round.

Kelly produced the day's best score of 66, along with compatriot Ryan Blaum, to keep within a stroke of Van Pelt while Ted Purdy was a further shot behind after shooting 68. —*MNA/Reuters*

Boston Red Sox designated hitter David Ortiz, left, is helped by a Japanese hotel staff to put on a 'happi' coat during a welcome party of the MLB opening game in Tokyo on 21 March, 2008.—INTERNET

China penalizes 62 websites for illegal airing

BEIJING,22 March— Chinese authorities have announced that 62 websites will face penalties either for broadcasting on-line audio and video programmes with banned content or for providing the service without state permision.

The state Administration of Radio Flim and Telecision (Sarft) side in a circular on Thursday that these sites were found to have violated relevant regulations as a resulf of a two-month inspection,which concluded on 20 February.

They were punished for broadcasting obscene, fear-inspiring or violent content or programmes that might endanger national security and interests, or for offering such services without the required qualifications or certificates, the circular said.

As a result of the inspection, the administrations banned 25 websites including the popular www.mopv-od,com,from providing audio and video services as they had offered the services without authorization and had "frequently" broadcast illegal programmes.

MNA/Xinhua

A man crosses a flooded San Marco's place in the Italian historic city of Venice in 2007. Venice is considening a plan to raise its buildings to counter rising sea levels.—INTERNET

DPRK, Russia to jointly to implement Khasan-Rajin railway

PYONGYANG, 22 March—The Democratic People's Republic of Korea (DPRK) and Russia agreed to set up a joint venture to undertake the reconstruction of the Khasan-Rajin railway and Rajin port, the offical news agency *KCNA*, reported Thursday.

The joint venture would be in charge of building a container wharf at DPRK's Rajin Port and reconstucting the railway line between Russia's Khasan and Rajin to connect the trans-Siberian railway, the *KCNA* said.

MNA/Xinhua

Mexico discovers antidote against African snakebite

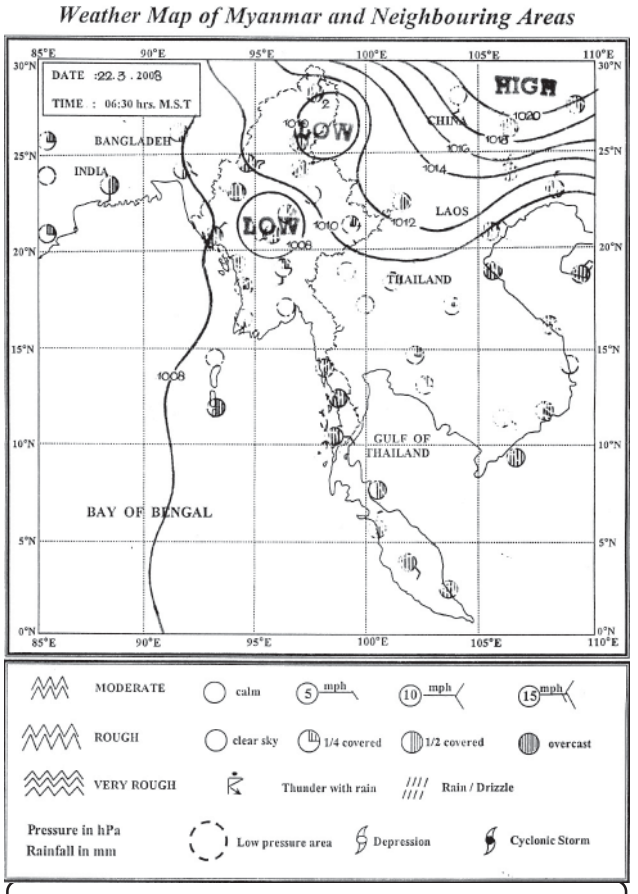
MEXICO CITY, 22 March — Researchers from Mexico's National Autonomous University's (UNAM) Biotechnology Institute (IBT) discovered an antidote against African snakebite, university scientists Roberto Stock Silberman and Alejandro Alagon Cano said in a communique on Thursday.

The communique said that the antidote would reduce deaths by 70 per cent resulted from African snakebite and it would also alleviate damage caused by these snake attacks.

Stock said that about one million people are affected yearly by these types of snakebite in Africa, of which 500,000 suffer poisoning and at least 20,000 die.

MNA/Xinhua

Weather Map of Myanmar and Neighbouring Areas



WEATHER

Saturday, 22 March, 2008

Summary of observations recorded at 9:30 hours

MST: During the past 24 hours, rain or thundershowers have been scattered in upper Sagaing Division, isolated in Kachin and Chin States and weather has been partly cloudy in Mon, Kayin States and Yangon Division and generally fair in the remaining areas. Day temperatures were (5ºC) to (6ºC) below March average temperatures in Kachin and Northern Shan States, (4ºC) below March average temperatures in upper Sagaing Division, (3ºC) above March average temperatures in Kayin State and Bago Division and about March average temperatures in the remaining areas. The significant day temperatures were Aunglan (42ºC), Chauk, Thayawady and Hpa-an (39ºC) each. The noteworthy amounts of rainfall recorded were Homalin (0.27) inch and Putao (0.07) inch.

Maximum temperature on 21-3-2008 was 100ºF. Minimum temperature on 22-3-2008 was 71ºF. Relative humidity at (09:30) hours MST on 22-3-2008 was 83%. Total sunshine hours on 21-3-2008 was (9.0) hours approx.

Rainfall on 22-3-2008 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 (4) mph from Northeast at (12:30) hours MST on 21-3-2008.

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

Forecast valid until evening of 23-3-2008: Likelihood of isolated rain or thundershowers in Kachin and Chin States, Sagaing and Mandalay Divisions and weather will be partly cloudy in Shan and Rakhine States, Yangon and Taninthayi Division and generally fair in the remaining States and Divisions. 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 23-3-2008: Possibility of isolated rain or thundershowers. Degree of certainty is (40%).

Forecast for Yangon and neighbouring area for 23-3-2008: Partly cloudy.

Forecast for Mandalay and neighbouring area for 23-3-2008: Possibility of isolated rain or thundershowers. Degree of certainty is (40%).

TV Myanmar

Sunday, 23 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. Cute little dancers
7:45 am
5. Musical programme
8:00 am
6. ရိုးရာကျေးလက်ကစားနည်း
8:15 am
7. (၆၃)နှစ်မြောက်တပ်မတော်နေ့ ဂုဏ်ပြုအစီအစဉ်
8:30 am
8. International news
8:45 am
9. "သတင်းကောင်း" (သျှားညို၊ဆုပန်ထွာ) (ဒါရိုက်တာ–ညီမင်းလွင်)
11:00 am
1. Martial song
11:10 am
2. Musical programme
11:20 am
3. Roundd up of the week's International news
11:30 am
4. ထက်မြက်ပျော်ရွှင်အိမ်ထောင်ရှင်
12:00 noon
5. "အမြင်" (မင်းသူ၊ခိုင်နှင်းဝေ) (ဒါရိုက်တာ–သက်တင်)
1:00 pm
6. (၆၃)နှစ်မြောက်တပ်မတော်နေ့ ဂုဏ်ပြုအစီအစဉ်
1:15 pm
7. Dance of national races
1:25 pm
8. ကပ်တဲလ်ကြိုးတံတား
1:35 pm
9. ဆိုင်းအဖွဲ့ဖျော်ဖြေခန်း "မြမြင့်အောင်"(မြင်းခြံ)
2:00 pm
10. ရုပ်မြင်ရသတေးစုကဏ္ဍ
2:15 pm
11. အကပြိုင်ပွဲ
2:30 pm
12. Musical programme
2:45 pm
13. International news
4:00 pm
1. Martial song
4:10 pm
2. တပ်မတော်နေ့ ဂုဏ်ပြုတေးသီချင်းပြိုင်ပွဲဆုရတေးများ
4:20 pm
3. "စက်မှုဇုန်မှာကျွန်မ စက်ရုံလာတည်တော့မယ်" (ဖြိုးဌေဖိုး၊သဇင်) (ဒါရိုက်တာ–တင်အောင်ရွှေ) (သုတေသီ)
4:30 pm
4. အဝေးသင်တက္ကသိုလ် ပညာရေး ရုပ်မြင်သံကြား သင်ခန်းစာ–၃တိယနှစ် (ရက္ခမေဒအထူးပြု) (ရက္ခမေဒ)
4:45 pm
5. Song to uphold National Spirit
5:00 pm
6. (၆၃)နှစ်မြောက်တပ်မတော်နေ့ ဂုဏ်ပြုအစီအစဉ်
5:10 pm
7. ဆိုကြမယ်၊ ပျော်ကြမယ်
6:00 pm
8. Evening news
6:30 pm
9. Weather report
6:35 pm
10. "ပြည်သူ့အတွက်တပ်မတော်" (သမိုင်းဂုဏ်ရောင်ထွန်းလင်းပြောင်သည့်ရှေးခေတ် မြန်မာ့တပ်မတော်)
6:50 pm
11. "သားကောင်းမိခင်" (အပိုင်း–၃) (လွင်မိုး၊နေတိုး၊ဇင်ဝိုင်း၊ ထွန်းထွန်း(Examplez)၊ စိုးမြတ်သူဇာ၊မေသဉ္ဇာဦး၊ ပန်းဖြူပုလဲဝင်း) (ဒါရိုက်တာ–ပန်းချီစိုးမိုး)
8:00 pm
12. News
13. International news
14. Weather report
15. "သားကောင်းမိခင်" (အပိုင်း–၄) (လွင်မိုး၊နေတိုး၊ဇင်ဝိုင်း၊ ထွန်းထွန်း(Examplez)၊ စိုးမြတ်သူဇာ၊မေသဉ္ဇာဦး၊ ပန်းဖြူပုလဲဝင်း) (ဒါရိုက်တာ–ပန်းချီစိုးမိုး)

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People's Desire

☆ **We favour stability.**

☆ **We favour peace.**

☆ **We oppose unrest and violence.**

USDA Secretariat Members meet USDA executives

NAY PYI TAW, 22 March—Secretariat Members of the Union Solidarity and Development Association Minister for Industry-1 U Aung Thaung and Minister for Communications, Posts and Telegraphs Brig-Gen Thein Zaw on 20 March met with secretaries and executives of the District and Township USDAs, departmental officials, townselders, local people and members of social organizations at the gymnasium in Mogok and gave necessary instructions.

On 21 March, the ministers attended the opening of the new digital auto exchange that was held in front of Kyatpyin Digital Auto Exchange in Mogok Township, PyinOoLwin District. After formally opening the new digital auto exchange, Minister Brig-Gen Thein Zaw inspected the installation of machines in the building of the new facility and test-dialed the auto telephones.

The new digital auto exchange project covers 500 auto telephones.

This was followed by the opening of the new digital auto exchange that was held in front of the Combined Office Digital Auto Exchange in Bogon Ward, Mogok. Minister Brig-Gen Thein Zaw formally opened the new facility.

Next, Minister U Aung Thaung and Minister Brig-Gen Thein Zaw looked into the installation of machines in the building of the new auto exchange and test-dialed the auto telephones.

The new digital auto exchange project covers 1,000 auto telephones.

After that, USDA Secretariat member Minister for Industry-1 U Aung Thaung proceeded to Uyin Kyaungtaik in Mogok and offered 'soon' and provisions to members of the Samgha led by Presiding Sayadaw of West Kathe Kyaungtaik Bhaddanta Sandasiri.—*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**

Minister inspects Coach and Wagon Factory (Myitnge), Ywa Htaung Diesel Locomotive Shed

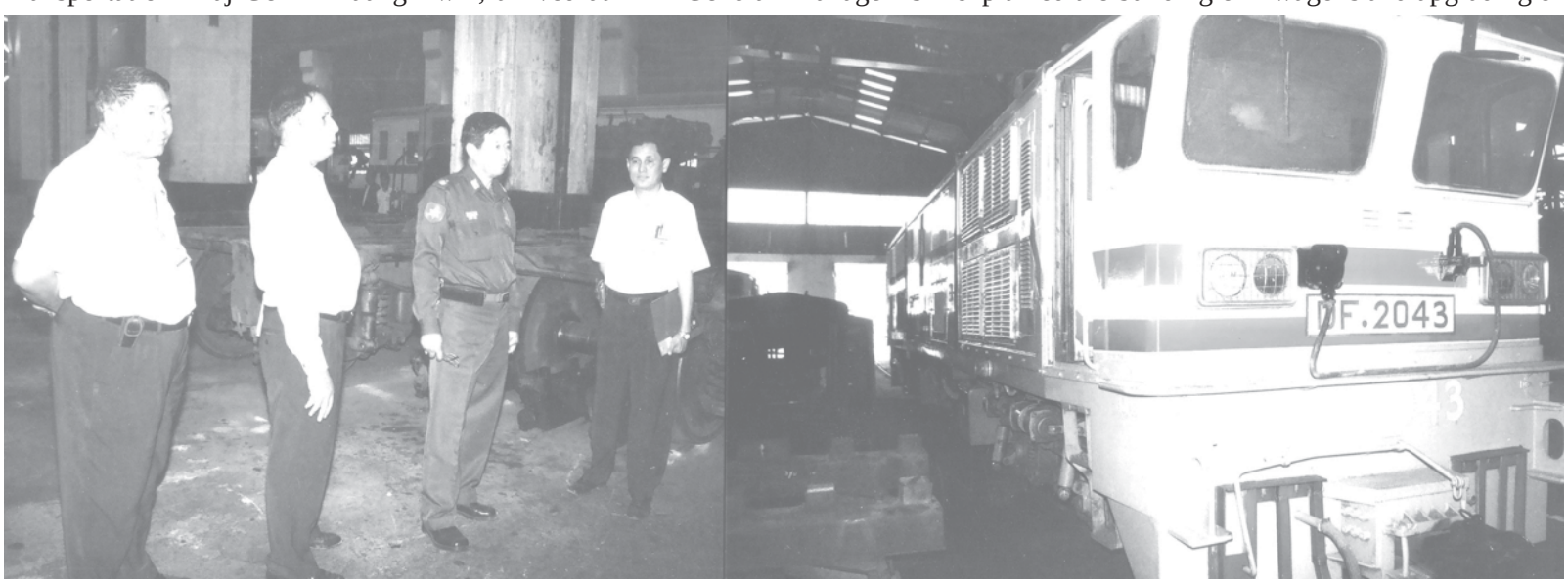
NAY PYI TAW, 21 March—Minister for Rail Transportation Maj-Gen Aung Min, together with Deputy Minister Thura U Thaung Lwin, arrived at Myitnge in a RBE special train yesterday morning.

General Manager U Aung Win of Coach and Wagon Factory (Myitnge) explained the building of new wagons, major repair and maintenance of RBE wagons and upgrading of coaches and wagons.

After giving necessary instructions to officials and factory staff, the minister viewed around the factory.

Next, he looked into the concrete sleeper factory (Myitnge) and Ywa Htaung Diesel Locomotive Shed and attended to the needs.

The minister and party inspected the maintenance of No 824 Myitnge Bridge on Dothtawady River and No 453 Sinthay Bridge between Sinthay Station and Shwe Myo and construction of new Nay Pyi Taw Station. — *MNA*



***Minister for Rail Transportation Maj-Gen Aung Min inspects Ywa Htaung Diesel Locomotive Shed.* — MR**