

Garavo ca, reverence; this is the way to auspiciousness

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Thursday, 17 April, 2008

Four political objectives

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

Four economic objectives

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

Four social objectives

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

Senior General Than Shwe sends message of felicitations to Syrian President

NAY PYI TAW, 17 April – Senior General Than Shwe, Chairman of the State Peace and Development Council of the Union of Myanmar, has sent a message of felicitations to His Excellency Mr Bashar Al-Assad, President of the Syrian Arab Republic, on the occasion of the National Day of the Syrian Arab Republic, which falls on 17 April, 2008.— MNA

True patriotism

- * It is very important for everyone of the nation regardless of the place he lives to have strong Union Spirit.
- * Only Union Spirit is the true patriotism all the nationalities will have to safeguard.

■ To approve the State Constitution is a national duty of the entire people today. Let us all cast “Yes” vote in the national interest.

Secretary-1 attends prize presentation ceremony of Nay Pyi Taw Maha Thingyan Tour Gold Cup Golf Tournament

NAY PYI TAW, 16 April – Secretary-1 of the State Peace and Development Council Quartermas-

ter-General Lt-Gen Thiha Thura Tin Aung Myint Oo this morning attended a ceremony to present

prizes to winners of Nay Pyi Taw Maha Thingyan Tour Gold Cup Golf Tourney held at Nay Pyi Taw Golf Course from 13 (Akyat Day) to 15 April (second Akyat Day).

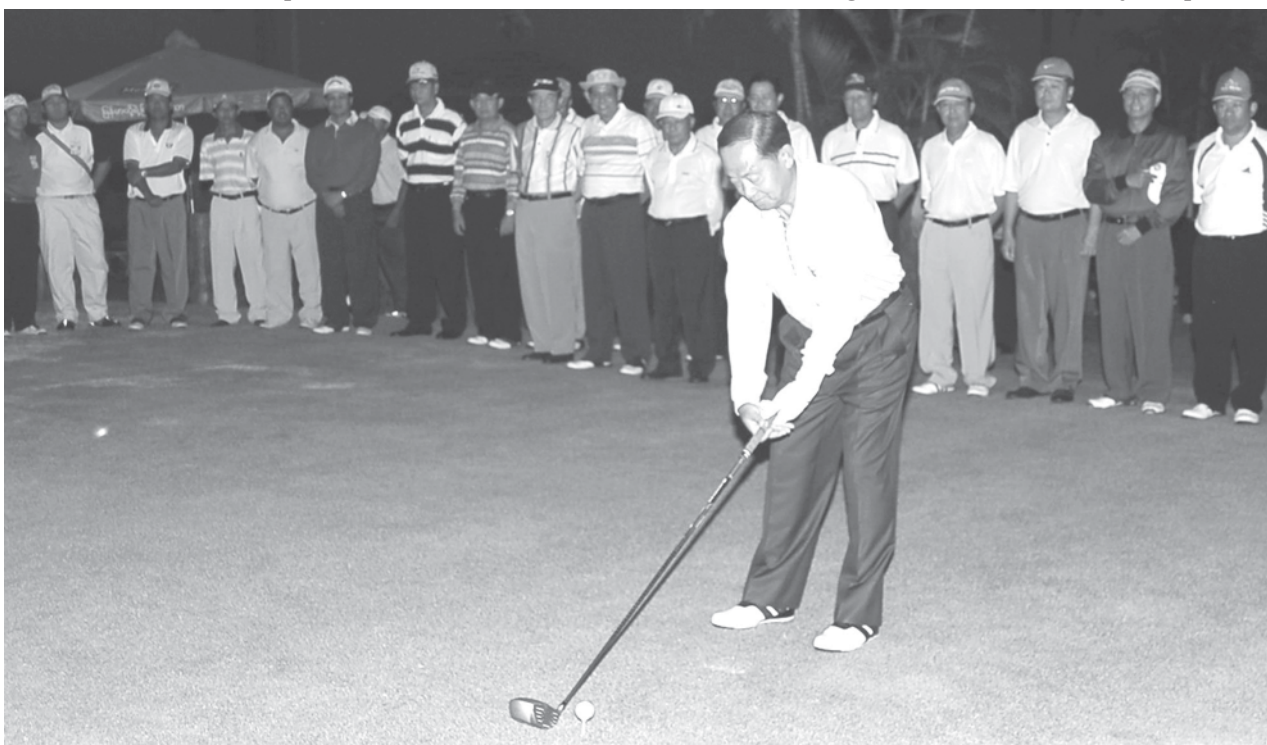
It was also attended by members of the SPDC, senior military officers of the Ministry of Defence, the ministers, the deputy ministers, departmental heads, 156 golfers of clubs and teams from the ministries, the commands and states and divisions.

The golf tournament was held at Nay Pyi Taw Golf Course, City Golf Course and Yay Pya Golf Course from 13 to 15 April with the participation of 156 golfers from 26 teams.

The tournament was organized with the aim of promoting the standard of golf sports and golf courses in Nay Pyi Taw. Plans are under way to organize the tournament annually.

There are three 18-hole golf courses — Nay Pyi Taw Golf Course, City Golf Course and Yay Pya Golf Course—in Nay Pyi Taw. Nay Pyi Taw Golf Course has 7007-yard Fairway, City Golf Course, 7059-yard Fairway and Yay Pya Golf Course, 6183-yard Fairway. The 26 teams were divided into three groups to compete in the tournament at the respective golf courses alternately.

(See page 8)



Secretary-1 Lt-Gen Thiha Thura Tin Aung Myint Oo tees off the tracer ball to open Nay Pyi Taw Maha Thingyan Tour Gold Cup Golf Tournament.— MNA

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

PERSPECTIVES

Thursday, 17 April, 2008

Happy New Year!

Today is Myanmar New Year Day and the old year ends and the new year has started and it is an auspicious occasion for everyone.

During the Myanma traditional cultural Maha Thingyan festival, the people of Myanmar doused water on one another and merrily celebrated the New Year. By nature water is cold and clear and therefore Thingyan water makes people cool, fresh and pleasant and gives happiness. Thingyan water cleans dirt of the old year and causes new and fresh mind for the new year.

On the auspicious Myanmar New Year Day, all the people in the country perform meritorious deeds and Buddhists usually go to the pagodas and monasteries and take Sabbath. They also dispense loving-kindness and meditate there.

Being the New Year Day, the people sprinkle scented water on the Buddha images. Some wash the pagodas, some make the wells and lakes clean and build roads, upgrade the bridges and carry out sanitation works in own wards and villages.

On the New Year Day, the young pay homage to the elderly people and mentors in accord with the Myanma traditions and customs. They also provide the elderly people with drinking water and shampoo them and manicure them.

Myanmar New Year Day is significant, pleasant and fresh. We wish for all the people to make endeavours for the betterment of the nation, national races and the Sasana forever with new mind upholding the fine traditions.



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

Industry-1 Ministry wins championship shield of First Nay Pyi Taw Inter-Ministry Men's Basketball Tournament

NAY PYI TAW, 16 April—The Ministry of Industry-1 beat the Ministry of Rail Transportation 79-66 points in the First Nay Pyi Taw Inter-Ministry Men's Basketball Tournament at the sport ground here on 10 April.

Chairman of Myanmar Olympic Committee Minister for Sports Brig-Gen Thura Aye Myint presented K 1 million and the championship shield and the replica of the shields to the Ministry of Industry-1.

The Minister also presented K 700,000 to the Ministry of Rail Transportation, K 500,000 to the Ministry of Sports and K 300,000 to the Ministry of Defence that were second, third and fourth winners.

Minister for Rail Transportation Maj-Gen Aung Min presented the fair play award and K 200,000 to the Ministry of Sports.

Deputy Minister for Hotels and Tourism Brig-Gen Aye Myint Kyu presented individual awards to first, second and third winners and Deputy Minister for Rail Transportation Thura U Thaung Lwin the best



Minister for Sports Brig-Gen Thura Aye Myint presents championship shield to Ministry of Industry-1 team.—MNA

player award and prizes to the best players of respective places.—MNA

Maha Thingyan festival in Taunggyi crowded with local people

NAY PYI TAW, 16 April—The Maha Thingyan festival was held in Taunggyi, Shan State (South) on a grand scale from Akyo Day to Atet Day.

On 12 April (Akyo Day), the Maha Thingyan festival was opened at Central Pandal in Taunggyi along with the opening of Taunggyi Pandal, Nyein Chan Yay Pandal, Padauk Cherry Pandal, Einmet Pandal and ward pandals, attended by Chairman of Shan State Peace and Development Council Commander of Eastern Command Maj-Gen Thaung Aye and party.

On Thingyan Akyo Day, Central Pandal was packed with fun-loving people and townsenders enjoying the entertainment of various Yein troupes including Mya Padauk Shwewar Yein troupe, Cherry May Yein troupe, NwayU Pyophyu Yein troupe, San Thit Yin Thuza Yein troupe, NwayU Kalaya Yein troupe and Atamay Yein troupe.

On Thingyan Akya Day, Commander Maj-Gen Thaung Aye formally opened Shwe Nay Kya Pandal of Eastern Command where both entertainment and

traditional snacks were presented to revellers.

Next, the commander and party enjoyed the presentation of Yein troupes at the Industrial Zone Pandal in front of the office of Shan State Myanma Agriculture Service on Bogyoke Road.

The offering of meals to members of the Sangha by the commander and party and traditional snacks to revellers participating in the water festival by well-wishers reflected the essence and beauty of Taunggyi Maha Thingyan.

Today, being Atet Day, all roads and lanes were thronged with revellers enjoying the entertainment of Lazy Club and Emperor music bands and the water festival in groups or individually.

Next, the commander and party enjoyed a variety of traditional dances presented by national races at Nyein Chan Yay Pandal of local national races.

In the evening, decorated floats such as Kanbawza, Ywetnuway, Nweyokhlwa, Shwe Yin Aye, Myitpha Zawgyi and Loilem Maungme highlighted the essence of Taunggyi Thingyan.—MNA



Revellers enjoy entertainment of dance troupe at Central Pandal in Taunggyi. — MNA

Putin, Abbas to meet in Moscow

Moscow, 15 April — Russia's outgoing President Vladimir Putin will meet with his Palestine counterpart Mahmoud Abbas on Friday in Moscow, the Kremlin Press service said on Tuesday. Abbas started

on Monday a three-nation tour which will take him to Jordan, Russia and the United States for talks on the Israeli-Palestinian issue.

Palestinian negotiator Saeb Erekat said the tour aimed to rally supports for

a truce between Israel and the Palestinians in the Gaza Strip and end an Israel blockade imposed on the territory.

Israel imposed a strict blockade on the Gaza Strip and considered it a hostile entity after Hamas militants routed President Mahmoud Abbas' security forces and took control of the vicinity in mid-June last year.

MNA/Xinhua

Smoke rises from the crashed plane on Tuesday near the border between the Democratic Republic of Congo (DR Congo) and Rwanda. It is reported some 83 people were killed in the crash.—XINHUA



Firemen tackle a blaze at a construction site in the Narvarte district in Mexico City on 15 April, 2008. It took the firefighters two hours to bring the fire under control and no injuries were reported, police said.—INTERNET

Chinese FM meets Thai counterpart

BEIJING, 15 April — China is willing to join hands with Thailand to push forward bilateral strategic cooperation, said Chinese Foreign Minister Yang Jiechi on Tuesday.

Yang made the remarks when he met with visiting Thai Foreign Minister Noppadon Pattama.

They exchanged views on bilateral relations as well as international and regional issues of common concern.

China and Thailand maintain a close relationship. The two countries share mutual benefits in economic exchanges, and cooperate well in international and regional affairs, said Yang.

Noppadon said Thailand is willing to work with China to push ahead with Thailand-China good-neighbourly relations.—MNA/Xinhua

Two US soldiers killed in bomb attacks in Iraq

BAGHDAD, 15 April — Two American soldiers were killed in two roadside bomb attacks across Iraq on Monday, the US military said on Tuesday.

A soldier was killed by a roadside explosion in the Salahudin province north of Baghdad, said a brief military statement. Another statement said second soldier died of wounds sustained when a roadside bomb hit his vehicle at about 04:45 pm (1345 GMT) during a combat patrol in northeastern Baghdad.

The names of the deceased soldiers are being withheld pending notification of the next of kin, said both the statements. The latest deaths bring the number of US soldiers killed in Iraq to more than 4,030 since the Iraq war broke out in 2003, according to media count based on Pentagon figures.

MNA/Xinhua

Bomb blasts kill three, injure 18 in Ethiopian capital

ADDIS ABABA, 15 April — Three people were killed and 18 others injured in separate bomb blasts that occurred here Monday simultaneously in areas locally known as Gerji and Lem Hotel, Ethiopia's federal police said Tuesday.

The blast, which set ablaze part of a depot in an area back of Imperial Hotel at 6:30 pm (1530 GMT), has killed two people while inflicting heavy and light injuries on nine others, according to a statement from federal police.—MNA/Xinhua

Nineteen pupils perish in school fire in Uganda

KAMPALA, 15 April — Nineteen pupils and two teachers were killed in a fire that broke out in a school near capital Kampala Monday night, a police spokesman said here Tuesday. The fire broke out in the dormitory at around 9 pm under unclear circumstances in Budo primary school, about 12 km from Kampala, said Simeo Nsubuga, the Kampala Police spokesman. "Police officers are still working at the site, trying to establish the cause of the fire," said Nsubuga.—MNA/Xinhua

A man who was wounded in a bomb attack is rushed into a hospital in Baquba on 15 April, 2008. A car bomb killed 40 people and wounded 80 in the city of Baquba, 65 km (42 miles) north of Baghdad, police said.—INTERNET

ASEAN preparing for Single Window

JAKARTA, 15 April — The Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) plans to put into trial the single window system that will accelerate Customs clearance and enhance trade competitiveness in the region starting next

year.

The trial will include Indonesia, Malaysia, the Philippines, Brunei, Vietnam and Laos, an Indonesian official was quoted Tuesday as saying.

Meanwhile, Singapore, Thailand and

Cambodia will consider joining the ASEAN Single Window (ASW) after the trial period, said Edy Putra Irawady, who heads Indonesia's ASW preparatory committee.

"The ASW means centralized procedures, so that the flow of goods in the region will be transparent, accountable and easier," he said in major national newspaper Tempo's website

MNA/Xinhua

Four people arrested in pirated disc seizure in HK

HONG KONG, 15 April — Hong Kong Customs officers arrested four people Tuesday and seized 200,000 pirated optical discs worth 5 million HK dollars (642,178 US dollars) in a raid on a local building.

Three women and a man aged 24 to 43 were being questioned, said a statement from the Hong Kong Customs.

The discs mainly involved Japanese and Korean television series and were intended for sale at local retail

outlets, according to the statement.

MNA/Xinhua



China, Pakistan pledge to strengthen economic and trade cooperation

BEIJING, 15 April — China and Pakistan have vowed to enhance economic cooperation, and to accelerate the achievement of 15 billion US dollars (105 billion yuan) worth of bilateral trade, a joint statement released on Tuesday said.

Both sides are satisfied with current cooperation, agreeing to

further strengthen exchanges and communication in the fields of economy, trade, science and technology, and culture among others. China expressed its readiness to provide full support to Pakistan's economic development. Energy, mineral and mining sectors are among the potential areas of

cooperation, said the statement.

China agreed to strengthen cooperation in the financial sector, and to extend more support for projects under the China-Pakistan Joint Five Year Economic and Trade Cooperation Plan.

The two countries agreed to enhance cooperation between economy and trade-related departments and sectors, with the aim of promoting cross-border trade.—MNA/Xinhua

Putin agrees to chair Russia's ruling party

MOSCOW, 15 April — Russian President Vladimir Putin accepted a proposal to chair the ruling United Russia in the party's congress on Tuesday.

The congress confirmed the election of Putin as chairman of the party for a four-year term. President-elect Dmitry Medvedev supported the proposal, saying Putin has become an "inform leader" of the party by leading it to win majority in last December's parliamentary elections.

Medvedev, however, declined to join the pro-

Kremlin party, hailing the party's development.

"We still have a lot of work to do together," Putin said after his election.

Putin is to hand over power to Medvedev on 7 May and act as prime minister in Medvedev's presidency. MNA/Xinhua

Farmers perform traditional dance during the ceremony marking the 50th anniversary of the foundation of Chuxiong Yi Autonomous Prefecture of southwest China's Yunnan Province on 15 April, 2008. —XINHUA



People plant trees in Ordos City of northwest China's Inner Mongolia Autonomous Region, on 31 March, 2008. Over 70 South Korean college students, reporters, enterprise employees and officials attend a trees planting activity together with some 200 local Chinese students and civil servants in Ordos Monday. —XINHUA

Slovenia pledges support to Turkish EU bid

BELGRADE, 15 April — Slovenia, the current EU president, on Tuesday pledged support to Turkey's progress in the lengthy, multi-step EU accession talks.

Slovenian parliamentary speaker France Cukjati assured his Turkish counterpart Koksal Toptan in the Slovenian capital Ljubljana that Slovenia would do everything in its power to speed up the talks between Turkey and the European Union, the Slovenian news agency STA reported.

"We are friends," Cukjati said at a joint Press conference with Toptan. Toptan said that Turkey is ready to open three new chapters in accession talks with the 27-nation bloc, and hopes to do so before the end of Slovenia's term as EU president in late June this year.—MNA/Xinhua

Passive smoking affects about 540 million Chinese

BEIJING, 15 April — Chinese health experts estimated that passive smoking has affected about 540 million people out of the country's 1.3 billion population.

Passive smoking, especially in public place, has been a serious health problem in China, said Li Hengyuan, deputy secretary-general of the All-China Environment Federation (ACEF), a leading environmental non-governmental organization, here Tuesday.

Passive smoking, meaning involuntary inhalation of smoke from tobacco products, could increase the incidence of cardiovascular and respiratory diseases and even lead to lung cancer.

MNA/Xinhua



Bangladesh slams donors for inaction over food crisis

DHAKA, 15 April — Bangladeshi caretaker government finance adviser Mirza Azizul Islam Tuesday slammed international lenders, including the World Bank and International Monetary Fund (IMF), for "not doing anything" to help ease the food crisis.

"Food costs are on the rise and Bangladesh and many other countries are in trouble. Our government is having a hard time coping with the burden of ever-increasing subsidies on food as the prices are climbing in the international market," the adviser told a seminar held here and was quoted by private news agency bdnews24.com.

"The World Bank and IMF are expressing concern over the crisis, but they are not doing anything to ease the problem," he said at the seminar on "social protection as a strategy in transformative social policy", organized by United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF).

MNA/Xinhua



A man is dragged away by riot police after being detained by authorities during disturbances in the Dandora district of Nairobi on 14 April. Four more people died during a second day of nationwide rioting in Kenya Tuesday, bringing the overall toll to 19, in a crisis that presented the new coalition cabinet with its first major challenge.—INTERNET

China refunds VAT on some imported oil products of PetroChina and Sinopec

BEIJING, 15 April — China would refund value-added tax (VAT) levied on some of PetroChina and Sinopec's imported oil products between 1 April and 30 June, the Ministry of Finance (MOF) said in a statement on its website on Tuesday.

The MOF said the move had been approved by the State Council, China's Cabinet.

These oil products

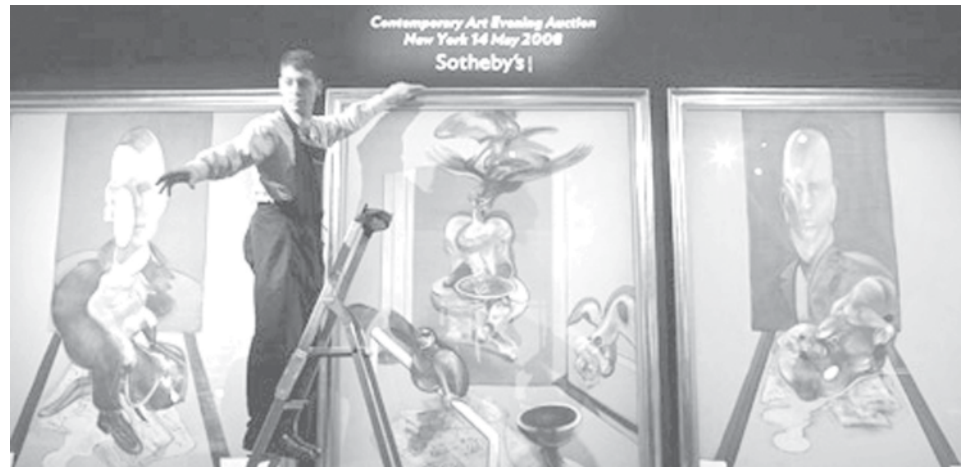
included 500,000 tonnes of gasoline and 1 million tonnes of diesel oil from PetroChina, the country's largest oil producer, and 500,000 tonnes of gasoline and 1.5 million tonnes of diesel oil from Sinopec, the country's largest refiner, said the statement.

However, the statement did not mention the details of how the value-added tax would be first paid and then refunded to these two

oil companies.

Some industry experts said that government-controlled oil prices in the domestic market has led to the recent shortfall of oil supply, as refineries cut back production to avoid losses against the back-drop of crude oil price rise globally.

Current VAT rate on gasoline and diesel import is 17 percent.—Xinhua



A Sotheby's employee adjusts part of the triptych by British artist Francis Bacon entitled *Triptych 1976* at the auction house in London, on 14 April, 2008. The work, with an estimated sale price of some 70 million US dollars (euro 44 million), is to be sold at auction in New York on 14 May. — XINHUA

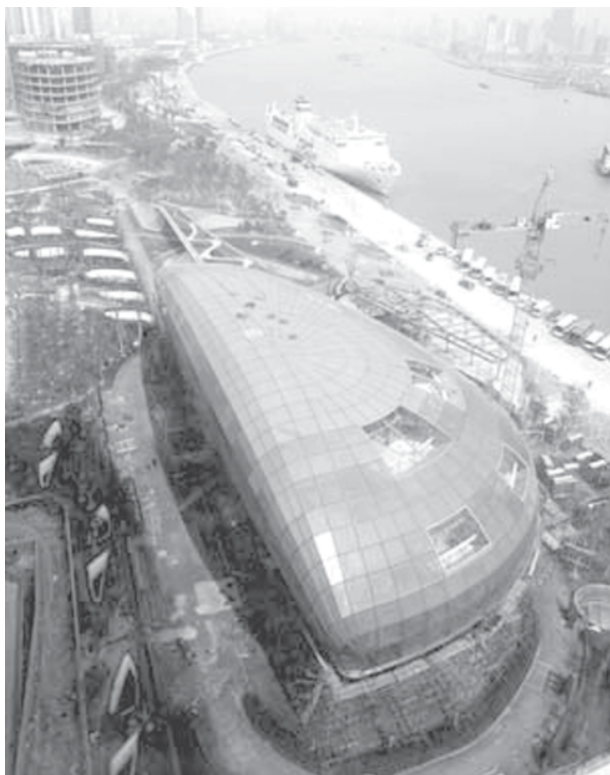


Photo taken on 3 April, 2008 shows the exterior of the newly-completed Comprehensive Building of the International Passenger Transport Centre of Shanghai Port in Shanghai, east China. The waiting hall of the International Passenger Transport Centre of Shanghai Port was officially put into use on Thursday to greet the passenger liner "Rhapsody of the Seas." —XINHUA

Int'l fiscal crisis has little effect on Greek economy: banker

ATHENS, 15 April — Bank of Greece Governor Nikos Garganas said here on Tuesday that the repercussions from the ongoing, and probably intensifying, world crisis with the possible stagnation of the American economy will not have an impact on the Greek economy.

He briefed the Parliament's Economic Committee on economic and monetary policy covering the 2007-2008 period, holding that the repercussions for the Greek banking system from the international fiscal crisis, if any, will be small since the growth rate

has not slowed down.

But he stressed that in the long run the repercussions might be more considerable, to the degree that the growth rate slows down even further.

Garganas placed emphasis on efforts being made to curb inflation as well as the need for the Stability Programme and the boosting of deposits.

"The goal of the Bank of Greece is backing business loans and restraining household loaning," Garganas said, adding that commercial banks have been requested to apply more stringent criteria in granting loans. —Xinhua

Economic news

Indonesian shoes export to grow 10 pct in 2008

JAKARTA, 15 April — Indonesian shoes exports are expected to grow 10 percent to 1.8 million US dollars in the year 2008, the Industry Ministry of Indonesia said on Tuesday.

"Shoes demand from the Europe and the US remain strong," Budi Irmawan, a ministry's

director, was quoted by Antara News Agency as saying.

Branded shoes like Adidas and Reebok, which were produced in Indonesia, would still take the largest share of the country's shoes export, the rest would be local leather shoes, he added.

Xinhua

China's exports of farm produce dwarfed by imports in first two months

BEIJING, 15 April — China's foreign trade in farm produce went into deficit in the first two months of this year, as opposed to a surplus for the same period last year, the Ministry of Agriculture revealed on Tuesday.

Both exports and imports of farm produce increased in the January-February period, but the former was dwarfed by the latter in terms of growth, said a ministry official who declined to be named.

This indicated the government's efforts to restrict farm produce exports to ensure domestic supply had begun to pay

off, said Chen Hongzhou, an analyst with the Galaxy Securities.

The first two months saw China's foreign trade in farm produce reach 14.67 billion U.S. dollars, up 38.6 percent on the same period of last year.

The total included 6.3 billion US dollars in export value, up 7.4 percent, and 8.36 billion dollars in import value, up 77.4 percent.

Xinhua

Turkey's imports and exports to surpass goals

ANKARA, 15 April — Total amounts of Turkey's exports and imports this year will exceed the goals set by the government in its economic programme, local newspaper *Today's Zaman* reported on Tuesday.

Foreign Trade Undersecretary Tuncer Kayalar was quoted as saying that as the energy prices continue

increasing in 2008, imports and exports are expected to exceed government's year targets slated for 117 billion dollars of exports and 182 billion dollars of imports.

Imports, particularly due to energy price surge, are expected to reach 190 billion US dollars by the end of 2008, while exports are expected to total 125 billion dollars, said the official.—Xinhua

OPEC daily prices surpass 104 dollars

VIENNA, 15 April — The daily average oil prices of the Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC) surpassed 104 US dollars per barrel (dpb) for the first time and set a new record of 104.02 dpb on Monday, the Vienna-based cartel announced on Tuesday.

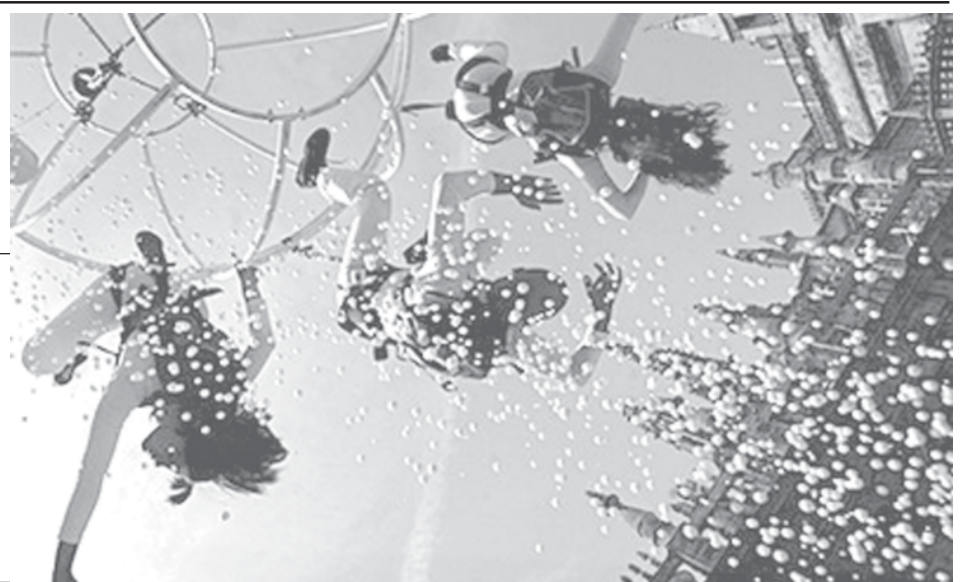
The previous record of 103.74 dpb was set on 10 April. After one day's slight retreat to 103.67 on Friday,

the prices rose without hesitation on the first trading day of this week and surpassed 104 dollars. Experts said the soaring oil prices were mainly driven by large amount of speculation.

Meanwhile, oil prices in the United States rose to 110.75 dpb on Monday afternoon following the news of a temporary shutdown of a major oil pipeline in the country.

Xinhua

Teatro de Altura :
Members of the Teatro de Altura perform by the cathedral in Sevilla as part of the international theatre festival which takes place in the city from 15-27 April. —INTERNET



Jordan's King meets Palestinian President on Mideast peace talks

AMMAN, 15 April — Jordanian King Abdullah II held talks Tuesday with visiting Palestinian President Mahmoud Abbas on the latest developments of the Palestinian-Israeli negotiations and efforts to

advance the negotiations.

During the meeting, Abdullah reiterated Jordan's support to the Palestinian National Authority (PNA) in its efforts to push forward the peace process through serious negotiations that

tackle all final status issues, the official *Petra* news agency said.

The king urged Israel to respond positively to these efforts to achieve a just and permanent peace by giving up its policies and unilateral actions, namely ending settlement activities, opening border crossings and removing road blocks, the report said.—Xinhua

China's combined direct investment abroad topped \$92 bln by 2007

BEIJING, 16 April — China's combined direct investments abroad amounted to 92.05 billion US dollars by the end of 2007, said a senior official of the China Council for the Promotion of International Trade (CCPIT) on Wednesday.

Zhang Wei, vice chairman of the CCPIT, said here that since the government initiated the "going global" strategy for domestic companies in 1998, Chinese companies' enthusiasm for investing overseas has been on the rise, big privately-owned enterprises in particular.

The CCPIT, and also the China Chamber of International Commerce, have formulated programs in 2006 to facilitate domestic companies' global strategy to help them make better use of the domestic and international markets, he added.

The 2nd Chinese Enterprise Outbound Investment Conference, organized by the CCPIT and the Ministry of

Commerce, would be held from April 22-23 in Beijing, according to the CCPIT.

By the end of 2006, more than 5,000 Chinese investment entities had established almost 10,000 companies overseas in 172 countries and regions, with the combined outbound investment reached 90.63 billion US dollars.

Xinhua

6 killed, 8 injured in road accident in NW Pakistan

ISLAMABAD, 15 April — At least six people were killed and eight others injured when two passenger pickups collided in Northwest Pakistan on Tuesday.

The tragic incident occurred as a result of the head-on collision between two passenger pickups on Indus Highway in Bannu district of North West Frontier

Province, official *Associated Press of Pakistan* reported.

As many as six people died instantly while eight others sustained critical wounds. The reason behind the gory incident was stated to be wrong overtaking. The injured have been shifted to Bannu hospital for treatment.

Xinhua



Flame guards escort the torch and a lantern which holds the Olympic flame to the venue of the lighting ceremony of the Olympic torch relay at the Pakistan Sports Complex in Islamabad, capital of Pakistan, on 16 April, 2008. Islamabad is the tenth stop of the 2008 Beijing Olympic Games torch relay outside the Chinese mainland.—INTERNET

4,300 people convicted of intellectual property right infringement in 2007

BEIJING, 15 April — More than 4,300 people were tried and convicted of intellectual property right (IPR) infringement last year, an official of China's supreme court said here on Tuesday.

A total of 4,322 criminals involved in 2,684 cases concerning IPR infringement, rising 23 percent and 18 percent year-on-year respectively, have been fined or sentenced to imprisonment of up to seven years, according to Xiong Xuanguo, vice president of the Supreme People's Court (SPC). Xiong revealed the numbers at an international workshop on IPR protection here. He said that China attaches increasing

importance to IPR. "People's courts have tried more cases of IPR infringement, and the supreme court has also made or modified over 20 legal explanations concerning IPR protection," he said.

He added that the SPC is now considering amending the Patent Law and the Trademark Law, and is setting agendas to draft laws and regulations on protection of commercial secrets and folk art and literature.

China in recent years has launched a series of campaigns against crimes related to the infringement of copyrights, trademarks and patent rights.

Xinhua



Police stand guard as supporters of former South African Deputy President Jacob Zuma demonstrate outside the Supreme Court in Johannesburg, South Africa. Thieves dressed as policemen talked their way past guards at Johannesburg's High Court, then locked them in a bathroom and stole highly sensitive documents, a police spokeswoman said on Tuesday.—INTERNET

17 killed in bus-train collision in Bangladesh

DHAKA, 16 April — At least 17 people were killed and 21 others were injured in a collision between a express train and a passenger bus early Wednesday morning in Bangladesh's Tangail district, about 80 km northwest of capital Dhaka, according to an official. Deputy Commissioner of Tangail Akhter Ali Sarker, chief executive of the district, confirmed to *Xinhua* on the phone at the scene that 17 persons were killed in the accident.

He said that the

accident occurred at a level-crossing of railway, maybe the gateman was sleeping for which he did not block the level-crossing. The bus was hit by the train at about 03:10 a.m. local time on Wednesday morning.

Sarker said four critically wounded passengers have been sent to hospitals in the capital and others are getting treatment in different hospitals and clinics in Tangail. He also said that police and Army are working at the scene and the road is now clear for movement of trains and vehicles.—MNA/Xinhua



China's ice-breaker Xuelong, or Snow Dragon, moors to its berth at the pier after it arrives in Shanghai, east China, on 15 April 2008.—XINHUA

● **For ratification of Constitution**
Let's go to polling booth to cast "Yes" vote.

● **Towards the new nation**
Will ratify Constitution.

Commission for Holding Referendum meets with sub-commissions at different levels in Sagaing, Magway, Bago, Bago (West), Ayeyawady Divisions



Red Cross members will assist the aged to cast vote.—MNA



An official demonstrates voting process in Magway. —MNA

NAY PYI TAW, 16 April—The ceremonies to hold meetings between the Commission for Holding Referendum and members of the sub-commissions in Sagaing, Magway, Bago, Bago (West) and Ayeyawady Divisions, District, Township and Ward/village-tract sub-commissions took place at respective states and divisions on 10 April.

At the city hall in Monywa, the commission held a meeting with Sagaing Division, District, Township, Ward and Village-tract sub-commissions. Commission member U Tun Tun Oo delivered an address. It was also attended by Commission members Dr Manug Htoo and U Shi Thee, the Chairman of Sagaing Division Sub-commission and members of sub-commissions of Districts, Townships, wards and village-tracts, and those in-charge and members of polling stations.

In his address, Commission member U Tun Tun Oo said that all the sub-commissions are to carry out their tasks on schedule in line with the prescribed law, rules and work guidelines, and it is necessary to supervise the tasks at different levels.

Chairman of the Sagaing Division Sub-commission U Win Kyi reported on preparations for voting, arrangements for opening of polling stations at regiments and units, factories and workshops and convenience of voters.



A voting demonstration in progress in Bago. —MNA

The members of the Commission for Holding Referendum inspected the voting demonstration at No 3 Basic Education High School in Sulegon Ward of Monywa.

A similar ceremony was held at the city hall in Magway, with an address by Member of the Commission for Holding Referendum Dr Aung Hsan Win.

Chairman of Magway Division Sub-commission U Myint Thein reported on seeking approval for the draft constitution and matters related to the Referendum Law and Rules and replied to the questions raised by members of the District, Township, Ward and Village-tract Sub-commissions. Next, Commission member Dr Aung Hsan Win and party viewed the sample polling station and the polling demonstration.

At Khabaung Hall in Toungoo, the Commission members met with members of Bago Division, District, Township, Ward and Village-tract Sub-commissions. Commission member U Chit Maung gave a speech.

Chairman of Bago Division Sub-commission U Pe Thein reported on progress in collection of eligible voters and replied to the queries raised by those present. Commission member U Chit Maung and U Tun Yin and party viewed the polling demonstration and functions of the polling station.

Likewise, Commission member U Chit Hla gave a speech at the meeting with members of Bago Division (West), District, Township, Ward and Village-tract Sub-commissions at Khittaya Yadana City Hall in Pyay.

Chairman of Bago Division (West) Sub-commission U Aung Win Oo reported on work progress for the referendum. U Chit Hla and party inspected the polling demonstration.

A similar meeting was held at the city hall in Patheingyi. Commission member U San Lwin delivered an address. Chairman of Ayeyawady Division Sub-commission U Kyaw San reported on preparations for holding the referendum and replied to the queries

raised by those present. The meeting ended with the concluding remarks by Commission member U San Lwin.

Commission members U San Lwin and U Tin Hsan and party viewed the polling demonstration at No 20 BEPS in Ward 4 of Patheingyi.

Since the second week of March 2008, over 465,000 copies of the five books — 'State Constitution Draft (2008)', 'Referendum Law', 'Referendum Rules', 'Manual for Referendum Holding Commission Polling Station Heads', and 'Work Guideline for Ward/Village-tract Sub-commissions' — have been distributed to related organizations.

The book 'State Constitution (Draft)' can be studied at the libraries of Township Information and Public Relations Departments across the nation, the libraries under the Ministry of Culture, libraries of universities, colleges and institutes, and copies are available now at the bookstalls of News and Periodicals Enterprise, Sarpay Beikman Book Centre, and private bookshops. — MNA



People taking part in the voting demonstration in Bago. —MNA

* Now is in the New Year
Trees thus come into bud
Occasion falls in month Tagu

* Meritorious deeds are done everywhere
Making wishes for what have been done
So pleasant is all over Myanmar
Auspicious occasion of New Year

FM U Nyan Win felicitates
Syrian counterpart

NAY PYI TAW, 17 April – On the occasion of the National Day of the Syrian Arab Republic which falls on 17 April 2008, U Nyan Win, Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Union of Myanmar, has sent a message of felicitations to His Excellency Mr Walid Al-Moualem, Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Syrian Arab Republic. – MNA

POEM:

New Year Day vision

* Celebrate Thingyan Myanmar happily
Using golden sprigs and scented water
Dousing water on each other
Myanmar glory to shine

* Leave behind dirt of past
With new vision in hearts
Ushers into New Year
The whole Myanmar

* Beautify we
Our environment and life
For prevalence of peace in our land
Sing song of amity in unity
Hands joined in oneness
Marching on own way
A significant season

* Bosom friends
Perpetuation of land we love
In hearts we keep ever
Our Myanmar
A land of peace and prosperity
On this occasion of New Year
Cherish our land we
Show our ability
For national glory

Myinmu Maung Naing Moe
(Translation)

Secretary-1 attends prize presentation ceremony of Nay Pyi Taw...

(from page 1)
The opening ceremony took place at Nay Pyi Taw Golf Course, City Golf Course and Yay Pya Golf Course on 13 April morning.

Secretary-1 Lt-Gen Thiha Thura Tin Aung Myint Oo attended the opening ceremony at Nay Pyi Taw Golf Course

(B) Team, Commerce Team, Home Affairs (A) Team, Home Affairs (B) Team, PBANRDA Team, Forestry Team, Kachin State Team, Kayah State Team, Kayin State Team, Sagaing Division Team, Bago Division (East) Team, Bago Division (West) Team, Magway Division Team, Mandalay

Team, the nearest to the pin award to Zaw Win of Mon State Team, the nearest to the line award to Kyaw Kyaw of Shwemantaung Club, the fifth prize to Than Zaw of Navy Club with 74 strokes, the fourth prize to Myo Win Aung of Mandalay Division Team with 72, the third prize to Yan Myo Aye of Navy Club with 72, the second prize to Myint Shwe of Yangon

Naing of Home Affairs (A) Team with 70 strokes, the fourth prize to Min Naing of Mandalay Division Team with 69, the third prize to Hla Myo of Air Force Club with 69, the second prize to Thura Kyaw of Shan State (South) Team with 69, the first prize to Myo Min Aung of Forestry Team with 68, the second prize to Kaung Myat Golf Club with 295 strokes in total and the first prize to Forestry Team with 288.

At Nay Pyi Taw Golf Course, Vice Quartermaster-General Maj-Gen Khin Maung Tun gave the most par award to Bo Bo of Air Force Club, the best birdie award to Hla Myo of Air Force Club, the longest drive award to Myat Min Tun of Shwemantaung Club, the nearest to the pin award to Myo Win Aung of Mandalay Division Team, the



Secretary-1 Quartermaster-General Lt-Gen Thiha Thura Tin Aung Myint Oo presents first prize to Forestry Team in Nay Pyi Taw Maha Thingyan Tour Gold Cup. — MNA

and teed off the tracer ball to open the tournament.

At City Golf Course, Minister for Progress of Border Areas and National Races and Development Affairs Nay Pyi Taw Mayor Col Thein Nyunt opened the tournament.

At Yay Pya Golf Course, Commander of Nay Pyi Taw Command Maj-Gen Wai Lwin opened the tournament.

Nay Pyi Taw Mayor organized the Nay Pyi Taw Maha Thingyan Tour Gold Cup at three golf courses.

A total of 26 golf clubs and teams namely Army Team, Navy Club, Air Force Club, Nay Pyi Taw Command (A) Team, Nay Pyi Taw Command

Division Team, Mon State Team, Rakhine State Team, Yangon Division Team, Shan State (East) Team, Shan State (South) Team, Shan State (North) Team, Mandalay Shwemantaung Club and Kaung Myat Club participated in the gold cup at three golf courses.

At the prize presentation ceremony at City Golf Course, Minister for Progress of Border Areas and National Races and Development Affairs Nay Pyi Taw Mayor Col Thein Nyunt handed the most par award to Myo Win Aung of Mandalay Division Team, the most birdie award to Zaw Zaw Latt of Home Affairs (A) Team, the longest drive award to Zaw Naing of Mon State

Division Team with 71, the first prize to Zaw Zaw Latt of Home Affairs (A) Team with 69, the second prize to Mandalay Division Team with 304 strokes in total and the first prize to Navy Club with 301.

At Yay Pya Golf Course, Commander of Nay Pyi Taw Command Maj-Gen Wai Lwin presented the most par award to Aung Htoo of Kachin State Team, the best birdie award to Hla Myo of Air Force Club, the longest drive award to Nay Min of Kachin State Team, the nearest to the pin award to Bo Bo of Air Force Club, the nearest to the line award to Maj-Gen Than Htay of Army Team, the fifth prize to Soe Kyaw



Secretary-1 Quartermaster-General Lt-Gen Thiha Thura Tin Aung Myint Oo presents prize to Mandalay Division Team that stood second with 898 strokes in Nay Pyi Taw Maha Thingyan Tour Gold Cup.

MNA

nearest to the line award to Aik Si of Shan State (South), the fifth prize to Khin Maung Myint of Forestry Team with 73 strokes, the fourth prize to Zaw Zaw Latt of Home Affairs (A) Team with 73, the third prize to Min

with 297 strokes in total and the first prize to Navy Club with 297.

At the prize presentation ceremony for the best individual winners and the best teams at three golf courses, Secretary-1 Quartermaster-General

strokes, Mandalay Division Team, second with 898 strokes and Forestry Team, first with 894 strokes.

Later, the Secretary-1 presented the Maha Thingyan Tour Gold Cup to Forestry Team. — MNA

*Documentary
photos of
Nay Pyi Taw
Golf Course,
City Golf Course
&
Yay Pya
Golf Course.*



**Nay Pyi Taw
Golf Course**

**Club House
(above) and
Fairway (left) at
Excellent Nay Pyi
Taw Golf Course
in Nay Pyi Taw.**

MNA



City Golf Course

**Club House (above left), a tee (above)
and Fairway & Green at High-class City
Golf Course in Nay Pyi Taw.—MNA**



Yay Pya Golf Course

**Club House (left) and a tee and Fairway (above) at First-class
Yay Pya Golf Course in Nay Pyi Taw.— MNA**

*** To ratify Constitution
Let's go to the polling booth**

*** We remain ever united
whoever tries to divide us
And will cast “Yes” vote**



A pandal on Latha Street and Anawrahta Street packed with revellers on 16 April.— MNA

**Matters for ratification of
Constitution discussed**

NAY PYI TAW, 12 April—Secretariat member of the Union Solidarity and Development Association Minister for Industry-1 U Aung Thaung met district/township departmental personnel, the secretaries and executives of district/ township USDA, social organizations members, businessmen and townsenders at Zaygyi Dhammayon in Myingyan, Mandalay Division on 9 April. The secretariat member also met the organizers from 14 village-tracts, the members and local people at Ywathit Model Village BEHS (branch) in Myingyan Township on 10 April.

At the meetings, the secretariat member discussed matters on voting “Yes” for ratification of the Constitution.

MNA

**Yangon Mayor Maha Thingyan
Pandal closed**

YANGON, 16 April—The closing ceremony of Yangon Mayor Maha Thingyan pandal was held at the pandal here this evening. Chairman of Working Committee for Yangon Mayor Maha Thingyan Festival Joint Secretary of Yangon City Development Committee U Kyaw Soe attended the closing ceremony.

Present on the occasion were members of the Leading Committee and Work Committee, heads of department, musicians, dancers and staff of YCDC. Joint

Secretary U Kyaw Soe announced successful completion of Yangon Maha Thingyan Festival for 1369 ME and the attendees sang Mantaungyeikho song in unison. Next, officials presented prizes to entertainers.— MNA



Closing ceremony of Yangon Mayor pandal in Kyauktada Township.— MNA

**Various roads and streets in downtown
Yangon crowded with revellers on final
day of Maha Thingyan festival**

YANGON, 16 April—Today, being Atet Day, various roads and streets in downtown Yangon as well as those in the area of Yangon City Development Committee were crowded with revellers enjoying the water festival to the accompaniment of Thingyan music from morning to evening.

Likewise, those who performed meritorious deeds were doing charity and observing morality and practising meditation at monasteries and pagodas ushering in the New Year.

During the water festival, different pandals in wards and streets served revellers and townsenders with various kinds of traditional foods and

snacks including fried noodles and Shweyinaye.

In some townships of Yangon Division there were collective novitiations, ordinations, Vipassana meditation and the conveying of 28 Buddha images.

In the YCDC area there were over 300 pandals echoed with the songs of Maha Thingyan presented by vocalists and film artistes with the participation of fun-loving people and local people while other streets and lanes were busy with cars of various sizes enjoying the water festival.

The whole Yangon City was drenched with water as water-throwers on either side of streets using water pipes doused

water on revellers roaming the city.

There were entertainment programmes of vocalists and film stars at pandals on Pansodan Street, Bo Aung Kyaw Street, Bo Gyoke Aung San Street, Anawratha Street and Botataung Pagoda Road.

The YCDC in cooperation with Yangon Division Peace and Development Council and All Private Bus Lines Control Committee was supervising the water festival in order that the people can enjoy the water festival in a peaceful way, avoiding undesirable behaviour and indecent dresses as well as reducing traffic accidents.

MNA

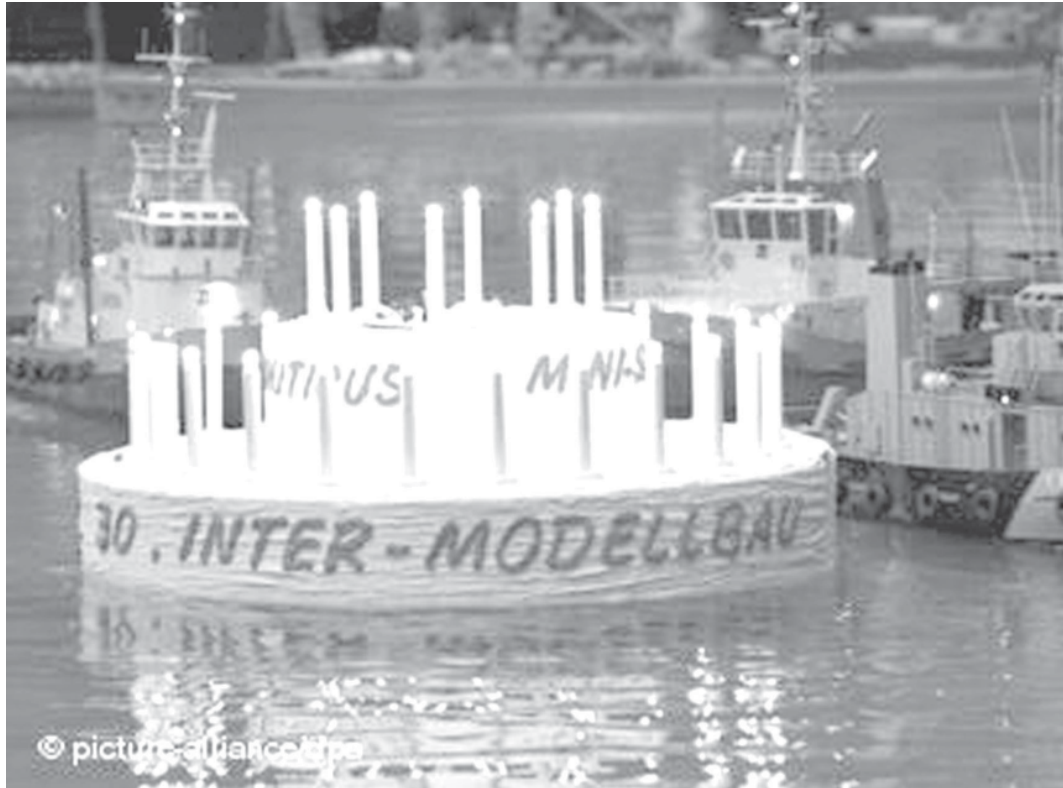


Revellers gather at the pandal on Pansodan Street in Kyauktada Township.— NLM



Mardan designs his artwork “flying dragon” in Hami, a city of west China’s Xinjiang Uygur Autonomous Region, on 15 April, 2008. The 2.8-metre-long and 1.88-metre-high “flying dragon” was designed out of 1888 ox and sheep horns. Retired Mardan spent 8 months to make this artwork to greet the coming Beijing 2008 Olympiad.

XINHUA



A floating birthday cake helps celebrate the 30th birthday of the “Intermodellbau” trade fair in the city of Dortmund in Germany on 15 April, 2008. Some 150,000 people are expected to come to the Westfalenhallen exhibition space to see the latest developments in model making and computer technology. Along with the model fair, the “hobbytronic” computer trade show is running at the same time.—INTERNET

A visitor looks at Japanese consumer electronics giant Sony Corp’s 11-inch OLED TV “XEL-1”, which is 3mm thick, displayed at the International Flat Panel Display Expo in Tokyo, on 16 April, 2008. The expo kicked off on Wednesday and runs until 18 April.—XINHUA



“Eye-catcher,” a sculpture made of Murano glass, is seen during a preview for an exhibition of glass art at Dusseldorf’s Museum Kunst Palast on 16 April. The exhibition is open to the public from 19 April to 31 August. INTERNET

Images of the Day

A small lake, about 400 square metres, has appeared adjacent to the Crescent Spring Lake in the Mingsha Mountain (Echoing Sand Mountain)-Crescent Spring Lake Scenic Zone in Dunhuang, Gansu Province. In recent years, the city took various measures to protect the lake and temple in the desert by prohibiting drilling new wells and developing water-effective agriculture.—XINHUA





Tourists enjoy their time on the boat in the Shouxihu Lake in Yangzhou, east China's Jiangsu Province, on 5 April, 2008. —XINHUA

Egypt to toughen traffic law to reduce accidents

CAIRO, 15 April — Egypt on Tuesday expounded the amendments to the traffic law to toughen punishment for offenders in a bid to end the country's traffic jam and high death toll of road accidents, the Egyptian *MENA* news agency reported.

According to the new law endorsed on Tuesday by Shura Council, the upper house of the Egyptian parliament, whoever drives a vehicle without a license or with an expired one will be punished with a mandatory prison sentence not exceeding six months and a fine between 100 Egyptian pounds (18.35 US dollars) and 500 pounds (91.74 dollars), Egyptian Assistant Interior Minister Ahmed Deyaa el-Din was quoted as saying.

The punishment in the amendments aimed to

reflect the gravity of the offence committed and the subsequent damage to both the motorist and other innocent people, el-Din said.

The new law also

includes special articles on the licenses of motorcycles, tractors and heavy vehicles for three years, as well as suspension of licenses of trailers, he added.—*MNA/Xinhua*



A wounded Israeli soldier is evacuated to a hospital in the southern city of Beersheba, on 15 April, 2008, after being injured during a military operation in the Gaza Strip. Two Israeli soldiers and four Hamas gunmen were killed in clashes in the Gaza Strip on Wednesday, Al Jazeera TV and Palestinian medical workers said. —INTERNET

At least 14 people killed in suicide car bombing in western Iraq

RAMADI, 15 April — A suicide car bomb struck a restaurant in the city of Ramadi, the capital of Anbar province, on Tuesday, killing at least 14 people and wounded 14 others, a provincial police source said.

“A suicide bomber drove an explosive-laden car into a restaurant shortly after midday in a district in western Ramadi, some 110 km west of Baghdad,” Col Muhammad Aouda of

Ramadi police told *Xinhua*. Anbar province has been seen as major stronghold for insurgent groups, including the al-

Qaida's Iraqi network and the hotbed of insurgency and sectarian violence since the US-led invasion in 2003.—*MNA/Xinhua*

A bullet train named “Hexie” or “harmony” runs out of the rolling stock factory in Tangshan of north China's Hebei Province, on 11 April, 2008. China's first domestically produced bullet train, able to reach 350 kilometres per hour, rolled off the production line in Tangshan on Friday. Three such trains would begin service on the Beijing-Tianjin route before the opening of the Olympics in August. In all, 57 such trains were expected to be in commercial operation by the end of 2009. —XINHUA



Hu Chunhua appointed acting governor of Hebei Province

SHIJIAZHUANG, 15 April — Hu Chunhua was appointed deputy governor and acting governor of China's north Hebei Province on Tuesday.

The appointment came at the 2nd session of the standing committee of the 11th Hebei Provincial People's Congress.

The resignation of the province's former gov-

ernor, Guo Gengmao, was accepted at the same session. Guo was appointed acting governor of Henan, China's most populous province.

Hu, born in April 1963 and a native of Wufeng, Hubei Province, worked in Tibet for more than 20 years.

He served as Tibet's deputy chief of the

Communist Party of China (CPC) from 2003 to 2006. He also held the post of vice chairman of the Tibet autonomous regional government from 2003 to 2005.

Hu was appointed the first secretary of the Central Committee of the Communist Youth League of China in 2006.

MNA/Xinhua

EU, Montenegro sign deal on WTO accession

BRUSSELS, 15 April — The European Union (EU) and Montenegro signed a bilateral agreement on Tuesday on the Western Balkan country's accession to the World Trade Organization (WTO).

“Today's signature is an important milestone in

Montenegro's WTO accession process,” said EU Trade Commissioner Peter Mandelson, hailing Montenegro's progress in preparing for WTO entry as “remarkable.”

The signing of the agreement caps three years of negotiations between the EU and Montenegro, making the bloc the first WTO member to conclude bilateral talks with the

country.

Montenegrin Vice Prime Minister Gordana Djurovic, who was a signatory to the deal along with David O'Sullivan, the director general of the European Commission's trade department, has vowed to intensify efforts to complete talks with other WTO members.

MNA/Xinhua

Turkey's foreign direct investment drops sharply in first two months of 2008

ANKARA, 15 April — Turkey's foreign direct investment (FDI), which had been growing since the country started negotiations with the EU in 2005, showed a sharp slowdown in the first two months of 2008, local newspaper *Today's Zaman* reported on Monday.

FDI in the January-February period of 2008 dropped to 1.6 billion US dollars from 7.4 billion dollars in the same period last year, the report quoted Central Bank data as saying. According to the data, the services sector occupies the largest share in FDI with 622 million dollars in the two-month period, while the mining and quarrying sector, which recently attracted impressive foreign investment, followed the services sector with 457 million dollars. —*MNA/Xinhua*

Pig disease spreads to one more Vietnamese locality

HANOI, 16 April — Porcine Reproductive and Respiratory Syndrome (PRRS), known as “blue ear” disease, has recently hit Vietnam’s central Thua Thien Hue province, bringing the total number of affected localities to six, according to local newspaper *Labour* on Wednesday.

By 15 April, PRRS had stricken 434 communes and wards of 31 districts and towns of the six provinces of Thanh Hoa, Ha Tinh, Nghe An, Quang Nam, Lam Dong and Thua Thien Hue in the central and central highlands regions, leading to the death and the forced

culling of over 149,000 pigs, the newspaper quoted the country’s Department of Animal Health as reporting.

Thanh Hoa alone has 337 communes and wards hit by the disease with a total of over 134,000 affected pigs.

PRRS was first recognized in the United States in the mid-1980s and is now present in most pig producing countries. The symptoms include reproductive failure, pneumonia and increased susceptibility to secondary bacterial infection.

MNA/Xinhua



Rural chefs cook a meal traditionally popular in north China’s rural areas at a restaurant in Changzhi city, north China’s Shanxi Province, on 15 April, 2008. More than 100 people shared the meal, cooked for an hour in the pot with a diameter of 1.5 meters.—XINHUA

Caltech to set up centre to study climate change

LOS ANGELES, 15 April— With the help of a 18-million-dollar donation, the California Institute of Technology (Caltech) will establish a multidiscipline centre for the study of climate change, a statement said Tuesday.

The centre will bring together in a single location faculty from chemistry, engineering, geology, environmental science and other fields, according to the statement from Caltech.

The Ronald and Maxine Linde Centre for Global Environmental Science was made possible by an endowment from private investors Ronald and Maxine Linde, said the statement.

“Ron and Maxine Linde appreciate how

critical environmental science is to the future of life on our planet and the tremendous contributions to the Caltech faculty can make to society,” said Caltech President Jean-

Lou Chameau.

The centre will be housed in what is now the Henry M Robinson Laboratory of Astrophysics.

MNA/Xinhua

China’s Tsinghua Univ to cooperate with Siemens in technology

BEIJING, 15 April — Tsinghua University signed a five-year contract here on Tuesday with the German multinational Siemens to establish a technology exchange centre.

The centre will conduct research in rail transportation, waste water treatment, energy conservation, emission reduction, intelligent transportation systems and other fields.

“Cooperation between universities and multinational companies will accelerate the speed of putting new technology into practice.

The two sides can learn from each other and achieve a win-win situation,” said Zhang Yaoyue, chief director of the higher learning department of Ministry of Education. —MNA/Xinhua



Members of main opposition United Democratic Party (UDP), wearing protective gear, place culled chickens into bags during a visit to a farm with bird flu in Gimje, about 215 km (134 miles) south of Seoul, on 15 April, 2008. South Korea said on Tuesday it was investigating four new suspected cases of bird flu, including one near Seoul, adding to a string of recent outbreaks and raising concerns the disease may be spreading across the country.—XINHUA

CPC launches pilot programme to promote scientific development

BEIJING, 16 April— The Communist Party of China (CPC) has launched a pilot programme to help its members grasp the essence of “the scientific outlook on development” and incorporate it into their daily work.

Since the programme was launched in late February, it has been tried out in 23 Party departments, provincial government organs, state-

sponsored enterprises, colleges and central financial institutions, as well as city- and county-level units.

Under the programme, relevant institutions promote the scientific outlook on development by giving lectures, carrying out inspections and encouraging participants to use the concept to analyze problems and innovate and improve

systems.

The Organization Department of the CPC Central Committee has organized a special group to fan out to eight provinces and municipalities including Hebei, Shandong, Beijing and Zhejiang to conduct inspections, aiming to improve the appraisal system for officials and raise the credibility of the selection of officials.

MNA/Xinhua

Seoul city gov’t seeks recognition of AIDS patients as disabled

SEOUL, 16 April— South Korea’s Seoul Metropolitan Government (SMG) is moving to get human immunodeficiency virus (HIV) positive people acknowledged as physically disabled so that they can receive state subsidies, tax cuts and other welfare benefits, the *Korea Times* reported on Wednesday.

According to the local news daily, a city government spokesman said on Monday that it would submit the plan to the country’s Ministry of Health, Welfare and Family Affairs this week.

The request is based on a report by a research team from Inha University and the Korean Alliance to Defeat AIDS (KADA).

MNA/Xinhua



Local residents watch Iranian artworks during the Iranian Cultural Exhibition in Urumqi, capital of northwest China’s Xinjiang Uygur Autonomous Region, on 15 April, 2008.—XINHUA

SPORTS



Argentine soccer great Diego Maradona (R) controls the ball under pressure from Bolivian presidential spokesman Alex Contreras during their friendly soccer match in La Paz on 17 March, 2008. Maradona will be the first runner to carry the Olympic torch when it arrives in Argentine capital Buenos Aires on 11 April, if he is in Argentina. —XINHUA

Romario announces retirement

RIO DE JANEIRO, 15 April — Brazil's World Cup winning striker Romario announced his retirement on Monday after collecting over 1,000 scores in his career.

"Officially I'm not playing any more. I've stopped," Romario said at a DVD launch. "My time is up. Everything has been a lot of fun."

The 42-year-old played for Brazil at the 1990 and 1994 World Cups, scoring five goals to help Brazil win the latter tournament. He capped 73 matches for his country between 1987 and 2005, scoring 56 goals.

"These last 20 years for me have been very positive," said Romario. "To be honest, I'm stopping because I don't see myself in any shape to continue playing."

Romario started and finished his career at Vasco da Gama, and also played for Flamengo and Fluminense in Brazil, Barcelona, PSV Eindhoven and Valencia, adding to spells with Al Sadd in Qatar, Miami FC in the United States and Adelaide United in Australia.

Last May, Romario scored what he claimed was his 1,000th goal but admitted that many of these were scored in friendlies, youth and testimonial games.

MNA/Xinhua



Swaziland coach urges Africa to invest in local coaches

LUSAKA, 15 April — Raoul Savoy, coach of the Swaziland national soccer team, has urged African countries to invest in local coaches, The Post reported Tuesday.

In an interview shortly before his departure from Lusaka Monday, Savoy said the idea of engaging a foreign coach was not bad but it was always important for African teams to invest in their local coaches.

Savoy, himself a foreign coach for Swaziland on a two-year contract, said that there is no major difference between African and European trainers.

"Africa has to develop its own coaches. It's time to do it," he said after his team lost 3-0 to Zambia in the African Nations Championship (CHAN).

However, Savoy said the notion that foreign coaches only came to Africa to make money was wrong.—Xinhua

Tennis ace Federer takes new coach

BEIJING, 15 April — Roger Federer, stuck in a slump, said he will work with coach Jose Higuera at the Estoril Open in Portugal this week.

"I am excited as I have asked Jose Higuera, one of the most respected and accomplished coaches in the world of tennis, to join me," the top-ranked player said on his Web site Monday.

"We are going to spend the week together to see if we could make a good team." Federer begins the European clay-court season at Estoril having failed to reach a final in four

tournaments this year.

Higuera is a clay-court specialist who coached a teenage Michael Chang to the 1989 French Open title. The Spaniard reached two semifinals at Roland Garros as a player and also has coached Americans Jim Courier, Pete Sampras and Robby Ginepri.

MNA/Xinhua



No 6 seed Marion Bartoli, of France, returns a shot during her match against Casey Dellacqua, of Australia, during the second round of the Family Circle Cup tennis tournament in Charleston, SC on 15 April, 2008.—INTERNET

Kuranyi's four goals bring Schalke sweeping win



Photo shows Kevin Kuranyi celebrates goal with teammate during the match. Schalke 04 striker Kevin Kuranyi bagged four goals to bring the troubled German soccer powerhouse a 5-0 sweeping win over Energie Cottbus on Tuesday night. —XINHUA

BERLIN, 15 April — Schalke 04 striker Kevin Kuranyi bagged four goals to bring the troubled German soccer powerhouse a 5-0 sweeping win over Energie Cottbus on Tuesday night.

It was the first time that the German national team striker scored four in a Bundesliga match, and Schalke's highest win of the season.

Kuranyi has thus handed interim coaches Mike Buskens and Youri

Mulder, who replaced Mirko Slomka on Sunday, a dream debut.

It was an important win for Schalke in the race for a place in next season's Champions League, and Energie—who had won three games in a row—came back down to earth with a bang.

Schalke needed a bit of good fortune, and it came on the half-hour mark when Energie defender Vragel da Silva put Marcelo Bordon's header through his own net.

Then it was time for Kuranyi. Six minutes later he was in the right place to turn home Fabian Ernst's cross, and after 41 minutes he scored with a beautiful curler into the top corner from 18 metres.

Another defence-splitting pass from Ernst set Kuranyi up for a cool finish with 59 minutes gone, and he added a fourth with a header ten minutes from time.

Buskens and Mulder had changed the starting line-up in just one position, with Brazilian Rafinha taking Mladen Krstajic's place.

MNA/Xinhua



Tiger Woods of the US hits his tee shot on the 5th hole during the first round of the 2008 Masters golf tournament at the Augusta National Golf Club in Augusta, Georgia, on 10 April, 2008.—XINHUA

Woods undergoes knee surgery

WASHINGTON, 15 April — American golfer Tiger Woods will miss at least four weeks of the PGA Tour after undergoing surgery on his left knee on Tuesday.

"I made the decision to deal with the pain and schedule the surgery for after the Masters," said Woods, who is fresh off a second-place finish at the 2008 Masters and underwent arthroscopic surgery on left knee in Park City, Utah of the United States.

"The upside is that I have been through this process before and know how to handle it. I look forward to working through the rehabilitation process and getting back to action as quickly as I can," he said.

It's the third time Woods has had surgery on the knee. The first surgery was 14 years ago when he had a benign tumour and the second in December, 2002 where doctors performed the first arthroscopic surgery. According to his doctors, the problem on Woods' left knee could be repaired and the recovery will take four to six weeks. —MNA/Xinhua

Chinese ambassador hails China-Russia ties

Moscow, 14 April— Chinese Ambassador to Russia Liu Guchang hailed the development of China-Russia relations, speaking highly of the contribution made by the 1948 Middle School in spreading Chinese culture among the young generation. “The 1948 Middle School plays an important role in the cultural exchange between China and Russia.

It is a cradle for fostering elites who will enhance the already solid bilateral ties in the years to come,” Liu told a celebration Monday in the school, where the calligraphy works of Li Lanqing, the former Chinese vice premier, were being exhibited.

Liu appreciated the school’s efforts in spreading Chinese culture and paid tribute to the students’ performances with Chinese characteristics.

MNA/Xinhua

Twin car bombings wounds 17 people in Mosul

MOSUL, Iraq, 15 April — Two car bomb attacks, including a suicide one, coordinately targeted a US patrol and an Iraqi police patrol in the city of Mosul on Tuesday, wounding 17 people, a police source said.

A suicide car bomber struck a US patrol in Mosul and minutes later a second booby-trapped car detonated near an Iraqi police patrol which arrived at the area, the provincial police source told *Xinhua* on condition of anonymity.

The second explosion wounded 17 people, including three policemen, the source said, adding that a police vehicle and several nearby buildings were damaged by the blast.

The source could not tell whether the US patrol sustained any casualty as the troops immediately cordoned off the scene. Mosul,

the capital of Nineveh province, has long been the hot bed of insurgency and sectarian violence since the US led invasion in 2003.—MNA/ Xinhua

PNA security officer found dead in southern Gaza

GAZA, 15 April — A Palestinian National Authority (PNA) officer, served in PNA security intelligence forces of President Mahmoud Abbas, was found dead on Tuesday near a former Jewish settlement south of Gaza City.

The 35-year-old man named Sami Khatab was found dead near the former Jewish settlement of Nitzarim south of Gaza City with signs of torture all over his body, his family told the Press, adding that the body was taken for autopsy.

A Hamas police force stormed Khatab’s house on Monday in the town of Deir el-Ballah

in central Gaza Strip and arrested him, his family said. Khatab had been arrested twice by Hamas forces in the past few months.

Comments by Hamas security forces on the death of Khatab were not immediately available.

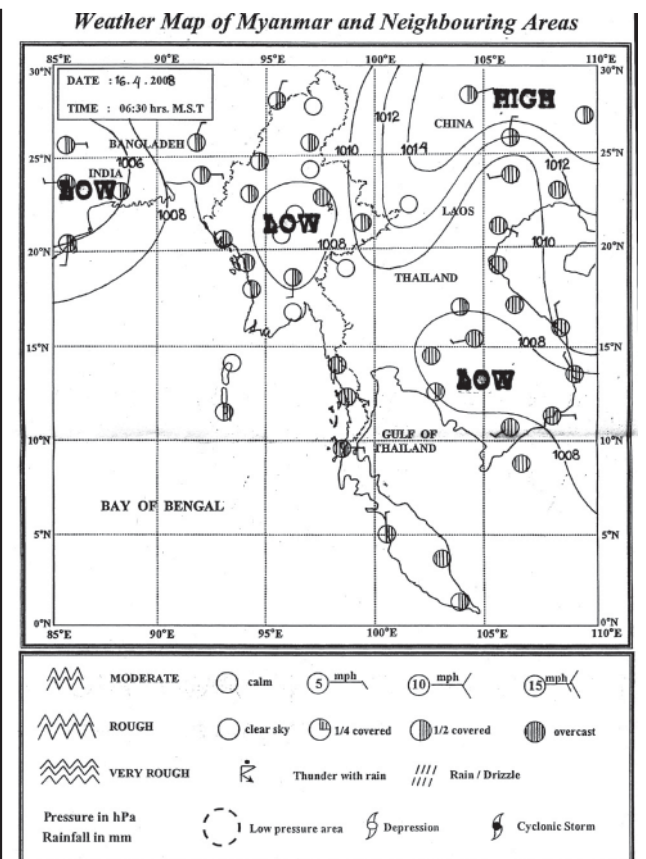
Following weeks of fighting with rival Fatah movement, Hamas movement took control of the Gaza Strip by force last June and routed President Abbas’ security forces from the enclave.

Fatah movement’s officials earlier said at least 90 Fatah activists and leaders are still imprisoned by Hamas movement in its jails in Gaza.

MNA/Xinhua



Photo shows a bird’s-eye view of the Boao Forum for Asia (BFA) International Conference Center in Boao, south China’s Hainan Province. Boao, once a nameless fishing port, has been known as a “forum town” after it became the seat of the annual conference of the Boao Forum for Asia (BFA) in 2002 and various kinds of business forums since then. —XINHUA



WEATHER

Wednesday, 16 April, 2008

Summary of observations recorded at 9:30 hours

MST: During the past 24 hours, rain or thundershowers have been isolated in Shan State, Sagaing and Mandalay Divisions, weather has been partly cloudy in the remaining States and Divisions. Day temperatures were (3°C) to (4°C) above April average temperatures in Chin and Kayin States, Sagaing, Magway, Ayeyawady and Taninthayi Divisions and about April average temperatures in the remaining States and Divisions. The significant day temperatures were Minbu, Magway and Aungmye (42°C) each, Nay Pyi Taw, Chauk and Thawaddy (41°C) each. The noteworthy amounts of rainfall recorded were Yamethin (0.31) inch, Pyinmana (0.11) inch, Lashio, Heho and Shwebo (0.08) inch each.

Maximum temperature on 15-4-2008 was 101°F. Minimum temperature on 16-4-2008 was 73°F. Relative humidity at (09:30) hours MST on 16-4-2008 was 75%. Total sunshine hours on 15-4-2008 was (8.4) hours approx.

Rainfall on 16-4-2008 was (Nil) at Mingaladon, Kaba-Aye and Central Yangon. Total rainfall since 1-1-2008 was (1.69) inches at Mingaladon, (1.85) inches at Kaba-Aye and (0.83) inch at Central Yangon. Maximum wind speed at Yangon (Kaba-Aye) was (7) mph from Southwest at (23:30) hours MST on 15-4-2008.

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

Forecast valid until evening of 17-4-2008: Likelihood of isolated rain or thundershowers in Kachin and Shan States, Sagaing, Mandalay and Taninthayi Divisions, weather will be partly cloudy in Chin, Mon and Kayah States, Yangon Division and generally fair in the remaining States and Divisions. Degree of certainty is (60%).

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

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

Forecast for Nay Pyi Taw and neighbouring area for 17-4-2008: Possibility of isolated rain or thundershowers in the afternoon or evening. Degree of certainty is (40%).

Forecast for Yangon and neighbouring area for 17-4-2008: Partly cloudy.

Forecast for Mandalay and neighbouring area for 17-4-2008: Possibility of isolated rain or thundershowers in the afternoon or evening. Degree of certainty is (40%).



Thursday, 17 April
View on today

7:00 am

1. တောင်တန်းသာသနာပြု ဆရာတော်ဘုရားကြီး၏ ပရိတ်တရားတော်

7:30 am

2. Morning news

7:40 am

3. နိုင်ငံတော်သံဃမဟာနာယက အဖွဲ့(အဖွဲ့ဝင်)ဧရာဝတီတိုင်း၊ ဟင်္သာတမြို့၊ မိုးကောင်းကျောင်းတိုက်ဆရာတော် ဘဒ္ဒန္တသုဓမ္မစာရ (အဂ္ဂမဟာပဏ္ဍိတ) ဟောကြားတော်မူအပ်သော “မင်္ဂလာတရားတော်”

7:45 am

4. ဘဒ္ဒန္တကုမာရ (အဘိဓမ္မမဟာရဋ္ဌဂုရု၊ အဘိဓမ္မအဂ္ဂမဟာသဒ္ဓမ္မဇောတိက)ဥက္ကဋ္ဌဆရာတော် နိုင်ငံတော်သံဃမဟာနာယက အဖွဲ့မဟာဝိသုတာရာမတိုက်သစ် မကျေးမြို့ထဲမှ နဝင်္ဂဥပေါသထသီလခံယူဆောက်တည်ခြင်း

4:00 pm

1. သံဃာတော်အပါး(၅၀၀၀) ကချီမြင့်သောပရိတ်တရားတော်

6:00 pm

2. Evening news

6:30 pm

3. Weather report

7:30 pm

4. “စိတ်အားထက်သန်ဆန္ဒအမှန်”

8:00 pm

5. News
6. International news
7. Weather report
8. “ခက်အောင်လုပ်နေသူများ”
9. ဇေယျတုသဗ္ဗမင်္ဂလ (ဆရာကြီးဦးသုခ)

Let us all

- * who are equipped with ardent patriotism,
- * who cherish genuine independence,
- * who aspire perpetuation of sovereignty,
- * who loathe foreign interference and manipulation, and
- * who oppose puppet government with strings of colonialists,

VOTE “YES” for ratification of the Constitution.

- **Charity, precepts, meditation**
Myanmar people’s fine traditions.
- **Meritorious deeds done more than ever.**
On the Day of Myanmar New Year.

- **Democracy cannot be**
achieved by anarchism or
violence, but by Constitution.

- **Let’s approve Constitution to**
shape our future by ourselves.

**Nay Pyi Taw Pyinmana, Nay Pyi Taw Tatkon, Nay Pyi Taw
Lewe teeming with merry makers on Thingyan Atet Day**

NAY PYI TAW, 16 April—Myanmar people participate in the Thingyan Festival on a grand scale in the Myanmar month of Tagu every year. On the Atet Day or the last day (16 April) of Thingyan, many people were seen everywhere, enjoying themselves by dousing water on one another happily and staying somewhere for rest and recreation.

Bogyoke Street and other streets in Nay Pyi Taw Pyinmana were thronged with Thingyan revelers enjoying themselves at Thingyan pandals where Thingyan dances and songs were presented to the audience.



Merry-makers visit Nay Pyi Taw Zoological Garden. — MNA

The Thingyan pandals in Nay Pyi Taw Lewe and Nay Pyi Taw Tatkon were packed with merry makers. Similarly, the Hlaykhwintaung Pagoda

and Hlaykhwintaung bathing beach in Kyeetaungkan village-tract, Nay Pyi Taw Pyinmana, were crowded with pilgrims and those dousing water on one an-

other and cooling themselves for relaxation.

Likewise, Nga Laik Kantha Gardens on the beach of Nga Laik Dam near Kyweshin vil-

lage, seven miles from Nay Pyi Taw, was thronged with people cooling themselves and throwing water at one another, and riding water-slide in the bathing beach,

and having meals and snacks in the restaurants.

There were many visitors at the Nay Pyi Taw Zoological Garden.

MNA

- * **Let’s get democracy**
By voting at polling booth

- * **For flourishing of democracy**
Ratify Constitution