

Ariyasaccana dassanam, to discern the noble-truths; this is the way to auspiciousness

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Friday, 18 April, 2008

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

Senior General Than Shwe and wife Daw Kyaing Kyaing attend ceremony to donate provisions to monasteries in PyinOoLwin Township

NAY PYI TAW, 17 April – Chairman of the State Peace and Development Council Commander-in-Chief of Defence Services Senior General Than Shwe and wife Daw Kyaing Kyaing attended the ceremony to donate rice, edible oil and alms to monasteries in PyinOoLwin Township of Mandalay Division at Gandakuti Building of Maha Arnthtoo Kantha Hsutaungpyae Pagoda in

the township this morning.

Also present on the occasion were members of the Sangha from monasteries in PyinOoLwin Township, SPDC member General Thura Shwe Mann, Secretary-1 Lt-Gen Thiha Thura

Tin Aung Myint Oo, SPDC members Lt-Gen Maung Bo, Lt-Gen Ye Myint, Lt-Gen Aung Htwe and Lt-Gen Tin Aye, Commander-in-Chief (Navy) Vice-Admiral Soe Thein, Commander-in-Chief (Air) (See page 8)

Senior General Than Shwe, wife Daw Kyaing Kyaing and the congregation receive Nine Precepts from a Sayadaw at the ceremony to donate provisions to monasteries in PyinOoLwin Township.

MNA



Four political objectives

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

Four economic objectives

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

Four social objectives

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

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

PERSPECTIVES

Friday, 18 April, 2008

Care for children during period of transition from one season to another

Now is in summer, and the temperature is going up. High temperature has adverse effects on the health of human beings to an extent. In particular, high temperature in summer is harmful to the health of children. So, parents have to take care of their kids in summer.

When it gets warmer, people sweat heavily and lose too much water from their bodies and face dehydration. If so, they can be feeble, feel dizzy, get high body temperature and unconscious due to excessive loss of sweat. Based on the size of sufferings resulting from high temperature, a patient should partake rehydration salt diluted in water.

In the hot season, diarrhea, and loss of consciousness due to high body temperature are common to children. In such situation, a child can lose much water from its body, having loose bowels and vomiting simultaneously. If so, it is required to feed the child rehydration salt diluted in water.

When a child is sick, his body temperature may get higher. So, the child should be sponged before he is sent to a hospital or clinic. If a fan is switched on in a room without ventilation when it is hot, the child can suffer the high temperature. When a child suffers diarrhea and is sick with high body temperature, he should be sent to the nearest hospital or clinic as soon as possible.

Health and fitness deserve the attention of everyone. So, the entire people should take care of themselves by following the instructions on health educative talks in order to keep themselves fit.



Members of the Sangha recite parittas at UMFCCI Office Tower.—UMFCCI

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

Pagodas packed with pilgrims on Myanmar New Year Day

YANGON, 17 April — Pilgrims performed meritorious deeds at famous pagodas such as Shwedagon, Botahtaung, Sule, Kaba Aye, Tooth Relic, Mahawizaya, Lawkachantha Abhayalabamuni, Ngahtatgyi and Chaukhtatgyi pagodas on Myanmar New Year day.

Meritorious deeds were performed in the wards and townships across Yangon. Members of the Sangha went round the respective townships by car reciting Paritta. No 41 bus line provided free transport service for the passengers today.

Myanmar New Year Day ceremony in conjunction with the releasing of life such as fish, poultry and cattle was held at Shwedagon Pagoda. Next, members of the Sangha recited Paritta and wellwishers donated alms to them. Pali University Nyaungdon Kyaungtaik Presiding Sayadaw preached a sermon and the congregation shared merits gained.

Afterwards, members of pagoda board of trustees and religious associations performed meritorious



Shwedagon Pagoda packed with pilgrims and devotees on Myanmar New Year Day. —NLM

deeds by setting animals free. The Shwedagon pagoda was packed with pilgrims performing meritorious deeds.

Similarly, Sule, Botahtaung, Kaba Aye, Tooth Relic, Lawkachantha Abhayalabamuni, Shwe Phone Pwint,

Koehtatgyi and Kyaikwaing were packed with pilgrims doing meritorious deeds. MNA

Taunggyi Maha Thingyan Festival concludes

YANGON, 17 April — A ceremony to conclude the Taunggyi Maha Thingyan Festival for 1369 ME was held in conjunction with a prize presentation ceremony at Central Pandal at the corner of Bogyoke and Merchant Streets in Taunggyi yesterday, attended by Chairman of Shan State Peace and Development Council Commander of Eastern Command Maj-Gen Thaung Aye and wife, the

deputy commander, heads of departments and their wives, State/District/Township level departmental personnel and their wives, members of the patron of judges, members of Yein troupes, decorated floats and local people.

The commander and wife, the deputy commander and wife, officials presented prizes to winners and entertainers. The commander also presented first prize to

Loilem Maungme decorated float, second prize to Nweyokhlwa decorated float and third prize to Myitpha Zawgyi decorated float. Next, the commander

delivered an address and enjoyed the entertainment of Yein troupes. The ceremony came to an end by singing “Mantaung Yeiknyo Mya Nandar” song in unison. — MNA

Take Fire Preventive Measures

Clinton, Obama clash in debate as vote showdown looms



Democratic presidential candidates Senator Hillary Clinton (D-NY) and Senator Barack Obama (D-IL) stand at their podiums prior to the Democratic Presidential Debate at the National Constitution Centre in Philadelphia, on 16 April, 2008.—INTERNET

PHILADELPHIA, —17 April—Hillary Clinton clashed with Democratic foe Barack Obama in a pivotal debate Wednesday as daunting poll data clouded her comeback hopes, six days ahead of their next White House nominating showdown. Obama immediately

attempted to defuse a controversy over his comment last week that some small-town Americans were “bitter” and so turned to God and guns, which prompted Clinton to brand his rhetoric “elitist.” “What I have been struck by is frustration,”

Obama said in the rivals’ first face-to-face debate for seven weeks, following weeks of fearsome long-distance sniping between their campaigns. “People are frustrated, not only with jobs moving, incomes being flat, and health care too expensive. “But also that special interests have come to dominate Washington. And they don’t feel like they’re being listened to.” Clinton paraphrased the opening lines of the US Constitution, which was signed metres away from their debate venue in Philadelphia. “I believe in all my heart that we the people can have the future our children and grandchildren so richly deserve,” said the New York senator.—Internet

AL calls on Israel to release Palestinian detainees

CAIRO, 16 April—The Arab League (AL) on Wednesday called for the release of all Palestinian and Arab detainees held in Israeli jails to achieve just, lasting and comprehensive peace in the Middle East. The Cairo-based pan-Arab body made the remarks in a statement on the occasion of the Palestinian Prisoners Day which falls on Thursday, calling on all international organizations concerned with human rights to move

quickly to support the release of Palestinian and Arab detainees in Israeli jails. It condemned Israel’s continuous violations and inhuman practices against the Palestinian and Arab detainees, as well as its bids to wriggle out of responsibilities toward human rights and the Geneva Conventions. Some 360 Palestinian children and 1,400 administrative detainees were held without trial in Israeli jails, according to

the statement 17 April has been set as the Palestinian Prisoners Day since the first prisoners swap on 17 April, 1974. MNA/Xinhua

Local people in Gaza inspect the damaged building bombed by Israeli airstrikes on 16 April. Eighteen Palestinians and three Israeli soldiers were killed on Wednesday in a daylong of mutual Israeli and Palestinian attacks in several Gaza Strip areas. XINHUA

Israeli troops kill teenager in West Bank

JENIN, 17 April— Israeli troops killed a Palestinian teenager on Thursday during a raid into the occupied West Bank, local residents and Palestinian security officials said. The officials said the 16-year-old boy was shot by Israeli troops during an exchange of fire, as they surrounded a house where Islamic Jihad militants were held up in the Kabatiya refugee camp near the city of Jenin. An Israeli army spokeswoman said she was checking the report. Israeli forces frequently raid West Bank towns in search of militants suspected of involvement in attacks against the Jewish state.—MNA/Reuters

China lodges formal complaint against CNN

BEIJING, 17 April — China has lodged a formal complaint against US television network CNN for what it called a vicious attack by one of its commentators who labelled the Chinese as “goons” and their products as “junk”. In a statement late on Wednesday, Foreign Ministry spokesman Liu Jianchao condemned the comments by Jack Cafferty on CNN’s The Situation Room programme and demanded the network apologise. “Those in the field of journalism should abide by their morals. They don’t have the privilege to rail against or slander other people or other governments,” Liu said in the statement posted on the ministry’s website (www.fmprc.gov.cn). CNN has already said

it did not mean to cause offence with Cafferty’s remarks and clarified that the commentator was offering his opinion of the Chinese government, not the country’s people, but the Foreign Ministry said that was not good enough. CNN’s motive was to “mislead public opinion” and “deceive the Chinese people”, Liu said. MNA/Xinhua



Zimbabweans living in South Africa protest outside the Zimbabwean Embassy in Pretoria over election result delays. Police in Zimbabwe cracked down on opposition supporters as a general strike fizzled out on Wednesday, while doctors said they had treated more than 150 victims of post-election political violence.—INTERNET

Fire destroys over 30 houses in Phnom Penh

PHNOM PENH, 16 April— Thirty-three houses were destroyed Wednesday during a fire in southwestern Phnom Penh, local police said. The fire broke out at about 1:00 pm local time (0600 GMT) in Meanchey district, an official said on condition of anonymity. No casualties were found in the fire, he said, adding that the cause of the fire was still under investigation. The fire raised the total number of fires in the Cambodian capital for the first half of April to six, including a devastating blaze which broke out last Friday in Russei Ke district that left hundreds of houses burned and more than 1,000 homeless. MNA/Xinhua

42 people injured in highway accident in Portugal

LISBON, 16 April — At least 42 people were injured Wednesday morning after two buses crashed on a highway near the Portuguese city of Coimbra. Most of those injured have already been released from hospital, an official source said. Coimbra’s Traffic Brigade reported that the buses collided on a stretch of the 111 National Highway connecting Coimbra with the coastal town of Figueira da Foz. The victims were transferred to Coimbra University hospitals. One woman suffered spinal injuries and may be hospitalized for one or two days. The rest of the victims suffered slight injuries, including back, neck, arm and knee injuries. MNA/Xinhua





A Turkish businessman talks to visitors during the 103rd China Import and Export Fair in Guangzhou, capital of south China’s Guangdong Province, on 15 April, 2008. —XINHUA

Crane barge arrives in Hong Kong to help salvage shipwreck

HONG KONG, 16 April—A heavy-lift crane barge arrived in Hong Kong Wednesday to help salvage the wreck of a Ukrainian tugboat that sunk in Hong Kong waters in March soon after colliding with a Chinese mainland ship.

The Marine Department of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region government said the 4000-ton “Hua Tian Long” from neighbouring Guangzhou will turn over and lift up the sunken vessel, which now lied upside-down on the seabed about 30 metres underwater.

The salvage operations will continue round-the-clock and involve salvage barges, tug boats and work boats. The operations were expected to complete by the end of April and “diving operations will be carried out from time to time,” the department said.

MNA/Xinhua



China says six-nation talks on Iran’s nuclear issue reaches “important consenses”

SHANGHAI, 16 April — A Press release from the Chinese Foreign Ministry said here Wednesday that the six-nation talks on Iran’s nuclear issue had reached an “important consensus” to formulate a plan to restart negotiations on Iran’s nuclear issue.

The involved parties all agreed to maintain close communication and consultation in an effort to continue their discussions on some unsolved issues concerning the plan, the Press release added.

ever, it did not offer any further information about what the consensus was.

At the invitation of Chinese Assistant Foreign Minister He Yafei, officials from China, United States, Russia, Britain, France, Germany and the Council of European Union gathered in Shanghai to discuss a plan to restart negotiations on Iran’s nuclear issue.

MNA/Xinhua

Injured Palestinians lay on stretchers pulled by donkey carts during a rally against Israel’s blockade on the Gaza Strip in Rafah, southern Gaza Strip. —INTERNET



Egypt releases 100 rioters of street protests

CAIRO, 16 April — Egyptian local courts on Wednesday ordered the release of 100 rioters arrested by police in the recent violent street protests in northern Egypt, the Egyptian MENA news agency reported.

The rules were given by el-Mahala criminal court, which upheld a lower court order for the release of 50 rioters, and also by el-Mahala misdemeanor court for the release of 50 others, MENA said.

There are still no less than 100 rioters being held in police custody waiting for legal action, it added.

The suspects detained in el-Mahala, some 110 km north of Cairo, were charged of protest in violation of law and preventing authorities from doing their job along with using violence.

MNA/Xinhua

Ships anchor at a harbour of Haikou, capital of southmost China’s Hainan Province, on 17 April, 2008. Tropical storm Neoguri, which formed in the South China Sea on Tuesday, strengthened into a typhoon Wednesday afternoon and is approaching the sea south of China’s Hainan island. Neoguri is the first tropical storm to hit China this year. —XINHUA

Afghan battle leaves six dead

KABUL, 16 April — Fighting between Taliban militants and police in Afghanistan’s southern Zabul province Wednesday left six persons including five insurgents and one police dead, an official said.

“The clash occurred at 10 a.m. this morning when Taliban rebels opened fire on police in Adghar area of Zabul province killing one police and wounding another. Police retaliated and killed five rebels,” Abdul Raziq the Commander of Border Police Force told Xinhua.

He also added that Abdul Manan, a Taliban local commander, is also among the dead.

Taliban militants have not made any comment. Conflicts and Taliban-related violence have left more than 400 people, mostly civilians, dead so far this year in Afghanistan. —MNA/Xinhua

Coalition air strikes kill four gunmen in Iraq’s Basra

BASRA, 16 April— Coalition air strikes hit insurgents’ positions in Iraq’s southern city of Basra early Wednesday, killing four gunmen and wounding another, a coalition spokesman said.

“A coalition aircraft conducted an air strike on a group of gunmen who were firing rocket propelled grenades on Iraqi security forces in Basra’s western neighbourhood of Haiyyania at about 1:30 am (2230 GMT on Tuesday),” Captain Chris Ford, spokesman of the Multi National Forces in Basra, told Xinhua.

The attack killed four insurgents and wounded a fifth, Ford added.

According to the spokesman, another coalition aircraft struck a vehicle in the same neighbourhood, but the casualties were unclear.—MNA/Xinhua

Four Hamas militants killed in eastern Gaza

Gaza, 16 April— Four Hamas militants were killed and five others wounded at predawn on Wednesday in clashes with Israeli soldiers near the borders between eastern Gaza and Israel, the movement’ military wing said.

Al-Qassam Brigades said in separate leaflets sent to reporters by e-mail that four of its militants were killed and five wounded in fierce armed confrontations with Israeli soldiers in Sheja’eya neighbourhood. It added that its militants fired around 57 mortar shells at the Israeli army forces that invaded the eastern part of the neighbourhood in eastern Gaza City. Palestinian residents in the neighbourhood said that several Israeli army tanks, armoured vehicles and bulldozers backed by helicopters stormed the eastern area of Sheja’eya amid intensive gunfire.—MNA/Xinhua

Brazil responds to criticism of biofuel

RIODEJANEIRO, 16 April—Brazil's President Luiz Inacio Lula da Silva Wednesday responded to critics of the country's biofuel programme who accuse the country of putting fuel before food, causing agriculture commodity prices to soar.

"Do not tell me that food is currently expensive because of bio-diesel. Food is expensive because the world was not prepared to see millions of Chinese eat, millions of Indians eat, millions of Africans eat, millions of Brazilians and

Latin Americans eat three meals a day," said the President in a speech in Brasilia.

Lula said he would never favour any bio-fuel policy that could lead to a reduction in the production of food. Brazil's bio-diesel and ethanol programmes have come in for particular criticism.

The Brazilian leader also criticized developed countries for trying to give "hints" to Brazil and other developing countries from a distance, saying "it is important to come here to

know how we live and to acknowledge the production potential that we have."

According to President Lula, there are currently 1 billion people worldwide that do not ingest the basic proteins and calories, and suggested that wealthy countries would better help poor countries by reducing agricultural subsidies.

"Poor countries could produce and sell to the European market and to the United States.

MNA/Xinhua



A worker counts Indian currency at a petrol pump in the northeastern Indian city of Siliguri in this file photo taken on 5 Feb, 2008. Crude oil for May delivery on 17 April, 2008 closed at nearly 115 dollars a barrel, the third straight day of records, on supply concerns on the New York Mercantile Exchange. —XINHUA



Lee Kun-hee (C), the chairman of the Samsung Group, one of South Korea's richest and most powerful men, appears at an office of a special prosecutor to answer questions about possible corruption at the country's largest conglomerate as reporters ask questions in Seoul on 11 April, 2008. —XINHUA

Brazilian beef import plan opposed in Indonesia

JAKARTA, 16 April—Indonesian government's plan to import beef meat from Brazil meets strong opposition from farmers and veterinarians worrying about the re-emerging of foot and mouth disease, local Press said Wednesday.

A number of major associations representing farmers, veterinarians and cow breeders have urged the government to drop the plan, arguing that Brazil is not yet fully free from foot and mouth disease.

At a Tuesday's gathering, the associations reminded that Indonesia in 1990 was declared free from the disease, but allowing beef import from Brazil may endanger the status, reported major national newspaper Kompas.

Indonesia currently buys beef meat from Australia, New Zealand, Canada and the United States.

Earlier this month, the government revealed the plan to import beef from Brazil and Uruguay to

meet domestic demands.

While import plan from Uruguay is proceeding smoothly, Indonesia must first send a team to verify if Brazil is fully free from lethal, infectious cow diseases.—MNA/Xinhua

Crude oil settles at 114.93 dollars

NEW YORK, 16 April—Crude oil for May delivery on Wednesday closed at nearly 115 dollars a barrel, the third straight day of records, on supply decline on the New York Mercantile Exchange.

Crude oil for May delivery rose to an intraday high of 115.07 dollars a barrel in late afternoon trading, before closing up 1.14 dollars, or 1 percent, at 114.93 dollars on the New York Mercantile Exchange, also a new closing record.

MNA/Xinhua



An oil platform in a file photo. Funds managed by private equity firms Candover and Alpinvest and Goldman Sachs have agreed to buy British oil services company Expro International for \$3.16 billion. —INTERNET

Economic News

China's industrial output up 16.4 pct in first quarter

BEIJING, 16 April—China's industrial production rose 16.4 percent year-on-year in the first quarter of 2008. The increase was 1.9 percentage points less than in the same period of 2007, said the National Bureau of Statistics (NBS) on Wednesday.

The economy had maintained steady, fast growth since the beginning of the year, despite the unusually severe winter weather and the spreading global credit crisis, said Li Xiaochao, spokesman of the NBS.

Economic growth slowed to 10.6 percent in the first quarter, compared with 11.7 percent in the same period of last year.—MNA/Xinhua

China's economy grows 10.6 pct in 1st quarter

BEIJING, 16 April — China's economic growth slowed down slightly to 10.6 percent in the first quarter, compared with 11.7 percent in the same period of last year, the government said Wednesday.

China maintained steady and fast growth since the beginning of the year, despite the unprecedented freak winter weather and the widespread subprime mortgage crisis, the National Bureau of Statistics spokesman Li Xiaochao said.

The world's fourth-largest economy expanded at a blistering 11.9-percent pace for all of 2007, the fifth consecutive year its annual economic growth exceeded 10 percent.

Industrial production rose 16.4 percent year-on-year in the first three months. The increase was 1.9 percentage points lower than that in the same period of 2007.—MNA/Xinhua

EU's gas supply deal with Iraq could be concluded within weeks

BRUSSELS, 16 April — The European Union hopes its negotiations with Iraq on gas supplies will conclude "very soon," European Commission President Jose Manuel Barroso said here Wednesday.

In a joint press briefing with visiting Iraqi Prime Minister Nuri al-Maliki, Barroso said the negotiations were of "regional importance" and hoped they could be concluded "in some weeks." However, he declined to reveal the contents of the negotiations.

The EU is trying to reach an outline agreement with Iraq to import gas via a planned pipeline across Turkey to central Europe, in an attempt to diversify its gas supplies following trouble with Russia on the issue in recent years.—MNA/Xinhua

Report raises concerns over chemical bisphenol A in US

BEIJING, 16 April — A chemical in some plastic food and drink packaging including baby bottles sold in US may be linked to early puberty, prostate and breast cancer, according to a preliminary US government report issued on Tuesday. Experiments on rats found precancerous tumours, urinary tract problems and early puberty when the animals were fed or injected with low doses of the plastics chemical bisphenol A, the US federal National Toxicology Programme,

part of the US National Institutes of Health, said on Tuesday. The chemical bisphenol A, also called BPA, is used in many baby bottles and the plastic lining of cans of baby formulations. It leaches out of water bottles, the lining of cans and other items made with it. The group said the studies only provide “limited evidence” of bisphenol’s developmental risks, but it stressed the possible effects on

humans “cannot be dismissed.” Environmentalists hailed the report as the first step toward reassessing a chemical they believe could cause health problems. “We’re hoping this decision will force FDA to recognize the toxicity of this chemical and make manufacturers set a safety standard that’s protective of the most vulnerable populations,” said Dr Anila Jacobs of the Environmental Working Group.—Xinhua



Environment-friendly shopping bags are seen in a supermarket in Shanghai, east China, on 16 April, 2008. Chinese retailers could be fined up to 10,000 RMB yuan (1,428 US dollars) for providing shoppers with free plastic shopping bags from 1 June, the Ministry of Commerce has announced. —XINHUA

Three killed in helicopter crash in Russia

MOSCOW, 16 April — Three people were killed and another one was injured in a helicopter crash on Wednesday in the Perm Territory in Russia’s Urals, Gazpromavia air company said. “We confirm that three people — two crewmem-

bers and a passenger — have been killed and the survivor, the other passenger, was taken to hospital,” a spokesman for Gazpromavia said. The Mi-2 helicopter with four people aboard lost contact with air traffic control earlier on

Wednesday. Its wreckage was later found some 16 kilometres south of the village of Kalino, near Perm. A spokesman for the Russian Emergency Situations Ministry said the helicopter crashed after colliding with electric power lines. Xinhua

44 killed, 12 missing in Indian bus fall

NEW DELHI, 16 April — A total of 44 died and 12 missing when an Indian transport bus carrying about 50 schoolchildren fell into a main irrigation canal in Gujarat state early Wednesday, local media reported. The accident occurred at about 6 am, 70 km from Vadodara, a district in central Gujarat. Forty-four people including 32 schoolgirls and nine schoolboys died. Searches were underway to trace the 12 other passengers still missing. Most of the children were between eight and 10 and were going to appear for an examination, which has been canceled by the state education official. Five of them were rescued and admitted to Vadodara civil hospital. Local media said soon after the accident locals recovered nine bodies. Xinhua



Defendants Stefan T (2nd R) and Nicole G (2nd L) arrive for the start of the trial on the death of their five year-old daughter Lea-Sophie at the ‘Landgericht Schwerin’ court in Schwerin on 15 April, 2008. —XINHUA

Mexican State seeks Chinese investments to boost tourism

CANCUN, Mexico, 15 April — The governor of Mexico’s central Zacatecas state Amalia Garcia Medina said on Tuesday here that she hoped to seek investments from China to promote local tourism. Garcia expressed the wish at the ongoing Latin America World Economic Forum, held in Cancun in the southeastern state of Quintana Roo.

More than 500 participants, including heads of states, entrepreneurs and social leaders, attended the forum. Mexico is fully aware of China’s economic importance in Latin America and admires its huge economic growth, Garcia said. There are many areas in which Mexico can cooperate with China, she said, including manufacturing, tourism and exploitation of natural resources.

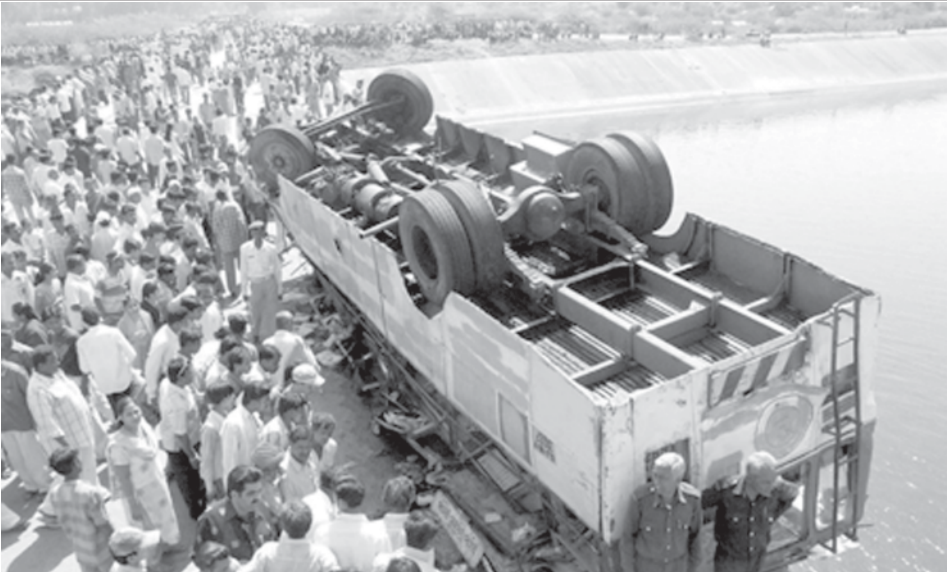
Garcia told Xinhua that she hoped investments from China would help create more job opportunities for local residents. Zacatecas is one of the states in Mexico from where large numbers of people emigrate to the United States every year to seek jobs.

Wang Jinzhen, vice president of China’s International Trade Promotion Committee said at the forum that China will increase its investments in Latin America as its ties with the region are strengthened. The forum will conclude on Wednesday. Xinhua

All items from Xinhua News Agency

Chinese Defence Minister meets Malaysian Chief of Air Force

BEIJING, 15 April — Chinese Defence Minister Liang Guanglie met here Tuesday with Chief of the Air Force of Malaysia Tan Sri Dato’ Sri Azizan Bin Ariffin. Liang, also state councilor, said China and Malaysia enjoy all-round development of bilateral relation in recent years, with mutual trust in politics and important partnership in economy. Highlighting sound growth of relations between the two armed forces, Liang believed that Azizan’s visit will help advance the relations between the two nations and the two militaries, especially the two air forces. Liang said China applauded Malaysia’s adherence to one-China policy.—Xinhua



People watch an overturned bus after it veered off a bridge and plunged into a canal at Bodeli village, about 170 km (106 miles) south of the western Indian city of Ahmedabad on 16 April, 2008. The incident occurred on Wednesday, killing at least 44 school children and three adults, police said. XINHUA

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

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

Let's cast 'yes' vote

Maung De Doh

Bagyi Phyo: Hi, Maung De Doh. Some say that the people should not cast vote in the referendum to be held on May 10, and some say that the people should cast 'no' vote if they participate in the referendum. What is your opinion about that?

Maung De Doh: Well, I wonder whether you will cast vote or not.

Bagyi Phyo: Oh, it depends on what we will benefit from if we cast vote and what sorts of benefits we will miss if we don't. What vote I will cast—"yes" vote or 'no' vote also depends on that point. I am just one of the ordinary people. So, I don't know much about that. I think I will stay at home if it is all right although I don't cast vote.

Maung De Doh: Right, Bagyi Phyo. I think no one will trouble themselves going to polling booth to cast vote if so. But, the people should think over as to whether they will cast vote or not. If the majority of the people cast 'yes' vote in the referendum, our country will have a constitution. If the majority of the people cast 'no' vote or do not cast vote, the constitution cannot be approved.

Bagyi Phyo: What do we have to do with the constitution? What is the use of the constitution? It is a long time the nation has been without a constitution. Whether there is a constitution or not, we can have our meals only if we earn money.

Maung De Doh: That is what I want to say. If there is a constitution, ordinary people like you and me can enjoy a lot of rights.

Bagyi Phyo: Come on, what rights will we enjoy? I am interested in that point if it concerns rights. You mean like in Pyidawtha period, each person was about to get an apartment, a car and monthly assistance of 800 kyats? Eight hundred kyats is no longer all right at present. It will be all right if the amount is 80,000 kyats instead of 800 kyats.

Maung De Doh: Ah, Bagyi Phyo, relying on the government for all the needs is outdated. This age, the people have to rely on themselves if they want to have a prosperous future. The rights we will enjoy are that we can do our businesses freely in the framework of law. The forthcoming constitution will guarantee that an individual, a group or an organization cannot monopolize the economy. There is no need to worry that our enterprises will be

nationalized or the currency in circulation will be demonetized. Farmers can enjoy reasonable prices for their crops. Necessary laws will be prescribed to ensure the rights of farmers and workers. Forced labour is prohibited, and the constitution will guarantee no detriment to the life and freedom of every citizen. In addition, every citizen will enjoy freedom of expression and peaceful procession, the right to organize, and the right to profess religions of their choice. The constitution will guarantee no discrimination against or in favour of particular people regardless of sex, race, religion, birth place, position, status and wealth. The winning government will take measures as far as it can to reduce the unemployment rate and care of mothers and children, orphans, the children of fallen servicemen, elderly persons and the disabled. It will provide assistance for outstanding students irrespective of race and religion. Mainly, the winning government will ensure that every citizen can enjoy all the rights they should do, and all rights equally.

Bagyi Phyo: Great, but to whom will we have to tell so that we can get the right you said? We farmers don't have access to officials and we have never appeared in a court.

Maung De Doh: That is the most important point. If you want to express your wishes, you can elect a reliable representative to have your wishes fulfilled. In this regard, you will have to cast vote in the election to elect a representative, but only after the draft constitution is approved.

Bagyi Phyo: The representative you said is like a member of Parliament in the Parliamentary Period. I have much knowledge about a Parliament member. He talked big while canvassing for votes. He said as if our region would be developed in a short time after he won in the election. And he said he would help our village get electricity. In practice, till he was removed, our village did not get electricity. We have to enjoy power supply projects like river-water pumping projects only when we have entered this era.

Maung De Doh: Democracy is like that Bagyi Phyo. It is just like a video, it may not be good simply because it stars famous actors and actresses. Although a candidate is from a famous party, we cannot believe that he will serve the



Demonstration of casting vote given in Loikaw, Kayah State.—MNA

interests of his own region. It is like a cattle broker who needs to examine all parts of a cow when it is traded. If we can make a thorough choice, we can have a reliable candidate.

Bagyi Phyo: Actually, a politician is a one who usually makes use of words or speech.

Maung De Doh: This is their job, Bagyi. A parliament is a place for speaking. The duties of hluttaw (parliament) representatives are to present the wishes and requirements of the public in the interests of the public voters, to protect the rights of the public voters and to try to develop their own constituencies.

Bagyi Phyo: Does it work by words?

Maung De Doh: No, absolutely not, Bagyi Phyo. When there is an issue to be solved, a draft bill has to be submitted first and then it is to be approved by vote. And the government is to address the issue in accord with that law. If farmers like Bagyi Phyo demand increased agricultural loans, for example, hluttaw representatives will have to submit a bill on increase of agricultural loans and put forward the bill to the parliament. Those supporting and opposing will discuss the issue and argue. The government is to call for those responsible for enquiry. Eventually, negotiation is made and the bill will be approved by vote. If the bill gets majority of the vote, Bagyi Phyo will enjoy increased agricultural loans.

Bagyi Phyo: In that case, if there is no constitution, there is no parliament. If there is no parliament, we have no platform to make our voice heard.

Maung De Doh: That's right, Bagyi. Hluttaw representatives have the right to speak freely in line with the rules and regulations of the parliament without having any fear. They can also strongly criticize the ruling government. There

is no cause to fear for them to be taken action for that. The law protects them. But they have no right to speak abuse language and quarrel each other. A hluttaw representative must have his dignity. The people can listen to the discussions of the representatives in the parliament in accord with the law.

Bagyi Phyo: Oh, it's great. But there is one more thing I want to know. Some politicians say that in the time of the military government, they have no right to speak freely; they don't have any rights, they have to do what they are asked forcibly. However, they are shouting for 'no' votes for the constitution that has vested them with the rights they need. Why?

Maung De Doh: When the government says 'white', they (politicians) will say 'black'. Although they are shouting that they don't want the military government, they are praying in their minds for the military government to live long.

Bagyi Phyo: Don't make me confused, please.

Maung De Doh: It's like this, Bagyi Phyo. Such politicians are gaining benefits by shouting that they want no military government. To shout so, they are given millions of dollars covertly or overtly. If the military government no longer exists as the constitution comes into force, they don't need to shout and will lose their profits. This is why, they are demanding to cast 'no' votes for the constitution in order that it is not to be approved and the military government's rule is to be prolonged.

Bagyi Phyo: Oh, I see. It makes me clear. As far as I am concerned, I will surely give 'yes' vote to the constitution so that the people have the rights they need and the right to speak freely and to earn their living in a peaceful way.

(Translation:MS+ST)

Senior General Than Shwe...

(from page 1)
Lt-Gen Myat Hein, Maj-Gen Khin Zaw and Adjutant-General Maj-Gen Thura Myint Aung of the Ministry of Defence, Chairman of Mandalay Division PDC Commander of Central Command Brig-Gen Tin Ngwe, ministers, senior military officers, departmental heads of the SPDC Office and ministries, officials, nuns, members of the Union Solidarity and Development Association, social and religious organizations and guests.
Senior General Than Shwe and wife Daw Kyaing Kyaing offered 'soon', fruit, lights, flowers and water and paid homage to the Buddha image.

The ceremony was opened with three-time recitation of *Namo Tassa*.
Member of the State

Nine Precepts. Members of the Sangha recited Parittas. The Senior General and wife donated rice, edible oil and alms to the Sayadaw.
SPDC member General Thura Shwe Mann, Secretary-1 Lt-Gen Thiha Thura Tin Aung Myint Oo, SPDC members, senior military officers, the ministers and officials offered provisions to members of the Sangha. The family of the Senior General presented rice, edible oil, robes and alms to nuns through Presiding Nun Maha Ganthavacaka Pandita Saddhamma Jotikadhaja Daw Pavarasingi of Zayan Nunnery.
Member of Mandalay Division Sangha Nayaka Committee Pyin Oo Lwin Kan U Monastery Sayadaw Bhaddanta Nanissara deliv-



Senior General Than Shwe and wife Daw Kyaing Kyaing donate rice, edible oil and alms to a Sayadaw.— MNA



Senior General Than Shwe releases pigeons, doves, owls and sparrows at National Kandawgyi Gardens. —MNA

Central Working Committee of the Sangha Pyin Oo Lwin Ponnyakari Khele Monastery Sayadaw Agga Maha Saddhamma Jotikadhaja Bhaddanta Sumana administered the

ered a sermon, followed by sharing of merits.
The ceremony ended with three-time recitation of Buddha Sasanam Ciram Titthatu. Senior General Than Shwe, wife Daw

Kyaing Kyaing and party offered 'soon' to members of the Sangha and nuns at Gandakuti Building.
Afterwards, they released doves, pigeons, owls, sparrows and fish at Na-



Senior General Than Shwe and wife Daw Kyaing Kyaing release fish at National Kandawgyi Gardens. —MNA

tional Kandawgyi Gardens. Likewise, members of USDA, Women's Affairs Organization, Maternal and Child Welfare Association, Red Cross

Society and Auxiliary Fire Brigades released fish into Kandawgyi Lake.
The Senior General and party viewed beautifying tasks at the gardens by

car. Today, being Myanmar New Year Day, the National Kandawgyi Gardens was packed with holiday-makers.
MNA



Daw Kyaing Kyaing, wife of Senior General Than Shwe, releases pigeons, doves, owls and sparrows at National Kandawgyi Gardens. —MNA



Family members of Senior General Than Shwe offer rice, edible oil and alms to nuns.— MNA

*** Let's get democracy
By voting at polling booth**

*** For flourishing of democracy
Ratify Constitution**

Commission for Holding Referendum meets sub-commissions in Shan State (North), Rakhine, Kayah and Kayin States, Taninthayi Division

NAY PYI TAW, 12 April – The Commission for Holding Referendum met with members of the sub-commissions of Shan State (North), Rakhine, Kayah and Kayin States and Taninthayi Division, district, township and ward and village-tracts at the respective states and divisions on 10 and 11 April.

At the city hall in Lashio on 11 April, the Commission for Holding Referendum held a meeting with members of the Shan State (North), District, Township, Ward and Village-tract Sub-commissions. Commission member U T Khun Myat delivered an address. Chairman of Shan State (North) Sub-commission U Maung Maung Aung reported on tasks being prepared for polling station



Commission member U Maung Hla delivers an address in meeting with District/Township/Ward subcommissions in Taninthayi Division.—MNA

seeking the approval of the draft constitution and matters related to the Referendum Law and Rules, and replied to the queries raised by members of the

members of Kayah State and other different sub-commissions.

The Chairman of Kayah State Sub-commission reported on matters related

State Sub-commission U Maung Maung reported on preparations for holding the referendum.

Commission members U Saw Ba Hlaing and U Lan Zone and party inspected the polling demonstration at Hpa-an BEHS No 1.

At the hall of Myeik BEHS No 1, the Commission for Holding Referendum met with members of the sub-commissions of Taninthayi Division, District, Township, Ward and Village-tracts on 10 April. Commission member U Maung Hla delivered a speech.

Commission member U Sai Yi Kyan and Chairman of Taninthayi Division Sub-commission U Than Win explained preparations for holding the referendum and replied to the queries raised by those present. Commission member U Maung Hla gave concluding remarks. Later, they viewed the demonstration on casting votes.

Since the second week of March 2008, 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 book shops.

MNA



A voting demonstration in progress in Kayin State.—MNA

and ballot boxes.

Commission member U T Khun Myat and party viewed the polling demonstration at the hall of No 5 Basic Education Middle School in Lashio.

A similar meeting was held at the city hall in Sittway on 11 April, with an address by Commission member U Thein Shwe Maung.

Chairman of Rakhine State Sub-commission U Ye Naing Aung reported on

District, Township, Ward and Village-tract Sub-commissions.

Commission members U Thein Shwe Maung and U Kyar Tun and party inspected the sample polling station and the demonstration of polling process.

At the city hall in Loikaw on 10 April, Commission member U Kyaw Din delivered an address at the meeting with

to the referendum and replied to the questions raised by those present.

Commission members U Kyaw Din and U Kyaw Tun and party viewed the polling demonstration at Loikaw BEHS No 1.

On 11 April, the similar meeting was held at Zwegabin Hall in Hpa-an, attended by Commission member U Saw Ba Hlaing.

Chairman of Kayin



An official demonstrates polling process in Lashio.—MNA



Pilgrims doing meritorious deeds at Phayakoesu Pagoda in Nay Pyi Taw Pyinmana on Myanmar New Year Day. (News on page 16)—MNA

YCDC holds ceremony to receive Parittas and pour Paritta water

YANGON, 17 April — With the purpose of clearing all forms of danger to the public, Yangon City Development Committee held a ceremony to receive Parittas and pour Paritta water at the pandal of Yeku waterwork in Mayangon Township this evening.

Present on the occasion were Vice-

Chairman Sayadaws Mandalay Division Mahaaungmyay Township Masoeyein Kyaungtaik Presiding Sayadaw Agga Maha Pandita Bhaddanta Tajawsarabhivamsa and Yangon Division South Okkalapa Township Ngwekyaryan Pariyatti Sarthintaik Presiding Sayadaw Agga Maha Pandita Bhaddanta Revata, Members of State

Sagha Maha Nayaka Committee, members of the Sangha, YCDC Chairman Mayor Brig-Gen Aung Thein Lin and wife Daw Khin Hsan Nwe, Joint-Secretary U Kyaw Soe and members, heads of departments and their wives and staff families.

The congregation received the Five Precepts from Yangon Division South Okkalapa Township Ngwekyaryan Pariyatti Sarthintaik Presiding Sayadaw Agga Maha Pandita Bhaddanta Revata and members of the Sangha recited Parittas.

Members of the Sangha, the Mayor and party poured Paritta water into Gyobu, Hlawga and Ngamoeyeik drinking water lakes.

MNA

Minister Brig-Gen Lun Thi receives Energy Minister of Republic of Kalmykia

NAY PYI TAW, 17 April — Minister for Energy Brig-Gen Lun Thi received Energy Minister of Republic of Kalmykia of the Russian Federation Mr Chedyrov Boris and Russian Ambassador to Myanmar Dr Mikhail M Geladze and party at his office here on 8 April.

At the call, they frankly discussed matters on energy cooperation.—MNA

Maha Thingyan Gold Cup Golf Tournament held in PyinOoLwin

NAY PYI TAW, 17 April — Maha Thingyan Gold Cup Golf Tournament to mark the 50th anniversary of PyinOoLwin Golf Club took place at PyinOoLwin golf course from 13 to 15 April.

A total of over 200 contestants from 30 teams participated in Gold, Silver and Bronze level events, women's division

and men's senior division. Chairman of Mandalay Division Peace and Development Council Commander of Central Command Brig-Gen Tin Ngwe teed off the ball to open the tournament on 13 April.

At Gold level team event, PyinOoLwin Golf Club (A) clinched the Gold Cup and Mandalay Golf

Club (A) fetched second prize. At Silver level team event, Muse Golf Club stood first and Mandalay Golf Club, second. At Bronze level team event, PyinOoLwin Golf Club (A) secured first prize and PyinOoLwin Golf Club (C), second prize.

KM Golf Centre was the main sponsor of the tournament.—MNA

Cash donated to Shwedagon Pagoda

YANGON, 17 April — For renovation of the Shwedagon Pagoda, the Waynaya Thukha Yaychansin Association donated K 1 million and foreign exchanges to the pagoda board of trustees today (Myanmar New Year Day). The association has already contributed K 8.8 million to the Shwedagon Pagoda.—MNA

Botahtaung Pagoda packed with pilgrims and devotees on Myanmar New Year Day.
(News on Page-2)



Mahasi Meditation Centre holds New Year Charity Fair

YANGON, 17 April — Hitaythi Group of Mahasi Meditation Centre organized the 41st New Year Charity Fair at the centre, here, this

morning.

After speaking on the occasion, Chairman of the Hitaythi Group U Kyaw opened the charity fair.

A total of 3,600 draw lots from 60 Padethabins worth over K 4.5 million were donated to members of the Sangha, nuns and lay persons. —MNA



A golfer taking part in Maha Thingyan Gold Cup Golf Tournament in PyinOoLwin.—MNA

Images of the Day



Sevilla show :
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



A King Penguin peers into the camera while others are seen in an enclosure at the Singapore Bird Park on 16 April, 2008, in Singapore. The Park currently houses 30 King Penguins, 15 of which were bred in the park itself. —INTERNET



Cat by the tail : A man flies his kite on the beach of Berck-sur-mer, northern France, during the 22nd International kite meeting.
INTERNET



Flower child : An Indonesian model in costume and decorated with flowers takes part in the Solo Batik Carnival in the central Java city of Solo recently. —INTERNET

Uruguayan cooks barbecue meat in an attempt to break a record for the world's largest barbecue in Montevideo, on 13 April, 2008.
INTERNET

China has more than 143,000 lawyers

BEIJING, 16 April — China now has more than 13,000 law firms with 143,000 lawyers, according to the Ministry of Justice here on Wednesday.

The number of government employed lawyers has reached 2,649, who are civil servants with lawyers’ qualification and only process cases of their

own departments.

There are also 250 companies which have their own company employed lawyers who play a similar role as the government employed lawyers.

In recent years, Chinese lawyers have handled 8.55 million litigation cases and 4.23 million non-litigation cases, and

offered legal consultation to 16,000 government agencies and 260,000 enterprises.

“We should improve lawyers’ quantity and quality, help the lawyers in the middle and west of China, participate more in the international legal actions,” said Wu Aiying, Minister of Justice.

MNA/Xinhua

Researchers find rare giant turtle in Vietnam

HANOI, 17 April—Biologists have identified a soft-shell giant turtle of cultural significance in northern Vietnam that was believed to be extinct in the wild, researchers said on Thursday.

After three years of searching, Asian turtle experts found, photographed and identified the turtle (Rafetus swinhoei),

the only known living such specimen, in a lake west of the capital, Hanoi.

The Cleveland Metroparks Zoo in the United States, which sponsored the research, made the announcement in a statement. “This is an incredibly important discovery because the Swinhoe’s turtle is one of the most critically

endangered species of turtle in the world,” Doug Hendrie, the Vietnam-based coordinator of the US zoo’s Asian Turtle Programme, said in the statement.

“This species has legendary status among the people of Vietnam, so this is perhaps an opportunity for the legend to live on.”

Researcher Tim

McCormack of Education for Nature-Vietnam, which was involved in the project, declined to provide the name of the lake or give other details of the turtle’s location for fear it would be hunted and sold into the wildlife trade. The zoo said that only three other specimens of the turtle are known to scientists, two at zoos in China and one in the storied Hoan Kiem Lake (The Lake of the Returned Sword) in the centre of Hanoi.

The turtles can weigh up to 136 kg (300 pounds), measure up to 0.9144 metres (3- feet) and live more than 100 years.

But researchers say they have become virtually extinct because of hunters who killed them for food, loss of nesting habitats and pollution.

MNA/Reuters

Earthquake hits Aleutian Islands

HONG KONG, 16 April — An earthquake measuring 6.5 on the Richter scale hit Aleutian Islands at 02:04 p.m. local time (604 GMT) on Wednesday, according to a bulletin released by the Hong Kong Observatory.

The epicenter was initially determined to be 52.0 degrees north latitude and 179.1 degrees east longitude, about 870 km west of Unalaska Island, Alaska of the United States.

MNA/Xinhua

Egypt confirms 50th human bird flu case

CAIRO, 16 April — Egyptian Health Ministry on Wednesday confirmed a new human bird flu case in a northern governorate, bringing the total number of the fatal disease to 50 in the most populous Arab country.

Two-year-old Mahmoud Ramadan from Sharqiya governorate, 65 km north of Cairo, was admitted to Cairo’s Abbasiya Chest Hospital on Monday after suffering from bird flu symptoms, including high emperature and respiratory problems, the ministry said in a statement.

After having been transferred on Tuesday to Manshiyat el-Bakri Hospital to continue his medical treatment, the boy is currently in stable condition, it added. Ramadan was the second human bird flu case reported in a week in Egypt. A 30-year-old woman from the Matariyah district, 10 km northeast of Cairo, died of the avian influenza on April 11.

She was Egypt’s 49th human bird flu case. Egypt detected its first H5N1 virus in dead poultry in February.

MNA/Xinhua

Australia launches richest literary prize

CANBERRA, 16 April — Australia’s richest literary prize was launched on Wednesday, with the prize worth 110,000 Australian dollars (100,000 US dollars) for fictions.

The West Australian Premier’s Literary Prize was announced in Perth, the state capital of West Australia.

The best work of fiction is confined to an author living in Australia, New Zealand or Asia.

It is also open to authors from other parts of the world whose novel is set in the region.

The Sri Lankan-born author, Nury Vittachi, one of three judges of the prize, said it was great news for the authors of the world and would rival the celebrated Man Booker or Pulitzer prizes in the quality of

competition.

Vittachi said that while the Booker and the Pulitzer were associated with the United Kingdom and the United States respectively, there was a huge gap in literary awards for the 4 billion people living in Asia and Australia.

“What these fine people have done is created something global, something massive on the scale of the Booker, on the scale of the Pulitzer. And, where is it based? It’s based here in Western Australia,” Vittachi was quoted by the Australian Associated Press.

It was an anomaly that most of the world’s literature came from the west when so much of the world’s population lived in Asia, he said.

MNA/Xinhua



The Mexican naval training ship ARM Cuauhtemoc docks at the Vasco Nunez de Balboa naval port in Panama City, Wednesday, 16 April, 2008. The Cuauhtemoc naval school ship is in Panama to cross the isthmus en route to the Caribbean Sea as a part of a training cruise.—INTERNET

Bomb hurts 3 Basque police after ETA call

MADRID, 17 April—A bomb hidden in a bag exploded outside a political party office in the Basque city of Bilbao on Thursday morning,

injuring three police officers who had already cordoned off the area following an ETA rebel warning, a police spokeswoman said.

The bomb exploded at 6 am local time, half an hour after an anonymous caller warned it had been placed and claimed the attack for Basque separatists ETA, the spokeswoman said. Two of the police officers suffered acoustic trauma from the noise made by the blast and another was injured to an unknown extent, she said.

The explosive was placed outside an office used by Spain’s governing Socialist Party in Bilbao’s La Pena neighbourhood.

MNA/Reuters

Philippines population climbs above 88 million

MANILA, 17 April — The population of the Philippines reached 88.57 million at a census in August last year, up from 76.5 million in 2000, and the country’s top economic planner said policies needed to be reviewed.

However, the government of the Roman Catholic nation is unlikely to switch to promoting artificial birth control, experts said.

The Philippines has one of the highest population growth rates in the region, with at least three babies born every minute.

The growth dilutes economic gains and the country does not produce enough food to feed its people.

“The population is increasing and it means that government has to more vigorously implement its population policy, which is responsible

parenthood and the advocacy for natural family planning,” Economic Planning Secretary Augusto Santos told Reuters on Thursday.

“I think the population commission will have to review its policies,” he added.

“We really need greater efforts. It means we have to work harder to make the economy function more properly and more smoothly.”

At least one-third of the people are poor and the number of poor is growing faster than the population.

Last month, government data showed that 28 million people, about a third of the population, were subsisting on less than \$1 per day in 2006, up 16 percent from 2003.

But Santos said artificial birth control remained a sensitive issue.

MNA/Reuters

Chemical in plastic packaging may harm baby growth



A chemical in plastic packaging such as baby bottles might be harmful to the development of children's brains and reproductive organs.—INTERNET

LOS ANGELES, 15 April — A chemical in plastic packaging such as baby bottles might be harmful to the development of children's brains and reproductive organs, a US government report said

Tuesday. There is some concern about bisphenol A, or BPA for neural and behavioral effects in fetuses, infants and children at current human exposures, said a report released by the National

Toxicology Programme, part of the US National Institutes of Health. The institute came to the conclusion after reviewing about 500 laboratory animal experiments. The chemical's effects on adults is rated as "negligible" in the report.

The report said laboratory rodents exposed to BPA levels similar to human exposure developed precancerous lesions in the prostate and mammary glands. It noted the possibility that BPA may impact human development cannot be dismissed and more research is needed.—MNA/Xinhua

Alzheimer's sets in earlier for heavy drinkers, smokers

WASHINGTON, 16 April — Heavy drinkers and smokers develop Alzheimer's disease years earlier than people who do not drink or smoke heavily, according a new study released Wednesday.

Researchers from the Mount Sinai Medical Centre in Miami, Florida, and fellows from the American Academy of Neurology have reported that the combination of heavy drinking and heavy smoking reduced the age of onset of Alzheimer's disease by six to seven years.

"So these two factors are among the most important preventable risk

factors for Alzheimer's disease," said study author Ranjan Duara in a prepared statement.

It has been projected that a delay in the onset of the disease by five years would lead to a nearly 50-percentage reduction in the total number of Alzheimer's cases. "It's possible that if we can reduce or eliminate heavy smoking and drinking, we could substantially delay the onset of Alzheimer's disease for people and reduce the number of people who have Alzheimer's at any point in time," Duara said.

The study looked at 938 people aged 60 and older who were diagnosed with

possible or probable Alzheimer's disease. The researchers gathered information from family members on drinking and smoking history and determined whether the participants had one specific variant of the APOE gene, which increases the risk of Alzheimer's disease.

People with the variant also develop Alzheimer's at an earlier age than those who do not have the gene variant.

Seven percent of the study participants had a history of heavy drinking, which was defined as more than two drinks per day.

MNA/Xinhua

Bangladesh to press for Global Food Security Compact at UNCTAD meeting

DHAKA, 16 April — Bangladesh will press for a Global Food Security Compact to expand food availability, Bangladeshi caretaker government's Foreign Adviser Iftekhar Ahmed Chowdhury told media Wednesday while sharing some views on the upcoming UNCTAD meeting.

The forthcoming United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) XII Conference will be held in Accra, Ghana, next week. Ahmed observed That the recent worldwide shortages in grain supply is significant enough for the United Nations to focus on.

On 19 April, there will be a Ministerial Conference of the Least Developed Countries (LDCs) to finalize the LDCs position in that conference. Ahmed will chair the conference.

The foreign adviser noted that among the LDCs are some most vulnerable ones as they are hit hardest by food shortages.—MNA/Xinhua



Bank employees cross a street in downtown Frankfurt, central Germany, Wednesday, 16 April, 2008, during an evacuation drill. A city spokesman says that nearly 10,000 people working in Frankfurt's financial district have been safely evacuated from six skyscrapers. The move was part of a drill to test emergency response times.—XINHUA

Multiple factors affect preemies' survival chance

BEIJING, 17 April — A new study shows at least five factors affect preemies' chance of survival besides gestational age, according *The New England Journal of Medicine* as quoted by media Thursday.

Focused on nearly 4,200 extremely premature infants, the study shows babies born between 22 and 25 weeks gestation were more likely to survive, if

—They were born at a later gestational age

—They were female

—Their mothers were given antenatal corticosteroids shortly before giving birth

—They were born single, rather than part of a multiple birth

—They had higher birth weights

Traditionally, doctors use gestational age, the number of weeks from fertilization to birth, to determine whether a preemie should receive invasive care.

"For the first time, parents and their doctors will have the best available information on which to base one of the most difficult and time-sensitive decisions they are ever likely to face," said John Langer, a co-author of the study, who works in Maryland as a statistician for the North Carolina-based Research Triangle Institute. —Internet

A new study shows at least five factors affect preemies' chance of survival besides gestational age, according *The New England Journal of Medicine* as quoted by media Thursday.

XINHUA

S Korea culls three mln birds as bird flu spreads fast

SEOUL, 17 April — South Korea said on Thursday it had culled three million farmed birds and was probing seven fresh cases of suspected bird flu, as the country grapples with its worst avian influenza outbreak in four years.

In just two weeks, South Korea has confirmed 12 cases of the deadly H5N1 strain, raising alarm as the highly virulent virus is spreading at its fastest rate since the country reported its first case in 2003.

The farm ministry said on Thursday it had seven new reports of suspected bird flu outbreaks at poultry farms in North and South Jeolla provinces, some 320 km (200 miles) south

of Seoul, where the first bird flu recurrence for a year was reported earlier this month.

The country raised the risk level for bird flu to the second highest on Wednesday and sent 200 soldiers to kill and bury birds, as an outbreak was confirmed at a farm in Pyeongtaek, just 60 km south of Seoul, bringing the disease closer to the capital.

The ministry said on Thursday its quarantine work would focus on speeding up slaughtering and investigating possible causes of the spread such as migrating birds and transport workers who have been moving around affected sites and other parts of the country.

MNA/Xinhua



SPORTS

Santos scrape through with last-minute goal

RIO DE JANEIRO, 17 April — Santos scraped into the last 16 of the Libertadores Cup by coming from behind to beat Cucuta 2-1 at home with a last-minute goal on Wednesday.

Argentina’s San Lorenzo also qualified with a 3-0 win over Venezuelan champions Caracas FC, whose goalkeeper Vicente Rosales scored an own goal and gave away another with a dreadful blunder.

Santos finished second in Group Six with 10 points, one ahead of Guadalajara whose 3-0 away win over Bolivian champions San Jose was in vain.

Colombian provincial side Cucuta, who topped the group with 11 points, had already qualified.

“It wasn’t pretty, it wasn’t brilliant but it was exactly what we needed,” Santos coach Emerson Leao said. “This is what the Libertadores is about.”

Cucuta, surprise semi-finalists last year, stunned Pele’s former club when midfielder Lin Carlos Henry curled in a free kick in the 23rd minute.

Kleber Pereira equalised for the Brazilians in the 69th minute but tempers flared shortly afterwards with an ugly clash which led to red cards for Henry and Santos defender Domingos.

Leao was then ordered from the touchline for a furious, finger-pointing protest to the linesman.

With Guadalajara winning in Bolivia, Santos were facing elimination until the 89th minute.

They were rescued when Kleber’s chipped cross was misjudged by Andres Castellanos, the ball hit the crossbar and Mariano Tripodi volleyed in the rebound.

Despite playing at 3,700 metres above sea level in the Bolivian mining town of Oruro, Guadalajara controlled their game and led 2-0 at halftime with a brace from Sergio Avila.

Gonzalo Pineda added the third for the Mexicans in the 55th minute, one minute after San Jose had Sandro Coelho sent off.

MNA/Reuters



Maria Sharapova, of Russia, returns the ball during her 6-0, 6-0 victory over Bethanie Mattek during the second round of the Family Circle Cup tennis tournament, in Charleston, SC, on 16 April, 2008.—INTERNET

Roma have edge in Cup semi and Inter draw

BEIJING, 17 April — A Rocket shot from Francesco Totti gave holders AS Roma a 1-0 home win over Catania in their Italian Cup semi-final first leg yesterday.

In the other first leg, Serie A leaders Inter Milan drew 0-0 at home to Lazio in a dire game on a slippery surface.

Lazio played their best side after resting some big guns in Sunday’s 1-1 draw with Siena while Inter had a largely second string lineup, with David Suazo and Hernan Crespo their only available strikers due to injury and suspension.

The pair combined for the clearest chance when Crespo’s effort was well saved before Inter defender Nicolas Burdisso hit the bar. Visitors Lazio were generally better and were only foiled by some last ditch defending and the offside flag. In Rome, Totti blasted in from 30 metres following Mancini’s run and pass in the 47th minute to give his side the edge.

With the Serie A title race taking priority, Roma coach Luciano Spalletti also picked several reserves but they still dominated and will be frustrated not to have taken a bigger lead into the second leg in Sicily on 7 May. Totti, Ludovic Giuly and Cicinho went close to increasing the advantage while league strugglers Catania barely threatened in Walter Zenga’s third game in charge. —MNA/Xinhua



China’s Du Li competes during the women’s 50m rifle 3 positions final in the “Good Luck Beijing” 2008 ISSF World Cup at the Beijing Shooting Range Hall in Beijing, on 17 April, 2008. Du Li won the gold of the event with a score of 692.7 points. —XINHUA

Euro 2012 preparations progressing smoothly in Poland

WARSAW, 16 April — Warsaw’s preparations for the organization of Euro 2012 are running on time, city officials said during Wednesday’s press conference summing up the first year of preparations for the European soccer event.

According to reports sent by the town hall to UEFA, the city will have a sufficient and efficient transport system, airports and hotels able to accommodate soccer fans as well as adequate medical and security backup.

The 55-thousand seat national stadium will be built in Warsaw at the cost of 1.2 billion zlotys (558 million US dollars).

Meanwhile MP Janusz Piechocinski stressed the need for the strengthening of public administration responsible for investments linked with the EURO 2012.

Already visible are some delays, Piechocinski told a Press conference on Wednesday and appealed for more administrative posts. —MNA/Xinhua



China’s Lu Feng (10) vies for the ball with Mexico’s Cesar Villaluz in front of the China goal in a friendly soccer match on 16 April, 2008, in Seattle. The exhibition is the first match of Mexico’s three-game tour of the United States.

INTERNET

Lin wins Asian opener with ease

BEIJING, 17 April — World No 1 Lin Dan of China crushed Indonesia’s Andreas Adityawarman yesterday as he opened his campaign for the Asian Badminton Championship men’s singles crown.

Lin took less than 25 minutes to beat Adityawarman 21-13, 21-13 in their first round match in the southern Malaysia city of Johor Baru.

The 24-year-old Lin, who will meet Nguyen Tien Minh of Vietnam in the second round, was barely stretched by the Indonesian junior.

The five-day tournament, which carries total prize money of US\$125,000, is the final chance for Asian players to qualify for the Beijing Olympics in August.

No 2 seed Lee Chong Wei of Malaysia strolled past Thailand’s Tanongsak Saensomboonsuk 21-13, 21-13 in his opening round match to set up a clash with China’s Zhu Wellun.

“I have always enjoyed playing here and I know the crowd is always very supportive of me. I don’t want to let them down either,” said Lee, the home favourite.

China’s Bao Chunlai, the third seed, also made it to the second round after defeating Jun Takemura of Japan 21-13, 21-16.

In a major upset, Chinese Taipei’s Chieh Min-fang and Wen Hsin-cheng scored a 21-15, 21-10 win over the world’s No 2 ranked pair from China, Gao Ling and Zhang Bo, in the mixed doubles opening round.

MNA/Xinhua



The sailboat Joe Fly, of Italy, takes a turn during the Rolex Farr 40 World Championship of sailing in Miami Beach, Fla, on 16 April, 2008.—INTERNET

အလ္လာဟ်သျှင်မြတ်အမိန့်တော်ခံယူခြင်း
ဟာဂျီမဆာရာဘီ (ခ) ဒေါ်ညိုတင်
အသက် (၈၉) နှစ်
(မြန်အောင်မြို့နယ် ပက်မခန်းကျေးရွာ)

ရန်ကုန်မြို့၊ မင်္ဂလာတောင်ညွန့်မြို့နယ်၊ ရေတွင်းကုန်းရပ်ကွက်၊ စက်ရုံလမ်း၊ အမှတ်-၁၅၅/၁၅၇နေ (ဦးအဗ္ဗူလတစ်)၏ဇနီး၊ (ဦးအမ်ဟာနစ်ယဉ်)-ဒေါ်ကြည်ကြည်၊ (ဦးတင်ထွန်း-အာရလက်ရှေ့ချန်ပီယံ)- ဒေါ်မေရှင်၊ ဦးတင်မောင်-ဒေါ်တင်တင်လှ၊ ဦးအောင်ဝင်း-ဒေါ်အေးအေးနိုင်-ဒေါ်တင်တင်မြင့်၊ (ဦးထွန်းကြည်)-ဒေါ်ခင်ခင်ရွှေ၊ (ဦးမြင့်မောင်)၊ ဦးမြင့်ဦး(ခ)ဦးထောင်-ဒေါ်အေးနန်း၊ ဦးခင်မောင်ဝင်း-ဒေါ်လှလှမြင့်(အထက-၅ မင်္ဂလာတောင်ညွန့်)၊ ဒေါ်လှလှဌေး (ခ)ဘုံရှင်၊ ဦးတင်ထွေး (ခ)ဦးနီ-ဒေါ်ခန်းစန်းဝင်းတို့၏မိခင်၊ မြေး(၃၃)ယောက်၊ မြစ် (၂၂)ယောက်တို့၏အဖွားဖြစ်သူ ဟာဂျီမဆာရာဘီ (ခ) ဒေါ်ညိုတင်သည် ၁၇-၄-၂၀၀၈ ရက်နေ့၊ နံနက် ၄-နာရီ ၄၀-မိနစ်တွင် အထက်ပါနေအိမ်၌ အလ္လာဟ်သျှင်မြတ်အမိန့်တော်ခံယူသွားပါ၍ ယင်းနေ့တွင်ပင် ဗိုဟိုရ်နမာဇ်အပြီး၊ လမ်း-၁၂၀ ကာလာဘတ်(စ)တီးစွန့်ရှာမေ့လျော့တွင် ဂျနာဇာနမာဇ်ဖတ်ပြီး ရေဝေးစွန့်ဥယျာဉ်တော်၌ ဒါဖ်နာပြီးစီးပါကြောင်း ရပ်ဝေးရပ်နီးနေ ဆွေးမျိုးမိတ်သင်္ဂဟအပေါင်းအား သိစေအပ်ပါသည်။

ကျန်ရစ်သူမိသားစု

French Parliament adopts law against anorexia

PARIS,16 April — The French parliament has adopted a draft bill making it illegal to incite anorexia, a disease which is currently afflicting 30,000 to 40,000 people in France, according to reports.

The draft bill, presented by French Health Minister Roselyne Bachelot, is recommending a two-year jail sentence and a fine of 30,000 euros (about 47,000 US dollars) for offenders inciting extreme thinness or anorexia, by encouraging prolonged dietary restrictions which could have direct implications on one's health.

The jail sentences will range from three years and a fine of 45, 000 euro (72,000 dollars) when this excessive thinness causes the death of a person.

Voting on this bill, which is expected to be submitted

for approval by the Senate in May, comes a week after the signing of a charter for promoting healthier body images, and against anorexia by Bachelot and fashion, advertising and media professional to fight excessive thinness of catwalk models.

According to the French Health Ministry, there are between 30,000 and 40,000 people, a majority of them being models, are suffering from anorexia in France today, while several countries such as Italy, Spain and Britain, have already taken measures to curb this phenomenon.

MNA/Xinhua



A 5-year-old Sumatran tiger named Leanne plays with her 6-week-old, 12 pound baby, in the outdoor exhibit at the San Francisco Zoo, on 14 April, 2008 in San Francisco.—INTERNET

Israel arrests 23 Palestinians in West Bank raids

RAMALLAH, 16 April — Israeli forces arrested 23 Palestinians in the West Bank early Wednesday, said Palestinian security sources and Israeli media.

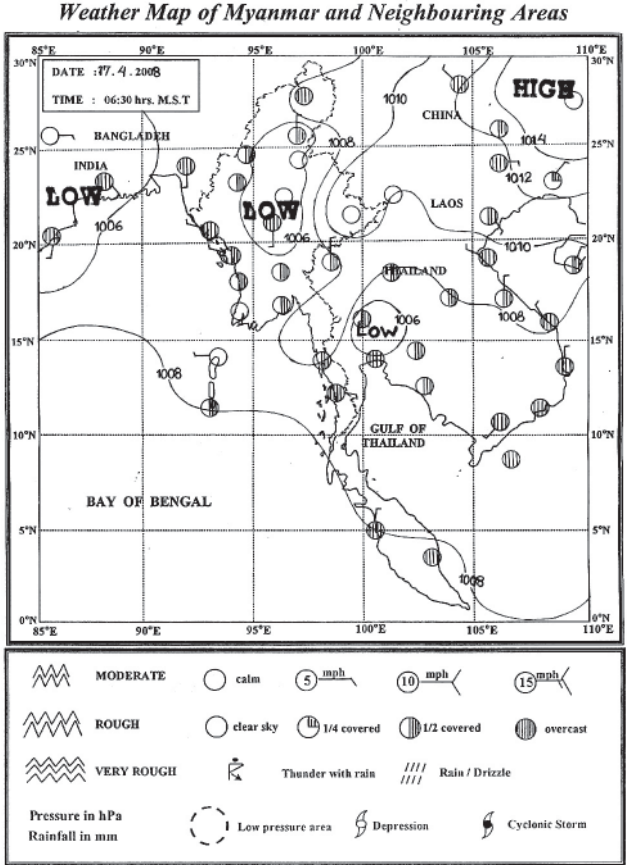
The detainees were taken for interrogation, said Israeli reports, without giving their identities and which group they are affiliated with.

Palestinian security sources said that the overnight raids and the detentions took place in Nablus and Jenin where a number of Hamas and Islamic jihad members were arrested. Meanwhile, Islamic Hamas movement said three of its members were also

arrested on Wednesday in the West Bank.

In a statement sent to the press for the Palestinian prisoner day on April 17, Hamas also urged Palestinian militant groups to free the prisoners “whatever the price was.” “All the options are open for the Palestinian resistance men, mainly al-Qassam Brigades (of Hamas’ military wing), to free the prisoners,” said the statement, calling on the Palestinian National Authority (PNA) to release Hamas supporters held by security forces of President Mahmoud Abbas.

MNA/Xinhua



WEATHER

Thursday, 17 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, weather has been partly cloudy in the remaining States and Divisions. Day temperatures were (3°C) to (4°C) above April average temperatures in Kachin, Chin and Kayah States, Sagaing, Mandalay, Magway, Bago, Yangon and Ayeyawady Divisions and about April average temperatures in the remaining States and Divisions. The significant day temperatures were Minbu (43°C), Monywa, Nyaung U, Chauk, Magway, Aungmye and Thawbaw (42°C) each, Nay Pyi Taw and Hinthada (41°C) each.

Maximum temperature on 17-4-2008 was 103°F. Minimum temperature on 17-4-2008 was 74°F. Relative humidity at (09:30) hours MST on 17-4-2008 was 75%. Total sunshine hours on 16-4-2008 was (8.8) hours approx.

Rainfall on 17-4-2008 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 (5) mph from Southwest at (23:15) hours MST on 16-4-2008.

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

Forecast valid until evening of 18-4-2008: Likelihood of isolated rain or thundershowers in Kachin and Chin States, upper Sagaing and Tanintharyi Divisions, weather will be partly cloudy in the remaining areas. Degree of certainty is (60%).

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

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

Forecast for Nay Pyi Taw and neighbouring area for 18-4-2008: Partly cloudy.

Forecast for Yangon and neighbouring area for 18-4-2008: Partly cloudy.

Forecast for Mandalay and neighbouring area for 18-4-2008: Partly cloudy.



Spruce trees. The world's oldest living tree on record is a nearly 10,000 year-old spruce that has been discovered in central Sweden, Umeaa University has said.

INTERNET

 Friday, 18 April View on today 7:00 am	7:30 am	6:00 pm	6. International news
	2. To be healthy exercise	2. Evening news	7. Weather report
	7:40 am	6:30 pm	8. “ရှ်တာကပိုကောင်းပါတယ်”
	3. Morning news	3. Weather report	9. မြန်မာ့ဗီဒီယိုဇာတ်လမ်း
	8:30 am	7:30 pm	“ရင်ဘတ်ထဲကိုဝင်ကြည့်လိုက်”
1. တောင်တန်းသာသနာပြု	4. International news	4. “စိတ်အားထက်သန်ဆန္ဒအမှန်”	(လွင်ဗိုး၊ဇာနည်၊ကြည်လဲ့လဲ့ဦး)
ဆရာတော်ဘုရားကြီး၏	4:00 pm	8:00 pm	(ဒါရိုက်တာ-ကျော်ဇောလင်း)
ပရိတ်တရားတော်	1. Martial Songs	5. News	

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.

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

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

● Towards the new nation
Will ratify Constitution.

● Let's approve Constitution to
shape our future by ourselves.

Nay Pyi Taw celebrates New Year with meritorious deeds

NAY PYI TAW, 17 April — Myanmar people performed meritorious deeds such as keeping Sabbath at pagodas, temples and monasteries, practising meditation, making donations and setting animals free on Myanmar New Year occasion in Nay Pyi Taw today.

Staff families of Khayay, Gangaw and Padauk staff quarters in Nay Pyi Taw performed meritorious deeds at Datusaya Datpaungsu Pagoda.

Similarly, pilgrims visited NanU Aung Pagoda, NanU Pagoda and Tadaingya Pagoda and donated cash today.

Likewise, pilgrims did meritorious deeds at Phayakoesu Pagoda and Lawkamarazein Pagoda in Nay Pyi Taw Pyinmana.

Meritorious deeds were performed at Koekhangyi Hsutaungpyae Pagoda. Local people received the Nine

Precepts from Ohntaw Pariyatti Sarthintaik Presiding Sayadaw Bhaddanta Tissa in Ywakauk Ward in Nay Pyi Taw Pyinmana.

Koemokpyan Pagoda was packed with pilgrims in Nay Pyi Taw Pyinmana Township. Members of the Sangha recited Paritta in respective streets of Nay Pyi Taw Pyinmana Ward.

MNA

Let's
cast
‘yes’
vote

Maung
De Doh

PAGE 7



People paying homage to Datusaya Datpaungsu Pagoda in Nay Pyi Taw Bawgahteikdi Ward on Myanmar New Year Day. — MNA