Senior General Than Shwe and wife Daw Kyaing Kyaing and Tatmadaw families offer ‘soon’ to Sayadaws

YANGON, 4 March—Under the patronage of Chairman of the State Peace and Development Council Commander-in-Chief of Defence Services Senior General Than Shwe and wife Daw Kyaing Kyaing, the State Peace and Development Council and families of Defence Services (Army, Navy and Air) offered ‘soon’ to State Ovadaçariya Sayadaws, member Sayadaws of State Sangha Maha Nayaka Committee, State Central Working Committee of the Sangha and title recipient Sayadaws at Tatmadaw Dhammayon on Azani Road in Bahan Township at 9.30 am today.

Senior General Than Shwe and Daw Kyaing Kyaing and the congregation received the Five Precepts from Vice-Chairman Sayadaw Abhidhaja Maha Ratthaa Guru Abhidhaja Agga Maha Saddhammasicotika Bhaddanta Pañhinda-bhivamsa of SSMNC.

Also present on the occasion were State Ovadaçariya Sayadaws, member Sayadaws of State Sangha Maha Nayaka Committee, State Central Working Committee of the Sangha and title recipient Sayadaws and nuns, Vice-Chairman of the State Peace and Development Council and Depuy Commander-in-Chief of Defence Services Commander-in-Chief (Army) Vice-Senior General Maung Aye and wife Daw Mya Mya San, Prime Minister General Khin Nyunt and wife Dr Daw Khin Win Shwe, Lt-Gen Tin Oo’s wife Daw Khin Than Nwe, member of the State Peace and Development Council General Thura Shwe Mann and wife Daw Khin Lay Thet, Secretary-1 of the State Peace and Development Council Lt-Gen Soe Win and wife, Secretary-2 Lt-Gen Thein Sein and wife, members of the State Peace and Development Council and their wives, the Commander-in-Chief (Navy) and wife, the Commander-in-Chief (Air) and wife, the Chairman of Yangon Division Peace and Development Council and their wives, ministers and their wives, the Attorney-General, the Yangon Mayor, senior military officers and their wives, the director-general of the State Peace and Development Council Office, departmental heads and guests.

Adviser U Arnt Maung who acted as master of ceremonies read the agenda of the ceremony. Next, the ceremony was opened with three-time recitation of Namo Tassa. Members of the Sangha recited Parittas. Afterwards, the Senior General and wife offered provisions such as robes, bowl and others to the Vice-Chairman Sayadaw.

Next, Vice-Senior General Maung Aye and wife Daw Mya Mya San, Prime Minister General Khin Nyunt and wife Dr Daw Khin Win Shwe and party donated provisions to the Sayadaws.

Secretary Abhidhaja Maha Ratthaa Guru Abhidhaja Agga Maha Saddhammajojita Magway Sayadaw Bhaddanta Kamara delivered a sermon and the Senior General and wife and party shared merits gained.

Later, the ceremony ended with three-time recitation of Buddha Sañanan Çram Titthatu.

After the ceremony, the Senior General and wife and party offered ‘soon’ to the Sayadaws—MNA

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

**Fullmoon Day of Tabaung**

Myanmar people are well known for their generosity and it is their lovely custom to make donations and do good deeds on days of special significance. Today is the fullmoon day of the month of Tabaung in Myanmar lunar calendar. In Myanmar it is one of the occasions set aside for doing meritorious deeds, especially offering of alms and provisions to the monks. As it is customary, lay Buddhists here in this country or in lands all over the world where His Teachings thrive, offer the Four Essentials or the basic needs of monks, viz, the monastery, robes, food and medicine for sustenance so that they may be able to conveniently practise, propagate and perpetuate the Sasana.

It is on this day that hundreds of monks receive provisions donated by thousands of the laity. Here it is to be noticed that the term “receive” means the act of receiving the offerings that enables the Buddhist faithful to do such offering. The relationship between the donor and the recipient is unique, for without the recipient there can be no donor and vice versa. It must, of necessity, apply to all donors and recipients, for those who are involved in the propagation of a faith are committed to their mission. If they had to go around in search of alms food or provisions all the time, the effectiveness of their mission would be diminished, or they may not be as fully capable of carrying it out. That is why the laity, individually, or in groups, or as organizations, or as government departments, organize alms-offering ceremonies so that those in missionary service may enable the donors to donate and thus gain merit. The government organizes some of these alms-offering ceremonies occasionally and also subsidises missions and homes for the aged and the needy.

Today, the Fullmoon day of Tabaung, religious titles are presented to Sayadawus, nuns and lay persons on a grand scale on Kaba Aye Hilllock in Yangon. Indeed it is a remarkable contribution towards propagation and promotion of Buddha Sasana. We wish all the citizens to pay attention to making donations, keeping precepts, dispensing metta and practising meditation.

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**Myanmar Gazette**

**Yangon, 4 March—** The State Peace and Development Council has confirmed the appointment of the following heads of service organizations on expiry of the one-year probationary period.

**Name**

- (a) Aung Myo
  - Director-General
  - National Archive Department
  - Ministry of National Planning & Economic Development
- (b) Pu Myint
  - Rector
  - Mandalay University of Foreign Languages
  - Higher Education Department
  - (Upper Myanmar)
  - Ministry of Education

**Appointment**

- **Yangon, 4 March—** The Myanmar Wushu Federation is taking preparatory measures to host the 6th Asian Wushu Championship in November this year. It will be the second Wushu Championship. The first international event was held in 1999. In the competition, Myanmar won 1 gold, 8 silver and 1 bronze.

- **Yangon, 4 March—** The Myanmar Wushu Federation General Secretary Mr Kyuhei Muraoaka (Japan), AWF Joint Secretary Mrs Li Yapei (China), President of the AWF Technical Committee Mr Chen Gudong (China) and World Wushu Federation Technical Committee member Mr Yoshiko Ishihara (Japan) inspected Myanmar’s preparations for the championship from 8 to 12 February.

- **Yangon, 4 March—** In an interview with Kyemon daily, the AWF General Secretary said that he learnt that Myanmar is making endeavours with might and main for the championship. It is heartening to know that Myanmar leaders and the Sports Minister are rendering special assistance for successful holding of the competition, he added. The gymnasium of the National Indoor Stadium in Thuwunna was larger and better than any other ones of the nations in which previous Wushu competitions were held, he re-

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**People’s Desire**

- Oppose those relying on external elements, acting as stooges, holding negative views and actions.
- Oppose those trying to jeopardize 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.

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**MWF readying for 6th Asian Wushu Championship**

The Myanmar Wushu Federation is taking preparatory measures to host the 6th Asian Wushu Championship in November this year. It will be the second Wushu Championship. The first international event was held in 1999. In the competition, Myanmar won 1 gold, 8 silver and 1 bronze. The MWF has got an opportunity to host Asian level Wushu competition for the first time. The MWF took part in the 4th Asian Wushu Championship held in the Philippines in 1996 and the 5th Asian Wushu Championship held in the Socialist Republic of Vietnam in 2000. In these two competitions, Myanmar won only six silver and one bronze. It has never won a gold medal in the Asian Wushu Championship. Thus, it is making arrangements to the best of its ability to host the competition on a grand scale as well as to win greater victory.

Asian Wushu Federation General Secretary Mr Kyuhei Muraoaka (Japan) making endeavours with might and main for the championship. It is heartening to know that Myanmar leaders and the Sports Minister are rendering special assistance for successful holding of the competition, he added. The gymnasium of the National Indoor Stadium in Thuwunna was larger and better than any other ones of the nations in which previous Wushu competitions were held, he re-

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**Course on fundamental IT**

**Yangon, 4 March—** Eleven trainees attended the training course for instructors on fundamental IT for Myanmar, jointly sponsored by Myanmar Computer Federation and the Association for Overseas Technical Scholarship at MICT Park in Hline Township here. The course conclusion ceremony was held at 4 pm today. — MNA

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**Short-term course on sales promotion**

**Yangon, 4 March—** A short-term course on sales promotion jointly sponsored by UMFCCI and Youth Force Group of Companies was opened at the UMFCCI training school on Bo Sun Pet Street in Pabedan Township here yesterday. UMFCCI General Secretary U Sein Win Hlaing and Youth Force Group Chairman U Thein Lwin spoke on the occasion. The 12-day course will be conducted by U Moe Naing Myint and Daw Tin Moe Lwin.

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**Over 40 Myanmar athletes will be sent to the People’s Republic of China to undergo training. And Myanmar new Wushu generation youths will be trained under Chinese coaches in the country. Myanmar will contend with its rivals in the first World Youth Wushu Championship to be held in France this September. He disclosed that he wished Myanmar to be the best in Wushu after China. He pledged that the Myanmar Wushu Federation will continue to make strenuous efforts to achieve greater success.**

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*Oppose those relying on external elements, acting as stooges, holding negative views and actions.
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*Oppose foreign nations interfering in internal affairs of the State.*
Iraq guerillas launch attack on US base

TIKRIT, 4 March—Guerrillas launched four mortars at the 4th Infantry Division’s base in Tikrit on Wednesday, including one that landed near a dining hall during supper time. No one was hurt.

Five large explosions also rumbled through the centre of Baghdad Wednesday night, and sirens sounded from the Green Zone where the headquarters of the US-led occupation authority is located. The US military press office said it had no information about where the blasts occurred.

In Tikrit, the 4th Division’s commanding officer, Major General Raymond Odierno, told The Associated Press mortars were fired at the riverfront base from the opposite side of the Tigris River.

One of the mortars landed yards from the base’s crowded dining facility but didn’t explode. The other two exploded in unoccupied areas. Bomb disposal soldiers defused the unexploded shell, along with another that failed to explode.

Soldiers saw three men running from the vicinity the mortars were fired from and into a house in a village near Ajid, a town about a mile from Tikrit, according to Lt. Col Steve Russell, commander of the 1st Battalion, 22nd Infantry Regiment of the 4th Infantry Division.

The soldiers surrounded the house but it wasn’t immediately clear if any arms were made, Russell said.

Tikrit is the hometown of former Iraqi dictator Saddam Hussein and is located in the Sunni triangle, a hotbed of anti-American activity.

The 4th Infantry Division, which has operated in Tikrit and throughout most of northern Iraq for about a year, has launched an aggressive campaign to root out insurgents and destroy stockpiles of weapons believed to be used in attacks against coalition soldiers.

The division is in the process of redeploying to the United States and is being replaced by the 1st Infantry Division, in Germany.

China, Vanuatu reiterate one-China policy

BEIJING, 4 March—Senior government officials of China and Vanuatu on Tuesday reiterated the common stance of the two countries that there is only one China.

Visiting Vanuatu Deputy Prime Minister Ham Lini said the Vanuatu Government and the National United Party of Vanuatu would adhere to the one-China policy and firmly support the Chinese Government’s stance and position on the Taiwan issue.

He made the remarks during his meeting with Chinese Vice-Premier Huang Ju in the Great Hall of the People in Beijing.

Huang expounded China’s principled stance on the Taiwan issue, and thanked the National United Party of Vanuatu for its firm adherence to the one-China policy.

Before the meeting, Chinese Foreign Minister Li Zhaoxing also met with the National United Party delegation headed by Lini. Representatives of the two governments also signed an agreement on economic and technological cooperation. China was ready to deepen bilateral relations with Vanuatu, Huang said.

MA/NXAixinhua

550 US service members killed since the beginning of military operations in Iraq

BAGHDAD, 4 March—As of Wednesday, 3 March, 550 US service members have died since the beginning of military operations in Iraq, according to the US Department of Defence. Of those, 379 died as a result of hostile action and 171 died of non-hostile causes, the department said.

The British military has reported 58 deaths; Italy, 17; Spain, eight; Bulgaria, five; Thailand, two; Denmark, Ukraine, Estonia and Poland have reported one each.

Since May 1, when President Bush declared that major combat operations in Iraq had ended, 412 US soldiers have died — 264 as a result of hostile action and 148 of non-hostile causes, according to the military.

Since the start of military operations, 2,731 US service members have been injured as a result of hostile action, according to the Defence Department’s figures. Non-hostile injured numbered 419. — Internet

China, Portugal to strengthen economic cooperation

BEIJING, 4 March—China and Portugal will make more efforts to strengthen their economic and trade cooperation, officials from the two countries said here Tuesday.

Vice-Minister of Commerce Zhang Zhigang said at the fifth Sino-Portuguese trade fair that China’s economy has developed rapidly since the reform and opening up policy was implemented.

Economic and trade cooperation between China and Portugal face great opportunities and the two sides have potential in promoting exchanges of trade and investment, he said.

“We welcome Portuguese entrepreneurs to invest in the west and northeast of China,” he said.

Franquelim Garcia Alves, Secretary of State of the Ministry of Economy of Portugal, said the fifth Sino-Portuguese trade fair falls during the 25th anniversary of diplomatic ties between the two countries and when Portuguese Foreign Minister Teresa Patricio Gouveia is visiting China.

This indicates that the Portuguese Government values exchanges and cooperation with China in political, economic and cultural fields, Alves said.

The two sides agreed to strengthen exchanges between trade departments and enterprises, and at the same time to expand cooperation in tourism.

Statistics from Chinese Customs indicated trade volume between China and Portugal exceeded 600 million US dollars in 2003, an increase of 56.7 per cent, among which China’s imports are approaching 200 million US dollars, an increase of 135.5 per cent.

MA/NXAixinhua

Nepal’s tourist arrivals surge in February

KAKARVITTA, 4 March—The total number of tourists visiting Nepal last month increased significantly by 44 per cent over the same period of last year, the Nepal Tourism Board said Tuesday.

Altogether 24,456 visitors from different parts of the world came to Nepal by air in February this year, against the arrival of 16,960 tourists into this country in February 2003, according to a Press release issued by the government bureau. The number of Indian tourists arriving in Nepal grew by 35 per cent to 6,777 visitors, while tourists from other countries recorded an overall increase of 48 per cent to 17,679 visitors.

Tourist arrivals from Nepal tourist industry’s traditional markets, namely the United States, Britain, Japan and Germany recorded increases of 72 per cent, 49 per cent, 15 per cent and 19 per cent, respectively. While the number of visitors from China decreased by 3 per cent to 355 visitors in this month. Tourist operators here said the unavailability of enough flights has hindered the increase of the number of Chinese tourists. — MNA/Xinhua
US-led coalition under fire for failing to stop deadly attacks in Iraq

BAGHDAD, 4 March — The US-led coalition in Iraq is under fire from angry Iraqis who blame their occupiers for failing to keep the peace almost a year after ridding the country of Saddam Hussein.

And officials warn the violence may rise as Iraq continues along the road to democracy, with US overseer Paul Bremer due to transfer sovereignty on June 30.

Many people in Baghdad and Karbala, where a series of coordinated blasts on Tuesday killed more than 180 people and injured hundreds of others, blamed the United States for failing to protect them.

“The Americans are the cause of all the violence,” a man who identified himself as Moki Abu Daga, an ice cream and candy shop owner in the holy city of Karbala, south of Baghdad, told the Associated Press.

He shut his shop minutes before explosions destroyed the dreams of hundreds of thousands of Shiiites the previous day who had gathered in the city to mark the climax of the solemn 10-day Ashura festival for the first time in decades.

“Two days ago their (US) helicopters were flying around in the night. When the attacks happened we saw nobody,” he said.

An Iraqi man pushes his wife on a cart as they pass by a blood-stained plastic bag outside a hospital in the Kazimiyah neighbourhood in Baghdad, Iraq, on 3 March, 2004. (INTERNET)

Turkish fighter jets collide in mid-air

ISTANBUL, 4 March — Two Turkish F-4 fighter jets collided in mid-air on Tuesday, and at least one pilot parachuted to safety, the state-run Anatolian news agency said.

Local television channels earlier reported that all four pilots on board had been killed in the collision, which occurred in the central province of Konya.

It was not clear what caused the crash or if any other airmen had survived.

Military helicopters were searching for other survivors in the area where the planes crashed, Anatolian said.

The jets crashed into a mountainside, sparking a fire in the wooded area, the agency said. The pilots were on a training flight.— MNA/Reuters

Malaysian Prime Minister calls for national unity

KUALA LUMPUR, 4 March — Malaysian Prime Minis- ter Abdullah Ahmad Badawi on Tuesday called for national unity among various races and love for the nation.

“If we don’t have a love for the nation, surely we will be easily ‘bought’ by parties out to undermine the peace that we have,” the Prime Minister said at the launching of “Saya Anak Malaysia (I’m a Malaysian)” campaign here.

As such, efforts to enhance unity, like Tuesday’s cam- paign, must be stepped up periodically by taking in account changes in the environment, he said.

His speech was delivered by National Unity and Social Development Minister Siti Zaharah Sulaiman.

The campaign organized by the ministry is a platform to enhance unity among school children, including those at the kindergarten level. Over 10,000 students and children at- tended the launching ceremony.

“All parties must continue with these efforts to generate the spirit of love for the nation and enhance national unity,” Abdullah said.

He believed that the country would continue to be peaceful and prosperous if the spirit of unity and patriotism continued to be fostered and the close ties among Malaysians continued to be strengthened.

“The multiracial people of Malaysia must realize that Malaysia that they live in now does not belong to just one party but to us all and we must defend it,” he said.

He said the occurrence in some countries of racial riots among people of common background and religion just because of ethnic differences should not be allowed to serve as a lesson so that such things would not happen in this country.

He said nationalismo was not something that came sponta- neously but was inherent in an individual through living in society. This process must start early and as such, the young generation must be exposed to positive values like respect for others, irrespective of their colour or religion, he added.

China has about 30 million obese people

BEIJING, 4 March — The number of overweight people in China has topped 200 million, at least 30 million of whom are obese.

Li Chunsheng, a doctor with the Xiyuan Hospital affiliated to the Chinese Academy of Traditional Chinese Medicine, said obesity was more common among people over the age of 50, with the ratio standing at 43.1 per cent among males and 55.4 per cent among females.

Doctor Li said obesity had become one of the serious diseases threatening the lives of Beijingers, especially primary and mid- dle school students.

The ratio of obese children in Beijing had climbed to 18.17 per cent in 2002 from 10.61 per cent in 1991.

The doctor warned that obesity increased the risk of developing high blood pressure, heart disease and diabetes. “The life expectancy of people who are overweight by 30 per cent is four years shorter than that of normal groups.”

However, he said, binge eating and dieting that lead to repeated increases and de- creases in weight was also harmful to health.

Some experts suggest people should give up lifestyles that lead to obesity and do more exercise.— MNA/Xinhua

Shanxi Province stresses safety in public places

TAIYUAN, 4 March — The northern Chinese province of Shanxi has suspended the operation of 13 businesses and 317 other units due to potential fire risks between mid-February and early March, an official with the provincial fire-fighting de- partment said Wednesday.

The move demonstrates the provincial government’s determination to guarantee the safety of people in public places, the official said.

The province’s fire de- partments and public secu- rity departments at various levels have jointly made safety inspections at a total of 3,660 public places such as conference centres, ho- tels, large shopping centres, cinemas, schools and kinder- gartens.

The official said that the enterprises which go into operation without approval of the authorities will be or- dered to stop operation again and root out fire risks. — MNA/Xinhua
IRAQ UNDER US OCCUPATION

Moments after the attacks, a youth runs past the victims and burning debris at the site of several bomb blasts in Karbala, Iraq, on 2 March. —INTERNET

A wave of suicide bombings and mortar attacks has killed at least 271 people in Baghdad and Karbala, Iraq’s bloodiest day since Saddam Hussein’s fall. Picture shows Iraqis rushing injured away from a blast after explosions rocked Karbala.INTERNET

Iraqi women mourn the victims of the bomb attack in Baghdad, on 3 March, 2004. INTERNET

An Iraqi shouts slogans as a funeral of Tuesday’s suicide attacks turns into an anti-American protest, on Wednesday, 3 March, 2004 —INTERNET

Iraqis burn a US flag during a rally on 3 March, 2004 in Karbala, 110 kilometres south of Baghdad. Iraq, blaming the US for the latest suicide attacks both in Karbala and Baghdad that killed at least 271 people and injured hundreds more. INTERNET

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Remission of Customs duties extended in Iraq

Baghdad, 4 March — Iraqi Minister of Trade Ali Allawi announced that remission of Customs duties are to be extended once more till the end of March, and even till June, newspaper Iraq Today said Wednesday.

Allawi announced this after the, according to him, a 5-per-cent Customs tariff starting March 1, said the local newspaper.

Coalition authorities had cancelled Customs duties after the war in April in an attempt to revive the Iraqi economy, but the implementation of Customs was supposed to be in January, but was postponed because of the insufficient security on the Iraqi borders.

“our business has taken off, and we can import as much as we can sell as there are no Customs, and this has improved the economy as well,” said Ahmed Mohammed, owner of an electronics shop in Karada.

“Before I couldn’t even afford an old car, because the price was very high, but recently I went to Amman and bought a used car for a good price.” said Bakir Hussein, an employee at the Ministry of Industry. “I now have a good car, a new TV, and a satellite receiver,” he added.

Other Iraqis complain that the absence of Customs has flooded the Iraqi market with cheap, inferior-quality goods.

“They only sell us bad and obsolete goods,” complained Ne’am Radhi, who works in an electronics shop in Karada.

The announcement replaces another one made by Iraqi Minister of Interior Noor Al Badran two weeks earlier that Iraq would charge a 5-per-cent Customs tariff starting March 1, said the local newspaper.

The ministers stated in a joint communiqué.

The foreign ministers of Argentina, Brazil, Uruguay, Paraguay, Chile, Bolivia, Peru, Colombia, Ecuador and Venezuela also vowed to coordinate their positions on the FTAA for the summit to be held on March 18 and 19 in Puebla, Mexico.

After the meeting, Argentine International Trade Secretary Martín Redrado said the meeting aimed to analyse the negotiating process.

He praised the “position of flexibility that the Common Market of the South (Mercosur) shows in this negotiating process”.

It would be a preclude for any FTAA negotiation that the US Government agrees to speed up a tariff cut to open regional agricultural products to the US market.

Redrado said, “It is not feasible to request the elimination of agricultural subsidies in an election year.” He warned however that “we will never stop demanding the elimination of subsidies for agricultural production and experts.”

The ministers and representatives of the 10 Latin American countries also reaffirmed their commitment to accelerate the negotiations of bilateral and regional accords that facilitate free trade and deepen the process of economic integration.”

S American countries call for flexibility in FTAA negotiations

Buenos Aires, 4 March — The foreign ministers of 10 South American countries met here and agreed that the negotiations on the Free Trade Area of the Americas (FTAA) “must have flexibility”.

This flexibility should consider “the needs and sensitivities of all the countries involved, especially small economies”, the ministers stated in a joint communiqué.

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New Taxi Tourist Guide scheme introduced in Singapore

Singapour, 4 March — Singaporean newspaper reported a new Taxi Tourist Guide scheme, an effort to liberalize its tourist guide sector.

This came after the Singapore Tourism Board (STB) and the Singapore Taxi Academy (STA) signed on Wednesday an agreement, which enables both sides to collaborate and leverage on each other’s resources and expertise to institutionalize the Taxi Tourist Guide scheme within a formalized training and regulatory framework, according to a joint Press release issued by the STB and the STA.

The scheme, the first of its kind in the world, enables visitors to experience and tour Singapore in a taxi driven by a licensed professional tourist guide.

The purpose of the scheme is to encourage creativity, entrepreneurship and vibrancy within the tourism industry and provide visitors with a wider range of tourism products and services. — MNA/Inshahu

Tianjin to position itself as container hub for N East Asia

Tianjin, 4 March — Tianjin, a leading international port city in north China, is striving for the status of a world-class container hub in northeastern Asia in the next decade, with an annual container handling capacity of 17 million TEUs (twenty-foot equivalent units) targeted for 2015.

An international business harbour, Tianjin Port currently operates 68 regular shipping routes and does business with more than 300 ports around the world.

According to sources with the Tianjin port authorities, the port handled 20.315.400 TEUs of containers in 2003, placing itself in the fourth position among Chinese coastal ports, next only to Shanghai, Shenzhen and Qingdao.

To lure more overseas shipping carriers and meet challenges from the top three and other domestic container ports, including Ningbo and Guangzhou, Tianjin completed a wharf upgrading project at a cost of 1.855 billion yuan (223.49 million US dollars) in 2003.

MNA/Inshahu

HK launches logistics services expo in Mainland

Hong Kong, 4 March — Hong Kong staged on Wednesday a logistics services expo in China’s Mainland to introduce the city to potential investors.

The three-day Hong Kong Logistics Services Expo is organized by the Hong Kong Trade Development Council in Guangzhou City, with the objective of promoting Hong Kong’s role as an international logistics and transportation centre in the region.

Invest Hong Kong’s transportation and logistics team attended the expo to meet with representatives from Mainland companies in the related industries, including freight forwarding, shipping, express services, and transportation, finance, logistics and supply chain management related services.

The head of transportation logistics of Invest Hong Kong Benjamin Wong said, “Through our participation in this high-profile fair, we want to communicate our key messages to potential investors — setting up business in Hong Kong is their natural choice, and Invest Hong Kong is here to provide assistance.”

MNA/Inshahu

Arroyo sees stronger Philippine-Papua New Guinea ties

MANILA, 4 March — Philippine President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo eyes stronger bilateral ties between the Philippines and Papua New Guinea which is set to popularize the use of Philippine-made jeeps to address its mass transport problem.

“I am looking forward to the expansion of our bilateral relations because we are neighbours in the Asia-Pacific Region,” Arroyo told visiting Papua Transportation and Civil Aviation Minister Don Poeyle who called on her at Malacanang (the presidential palace) Wednesday.

Arroyo thanked the Papuan official for tapping the uniquely Filipino jeepney as a solution to their mass transport problem.

Arroyo recalled that increasing trade and relations was part of the bilateral agreement forged with Papua New Guinea during the last Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) meeting held in Bangkok, Thailand, in 2003.

For his part, Poeyle said the Philippines has a prime interest in the solutions of the transport problems as they are part of our mass transport system.”

MNA/Inshahu
"Is that so, Maung Ka Lu?" “It’s more than that”

Maung Ka Lu

(Continued from yesterday)

Grandpa: You are right. After restoring stability and bringing progress, the Tatmadaw has tried to achieve 100% per cent peace in the whole nation. Our nation has been able to move a step forward because of the efforts to further develop the political and economic sectors.

Maung Ka Lu: A step forward? What do you mean, Grandpa?

Grandpa: You are so naive, although you look quite clever. It is none other than the road map to build a genuine democratic nation. Concerning the other matters, the Prime Minister has already laid down the seven-point future programme of the State.

Maung Ka Lu: The National Convention will be reconvened. Necessary steps taken will be for the flourishing of democracy. A new Constitution will be drafted in accordance with the basic principles laid down by the National Convention. The Constitution must be approved through referendum. The Pyithu Hluttaw elections will be held in accordance with the Constitution. A Peace meeting will be held with the participation of the Pyithu Hluttaw representatives. The Hluttaw will elect the head of state and the cabinet. Is it correct Grandpa?

Grandpa: Yes. After the election of the head of state and the cabinet, the final touches in building a peaceful, modern and developed nation will be carried out. The seven stages of the road map have been drawn in the interest of every person. The seven-point policy paper which has been unanimously approved by the entire people. It is also welcomed and supported by all the ASEAN nations, all the neighboring nations and all the regional countries. It is drawn by the State in accordance with the aspiration of the people of Myanmar, and supported by many countries. Except for a handful of external and internal destructive elements, the road map is welcomed by the entire Myanmar and the whole world.

Maung Ka Lu: Oh Grandpa, those destructionists from inside and outside the nation are worthless. They cannot hide their evil mind, and are talking in a random way. The more they hold negative views, the more loathsome they become for the people.

Grandpa: Every country has the media for propaganda network. Most try to advertise their efforts and accomplishments through the media. In other words, they are conducting ordinary media services. But some are different. They are shamelessly trying to float slanders to interfere in the affairs of other countries and to dominate them.

Maung Ka Lu: I have also heard their slanders. They are talking ill of the emergence of over 150 new parties, over 150 bridges whose lengths exceed the 180-foot mark, institutions of higher learning, schools, hospitals and dispensaries in our country. They are saying that the new government is not able to lift the country out of its state.

Grandpa: They are trying to stop the armed group from making peace with the Government. They are trying to ask endless questions from the destructive point of view.

Maung Ka Lu: When the armed groups were making peace with the government one after another, they were expressing their great expectations, saying that the armed groups would go underground again soon. And when the peace groups are striving for the progress of their regions, their people and the nation, the colonialists accuse them of running a big narcotic business. In collusion with a group of expatriates, the radio stations under their influence are broadcasting programmes against the road map. Is it true Grandpa?

Grandpa: You are right. After restoring stability and launching the armed opposition for many years? Are its 50-year-old aspirations fulfilled? They are trying to stop the armed group from making peace with the Government. They are trying to ask endless questions from the destructive point of view.

Maung Ka Lu: It's more than that. Is that so, Maung Ka Lu?

Grandpa: Yes, I am also thinking about it. They do not wish to see any of the one or two unlawful groups, a band of expatriates, and one or two remaining armed groups, return to the legal fold because they are using the latter as the launching pad to interfere in others’ affairs and to manipulate others. If all return to the legal fold, the colonialists will lose its supporting stick and fell to the ground like an old and feeble man.

Efficient use of electricity

- Use daylight as the main source of light
- Use the least possible amount of electricity only if there is not enough natural light
- Use the least possible amount of electricity required in production and service enterprises
- Preventing waste of electricity benefits the user and others

There are about 500,000 households using electricity in Yangon. Thus, saving a four-foot fluorescent lamp every day by each household amounts to saving power that is equal to the capacity a 20-megawatt power station can supply.

Efficient use of fuel

- * Saving one gallon of fuel per car per month will save the nation one US dollar
- * Thus, a total of 455,822 cars in Myanmar can save US$ 5.5 million in a year
- * The amount, US $ 5.5 million, can build a major bridge across Ayeyawady River

All this needs to be known

- * Do not be frightened whenever intimidated
- * Do not be bolstered whenever flattered
- * Do not be softened whenever appealed

International Women's Day

8th March 2004

(Continued from yesterday)

Ovadas sought from State Sangha Maha Nayaka Committee Sayadaws

YANGON, 4 March — Member Sayadaws of the State Sangha Maha Nayaka Committee gave Ovadas to laity at a ceremony held at Kainmyint Monastery in Sanyangtown Township, here, this morning, attended by Chairman of Yangon Division Peace and Development Council Commander of Yangon Command Maj-Gen Myint Swe and wife Daw Khin Thet Htay.

Chairman of the SSSMC Abhidiha Maha Rattha Guru Abhidhaja Agga Maha Saddhamma Jotika Anuruddha Sayadaw Bhaddanta. Secretary Abhidiha Maha Rattha Guru Abhidhaja Agga Maha Saddhamma Jotika Magway Sayadaw Bhaddanta Kumara and members of the Sangha graced the ceremony by their attendance. The Magway Sayadaw administered the Five Precepts to the congregation. Members of the Sangha recited puritas. Next, the commander and wife presented ovadas to members of the Sangha.

The vice-chairman Sayadaw of the SSSMC gave Ovadas and delivered a sermon, followed by sharing of merits gained. — MNA

National Tennis C'ship 8-12 March

YANGON, 4 March — The Myanmar Tennis Federation will conduct National Tennis Championship at Hshimyu Tennis Plaza here from 8 to 12 March. The tournament comprises men’s singles and doubles events (open), women’s singles and doubles events (open), men’s singles and doubles events (aged above-35), men’s singles and doubles events (aged above-45), men’s singles and doubles events (aged above-55), and men’s singles and doubles events (aged above-60). Those wishing to take part may enlist at the MTF by 10 am on 7 March. — MNA

Minister meets Korean guest

YANGON, 4 March — Minister for Religious Affairs Brig-Gen Thura Myint Maung met Head of the Buddhist Broadcasting Department of the Republic of Korea Vun Kim Do Hu at his office at 7.30 am today.

Also present at the call were Director-General of the Department for Promotion and Propagation of the Sasana U Sann Lwin and officials. — MNA

President of the SSSMC Maha Nayaka Committee Sayadaw

ANGON

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* Saving one gallon of fuel per car per month will save the nation one US dollar

* Thus, a total of 455,822 cars in Myanmar can save US$ 5.5 million in a year

* The amount, US $ 5.5 million, can build a major bridge across Ayeyawady River

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* Do not be softened whenever appealed
Regional development...
(from page 1b)

encouragement should be given to increase income from the meat and fish sector which has high potentials for development.

Boosting of the production, with the natural resources as the base, will ensure the economy of Mon State stand on a firm foundation. The Government has already set up infrastructures in various sectors.

After the ceremony, Senior General Than Shwe and party proceeded to Mawlamyine University where they were welcomed by Minister for Education U Than Aung and officials.

Next, Senior General Than Shwe and party met with rector, pro-rectors, professors, associate professors, lecturers, assistant lecturers, tutors and demonstrators of Mawlamyine University. Mawlamyine Education College, Government Technical College and Government Computer College at the Convocation Hall of Mawlamyine University.

At the meeting, Rector of Mawlamyine University U San Tint, Principal of Mawlamyine Education College Daw Yin Yin Mya, Principal of Government Technical College U Win Maung and Principal In-Charge of Government Computer College reported on brief history, location and area of the university and colleges, courses conducted and subjects, population of students, academic and administrative staff and acquisition of teaching and learning aids.

In response to the reports, Senior General Than Shwe gave instructions, saying that the earlier education standard of Myanmar lagged far behind when compared with that of international community, adding that at a time when there have been changes and developments in leaps and bounds in the field of world education there should not be a series of weak points in Myanmar education.

There will be no progress in Myanmar education if review and reform are not made in an effective way in the education system in time.

The vision of ASEAN is “all member nations must become modern and developed ones in 2020”, and it is imperative to swiftly reform the Myanmar education system and efforts are to be made for development in the field of education.

Therefore, transformation is being introduced with added momentum in the education system under the motto “building a modern and developed nation through education” and education infrastructures were established after laying down the national education promotion special 4-year project.

Universities and colleges were set up in the 24-development zones and opportunities to pursue the higher learning within the reach were created. Human resources needed for the region will emerge if the opportunity to pursue education is created in the region, thereby contributing to ensuring regional development and narrowing development gap between one region and another.

Intellectuals and intelligentsia play a crucial role in building a modern and developed nation. The government is doing its best in promoting the national education standard and continued efforts are to be made for successful realization of the national education promotion goal.

In the process, the qualified teachers are to provide well-rounded education with the effective use of teaching aids in accord with the curricula. The government will provide necessary assistance with goodwill and the teachers, on their part, are to strive to become highly qualified ones while teaching the students to become outstanding ones.

The teachers are to teach the students who will build and safeguard the nation in future to become new generations of international level.

Next, the Senior General inspected progress made in construction of the convocation hall of Mawlamyine University and the small scale model of the convocation hall and gave necessary guidance to officials.

On arrival at Thanlwin Bridge (Mawlamyine), the Senior General and party were welcomed by Minister for Construction Maj-Gen Saw Tun, the Chief Engineer, senior engineers and engineers of Public Works.

At the briefing hall, the Senior General heard reports on progress in building the bridge by Minister Maj-Gen Saw Tun.

After hearing the reports, the Senior General gave guidance that as Thanlwin Bridge (Mawlamyine) now under construction is the longest and biggest of the State, it will be the pride of the State as well as symbol of Mawlamyine. And emphasis is to be laid on timely completion of the bridge meeting the set standard.

Then, the Senior General and party inspected progress in construction of the bridge.

Next, the Senior General and party went to the part of the bridge on Mawlamyine Bank and saw over the laying of concrete floor for the motor road and the preparation for laying of the railroad.

Thanlwin Bridge (Mawlamyine), 11,575 feet long, will be one railroad with two motorways running parallel. Efforts are being made to complete the bridge at the end of this year.

After inspecting the bridge, Senior General Than Shwe and party viewed greening tasks along Strand Road and development of Mawlamyine.

In the evening, the Senior General and party proceeded to historic Kyaikthanlan Pagoda and paid homage to Buddha Images at the northern prayer hall.

Next, the Senior General presented cash donations for the pagoda and signed in the visitors’ book.

They then went round the pagoda clockwise.

On 3 March morning, the Senior General and party paid homage to State Ovadacariya Agga Maha Pandita Kawthar Parayatti Monastery Sayadaw Bhaddanta Obhasa and members of the Sangha at Mon State and township levels at Thanlithuha Dhammayon of South-East Command in Mawlamyine and offered provisions to the Sayadaws.

Then, the Sayadaw dispensed Metta to the Senior General and party.

Minister for Information Brig-Gen Kyaw Hsan, who accompanied the Senior General, inspected Dawei District Information and Public Relations Department Office on 29 February and Mawlamyine District IPRD Office on 3 March.
Pantanaw test well, Nyaungdon oil field inspected

YANGON, 4 March—Deputy Minister for Energy Brig-Gen Than Htay arrived at the site of test well in Pyindongale Village, Pantanaw Township, this morning.

Officials reported on preparations for drilling the test well, arrival of heavy machinery and construction of roads. The minister gave necessary instructions and inspected preparations for drilling the test well and road construction.

On arrival at Nyaungdon Oil Field, Chief Engineer (Drillings) U Ye Khaung reported on production of oil and gas and construction of oil tank. The Deputy Minister then proceeded to the site for the installation of Nyaungdon-Ywama natural gas pipeline and gave necessary instructions to officials.—MNA

Greening of 30-mile radius of Yangon International Airport all the year round coordinated

YANGON, 4 March—The coordination meeting on greening 30-mile radius of Yangon International Airport all the year round was held at the hall of Yangon Command Headquarters yesterday evening, attended by Yangon Division Peace and Development Council Chairman Yangon Command Commander Maj-Gen Myint Swe.

Speaking on the occasion, the commander said that as arrangements are being implemented for cultivation of monsoon and summer paddy, pulses and beans, edible oil crops, vegetables and other crops on a commercial scale for greening 30-mile radius of Yangon International Airport all the year round, there are five zones for greening tasks at the environs of the airport and the way to landing area.

Deputy Minister for Forestry Brig-Gen Tin Naing Thein, Vice-Mayor Col Maung Pa and officials submitted reports on cultivation, water supply and extension of cultivation in coming season.—MNA
Senior General Than Shwe and wife Daw Kyaing Kyaing and Tatmadaw families offer ‘soon’ to Sayadaws

Senior General Than Shwe and wife Daw Kyaing Kyaing and party offer ‘soon’ to Sayadaws. — mna

Senior General Than Shwe and wife Daw Kyaing Kyaing offer provisions to Vice-Chairman Sayadaw Bhaddanta Pahittdabhiyavasa. — mna

Vice-Senior General Maung Aye and wife Daw Mya Mya San donate offertories to a Sayadaw. — mna

Prime Minister General Khin Nyunt and wife Dr Daw Khin Win Shwe present offertories to a Sayadaw. — mna

Daw Khin Than Nwe, wife of Lt-Gen Tin Oo, offers provisions to a Sayadaw. — mna

General Thura Shwe Mann and wife Daw Khin Lay Thet present offertories to a Sayadaw. — mna

Secretary-1 Lt-Gen Soe Win and wife donate provisions to a Sayadaw. — mna

Secretary-2 Lt-Gen Thein Sein and wife present offertories to a Sayadaw. — mna
Britain’s house prices continue to rise

London, 4 March — Britain’s housing market showed no signs of easing off and the prices are still rising strongly despite interest rates having been pushed up twice by the Bank of England, according to the country’s biggest mortgage lender Wednesday.

Halifax said that the current average price of a home rose 1.6 per cent during February, to 148,089 pounds or 275,445 US dollars, taking the year-on-year prices rise to 17.8 per cent, up from 16 per cent in January and 15.4 per cent in December.

However, Halifax’s monthly rise at 1.6 per cent is only half that reported last week by the Nationwide Building Society, which claimed that house prices rose by 3.1 per cent in February.

There are some differences of timing of data collection between the two lenders and economists say the Christmas period could have distorted the figures.

According to Halifax, the house market is being propped up by a strong labour market, low rates and a shortage of new homes being built.

“The ongoing strength of the housing market is underpinned by the favourable coming into play of a strong labour market, historically low interest rates and low mortgage payments in relation to earnings,” said Shane O’Riordan, general manager of group economics at Halifax.

The Bank of England is concerned and wants to engineer a slowdown in the growth in the housing market for fear that a credit crunch would lead to a crash.

Samsung develops world’s first 70 nanometer DRAM chips

Seoul, 4 March — Samsung Electronics Co announced Wednesday it has developed the world’s first 70 nanometer (nm) technology for producing dynamic random access memory (DRAM) chips.

The world’s largest memory chipmaker said it utilized metal electrodes as condensers instead of silicon condensers in developing the 70 nm process, which can produce 30 per cent more than 80 nm process, the industry standard, reported South Korean Yonhap news agency.

The 80 nm technology had been regarded as the limit of DRAM manufacturing technology, according to experts.

“We completed verifying the commercialization of the new technology by applying it to making 70 nm 512-megabit DRAM chips,” a Samsung official was quoted by Yonhap as saying. The South Korean electronics giant has applied for a patent for the new technology.

One nanometer is a unit of measurement equal to one-billionth of a metre. In the chip production process, it refers to the output operation of chips smaller than 100 nanometers.

Samsung has strengthened its leadership in the industry following the development of the world’s first 70 nanometer 4-Gigabit NAND flash memory chips and an 80 nm DRAM device in last September.

Aussie golden fleece locked up in bank vault

Sydney, 4 March — Two Australian sheep farmers have produced the world’s finest wool, a mere 11.9 microns thick or about one-fifth the diameter of human hair, with a bale of the super fine wool now under armed guard inside a bank vault.

The bale of wool is valued at more than one million Australian dollars (752,000 US dollars) and when sold in coming weeks is probably destined for a fashion house in Paris, Milan, New York or Tokyo.

“It’s a world record that highlights the amount of research and development put in by Australian farmers,” said Deputy Prime Minister John Anderson on Wednesday in congratulating the sheep farming brothers Bim and Richard Goodrich.

One micron is a thousandth of a millimetre and 14-16 micron wool is normally used for cashier clothing. The average wool produced in Australia is 20 microns. To grow the world’s finest wool, the Goodrich brothers built a luxurious shed dubbed the “Wooldorf Astoria” for the prized sheep on their Warroo Station property in northern New South Wales State.

Life for the pampered sheep inside the large shed, unlike those left in open paddocks, is stress-free with the climate controlled and special feed. — MNA/Reuters

76 poisoned after wedding feast in S-W China

KUNMING, 4 March — Seventy-six people in Luxi County in southwest China’s Yunnan Province were poisoned after attending a wedding feast at a local restaurant Monday, officials with the county health bureau said Wednesday.

“All the victims are out of danger and the restaurant has been closed for examination,” said Wang Zefang, director of the bureau. Wang said Luxi People’s Hospital reported Tuesday that it had treated dozens of people for nausea, vomiting, fatigue, headaches and diarrhoea and the number of victims had climbed up to 76 by Wednesday afternoon. The bureau immediately carried out an investigation and found out that all the victims had attended a wedding feast at a local restaurant called “Yipingxian” on Monday afternoon, said Wang, who said the hospital has set up a special team to take care of the victims. — MNA/Xinhua
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   - 4 Days/3 Nights [15th to 18th April '04]
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The best time to plant a tree was 20 years ago. Second best time is now.
ASEAN seeks ways to boost intra block cooperation

HANOI, 4 March—The important issues to boost intra-ASEAN cooperation and solidarity will be discussed at the retreat, which will be held on Thursday in Ha Long City of northern Quang Ninh province. The meeting will focus on the Summit’s resolutions as well as the block’s external relation strategy. Local newspaper Labour on Wednesday quoted Vietnamese Foreign Minister Nguyen Dy Nien as saying.

The coming retreat takes place at a time when ASEAN is facing a number of opportunities and challenges. Firstly, the group’s international image and prestige are increasing thanks to the success of the 9th ASEAN Summit last October and other summits with China, Japan and India, Nien noted.

Secondly, external relations with ASEAN partners, especially the three Northeast Asian nations of China, Japan and South Korea, and India have made huge steps forward in economics, politics and international issues. China and Japan have become ASEAN’s strategic partners, he added.

However, numerous problems and major challenges are ahead. Economically, many countries in the region are battling a complicated development which followed soon after SARS was contained. Meanwhile, cooperation within the block in certain fields is still limited as the cooperation mechanism has not yet worked as effectively as expected, he said.

Member countries have, therefore, to sit down and openly and frankly discuss the issues of cooperation within the block. And the upcoming AMM Retreat will provide them with opportunities to seek effective solutions to outstanding problems.

At the retreat, ASEAN members will discuss concrete steps to put into practice two initiatives which were launched by Vietnamese Prime Minister Phan Van Khai at the 9th ASEAN Summit. One is to hold a meeting for leaders of ASEAN’s poor localities in Vietnam, to exchange experiences in poverty reduction and narrow the development gap, and the other to organize a festival to promote tourism in East Asia, said Nien.

China works out first computer for the blind

HARбин, 4 March—Two companies based in the northeastern China province of Heilongjiang have successfully produced a computer that allows the blind and those with eye diseases to access the cyber space with a Chinese-Braille keyboard, a mouse and two ears.

The computer is a joint product between Chen’s company and the Telecommunication Industry Group based in the oil rich Daging City. “The blind do not fall behind the seeing people at all in terms of intelligence, but have much fewer opportuni- ties for training and employ- ment,” said Hou Qiyong, a teacher with a Harbin-based school for blind students who invented the Chinese-Braille keyboard.

With this computer, the blind users can learn to send and receive emails within two days,” said Hou, who has poor sight himself. Figures show China has around nine million people suffering from eye diseases, more than five million of whom are blind. As digital technology and networking have become a major source of information, blind people are eager to update their knowl- edge and improve their lives.

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**Ronaldo hoping to finish career at Real Madrid**

**Madrid, 4 March —** Ronaldo signed a two-year extension to his Real Madrid contract on Tuesday and said he expected to close out his career at the Spanish club.

"I had no doubts about this extension, from the moment Real Madrid expressed their interest," said the Brazilian striker, whose new deal runs until the end of the 2007-08 season.

"Between now and 2008 I've got time to think but I assume I'll finish my career at Real Madrid. It would be spectacular to do that."

Ronaldo joined Real from Inter Milan for 45 million euros (56 million US dollars) in 2002, signing a four-year deal with an option to stay one further season.

Real announced on Tuesday that the two parties had agreed to prolong the contract for two further years.

Bates had, who, has been the subject of speculation linking him with moves to England or back to Italy, said his first choice would be to remain at Real.

"Interest from other clubs is always nice but I'm at the best club in the world, playing with the world's best players," said Ronaldo, who was speaking at a news conference at the Santiago Bernabeu Stadium.

"I'm planning on spending a lot of years here and going on to be an ambassador for the club."
8:00 am
1. Recitation of Parittas by Missionary Sayawd U Ommathara

7:30 am
1. Morning news

8:00 am
1. Musical song

8:10 am
1. Daily News

8:20 am
1. Morning News

8:25 am
1. News

8:30 am
1. News

9:00 am
1. Discovery News

10:00 am
1. Evening News

10:20 am
1. Discovery News

11:00 am
1. Special News

11:30 am
1. Special News

12:00 am
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8:00 am
1. News

WEATHER

Summary of observations recorded at 09:30 hours MST: During the past 24 hours, weather has been generally fair in the whole country. Day temperatures were (°C) above normal in Kachin, Shan and Kayin States, Sagaing, Magway and Taninthayi Divisions, (°C) above normal in Mandalay Division and about normal in the remaining areas. The significant day temperature was (°C) in Amayaw. Maximum temperature on 3-3-2004 was 35.8°C (96°F). Minimum temperature on 2-3-2004 was 17.9°C (64°F). Relative humidity at 9:30 hrs MST on 4-3-2004 was 83%. Total sun shine hours on 3-3-2004 was 7.7 hours approx. Rainfall on 2-3-2004 was nil at Yangon Airport, Aye Aye and central Yangon. Total rainfall since 1-1-2004 was 6 mm (0.2 inch) at Yangon airport and nil at Kaba Aye and central Yangon. Maximum temperature at Yangon (Kaba Aye) was 8 mph from South at (18.30 hrs) MST on 3-3-2004. A low pressure is partly in the Andaman Sea and South Bay and fair elsewhere in the Bay of Bengal.

Forecast valid until evening of 3-3-2004: Possibility of isolated light rain in Taninthayi Division, weather will be generally fair in the remaining areas. Degree of certainty is (40%).

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

Outlook for subsequent two days: Likelihood of isolated rain in Taninthayi Division, Forecast for Yangon and neighbouring areas for 3-3-2004: Partly cloudy. Forecast for Mandalay and neighbouring areas for 3-3-2004: Fairly cloudy.

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Regional development mainly relies on efforts of local people
Senior General Than Shwe inspects development of Ye in Mon State

YANGON, 4 March — Chairman of the State Peace and Development Council Commander-in-Chief of Defence Services Senior General Than Shwe arrived at Ye in Mon State on 2 March.

He was accompanied by members of the State Peace and Development Council General Thura Shwe Mann, Lt-Gen Maung Bo, Lt-Gen Thida Thura Tin Aung Myint Oo, Lt-Gen Kyaw Win and Lt-Gen Tin Aye, Commander-in-Chief (Navy) Rear-Admiral Soe Thein, Commander-in-Chief (Air) Maj-Gen Myat Hein, Chairman of Taninthayi Division Peace and Development Council Commander of Coastal Region Command Brig-Gen Ohn Myint, ministers, deputy ministers, senior military officers and officials of the State Peace and Development Council Office.

On arrival in Ye, the Senior General and party were welcomed by Chairman of Mon State Peace and Development Council Commander of South-East Command Maj-Gen Thura Myint Aung, Brig-Gen Ye Win of Ye Station and officials.

At the regional battalion, Senior General Than Shwe and party met with departmental personnel, members of Union Solidarity and Development Association and social organizations, and Tatmadaw members and families of Ye Station.

General Thura Shwe Mann spoke on the occasion.

Later, Senior General Than Shwe gave guidance, saying that in the past Ye was the end of railroad and motor road running to the south in the coastal region. Now a motor road runs from Ye to Kawhobung via Dawei and Myeik. In addition, the railroad in the area has now extended up to Dawei. As Ye has become one of the gateways to Taninthayi Division, it will achieve extra development in the future.

Apart from it, Ye has sound economic foundations, where agricultural business is good, and potentials are high for the growth of meat and fish industry. The improvement of roads between Mon State and Taninthayi Division has led to the development of the economy, trade and transport of Ye.

Anyhow, whatever condition a region may have, hard work of the local people is required for its progress. If the region has enough skilled human resources, it will actually gain progress.

The State has set up institutions of higher learning and schools region-wise for development of human resources region-wise. All need to strive hard as only hard work will bring prosperity. Harmonious efforts are required for development of Ye Township, Mon State and the Union itself. He then cordially greeted those present at the meeting.

After the meeting, the Senior General and party inspected rail-cum-road bridge built by Myanmar Railways of the Ministry of Rail Transportation on Ye River, and the town.

Accompanied by Commander of South-East Command Maj-Gen Thura Myint Aung, the Senior General and party helicoptored to Mawlamyine, where they were welcomed by Deputy Commander Brig-Gen Myo Hla and officials.

At the command, they met with Mon State, Mawlamyine District and township local authorities, division, district and township level officials, members of USDA and social organizations, and Tatmadaw members and their families of Mawlamyine Station and families.

At the meeting, Commander Maj-Gen Thura Myint Aung reported to the Senior General on development of the agricultural, industrial and meat and fish sectors, monsoon and summer paddy cultivation, rice production, cultivation of beans and pulses and pepper, sown acreage of rubber and plans to extend rubber plantation, and implementation of the economic plans.

Minister for National Planning and Economic Development U Soe Tha explained the national economic growth, increase in the per capita income, the economic volume of the nation, the ratio of Mon State contribution to the national economy, and sector-wise implementation for development of Mon State.

General Thura Shwe Mann also explained the aims of the entourage led by the Head of State to visit Mon State and Taninthayi Division, and the development of the entire nation including Mon State, speaking of the need to pay serious attention to the economic sector to boost production as peace and stability is prevailing in the whole nation due to harmonious efforts of the State, the people and the Tatmadaw; to manufacture import-substitute goods; to switch to mechanized farming; to minimize loss and wastage; and to increase exports.

In his guidance given at the meeting, Senior General Than Shwe said he has been visiting the regions with the goodwill to develop them and the wish to fulfil their requirements.

Regional development mainly relies on the efforts of the local people. In other words, the main strength for regional development is the people of that region themselves. The State can only create a better situation by providing proper encouragement and assistance.

Effective use of natural resources is important for regional development. In stead of expecting what is non-existent, efforts should be made to achieve progress and success, based on the objective conditions.

Mon State is fertile where agricultural business flourishes. Extra impetus should be made to extend cultivation of rice, and other crops including rubber and pepper in accord with the year-wise plans. Moreover, (See page 8)

Excerpts from Senior General’s addresses

As Ye has become one of the gateways to Taninthayi Division, it will achieve extra development in the future.

Whatever condition a region may have, hard work of the local people is required for its progress.

All need to strive hard as only hard work will bring prosperity.

Effective use of natural resources is important for regional development.

The vision of ASEAN is “all member nations must become modern and developed ones in 2020”, and it is imperative to swiftly reform the Myanmar education system.

Education infrastructures were established after laying down the national education promotion special 4-year plan.