Patriotic leaders and experts dutifully contribute to strengthening and modernization of the Armed Forces

Only when a nation possesses a modern defence capability, will it be possible to ensure the full protection of its sovereignty. Thus, it can be seen that in every nation of the world, patriotic leaders and experts who hold sovereignty dear have the sense of responsibility to contribute to the strengthening and modernization of the Armed Forces.

Comrades,

We have to build up and maintain a national defence capability adequate for the total defence of the nation. Factors contributing to the national defence capability include not only economic strength and geographical characteristics but also the country’s demographic features. Therefore, it is necessary for each and every citizen to participate in the defence of the nation with a heightened sense of patriotism. Defending the nation is an inborn duty of every citizen.

Only when a nation possesses a modern defence capability, will it be possible to ensure the full protection of its sovereignty. Thus, it can be seen that in every nation of the world, patriotic leaders and experts who hold sovereignty dear have the sense of responsibility to contribute to the strengthening and modernization of the Armed Forces.
Build up State defence capability

As regards the State defence duties, Defence Services Commander-in-Chief Senior General Than Shwe in his address at the 59th Anniversary Armed Forces Day Parade said: "We have to build up a national defence capability adequate for the total defence of the nation. Factors contributing to the national defence capability include not only economic strength and geographical characteristics but also the country’s demographic features. Therefore, it is necessary for each and every citizen to participate in the defence of the nation with a heightened sense of patriotism. Defending the nation is an inborn duty of every citizen."

Tatmadaw and the people must be inseparable. In order to ensure that the nation with a heightened sense of patriotism is being developed, where there prevails peace, tranquillity and development, people are urged to participate in the tasks together for national reconsolidation among the national brethren in order to ensure prevalence of peace and tranquillity all over the country. At the same time, efforts are being made to bring about equitable development in all regions of the Union.

Hailing the 59th Anniversary Armed Forces Day: Book Fair

Sarpay Beikman

# 378,384 Uppar Kyauk Street, Yangon (former PPE head office) 19 to 28 March 2004 (from 9 am to 5 pm)

Prizes presented to best companies, columns in Armed Forces Day Parade

YANGON, 27 March—The prize distribution to best companies and columns in the 59th Anniversary Armed Forces Day Parade took place at the Myoma Ground on U’ Wisara Street here this morning, attended by member of the State Peace and Development Council General Thura Shwe Mann, on behalf of the Commander-in-Chief of Defence Services, Secretary-2 of the State Peace and Development Council Adjunt-General Lt-Gen Thein Sein and Chairmen of Leading Committees for Observation of the 59th Anniversary Armed Forces Day Chief of Armed Forces Training Lt-Gen Kyaw Win.

Also present on the occasion were Chairman of the Working Committee for the Generation Youth Golf Championship, organized by the Myanmar Federation of Women’s Affairs, acting as stooges, holding negative views

* Oppose foreign nations interfering in internal affairs of the State
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People’s Desire

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Prizes presented to best companies, columns in Armed Forces Day Parade

YANGON, 27 March—Honouring the 59th Anniversary Armed Forces Day, the Han Golf Master’s New Generation Youth Golf Championship, organized by Myanmar Golf Federation, will be held at Myanmar Golf Club, here, on 30 March morning.

There will be five classes— the 8-10 age class, the 11-12 age class, the 13-14 age class, the 15-17 age class and the under-18 women’s class. Those wishing to participate in the championship may enlist at City Golf Resort (Pro-shop), Tel: 641341 and 723221, not later than 4 pm on 29 March—MNA
China striving to launch satellite to orbit moon in late 2006

BEIJING, 27 March — China will strive to launch a satellite to orbit the moon by December of 2006 from its Xichang Satellite Launch Centre in Sichuan Province, southwest China, the country’s top space official said Thursday.

The tentative plan for the launch is one year earlier than was announced late last year. Sun Laiyan, vice-director of the China National Space Administration (CNSA), said last December the satellite will be launched by 2007.

Luan Enjie, CNSA director and chief commander of the lunar satellite project, said Thursday research and development of five major systems of the project are under way. They are the satellite system, the launch vehicle system, the launch site system, the survey and control system and the ground application system.

The project has government funding of 1.4 billion yuan (about 170 million US dollars).

Addressing the first work meeting on the project, Luan said the project has been named Chang’e Project, while the first lunar satellite has been named Chang’e No.1. Chang’e refers to a goddess who flew to the moon in an ancient Chinese fairy tale.

According to the design, the satellite system consists of a satellite platform and payload, which will be based on China’s Dongfanghong 3 satellite platform and pay- load and other mature satellite technology. The satellite will weigh 2,350 kilos in weight with 130 kilos of payload, and will orbit the moon for one year.

A home-made Long March III A carrier rocket will be used to launch the satellite. The satellite will obtain three-dimensional images of the lunar surface, analyse the content of useful materials and elements, and probe the depth of the lunar soil and the space environment between the Earth and the moon.

China’s lunar probe programme is divided into three phases. The first phase of the programme for sending a satellite to orbit the moon is underway. It would be followed by a proposed landing of an unmanned vehicle on the moon in the second stage by 2010, and collecting samples of lunar soil with an unmanned vehicle in 2020 in the third phase.

Indonesia sets up first virus research centre

JAKARTA, 27 March — The University of Indonesia (UI) has set up its first virus research centre, the Institute of Human Virology, University of Maryland Baltimore, the United States, the Rector of the University of Indonesia Usman Chahid said. He said the establishment of the institute is part of the MNA/Xinhua

French FM to visit Haiti next week

PARIS, 27 March — French Foreign Minister Dominique de Villepin will visit Haiti next week in the first visit by a high-ranking foreign political leader since President Jean-Bertrand Aristide was toppled in a rebellion.

A Foreign Ministry spokesman said on Friday that Villepin would visit the Caribbean country on April 1 but gave no details of his programme.

Villepin said earlier this month that he would visit the former French colony after a government of national unity was installed.

Villepin’s trip will be the first official visit by a French Government representative to Haiti since it became independent 200 years ago, the Foreign Ministry said.

Haiti is one of France’s wealthiest colonies during the 17th Century before a slave rebellion led to its independence in 1804. Today it is the poorest country in the Americas.

MNA/Reuters

Drug overdoses fuel jump in US poisoning deaths

ATLANTA, 27 March — Illicit use of heroin, cocaine and other drugs helped fuel a dramatic rise in the number of accidental and unplanned poisoning deaths in the United States, health researchers said on Thursday.

The fatality rate from poisoning, excluding suicides and murders, rose an average 145 per cent between 1990 and 2001, according to data collected by 11 states and published by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Narcotics and hallucinogens accounted for 51 per cent of these deaths.

Catherine Sanford, an official with the North Carolina Department of Health and Human Services and one of the authors of the study, said the troubling data highlighted a clear and common message.

“If you use drugs for recreation, there is good chance you will die,” said Sanford, who added that misuse of sedatives, pain killers and other legitimately prescribed drugs also contributed to the poisoning fatality trends.

She stressed that this finding did not indicate a need to restrict legally prescribed drugs, especially if they were used to control chronic pain or treat patients in substance abuse clinics.

There were 22,242 poisoning deaths in 2001 in the United States, 63 per cent of which were unintentional. The overall death rate from poisonings — either intentional or unintentional — rose 56 per cent between 1990 and 2001.

Poisonings cost the nation untold billions every year in medical costs and lost productivity. A 1997 study put the cost at about 925 US dollars per incident.

Researchers could not explain why Americans between the ages of 45 and 54 posted the biggest increase — a 359 per cent rise — in unintentional poisoning fatalities during the 1990-2001 period.

Equally puzzling was the discovery that the rate of increase among women was almost double that of men in Colorado, Delaware, Florida, Kentucky, Massachusetts, New Mexico, North Carolina, Oregon, Utah, Washington and Wisconsin.

MNA/Reuters

Irak fighting leaves 15 dead, including a US Marine

BAKU, 27 March — A US Marine is one of 15 people killed in fighting in Iraq. In the town of Fallujah, US troops and guerrillas armed with mortars and rocket-propelled grenades fought for hours in the alleys. One Marine and at least five Iraqis died, including a cameraman with ABC News.

Near Tikrit today, four members of the US-trained Iraqi Civil Defence Corps and three suspected rebels died during a raid by Iraqi security forces and US soldiers.

The US military also says 21 suspected guerrillas were captured in the raid north of Baghdad.

US Marines took over authority in Fallujah and surrounding areas from the Army this week. The city is in the so-called Sunni triangle, where support for Saddam was strong and rebel attacks on American forces are frequent. After the fighting, Marines patrolled on foot.

The city was largely deserted with shops shuttered and residents staying indoors.

MNA/Xinhua

Soldiers in Iraq buy their own body armour

BAGHDAD, 27 March — Soldiers headed for Iraq are still buying their own body armour — and in many cases, their families are buying it for them — despite assurances from the military that the gear will be in hand before they’re in harm’s way.

Body armour distributors have received steady inquir- ies from soldiers and fami- lies about purchasing the gear, which can cost several thousand dollars. Though the military has advised them not to rely on third-party suppli- ers, many soldiers say they want it before they deploy.

Last October, it was re- ported that nearly one-quarter of American troops serving in Iraq did not have ceramic plated body armour, which can stop bullets fired from assault rifles and shotguns.

The military says the shortfall is over and soldiers who do not yet have the armor soon will. But many want to avoid the risk.

“What we hear from sol- diers is that they are told that they are going to get body armour just before they leave or just after they get there. But they don’t want to take a chance,” said Nick Taylor, owner of Bullet- proof.com, an online dis- tributor of body armor in Austin, Texas.

Inquiries rise and fall with the rate of deployments, fueled by stories of units falling un- der attack at little or no notice, being issued body armour. Whether they are true, the sto- ries are prompting families to think about buying the equip- ment, Taylor said.

Dan Britt paid about $1,400 for body armour for his son stationed in Kuwait who had orders to move into Baghdad. He re- cently heard his son received protection.

“In war, as we’ve learned through all our history, who gets killed and who doesn’t is just happenstance,” said the father from Hamilton, Ohio. “But if I can raise the odds, then I’ll feel better.” — Internet

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Equally puzzling was the discovery that the rate of increase among women was almost double that of men in Colorado, Delaware, Florida, Kentucky, Massachusetts, New Mexico, North Carolina, Oregon, Utah, Washington and Wisconsin.

MNA/Reuters
US soldiers face charges of prisoner abuse

WASHINGTON, 27 March—To former military police Master Sgt Lisa Girman and two of her fellow soldiers, May 12 was just “another night in the desert” restraining unruly Iraqi war prisoners. But in January, the three Pennsylvania MPs were discharged from the military for kicking and punching Iraqis, including one allegedly linked to the ambush of the Jessica Lynch convoy.

In a similar case, a Marine guard testified in February that beating uncooperative Iraqi detainees was common. In all, eight Marines have been charged, six more American soldiers with assault, indecent acts, cruelty, and maltreatment in connection with the alleged abuse of as many as 19 detainees at the Abu Ghraib prison west of Baghdad.

From detainee abuse to the excessive use of force and disputed killings of civilians, the Iraq conflict is producing its share of legal and ethical lapses by US service members, despite strenuous efforts by US commanders to avoid them.

The breaches involve only a tiny fraction of the more than 150,000 US occupation force, which military ethicists and human rights groups have given generally good marks for their comportment in Iraq. Still, such violations could cause disproportionate damage to the US military’s image among Iraqis.

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Syposium held in Hangzhou to discuss UN reform

BEIJING, 27 March — The Asia High-Level Symposium on Threats, Challenge and Change will be held in China from 2 to 4 April to discuss the role and reform of the United Nations (UN).

Chinese Foreign Minis-
try spokesman Kong Quan made the announcement here on Thursday afternoon. The conference will be held in Hangzhou, capital of east China’s Zhejiang Province, at the request of a panel of eminent persons on UN re-
form and UN’s role, accord-
ing to Kong.

From the Chinese vice-pre-

dier Qian Qichen, also a

Berlin zoo banks on sperm cocktail for panda cubs

BERLIN, 27 March—Berlin Zoo’s giant panda Yan Yan moved a step closer to becoming a mother on Thursday when a delegation of Chinese experts flew in to discuss inseminating her with a cocktail of sperm from several Chinese pandas.

Six attempts to impregnate the 19-year-old with sperm from her Berlin Zoo companion Bao Bao, 26, all failed and now scientists at the zoo say they want to try a mixture of semen from several Chinese pan-
das.

For one week, experts from Beijing will assess the suitability of Chinese-born Yan Yan and her environment for the project. “At first glance, the outlook is good. At this early stage we are very happy,” said Peng Zhenxin, Director of the Giant Panda Re-
search Centre in Beijing.

The method has already been used sucess-

fully in China, where the research cen-
tre has used sperm cocktails to breed 64 cubs, he added. Yan Yan’s vet, Andreas Ochs, told Reuters it was extremely difficult to create the right conditions in captivity for natural insemination of the endangered spe-
cies and had never happened in Yan Yan’s case. — MNA/Reuters

EU wants greater UN role in Iraq

BRUSSELS, 27 March—The European Union stressed the need for a greater UN role in Iraq amid rampant insecurity, as Australian Prime Minister John Howard said an early withdrawal from the war-torn country could help foster global terrorism. Meanwhile, the chief US allies in Asia, Japan and South Korea, shored up their support for the US-led coalition, mapping out their financial aid and sticking to plans to send more than 3,000 troops.

After a two-day summit in Brussels, EU leaders reaff-

ermed their support for a greater UN role in Iraq, but warned insecurity remains a major obstacle to rebuilding the coun-

try. Brussels “looks forward to the UN playing a vital and growing role endorsed by the UN Security Council in the rule of law transition and beyond,” the leaders said in a concluding statement.

“A strong UN role in this political transition process is an essential element for its success,” they said.

But they warned “the security situation in Iraq remains a major impediment to successful political and reconstruction processes.” UN Secretary-General Kofi Annan on 18 March agreed to send his envoy, Lakhdar Brahimi, and a team of experts back to Iraq to help prepare for elections and a new government set to take power in three months. — Internet

India test-fires “Trishul” short-range missile successfully

NEW DELHI, 27 March—India on Thursday successfully test-fired its most sophisticated short-range missile Trishul from the Integrated Test Range (ITR) at Chandipur in central India’s Orissa State.

India test-fired “Trishul” short-range missile successfully.

Indigenously developed by India’s Defence Research Development Organization (DRDO), the surface-to-air missile was test-fired from a mobile launcher at about 2.52 a.m., the Press Trust of India (PTI) quoted defence sources as saying.

Russia says “ISS” crew’s return to earth delayed

MOSCOW, 27 March—The International Space Station’s two-man crew will return to Earth on 30 April, a day later than planned, Russia’s mission control said on Thursday.

Russian cosmonaut Alexander Kaleri and his US commander Michael Foale had not been able to complete their programme in time to return to Eon schedule.

“their programme has been extended and they need more time in orbit,” said a mission control spokesman. “They will return on 30 April, not 29 April.”

The two men have been in orbit since 18 October. — MNA/Reuters

Anti-war soldier charged with desertion

SAVANNAH, 27 March—A US soldier who says he would rather go to prison than back to an “oil-driven war” has been charged with desertion for leaving his unit in Iraq five months ago.

Staff Sgt Camilo Mejia of the Florida National Guard will face a special court-
martial. Fort Stewart command-
der Maj Gen William G Webster declined Friday that means Mejia could get up to one year in prison and a bad conduct discharge rather than the maximum five years and dishonorable discharge allowed under military law in a general court-martial.

“The maximum punish-

ment is a little bit less,” said Maj Robert Resnick, chief of military justice at Fort Stewart. Even if Mejia is found guilty, “in a court-

martial, they can always adjudge no punishment.”

No date has been set for a military judge to try Mejia’s case, Resnick said.

Mejia, 27, of Miami Beach, returned 17 March to Fort Stewart to face possible prosecution. He left Iraq in October on two weeks leave and did not return to his unit, the 1st Battalion, 124th In-

fantry Regiment.

Mejia, who has com-
demned the war in Iraq as “an oil-driven war,” has an application pending for conscientious objector status. That would stop the Army from prosecuting him for his five-month absence. Mejia has said he would rather go to prison than back to Iraq. He learned of the charge Wednesday, a week after he returned to Fort Stewart, said his attorney, Louis Font. — Internet

China’s acid rain pollution worsened in 2003

BEIJING, 27 March—China’s acid rain pollution worsened in 2003, according to a statement released here Thursday by the environment watchdog.

According to the annual “Statement on the Environment” issued by the State Envi-
onmental Protection Administration (SEPA), acid rain occurred in 54.4 per cent of the total 487 cities monitored. The percentage of cities with no acid rain occur-

rence decreased while that of cities with acid rain frequency is higher than 40 per cent, increasing 7.2 per cent over 2002.

Zhu Guangyao, vice-director of SEPA, said at a Press conference here Thursday that the statistics indicated that acid rain pollution worsened in 2003. The statement also said the pollution scope within the acid rain control zones remained stable, but pollution in already seriously polluted areas has wors-

ened. Statistics showed acid rain occurred in 89.6 per cent of the 106 cities in the acid rain control zones in 2003. Compared to 2002, the percentage of cities with low acid rain fre-

quency (between 20 to 40 per cent) decreased by 11.9 per cent while that of cities with high frequency (higher than 40 per cent) increased by 6.9 per cent. — MNA/Xinhua

Smoke billows from an explosion which set ablaze a main oil well in the Kabazh oil field in Kirkuk, northern Iraq, on Friday 26 March, 2004. The cause of the fire was unknown. — Internet
Iraqi guerillas likely to step up attacks on police

BAGHDAD, 27 March— Some 350 US-trained Iraqi police have been killed in the past year, and rebel attacks will likely increase before the coalition hands over sovereignty on 30 June, the US military said yesterday. The latest American casualty was a soldier who died in a bomb explosion north of Baghdad.

In Fallujah, west of Baghdad, guerillas attacked a US military convoy, and TV footage showed an empty Humvee in flames. One Iraqi driver in a civilian car was killed in the crossfire.

Guerillas have struck police north and south of the capital this week. They killed two police who were twin brothers, killed a provincial police chief and ambushed a van carrying police recruits, killing nine.

“We remain concerned at what is clearly a programme of intimidation and targeting of not only the Iraqi police service, but all Iraqi government officials,” said Brig Gen Mark Kimmit, the US military’s deputy director of operations. “A significant number of Iraqi police have been killed in the past year, somewhere in the order of 350.”

He said that despite the attacks “on almost a daily basis,” morale in the force remained high and no significant drop in recruitment of retention rates had occurred.

Some 200,000 Iraqis are serving in the country’s security forces, which includes the army, police, border guards and the Iraqi Civil Defence Corps, or ICDC. Guerillas view them as collaborators with the US-led occupation, and they often make easier targets because they are less well-armed and protected than the US troops who sometimes accompany them on patrols.

Iraqi cameraman working for US network ABC killed in Fallujah

BAGHDAD, 27 March— An Iraqi cameraman working with US television network ABC was killed on Friday while covering clashes in the restive town of Fallujah.

“Sadly, today we learned of the death of our colleague, Burhan Mohammed Mazhour,” ABC News President David Westin said in a statement.

“An Iraqi citizen, Burhan had been working as a freelance cameraman for ABC News in Fallujah for about two months. He died of gunshot wounds while covering a firefight in Fallujah.

“We are trying to confirm all the details surrounding his death and have asked the US military for an investigation. We will miss Burhan’s dedication and professionalism. Our thoughts and prayers are with his family.”

Mazhour was shot in the head and taken to Fallujah hospital, where he died shortly afterwards. Witnesses said US troops fired at him. The US military said it had no information about the incident.

MNA/Reuters

Dinosaur fossil discovered in S-W China

CHONGQING, 27 March— The Chongqing Museum of Natural History began formal excavation Wednesday of a dinosaur fossil newly discovered at the shoal of the Jialing River in southwestern China’s Chongqing Municipality.

Belonging to the Mamenchisaurus dinaouropod, the dino soar lived in the late Jurassic period about 130 million years ago.

According to Zhang Yihong, a research member with the museum, the dino soar fossil, which is well-preserved, is 18 metres long and the height of its back is 3.5 metres.

“All the size of the dino soar fossil is smaller than the Hechuan Mamenchisaurus dino soar, from the shape of the skeleton of the dino soar we can judge that the age it lived should be earlier than the Hechuan Mamenchisaurus dino soar and the Jianshai Mamenchisaurus dino soar discovered in Zigong County, southwestern Sichuan Province,” said Zhang.

“In this sense, the fossil discovered in Chongqing is of great significance to the study of the Mamenchisaurus dino soar and its evolution,” said Zhang.

Experts evaluation shows that the 12 vertebrae, four sacral vertebrae, cervical vertebrae and caudal vertebrae of the dinosaur fossil are all quite intact. Possible fossil of teeth, pubic bones and fragments of the jaw bone were discovered at the nearby shoal.

MNA/Xinhua

South Africa records drop in unemployment

JOHANNESBURG, 27 March — South Africa said on Thursday that its official unemployment rate declined to 28.2 per cent in September from 31.2 per cent in March of the same year.

Statistics SA said in Pretoria that the number of un employed people fell from 5.3 million to 4.6 million over the same period, describing the development as a “statistically significant decrease.”

However, the decline was accompanied by an increase of 985,000 people who have been described as not economically active people — that includes children and the elderly. — MNA/Xinhua

US existing home sales up 2% in February

WASHINGTON, 27 March — Sales of existing homes in the United States rose by 2 per cent in February to a seasonally adjusted annual rate of 6.12 million units, the National Association of Realtors on Thursday.

The sales in February were up 5.7 per cent from a year earlier and in line with economists’ forecasts. The increase indicated that the US housing market, supported by the lowest interest rates in decades, remained buoyant.

In February, the median price for an existing home was 168,100 dollars, up 5.7 per cent from a year earlier. Housing inventory levels rose 5.9 per cent at the end of February with 2.33 million existing homes available for sale.

According to the US mortgage finance firm Freeland Mac, the monthly average rate for a 30-year, fixed-rate mortgage was 5.64 per cent in February, down from 5.73 per cent in January.

MNA/Xinhua

Bangladesh marks 33rd Independence anniversary

DHAKA, 27 March— Bangladesh marked its 33rd Independence anniversary on Friday with an Army parade boasting pomp and splendour, but with a stagnating economy, rising crime and constant political bickering, citizens have little to celebrate.

Prime Minister Begum Khaleda Zia is struggling to retain support in the face of a campaign by the opposition to force her to call early elections — currently scheduled for the end of the year — and the country has been paralyzed by a series of strikes.

In a speech ahead of Friday’s anniversary, Khaleda appealed to all political parties to work together for the good of Bangladesh.

“Whichever party we belong to or whatever opinion we hold, we all are pledge bound to work for the welfare of the country and are accountable to the people,” Khaleda said. She also shook up her own Cabinet in a bid to improve efficiency. — MNA/Reuters

China contributes to global anti-poverty efforts

BEIJING, 27 March— China has made important contributions to the global cause of poverty reduction by cutting the number of desperately poor people from 250 million in 1978 to just 30 million in 2003, according to a United Nations report issued here Thursday.

The UN report on China’s progress towards the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) said China had already achieved the goal of halving the number of people living in extreme poverty ahead of the international deadline of 2015.

China’s success offers hope for poverty reduction efforts around the globe, World Bank Vice-President Franne Leautier said after an on-the-spot inspection of poverty alleviation projects in southwest China earlier this month.

A total of 147 million people in the Asia Pacific region have been alleviated from extreme poverty over the past decade, UN Deputy Secretary-General Kim Hak-In told an international conference in Beijing Thursday. The “Asia miracle” should be attributed to China’s exceptional economic growth and India’s significant progress, he said.

However, China is facing new challenges in the progress of poverty reduction as the disparity of incomes between urban and rural residents widened. In order to solve the problem of unbalanced development, the Chinese Government has adopted a new ideology of sustainable growth. Kim said future progress in global poverty reduction requires a new line of thinking that focuses on strategies to help the poor.

He said the Chinese Government had instituted tax cuts, greater rural investment and better medical care and schooling in rural areas.

Chinese State Councillor Tang Jiaxuan said at a three-day international conference on the MDGs that as the new idea of sustainable development takes deeper root in the mind of the Chinese people, China will accelerate its pace in achieving the poverty reduction targets.

His comment was echoed by Rubens Ricupero, Secretary-General of United Nations Conference on Trade and Development. Ricupero said at the seminar that China has set an example for other countries in the anti-poverty drive.

Internet
Daw Kyaing Kyaing and public accord rousing welcome to Tatmadawmen of 59th Anniversary Armed Forces Day parade columns

YANGON, 27 March — To attend the 59th Anniversary Armed Forces Day Parade, led by Parade Commander Brig-Gen Min Then, Tatmadaw members of Anawrahta Column, Kyansitha Column, Bayintnaung Column, Nawade Column, Aung Zeya Column, Hsinbyushin Column, Bandoola Column, Myawady Column and Aung San Column, members of Myanmar Police Force, Fire Brigade and Myanmar Red Cross Society this morning marched into the Resistance Park from Myoma Grounds along U Wisara Road. Thousands of people along the road accorded rousing welcome to them.

Together with the public, Daw Kyaing Kyaing, wife of Chairman of the State Peace and Development Council Commander-in-Chief of Defence Services Senior General Than Shwe, Daw Mya Mya San, wife of Vice-Chairman of the State Peace and Development Council Deputy Commander-in-Chief of Defence Services Commander-in-Chief (Army) Vice-Senior General Maung Aye, Dr Daw Khin Win Shwe, wife of Prime Minister General Khin Nyunt, Daw Khin Than Nwe, wife of Li-Gen Tin Oo, Daw Khin Lay Thet, wife of member of the State Peace and Development Council General Thura Shwe Mann of the Ministry of Defence, Daw Than Than Nwe, wife of Secretary-1 of the State Peace and Development Council Li-Gen Soe Win, Daw Khin Khin Win, wife of Secretary-2 Li-Gen Thein Sein, Dr Daw Tin Lin Myint, wife of member of SPDC Li-Gen Ye Myint, Daw Khin Hnin Wai, wife of member of SPDC Li-Gen Aung Hiwe, Daw Marlar Tint, wife of member of SPDC Li-Gen Khin Maung Thaung, Daw Khin Lay Myint, wife of member of SPDC Li-Gen Maung Bo, Daw Khin Saw Hnin, wife of Quartermaster-General Li-Gen Thigha Thura Tin Aung Myint Oo, Daw San San Yi, wife of Chairman of the leading committee for observance of the 59th Anniversary Armed Forces Day Chief of Armed Forces Training Li-Gen Kyaw Win, wives of the Commander-in-Chief (Navy), the Commander-in-Chief (Air), the Chairman of the management committee for observance of the 59th Anniversary Armed Forces Day Chairman of Yangon Division Peace and Development Council Chairman of Yangon Command offered Aungthabyay (eugenia sprigs) to Tatmadawmen of the military columns and members of MPF, FB and MRCS and garlanded them. Moreover, thousands of people, service personnel of various ministries, members of the Union Solidarity and Development Association, families of Tatmadawmen, members of NGOs, MPF, welcomed the Tatmadawmen and offered Aungthabyay (eugenia sprigs) to them.

Military attaches pay tribute to fallen heroes

YANGON, 27 March — After attending the 59th Anniversary Armed Forces Day Parade held at the Resistance Park this morning, military attaches of foreign missions in Myanmar proceeded to the Memorial to Fallen Heroes on Azarni Road in Bahan Township where they were welcomed by Chairman of Maintenance Committee for the Memorial No 2 Military Region Commander and Yangon Station Commander Brig-Gen Myo Myint and officials. Next, led by Dean of the Military Attaches Military Attaché of the People’s Republic of China to Myanmar Mr Col Xu Shouli, the military attaches paid tribute to the fallen heroes and signed in the visitors’ book.
Tatmadawmen who are combating the menace of narcotic drugs

Soe Nyein San

Born of the national people, the Tatmadaw always gives priority to the aspirations of the people. Members of the Tatmadaw are ready to risk their lives to protect the life, property and security of the people. Apart from discharging national defence duties, the Tatmadaw also plays a crucial part in preventing the danger of narcotic drugs, which can cause the extinction of the entire mankind.

Major operations in which the Tatmadaw took part in 1975-76 were Operation Melon, Operation Taunghteikpan, Operation Zimu, Operation Aung Kyaw Moe, Operation Hti Man Oo, Operation Aung Moe and Operation Lay Man Aung. In 1977, the Tatmadaw also launched Operation Paukpun in 24 townships of Shan State, Operation Twam Wong in three townships of Chin State, and Operation Bat刊物 in two townships of Mon State. Moreover, the Tatmadaw intensified its operations in four townships of Kachin State, in Loikaw Township of Kayah State and in Mogok and Thazi Townships of Mandalay Division to destroy poppy fields. In that drive, a total of 8769.49 acres of poppy fields had been destroyed.

Operation Kauk Yoe and Operation Myechauk were also launched in the east and west of Bago mountain range. Operation Hteekyi aung in Kayin State, Operation Marana in Chin State, Operation Myechauk-2 in Bago Division and localized operations in Rakhine State and Aye Yone Division were also launched to destroy marijuana plantations.

In doing so, the Tatmadaw also launched Operations Moe Hein from First Phase to the Twelfth in the eradication of narcotic drugs. The Tatmadaw won victory in launching those operations. I would like to recall those famous operations, First to Twelfth Operations Moe Hein in which the Tatmadaw was involved.

Operation Moe Hein Phase One was launched in Mognath on the east bank of Thanlawin river in Shan State near Thailand from 26 April to 3 May 1976. In that operation, the Tatmadaw had five engagements with opium traffickers. In those fights, five members of the Tatmadaw sacrificed their lives for the country. Seized together with nine bodies of opium traffickers were narcotics, paraphernalia and items of arms and ammunition.

Operation Moe Hein Phase Two took place in Lwehoingyi region, Mognath Township, Shan State, from 18 to 27 January 1977. Three members of the Tatmadaw sacrificed their lives for the country and the people while 11 others got injured.

It was on 17 June 1977 that Operation Moe Hein Phase Three started around Kaung Maik Hong and Manton regions of Mognath, Loikaw Township near Myanmar-Thai border. The operation went till 14 July that year. The seven engagements between the Tatmadaw and opium traffickers claimed the life of one Tatmadaw member and 12 wounded. Five of the drug traffickers were killed and one captured alive.

Operation Moe Hein Phase Four occurred in Lweho region, Mognath Township at Thailand-Myanmar border from 10 to 27 April 1978. The operation cost the Tatmadaw one life and one wounded. Among the seizures made by the Tatmadaw were 27 bodies of opium traffickers, assorted arms and documents.

From 23 February to 18 March 1980, Operation Moe Hein Phase Five took place in Lawlochaing region. In that operation, the Tatmadaw fought with opium traffickers nine times and seized 10 bodies, assorted arms and rounds of ammunition, and paraphernalia. Five members of the Tatmadaw were wounded.

Operation Moe Hein Phase Six occurred in Lweho region, Mognath and lasted from 9 to 27 March 1981. During the operation, there were 18 fights between the Tatmadaw and opium smugglers. In those engagements, six Tatmadaw members sacrificed their lives for the country while 13 others got injured. Seized together with 32 bodies of opium traffickers were 15 assorted arms and rounds of ammunition. Two were also caught alive.

The Seventh Phase of Operation Moe Hein was launched for 16 days from 8 April in 1983 in Mongyang region. In doing so, the Tatmadaw also launched Operations Hngetkyitaung in Kayin State, Operation Aung Lay Man Aung. In that operation, the Tatmadaw column destroyed insurgents' opium refineries. There were 34 fights occurred in which 21 Tatmadawmen sacrificed their lives and 65 others were wounded. But, 89 drug smugglers were shot dead, five were captured alive, and 30 surrendered.

With the launch of Operation Moe Hein Phase Eight, the Tatmadaw destroyed an opium refinery run by the strength of 300 insurgents in Haskanlan region from 7 to 28 April in 1984. During the 15 fights, two Tatmadaw members sacrificed their lives and 12 others were wounded. Ten opium smugglers were captured. From 3 to 13 May the same year, Eighth Phase of Operation Moe Hein (part-2) destroyed an opium refinery run by 300 smugglers in Lawlochaing region. In that battle, nine Tatmadaw members gave their all, and 27 others were wounded. On the side of the insurgents, three bodies were left. The Tatmadaw launched Operation Moe Hein Phase Nine from 27 February to 14 March 1985. Insurgents were then smuggling out opium of Mongkon region. In seven fights, three Tatmadawmen fell, and one insurgent was captured dead and another was captured alive. From 19 February to 4 March 1986, under Operation Moe Hein Phase Ten, Tatmadaw launched an operation against 400 drug smugglers who were camping in the jungle of Mongkon region. Receiving the information about the launch of Tatmadaw's operation, the insurgents destroyed their opium refineries and fled. But, the Tatmadaw was in hot pursuit and caught three dead and one alive.

Operation Moe Hein Phase Eleven was launched from 20 February to 28 March in 1987 in Naungkan and Mongkon regions. However, some 1400 drug dealer insurgents fled for fear of Tatmadaw's operation. Only two fights broke out between a remnant group of insurgents and the Tatmadaw. In those fights, two members of the Tatmadaw sacrificed their lives and five others were wounded. The Twelfth Phase of Operation Moe Hein was launched from 17 March to 11 April 1988 that crushed remnants of KMT and over 1600 insurgents under BCF (No 6 brigade) and various forces. During the operation, there broke out 11 major fights and 39 engagements totaling 50. In the operation region, five opium refineries of insurgents were destroyed, 37 Tatmadawmen sacrificed their lives and 335 others were wounded. A total of 86 bodies of insurgents were seized and one was captured alive.

To be continued

(Translation: KTY)
Only when a nation ...

(From page 1)

Comrades,

Our Tatmadaw has three main duties. The first duty is to defend the nation. We must train constantly for the successful defence of the nation. It follows from the nature of our defence duty that continuous training enhances capability. This makes training our second duty. In addition to the duties of national defence and continuous training, we have to vigorously discharge our third duty of serving the interests of the people.

We Tatmadawmen are the offspring of the people. Therefore, I would like to remind you to participate wholeheartedly in the activities that promote the welfare of the public wherever you are assigned and to join hands with the people to repulse courageously whatever dangers that threaten the nation and its people, even at the risk of your own lives.

Comrades,

The Tatmadaw was compelled to assume the responsibilities of the State as the people were faced with a generally deteriorating and extremely critical situation. In assuming those responsibilities, the Tatmadaw has also become responsible for the nation’s future. Therefore, the Tatmadaw, upholding the Three National Causes, has laid down the Twelve National Objectives and has been striving day and night for the emergence of a new peaceful modern developed nation.

As the Tatmadaw has given priority to achieving national reconsolidation, peace and tranquility now prevail throughout the country, including the border areas. With efforts to achieve peace and stability bearing fruit, endeavours to achieve all-round progress in all parts of the country simultaneously have begun. A trio of major projects - the border areas and national races development project, the 24 special development zones project and the rural areas development project - are being implemented in a coordinated network covering the whole country.

Comrades,

Major clusters of agriculture and other economic infrastructures are being built wherever necessary. Roads and bridges crisscrossing the length and breadth of the country have been built, resulting in reciprocal beneficial relationships among regions leading to greater development. Moreover, in order that highly qualified human resources develop simultaneously in all regions, the requirements in the health and the education sectors are being fulfilled effectively. We are therefore witnessing social and economic developments gathering momentum in all parts of the nation. However, continued efforts are necessary to ensure that our country shortly becomes a modern industrialized nation that keeps abreast of the world.

Vigorous efforts are being made toward increased electric power supply and exploitation of oil, natural gas and other resources, necessary in building an industrialized nation. Furthermore, major state-owned industries and private industrial zones have been established to promote the development of the industrial sector.

It should be noted that nation-building efforts that consolidate peace, modernization and development represent the fulfillment of the fundamental requirements for the emergence of a discipline-flourishing democracy in the nation.

Comrades,

Finally, in accordance with the objectives of the 59th Anniversary Armed Forces Day, I exhort you:

- to strive hand in hand with the people for the successful realization of the State’s seven-point policy programme;
- to crush through the people’s militia strategy the internal and external destructive elements hindering the stability and progress of the State;
- to participate in implementing border areas development tasks and the five rural areas development tasks together with the entire people; and
- to work strenuously toward building up a strong efficient modern Tatmadaw capable of safeguarding Our Three Main National Causes. — MNA

Tatmadaw’s Ten Strengths

1. Loyalty
2. Obedience
3. Strong morale & perserverance
4. Good discipline
5. Being well-trained
6. Possessing brilliant combat skill
7. Healthiness & fitness
8. Having esprit de corps
9. Making sacrifices
10. Endeavouring to meet the aim with strong determination

Twelve Nobel Traditions of the Tatmadaw

1. A patriotic Tatmadaw
2. A disciplined Tatmadaw
3. A loyal Tatmadaw
4. A united Tatmadaw
5. An efficient Tatmadaw
6. A Tatmadaw which makes heroic sacrifices
7. A Tatmadaw which does not seek personal gain
8. A Tatmadaw of noble spirit and high moral
9. A Tatmadaw which possesses true quality of overcoming obstacles
10. A Tatmadaw which can endure hardship
11. A tenacious and persevering Tatmadaw
12. A Tatmadaw which always upholds Our Three Main National Causes
Only when a nation possesses a modern defence capability, will it be possible to ensure the full protection of its sovereignty. Thus, it can be seen that in every nation of the world, patriotic leaders and experts who hold sovereignty dear have the sense of responsibility to contribute to the strengthening and modernization of the Armed Forces.
Prime Minister Chief of Military Intelligence General Khin Nyunt greets a foreign military attaché at the 50th Anniversary Armed Forces Day Parade. — MNA

Defence Services Commander-in-Chief ...

Myanmar War Veterans Organization Headquarters, senior military officers, Yangon Command, local and foreign journalists, divisional authorities, senior police officers of MPP, Fire Services Department, NGOs, Mawgun Award winners, Union Solidarity and Development Association, Minami Kikan members, members of Japan-Myanmar History and Culture Association and winners in the contests to mark the Armed Forces Day.

Prime Minister Chief of Military Intelligence General Khin Nyunt greets personnel of Japan-Myanmar History and Culture Association. — MNA

Column Commander Col Aungzeya Column which was made up of the standard bearers with the flags of Tatmadaw (Army, Navy and Air) led by Maj Myo Min Oo, parade company-3 of Coastal Region Command led by Maj Ye Htun and parade company-2 of Western Command led by Maj Kyaw Zeya.

Column Commander Col Myint Ko Ko ushered Aung San Column which was made up of the standard bearers with the flags of Tatmadaw (Army, Navy and Air) led by Maj Kyaw Kyaw Win, parade company-3 of Central Region Command led by Maj Ko Ko Aung and parade company-4 of Western Command led by Maj Win Naing.

Column Commander Col Tin Tun (Air) ushered Banyinnaung Column which was made up of the standard bearers with the flags of Tatmadaw (Army, Navy and Air) led by Maj Ye Htun and parade company-3 of Triangle Region Command led by Maj Åye Tun and parade company of Western Command led by Maj Kyaw Kyaw Lwin.

Column Commander Col Maung Maung Thian ushered Aung San Column which was made up of the standard bearers with the flags of Myanmar Police Force, Fire Brigade and Myanmar Red Cross Society led by Police Maj Naing Win, the military band led by Police WO Aung Zaw Oo of Myanmar Police Force Band, Guard of Honour of Myanmar Police Force led by Police Major Aung Thet Naing. (See page 11)
Defence Services Commander-in-Chief ...

(from page 10)

Commanding Officer Lt-Col Win Ngwe, parade company of MPF led by Police Maj Soe Lin Aung, parade company of Fire Brigade led by Assistant Director Aung Sue Win, parade company of MRCS led by Company Commander Sai Nyi Nyi Aung, parade company-2 of MRCS led by Company Commander Tin Htay Oo and parade company of No 11 LID led by Maj Pe Kyaw. Altogether 7,139 members of Tatmadaw, MPF, Fire Brigade and Red Cross Brigade participated in the marching columns.

Along the route from Myayon Grounds to the Resistance Park, the marching columns were accorded a rousing welcome by the families of the Ministry of Defence, Directors, and members of the families of Yangon Command, military stations and their quarters, students and local people who waved the miniature flags, presented flowers and garlands to the parade members. Singing military songs, the parade columns entered the No 1 Gate of the Resistance Park.

At 7.30 am, Senior General Thaw Swai, accompanied by members of the State Peace and Development Council, General Thura Shwe Mann, arrived at the park where they were welcomed and ushered to the reviewing stand by Prime Minister Chief of Military Intelligence General Khin Nyunt, Secretary-1 Li-Gen Soe Win, Secretary-2 Adjoint-General Li-Gen Thein Sein, Chairman of the Leading Committee Chief of Armed Forces Training Lt-Gen Kyaw Win, Commander-in-Chief (Naval) Rear-Admural Soe Thein and Commander-in-Chief (Air) Li-Gen Myint Hein.

After Senior General Thaw Swai had taken the position on the reviewing stand, the columns saluted him and then marched on down a route of red carpeted streets. Various signboards with mottoes of the Tatmadaw and the Defence Services Commander-in-Chief were erected at the road-corners, parks, gardens and roundabouts. The Resistance Park was illuminated in the evening.

Next, Parade Commander Brig-Gen Min Thein presented the columns to the Senior General. Afterwards, the Senior General inspected the columns. The Central Military Band played the National Anthem while those present saluted the Flag of the Union of Myanmar. After paying tribute to the fallen leaders and members of the Tatmadaw, the columns members took the four oaths. The Senior General delivered an address. Reported separately.

The columns led by Parade Commander Brig-Gen Min Thein marched past the Senior General and exited the park through No 1 Gate of the Resistance Park and left for the Myayon Grounds.

Afterwards, the Senior General left there and the 59th Anniversary Armed Forces Day parade ended at 8.50 am.

Various sognboards with motifs of the Tatmadaw and the Defence Services Commander-in-Chief were erected at the road-corners, parks, gardens and roundabouts. The Resistance Park was illuminated in the evening.

— MNA

Military code of conduct and extempore talks contests

YANGON, 27 March — The prize-distribution ceremony for the 59th Anniversary Armed Forces Day commemorative literary and arts competitions took place at the Ministry of Commerce. Next, dinner was hosted to the families of Yangon Command, military stations and their headquarters, students and local people who waved the miniature flags, presented flowers and garlands to the parade members. Singing military songs, the parade columns entered the No 1 Gate of the Resistance Park.

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— MNA

Prizes presented for 59th Anniversary Armed Forces Day commemorative literary and arts contests

YANGON, 27 March — The prize-distribution ceremony for the 59th Armed Forces Day commemorative literary and arts competitions took place at the Prime Minister's office on 27-3-2004. — MNA

Outstanding footballers honoured

YANGON, 27 March — The Myanmar Agricultural Produce Trading soccer team which was upgraded to the Premier League after winning the first division soccer tournament (2003-2004) and two players of the team who participated in the marching columns.

— MNA

Prime Minister General Khin Nyunt, State Peace and Development Council member General Thura Shwe Mann, dignitaries and senior military officers seen at the 59th Anniversary Armed Forces Day Parade on 27-3-2004. — MNA
Recommend study gene findings could help fight malaria

WASHINGTON, 27 March— The discovery of four genes that help or hinder the malaria parasite as it infects mosquitoes could lead to new ways to battle one of the world's biggest killers, researchers in Germany said on Thursday.

Two of the mosquito genes kill the Plasmodium parasite in the insect's gut and two others actually promote the parasite's development, the researchers report in Friday's issue of the journal Science.

Studying their effects could lead to novel ways to fight malaria, which is transmitted by mosquitoes and kills millions of people every year around the world, most of them children.

"Many researchers focus on the direct effects of Plasmodium on the human body but the mosquito is an equally important battleground in fighting the disease," said Fotis Kafatos, Director-General of the European Molecular Biology Laboratory in Heidelberg, Germany.

"We now see a way to potentially stop the parasite in its tracks," Kafatos, who led the study, added in a statement.

"These studies are the first to show the power of the mosquito's immune system and give us some very real options for fighting the disease in the insect before it even has a chance to be passed to a human."

When female mosquitoes feed on an infected animal, they suck in Plasmodium parasites with the blood.

But some mosquitoes do not transmit the parasites. Colleagues of Kafatos identified two genes that control proteins made by the mosquitoes, called TEP1 and LRIM1, which kill the parasite in the gut.

"By enhancing these natural defenders, we may be able to block the parasite-mosquito cycle," Stephanie Blandin, a researcher who worked on the study, said in a statement.

This part of the research was published this month in the journal Cell. Kafatos and colleagues found two other proteins, each controlled by a gene, called CTLA4 and CTLMA2, that protect the parasite as it develops in the mosquito gut. If these proteins were eliminated, the parasites died.

US arrests suspected people smuggler

A D V E R T I S E M E N T S

Chinese law school graduates donate legal aid

BEIJING, 27 March— Lin Yan, a senior student at the China University of Political Science and Law, has given up seeking a job in China's capital Beijing for two years of free service in a legal aid centre in northwest China's Shaanxi Province.

She is one of the 62 graduates and eight postgraduates from law schools in Chinese universities funded by a programme called China Recent Graduates Legal Aid Fellowship run by the China Legal Aid Foundation (CLAF).

This summer the 70 young people will go to work for 46 legal aid centres in 12 Chinese provinces, including northwest China's Gansu Province, southwest China's Sichuan and Yunnan provinces.

The programme held its launch ceremony here Wednesday. In its first year, it received donations from the US-based Ford Foundation but did not release the exact amount of the donation.

Each postgraduate is required by the programme to work at least 15 legal aid cases in two-year service while each graduate is to complete at least 10.

The programme will help relieve the shortage of personnel and money in legal aid centres in less developed areas and more needy people will gain help to protect their legal rights and interests," said Ding Jiaming, director of the Legal Aid Centre under the Ministry of Justice.

Last year the Chinese Government invested 150 million yuan ($18.14 million US dollars) in legal aid, about one fifth of the money needed. Parties in some 500,000 cases did not get the legal aid they were entitled to, according to the government.

"In my hometown, it is expensive and troublesome to hire a lawyer and go to court. No ordinary family can afford it," said Lin Yan, who comes from poverty-stricken Dingxi in northwest China's Gansu Province. "I am very glad to have such a chance to help others."

As a developing country with 1.3 billion population, China now has 102,000 lawyers and there are still 206 counties without lawyers.

Australia arrests suspected people smuggler

Canberra, 27 March— Australian police arrested a suspected people smuggler on Thursday when he arrived at Sydney Airport and charged him in relation to the discovery of a boatload of illegal immigrants four years ago.

Mehmet Seriban, a Turkish national, was charged at Supreme Court on Thursday, February 2000 with 14 Turkish nationals on board," he said.

Seriban appeared in a Sydney court last month when authorities applied to extradite him to the Northern Territory in far north Australia.

People smuggling carries a maximum penalty of 20 years jail under tough Australian laws introduced in 1999. People smugglers also face fines up to $20,000 Australian dollars (15,000 US dollars).
UN envoy says HIV “AIDS” could undermine MDG achievements

BEIJING, 27 March—A senior official of the United Nations said here Friday that HIV/AIDS could undermine the achievements that all nations have made toward the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) if not successfully prevented.

During a three-day international conference on the MDGs, Nafis Sadik, special envoy of the UN Secretary-General for HIV/AIDS in Asia and the Pacific, said HIV/AIDS prevention is a huge task, but there is a beacon of hope in the success of some national efforts. The campaign to improve blood safety and efforts to promote condom use are also showing results in China, Sadik said.

“The HIV/AIDS takes hold in China, it will spell the end of efforts to end poverty,” said Sadik. “And there is nothing inherent in China’s culture or society, ancient and unique though it is, that will protect you against HIV/AIDS.”

Sadik added that policy makers and committed leadership, will prevent an AIDS catastrophe in this country and China has a huge advantage. Sadik said “It has the health and administrative infrastructure that can allow it to implement a successful campaign, once a strong political commitment is made and sustained at every level — national, provincial, prefecture, county, township and community.”

Sadik said there was no link between a history of abortion and breast cancer as concluded by the international team, analysed virtually all the worldwide data that were compared once a strong political commitment is made and sustained at every level — national, provincial, prefecture, county, township and community.

The research included a large number of prevention programmes that have been carried out in the different parts of China, but coverage is very limited due to funding gaps as well as technical and programmatic constraints.

“HIV/AIDS accompanies poverty, is spread by poverty and produces poverty in turn. For example, Sadik said, the poor have lower general levels of health and their immune systems are weaker, health care is less available in poor communities, the poor are less likely to have proper information, the poor have less political influence, poverty drives high-risk behaviours such as trafficking of young girls.

Inequality sharpens the impact of poverty and a mixture of poverty and inequality may be driving the epidemic.

For a successful prevention, she urged policy makers to devise ways of providing people at risk with information and services, including condoms, and voluntary counselling and testing for HIV/AIDS. She also urged open discussions among young people about risks and how to minimize them.

Asian economies need not adopt more flexible exchange rates

KUALA LUMPUR, 27 March—Asian economies did not need to adopt more flexible exchange rates as adjustments in exchange rates were unlikely to correct structural imbalances, said Zeti Aziz, governor of Malaysia Central Bank.

The comparative advantage which Asia possessed was not due to exchange rates but included other factors that had resulted in lower costs, the governor said in her annual statement contained in Malaysia Central Bank’s 2003 annual report released on Friday.

Several Western countries have recently exerted pressures on Asian economies to adopt more flexible exchange rates to correct structural imbalances in their economy.

The question whether exchange rate appreciation could address any signs of overheating also needed to take into account the nature of price pressures, she said.

In situations where the pressures were sectorial or localized, other measures, including prudential measures, might be more effective in addressing these developments, she stressed.

“Indeed, the exchange rate should not be used for the purpose for which it might not be able to yield the desired results,” Zeti said.

A financial analyst here said while it was important that the Malaysian currency ringgit, now pegged to the US dollar at 3.8 ringgit, was not misaligned, it was also crucial for the economy to be supported by strong fundamentals such as increased revenue and low inflation.

The analyst said the current fixed exchange rate regime was an efficient functioning system whereby trade had flourished and the cost of business was relatively low and so there was no need for change the ringgit’s peg against the dollar.

The governor said that it was an “illusion to think that the exchange rate is going to protect us against external shocks but it is the strength of the economy and that of the financial system which is going to insulate us”.

Poisonous snakes homeless after Thai owner’s death

BANGKOK, 27 March—Some 30 poisonous snakes faced the fate of being homeless since their owner was bitten by one of them to death a week ago in northern Thailand, local Press reported on Friday.

The snakes were now contained in a box at the home of their deceased owner’s elderly brother’s home in the province of Si Sak Ket, which was located some 560 kilometres northeast of Bangkok.

The families did not want to keep the snakes but wished zoos to take care of the snakes.

However, two zoos in Si Sak Ket had declined to receive the snakes on the grounds that they had received the pet snakes to anyone for trade. They wished zoos to take care of the snakes.

Chinese Defence Minister visits India

NEW DELHI, 27 March — Cao Gangchuan, Chinese Defence Minister, arrived here on Friday afternoon and began his five-day official goodwill visit to India.

Cao, also Vice Chairman of the Central Military Commission and State Councillor, said at the airport upon arrival that developing long-term, stable and sound state-to-state relations between China and India conforms to the fundamental interests of the two peoples and conducive to the peace, stability and development of the region and the world at large.

He noted that the state leaders of the two countries have made positive efforts to advance the long-term stable and sound development of the bilateral relations by proceeding from the overall interests and bearing a long-term perspective.

Study finds abortion does not raise breast cancer risk

LONDON, 27 March—In a finding that contradicts earlier research, a re-analysis of data from 53 studies in 16 countries involving women with breast cancer showed there was no link between the most common cancer in women and a terminated pregnancy.

“We can be really definitive that neither induced nor spontaneous abortions nor miscarriages increase breast cancer risk,” Professor Valerie Beral, an author of the study from the University of Oxford, told Reuters.

She said results from previous studies that concluded there was a link were based on unreliable data and poorly conducted research.

Having an abortion or miscarriage does not increase a woman’s risk of suffering from breast cancer later in life, scientists said on Friday.

“They mixed together studies that gave reliable and unreliable results,” Beral said.

The international collaboration, led by the Oxford team, analysed virtually all the worldwide data that looked at risk factors for breast cancer and concluded abortion and miscarriage was not associated with the disease.

“No one has ever done this before. We had the original data and could check it and analyse it in a similar way. No one had the ability to do that before,” Beral added.

The research included 44,000 breast cancer patients who took part in studies where a history of abortion had been recorded before the cancer was diagnosed.

The odds of developing the disease were compared in women with and without any record of abortion.

The International Space Station’s two-man crew will return to Earth on 30 April, 2004, a day later than planned, US and Russian space officials said on 25 March. Astronaut C. Michael Foale (L) and cosmonaut Alexander Y Kubar are shown in the Zvezda Service Module on the International Space Station, on 28 Dec, 2003.—INTERNET
Marseille reach UEFA Cup quarters

Marseille (France), March 27 — Olympique Marseille, helped by their Ivory Coast striking force and the dismissal of Croatian defender Igor Biscan, beat Liverpool 2-1 to qualify for the UEFA Cup quarterfinals on Thursday.

Didier Drogba and Aboubayle Meite, both Ivory Coast internationals, scored Marseille goals in the 38th and 58th minutes while Liverpool, who opened the scoring thanks to Emile Heskey in the 15th minute, were man down.

Liverpool's manager Gerard Houllier complained about celebrations in Marseille's dressing rooms after the first leg's 1-1 draw and the former European champions had little to celebrate at first.

Their international Fabricio Barthez was injured in the eighth minute in a collision with teammate Habib Beye and spotted a plaster on his nose for the rest of the game.

Seven minutes later, with Liverpool dominant, Heskey took advantage of a gross collective defensive mistake to open the scoring from just outside the box.

Inter win seven-goal thriller with Benfica

MILAN, 27 March— Inter Milan reached the quarterfinals of the UEFA Cup after a thrilling 4-3 win over Benfica in their fourth-round, second-leg match at the San Siro stadium on Thursday.

Five goals in 17 minutes in the second half produced drama and excitement right until the end of a pulsating game but while Benfica produced some exciting football it was Alberto Zaccheroni's side who went into the draw for the last eight after the first leg ended goalless.

Former Fiorentina striker Nuno Gomes put Benfica in front but Inter drew level on the stroke of halftime through Nigerian forward Ghefrali Martins. Goals from Alvaro Recoba and Christian Vieri appeared to have given Inter a comfortable lead at 3-1.

But then Nuno Gomes pulled one back for Benfica and although Martins again restored Inter's two-goal cushion a brilliant 78th-minute strike from Mendes Tiago kept the game alive right until the end.

The Portuguese side could even have snatched an away goals win with the last kick of the game when Tomislav Sokota shot just wide at the back post.

Benfica looked full of confidence and attacked from the outset with Slovenian Zlatko Zahovic and Teseiori Armando both going close as Jose Antonio Camacho's side established their dominance.

Once again Inter's defence was opened up with ease when Sabrosa Simao dashed down the left and picked out Joao Pereira but the striker's shot was just wide of Francesco Toldo's goal.

It was no surprise when the visitors went ahead in the 36th minute through a crisply struck shot from the area from Nuno Gomes.

He almost made it 2-0 moments later, hitting the post with a similar shot from closer in.

Inter responded with Vieri's scrappy effort hitting the side netting and then Marrains having an effort ruled out before, right on the stroke of halftime, they levelled.

Recoba then slotted home a cross past three defenders as he cut in from the left flank and slid a pass across the face of goal for Martins to tap in.

The introduction of Recoba just before the hour transformed the game. With his first touch he powered Inter into the lead with a sweet shot from the edge of the area and then he helped create the third Inter goal for Vieri, slipping the ball into the path of the burly striker who blasted home. But Nuno Gomes struck back, sliding in at the back post to convert a low cross from Sokota. 

Marshall the hero as Celtic weather Barca storm

BARCELONA, 27 March — Some outstanding keeping from stand-in David Marshall and a gritty defensive display from his teammates helped Celtic book their place in the last eight of the UEFA Cup after a 0-0 draw at the Nou Camp on Thursday.

Leading 1-0 after a bad- tempered first leg in Glas- gow, Celtic were put under severe pressure from the start, but 19-year-old Marshall produced a string of top-class saves to keep the Catalans at bay and ensure last season's runners-up moved into the quarterfinals.

Barca, who have powered their way up to third place in La Liga since the first clash five months ago, were without their Ivory Coast striking force and the dismissal of Croatian specialist Desailly, who grew in confidence as the match wore on.

Celtic were the more threatening side and they went close early through a cracking shot from Paul Sherrin that Marshall produced a string of top-class saves to keep the Catalans at bay and ensure last season's runners-up moved into the quarterfinals.

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Celtic were the more threatening side and they went close early through a cracking shot from Paul Sherrin that Marshall palmed over the bar and then blocked a Luis Garcia shot brilliantly each time.

He reacted sharply to save a Robert Douglas shot and then tipped the ball away from the feet of the Scottish Premier League, accompanied by 5,000 fans. 

ACROSS
1 Solitary
7 Wealth
8 Dumb show
9 Decline
10 Dregs
11 Sitting
13 Peacock's wing
14 Pursue
17 Brainy
18 Bargain
20 By way of
22 Soapless cleanser
23 Board game
24 Captive

DOWN
1 Fold of coat
2 Convert
3 Shortly
4 Girl
5 Finished
6 Supercilious feature
7 Brief notice
9 Wait on
12 Waits on
13 Service-12
15 Lamp
16 Amoy persistently
17 Friko
19 Boy's name
21 Flag
Senior General Than Shwe and wife Daw Kyaing Kyaing host 59th Anniversary Armed Forces Day reception and dinner

YANGON, 27 March — Chairman of the State Peace and Development Council Commander-in-Chief of Defence Services Senior General Than Shwe and wife Daw Kyaing Kyaing hosted reception and dinner in commemoration of the 59th Anniversary Armed Forces Day at Zeyathiri Beikman on Konmyinttha this evening.

Senior General Than Shwe and wife Daw Kyaing Kyaing arrived at the venue of the reception and dinner at 6.45 pm.

Senior General Than Shwe and wife Daw Kyaing Kyaing, accompanied by Vice-Chairman of the State Peace and Development Council Deputy Commander-in-Chief of Defence Services Commander-in-Chief (Army) Vice-Senior General Maung Aye, Prime Minister Chief of Military Intelligence General Khin Nyunt, member of the State Peace and Development Council General Thura Shwe Mann of the Ministry of Defence, Secretary-1 of the State Peace and Development Council Lt-Gen Soe Win, Secretary-2 General Li-Gen Thien Sein, members of the State Peace and Development Council, and Chairman of the leading committee for observance of the 59th Anniversary Armed Forces Day Chief of Armed Forces Training Li-Gen Kyaw Win, cordially greeted Ambassadors and Charge d’Affaires ai of the embassies in Yangon, heads and resident representatives of UN agencies, military attaches and their wives and guests who attended the reception and dinner.

Next, Senior General Than Shwe and wife Daw Kyaing Kyaing hosted a dinner to the guests.

Also present at the reception and dinner were Vice Senior General Maung Aye and wife Daw Mwa Mya San, Prime Minister General Khin Nyunt and wife Dr Daw Khan Win Shwe, General Thura Shwe Mann and wife Daw Khin Lay Thet, Secretary-1 Li-Gen Soe Win and wife, Secretary-2 Adjutant-General Li-Gen Thein Sein and wife, members of the SPDC and wives, the Commander-in-Chief (Navy) and the Commander-in-Chief (Air) and their wives, ministers, senior officers of Tatmadaw (Army, Navy and Air) of the Ministry of Defence, deputy ministers, the deputy chief justice, the deputy attorneys-general, the deputy auditor-general, members of Civil Service Selection and Training Board, the vice-mayor, senior military officers of Yangon Command, the 59th Anniversary Armed Forces Day Parade Commander and column commanders, departmental heads of the SPDC office and ministries, members of the leading committee and work committee for observance of the 59th Anniversary Armed Forces Day, local and foreign journalists, representatives of the Union Solidarity and Development Association, national business entrepreneurs, former Minami Kikan, officials of Japan-Myanmar Society for History and Culture and guests. Before and during the dinner, variety songs were presented to the guests by vocalists and Myanmar Athishan Modern Music Troupe. After the dinner, artists of the Fine Arts Department of the Ministry of Culture entertained the guests with Myanmar traditional cultural dances at Thabin hall. — MNA

Defence Services Commander-in-Chief Senior General Than Shwe attends 59th Anniversary Armed Forces Day Parade

YANGON, 27 March — Chairman of the State Peace and Development Council Commander-in-Chief of Defence Services Senior General Than Shwe delivered an address at the 59th Anniversary Armed Forces Day Parade at the Resistance Park at 7.30 am today.

The 59th Anniversary Armed Forces Day was held in accord with the objectives — to strive hand in hand with the people for successful realization of the State’s seven-point policy programme; to crush internal and external destructive elements hindering the stability and progress of the State through people’s militia strategy; to implement border area development tasks and the five rural development tasks hand in hand with the entire people; and to build up a strong and efficient Tatmadaw to uphold ‘Our Three Main National Causes’.

Also present at the parade were Prime Minister Chief of Military Intelligence Gen Khin Nyunt, Member of the State Peace and Development Council General Thura Shwe Mann of the Ministry of Defence, Secretary-1 of the State Peace and Development Council Li-Gen Soe Win, Secretary-2 Adjutant-General Li-Gen Thein Sein, members of the State Peace and Development Council Li-Gen Ye Myint, Li-Gen Aung Htwe, Li-Gen Khin Maung Than, Li-Gen Maung Bo, Quartermaster-General Li-Gen Thaha Thura Tin Aung Myint Oo, Chairman of the Leading Committee for Observance of the 59th Anniversary Armed Forces Day Chief of Armed Forces Training Li-Gen Kyaw Win and Li-Gen Tin Aye of the Ministry of Defence, Commander-in-Chief (Navy) Rear-Admiral Soe Thein, Commander-in-Chief (Air) Lt-Gen Myat Hein, Chief of Staff (Navy) Captain Nyan Tun, Military Appointment-General Maj-Gen Hsan Hsint, Judge Advocate-General Maj-Gen Soe Maung, Defence Services Inspector-General Brig-Gen Thein Htaik, ministers, the Chief Justice, the Attorney-General, the Chairman of Civil Service Selection and Training Board, the Yangon Mayor, members of the National Convention Convening Work Committee, senior military officers, deputy ministers, supreme court justices, military attaches of foreign missions, advisers to the State Peace and Development Council Office, departmental heads and the head of SPDC Office, members of the Public Relations and Information Committee of the State Peace and Development Council, representatives of the Union Solidarity and Development Association, representatives of the Union National Congress, and guests.

As the Tatmadaw has given priority to achieving national rconciliation, peace and tranquillity now prevail throughout the country, including the border areas.

With efforts to achieve peace and stability bearing fruit, endeavours to achieve all-round progress in all parts of the country simultaneously have begun.

The trio of major projects — the border area and national races development project, the 24 special development zones project and the rural races development project — are being implemented in a coordinated network covering the whole country.

Major clusters of agriculture and other economic infrastructures are being built where ever necessary.

Roads and bridges crisscrossing all over the country have been built, resulting in reciprocal beneficial relationships among regions leading to greater development.

In order that highly qualified human resources develop simultaneously in all regions, the requirements in the health and the education sectors are being fulfilled effectively.

Continued efforts are necessary to ensure that our country shortly becomes a modern industrialized nation that keeps abreast with the world.

Vigorous efforts are being made toward increased electric power supply and exploitation of oil, natural gas and other resources necessary in building an industrialized nation.

Major state-owned industries and private in industrial zones have been established to promote the industrial development.

It should be noted that nation-building efforts that consolidate peace, modernization and development represent the fulfillment of the fundamental requirements for the emergence of a discipline-flourishing democracy in the nation.

Excerpts from address of Senior General Than Shwe

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