Senior General Than Shwe offers gold foils to Manaungmyin Pyidawbyan Buddha Image in Zalun, Ayeyawady Division. — MNA

Senior General Than Shwe inspects development of Hainggyi Island region

YANGON, 2 April — Chairman of the State Peace and Development Council General Thawar Shwe and wife Daw Kyaing Kyaing donated provisions to a Sayadaw at Dhammayon of Maha Makutayanthi Hsandawshin Pagoda in Ngapudaw Township, from Pathein by helicopter at 9.30 am yesterday. They were welcomed by Command General Staff Col Tint Swe and officials.

The Senior General and wife and party offered flowers, lights and water to the Buddha images of the pagoda. They paid obeisance to the pagoda.

At the Dhammayon of the pagoda, they paid respects to Sayadaws led by Chairman of Township Sangha Nayaka Committee Sayadaw Maha Saddhamajotika Bhaddanta Pandita, and presented offerings to the monks. Sayadaw Bhaddanta Pandita delivered a sermon. The congregation shared the merits gained. Senior General Than Shwe and Daw Kyaw Kyaw Kyaw donated cash to the pagoda funds.

On arrival at Hainggyi Island by helicopter, the Senior General and party were welcomed by Capt Aye Pe (Navy) of regional station, military officers, departmental personnel and members of social organizations. At the guest house, Senior General Than Shwe and party heard a report on Hainggyi Island region presented by (See page 8)

Excerpts from Senior General’s speech

* As Hainggyi Island region is located at the boundary of the Myanmar territorial waters, harmonious efforts should be made to further develop the rule of law, regional peace and stability, administrative machinery and regional development.
* Local people are required to be imbued with the spirit to ensure national security, patriotism and the spirit to love the Union, while possessing the will to safeguard their region and the nation by themselves.
* The Government will fulfill and make arrangements for regional development, especially, it will practically implement the five rural development tasks for progress of Hainggyi Island and its surrounding areas.
* Efforts will have to be made in cooperation with the local people for transport development and facilitation.
* Endeavours should be made for development of not only the island, but also its surrounding areas. There must be a link between the regional and national development undertakings.

**Four political objectives**
* Stability of the State, community peace and tranquility, prevalence of law and order
* National reconciliation
* Emergence of a new enduring State Constitution
* Building of a new modern developed nation in accord with the new State Constitution

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

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

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

Saturday, 3 April, 2004

Paper and pulp factory— a step to fulfil the domestic needs

To fulfil the paper needs at home and boost production of import-substitute items, Myanma Paper and Chemical Industries under the Ministry of Industry-I is implementing 200-ton Pulp Factory Project in Hlaygyitet village, Thabaung Township.

At present, 98 percent of factory erection work and 72 percent of machine installation work have been completed. Plans are under way to conduct test run in July 2004.

Chairman of the State Peace and Development Council Commander-in-Chief of Defence Services Senior General Than Shwe inspected the Pulp Factory Project (Thabaung) that has a daily production capacity of 200 tons on 31 March.

Officials concerned reported to the Senior General on the investment in the project, work being carried out in different phases of factory construction and installation of machines, bamboo, salt, limestone, power, fuel oil and natural gas requirements, raw material supply programmes, supply of gas and electricity to the project and land and water transport for raw materials.

Senior General Than Shwe gave guidance saying that based on the experiences of the project, places suitable for pulp and paper industries should be chosen and the required capacity of the machines should be calculated and that paper and pulp industry has high prospects.

Based on the 200-ton Pulp Factory Project (Thabaung), a 50-ton high-quality paper plant project (Thabaung), a 60-ton newspaper print plant project (Thabaung), and a fuel oil tank project will be implemented.

Efficiency is required in running the 200-ton pulp factory as it is a mammoth one. Ways should be found to supply bamboo to the factory in time, while laying down systematic projects to set up bamboo and tree plantations for ensuring continuous supply of raw materials. Arrangements will have to be made in advance to transport pulp and paper to consumer markets swiftly.

As paper and pulp industry has high prospective efficiency, efforts are urged to make endeavours for achieving efficiency to run the factory and ensuring continuous supply of raw materials.

Appointment of Ambassador agreed on

YANGON, 3 April—The government of the Union of Myanmar has agreed to the appointment of His Excellency Mr El Hassane Zahid as Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the Kingdom of Morocco to the Union of Myanmar. He was born in 1950 at Fez and received a Masters Degree from the National School of Administration in Rabat. He joined the diplomatic service and has served in various capacities at the Moroccan Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Cooperation and Missions in Dusseldorf and New York. He will be concurrently accredited as Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the Kingdom of Morocco to the Union of Myanmar with residence in Bangkok. He is married and has two children. — MNA

Myanmar Trade Fair 2004 launched

YANGON, 2 April —The Myanmar Trade Fair 2004 was launched with the permission of the Ministry of Commerce and arrangements of the Oriental National Co Ltd at the Yangon Trade Centre on Upper Pazundaung Road in Mingala Taungnyunt this morning. It was attended by Minister for Commerce Brig-Gen Pyi Sone, Minister at the Prime Minister’s Office Maj-Gen Thein Swe, Deputy Minister for Commerce Brig-Gen Aung Tun, departmental heads, officials, members of social organizations, Managing Director of the company Daw Myat Aye and guests. The minister and the managing director formally opened the fair.

Now, the ministers, the deputy minister and officials viewed the booths round the fair. Displayed at the 45 booths of 35 companies are cosmetics, personal and household goods, fashion clothes, plastic wares, food stuff, electric and electronic apparatus, traditional medicines together with services. The fair opens daily from 9 am to 6 pm until 5 April. Admission is free. — MNA

People’s Desire

* Oppose those relying on external elements, acting as stooges, holding negative views.
* Oppose those trying to jeopardize stability of the State and progress of the nation.
* Oppose foreign nations interfering in internal affairs of the State.
* Crush all internal and external destructive elements as the common enemy.

Information tasks inspected in Mandalay, Sagaing Divisions

YANGON, 2 April —Deputy Minister for Information Brig-Gen Aung Thein, accompanied by Director-General of MRTV U Khin Maung Htay and officials, inspected Sagaing TV retransmission station yesterday morning. In meeting with staff there, the deputy minister stressed the importance of harmonious co-operation of officials and subordinates for achieving greater success. He called on the fresh personnel to become skilled ones by acquiring knowledge from superiors. He gave instructions on ensuring completion of installation of lighting conductors to the buildings before the rainy season. The deputy minister held a meeting with Sagaing District Information and Public Relations Department. On the occasion, the deputy minister gave instructions on making clarifications to step-by-step implementation of the State’s seven-point policy programme for better knowledge of local people through wall newspapers.

On arrival at Mandalay, the deputy minister looked into progress of installation of the press for the Myanmar Trade Fair 2004. — MNA

Chinese journalist delegation continues Yangon excursion

YANGON, 2 April —The visiting six-member Chinese journalist delegation headed by Editor Mr Liu Zhannian of the Farmers’ daily of the People’s Republic of China visited the Shwedagon Pagoda this morning.

The Chinese delegation observed the religious buildings and paid homage to the Buddha images around the pagoda platform and made cash donations to the pagoda funds.

Next, they visited Pyaunggyi Ayeikyenkyaw at the corner of Pyay Road and Alone Road here. They paid a courtesy call on Managing Director of the News and Periodical Enterprise Col Soe Win at the New Light of Myanmar daily on Strand Road in Botataung Township later in the morning.

Also present at the call were advisers to the minister, the director (News), chief editors and officials of the NPE.

Matters related to mutual understanding on news and further strengthening of friendship and cooperation were discussed.

The Chinese group also visited the Myanmar Alin daily at No 53, 1st Natmauk Lane in Bahan Township here. They were conducted round the daily compound.

Chinese journalist delegation continues Yangon excursion

YANGON, 2 April —Deputy Minister for Immigration and Population U Maung Aung received a three-member delegation led by Mr Sultan A Aziz, Director of Asia and Pacific Division of the UNPPA Headquaters, New York, at his office at 10 am today. Deputy Directorate-General of Population Department U Myo Min, Director Daw Khin May Aung and officials were present on the occasion. — MNA

Filling stations to be kept open during Thingyan

YANGON, 1 April —The Myanmar Petroleum Products Enterprise under the Ministry of Energy will keep its filling stations in Yangon Division open during the Thingyan holidays. — MNA

Minister Brig-Gen Pyi Sone formally opens the Myanmar Trade Fair 2004.

Deputy Minister Brig-Gen Aung Thein inspects progress in the construction of sub-printing house in Mandalay. — MNA

NPE Managing Director Col Soe Win presents a gift to a delegation member. — MNA

At the Oriental House restaurant on Myoma Kayang Road here, Chairman of Myanmar Writers and Journalists Association U Hla Myang (Ko Hsaung) presented gifts and hosted a luncheon to them. In the evening, Managing Director Col Soe Win hosted a dinner in honour of the Chinese delegation, Present on the occasion were Deputy Ministers U Thein Sein and Brig-Gen Aung Thein, departmental heads and guests. — MNA

Deputy Minister Brig-Gen Aung Thein formally opens the Myanmar Trade Fair 2004. — MNA
March was deadly month for US troops in Iraq

WASHINGTON, 2 April — The March death toll among US forces in Iraq was the second-highest of any month since President Bush declared major combat over 11 months ago and the total number of American troops killed in the war is now approaching 600.

Including five US Army soldiers killed on Wednesday when a roadside bomb exploded next to their armoured vehicle convoy west of Baghdad, at least 50 American troops and two civilians Defence Department employees died in Iraq in March, according to Pentagon figures.

That total does not include the four US civilian contractors slain in the resonance city of Falluja on Wednesday. Their bodies were burned and mutilated by a jubilant crowd, and two corpses were left dangling from a bridge.

The only deadlier month for US forces was November, when 82 US troops died during an offensive by the insurgency that coincided with the Islamic holy month of Ramadan. US-led forces invaded Iraq in March 2003 to topple President Saddam Hussein. According to the Pentagon, 597 American troops have died since the start of military operations.

In Iraq, US officials argued that the latest surge in violence did not indicate the security situation was spiraling out of control.

“Despite an uptick in localized engagements, the overall Iraqi area of operations remains relatively stable with negligible impact on the coalition’s ability to continue progress in governance, economic development and restoration of essential services,” Mark Kimmitt said in Baghdad.

Steven Kull, director of the University of Maryland’s Programme on International Policy Attitudes, said opinion polls indicate that the US public’s tolerance for casualties in Iraq has remained fairly stable.

Local facility works to protect soldiers in Iraq

BAGHDAD, 2 April — An around-the-clock effort is underway to protect soldiers in Iraq from roadside bombs.

A Susquehanna Valley facility is playing a major role in the ongoing fight.

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Schofield Barracks soldiers injured in Iraq attack

HAWAII, 2 April — Nine Schofield Barracks soldiers were injured in a rocket attack in Iraq. The injuries follow a series of attacks on US soldiers.

The injuries happened Tuesday night when a rocket exploded in a military housing area in Kirkuk. It was at a time when many of the soldiers there were preparing for bed.

“Nine US soldiers were wounded in a rocket attack in Kirkuk at about 8 pm, March 30. The wounded were transported to a military medical facility for treatment,” 1st Lt Serena Wallace said.

The injuries are among the 4,000 soldiers from Schofield Barracks that were deployed to Iraq in January. The Army said the injuries from Tuesday night’s rocket attack are not life threatening.

The Army said the training those soldiers have undergone is helping them deal with what they are now experiencing. “They’re trying to get a sense of deja vu. They’ve actually done this before, so that if it does happen to them they’re in country when they react accordingly and know they’ve done it before. So, they have a sense of reaction they can do it all over again,” Capt. Don Evans said.

The names and units of the nine wounded soldiers are being withheld at this time. The Army says it needs to first notify their families.

Balkan army members agree anti-drug pact

BELGRADE, 2 April — Afghanistan and its six neighbours agreed on Tuesday to sign an agreement to coordinate anti-drug operations.

On the second day’s meeting of the International Conference on Afghanistan, China, Iran, Pakistan, Turkmenistan, Tajikistan and Uzbekistan joined hands with Kabul in an agreement to curb opium trade across Afghanistan.

“The agreement calls on signatory states to forge a coordinated anti-drug strategy to combat cultivation, production and export of opium and other related substances.”

Kerry statement on deaths of US soldiers and civilians

WASHINGTON, 2 April — Democratic presidential candidate John Kerry issued the following statement on the deaths of US soldiers and civilians today in Iraq.

“My deepest sympathies are with the families of those lost today. Americans know that all who serve in Iraq — soldier and civilian alike — do so in an effort to build a better future for Iraqis. These horrific attacks remind us of the viciousness of the enemies of Iraq’s future. United in sadness, we are also united in our resolve that these enemies will not prevail.”

Dean blasts Bush over US losses in Iraq

WASHINGTON, 2 April — President Bush's credibility is the issue in the presidential campaign, more important than jobs, the economy and health care, now that a former administration official says the President didn’t take the terrorism threat seriously enough before Sept. 11, 2001, one-time Democratic presidential hopeful Howard Dean said Wednesday.

“Each and every one of these Americans is valiant, bold and courageous. They've actually done this before, so that if it does happen to them they’re in country when they react accordingly and know they’ve done it before. So, they have a sense of reaction they can do it all over again,” Capt. Don Evans said.

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Dean said he thought jobs, health insurance and economic security would be the biggest issues of the presidential election. But now, “the credibility of the president of the United States is the biggest issue of this race,” he said.

Chinese, French presidents hold phone conversation

BEIJING, 2 April — Chinese President Hu Jintao and his French counterpart Jacques Chirac talked by telephone Wednesday afternoon.

China also talked about the progress of EU lifting its ban on arms sales to China. Hu appreciated France’s stance of sticking to the one-China policy on the Taiwan issue. The Chinese Government attaches importance to the Sino-French ties and is willing to enrich and expand bilateral relations, and enhance the mutually-beneficial cooperation with France in all fields, Hu said.

The French culture year in China will definitely be a

A truck carrying used cars bought overseas arrives at a lot in the Iraqi capital of Baghdad, on 31 March, 2004 — Internet

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“The agreement calls on signatory states to forge a coordinated anti-drug strategy to combat cultivation, production and export of opium and other related substances.”

“The representatives expressed their support for the concept of creating a security belt around Afghanistan with the purpose of an effective system to interdict trafficking of opium products,” the agreement said.

Debates about related departments of the two governments have been cooperating closely, the Chinese President said. The lifting of the ban on arms sales to China by the EU at an early date will be conducive to the sound and overall development of Sino-EU relations, Hu said. He added that the Sino-French comprehensive strategic partnership will be more fruitful with the joint efforts from the two countries.

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The French culture year in China will definitely be a
UN Council backs Annan's Iraq oil, food probe

UNITED NATIONS, 2 April — The UN Security Council on Wednesday welcomed a United Nations probe into allegations of corruption in the Iraqi oil-for-food programme and expressed readiness to cooperate with the inquiry.

UN Secretary-General Kofi Annan notified Council members last week he was setting up an independent panel to probe any wrongdoing by UN officials running the programme. He asked for cooperation from member states to investigate companies around the world who sold supplies and bought oil from Iraq. Russia, one of several countries with companies that had extensive dealings with Iraq, only wanted to “note” Annan’s intention to pursue a full-scale investigation. To satisfy Moscow, a letter from Secretary-General’s letter, support unanimously his initiative,” Sabliere said.

Annan is investigating the UN-run programme that began in late 1996 and ended last year. Some 65 billion US dollars passed through the programme, which monitored Iraq oil sales and purchases of civilian goods, and hoped to ease the impact on ordinary Iraqis of UN sanctions imposed after the 1990 Gulf War. The General Accounting Office, the investigative arm of the US Congress, says Iraq elites raised 4.4 billion US dollars by imposing illegal surcharges. Iraq is estimated to have smuggled another 5.7 billion US dollars in oil outside the UN programme. Annan said in a letter last week that the panel would investigate companies with contracts in the oil-for-food programme and protect the confidentiality of whistle blowers.— MNA/Reuters

Famous Chinese medicine company opens in S Korea

SEOUL, 2 April — Tongrentang, China’s most famous traditional medicine producer and seller, on Wednesday opened a joint venture here to promote Chinese medicine’s image in South Korea.

With the official opening of the Beijing Tongrentang & Boryung Co. Ltd, the Bezoar Resurrection Pills, one of Tongrentang’s products well-known among domestic and overseas clients, can be sold in South Korea.

The ceremony was held at the Tongrentang drugstore in Jongno, a bustling street called by local people as “medicine street” in central Seoul.

Founded in 1669, Beijing Tongrentang Group Company has grown into a large enterprise including two marketing sub-companies and 347 branches across the world.

Known for its therapeutic Chinese medicine with 24 drug forms and over 800 varieties per year, the group in 2003 realized net profits of 230 million US dollars, with total capital assets reaching 2.7 billion US dollars.

From 2000, Tongrentang and South Korean Boryung Pharm. Co. Ltd, a 330-year-old company in the country, started seeking cooperation in inducing Chinese medicine into South Korean market.

The two sides injected 1.5 million US dollars into the joint venture, in which Tongrentang controls 51 percent per cent of the shares.

“We spent almost three years to acquire the entering permission of the Bezoar Resurrection Pills,” Ding Yongling, vice general manager of Tongrentang Group Company, told Xinhua. “You know, in order to protect domestic traditional medicine market, South Korea has very strict rules against Chinese traditional medicine. But we are very confident of the effect of our products,” said Ding, adding “the Bezoar Resurrection Pills have passed the stringent tests made by the South Korean Food and Drug Administration.”— MNA/Xinhua

Three contractors killed in Iraq were US citizens

WASHINGTON, 2 April — Three of four contractors working for the US-led coalition in Iraq who were killed in an ambush in Falluja on Wednesday were US citizens, a State Department official said Thursday.

“We’ve identified three of the four as Americans,” said the official, who asked not to be identified. Cheering Iraqis dragged the charred and mutilated bodies of the four through the streets of Falluja.

The Falluja violence began when two four-wheel-drive vehicles were attacked by guerrillas on a main road in the town, 32 miles west of Baghdad. A crowd then set the vehicles ablaze and hurled stones into the burning wreckage.

Brigadier-General Mark Kimmitt, deputy director of operations for the US Army in Iraq, said all four contractors in the vehicles were killed. He did not give their nationalities.— MNA/Reuters

Thousands protest newspaper closure in Iraq

BAGHDAD, 2 April — Thousands of Iraqi protesters blocked streets in central Baghdad for hours on Wednesday, demanding the reopening of a newspaper USA authorities shut down for what they called incitement to violence.

The US-led authorities in Iraq closed the weekly al-Hawza newspaper on Sunday, handing the editor a letter from the US governor in Iraq, Paul Bremer, that accused the paper of provoking violence against US troops.

The paper is a mouthpiece for radical Shi’ite cleric Moqtada Sadr, and his supporters were out in force on Wednesday outside the main US headquarters in Baghdad.

A few thousand protesters waved banners and pictures of Sadr, burnt at least two American flags and chanted that Bremer “should be ready” for the Mehdi Army, Sadr’s militia.

“But denounce the occupation and its methods,” cleric Sheikh Taha al-Itabi said. “They claim to represent democracy — stopping a newspaper is against freedom...They are targeting the whole organization of Moqtada Sadr.”

Sadr, a young and radical Shi’ite cleric, has often spoken out against the US occupation, in contrast to many other Shiite groups that have sought to work with occupying forces.

Bremer’s letter said several articles in al-Hawza included an editorial entitled “Bremer follows the steps of Saddam”, misled readers and incited hatred.

“A senior official with the US-led coalition said al-Hawza had not been given a warning before being closed for 60 days. “Under international law we have an obligation to maintain security here and it’s... within our legal obligation to act against institutions or individuals that are provoking violence,” he said. Last July, the US-led administration closed down another newspaper in the mainly Shi’ite city of Najaf for inciting violence. At least one other of an estimated 200 papers that have sprung up in occupied Iraq has received a warning.

The Arabic-language satellite television news channels Al Jazeera and Al Arabiya have also faced sanctions after the administration and the Iraqi Governing Council said they violated a law issued last year that bans inciting violence.

More than a hundred of Sadr’s supporters protesting on Wednesday wore black shirts with Mehdi Army written on them. Four clerics went inside the fortified US compound to meet the Iraq Governing Council.

MNA/Reuters

Trans-Asia festival to be held in Vietnam

HANOI, 2 April — China, Thailand, Myanmar, Laos and Vietnam are expected to hold a festival full of tourism, culture and sport activities, slated for late July in Vietnam’s central region.

“The festival will be held in Quang Tri central province from July 25-28, mainly to boost tourism and cultural exchanges of localities of countries in the West-East Economic Corridor,” Nguyen Duc Chuinh, vice chairman of the provincial People’s Committee told Xinhua on Wednesday.

Major events at the festival christened “Trans-Asia Bridge” will include performances of traditional music and folk dances, cycling, international trade fairs and tourism seminars, he noted.

A trans-Asia bicycle race with expected participation of nearly 150 cyclists will be organized during the festival. The 1,000-kilometre race is to start in Thailand. Five Vietnamese localities, three Thai provinces and three Lao provinces have registered to attend the festival. We are expecting more localities from Myanmar and China’s Yunnan Province,” Chuinh said.

MNA/Xinhua

Ukrainian, Polish presidents vow to promote ties

KIEV, 2 April — Ukrainian President Leonid Kuchma and visiting Polish President Alexander Kwasniewski vowed here Thursday to promote their bilateral ties.

Kuchma told a joint news conference after his talks with Kwasniewski that Ukraine hopes that Poland’s entry into the European Union (EU) would create a new era for the development of relations between Ukraine and Poland, rather than leading to lost markets in Poland for Ukraine.

Kwasniewski said his country, which is set to join the EU on May 1, will keep its doors open to Ukraine just as before.

As neighbours, relations between Ukraine and Poland have been quite close and Poland has been actively supporting Ukraine’s bid for EU membership.

During their talks, the two presidents discussed the development of relations between Ukraine and Poland, as well as potential future expansion of their bilateral and sub-regional cooperation.

For their part, the leaders praised the country’s economic growth and stressed their commitment to democratic development.

Australian soliders secure their embassy in Baghdad on 31 March, 2004.

INTERNET
CONTINUING IRAQI GUERILLA ATTACKS INFLECT RISING US CASUALTY

Under the eyes of US soldiers, some of tens of thousands of protesters take to the street of Baghdad on 31 March, 2004 to protest the US led coalition shut down of a weekly newspaper. — Internet

A British soldier takes position at the site of an explosion in the southern Iraqi city of Basra recently. Three British soldiers were injured near the southern Iraqi city of Basra when their vehicle was hit by an explosive device, Britain’s Defence Ministry said. — Internet

Iraqi protesters run from the protest site in the southern city of Basra, on 1 April, 2004. — Internet

An Iraqi man looks at a sport utility vehicle on fire after an attack in the restive town of Falluja, on 31 March, 2004. — Internet

A US Humvee vehicle burns on a highway near the restive Iraqi town of Falluja, on 1 April, 2004, after it had been hit by a roadside bomb, abandoned and set on fire. — Internet

American soldiers in Baquba. Five US soldiers in Iraq were killed when their vehicle struck a roadside bomb in Al-Ambar Province, west of Baghdad, a coalition spokesman said. — Internet

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Security pushes up Iraq contracts price

WASHINGTON, 2 April — Soaring security and insurance costs are driving up the price of contracts to rebuild Iraq and more funds may be needed, said a report on Wednesday by the US-led authority’s chief inspector in Iraq.

Chairman of the Coalition Provisional Authority, said security costs and the oversight of spending and control of contractors was among his main concerns in the months ahead as his team looks at US-funded contracts.

In a quarterly report made public on Wednesday, online博文 said security rate was up 10-15 percent or more of the total costs of Iraqi contracts, and he predicted more funding would be needed to cover this.

With continued and significant threats to human life being experienced in the Green Zone (in Baghdad) and throughout Iraq, the inability to predict the costs of security (including insurance), raises questions about the need for more funding — Iraq, donor, or US, to accomplish the reconstruction mission, ” said the report delivered to Congress on Tuesday. 

Bowen, a former White House lawyer, said his office would work closely with other US agencies to see whether the government should provide insurance or find other ways to control security-related costs without compromising safety. That report did not provide estimates on how much more should be budgeted for security but contractors have complained that the price of keeping their staff safe in such a hostile environment has cut deeply into profit margins.

All contractors working in Iraq have expensive private security to protect staff, and some have moved non-essential personnel to neighboring countries to reduce the risk.

Bowen was appointed in January to review how US taxpayer and Iraqi funds were being spent in Iraq, particularly the $18.6 billion US dollars appropriated by Congress for reconstruction.

The contracting process in Iraq has been criticized, particularly contracts handed out without competition to among others, Halliburton the oil services company once run by Vice-President Dick Cheney.

Three British soldiers wounded in Iraqi blast

LONDON, 2 April — Three British soldiers have been injured in an explosion in southern Britain’s Ministry of Defence said on Wednesday.

A ministry spokesman said an improvised explosive device had gone off near a vehicle south of Basra. He had no further details on the extent of the soldiers’ injuries or the explosion itself.

Basra, Iraq’s second city, and the rest of the southern Iraq region where British forces are deployed, has been relatively calmer than the rest of the country, although there have been several recent flare-ups.

British troops clashed with demonstrators on Monday outside the offices of a religious organization in Basra and at least one protester and two British soldiers were wounded.

Some 20 British soldiers have been killed in combat attacks in Iraq since the start of the war last year. Thirty-eight have died in non-combat incidents. — MNA/Reuters

ASEAN Regional Forum vows to combat terrorism in transport

MANILA, 2 April — The Association of South-East Asian Nations (ASEAN) Regional Forum members vowed Wednesday here to take measures to keep safe air and sea lanes as well as roads and rail.

In a statement after a two-day meeting, the delegates committed to combating international terrorism in transport security, identification and sharing of counter-terrorism measures as well as technical, legislative, and legal adjustments to enhance coordination in the region.

William Pope, deputy coordinator for counter-terrorism of the US Department of State, said he believes that terrorists would be attracted by commercial shipping and possible targets could be ships plying the Straits of Malacca and Singapore, the world’s busiest shipping lanes.

Southeast Asian countries need a region-specific approach to curb potential terrorist attacks, Pope said, adding that ASEAN “has not yet developed broad cooperative arrangement to combat the endemic piracy that is on the rise, much less terrorism.”

Like the United States, Australia also focused on terrorists’ interest in attacking economic assets as means of undermining the global economy, including strikes against shipping. The meeting’s co-chair, Vladimir Andreiev, director of the Department of New Challenges and Threats of the Russian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, said terrorists have not been completely defeated because they still have the initiative.

The fight against terrorism, he added, is 90-per cent-collecting information and working on it, including exchanging it with partners and doing it rapidly and fully enough to counteract terrorists’ plans.

About 125 delegates from 23 members attended the 2nd Inter-sessional Meeting on Counter-terrorism and Transnational Crime, co-chaired by the Philippines and Russia.

MNA/Reuters

German says restaurant food must be marked as GMO

HAMBURG, 2 April — Restaurant and canteen food containing genetically modified organisms (GMOs) must be clearly labelled on GMO labelling take effect in April, the German Government said on Wednesday.

On April 18 new European Union rules mean food on sale in shops will have to be labelled if it contains GMOs. Animal feed sold to farmers will also have to be labelled.

The rules also apply to restaurants, Junior German Agriculture and Consumer Protection Minister Alexander Mueller said in a statement.

If canteens or restaurants use genetically-modified food this must be clearly marked on the menu or in a notice, ” he said.

The ministry has completed talks with German state authorities, responsible for food inspections, and food industry associations to achieve a smooth implementation of the new regulations, Mueller said. “It is now the responsibility of the private sector to fulfil its labelling responsibilities,” he added. He expected state authorities to increase food inspections from April 18. — MNA/Reuters

Chavez rejects US interference in Venezuela, Haiti

CARACAS, 2 April — Venezuelan President Hugo Chavez reiterated Wednesday that his government resists the United States’ interference in the internal affairs of other nations, specifically in Haiti and Venezuela.

“My government does not recognize the one (government) placed by the United States in Haiti and we call on the other countries of the continent, as the Caribbean Community and Common Market (Caricom) has already done, to pronounce this,” he said.

He indicated that “only unity among us will guarantee respect for sovereignty.”

Chavez questioned the role of the Organization of American States (OAS), whose voice over Haiti’s situation is absent, saying that “silence in this case is pathological.”

Deploving the OAS’ failure to make pronouncements on this case and the international human rights organizations’ silence, eternal silence”, the Venezuelan leader said. “This world is full of hypocrisy.”

He also said Wednesday afternoon that the Venezuelan ambassador to the United States Jorge Valero “will give a speech that I approved, in which all this perverse interventionist plan waged by the government of Washington against Venezuela will be denounced”. M/Reuters

US-backed Iraq trade fair postponed indefinitely

BAQUBA, 2 April — A US-sponsored trade fair billed as Iraq’s largest postwar business gathering was postponed on Thursday, in a blow to efforts to boost investment and project an image of Iraq as a place to do business.

A foreign company whose part had pulled out of the fair in recent weeks because of concerns about security. Insurers were hoping to win a slice of Iraq reconstruction had planned to attend, along with US companies that won most of the contracts Washington has awarded to rebuild Iraq so far, such as Bechtel, Halliburton and Fluor.

The projects include oil, military bases, electricity generation, and water and security facilities.

The fair, next to the city of Fallujah, west of Baghdad, and their bodies burned and dragged through the streets by a jubilant crowd.

Several firms out of 200 contractors who usually operate out of hard-to-access compounds with Iraqi and foreign companies looking for business in the country. Although postwar subcontractors are on offer, few foreign companies have chosen to set up in the country as instability continues and facilities such as hotels are under attack.

One Arab businessmen said Arab companies could gain an advantage as Western businesses stay away from Iraq. “They are still coming. Many have dual Arab-US nationalities,” the businessman said. — MNA/Reuters

Iraqi cyclists pass the wreckage of a car bomb which exploded in the town of Baquba, on 31 March, 2004. — Reuters

Tom Cole, owner of Cole’s Gun Works, in Moyock, NC, a shop that deals with Blackwater Security Consulting, stands in his shop on Wednesday, 31 March, 2004. Cole said that the killings in Iraq weren’t “anything different than the kind of stuff that happened in Vietnam.”

MNA/Xinhua

Italy's left-wing coalition said a speech that I approved, in which all this perverse interventionist plan waged by the government of Washington against Venezuela will be denounced”.

MNA/Reuters

Tom Cole, owner of Cole’s Gun Works, in Moyock, NC, a shop that deals with Blackwater Security Consulting, stands in his shop on Wednesday, 31 March, 2004. Cole said that the killings in Iraq weren’t “anything different than the kind of stuff that happened in Vietnam.”

MNA/Xinhua

MNA/Reuters
On return from Ayeyawady

Sein Sein Thein (Dagon University)

If was my fifth arrival at Ayeyawady Division. We have arranged training programmes for our new generations to enhance their knowledge and awareness through excursions to the natural training ground. It is very urgent time to work out to know bio-technology and environmental studies.

These subjects are the applied science and has advanced in our country. Myanmar is a country with a long coast-line and three major rivers are rich in prawns, shrimps, lobsters which are highly favoured by the people and consumed in various forms. On the first week of March, altogether 50 members of scholars and students of Bio-technology of Dagon University arrived at Ayeyawady Division, in the hope of studying culture methods by using bio-techniques. The aims and objects of our excursion to Ayeyawady is to provide descriptions of the species collected and to record many new species. At 10.30 am we all took rest in office of Department of Fisheries. Fishery officials and staff of DOF warmly welcomed us.

Divisional officers of DOF, U Win Myint Maung explained the successful farming methods by using bio-technical ways and natural resources of this region. Like all scientists, we, students have to work rather like detectives. This involves asking questions and trying to work out the answers with official of DOF and entrepreneurs of Ayeyawady Division.

After lunch, Ayeyawady Division Peace and Development Council Chairman Maj-Gen Soe Naing arrived at the meeting room and encouraged us. And, he gave advice, saying due to soil and weather condition, Ayeyawady Division produces fish, prawns, shrimps, lobsters and fishery products. The divisional aquaculture sector is important for our nation. Nowadays, Ayeyawady has been developing year by year. We are looking forward to the day on which all the efficient graduates specializing “Bio-technology” could be able to serve our country.

All of our students are year under 24, so we describe them as youth. All of the youth agreed with him and were pleased with his honourable prizes for them. The students stated that Tatmadaw men are energetically implementing the nation-building projects covering numerous sectors including education.

I am convinced that education and training are the mainstay in the creation of qualified and skilled human resources. Today, in the world, the proportion of species that face extinction stand at 34 percent for fish and shell fish. Fish and shell fish are our staple. The single largest problem is habitat loss, such as man’s conversion and fragmentation of coral reef, rivers and many other habitats that species call home. There is no need to doubt that interrelation of biological environment and fish, shell fish is one of the interesting portion of Ecology. Thus we find out the new edible species for our country.

Fish, prawn and fishery products are major sources of animal protein for the increasing population and Bio-technology provides both products and services.

Bio-technology may be defined more broadly as the use of other living organism for the benefit of human beings. We taught Bio-technology in this field trip.

In the evening, we arrived at Ngwe Haung Beach. Lake all life, that of the shore has beauty and as always that beauty is the greatest in its natural setting in Ngwe Haung Beach. On the beach, we have observed so many bivalves such as oysters, cockles and scallops. These are well-known edible mollusk. We had an opportunity to visit shrimp breeding farms, Yuzana, Shwe Kha Yu and mainly from intertidal zone of the sea. Altogether 34 species of perecypods (Bivalves), 16 species of fishes, 10 species of shrimps, five species of lobsters of Ngwe Haung and Chaung Tha beaches were observed. All of the students were discussed at night in Sea Sein Hotel. They stated that Aquaculture System must be considered in relations to natural resources system. Natural resources are necessary for economic growth, thus we need to learn natural resource economy. I assumed, the newest resources, biological diversity is perhaps a special type of extractive resources. Diversity is not a feature of one ecosystem or species or gene but of a collection of them. But the justification for preservation, of diversity is often expressed in extractive terms. Diversity may also be important in general ecosystem maintenance. Preservation of diversity normally implies a shift away from traditional types of extractive activities.

Researchers of universities and other departments should work together in Myanmar. More research is needed and they should focus on providing answers to the problems related to use of natural resources.

We wish to thank Deputy Minister U Aung Thin and Major Cho Win (Pathein) for their help and encouragement to carry on with the research work on natural resources of Ayeyawady Division.
Senior General Than Shwe and wife Daw Kyaing Kyaing present cash donations to members of pagoda board of trustees of Zalun Pyidawbyan Buddha Image. — MNA

Senior General Than Shwe and wife Daw Kyaing Kyaing offer ‘soon’, fruits, lights, water and joss sticks to Manaungmyin Pyidawbyan Buddha Image in Zalun. — MNA

Implementation of the national development tasks must be in harmony with the international trend and developments. Only then will the whole nation including the rural areas achieve greater progress.

The Senior General and party viewed the developments of the island in a motorcade. Back in Pathein at 9:30 am today, they paid respects to State Ovadacariya Sayadaw, Sayadaws of State Sangha Maha Nayaka Committee, Sayadaw of the State Central Working Committee of the Sangha and Sayadaws of Division and Township Sangha Nayaka Committees at Sasana Beikmandawgyi. Local authorities, departmental personnel, members of Union Solidarity and Development Association and other social organizations and religious associations and guests were also present.

Endeavours should be made for development of not only the island, but also its surrounding areas. There must be a harmony between the regional development and national development undertakings. Besides, the spirit to love the Union, while possessing the will to safeguard their region and the nation by themselves. The Government will fulfil and make arrangements for regional development, and it will practically implement the five rural development tasks for progress of Hainggyi Island and its surrounding areas.

Efforts will have to be made in cooperation with the local people for development of transport infrastructure. Endeavours should be made for development of not only the island, but also its surrounding areas. There must be a harmony between the regional development and national development undertakings. Besides, the spirit to love the Union, while possessing the will to safeguard their region and the nation by themselves. The Government will fulfil and make arrangements for regional development, and it will practically implement the five rural development tasks for progress of Hainggyi Island and its surrounding areas.

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Senior General Than Shwe and Daw Kyaing Kyaing visited the island of Hainggyi, near Pathein, yesterday morning, according to the Senior General’s agenda.

Senior General Than Shwe, wife Daw Kyaing Kyaing and party visited Manaungmyin Pyidawbyan Pagoda, where they offered alms, fruits, lights, flowers, water and joss sticks to the Buddha Image and paid homage to it.

They also offered the Buddha Thingaung to the Buddha Image. After signing in the visitor’s book at the pagoda, Senior General Than Shwe and wife Daw Kyaing Kyaing donated cash to the pagoda through the pagoda board of trustees. Senior General Than Shwe, wife Daw Kyaing Kyaing and party viewed the developments of the island in a motorcade. Back in Pathein at 9:30 am today, they paid respects to State Ovadacariya Sayadaw, Sayadaw of State Sangha Maha Nayaka Committee, Sayadaw of the State Central Working Committee of the Sangha and Sayadaws of Division and Township Sangha Nayaka Committees at Sasana Beikmandawgyi. Local authorities, departmental personnel, members of Union Solidarity and Development Association and other social organizations and religious associations and guests were also present.

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246 drug cases exposed in February

YANGON, 2 April — Tatmadaw, Myanmar Police Force and the Customs Department exposed 246 drug-related cases — 55,585.2 kilograms of opium in 50 cases, 37,661.9 kilograms of heroin in 75 cases, 0.0962 kilograms of opium oil in two cases, 2.3324 kilograms of low-grade opium in 10 cases, 46,970.7 kilograms of marijuana in 25 cases, 8.3 litres of Phensedyl in five cases, 39,620 stimulant tablets in 32 cases, 0.015 kilograms of stimulant powder in one case, 0.62 litre of cough syrup in one case, 22 cases for failure to register and 23 other cases in February 2004.

Action was taken against 322 persons in 246 cases — 265 men and 57 women — under the law in February 2004.

MNA

Vietnamese delegation leaves

YANGON, 2 April — The three-member Vietnamese broadcasting delegation led by Mr Nguyen Van Khoa, Deputy Director of the Voice of Vietnam that visited Myanmar under the cooperation programme between the Myanmar Radio and Television and the Voice of Vietnam, left here by air for home this morning.

The Vietnamese delegation was seen off at Yangon International Airport by U Ko Ko Htwe, Director (Myanmar Radio) of MRTV of the Ministry of Information and officials.

MNA

WHO director for SEA region leaves

YANGON, 2 April — Dr Samlee Pliamthangchang, Director of the Southeast Asian Region of the World Health Organization, left here by air this morning as he had studied and discussed the health care activities being implemented in Myanmar under the programme of WHO.

He was seen off at Yangon International Airport by Deputy Minister for Health Dr Mya Oo, directors-general of departments under the ministry, deputy directors-general, officials, WHO Resident Representative Dr Agostino Borra and responsible personnel.

MNA

Minister receives guests

YANGON, 2 April — Minister for Commerce Brig-Gen Pyi Sone received the journalist delegation led by Mr Liu Zhanmian of the Farmers’ Daily of China, at his office on Strand Road this afternoon. Present were Deputy Minister Brig-Gen Aung Tun and departmental heads.

MNA

Management Officers Course ends

YANGON, 2 April — The Management Officers Course No 9 of the Customs Department under the Ministry of Finance and Revenue concluded at the training hall of the department here this afternoon, with an address delivered by Minister for Finance and Revenue Maj-Gen Hla Tun.

It was attended by Governor of the Central Bank of Myanmar U Kyaw Kyaw Maung, Director-General of the Customs Department Col Khin Maung Lin, directors-general and managing directors of departments and enterprises under the ministry. A total of 24 officers attended the course, which lasted eight weeks.

MNA

Donations for Tatmadaw medical units

YANGON, 2 April — In honour of the 59th Anniversary Armed Forces Day, Thida Thudhamma Theingi Thiri Thudhamma Theingi Agga Maha Thiri Thudhamma Theingi Daw Ni and family, on behalf of Chairman of Shwe Myitta Street, Region 18, Ward 5, Lashio, donated 100 beds worth K 25 million for Defence Services medical units at Defence Services Liver Specialist Hospital on 25 March afternoon.

Director of Medical Services Col Than Aung accepted the donations and presented a certificate of honour to the wellwisher. Next, the director spoke words of thanks.

MNA

Heroin seized in Lashio

YANGON, 2 April — A combined team comprising members of local intelligence unit, Myanmar Police Force and Special Anti-Drug Squad, acting on information that narcotic drug will be sold at the tea shop near the market in Ward 2, Lashio, on 24 March, seized 669 grams of heroin hidden in 40 soap boxes from Ma Yan Kyaw Chin, daughter of U Yan Chauk Pauk of Namhsan Street, Region 18, Ward 5, Lashio.

According to further information, the team arrested U Yon Phint who was the owner of the heroin, son of U Laung Shan of Shwe Myitta Street, Region 9, Ward 6, Lashio.

Action is being taken against them under the Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances Law.

MNA

Heroin seized in Lashio

Nursery Market Festival continues

YANGON, 2 April — The Nursery Market Festival continued at Myayha Padetha Park in Bahan Township here today with the aim of providing necessary assistance to growers and attracting the public to be interested in agriculture, horticulture, livestock breeding and vegetable farming. Poultry farming and fish breeding are also exhibited there.

MNA
Secretary-1 inspects multi-purpose…

(from page 16)

city. On completion, the project will not only supply water to a total of 108,000 acres of farmland but also generate 330 million kilowatt hours on an annual ba-

sis.

Before 1988, the coun-
ty could produce a total of over 580 megawatts of elec-
tricity on a national basis. However, after 1988, more than 560 megawatts of elec-
tricity was produced addi-
tionally by constructing 28 hydel power stations and six gas-powered stations, total-
ing 34 stations. As a result, nearly 1,200 megawatts of electricity can now be generated.

At the same time, efforts are under way to produce another 2,000 megawatts of electricity with the use of rich water resources in the third five-year plan.

Secretary-1 Lt-Gen Soe Win and party arrived back in Magway by helicopter and met with departmental officials and members of social organizations at the city hall of Magway.

Magway Division Peace and Development Council Chairman Col Zaw Min reported on the loca-
tion of Magway Division, its climate, the use of land and water resources, culti-
vation of crops, sufficient of rice and edible oil in the region, cultivation of ma-

jor crops, the undertaking of livestock breeding, the investment in industrial zones and their productiv-
ity, education, health and rural development meas-
ures. Departmental officials reported on progress of their tasks and the requirements to be fulfilled.

Next, Lt-Gen Ye Myint spoke of the need of de-
partmental officials to or-
ganize local people to co-
operate with the Govern-
ment in regional develop-
ment tasks.

Speaking on the occa-
sion, Secretary-1 Lt-Gen Soe Win said that in build-
ing a modern and developed nation, the Government has been laying down and im-
plementing long-term and short-term plans.

Dam projects and river water pumping station projects have been imple-
mented to extend cultivation of the ten main crops in-
cluding paddy till reaching the goal. Priority has been given to irrigation as Magway Division gets less amount of rainfall annually. Magway Division is one of the six most reliable divi-
sions of the nation.

The division cannot pro-
duce enough food for its lo-
cal requirement yet.

Thus, efforts should be made to extend sown acre-
age, multiple cropping and per acre yield, while effec-
tively using the irrigation facilities set up by the Gov-
ernment.

The Government has been using various means of irrigation to ensure surplus food for the growing popu-
lation of the future, and to enable them to live with

peace of mind. Thus, all the local people will have to strive for regional agricul-
tural development.

Besides, industrial de-
velopment plays a key role in building a modern and developed nation that can stand shoulder to shoulder with the global nations. Nineteen industrial zones have been set up for industrial development, and various means are being ap-
plied to develop the private industries.

The Government has been opening institutions of higher learning and subject-
wise advanced level courses to bring out brilliant new generation and experts in various fields and develop human resources who may help develop the nation.

As various means are being applied in generating hydro power from rivers and creeks to supply enough electricity to the nation’s industrial sector, the nation will enjoy adequate power supply in the near future.

In addition to the na-
tional development drive, border area development project, 24-development zone project and five rural tasks have been or are be-
ing implemented for progress of all sectors and all regions of the nation.

Thanks to the Govern-
ment’sfarsighted efforts, the nation is on the develop-
ment track.

It is a common knowl-
edge that seven-point future policy programme has been laid down and implemented

to build a modern, devel-
oped and discipline-flour-
ishing democratic nation.

All the national races will have to strive for the success of the programme. Local authorities and de-
partmental personnel are urged to serve the interest of the regions they are as-
signed and of the nation.

The Secretary-1 cor-
dually greeted those present at the meeting.

Next, the Secretary-1 and party proceeded to the 200-bed teaching hospital construction project site of Magway Institute of Medi-
cine.

At the briefing hall, the Secre-
tary-1 and party heard a report presented by Direc-
tor of Myanma Industrial Construction Services under the Ministry of Industry-2 U Than Aye on matters related to construction of the 200-bed teaching hos-
pital.

After giving necessary instructions, the Secretary-1 and party inspected con-
struction project site of Thaphanseik river water pumping project being undertaken by Water Re-

sources Utilization Depart-
ment under the Ministry of Agriculture and Irrigation in Thaphanseik region, Magway Township and contribute to greening of 7-

mile radius of Magway.

Next, the Secretary-1 and party arrived in Magway.

MNA

e-Procurement Project formally launched

YANGON, 2 April—With the directives of the e-Na-
tional Task Force and co-
operation of Myanmar ICT Development Corporation Ltd, the e-Government Pi-
lot Projects such as e-Visa, e-Passport, Smart Card, Smart School and Certifica-
tion Authority are being im-
plemented.

Today, the e-Procure-
ment programme was for-
mal launched for 2004-
2005 financial year at MICT Park, Hlne Univer-
sities’ Campus, here, this morning.

Present were Chairman of the e-National Task

Force Minister for Commu-
nications, Posts and Tel-
egraphs Brig-Gen Thein
Zaw, Deputy Minister for Mines U Myint Thein, Deputy Minister for Hotels and Tourism Brig-Gen Aye Myint Kyu, MICTDC Chairman e-Application Committee Chairman Brig-
Gen Thein Swe, members of the e-National Task

Force, departmental heads from departments and en-
terprises which will start to apply the e-Procurement Project and officials of local and foreign compa-
nies.

MNA
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Chinese middle class covers 19% of population.

Brazzaville, 2 April — Growing by one percentage point every year since 1999, China's middle class covered 19 per cent of the total population of about 1.3 billion by 2003, Chinese Academy of Social Sciences (CASS) said here. According to CASS's standard, families with assets valued at 19,000 to 300,000 yuan (18,072 to 36,144 US dollars) could be classified as "middle class." About 49 per cent of households in urban areas in China meet the middle class standard, but considering the large amount of families with lower incomes in the rural areas, the report concluded that the middle class covered 19 per cent of the total population. Thanks to favourable policies, the number of China's middle class had increased rapidly and its growth would be accelerated in future, the report by the elite think-tank showed.

Based on the figures of 15 per cent in 1999 and 20 per cent in 2003, the percentage of middle class people in China was expected to reach 40 per cent in 2020 under current economic growth conditions, the report said.

No claims against this vessel will be admitted after the Claims Day.

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New SARS vaccine works in mice, human trials near

Los Angeles, 2 April — A new, experimental vaccine against SARS that protects mice from the infectious disease could soon be tested in humans, scientists said on Wednesday.

The vaccine, which contains a small piece of DNA from the virus that causes the respiratory illness, stopped it replicating in infected mice.

"The good news from this study is that it really provides the first proof of concept that you can vaccinate and you can get immune protection against the SARS coronavirus," said Dr Gary Nabel of the National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases (NIAID) in the United States.

"It also provides first description of an immune mechanism by which that occurs," he added in an interview. "That is important for developing a human vaccine and for developing anti-viral therapies."

Severe acute respiratory syndrome (SARS) first emerged in southern China in 2002. It infected more than 8,000 people in nearly 30 countries and killed nearly 800. Although the outbreak was brought under control, public health experts say it could re-emerge.

Scientists identified its cause as a new virus from the family of so-called coronaviruses that are responsible for the common cold and a range of animal illnesses.

China, Hong Kong and Canada were among the most severely affected by the virus, which spread around the world through international air travel.

The vaccine developed by Nabel and his team is made from a tiny piece of modified SARS DNA linked to a protein on the outer surface of the virus. The protein helps the virus infect cells.

The DNA used in the vaccine is too small to reproduce the SARS virus but sufficient to stimulate an immune response.

In animal tests, scientists tested two versions of the vaccine containing different amounts of genetic material from the virus and compared the results with mice that were not vaccinated.

Mice injected with the vaccine launched an immune response against the virus shortly after they were infected. Animals that had been vaccinated had one million times fewer virus particles in their lungs than the non-vaccinated mice, according to the research published in the science journal Nature.

US military sex assaults linked to "friendly fire"

WASHINGTON, 2 April — Sexual assaults by US military men against their female comrades-in-arms amount to a different kind of "friendly fire" in the Iraqi-Afghan theatre, veterans' advocates told members of Congress on Wednesday.

"While these friendly fire attacks leave no trail of blood, they leave many damaged souls in their wake," Scott Berkowitz, President of the Rape, Abuse & Incest National Network, told a panel of women lawmakers. "They rob our country of the services of many we have trained and nurtured to protect us."

There have been 129 cases of sexual assault reported to the independent Miles Foundation in the current theatre of operations — Iraq, Kuwait, Afghanistan and Bahrain — but only 27 were reported to military officials, according to foundation chief Christine Hansen.

One reason victims are reluctant to tell their commanding officers is the lack of confidentiality and a blame-the-victim mentality within the military, Hansen told the Congressional Caucus for Women's Issues.

"The more you report, the more they say you're making it up," said Jennifer Machmer, a US Army captain who was sexually assaulted in Kuwait in 2003 and is now being medi-cally discharged from the military as a direct result.

Machmer said she reported extreme sexually abusive language by a subordi-nate in 2001, and was sexually assaulted in 2002. She did not report the incident, but when she was assaulted in Kuwait in March 2003, "There was no way for me to report another violation, so I went and I reported it within a half hour."

The investigation took until August, but Machmer said the man was never pun-ished and remained in the military, while she is being discharged with a 30-per-cent temporary retirement benefit.

Turkey's police seize 4.4 tons of base morphine

ANKARA, 2 April — Turkish police has seized 4.4 tons of base morphine in an operation in the country's largest city of Istanbul, Interior Minister Muharrem Guler announced on Wednesday.

Anatolia news agency quoted Guler as saying that the Istanbul police had consis-ted the base morphine hidden in a truck in Esenyurt District in Istanbul's Buyukcekmece town on 29 March.
“HIV/AIDS has reached into the visceras of Swaziland and is tearing it apart,” Stephen Lewis, UN special envoy for HIV/AIDS in Africa, told a Press briefing at the UN Headquarters in New York after a visit earlier in the month to the southern African country.

Swaziland, with the highest-ever AIDS crisis in the world, is undergoing socially wrenching changes, with some heads of families among the young as eight and the number of orphans likely to rise to 10 or 15 per cent of the population by 2010, according to an envoy.

“The rise and sweep of the virus has been inexorable, and thus far, irreversible,” said Lewis. The caseload has increased from 2.6 per cent in 2000 to 38.6 per cent in 2002, Lewis said.

Meanwhile, between a four-year drought and the AIDS illnesses and deaths of the predominantly female agricultural force, “the fields are shrivelling from neglect,” he said. “You can’t hold it, you can’t plant.” Many people depended on the UN World Food Programme to get enough food to survive, Lewis said.

Lewis also said Swaziland’s National Emergency Response Committee, which is fighting HIV/AIDS, had requested funds from the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria to pay 10,000 women 40 US dollars a month each to become surrogate mothers for some of the orphans.

“The UN envoy expressed concern that the seed money the World Health Organization needs, 200 million US dollars to put enough people to treatment by the end of next year, is still not forthcoming,” the Prime Minister said.

He called on donor countries to donate money to WHO to enable it to do this indispensable, life-saving work.

China, Thailand to improve military cooperation

BANGKOK, 2 April — China stands ready to join efforts with Thailand to continue helping Swaziland fight against HIV/AIDS.

The defence establishment, ministries and militaries of two countries have had close interaction and cooperation and made positive contribution, the visiting Chinese Defence Minister Cao Gangchuan said.

“China and Thailand have developed a special bilateral relationship and cooperation in a way of mutual respect, mutual trust and mutual help,” said Cao when he met with his Thai counterpart Chethta Thanajaro here on Wednesday.

The Sino-Thai friendship has developed in all sectors including the military area, which is to the interests of both peoples, he added.

The “defence establishment, ministries and militaries of two countries have had close interaction and cooperation and made positive contribution,” said Cao, who had invited Cao to have an official goodwill visit.

Cao is the first foreign Defence Minister visiting Thailand since Chethta took office earlier this month, showing the good relations between the two countries and militaries, according to the Thai Defence Minister.

ADB proposes loan of $1,368m for Bangladesh

DHAKA, 2 April — The government has signed a $1,368 million 12-year dollar lending programme (2004-2006) for Bangladesh.

The lending programme, consisting of 17 projects, will be placed before the ADB management for the final approval.

The United News of Bangladesh, a private news agency here, reported Wednesday.

Of the proposed loan amount, 618 million dollars is expected to come from Asian Development Fund and 750 million dollars from the ordinary capital resources.

The programme accommodates several thematic priorities, including promotion of the private sector, good governance, development and regional cooperation.

Japan compiles guidelines to stop taxi crimes

Tokyo, 2 April — The National Police Agency (NPA) has compiled a set of guidelines for measures to cope with a surge of taxi-related crimes, the agency said Thursday.

The NPA said it has asked taxi operators to take measures based on the guidelines and ordered prefectural police to hold crime-prevention drills in the taxi industry.

According to the latest NPA statistics, the number of taxi robbery cases rose by 58 to 226 last year, or by 58 per cent more than the previous year.

According to the NPA, about 80 per cent of the taxi drivers in the robbery cases were not equipped with exterior alarm lights and some 40 per cent had no crime-prevention drills and drew up manuals for drivers, as well as equip their taxis with partitions and external alarm lights.

Australia considers fertiliser licensing plan

CANBERRA, 2 April — Australia is considering a plan to license the sale of ammonium nitrate fertilizer, a prime ingredient in explosives used in the 2002 bombings on the Indonesian island of Bali that killed 202 people.

“We are looking at a licensing system that would be administered by the states and territories, whose responsibility it is. It is a high priority,” the Prime Minister Qarase said.

There were only curbs on the storage and transport of ammonium nitrate because it was classified as a dangerous item, but there were no regulations on the sale of the fertiliser.

Japan to delay launch of lunar probe satellite

Tokyo, 2 April — Japan will delay the plan to launch its first lunar exploration satellite this summer because valves for the orbiter’s attitude control engine have been recalled by the manufacturer, Japan Aerospace Exploration Agency (JAXA), officials said.

The launch of the H-2A rocket on an M-5 probe satellite, which was classified as a danger,

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South Korea held to shock 0-0 draw by Maldives

SEOUL, 2 April — South Korea were held to a shock 0-0 draw away from home by the Maldives in a 2006 World Cup Asian zone Group Seven qualifier on Wednesday.

The 2002 World Cup semifinalists enjoyed the bulk of possession in the Male National Stadium but could not break through against the Indian Ocean islanders, ranked a lowly 141st in FIFA’s world rankings.

Early reaction from South Korean media was harsh and likely to pile renewed pressure on coach Kim Ho-tong. Disgruntled South Korea fans were also reported to be lashing out at a string of media criticising the team’s performance on Internet bulletin boards.

Anderlecht striker Seol Ki-hyeon put the ball in the net for the visitors in the 24th minute, but the goal was disallowed after fellow striker Ahn Jang-hwan was penalised for handling the ball moments earlier.

In the 54th minute Japan-based striker Ahn also had a goal disallowed for offside.

Roving wing-back Song Chong-gug found a lot of space on the right-hand side for the visitors, but South Korea’s strike force repeatedly failed to get on the end of his crosses.

Andresen penalty gives Norway win in Belgrade

BELGRADE, 2 April — A Martin Andresen penalty in the 76th minute gave Norway a 1-0 win against 10-man Serbia and Montenegro in a friendly international on Wednesday.

Andresen, currently on loan to English club Blackburn Rovers, converted the spot kick after Morten Gamst Pedersen was felled by the home team’s keeper Vladimir Duslenjovic, following a goalmouth scramble.

The hosts had been reduced to 10 men on the hour when Darko Kovacevic was sent off for deliberately elbowing an opponent off the ball.

Kovacevic hit the crossbar with a powerful header in the 24th minute and Dejan Stankovic also missed a good chance for Serbia and Montenegro, when his spectacular volley cannoned off the post on the stroke of halftime.

Venus ousted by Dementieva in Miami

WASHINGTON, 2 April — Russia’s Elena Dementieva stunned an expected all-Williams final at the 6.5 million US dollars Nasdaq 100 Open, knocking out Venus with a 6-3, 6-7, 7-6 win in the quarterfinals on Wednesday.

The fifth seed got off to the more consistent start and could have won in straight sets before Dementieva rallied.

But Venus’ improvement made Dementieva unsure if the second-seeded American was faking or fighting back.

The Nasdaq 100 Open is Williams’ fourth tournament of the season and she has yet to get past the quarterfinal stage after missing the second half of last year with abdominal injuries. Dementieva next plays winner between compatriot Nadia Petrova and Frenchwoman Nathalie Dechy in Friday’s semifinals.

Defoe stakes his claim

LONDON, 2 April — England’s Sven Goran Eriksson will name his Euro 2004 squad in 47 days with 17 players guaranteed to be making the trip to Portugal in June.

That leaves six places up for grabs to complete Eriksson’s 23-man squad. England’s coach will have given few clues in the friendly with Sweden to who will make up the squad, with only Jermain Defoe stakes a claiming a place.

Coming on as an 11th-minute substitute for Darus Vassell, debutant Defoe caused Sweden plenty of problems. Still only 21, Defoe has demonstrated, be it at Bournemouth, West Ham and now Spurs an impressive goalscoring pedigree.

Spurs director of football David Pleat has been banging the drum for international inclusion ever since his move to White Hart Lane, emphasising his versatility and ability to make an impact even as a substitute. In promoting Wayne Rooney to the senior squad, Eriksson has shown he is willing to blood players, whatever their age, which suggests Defoe will be on the plane to Portugal.

Healy strike in Estonia ends Northern Ireland’s bleak run

TALLINN, 2 April — Northern Ireland finally ended their dreary run of 15 games without a win spanning more than two years when they beat Estonia 1-0 in a friendly on Wednesday.

The visitors, whose last success was a 1-0 World Cup qualifying win in Maljatgur on 18 October 2001, took the honours when striker Ian Healy latched onto a long pass in the last minute of the first half and thundered shot from 25 metres into the top right hand corner.

The Preston North End striker had ended Northern Ireland’s two-year goal drought when he scored in last month’s 4-1 defeat by Norway.

Estonia goalkeeper Martin Kaalma, who earlier made a great save to deny Crewe midfielder Steve Jones from close range, had no chance with the winner.

Palestinians celebrate going top after 1-1 draw with Iraq

JERUSALEM, 2 April — Palestine’s 1-1 draw with Iraq in a World Cup qualifier in Damascus was made up of locally-based players and ex-pats, mainly from Chile where a number of them play for local league sides.

The team is coached by Austrian Alfred Riedl, while his assistant is Israeli Azmi Nasser.

Nasser, a former coach of Israeli Premier League side Al Ahl Nazareth, coached Palestine in their last World Cup qualifying campaign when they failed to advance past the first stage on the road to the finals that were held in Japan and South Korea in 2002.

Joaquin set to become Real’s next Galactico

MADRID, 2 April — Joaquin is close to becoming Real Madrid’s next mega-money signing.

The Merengues’ interest in the winger is no secret, and after declining a move to Manchester United—who had apparently agreed terms with Betis—the youngster has said ‘yes’ to Real.

The projected move will throw further doubt on Luis Figo’s future at the Bernabeu.
3-4-2004 (Saturday) (Programme Schedule)  
Morning Transmission (05:30 - 07:30)  
9:00 Signature Tune  
9:05 Greetings  
9:10 Song “Yangon to the  
Peak of Mt Victoria”  
9:20 Song “Towards Man- 
day Golden City”  
9:30 National News  
9:40 Ancient Pakhangyi 
Monastery  
9:50 Song “Mesmerize 
Your Longing Wish”  
10:00 National News  
10:10 Song “Not Far From 
Sight”  
10:20 Song “Sky: “Catch of Fish by 
Lights” (The Ruby Land)”  
10:30 National News  
10:40 Song “Myanmar 
Monastery”  
10:50 Journey to Mogok 
(“Mingalabar!”)  
11:00 National News  
11:10 Song From Yangon to the 
Peak of Mt Victoria  
11:20 Song “Towards Man- 
day Golden City”  
11:30 National News  
11:40 Song “Mesmerize 
Your Longing Wish”  
11:50 Greetings  
12:00 Signature Tune  
12:10 Song “Towards Man- 
day Golden City”  
12:20 National News  
12:30 Song “Buddhism 
& Myanma Sen- 
ded Hills”

Saturday, April 3  
7:00 am  
1. Recitation of Parittas by 
Monsignor Kyaw U 
OoTamaura  
7:25 am  
2. To be healthy exercise  
7:30 am  
3. Morning news  
7:40 am  
4. Nice and sweet song  
7:55 am  
5. Delicacies  
8:05 am  
6. National News  
8:20 am  
7. National News  
8:30 am  
8. International news  
8:45 am  
9. Happy and Educational 
English Summer Course 
MRTV (Junior Class-I)  
10:00 am  
11. National News  
11:10 am  
12. News  
12:40 pm  
Edit: 296115, Manager 29664, Circulation 297093, Advertisement 296643, Accounts 296545, Administration 296611, Production 297030 (Office) / 297028 (Press).
YANGON, 2 April— Secretary-1 of the State Peace and Development Council Lt-Gen Soe Win, accompanied by members of the State Peace and Development Council Office and departmental heads, heard reports of hydro电 projects around Yangon Airport held.

Speaking on the occasion, the commander said that the plan is being implemented for the cultivation of irrigation fields and vegetables to ensure greening of 30-mile radius of Yangon International Airport all the year round. The government has spent a large amount of money on water supply system for the plan.

YANGON, 2 April— The Yangon Division Supervisory Committee for Ensuring Secure and Smooth Transport held its meeting at the Yangon Division Secretariat Building. Chairman of the Supervisory Committee Chairman of Yangon Division Peace and Development Council Commander of Yangon Command Maj-Gen Myint Swe. In his address, Commander Maj-Gen Myint Swe stressed a host of measures to be taken by the drivers and action to be taken against reckless drivers.

Next, members of the Supervisory Committee reported on tasks being carried out for the convenience of passengers.

Secretary-1 inspects multi-purpose dam projects, hydro-electric power projects in Magway Division

YANGON, 2 April— Secretary-1 of the State Peace and Development Council Li-Gen Soe Win attended a meeting at the Yangon Command Headquarters this morning, attended by Chairman of the Yangon Division Peace and Development Council Commander of Yangon Command Maj-Gen Myint Swe. Secretary-1 inspected multi-purpose dam projects, hydro-electric power projects in Magway Division.

Secretary-1 said that they have received the reports of multi-purpose dam projects, hydro-electric power projects in Magway Division. Secretary-1 called for cooperation of the Ministry of Agriculture and Irrigation and the Ministry of Electric Power for timely completion of the project.

At the Central Control Room of the Mone Creek hydroelectric power station, Secretary-1 and party heard reports about the generation of electricity and distribution of electricity to Chank power station.

The Mone Creek multi-purpose dam project is being implemented on Mone Creek, two miles north of Sedoktara. (See page 10)