Virati papa, to refrain from sin; this is the way to auspiciousness.

Senior General Than Shwe greets Prime Minister General Khin Nyunt at the airport. — MNA

Senior General Than Shwe welcomes back Prime Minister General Khin Nyunt on return from Bangladesh

YANGON, 6 April—Myanmar delegation led by Prime Minister of the Union of Myanmar General Khin Nyunt arrived back here by air at 3.30 pm today after paying a goodwill visit to the People’s Republic of Bangladesh at the invitation of Prime Minister of the People’s Republic of Bangladesh Begum Khaleda Zia.

The Myanmar delegation led by Prime Minister General Khin Nyunt was welcomed back at the Yangon International Airport by Chairman of the State Peace and Development Council Commander-in-Chief of Defence Services Senior General Than Shwe, 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, member of the State Peace and Development Council General Thura Shwe Mann, Secretary-2 of the State Peace and Development Council Lt-Gen Thein Sein, members of the State Peace and Development Council, the Commander-in-Chief (Navy), the Commander-in-Chief (Air), the Yangon Division Peace and Development Council Chairman and Yangon Command Commander, the Minister for Foreign Affairs, senior military officers, Dean of the Diplomatic Corps Ambassador of the Republic of Singapore Mr Simon Tensing de Cruz, heads of diplomatic missions and resident representatives of the United Nations agencies, Chargé d’Affaires ai of the Bangladesh Embassy Mr Md Eusuf Ali and officials and departmental heads. (See page 8)

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

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

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

Emergence of the State Constitution is the duty of all citizens of Myanmar Naing-Ngan.
Try to become able technicians

Nowadays, science and technologies are experiencing such a rapid development that they have a great influence on education, health, defence, security, economic and social sectors of society. At such a time like this, development of human resources is the name of the game if we want to modernize our country. For our country to emerge as a modern and developed nation, it is a prime national requirement to produce the highly-qualified technicians, engineers, architects and scientists in accordance with the changes of science and technology in various sectors.

Head of State Senior General Than Shwe gave guidance on laying down firm objectives on various sectors and implementation of the future plans in conformity with advanced science and technology and on establishment of respective universities to produce intellectuals and intelligence, construction engineers who are able to build aircraft and ships. This is why these two universities have emerged.

The main hall of the Myanmar Maritime University was inaugurated on 29 March morning at Thitawya, Thaylin Township in Yangon South District with an address by Prime Minister General Khin Nyunt. In his address, the Prime Minister said that producing and training maritime officers and engineers, shipbuilding engineers and architects in the country contributes not only towards national development and strong national economic life but also towards the security of the State.

Today, marine transport plays a crucial role in trade and shipment of cargoes, oil and natural gas. Moreover, taking leisure trips in ocean liners and vessels is in vogue. It plays a critical role in defence and security.

The Union of Myanmar is teeming with many rivers and creeks with long coastal region and it is also blessed with invaluable natural resources.

With maintenance and management of rivers and creeks and building and managing of deep sea port will contribute much towards not only national development but also efforts to conquer the sea.

Hence, the inauguration of the Myanmar Maritime University will inaugurate development of maritime sciences. Therefore, we would like to urge students of the university to try to be the best of their abilities to become able technicians.

Measures coordinated for holding MWJA third conference

YANGON, 6 April — Myanmar Writers and Journalists Association CEC members, the chairman of work committee and secretaries met for holding the third conference of the MWJA to be held in the second week of May 2004 at the meeting hall of the association this morning.

It was attended by MWJA Chairman U Hla Myaing (Ko Hsawng), Vice-Chairman U Tin Kha (Tektakho Tin Kha) and U Myint Thein (Myint Thein Aung), Secretary U Hla Tun (Hla Tun-Twantasy), joint secretaries and CEC members.

The MWJA chairman presided over the meeting and Joint Secretary U Myint Kywe (Maung Myint Kywe) acted as secretary of ceremonies.

Next, the MWJA chairman delivered a speech, followed by a general round of discussions.

The MWJA chairman gave closing remarks.

Mails to be delivered during Thingyan

YANGON, 6 April — Myanmar Posts and Telecommunications will continue to deliver mails and telegrams on 14 April, the third day of the water festival. There will also be a regular express postal and mail delivery on all days of the festival without a day off. MPT requested that during those days water should not be thrown at postmen and delivery men wearing uniforms. — MNA

Hlawga Park to be closed during Thingyan

YANGON, 6 April — Hlawga Wildlife Park of the Forest Department will be kept closed during the water festival days from 12 to 17 April. It will be reopened to the general public for recreation as of 18 April. — MNA

Participants in MWAF Plenary Meeting honoured

YANGON, 6 April — The delegates to the Plenary Meeting of State/Organization for Women’s Affairs and those who rendered assistance to the Plenary Meeting were hosted a dinner at International Business Centre (IBC) on Pyay Road here this evening.

Myanmar Women’s Affairs Federation President Dr Daw Khin Win Shwe and the vice-presidents and joint secretaries of the organization gave guidance on laying down firm objectives of the State and progress of the nation. The directors-general of the General Administration Department, Special Investigation Department and Prisons Department welcomed the participants to the event.

Later, President of MWAF Dr Daw Khin Win Shwe handed over K 200,000 to the peacekeepers of special task forces. Next, MWAF Vice-Presidents Daw Khin Lay Thet, Daw Khin Hla Hla, Wife of the Minister for Home Affairs and Daw Khin Myint Myint of MWAF also presented K 94,000, K 100,000 and K 200,000 respectively. The director-general of the General Administration Department, Special Investigation Department and Prisons Department presented K 70,000 each.

Policewomen task force of MPF stage skill demonstration

YANGON, 6 April — Policewomen special task force of Myanmar Police Force under the Ministry of Home Affairs staged skill demonstration at No 7 Police Battalion in Thanlyin this morning, attended by wife of the Prime Minister President of Myanmar Women’s Affairs Federation Dr Daw Khin Win Shwe and the vice-presidents and joint secretaries of the organization.

First, adviser to Work Committee for Prevention against Human Trafficking wife of the Minister for Home Affairs Daw Khin Hla Hla extended greetings and Police Li-Col Aung Tin Lwin explained matters related to policewomen special task force of the MPF on the occasion.

Next, police women of special task force demonstrated lethal weapon defence, close-range fights, mine clearing, light weapon skill, pistol skill, marksmanship and other advanced techniques to launch surprise attacks against human traffickers to save the victims.

Wellwishers honour MWJA third conference

YANGON, 6 April — Wellwishers donated cash at a ceremony at the meeting hall of the association this afternoon. Present on the occasion were MWJA Chairman U Hla Myaing (Ko Hsawng), Vice-Chairmen U Tin Kha (Tektakho Tin Kha), U Than Maung (Than Maung) and U Myint Thein (Myint Thein Aung), Secretary U Hla Tun (Hla Tun-Twantasy), joint secretaries, CEC members, Secretary of Fund Raising Work Committee U Soe Shin (Maung Soe Htaik-Thonze) and wellwishers.

Chief Editor of Thuta Swenon Publishing House Dr Tin Tun Oo-Os-Dra Khin Moe Moe presented K 100,000 to Chairman of the work committee U Tin Kha (Tektakhoo Tinkha), who then presented a certificate of honour to them. — MNA

People’s Desire

* Oppose those relying on external elements, acting as stooges, holding negative views and opposing foreign nations interfering in internal affairs of the State.
* Oppose foreign nations interfering in internal affairs of the State.
* 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.
Rioting in Iraq kills at least 61 people

BAGHDAD, 6 April — The top US administrator in Iraq declared a radical Shiite cleric an “outlaw” Monday after his supporters rioted in Baghdad and four other cities in fighting that killed at least 52 Iraqis, eight US troops and a Salvadoran soldier.

The fiercest battle took place Sunday in the streets of Sadr City, Baghdad’s largest Shiite neighborhood, where black-garbed Shiite militiamen loyal to cleric Muqtada al-Sadr fired from rooftops and behind buildings at US troops, killing the eight Americans. At least 30 Iraqis were killed and more than 110 wounded in the fighting, doctors said.

Violence broke out Monday in another Shiite neighborhood of the capital, al-Shoura, where members of al-Sadr’s “Al-Mahdi Army” militia clashed with a US patrol. An American armored vehicle was seen burning, and an Iraqi taxi driver ran off with a heavy machine gun apparently taken from the vehicle. A US helicopter hovered overhead.

Militiamen also clashed with British troops in two southern cities, sparking fights that killed three Iraqis, witnesses said, while in several cities al-Sadr followers held sit-in protests, controlled the streets and held police stations.

Meanwhile, US troops on Monday sealed off the city of Fallujah west of Baghdad, where some 1,200 Marines and two battalions of Iraqi security forces were poised to launch an operation aimed at pacifying the city, one of the most violent places in the Sunni Triangle.

Explosions and gunfire could be heard coming from the center of the city, which is west of Baghdad. Streets on the outskirts were largely deserted.

A Marine was killed Monday in the Fallujah area, the military said, without providing further details. The death — along with killings of US soldiers in two northern cities and in Sunday’s violence — brought the US death toll in Iraq to at least 613 since the war on Iraq began a year ago.

The insurgency that has plagued US troops in Iraq for months has been led by Sunni Muslims. But Sunday’s clashes in Baghdad and three other cities threatened to open a dangerous new front: a confrontation with Iraq’s powerful Shiite minority, which has until now largely avoided violence with the Americans.

Al-Sadr fiercely opposes the US occupation, but he has not had widespread support among Shiites, who see him as too young, too radical and too inexperienced to lead.

The large protests Sunday in Baghdad, Najaf, Nasiriyah and Amarah — sparked by the arrest of an aide to al-Sadr — were a show of force by his militia. But US officials said they believe his appeal among the Shiite public remained limited.

L Paul Bremer, the top US administrator in Iraq, declared al-Sadr an “outlaw” who threatens Iraq’s security.

Bashir leaves Egypt after talks with Mubarak

CAIRO, 6 April — Sudanese President Omar Al-Bashir left here late Sunday after talks with his Egyptian counterpart Hosni Mubarak on Arab summit during his brief visit, MENA news agency reported.

Talks between the two leaders on Saturday dealt with the coming summit’s agenda, he pointed out.

 Asked about whether Mubarak-Bashir talks dealt with the venue and date of the summit, Mubarak said Monday, citing the need to keep labour costs low to maintain the country’s development. China Daily listed four reasons that would prevent China from floating its currency, despite political pressure from the United States.

— First, foreign countries’ restrictions on Chinese travel abroad placed unfair limitations on Chinese investment, spending, and technology purchases abroad.

— Second, floating mortgage interest rates are fueling inflation in the property market.

— Third, high taxes already diminish profits for export industries, and added pressure from artificially increased labour costs if the currency appreciated could drive factories from China to other countries with cheap labour forces.

Sunday that they were either unsure about attending or were definitely not planning to go.

London-based BP has no plans to attend the event, a spokesman said. Statoil, the Norwegian oil company, had offered to advise the Iraq Oil Ministry, but from Norway.

Although Iraq’s main natural resource is oil, many big Western oil companies said they believe his appeal among the Shiite public remained limited.

The government expressed regret about the delay because of big divisions over Arab reform and modernization as well as the escalation of violence on the Palestinian territories, a Tunisian official statement said.

Arab countries, stunned by the Tunisian decision and expressed their regret and tried to coordinate their stance.

Egypt offered to reconvene the summit at the earliest possible time immediately after the Tunisian announcement of summit postponement.

Schiff noted, however, that President Bashir has welcomed the initiative floated by President Mubarak on holding the Arab summit as soon as possible. According to the minister, the two countries also signed an agreement on Sunday on cooperation in the four freedoms of movement, residence, property and work, which was aimed at activating integration between the Egyptian and Sudanese peoples.

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Swiss firms weigh up risk and opportunity in Iraq

ZURICH, 6 April—Swiss companies have been weighing up the risks of bidding for potentially lucrative contracts in post-war Iraq.

Representatives from some 50 firms met in Zurich last week to explore business opportunities in a country still wracked by political instability.

The meeting was held amid ongoing fears about the safety of civilians who take up employment in Iraq. Four United States contractors were killed last week before their bodies were mutilated and dragged through the streets of the city of Fallujah.

The incident—which came days before the US-sponsored Destination Baghdad Expo trade fair was due to open—highlighted the unstable political and security situation in the country. The murders also served as a warning to foreign companies that setting up in Iraq is a dangerous business.

Martin Aeschbacher, who heads up the Swiss Liaison Office in the Iraqi capital, Baghdad, told Swissinfo that the security issue was still a serious obstacle.

“We cannot recommend that representatives of Swiss firms come to Iraq because we consider there are still quite a lot of dangers,” he said.

“But having said that, the situation is in some parts of the country much better than it was last May after the war when I arrived in Baghdad. Back then it was a kind of anarchy, whereas now there are a lot of police and it seems that normal crime has gone down,” he added.

Aeschbacher points out that politically motivated crime is on the rise and that foreigners engaged in the reconstruction of the country are increasingly becoming targets.

Promoting trade

Last week’s event in Zurich was organized by Osec Business Network Switzerland, which has been promoting trade between Swiss companies and foreign markets for the past 75 years. Though it is unclear exactly how many Swiss companies are currently doing business with Iraq, official figures show that Swiss exports totalled SF538.4 million ($30.24 million) in 2003. There were no imports from Iraq.

Three Swiss companies that have permanent representation in the country are the engineering concern ABB, the world’s largest agrochemicals company, Syngenta, and technology firm Bühler, which is active in food and chemical processing.

Aeschbacher does not have any precise figures about how many other Swiss firms are already in Iraq—but believes the numbers are growing. “I think there are quite a lot of Swiss firms which do business with Iraq in one way or another,” he said.

“These companies export, while others might have an agent in Iraq or maybe do business with the country through Kuwait or [the Jordanian capital] Amman,” he added.

Chinese, Albanian FM hold talks

BEIJING, 6 April—Chinese Foreign Minister Li Zhaoxing and his Albanian counterpart, Kastrriot Islami, held talks here Sunday.

Li said Albania is one of the countries which established diplomatic ties with China soon after the People’s Republic of China was founded in 1949 and the people of the two countries enjoy traditional friendship.

Bilateral ties are going smoothly and the two countries have had fruitful cooperation, said Li. He said he believes the bilateral friendship and cooperation will gain new achievements through the efforts of the two countries.

He thanked Albania for its adherence to the “one-China” policy. Islami said bilateral relations have gone smoothly since the two nations established diplomatic ties.— MNA/Xinhua

China to set up trust, investment association

BEIJING, 6 April—China’s booming trust and investment business will soon have its own industry association, sources were quoted as saying by China Daily on Monday.

“We received the approval from the Ministry of Civil Affairs for the launch of the association two weeks ago. Now we are only waiting for the final approval from the State Council,” said Wu Dayong, head of the industry association.

He said the China Banking Regulatory Commission had already given the go-ahead to the industry association earlier. So if things run smoothly, the licence will be granted in two to three months.

“The union will enhance self-discipline in the industry and communication with the public,” Wu said.

MNA/Xinhua
US, ALLIES FACE INTENSIFIED IRAQI RESISTANCE

Loyalists of Shiite cleric Moqtada Sadr take position in the western Baghdad, district of Shula, Iraq, on Monday, 5 April, 2004, following fighting against US forces.

Iraqi Shi'ite supporters of cleric Moqtada al-Sadr celebrate near a burning US Army truck in the Shuala neighbourhood of Baghdad, on 5 April, 2004. — Internet

Sheikh Abdel al-Satar al-Bahadli, an official in radical Shiite leader Moqtada al-Sadr’s Army of Mehdi, brandishes a sword after taking over the governor’s office in the British-controlled port city of Basra on 5 April. — Internet

Spanish troops stand guard in southern Baghdad, on 5 April, 2004. — Internet

Radical Shiite militiamen stand on top of the governor’s house they occupied in the southern city of Basra, Iraq, on Monday, 5 April, 2004. — Internet

US soldier with the 2nd Battalion 1st Marine Regiment digs a trench outskirts of Fallujah, Iraq, on Monday, 5 April, 2004.— Internet
Aussie scientists get teeth into stem cell research

SYDNEY, 6 April — The baby teeth children hide under their pillows for the mythical tooth fairy may one day be used to extract stem cells for life-saving treatments, Australian scientists said on Sunday.

Infant teeth have been recognized as a valuable source of the master cells and much easier to obtain than controversial embryonic stem cells, said researchers from the Hansson Institute at South Australia's Royal Adelaide Hospital.

"Stem cells in adult tissues are difficult to get or present in very small amounts," said Hanson Institute Director Howard Morris.

"Pulp in teeth is quite a good source of stem cells and they are very amenable to getting hold of. You lose a whole mouthful of them when you are a young child," he told Australian Associated Press.

Stem cells are master cells in the body that have the capability to transform into any cell or tissue. Researchers believe they have the potential to revolutionize medicine.

Philippines to export corn for the first time in history

MANILA, 6 April — The Philippines will, for the first time in history, export corn in August and September to save its price from falling as the south is expecting a big harvest for the third quarter, a local newspaper reported Monday.

Roderico Bioco, chairman of the Philippine Maize Federation Inc (PMFI), told Manila Bulletin during the 3rd Philippine Corn Congress that the southern island of Mindanao is now preparing toexport corn to Malaysia amid concerns that corn price may drop below farmers' desired level of 8.5 pesos (15 US cents) per kilo.

"We will be exporting corn to Malaysia in August to September because we have a very big crop in Mindanao. It will not be so large — 5,000 to 10,000 tons, but it will relieve the downward pressure on price because the lack of storage facilities in Mindanao will create a glut that will push price below 8.5 pesos," he said.

He said the PMFI is also eyeing Brunei as the next export market.

Corn price in the Philippines is now at 9.5 pesos (17 cents) to 10.5 pesos (19 cents) per kilo from a higher 12 pesos (21 cents) per kilo at the year's beginning.

Mindanao, as Bioco said, is expecting a harvest of 1.5 million tons of corn from July to September. 25 per cent up from over 1.2 million tons last year, when corn price skyrocketed in the world market due to tight food grains supply, encouraging farmers to expand planting.

The Philippines, encouraged by the high corn price in the world market, is projected to produce 5.57 million tons this year, up by 20.56 per cent from 2.94 million tons last year, when the price below 8.5 pesos," he said.

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According to the latest data released by Thai Commerce Ministry, demand for Thai rice in foreign markets in the quarter rose by 45 per cent to 543 million US dollars.

The price per ton of exported jasmine rice in March stood at 549 dollars, a 100-dollar increase from the same period last year, the price of 100 per cent grade A rice increased 47 dollars from the previous year to 249 dollars per ton while jasmine paddy increased 2,319 baht (59.5 US dollars) to 9,250 baht (237.2 US dollars) per ton.

Jasmine rice accounts for about 227 million dollars or 27 per cent of the 820 million tons of rice exports, contributing 42 per cent of the rice exports earnings.

Meanwhile, the Thai Government also expected rice exports in April to grow on the back of orders from foreign markets and from other unfinished contracts which exporters plan to complete.

The report said this year, China had ordered 100 per cent grade B rice from Thailand, besides the jasmine rice it had been importing. The Middle East and South Africa had also ordered sticky rice and 100 per cent grade B rice from Thailand — MNA/Xinhua

US revives radical Shiite foe in Iraq

BAGHDAD, 6 April — Iraq's US-led authorities have reinstated radical Shiite Muslim fury in the country with the closure of a firebrand cleric's newspaper, at a time when the administration is struggling to win over moderates.

Thousands of supporters of Moqtada al-Sadr, a prominent anti-American cleric who had given relatively quiet for months, took to the streets near Najaf on Sunday, drawing fire from coalition troops when they tried to enter a base.

At least 19 people were killed and more than 100 wounded in the clashes. In Baghdad too, hundreds of protesters marched through the streets, and the rattle of gunshots could be heard.

"Sheik Moqtada Sadr is our leader. He's going to take over," said 23-year-old Sadr's supporter. The clashes may emerge from any cell or tissue and be difficult to extract.

Sadr's supporters have staged several marches in the past week to protest against the closure a week ago of al-Hawza newspaper, a mouth-piece for Sadr that US-led authorities accused of inciting anti-American violence.

The closing of Sadr's newspaper has galvanized his supporters. The clashes may emerge from any cell or tissue and be difficult to extract.

"We will be exporting corn in August and September to save its price from falling as the south is expecting a big harvest for the third quarter," a local newspaper reported Monday. — Internet

The Middle East and North American countries were preparing to take advantage of the new rice supply from Thailand.

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An Iraqi man, armed with a Kalashnikov rifle, keeps watch after clashes broke out with US forces in the impoverished Baghdad suburb of al-Sadr City on 4 April, 2004. — Internet

Three Portuguese soldiers wounded in Iraq ambush

LISBON, 6 April — Three members of Portugal's National Guard were slightly wounded in an ambush Sunday near the southern Iraqi city of Nasiriyah, the guard's command confirmed here.

The wounds were caused by flying shrapnel, a guard spokesman said.

Portugal sent 128 national guards to Iraq in November 2003 as part of US-led coalition forces which occupied Iraq last year.

British troops clash with Iraqi demonstrators

LONDON, 6 April — British troops shot and injured a number of Iraqis in Amara on Sunday after coming under attack during a protest against the arrest of an aide to a radical Shiite cleric and the closure of a newspaper, Britain's Ministry of Defence said. "We understand there are Iraqi casualties," a military spokesman in London said.

She said it was possible there had been deaths among the Iraqis after a fire-fight erupted during a mostly peaceful demonstration, but did not have any estimates of Iraqi casualties.

She said there were no British casualties from the clash in the southeastern Iraqi town which began when soldiers returned fire after coming under attack from rocket-propelled grenades and small arms fire.

The demonstration by the Iraqis was against the arrest of Mustapha Yacoubi, an aide to Sadr, who was seized by coalition forces in Najaf on Friday.

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Thailand considers pulling troops out of Iraq after June 30

BANGKOK, 6 April — Thailand may get its troops out of Iraq after the United States transfers power to a transitional Iraqi authority on 30 June, a government spokesman said.

As violence against coalition forces by guerillas might increase after Saturday, the Thai Defence Ministry will conduct a review on whether the Thai troops in Iraq should come back in September as planned or sooner, said ministry spokesman Major-General Palangpun Khlabarn.

If other nations' troops leave Iraq, the Thai Government would have to review the policy, he said, adding that otherwise the troops will stay in Iraq for a full year as planned.

— MNA/Xinhua

Thailand’s rice exports rise 29% in first quarter

BANGKOK, 6 April — Thailand’s rice exports in the first quarter this year increased 29 per cent to 2.08 million tons, reflecting Thai rice in higher demand than the previous year, the Businessday newspaper reported Monday.

According to the latest data released by Thai Commerce Ministry, demand for Thai rice in foreign markets in the quarter rose by 45 per cent to 543 million US dollars.

The price per ton of exported jasmine rice in March stood at 549 dollars, a 100-dollar increase from the same period last year, the price of 100 per cent grade A rice increased 47 dollars from the previous year to 249 dollars per ton while jasmine paddy increased 2,319 baht (59.5 US dollars) to 9,250 baht (237.2 US dollars) per ton.

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US troops disembark from their Blackhawk helicopter into a field near a Spanish base in the Iraqi town of Kufa on 5 April, 2004. — Internet

The new light of Myanmar Wednesday, 7 April, 2004

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Traditional Rakhine Thingyan Festival

All Rakhine people who are mostly pure Buddhists hold many festivals in auspicious days such as Thadingyut, Tazaungdaing and Thingyan. They hold Traditional Rakhine Thingyan Festival in three stages, which are incense-grinding, offering of water to Buddha images and holding the water festival.

Incense-grinding is the first stage. The young Rakhine village make incense-grinding at the night on the day before pre-Thingyan day for offering water to Buddha images. At that time, young boys in the village come and join them in incense-grinding together with music and dance. In Rakhine State, we call it “Incense-grinding Pwe.”

The second stage is offering of water to Buddha images. Rakhine people usually hold offering of water to Buddha images on pre-Thingyan day. Some young girls carry incense-grinding pots on each head and some bring alms bowls with things to offer and go to the monastery on that day. The young boys also accompany them and go to the monastery together, singing and reciting Thingyan songs and rhymes with music and dance.

When they arrive at the monastery compound, the girls fill the pots with water from the nearby ponds and wells, the boys cleanse the Buddha images, stupas and the monastery with water and offer incense-paste to Buddha images. On their return they go around the village and do mani-manicuring, Shampooing, cleaning and bathing the elderly people.

In the Traditional Rakhine Water Festival as the third stage, Rakhine young girls sit at the pandal and wait for the boys who will visit the pandal members. There are usually twenty to fifty Rakhine girls who are in the stage, Rakhine young girls sit at the pandal and wait for the boys who will visit the pandal members. There are usually twenty to fifty Rakhine young girls sitting at the pandal and waiting for the boys who will visit the pandal members. Every group of pandals join them and go round the pandals by singing and reciting Thingyan Songs and Rhymes. Thingyan revellers will praise the good, but satirize the bad. This is their fine tradition practice.

There are rules and disciplines in the Traditional Rakhine Thingyan Festival. Rakhine people obey and practise these rules and disciplines. I would like to mention them as below:

— The Thingyan pandal-girls have to sit facing the boat with their backs to the pandal, and waiting for the boys who will come to do merry making from one pandal to another.

— The Thingyan pandal-girls have to enjoy the water festival with the boys whether they like it or not.

— Every Thingyan group has to bring buckets and water-bowls together with them, they are not to borrow them at the pandal.

— Every Thingyan group has to wait for its turn while the other group is enjoying the water festival in the pandal.

— The Thingyan groups are not allowed to bring weapons or any sorts with them, they also have to obey the pandal-discipline.

As mentioned above it is disciplined and polite Traditional Rakhine Thingyan Festival where we can enjoy it and usher it in the good news. Therefore this is a festival to build a cultural bridge among all nationalities of the Union of Myanmar.

Democracy: A Hard Idea to Translate

Steven Erlanger

The following is a reproduction from The New York Times Large Type Weekly February 16-22, 2004 titled “Democracy: A Hard Idea to Translate” by Steven Erlanger.—Editor

Arkady Volsky, a Soviet apparatchik who maneuvered elegantly, for a time, in the new Russia, liked to make his political...
Senior General Than Shwe welcomes back Prime Minister General Khin Nyunt on return from …

(from page 1)

Members of the delegation Secretary-1 of the State Peace and Development Council Lt-Gen Soe Win, Chairman of Rakhine State Peace and Development Council Commander of Western Command Maj-Gen Maung Oo, Minister for Agriculture and Irrigation Maj-Gen Nyunt Tin, Minister for Commerce Brig-Gen Pyi Sone, Minister for Home Affairs Col Tin Hlaing, Minister for Transport Maj-Gen Hla Myint Swe, Minister for Information Brig-Gen Kyaw Hsan, Minister at the Prime Minister’s Office Maj-Gen Thein Swe, Deputy Minister for Foreign Affairs U Khin Maung Win, Deputy Minister for Construction U Tint Swe, Deputy Minister for Immigration and Population U Maung Aung, Director-General of the State Peace and Development Council Office Lt-Col Pe Nyein and heads of department, who accompanied Prime Minister General Khin Nyunt, also arrived back on the same flight. — MNA

Myanmar Prime Minister General Khin Nyunt meets with Bangladeshi Prime Minister Begam Khalida Zia. — mna

Myanmar Prime Minister General Khin Nyunt and party discuss with Bangladeshi Prime Minister Begam Khalida Zia and party. — mna

Myanmar Prime Minister General Khin Nyunt presents a gift to Bangladeshi Prime Minister Begam Khalida Zia. — mna

Myanmar Prime Minister General Khin Nyunt signs in the Visitors’ Book at the Bangladeshi Prime Minister’s Office. — mna

Bangladesh supports Myanmar’s democracy …

(from page 16)

cooperation. Bangladesh is desirous of further promoting her relations with Myanmar. As there are many prospects in the bilateral economic and trade sectors, efforts will bring benefits to the peoples of both countries.

After the meeting, MoUs were signed between the Union of Myanmar and the People’s Republic of Bangladesh. Ministers Maj-Gen Nyunt Tin and Mr MK Anwar signed and exchanged the MoU on cooperation in the field of Agriculture between Myanmar and Bangladesh, Deputy Minister U Tin Swe and the Secretary of the Ministry of Communications, on the establishment of Road Link between the two countries; and Deputy Minister U Khin Maung Win and Foreign Secretary Mr Shamsher M Chowdhury BB, on Visa Exemption for Holders of Diplomatic or Official Passports.

Prime Minister General Khin Nyunt signed in the distinguished visitors’ book. He answered to queries raised by members of the news agencies regarding the goodwill visit. — MNA

Deputy Minister for Construction U Tint Swe and the Bangladeshi Secretary of Ministry of Communications sign the MoU. — mna

Deputy Minister for Foreign Affairs U Khin Maung Win and Bangladeshi Foreign Secretary Mr Shamsher M Chowdhury BB sign the MoU. — mna
YANGON, 6 April — At the invitation of Prime Minister of the People’s Republic of Bangladesh Begum Khaleda Zia, Prime Minister General Khin Nyunt, accompanied by Secretary-1 of the State Peace and Development Council Lt-Gen Soe Win and members, left here by special flight of Myanma Airways International at 10.30 am on 4 April for Dhaka on a goodwill visit.

Prime Minister General Khin Nyunt was accorded a 19-gun salute when he and his members of the goodwill delegation got down the plane.

Prime Minister of the People’s Republic of Bangladesh Begum Khaleda Zia greeted Prime Minister General Khin Nyunt. A young Bangladeshi girl presented a bouquet to Prime Minister General Khin Nyunt.

Prime Minister General Khin Nyunt and Prime Minister of the People’s Republic of Bangladesh Begum Khaleda Zia proceeded to the saluting dais and the two prime ministers took the salute of the Guard of Honour while the State Band played the national anthems of the two countries.

The programme to inspect the Guard of Honour was not held because of the rain.

Next, Prime Minister General Khin Nyunt signed in the visitors’ book and planted a herbal plant at the National Martyrs’ Memorial.

Prime Minister General Khin Nyunt and members went to the tomb of President Ziaur Rahman where they were welcomed by Minister for Housing and Public Works Mr Mirza Abbas, State Minister for Liberation War Affairs Professor M Rezual Karim and officials.

Myanmar Ambassador U Thein Myint, wife Daw Khin Than Nu, Military Attaché Col Han Tint and wife Dr Leh Leh Win and embassy staff welcomed Prime Minister General Khin Nyunt.

The portraits of the two prime ministers were hung in front of the special lounge.

Welcoming the Prime Minister General Khin Nyunt and members of Myanmar goodwill delegation, the flags of the two countries were hoisted in the special lounge, near the environs of the airport, along the major roads and junctions.

Prime Minister General Khin Nyunt and members went to National Martyrs’ Memorial in Savar where they were welcomed by the Minister for Housing and Public Works Mr Mirza Abbas, State Minister for Liberation War Affairs Professor M Rezual Karim and officials.

Prime Minister General Khin Nyunt laid a wreath at the National Martyrs’ Memorial.

Prime Minister General Khin Nyunt and members went to the tomb of President Ziaur Rahman where they were welcomed by Minister for Housing and Public Works Mr Mirza Abbas, State Minister for Liberation War Affairs Professor M Rezual Karim and officials.

Prime Minister General Khin Nyunt laid a wreath at the National Martyrs’ Memorial.

Prime Minister General Khin Nyunt and members arrived at the Hotel Sheraton in Dhaka.

Prime Minister General Khin Nyunt pays tribute to the fallen heroes at the National Martyrs’ Memorial in Savar. — MNA

Prime Minister General Khin Nyunt being welcomed by Bangladeshi Prime Minister Begum Khaleda Zia at Zia International Airport. — MNA

Prime Minister General Khin Nyunt plants a herbal plant at National Martyrs’ Memorial in Savar. — MNA

Prime Minister General Khin Nyunt and Bangladeshi Prime Minister Begum Khaleda Zia take the salute of the Guard of Honour. — MNA

Prime Minister General Khin Nyunt being welcomed by Bangladeshi Prime Minister Begum Khaleda Zia at Zia International Airport. — MNA

Prime Minister General Khin Nyunt plants a herbal plant at National Martyrs’ Memorial in Savar. — MNA

Prime Minister General Khin Nyunt and Bangladeshi Prime Minister Begum Khaleda Zia take the salute of the Guard of Honour. — MNA
Prime Minister General Khin Nyunt delivers an address at the banquet. — MNA

Prime Minister Begum Khhaleda Zia delivers an address at the banquet. — MNA

Bangladeshi PM hosts banquet in honour of Prime Minister General Khin Nyunt

YANGON, 6 April — Prime Minister General Khin Nyunt of the People’s Republic of Bangladesh Begum Khaleda Zia hosted a banquet in honour of his Excellency Mr. General Khin Nyunt at the Hotel Sonargaon on 4 April evening.

After Prime Minister General Khin Nyunt and party and the Bangladeshi Prime Minister and party took possession of their Room 1, the State Band played National Anthems of Myanmar and Bangladesh. Bangladesh Prime Minister General Khin Nyunt and party delivered a speech in her address, she said: It is indeed a special pleasure for me to welcome Your Excellency and the members of your delegation this evening. Your visit is a clear reflection of the close bonds and excellent relations that exist between our two friendly countries. Bangladesh and Myanmar are bound by historical ties. We have common cultural heritage and a shared stake in peace, security and progress in the region. The visit of Shaeed President Ziaur Rahman to your beautiful country in July 1977 had laid the foundation on which our bilateral relations have already been built. I recall with great pleasure my own visit to your country a year ago. We are confident that your visit as Prime Minister will help in further strengthening our close bonds of friendship.

Bangladesh and Myanmar are developing countries with similar economic challenges. We need to intensify our efforts to face these challenges together at both political and economic links. Our talks today were a clear reflection of our resolve.

Our two countries also hold similar views in various regional and international fora. The strategic location of Bangladesh grants us a legitimate claim to act as a bridge between South Asia and South East Asia. It is in this spirit that we want to be a part of the ASEAN Regional Forum. We seek your valuaable support and support for membership of the ARF. We also look forward to increased cooperation within the BIMST-EC. Bangladesh is committed to making this regional forum effective. We are confident that the BIMST-EC Summit this year will help to make a major landmark in bringing South and South East Asia closer.

In his speech, he said: On behalf of the Myanmar Delegation and on our own behalf, I would like to express my sincere thanks to Your Excellency for the warm hospitality extended to us since our arrival in Dhaka, and for honouring us with this banquet.

I consider it a privilege to be in Bangladesh again in just a little over two years. Our visit has only one purpose — to strengthen and expand our amicable ties.

I am also happy that I shall have the opportunity to observe the economic development of Bangladesh under Your Excellency’s able leadership. The success of your poverty alleviation programme is a good example of rural development for the developing world. May I take this opportunity to wish You Excellency and the Government of the People’s Republic of Bangladesh every success in their development endeavours.

We have made significant progress in ensuring the reparation of Myanmar refugees from Bangladesh. I am confident that with the repatriation of the residual refugees, we would have contributed to resolving a major bilateral problem through negotiations.

Before I conclude, I would like to take this opportunity to wish you and the people of Bangladesh a pleasant and enjoyable stay in Bangladesh. May I now invite you all to join me in a prayer — the good health, happiness and long life of His Excellency General of the State Peace and Development Council Senior General Than Shwe to Bangladesh in 2002 and Your Excellency’s visit to Myanmar in March of last year. The fruitful outcome of these visits is a new chapter in our long standing relations of friendly cooperation. It is always a pleasure to have a friendly neighbour and observe developments that are taking place.

Our two countries enjoy good neighbourhood relations and there exists no big issues between our two countries. We want to proclaim that Myanmar and Bangladesh have nurtured good relations and our border is one of peace and stability. It is also incumbent on both of us to turn our border into one of prosperity.

We are deeply gratified that the 6th Mekong-Mekong summit has been welcomed by the nations of the region and I wish to express our sincere thanks and appreciation to all our friends and like-minded nations.

During the visit, we will also have the opportunity to visit Chittagong and Bandarban. This will give us a chance to witness at first hand the tremendous achievements being made to improve the lives of the people. I wish to congratulate the Government and People of Bangladesh for their all round achievement.

Distinguished Guests and Friends,

In conclusion, allow me to express my sincerest best wishes for:

— continued progress and prosperity of the People’s Republic of Bangladesh;
— lasting friendship between the Union of Myanmar and the People’s Republic of Bangladesh;
— good health and personal well-being of our distinguished host, Her Excellency Begum Khhaleda Zia, Prime Minister of the People’s Republic of Bangladesh.

Next, the prime ministers and parties enjoyed the banquet.

Also present at the banquet were members of the Myanmar party including Deputy Minister for Foreign Affairs U Myint Hla, Deputy Minister for Construction U Tin Swe, Deputy Minister for Immigration and Population U Maung Aung, Myanmar Ambassador to Bangladesh U Thein Myint, Director-General of the State Peace and Development Council Office Lt-Col Pe Nyein, Ministry of Defence and Security; Deputy Minister, Departmental heads and Military Attaché Col Han Tin.

Also present together with the Prime Minister of Bangladesh were ministers, secretaries, MPs, the mayor of Dhaka, senior military officers, departmental heads, ambassadors and distinguished guests.

The banquet came to a close with the playing of National Anthems of the two nations.

Prime Minister General Khin Nyunt and party arrived back at the Hotel Sheraton. — MNA
Self-reliant roads and tube-well opened in Dagon Myothit (South) Township

YANGON, 6 April — That Chitteshwar, Aungsumun and 6th tarred roads in Ward 19 and a tube-well in Ward 71 in Dagon Myothit (South) Township, Yangon East District, were opened this morning, attended by Chairman of Yangon Division Peace and Development Council Commander of Yangon Command Maj-Gen Myint Swe, CEC member of the Union Solidarity and Development Association Chairman of Yangon City Development Committee Mayor Brig-Gen Aung Thein Lin.

Also present on the occasion were CEC member of the USDA in charge of Yangon Division USDA Vice-Mayor of Dagon Myothit Township Commander Brig-Gen Myo Myint, YCDC Secretary Col Myint Aung and members, local authorities, members of social organizations and guests.

The opening of Aungsumun tarred road was held at the top of the road this morning, Commander Maj-Gen Myint Swe, the mayor and the chairman of the committee for construction of the facilities formally opened the road and viewed the facility.

Similarly, the opening of Aungsumun and 6th tarred roads were held in Ward 19. The secretary of Township USDA reported on arrangements for opening of tarred Thitsarsan, Aungsumun, Malar Myaing, Kyung, Khaing Thazin 1st and 2nd, Nikar and Padamya roads in Ward 19 and the tube-well in Ward 71.

The mayor reported on the tarred roads in the townships in Yangon City jointly undertaken by the USDA and the YCDC and arrangements for construction of more tarred roads. A local spoke words of thanks.

The chairman of Township PDC reported on progress in constructing tarred roads in Ward 19 and plans for building of more tarred roads. The commander and the mayor gave instructions and fulfilled the requirements.

The opening of the self-reliant tube-well was held at Ward 71. The commander, the mayor and party inspected the opening. "Funded by the YCDC Engineering Department (Road & Bridge) in Yeadashi Lantih, Bahan Township, Yangon West District and Left instructions."

Afterwards, they looked into the Sibinhaya Market in Bahan and stressed the importance of sanitation.

Wellwishers invited for sinking tube-wells

YANGON, 6 April— The Development Affairs Committee under the Ministry for Progress of Border Areas and National Races and Development Affairs are making concerted efforts to sink tube-wells for sufficient safe water in rural areas in States and Divisions where water is scarce.

One 200 feet deep two-inch diameter tube-well costs K 250,000, one 400 feet deep two-inch diameter tube-well costs K 500,000; and one 200 feet deep four-inch diameter tube-well costs K 500,000.

Those wishing to donate cash for the tube-well sinking projects for rural areas may contact the Director-General (Tel: 01-245420 & 253088), the Deputy Director-General (Tel: 01-240118), the Director (Engineering) (Tel: 01-291987), the Directors (Sagai Division Development Affairs Committee) (Tel: 071-21012), the Director (Magway Division Development Affairs Committee) (Tel: 063-23164) and the Director (Mandalay Division Development Affairs Committee) (Tel: 02-54657).

Chinesse journalists delegation on tour

YANGON, 6 April — The visiting six-member Chinese journalists delegation led by Editor of the Farmers’ daily of the People’s Republic of China Mr Liu Zhanmian, accompanied by officials of the News and Periodicals Enterprise, made a tour of Upper Myanmar on 4 and 5 April.

In the morning, they visited the Shwezigon Pagoda, the Aungmye Bonzan and the Archaeological Museum and that they may feel the cold, with “Ata” water. "Wet and pleasant, you are fresh."

Subsequently, the delegation visited the Lawka Nanda Archaeological Museum and the Advisory Council of the Yangon City Development Committee. They then inspected the construction site of Mandalay Bridge Project in Mandalay. In the afternoon, they visited the Mandalay City Development Committee Mayor Brig-Gen Yan Thein.

In the evening, they visited the Shan Mye Nan San Kyaw Shwezanaw and the Dagon Wadi Garden in Pyinoolwin. Next, they studied construction work at the

The Chinese journalists delegation visits the Defence Services Museum. — MNA

Effectiveness of traditional medicines discussed

YANGON, 6 April — Dr Thein Swe, Director-General of the Traditional Medicine Department and Chairman of the Traditional Medicine Council, met with traditional medical practitioners who advertise in daily newspapers, magazines and journals, saying that their medicines can cure HIV/AIDS and hepatitis, at the meeting hall of the department yesterday. In his meeting with them, Dr Thein Swe told them if it is certain that their medicines are capable of curing such diseases, sound evidence will be needed to prove it. Otherwise, the people will be under illusion, which will produce ill consequences. He continued careful examination will be made as to their potency to see if the medicines are really effective as advertised, adding that if the drugs are in accord with the advertisements, they will be publicized. He also said that the treatment with the medicines contrary to the advertisements will be banned. In Mandalay on 28-2-2004, Dr Thein Swe also met with traditional physicians who claimed that their medicines were capable of curing HIV/AIDS. — MNA

Guest Flower

* Of soldier quality, is its appearance
Sun shines on it, in different eras
Those Fragrant buds, the yellow padak
It’s elegance, is carried forth
Pride it’s companion, the water festival
The awaited blooms, out at their best.

* As they move into the wind,
rushing forward that lingers
Fragrance touches the heated, and lingers
The sweet smell is spread by the wind
Clean and fresh, the padak flowers
Sweet as if sprinkled with scent
Its fragrance, pours out unabated.

* A passing shower, seems a coming
And one feels cool, amid new pretty leaves
Tender and young, with elegant green
New pretty yellow blooms, that appear
As if emerald shawl, was dotted with gold
Green and yellow intermixed
To create gold and emerald.

* Once or twice, as if water fell
Was ushered in, the sold overwhels
With pride of place, in mild fragrance
As if created out of gold

"Wet and pleasant, you are fresh.”

Yaing Naing Oo (Trs.)
(Honouring the 3156 Myanmar Traditional Thanyay)
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The said marks are used in respect of “Pharmaceutical veterinary and sanitary preparations; vitamins; dietary substances adapted for medical use, food for babies, plasters, materials for dressings, disinfectants”.


Any infringement or colourable imitation thereof or other infringement of the rights of the said Companies will be dealt with according to law.

Win Mya Tin, M.A., H.G.P., D.B.L. for TAISHO PHARMA-
CEUTICAL CO., LTD., P.O. Box 60, Yangon Dated: 7th April 2004

CLAIMS DAY NOTICE

MV SEA BRIGHT VOY NO (611)

Consignees of cargo carried on MV SEA BRIGHT Voy No (611) are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on 7-4-2004 and cargo will be discharged into the premises of A.W.P.T where it will lie at the consignee’s risk and expenses and subject to the byelaws and conditions of the port of Yangon.

Damaged cargo will be surveyed daily from 8 am to 11:20 am and 12 noon to 4 pm up to Claims Day now declared as the third day after final discharge of cargo from the vessel.

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

SHIPPING AGENCY DEPARTMENT
MYANMA PORT AUTHORITY
AGENT FOR: MS ATTACH VESSEL

Phone: 256906/378316/376797

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IV.6039/2003, 4 COSTA, Japan, is the Owner of the following Trade Marks:

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Aarti Anand, G.B., B.L. for Bristol-Myers Squibb SARL, by its Attorneys RMFRY & SAGAR
INDIA Dated: 7th April 2004

Matsushita vows to boost relations with China

BOGOTA, 6 April — Co-

lombian Foreign Minister Carolina Barco, who scheduled to travel to China on 6 April, said her visit is aimed at strengthening political, economic and social relations between the two countries.

In a recent interview with Xinhua Barco stressed that for Colombia, the global leadership and importance of a nation like China are vital.

“China is of utmost importance for Colombia because we see China as a country of tremendous leadership and importance in the world,” where we have been given examples of its economic and social improvements,” the minister said.

“We want to strengthen our political ties and be able to carry out common projects related to political, economic and social aspects,” she added.

Barco voiced her interest in China’s scientific improvements, saying she would call for a meeting of the bilateral cooperation committee dedicated to this issue.

“China is an important country in the world and we have the opportunity to work together,” she said.

Speaking of her country’s economic development, Barco said “Colombia, at this moment, is the same as China, in the processes of different levels and we are participating in the discussions of the World Trade Organization, the Doha Round, and the Andean Community (Ancom).”

She noted that in the same way, “we are participating in the FTA (Free Trade Area of the Americas) negotiations and we are taking part in the negotiations between Ancom and the Common Market of the South.

The minister also referred to Ancom’s approaches to Europe and China.

“We are seeking an approach of Ancom toward Europe and China, and this is the same as China’s experience,” she said.

The minister also referred to Ancom’s approaches to Europe and China, and this is the same as China’s experience,” she said.

Said during the visit, she said she would seek to call the attention of Chinese consumers to Colombian coffee and propose an exchange of new products between the two countries.

MNA/Xinhua

India-China trade pegged at $20b by 2010

NEW DELHI, 6 April — The bilateral trade between the two countries has touched a significant 1.87 billion dollars during the January-February period and is expected to exceed 10 billion dollars this year.

Addressing Confederation of Indian Industries, he said that trade will touch 20 billion dollars by 2010 providing a change in the export basket and anything additional will be a bonus.

Said a senior official of the Industrial Development Corporation of India, it was expected to touch 20 billion dollars by 2010 providing a change in the export basket and anything additional would be a bonus.

MNA/PTI

Colombia vows to boost relations with China

Among the investments, a 45 billion yen (342.69 million US dollars) will be spent on parts procurement, manufacturing and product delivery, the officials said.

The company has also earmarked about 30 billion yen (288.46 million dollars) for IT investment in product development, testing mass production, as well as integration and reconstruction of its computer systems.

MNA/Xinhua
Scientists say smoking may lead to blindness

New Delhi, 6 April — Smoking does not just make your lungs ineffective but may also make you blind, according to a new evidence. How ever, awareness about this aspect lags behind, says a report in British Medical Journal.

Smoking is associated with several eye diseases that lead to impaired vision like degeneration of macula (the portion of retina which is important for vision) in old age and nuclear cataract (cataract that has brownish effect and is much difficult to remove), the report says. Evidence indicates that more than a quarter of all cases of age-related macular degeneration with blindness worldwide is potentially attributable to current or past exposure to smoking, it says.

A pooled analysis of data from three cross sectional studies carried out in Australia, North America and several European countries participants, indicated that current smokers had a three-fold to four-fold increased risk for this condition, it says, adding smoking was also the strongest environmental risk factor.

MNA/Reuters

Eleven feared dead in Serbia bus accident

Belgrade, 6 April — Eleven children were feared dead after a bus taking a party of Bulgarians home from a school trip to Dubrovnik plunged into a swollen river in a ravine in Serbia, police said on Monday.

Fast flowing waters in the 150-foot deep gorge of the River Lim, in the mountains between Serbia and Montenegro, were hampering rescue efforts by a special-ised Army unit and police divers, police said.

The bus from the Bulgarian town of Slistoi had 48 children and teachers aboard with a crew of two drivers. They had been on holiday in the Adriatic resort on the coast of Croatia. The bus careered off the road on Sunday evening. Reports said the mountain road was slick with rain. A police statement carried by Reuters News Agency said 10 children were still missing but a further 22 injured were in hospital in the nearby town of Prijevoj.

MNA/Reuters

Pakistan boy treated in India for hole in heart

New Delhi, 6 April — The thal in India-Pakistan ties has come as a bon of life for four-year old Parvez Iqbal, who has become the first Pakistani child to be treated under the Indian initiative to provide free healthcare to children from across the border suffering from congenital heart disease.

Parvez, a resident of Rajanpur District of Punjab Province, was operated upon at the Escorts Heart Institute here to plug a hole between the two lower chambers of his heart, with the Indian Government sponsoring the treatment.

The surgery to plug the hole was complicated as the boy was well past the ideal age of six months for carrying out such an operation.

Landing here on March 16 with his parents, Parvez was operated upon successfully on March 22 by a team of paediatric specialists led by Dr K S Iyer to correct the ‘ventricular septal defect’.

There was a big hole in the heart, which ought to have been corrected early in life. The longer the wait, the more traumatic the surgery becomes as due to the hole, blood is pumped to the heart with above normal pressure, Dr Iyer told reporters here on Friday.

“We were able to carry out a quick, successful sur gery,” he said.

Parvez’s father Amir Baksh, who sat nestling the boy in his arms, said the anomaly was diagnosed when his son was three years old and doctors at Lahore Institute of Cardiology told him that the operation could be carried out there, but that it would a high-risk affair.

MNA/PTI

Singapore hunts for diabetes cure with stem cells

Singapore, 6 April — With rising affluence and obesity becoming a greater problem in Asia, Singapore has joined the race to find a cure for diabetes using adult stem cells.

Researchers from the National University of Singapore and a local biotechnology company said on Monday they were collaborat ing on a project to produce insulin-secreting cells from adult stem cells harvested from fat tissue.

“There is a race around the world to de velop what we call surrogate islet cells — cells not derived from the human donor pancreas but cells from tissue, from stem cells, which can be coaxed into producing insulin and then transplanted,” said Dr John Isaac of the university’s department of surgery.

Singapore, which has positioned itself as a centre for stem cell research, joins experts in the United States and Europe researching fat tissue in adults as a source of stem cells.

The wealthy island state has one of the highest rates of diabetes in the world, with 9 per cent of adults suffering from the potentially fatal disease compared with 6 per cent in the United States.

The disease results in the body’s failure to produce insulin and if not properly treated, can lead to heart and kidney disease, stroke, amputations, blindness and death.

The research, with an initial investment of 1.5 million Singapore dollars ($893,900 US dollars), would be to examine the use of adipose tissue, but other sources of adult stem cells may also be investigated.

Dr Susan Lim, founder of the biotechno logy firm Stem Cell Technologies Pte Ltd, said there was already strong evidence that cells from fat can differentiate into a variety of cell types, including fat, bone and cartilage.

Lim told a news conference that using adult stem cells from patients should pose less controversy than embryonic ones. And with the cells taken from patients’ tissues, immunosuppressant drugs can also be avoided.

MNA/Reuters

Japan to free Chinese, ASEAN students of visa fee

Tokyo, 6 April — Japan will waive the visa commission charge for some short-term student visitors from China and ASEAN nations, the Foreign Ministry said Monday. The policy, which came into effect the same day, is designed to promote youth exchange between Japan and other Asian countries, the ministry said.

Based on the regulation, primary and secondary students from China for school excursions and sightseeing university students from Association of South-East Asian Nations members will be exempted from the commission fee of some 3,000 yen.

According to the World Tourism Organization, 16 million Japanese travelled abroad in 2002. About 510,000 Japanese tourists have been entertained abroad by the local government to work at five million visitors by 2010. Prime Minister Junichiro Koizumi crusaded the campaign by going in a TV commercial.

MNA/Xinhua

French detains 15 in raid over Casablanca bombing

Paris, 6 April — French police detained 15 people in a raid on Monday, including a number of people suspected of having links with suicide bomb attacks last year in Morocco, judicial sources said.

They said the 15 were seized in a Paris suburb and some were suspected of having links with Moroccan Islamic groups.

“Fourteen men have been detained,” an Interior Ministry spokesman said but gave no other details.

Forty-five people were killed, including the suicide bombers, in almost simultaneous attacks in Casablanca on 16 May last year. — MNA/Reuters
Wenger wants to keep Bergkamp as squad player

LONDON, 6 April — Arsenal manager Arsene Wenger believes Dennis Bergkamp could get a new contract if the Dutchman accepts being a squad player instead of a first-choice striker next season.

The 34-year-old striker's current one-year deal expires in June and he wants another season with a club that he helped to league and FA Cup doubles in 1998 and 2002. However, with Arsenal signing young Spaniard Jose Antonio Reyes as his replacement in January, there is no guarantee of a new deal while Wenger continuing to pick him regularly this season.

Asked about a new deal for Bergkamp, Wenger told reporters: "Mentally, of course, he deserves it because he has been amazing. "But you have to consider that, at that age, it's short term. It will depend as well on him. Will he accept that the time comes when he will not be an automatic choice? "You can still be very useful if you can adapt to coming on and making the difference. "Bergkamp has been on form as both a goalscorer and goalsmaker this season. — MNA/Reuters

Inter’s double over Juventus boosts AC Milan

MILAN, 6 April — Inter Milan beat champions Juventus 3-2 on Sunday, providing a helping hand for their city rivals Serie A leaders AC Milan after they were held to a 1-1 draw at lowly Modena.

Juve’s defeat means that with six games of the season remaining AS Roma, who won 3-0 at Lecce, are now 10 points behind leaders Inter, who have played two fewer games than their Serie A counterparts. Roma’s second successive draw leaves them on 69 points with Roma on 60 but with a game in hand. Third-place Juventus are now 10 points behind the leaders.

Wimbledon’s Ancona welcomed a 1-0 home defeat to Sampdoria to leave them on seven points at the foot of the table.

Inter, who beat Juve 3-1 at the Delle Alpi earlier in the season, completed a rare double to boost their chances of making a push for the fourth Champions League qualification spot.

Alberto Zaccheroni’s side went ahead in the sixth minute when Christian Vieri deflected a corner across his own goal line from the path of a shot from his teammate. They went two up after 10 minutes when Juve, 1-0 winners at the San Siro in the first leg, doubled the lead through Giampaolo Pazzini.

But Juve levelled in the 25th minute when Inter’s Argentine midfielder Kily Gonzalez headed a Mauro Camoranesi cross from the right into his own net. Just before the break Inter were awarded a penalty when Gianluca Zambrotta brought down Stankovic and, although referee Pierluigi Collina initially awarded a corner, he pointed to the spot after consultation with his linesman. Vieri blasted the ball straight down the middle of Gianluigi Buffon’s goal as Stanicai went down to a sitting position with his linesman.

Inter’s fourth goal came in the 74th minute when midfielder Miccoli converted at the back post after he lost his marker at the corner. Inter also had Park Ji-sung sent off for a second bookable offence and although Marco Di Vaio headed home in injury time it was far too late for any sort of consolation for the hosts.

Inter Milan’s midfielder Francesco Farinaci (bottom) vies with Juventus counterpart Stephen Appiah during their Serie A football match at San Siro Stadium in Milan — Reuters

First Division Millwall reach first FA Cup final

MANCHESTER (England), 6 April — Millwall reached the FA Cup final for the first time in their 119-year history on Sunday when they beat First Division rivals Sunderland 1-0 in their semifinal at Old Trafford.

Australian Tim Cahill’s 26th-minute goal set up a meeting with 10-times winners Manchester United in the final. United have also earned the south London club a place in next season’s UEFA Cup for the first time thanks to United’s qualification for the Champions League through their league placing.

Sunderland had their chances but finished with ten men after Jason McAteer was sent off four minutes from time as Dennis Wise’s team became the first club from outside the top flight to reach the FA Cup final since 1937, when, as a Third Division club, they lost to Sunderland. It was the northeast club who started the stronger at Old Trafford and they almost took the lead after seven minutes when the lively John Oster curled a free-kick against the underside of the crossbar. Oster and McAteer both shot wide but Millwall got the all-important goal when Cahill struck a well-controlled volley from 10 yards after Sunderland goalkeeper Martin Poom had saved from Paul Hill.

Sunderland dominated the second half, having been kept in the tie by Poom’s fine saves from former Sunderland striker Danny Dichio. — MNA/Reuters

West Brom snatch injury-time win at Ipswich

LONDON, 6 April — West Bromwich Albion secured a 3-2 win at Ipswich Town on Sunday with an injury-time goal from striker Geoff Horsfield that put them level on points with Norwich City at the top of the First Division.

Norwich, who came from a goal behind three times to win 3-5 at Burnley on Saturday, lead the standings on goal difference from West Brom with both teams on 76 points.

The top two are 11 points clear of third-placed Sunderland, who have two games in hand after losing 1-0 in their FA Cup semifinal against Millwall at Old Trafford on Saturday.

Ipswich's defeat ended a run of three wins and leaves them in ninth place with 62 points. They also have the luck of not having to face West Ham United in the quarterfinals after drawing the Seed of the area. Ipswich took the lead at Portman Road just before the break when Tommy Miller finished a well-worked move from midfield.

It took West Brom until midway through the second half to reply but they then struck twice in quick succession.

Jason Koumas netted the first with a screaming free kick from well outside the area and Lloyd Dyer put them 2-1 ahead two minutes later.

Ipswich striker Darren Bent bundled a loose ball on the line for the equalizer five minutes later and it looked like the home side would secure a point until Horsfield grabbed the winner in the fourth minute of injury time. — MNA/Reuters

Ferguson backs Chelsea to upset Arsenal

LONDON, 6 April — Manchester United manager Alex Ferguson has rubbed salt into Arsenal’s wounds by suggesting the Londoners may struggle in their Champions League quarterfinal return against Chelsea on Tuesday.

United ended Arsenal’s hopes of a treble on Saturday when Paul Scholes’ first-half goal gave them a 1-0 victory over the Londoners in a tense FA Cup semifinal at Villa Park.

Arsenal, whose Premier League lead was cut to four points after Chelsea won 1-0, have only three days to recover before the Champions League showdown with Chelsea at Highbury.

Chelsea have not beaten Arsenal in their last 17 meetings and Wenger’s team will start firm favourites after the first leg finished 1-1 but Ferguson and Hiddink do not think it will be a difficult game on Tuesday night. "I think (Chel- sea) coach (Claudio) Ranieri is due luck, (after the season he’s had, the pressure he’s been under. ‘I think it’s a difficult game for them’ (Arsenal). I think they will win the league, I’m sure of that. They shouldn’t throw that away, that’s a great position they are in there. “But we wouldn’t bet on them on Tuesday night. It’s a difficult game. It’s not an easy one.”

Arsenal manager Arsene Wenger was angry at some of United’s tackling in Saturday’s game which left Spanish striker Jose Antonio Reyes facing three weeks out due to leg ligament damage and Swedish midfielder Freddie Ljungberg nursing a broken hand. — MNA/Reuters

Deportivo Coruna’s Uruguayan player Walter Pandiani (R) and Betis’ Eduardo Tais battle for the ball during their First Division soccer match in Coruna, on 4 April, 2004. The match ended 2-2. — Reuters

Deportivo title hopes fade after draw with Betis

MADRID, 6 April — Deportivo Coruna effectively waved goodbye to their hopes of winning the Spanish title when they surrendered a two-goal lead to draw 2-2 at home to Real Betis in the Primera Liga on Sunday.

The result means that with just seven games left, the Galicians now trail leaders Real Madrid by 10 points. Real, who claimed a draw whenivan’sa won 2-1 against Betis when Villarreal on Satur- day, are four points behind second-placed Valencia, who play basement side Murcia in Sunday’s late match.

Deportivo are third with 57 points and Barcelona, who were held to a 0-0 draw at home by Villarreal on Saturday, are four points behind second-placed Valencia, who play basement side Murcia in Sunday’s late match.

Deportivo are third with 57 points and Barcelona, who were held to a 0-0 draw at home by Villarreal on Saturday, are four points behind second-placed Valencia. Di Vaio headed home in injury time it was far too late for any sort of consolation for the hosts.

Deportivo was postponed due to a wa-

Deportivo went off a second bookable offence and although Marco Di Vaio headed home in injury time it was far too late for any sort of consolation for the hosts.
Tuesday, 6 April, 2004

Summary of observations recorded at 09:30 hours MST:
During the past 24 hours, rain or thundershowers have been isolated in Khin, northern Shan, Chin and Kayin States, Sagaing, Mandalay, Magway and Tanintharyi Divisions and weather has been partly cloudy in the remaining areas. Day temperatures were (3°C) to (10°C) above normal in northern Shan State, Mandalay, Magway, Ayyeyadaw and Tanintharyi Divisions and about normal in the remaining areas. The significant day temperature was (6°C) in Magway.

Maximum temperature on 5–4–2004 was 36.5°C (98°F). Minimum temperature on 6–4–2004 was 23.8°C (75°F). Relative humidity at 9.30 hrs MST on 6–4–2004 was 65%. Total sunshine hours on 5–4–2004 was 9.2 hours approx. Rainfall on 6–4–2004 was nil at Yangon Airport, 12mm (0.47 inch) at Kaba–Aye and 3mm (0.12 inch) at central Yangon. Total rainfall since 1–1–2004 was 3 mm (0.12 inch) at Yangon Airport and 12mm (0.47 inch) at Kaba–Aye and 3 mm (0.12 inch) at central Yangon. Maximum wind speed at Yangon Airport was 14 mph from Southwest at (17.30 hours MST) on 5–4–2004.

Weather for the following days is partly cloudy to cloudy in the Bay of Bengal. Forecast valid until evening of 7–4–2004: Isolated rain or thundershowers are likely in Khin, Chin, Shan and Kayin States, upper Sagaing, Mandalay, Magway and Ayyeyadaw Divisions and weather will be partly cloudy in the remaining areas. Degree of certainty is (60%).

Forecast of the state’s seas; Will be moderate in Myanmar waters. Currents: Expected two days. Continued rain or thundershowers in upper Myanmar areas.

Weather for Yangon and surrounding areas for 7–4–2004: Possibility of isolated rain show. Degree of certainty is (40%). Forecast for Mandaly and surrounding areas for 7–4–2004: 

WEATHER
Prime Minister General Khin Nyunt calls on Bangladeshi President Professor Dr Iajuddin Ahmed

YANGON, 6 April—Prime Minister of the Union of Myanmar General Khin Nyunt called on President of the People’s Republic of Bangladesh Professor Dr Iajuddin Ahmed at Bangabhaban Presidential House at 5 pm on 4 April.

On arrival at the Presidential House, Prime Minister General Khin Nyunt and party were welcomed by President of the People’s Republic of Bangladesh Professor Dr Iajuddin Ahmed.

Next, Prime Minister General Khin Nyunt had a documentary photos taken together with the President of the People’s Republic of Bangladesh were Minister for Foreign Affairs Mr M Moreshed Khan and the high-ranking officials. In meeting with the President, Prime Minister General Khin Nyunt conveyed a message of good wishes of Chairman of the State Peace and Development Council Senior General Than Shwe to the President.

Prime Minister General Khin Nyunt signed in the visitors’ book.

MNA

Bangladesh supports Myanmar’s democracy drive and nation-building tasks

General Khin Nyunt and Begum Khaleda Zia hold talks

YANGON, 6 April — Myanmar goodwill delegation led by Prime Minister of Myanmar General Khin Nyunt on a goodwill visit to the People’s Republic of Bangladesh held cordial discussions with Prime Minister of the host country Begum Khaleda Zia and party at the Prime Minister’s Office in Dhaka on 4 April.

Present at the meeting together with General Khin Nyunt were Secretary-1 of the State Peace and Development Council Lt-Gen Soe Win, Chairman of Rakhine State Peace and Development Council Commander of Western Command Maj-Gen Maung Oo, Deputy Minister for Foreign Affairs U Khin Maung Win and Myanmar Ambassador to Bangladesh U Thein Myint.

After the discussions, the two Prime Ministers posed for documentary photos.

At 3.30 pm, they held a meeting at the same venue. Present on the Myanmar side together with Prime Minister General Khin Nyunt were Secretary-1 Lt-Gen Soe Win, Commander Maj-Gen Maung Oo, Minister for Agriculture and Irrigation Maj-Gen Nyunt Tin, Minister for Commerce Brig-Gen Pyi Sone, Minister for Home Affairs Col Tin Hlaing, Minister for Transport Maj-Gen Hla Myint Swe, Minister for Information Brig-Gen Kyaw Hsan, Minister at the Prime Minister’s Office Maj-Gen Thein Swe, Deputy Minister U Khin Maung Win, Deputy Minister for Construction U Tin Swe, Deputy Minister for Immigration and Population U Maung Aung, Ambassador U Thein Myint, Director-General of State Peace and Development Council Office Lt-Col Pe Nyevin, Director-General of Government Office U Soe Tint, Director-General of the Pyithu Hluttaw Office U Myint Thein, Director-General of Protocol Department Thura U Aung Htet and Director-General of Consular, International Law and Treaties and Research Development U Nyan Lin.

Prime Minister Begum Khaleda Zia was accompanied by Minister for Foreign Affairs Mr M Moreshed Khan, State Minister for Home Affairs Mr Md Barkatullah Bulu and Bangladesh Ambassador to Myanmar Mr Abul Mannan Rahim.

The two sides cordially discussed matters relating to bilateral relations.

During the meeting, the two Prime Ministers cordially discussed means to further strengthen relations between the two countries and enhance bilateral cooperation, especially, in the international issues, trade, and maritime and land transport.

Prime Minister General Khin Nyunt explained the seven-point future policy programme of the State and national development undertakings, expressing satisfaction to see progress in the Myanmar-Bangladesh friendly relations and wish to further extend the scope of bilateral relations and cooperation, and thanking Bangladesh for her role in always supporting Myanmar in the international field.

In her discussions, Prime Minister Begum Khaleda Zia welcomed and supported the drive for the flourishing of democracy in Myanmar.

She said that the goodwill visit of Chairman of the Peace and Development Council Commander-in-Chief of Defence Services Senior General Than Shwe to Bangladesh in 2002 and her goodwill visit to Myanmar in 2003 have helped strengthen friendly relations between the two countries, while expressing belief that the present visit of Prime Minister General Khin Nyunt will also promote bilateral relations and (See page 8)