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

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Saturday, 24 April, 2004

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

Vice-Senior General Maung Aye receives PRC Military Attaché

YANGON, 23 April — 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 received Military Attaché Senior Colonel Xu Shulai of the People’s Republic of China who has completed his tour of duty and his successor Senior Colonel Ma Shoudong at Zeyathiri Beikman at 9 am today.

Also present at the call were Military Adviser to the Chairman of the State Peace and Development Council General Khin Nyunt, Commander-in-Chief (Navy) Rear-Admiral Soe Thein and Commander-in-Chief (Air) Lt-Gen Myat Hein.

MNA

22,718
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.

For strong national unity

The national brethren have been living in the land on which the Union of Myanmar would emerge for years countable by the thousand. It is a fine tradition bestowed by the history that the national races have been living in unity in the Union in successive eras. After the colonialist invasion, they drove a wedge among the national races practising divide-and-rule policy. As a result, there emerged suspicions among the national races. That was why the national race leaders with farsightedness assembled on Panglong soil and restored the fine tradition of national unity. As a result, the Union made up of states and divisions was conceived and born along with the independence.

In the time of the Tatmadaw government, projects for development of border areas and national races have been laid down and are being implemented while making efforts for bringing about harmonious and equitable development across the nation and restoring the national unity. Therefore, there has now been better transport in border areas, thereby contributing to development of education, health and social sectors and further strengthening friendship among the national races.

Chairman of the Work Committee for Development of Border Areas and National Races Prime Minister General Khin Nyunt hosted a dinner in honour of cultural troupe members of respective national races from border areas who took part in Yangon Maha Thinyan Festival 2004, at Mya Yeik Nyo Hotel on 18 April.

On the occasion, the Prime Minister said that he was very pleased to see that all the national races stayed in Yangon happily like family members during the Thingyan festival in accord with noble traditions existed in the history and that he believed that they would meet the next time and they are always to safeguard the concept of "Whoever tries to divide us, we will ever remain united.''

The government made arrangements for national people to understand culture and customs of a region and to strengthen goodwill during the Myanmar Traditional Maha Thinyan Festival.

We would like to urge all the national brethren to convey the already-achieved friendship and noble traditions to the respective regions and to take part in the efforts to strengthen national solidarity spirit among the national races and the concept — "Whoever tries to divide us, we will ever remain united.''

People’s Desire

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**People’s Desire**

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- Oppose foreign nations interfering in internal affairs of the State.
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**Course on prevention of trafficking in persons concludes**

**Ambassador donates cash for tube-wells in arid regions**

**Work Group for Prevention of Violence Against Women meets Transport Ministry staff**

**The best time to plant a tree was 20 years ago.**

**The second best time is now.**

**MWAF President Dr Daw Khin Win Shwe delivers an address at the closing ceremony of the course. — MOHA**

**Ambassador donates cash for tube-wells in arid regions**

**Work Group for Prevention of Violence Against Women meets Transport Ministry staff**

**Dr Daw May May Yi, advisors and members of the group, and officials and service personnel of the ministry totaling 250.**

**Adviser of the group Prof Dr Daw San Myint presented K 200,000 for the group to Adviser Daw Ma-lar Tint. Prof Dr Daw May May Yi gave the concluding address. — MNA**
Swedish PM doubts June handover of power in Iraq

STOCKHOLM, 23 April — Swedish Prime Minister Goran Persson on Wednesday said US President George W. Bush next week, said on Thursday instability in Iraq could prevent the handover of power from the US-led authority to Iraqis on June 30.

“It is difficult to see that there will be an administration to hand over to Iraq on June 30,” Persson, a critic of the 2003 US-led invasion of Iraq, told reporters.

“The country is now in deep disorder, partly because of the strong internal opposition. To believe that such a situation could quickly become a democratic model is hoping for too much,” said the Social Democrat Prime Minister.

The United States plans to transfer power to an interim Iraqi government on June 30. But preparations have been eclipsed by bloodletting and hostage-taking this month.

Since the start of the war in March last year, 511 US soldiers have been killed, according to the US Defence Department. More than 100 have been killed this month.

Sweden is militarily non-aligned and has not sent troops to Iraq like its neighbour Denmark, a NATO member.

MNA/Reuters

Germany confirms two missing in Iraq believed dead

BERLIN, 23 April — Two German security specialists whose convoy was ambushed in Iraq earlier this month are believed to be dead, Interior Minister Otto Schily said on Thursday.

The two elite anti-terror specialists were heading from Jordan to Baghdad by road when their vehicle was attacked near Fallujah two weeks ago.

“Unfortunately I have to record, to my great sadness, that these two security officials have certainly...or with a probability bordering on certainty, been killed,” Schily told foreign journalists at a briefing. He said he had commissioned an investigation into the incident but this had not yet been completed.

The two men were travelling between the Jordanian capital Amman and Baghdad, to take part in a routine changeover of staff at the German Embassy.

Dozens of foreigners have been abducted in Iraq amid a worsening security situation in recent weeks, including several who were taken hostage on the dangerous road near Fallujah. Germany, which strongly opposed the US-led invasion of Iraq last year, does not have troops in the country and has ruled out sending any.

MNA/Reuters

Poland, France urge bigger role for UN in Iraq

PARIS, 23 April—The foreign ministers of France and Poland expressed concern over the situation in Iraq and urged a leading role for the United Nations to oversee the transfer of powers next month.

Michel Barnier and his Polish counterpart, Wlodzimierz Cimoszewicz, said they were “worried about the deterioration of the situation in Iraq” and they stressed “the importance of the role of the United Nations” in organising a transfer of sovereignty from US military occupation, French foreign ministry spokesman Herve Ladsous said Thursday.

Cimoszewicz told journalists that his country planned to reduce the number of its troops in Iraq to support the occupation after elections tentatively scheduled for early next year.

“After the elections...we believe that next year it will be possible to withdraw foreign forces,” he said, adding: “The question is not in terms of pulling out — none of us believe we will participate forever.”

France, which led international opposition to the US-led invasion of Iraq at the UN Security Council, has repeatedly insisted that Washington keep to its pledge of handing over power to an interim Iraqi administration June 30. Poland is a close US ally which has contributed 2,500 troops to the occupation, although its prime minister, Leszek Miller, said this week that Warsaw may re-open to military deployment depending on decisions by Spain, Honduras and the Dominican Republic to withdraw from the UN-led coalition.

MNA/Reuters

Romanian firm pulls out of Iraq after attack

BUCAREST, 23 April — A Romanian private security company said on Wednesday it had pulled out of Iraq after one of its workers was killed and another one injured in an ambush near Baghdad this month.

Foreign firms employ tens of thousands of staff in Iraq working for the country’s reconstruction and some have said they were considering leaving due to the growing risks.

New NATO member Romania remains committed to keeping in Iraq around 730 troops it has contributed to the US-led coalition.

The Romanian security firm Bidepa, which had eight staff working under a three-month contract as bodyguards for members of Iraq’s transitional Coalition Provisional Authority, said it had withdrawn its staff until the situation improved.

“The contract we signed with our foreign partner is temporarily suspended because of the security situation in Iraq,” Bidepa director Dumitru Nicolae told a news conference. “Our staff in Iraq have already arrived in Romania.”

One Bidepa security guard was shot dead and another wounded when a coalition forces convoy they were protecting was attacked in an ambush near Fallujah last week.

Romania’s Foreign Ministry advised Romanian citizens two weeks ago not to travel to Iraq.

MNA/Reuters

Foreign hostages released in Iraq

BAGHDAD, 23 April—Three more foreign hostages were released by their captors in Iraq, following a spate of kidnappings in recent weeks.

One of them was an Israeli Arab abducted two weeks ago and accused of spying for Israel.

Switzerland says a married Swiss couple were freed in southern Iraq, after being held for 48 hours. The news came amid reports that two major contractors have suspended most of their work in Iraq.

About 50 foreigners have been abducted in Iraq in the last month.

One Italian hostage was killed by his captors, and a Danish national was found dead a day after he was seized, but most of the others have been released unharmed.

US company Research Triangle International was quoted by Reuters news agency as saying one of its employees - Nabil George Yaakob Razuq — had been released. RTI Vice President Sally Johnson said Mr Razuq, a Palestinian with an Israeli identity card, had been released earlier on Thursday and was “safe and sound”.

Mr Razuq, who was working for the North Carolina-based company on local government work in Iraq, was taken hostage on 4 April. Swiss Foreign Minister Micheline Calmy-Rey said the married couple, who worked for a non-governmental organisation, were kidnapped on Tuesday by a small band of people.

Their release was followed negotiations by Swiss diplomats in Baghdad, and both are thought to have resumed their work in Iraq.

Siemens and GE are reported to have suspended most of their work in Iraq because of the continuing insurgency. The reports are being carried by US newspapers quoting officials of the US-led governing organisation in Iraq, the Coalition Provisional Authority.

But Siemens and GE say they will not discuss projects or numbers of people on the ground for security reasons.

Siemens of Germany, and GE, the biggest company in the US, have big contracts in the Iraqi electricity and telecommunications sectors.

FM says two Swiss hostages released in Iraq

BERN, 23 April—Two Swiss nationals were released by an unknown group in Iraq after being held hostage for 48 hours, Switzerland’s Foreign Minister Micheline Calmy-Rey revealed.

The pair, a married couple who worked for a non-governmental organisation, were kidnapped on Tuesday by an unknown group in the northwest of the country.

“We were able to resolve the problem quickly thanks to the good contacts we have established on the ground,” said a foreign office spokesperson Carine Carey.

The two ex-hostages had restarted their work they were doing in Iraq, explained Carey, but she declined to reveal who they were employed by. She was equally vague on the circumstances surrounding their kidnap. “They are not very clear,” she told AFP.

MNA/Reuters

Denmark says Kidnapped Dane found dead in Iraq

COPENHAGEN, 23 April — A Danish businessman kidnapped in Iraq has been found dead, Denmark’s Foreign Ministry said on Wednesday. “This is as far as we have information about the perpetrators or a motive for the killing,” it added in a statement.

The ministry said that since being informed of the man’s disappearance on April 11, it had been in talks with a Sunni Muslim sheikh, US forces and local authorities in order to find him.

MNA/Reuters
Spain to withdraw 1,400 Iraq troops soon for own safety

MADRID, 23 April — Spain’s new government decided to withdraw its 1,400 troops from Iraq as soon as possible for their own safety and the bulk of them could be home by May 30, Defence Minister Jose Bono said on Wednesday.

Domestic opponents have accused Spain’s new Socialist Prime Minister Jose Luis Rodriguez Zapatero of jumping the gun on Sunday by ordering the withdrawal of troops. Sunday was only his second day in office.

"Why was it so quick? For the security of the troops," Bono told Cadena Ser radio, saying Spanish commanders in Iraq had reported 17 grenades being fired at their barracks overnight.

"When Spaniards do not know what their troops are doing in Iraq, then perhaps their policy should not be in keeping," Zapatero pledged during the election campaign to pull out Spanish forces if the United Nations did not assume political and military control in Iraq by June 30.

The White House is pushing for a new UN resolution to encourage other nations to help with security and rebuilding in Iraq, but Bono reiterated the Spanish Government’s view that this would not meet its conditions.

"I cannot see the United Nations taking command of the troops (in Iraq)," Bono said.

Khatami says US realizes time to leave Iraq

TEHRAN, 23 April — The United States has realized it would be better off withdrawing its troops from Iraq but cannot bring itself to do so, Iran’s President Mohammad Khatami said on Wednesday.

"The Americans have understood that continuing the occupation (of Iraq) is not to their benefit but because of their vanity they are continuing with the occupation," Khatami told reporters after a weekly Cabinet meeting.

Some US officials have accused Iran of stirring up anti-US sentiment in Iraq, particularly among the Shiite Muslim population.

Khatami, considered a moderate voice in the Islamic republic, laid the blame for the increased level of violence and attacks in neighbouring Iraq squarely at Washington’s doorstep.

"We want calm in Iraq and condemn any activity which might cause disorder in Iraq but we say the source of problems is the continuation of the occupation," he said.

The United States and Iran have been enemies since Washington broke diplomatic relations with Tehran in 1980, after militant Iranian students seized the US Embassy and took hostages.

Khatami voiced Iranian support for Grand Ayatollah Ali al-Sistani, now viewed by the West as a moderate Shiite leader compared with the firebrand cleric Moqtada al-Sadr, who this month started a violent uprising against US-led forces.

But Khatami warned US-led troops against trying to stamp out the Shi’ite holy cities of Najaf and Kerbala to flush out Sadr and his supporters.

"If the occupying forces were to attack Kerbala and Najaf they would be committing suicide and molesting all the sentiment of the Islamic world and especially the Shiites against them," he said.

Chinese consumers demand right to know about GE food

BEIJING, 23 April — A food brand which contains genetically engineered (GE) ingredients but is not labelled as such will create an unfavourable image among Chinese consumers, according to a recent survey.

Seventy-one per cent of the 600 respondents in the survey conducted by Beijing’s Greenpeace and a research institute in Guangzhou-based Zhongshan University, said they would trust a food brand less if it did not declare its GE ingredients. Only 20 per cent said their loyalty would remain unchanged.

Carried out in February by Research International, the telephone survey polled 600 ordinary consumers in Beijing, Shanghai and Guangzhou cities.

Thirty-eight per cent of the respondents said they cared a lot about GE ingredients in food, while 42 per cent showed an attitude of indifference.

Approximately 40 per cent of the respondents prefer buying food without GE ingredients, while some 24 per cent would choose food with GE ingredients.

Nearly 90 per cent of respondents supported establishing a GE food labelling system.

Hong Kong launches mini-card for ladies

HONG KONG, 23 April — Wearing a card may become a fashion for Hong Kong young ladies after the Bank of China (BOC) Credit Card (International) Limited launched the first mini-card in Hong Kong Wednesday.

Less than half of the classic card in size, the baby card can be used as a key chain or an accessory.

The classic and mini-card are under same card account, which ensures easy card account management.

The cards are specially “designed for modern young ladies who are in search of trendy lifestyle and independence”, said Dickson So, General Manager of BOC Credit Card. — MNA/Xinhua

Contract firms suspend Iraq projects

BAGHDAD, 23 April — Violence across Iraq has interrupted repair on key electricity and water systems and forced giant firms Siemens AG, Bechtel and General Electric to suspend some reconstruction projects, threatening to undermine the critical US goal of rebuilding Iraq.

Even the US Agency for International Development (USAID) which oversees some reconstruction projects, has been affected. Some 10 per cent of its non-Iraqi employees are outside the country, either sent out of Iraq or unable to come in because of the violence.

Rebuilding infrastructure is key to Iraq’s economic growth and would show Iraqis a tangible benefit of the US-led occupation, which many feel has brought instability.

Iraqis often complain about sporadic electricity supplies in particular.

Staffers for Germany-based Siemens have stopped work at their Baghdad offices on Tuesday, but the Socialists are expected to win approval comfortably with the support of smaller regional and left-leaning parties. Only the outgoing Popular Party backs keeping the troops in Iraq. — MNA/Reuters

Iraqi forces kill four guerillas, seize car bombs

KIRKUK, Iraq, 23 April — US-backed Iraqi soldiers killed four guerillas and seized three cars laden with explosives in a swoop on a guerilla hideout in northern Iraq overnight, an Iraqi official said on Wednesday.

Major-General Anwar Amin said Iraqi Civil Defence Corps (ICDC) forces attacked the hideout 85 miles south of Kirkuk after a tip-off.

The bodies of the guerillas were not identified, he said, adding that assault rifles were also seized in the raid.

Three car bombs exploded near police stations in the southern Iraqi city of Basra on Wednesday, killing at least 55 people and wounding more than 200 in the latest massive attack in the war-scarred country. — MNA/Reuters

Mortar barrage on Baghdad prison kills 21

BAGHDAD, 23 April — Guerillas fired mortar bombs at a Baghdad prison run by US-led forces in Iraq on Tuesday, killing 21 detainees, the US military said.

A military spokesman said initial reports indicated that all the casualties at the Abu Ghraib jail, just west of Baghdad, were prisoners, but could not say if they were held as suspects for criminal or guerilla activities. The spokesman said more than 100 people had been wounded in the attack. — MNA/Reuters
Security remains “constraint” for UN to play role in Iraq

UNITED NATIONS, 23 April — United Nations Secretary-General Kofi Annan said on Wednesday that the security situation in Iraq may continue to delay the return of UN staff despite growing international calls for a vital UN role in the country.

“Many countries are looking to the UN to play an important role in Iraq. We would like to play an important role in Iraq, but the circumstances have to allow us to do that,” Annan told reporters.

“The security situation on the ground has a very important impact on our decisions, on our activities,” he said, hours after a bombing in the southern Iraqi city of Basra killed more than 60 people.

“We hope the attempts to reduce the violence will succeed. Until that is done, security is a constraint for us,” he added.

While admitting Iraq needs international assistance to restore stability, Annan ruled out again the possibility of deploying UN peacekeepers in the country.

He suggested that the UN Security Council authorize the deployment of a multinational force in Iraq after the June 30 sovereignty transfer.

“There is need for assistance in the effort to create a secure environment,” he said. “Some international military presence is going to be required for the foreseeable future to fill that bridge, and I do not think it can or be ought to be UN peacekeepers.”

“So the Council may have to allow a multinational force to do it,” he added.

Annan’s special adviser Lakhdar Brahimi will brief the Security Council Wednesday afternoon on his recommendations to form a caretaker government in Iraq before June 30.

Brahimi, who just returned from a tour to Europe, went to Iraq early this month to help Iraqis find ways of establishing the interim government.

Annan ordered withdrawal of all UN international staff from Iraq in October after the UN office in Baghdad was bombed twice. The August 19 blast left 20 people dead, including Annan’s special envoy Sergio de Mello. — MNA/Xinhua

Intelligence says Italian hostages are alive

ROMA, 23 April — The negotiations to secure the release of three Italian hostages in Iraq have come to a crunch and the next 48 hours will be crucial, local media reported Wednesday.

According to the report that an Italian intelligence source said talks to free three Italian hostages in Iraq “had come to a turning point”, and “that the British government was on the edge of disbelieving they would be released”, contacts between Italian intelligence and the hostage takers had received “special impetus” in the last few hours, the source said, adding that it is possible talks may take place that day and tomorrow are crucial.

Top US general says cost of Iraqi conflict growing

WASHINGTON, 23 April — A top US general said Wednesday that the Iraqi military operation would cost more money than expected, citing the need to deploy more US troops in Iraq than the Pentagon had planned.

General Richard Myers, chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, told the House Armed Services Committee that it would cost an estimated $700 million US dollars just to keep 20,000 troops in Iraq for an extra three months.

“Additional time in Iraq is going to cost us more money,” Myers said. “We are working those estimates right now.”

The Bush Administration has funded the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan with supplemental appropriations that are not included in its budget requests. Congress has passed two bills appropriating more than $160 billion US dollars since the war started last March.

White House Spokesman Scott McLellan said the administration did not expect to seek additional money before January, but President George W Bush “is committed to making sure our troops have everything they need to do their job”, he said.

US Army troops of the 1st Infantry Division take battle position on a road leading to their base in the Iraqi town of Baquoba after their convoy was attacked on 22 April, 2004. — INTERNET

NZ to play role in UN meeting of small island states

WELLINGTON, 23 April — New Zealand is being asked to play a central role in the lead up to a major United Nations meeting later this year on the sustainable development of small island states, Foreign Minister Phil Goff said Wednesday.

Goff said in a statement that Associate Foreign Minister Marian Hobbs would be among the inner circle of international leaders overseeing the meeting in Mauritius from August 30 to September 2.

“The reality is that small islands are especially vulnerable to both new threats and to those such as climate change that were identified in Barbados, he said, adding that the commitment made 10 years ago, overall development assistance to small island states had actually declined.

As chair of the negotiations, New Zealand will be well placed to focus on ensuring practical outcomes that will help small island states in the years ahead, Goff said. — MNA/Xinhua

China’s urban utilities open doors to private investors

BEIJING, 23 April — After a year of experimenting, China has decided its policy on the privatization of the country into urban utilities once monopolized by the government.

A regulation made public here Wednesday says that private investors could run water, gas and heat supply, public transportation, and water and trash treatment if they win public bids and get the franchise from the government.

However, they can only run for 30 years at most, and their companies would be taken over if the government believed after a due procedure that they threatened the public security.

“After the pilot in 2003, and discovered some local governments have given the investors over-long franchise terms or promised fixed rates of return,” said Li Dongxu, a Construction Ministry official responsible for urban infrastructure.

While giving the government more power, the regulation also protected the franchise holders from government’s abuse of power, said Li.

MNA/Xinhua

Shanghai Airlines launches new flight to Osaka

SHANGHAI, 23 April — Shanghai Airlines launched a new air service Wednesday to Osaka, Japan, offering a daily flights to and from Osaka with Boeing 757 passenger planes.

The new flight is expected to greatly increase exchanges between the two coastal cities, which forged friendly relations in 1974.

Shanghai Airlines has become one of China’s major operators of overseas air flights after opening new routes in recent years to Ho Chi Minh city in Vietnam, Phuket in Thailand, Phnom Penh in Cambodia and Vladivostok in Russia, as well as Macao. — MNA/Xinhua
US contractor fired for military coffin photo

WASHINGTON, 23 April — A US contractor and her husband have been fired after her photograph of 20 flag-draped coffins of US soldiers going home from Iraq was published in violation of military rules.

“Lost my job and they let my husband go as well,” Tami Silicio, who loaded US flags on April 7 inside a military cargo plane at Kuwait International Airport for a US company, told Reuters in an email response to questions.

The Pentagon tightly restricts publication of photographs of coffins with the remains of US soldiers and has forbidden journalists from taking pictures at Dover Air Force Base, the first stop for the bodies of US soldiers being sent home.

The military says the policy is in place to protect the privacy of families of those killed, but critics have said the rules are aimed at sanitizing the war for the public.

The Seattle Times printed Silicio’s photograph last weekend and again on Thursday. The picture shows soldiers tending to 20 coffins completely covered with American flags on April 7 inside a military cargo plane at the Kuwait Airport.

Silicio, who was raised in the Seattle area, was not paid by the newspaper for the picture, which a friend in the United States, Amy Katz, passed on to the newspaper. Katz said she had since found an agent to sell the photograph.

Silicio’s former employer, Colorado-based Maytag Aircraft Corp., a subsidiary of Mercury Air Group Inc., said the couple was dismissed for violating US Government and company regulations.

“Maytag deeply regrets these actions and fully concurs with the Pentagon’s policy of respecting the remains of our brave men and women who have fallen in service to our country,” said Maytag President William Silva.

The Pentagon has declined to comment on Silicio’s case but spokesman James Turner said the policy of media coverage of war dead has been in effect since 1991.

“The principal focus and purpose of the policy is to protect the wishes and the privacy of the families during their time of greatest loss and grief,” he said.

A truce deal was put in place Monday but the US Army said clashes threatened to derail the peace initiatives.

The return of families to the city was again suspended on Thursday because of the tensions in the city.

Medical sources in the city said more than 600 Iraqis have been killed in fighting in Fallujah since April 5. The US military said it had suspended offensive operations in the city but would hit back if attacked.

Iraqi resistance uses bicycle bomb to attack US troops

BAGHDAD, 23 April — As the tension between the American forces and the Iraqi resistance increased, the latter started using such new method as bicycle bomb to attack the occupation forces, said Thursday Azzaman newspaper.

In an unprecedented event, the Iraqis resistance used a bicycle placed with bomb in an attack on an American convoy two days ago in Haowa City, 50 kilometres south of Baghdad, said the newspaper. The bicycle was placed on the sidewalk in the mostly unsuspicious way, said the paper, adding the bicycle exploded causing a big noise, which was heard all over the city, without causing them any damages.

The newspaper noted that “in spite of the fact that the American forces are being daily attacked by all kinds of weapons, but this is the first time that the resistance use a bombed bicycle, which means a change in the style of attacking those people.”

According to the report, members of the resistance have also used many other ways to attack Americans, like caricatures and dead animals, which were stuffed with explosives and left by the road to be detonated later on.

Six killed, 13 injured in Nepal’s road accidents

KATHMANDU, 23 April — At least six people were killed and 13 others injured in three separate road accidents that occurred Wednesday in Nepal, The Kathmandu Post newspaper reported Thursday.

Two persons aboard a bus died and three others were injured when the bus collided with a truck at Ramnagar on the Mugling-Narayangadi Highway. A 65-year-old man died on the spot and 10 other passengers were injured when the jeep they were taking turned over on the Hetauda-Birgunj Road. Meanwhile, three passengers including a child died in another bus accident occurred Wednesday afternoon at Ambot Odare in Parbat District, some 200 kilometres west of Kathmandu.

Economic growth in emerging Asia to remain high

WASHINGTON, 23 April — The economic growth in emerging Asia is expected to remain high in 2004, based on the continued momentum of domestic demand and the strong outlook for the global economy, the International Monetary Fund (IMF) said in a report released Wednesday.

The growth rate of the gross domestic product (GDP) in emerging Asia is expected to be 7.4 per cent in 2004 and 7.0 per cent in 2005, much higher than that in other regions, said the IMF’s World Economic Outlook.

In Asia, the report said, GDP growth accelerated to 7.0 per cent in 2003, accounting for about 50 per cent of world growth. Economic activity surged in the second half of the year, reflecting both domestic demand and export growth.

Consumption and tourism rebounded, especially in those economies that had been affected by SARS, supported by accommodative monetary policies and increased consumer credit.

Exports were also robust, reflecting both the strength of exports and the rebound in domestic demand, so the region’s current account surplus was broadly unchanged. Reflecting increasing capacity utilization rates and rising global commodity prices, inflation picked up modestly in most countries, but still remained low. The balance of risks in the short run is on the rise, with the possibility of favorable surprises to exports and capital inflows, the report said.

Three foreigners released in Iraq

BAGHDAD, 23 April — Three foreigners, two Swiss nationals and one Iraqi Arab, were released in Iraq on Thursday, Qatar-based Al-Jazeera satellite channel reported.

The two Swiss nationals were released after being taken hostage for two days in southern Iraq.

Switzerland’s Foreign Minister Micheline Calmy-Rey confirmed that the pair, a married couple who worked for a non-governmental organization, were kidnapped on Tuesday by a small band of people. The Iraqi Arab, identified as Nabil George Razzaq, was also released on Thursday after being held hostage by an armed Iraqi group.

Razzaq was working for a US company in Iraq. He is a Palestinian holding the Israeli nationality and was mistaken by Iraqi resistance fighters for a spy. Coalition officials have said there are some 40 foreign hostages from 12 countries being held in Iraq by militants trying to exert political pressure on US allies in the country.

French journalist shot dead in Baghdad

BAGHDAD, 23 April — Masked gunmen have shot and killed a foreigner in northern suburb of Baghdad and severely wounded his translator, witnesses said.

The victim was a French journalist, according to the Iraqi police, but there was no immediate confirmation of that report.

The attack took place near the Azimiyah neighbourhood, where gunmen have recently been active.

Unknown gunmen have repeatedly attacked US military convoys in Baghdad as well as foreigners who have been accused of collaborating with occupiers of Iraq.

Many foreigners have sharply restricted their movements in the capital.
Those who don’t show their face — 51

It is quite clear. Shnapai is not a legal magazine published with the permission of the Press Scrutiny and Registration Division. But a Myanmar-language miscellaneous matters magazine does come out every month in the country.

There was another point in which an illegal magazine, which wrote that the Shnapai magazine had been published by the Shan National League for Democracy (SNLD) under the permit No na/tha at Zalatui Press owned by U Sai Nyunt Win since 2001. What they are doing is like making matters worse and causing simple things complicated.

They are claiming themselves to be the cleverest, but doing the foolish. The permit na/tha is issued for political parties to present their policy, ideology and news, but not to publish it for profit. The secretary of the SNLD was missing the na/tha permit and printing it in his own press for economic gains. True, it is a magazine featuring a wide array of topics without touching the political matter. The SNLD secretary was enjoying all the profits of the magazine including the printing charges. I wonder whether chairman U Khin Tun Oo, knew about it or not.

The Myanmar expatriates and fugitives, without studying or knowing the source of a case, are publishing periodicals of inferior quality and featuring them through the Internet, just to beg money from their masters, but not for democracy cause.

The reporters without borders or the persons without rules have never studied the source and purpose of a news report to verify whether it is true or not. Amazing! Never in my whole 40-year service as a journalist have I met or heard of reporters of that kind. Reporters like those from the RSF can rarely be found in the world. It is great opportunity for me to hear about them.

No reporter or editor of any periodical would feature a news item randomly. The RSF is boasting about itself to be an international media rights watch group. But in reality, it is acting as a writer receiving and distributing slanderous news on Myanmar. I feel sad to find out that it is being cheated and misused.

Now, I am going to conclude my article. The Myanmar expatriates and fugitives are publishing illegal publications without observing the journalism ethics with the sole aim of discrediting Myanmar, and the RSF is distributing the slanderous news reports received from the Myanmar expatriates and fugitives. All the people of Myanmar including those from the journalism profession know that the shameless misleads of Myanmar expatriates and fugitives and the RSF are meant to destroy Myanmar and her people and journalism industry. For reasons mentioned above, they are just like the persons who don’t show their face.

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(Translation: TMT)

Myanmar Alin, Kyemon: 23-4-2004

Efficient use of electricity

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

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

Efficient use of fuel

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

All this needs to be known

- * Do not be frightened whenever intimidated
- * Do not be bolstered whenever flattered
- * Do not be softfened whenever appeased

Intel invests in digital home development

LOS ANGELES, 23 April — Intel, the world’s biggest chipmaker, said that it has made investments in four companies developing technologies for the digital home, on multiple devices in the home and beyond,” said John Miner, president of Intel Capital.

“These four companies’ technologies help drive key inter-operability, bandwidth and distribution issues,” he said.

Intel said the money came from its 200-million US-dollar Intel Digital Home Fund and was invested in January. But it did not disclose how much it had invested in any of the four companies.

“The Intel Digital Home Fund investments we’re announcing today support Intel’s initiative to enable people to enjoy digital content — including music, games, photos and video —
Secretary-1 Lt-Gen Soe Win inspects the project site of Pyuchaung Multi-purpose Dam in Pyu Township.— MNA

Secretary-1 Lt-Gen Soe Win inspects implementation of Shwegyin Hydroelectric Power Project in Shwegyin Township.— MNA

Secretary-1 Lt-Gen Soe Win hears reports on Kunchaung Hydroelectric Power Project presented by Deputy Minister for Electric Power U Myo Myint.— MNA

Increased in power generation...

(from page 16)

completion of the project as soon as possible.

On completion, the dam will be able to irrigate some 100,000 acres of arable land and generate 30 megawatts.

YANGON, 23 April— Members of Central Executive Committee and work committee of Myanmar Writers and Journalists Association held the coordination meeting to hold the Third MWJA Central Body Conference, to be organized by MWJA in the second week of May, at the hall of the Ministry of Information on Theinbyu Street this afternoon, attended by Minister for Information Brig-Gen Kyaw Hsan.

Also present on the occasion were Deputy Ministers Brig-Gen Aung Thein, directors-general and managing directors of departments and enterprises under the ministry, Chairman of MWJA U Hla Myaing (Ko Hsaung), Vice-Chairmen U Tin Kha (Tekkatho Tin Kha), U Than Maung (Than Maung) and U Myint Thein (Myint Thein Aung), Secretary U Hla Tun (Hla Tun Twantay), joint-secretaries, CEC members and work committee members.

In his address, Minister for Information Brig-Gen Kyaw Hsan said that the MWJA, being a large social organization, was formed with over 6,000 members in 177 townships out of over 300 townships in the country. Moreover, the association gets in touch with over 53 million people through the literature. It is necessary to hold the Third MWJA Central Body Conference on a grand scale. For holding the conference, all the work committees have made arrangements and ministries concerned are also providing assistance for the conference. After reviewing weak and strong points of the programmes laid down by the previous conference, the future programmes are to be laid down for serving interest of the literature, literati, the country and the people. In addition, it is necessary to draw the plan for uplift of standard of the press, and the Myanmar literature. Furthermore, quality papers for the conference are to be compiled and requirements of the respective work committees are to be submitted.

Next, Chairman of MWJA U Hla Myaing (Ko Hsaung) reported on progress in preparations for the conference and future tasks.

Afterwards, Chairman of Management Work Committee, Delegate Scrutinizing Work Committee and Information Work Committee U Hla Tun (Hla Tun Twantay), Finance Work Committee Chairman U Tin Kha (Tekkatho Tin Kha), Reception Work Committee U Than Maung (Than Maung) and officials reported on requirements and their respective sectors.

The minister fulfilled their needs.

Next, Deputy Minister for Information Brig-Gen Aung Thein and officials took part in the discussions. Later, the minister gave the concluding remarks.

MNA

Minister for Information Brig-Gen Kyaw Hsan presents K 300,000 donated by Ministry of Information to MWJA Chairman U Hla Myaing (Ko Hsaung).— MNA

Donate blood
**Commander inspects tax-free markets**

**YANGON, 23 April** — Chairman of Yangon Division Peace and Development Council and Commander of Yangon Command Maj-Gen Myint Swe, accompanied by Deputy Commander Col Wai Lwin, commanders of military regions, local authorities, and officials, oversaw tax-free markets here this morning and attended to the requirements.

The commander and party arrived at the tax-free market in Dagon Township, Yangon West District, at 6.30 am and inspected the sales.

The commander also went to the tax-free markets in Kamayut, Mayagone, Yankin, Tamwe and Kyimyin dine townships. At the markets, the commander looked into the shops opened by ministries, Yangon City Development Committee and other private companies.

The commander was conducted round the markets by officials concerned.

Giving instructions to officials, the commander spoke of the need to open the markets daily and sell fresh vegetables, meat and fish, to keep the markets clean and pleasant by adopting the proper garbage-dumping system, and to place emphasis on maintenance of shops for their durability. After hearing the reports presented by market officials concerned, the commander fulfilled to the requirements. — MNA

**Golden jubilee of Myanmar Pharmaceutical Factory held**

**YANGON, 23 April** — The ceremony to mark the golden jubilee of Myanmar Pharmaceutical Factory was held at the hall of the factory in Gyo gon, Insein Township, this morning, attended by Minister for Industry-1 U Aung Thaung and wife.

Also present on the occasion were Deputy Ministers Brig-Gen Thein Tun and Brig-Gen Kyaw Win, directors general and managing directors under the ministry, retired factory managers and deputy factory managers of the MFP and guests.

On behalf of the factory manager, Deputy Factory Manager U Win Aung extended greetings. Next, Managing Director U Myint Oo presented prizes to senior workers. Deputy Factory Manager U Win Aung gave away prizes to winners in the quiz. Later, staff members presented songs and dances to the guests. — MNA

**Minister inspects test running of mini-rice mill**

**YANGON, 23 April** — Minister for Commerce Brig-Gen Pyi Sone and Deputy Minister Brig-Gen Aung Tun looked into test running of six-ton rice mill of the main workshop of Myanmar Agricultural Produce Trading on Upper Pazundaung Street in Mingala Taungnyunt Township this afternoon.

Managing Director U Min Hlaung and officials conducted the minister round the mill. The minister gave instructions on taking extended innovative measures for development of milling industry and manufacturing of import-substitute items. — MNA

**Minister receives Chinese guests**

**YANGON, 23 April** — Minister for Commerce Brig-Gen Pyi Sone met the visiting business delegation led by Mr Yang Chong Hui, Chairman of Yunnan Provincial Chinese People’s Political Consultative Conference, CPPCC, at the Ministry of Commerce on Strand Road here at 11 am today.

Also present at the call were Border Trade Department Director General U Nay Win, Myanmar Agricultural Produce Trading Managing Director U Min Hlaung and officials. — MNA

**Outstanding service personnel honoured**

**YANGON, 23 April** — Staff should understand the important role of industries in the national development drive, said Minister for Industry-1 U Aung Thaung at his meeting with officials this morning. As the industries are also advancing together with the national development drive, the ministry staff will have to expedite their task in accord with the time and condition, the minister pointed out.

At the meeting, the minister, Deputy Ministers Brig-Gen Thein Tun and Brig-Gen Kyaw Win, heads of departments and enterprises under the ministry and other officials reviewed the work done in 2003-2004 and sought means for successful realization of the goals for fiscal 2004-2005.

The Head of State is making efforts for development and modernization of the nation, the minister said, adding, the ministry is also implementing 30-year plans for industrial development. As they are working in the interest of the State, the staff should think and do good work and make the State peaceful, modern and developed nation— for 15 years hand in hand with the people, he said. Now, almost all the groundwork has been laid, which is needed for development of the nation, he said. Based on the already-achieved success, in accordance with the guidance of the Head of State, emphasis is placed on greater development of the industrial and electric power sectors, border areas development sector and transforming the conventional farming into mechanized farming in 2004-2005. In this regard, the staff are to make efforts by doing their bit for success of the tasks, he said. The ministry’s seven objectives for 2004-2005 and those of the PPE are to be accomplished through the endeavours of the service personnel, he urged.

Next, the minister presented cash awards to six personnel who won good service medals, four who won medal for outstanding performance in industrial field and two, in social field.

Minister for Mines receives guests**

**YANGON, 23 April** — Mr Yang Chong Hui, Chairman of Yunnan Provincial Chinese People’s Political Consultative Conference, CPPCC, and party, called on Minister for Mines Brig-Gen Ohn Myint at the latter’s office at 10 am today.

Present at the call were directors-general and managing directors of the departments and enterprises under the ministry. During their meeting, they discussed mining cooperation between the two countries. — MNA

**Minister for Mines receives guests**

**YANGON, 23 April** — Chairman of Myanmar Olympic Committee, Brig-Gen Thura Aye Myint receives the visiting Chinese delegation led by Mr Cheng Liangzhou, Deputy General Secretary of Guangdong Province of the People’s Republic of China at Kyauksein Hall, National Sports Stadium-1, at 9 am today. Also present at the call were officials of the Ministry of Sports, the chairman of Myanmar Wushu Federation and officials of Chinese Embassy. During their meeting, they discussed cooperation of sports activities between the two countries. The delegation watched skill demonstration by athletes of Myanmar Chinlon Federation, Myanmar Martial Arts Federation and Myanmar Wushu Federation. — MNA

**Minister for Information** Brig-Gen Kyaw Hsan addresses annual ceremony of Printing and Publishing Enterprise. — MNA
ICO special meeting on Middle East begins

PUTRAJAYA (Malaysia), 23 April — The Organization of Islamic Conference’s (ICO) special meeting on the Middle East began at Putrajaya Convention Centre on Thursday.

The Malaysian Prime Minister and Chair of the 57-member ICO, Abdullah Ahmad Badawi, opened the one-day meeting attended by foreign ministers and ambassadors of 13 member states.

They are Qatar, Malaysia, Senegal, Sudan, Iran, Turkey, Guinea, Pakistan, Palestine, Morocco, Saudi Arabia, Iraq and Indonesia. Abdullah expressed the hope that ICO would find ways to resolve the Palestinian and Iraqi conflicts.

ICO consists of 57 Islamic countries worldwide, was set up in 1970 to boost political, economic and social cooperation among member states and support the justice struggle by the Palestinians.

All sessions at this special meeting would be closed-door except the opening ceremony and closing ceremony. The meeting is expected to discuss the Palestinian conflict in the morning and the Iraqi crisis in the afternoon.

The meeting is expected to issue a declaration on Palestine, calling on Israel to respect International Law, and come up with a statement on Iraq urging the United Nations to play a pivotal role to restore peace and stability in the war-torn country.

MNA/Xinhua

Indonesia, Singapore sign agreement on telecommunications

JAKARTA, 23 April — Indonesia and Singapore signed Wednesday a memorandum of understanding (MoU) on telecommunications equipment conformity testing, becoming the first among the Association of South-East Asian Nations (ASEAN) members with such a bilateral agreement.

Singapore’s Director-General of Infocomm Development Authority Leong Keng Thai and Indonesia’s Director-General of Post and Telecommunications Djumadi Sirat signed the agreement in Jakarta, The Jakarta Post reported Thursday.

Quoting an Infocomm release as saying, the report said telecommunications equipment must be tested against the standards of the importing country before they can be approved for sale and distribution. Testing is usually undertaken by an accredited laboratory based in the receiving country. Under the MoU, equipment testing can be conducted at any laboratory based anywhere in the world, as long as it is recognized by the importing country.

The MoU will enhance Indonesia’s telecommunications equipment imports and exports, as tests by accredited laboratories will help avoid duplicate testing.

It will also offer faster market entry to telecommunications businesses at reduced costs, saving up to 45 days’ delivery time and up to 700 Singaporean dollars (416,601US dollars) per model.

In 2003, Singapore’s telecommunications equipment trade with Indonesia respectively accounted for 8.3 per cent and 10.1 per cent of Singapore’s total imports and exports.

MNA/Xinhua

Thai banking industry posts impressive 1st quarter results

BANGKOK, 23 April — The Thai banking industry posted impressive first quarter operating results with an 88-per-cent increase in net profit or about 12 billion bath (307.62 million US dollars) up from the same quarter last year.


Under the MoU pact, which will be Thailand’s first free trade agreement covering a comprehensive list of goods and services, the two countries will eliminate import tariffs on most products by 2010, the Ministry of Commerce said in a statement released here Thursday.

Thailand has signed FTAs with India and China, but they are limited to certain sectors.

Australia has agreed to bring tariffs down to five per cent for over 5,000 import items, or 85 per cent of the products it totally imports from Thailand, including fuels, vegetables and automobiles.

Thailand, on the other hand, has agreed to eliminate tariffs on 50 per cent of imports from Australia next year, including fuels, vegetables and chemicals.

The two countries are required to eliminate import tariffs on almost all products by 2010.

MNA/Xinhua

More business deals struck at 95th China Export Commodity Fair

GUANGZHOU, 23 April — Business deals worth 14.89 billion US dollars were struck at the first phase of the 95th China Export Commodity Fair that opened last Thursday in Guangzhou, capital of south China’s Guangdong Province.

The volume of business shows a rise of 14.5 per cent, according to comparable figure of the previous fair, said Xu Bing, the spokesman for the fair.

According to Xu, 91,511 businessmen from 200 countries and regions visited the first phase of the two-segment fair, up 8.3 per cent. European Union, the United States and the Middle East are placed ahead of other regions in terms of business deals. Manufactured goods, textile and garments, foodstuffs and medicine were showcased at the first stage of the fair, which ran from April 15-20.

In the second phase, from April 25 to 30, souvenirs and gifts, and commodities for daily use will be exhibited.

China (Guangzhou) Export Commodity Fair, a biannual event held in spring and autumn, is dubbed the ‘weatherglass’ of the country’s foreign trade. Business deals worth 20.49 billion US dollars were struck at the 94th China Export Commodity Fair.

MNA/Xinhua

Thailand likely to sign FTA with Australia in mid 2004

BANGKOK, 23 April — Thailand and Australia are likely to sign their bilateral free trade area agreement (FTA) in mid 2004, which will be effective as of January 1, 2005, according to the Ministry of Commerce.

Under the FTA pact, which will be Thailand’s first free trade agreement covering a comprehensive list of goods and services, the two countries will eliminate import tariffs on most products by 2010, the Ministry of Commerce said in a statement released here Thursday.

Thailand has signed FTAs with India and China, but they are limited to certain sectors.

Australia has agreed to bring tariffs down to five per cent for over 5,000 import items, or 85 per cent of the products it totally imports from Thailand, including fuels, vegetables and automobiles.

Thailand, on the other hand, has agreed to eliminate tariffs on 50 per cent of imports from Australia next year, including fuels, vegetables and chemicals.

The two countries are required to eliminate import tariffs on almost all products by 2010.

MNA/Xinhua

Dominican Republic’s 300 troops to leave Iraq in two weeks

SANTO DOMINGO (Dominican Republic), 23 April — The Dominican Republic’s 300 troops in Iraq will be returning home in two weeks or less, the government said on Thursday, confirming that Caribbean nation is pulling out of the US-led coalition as soon as possible.

“President Hipolito Mejia’s desire, and ours, is that they return as rapidly as possible,” the secretary of the Armed Forces, Jose Miguel Soto Jimenez, told a local television station.

“The Dominican troops will return in two weeks, possibly before,”

Soto Jimenez said.

Mejia’s government said on Tuesday it would remove its troops as soon as possible, and Honduras also said this week it would bring home its 370 troops.

The decision by the Latin American countries followed Spain’s move to remove its troops.

Spain, with 1,400 soldiers in Iraq, has been in charge of troops from the Spanish-speaking nations the Dominica Republic, Honduras, Nicaragua and El Salvador.

MNA/Reuters
China willing to work with Asia, Europe to safeguard world peace

Beijing, 24 April — The world’s security situation is undergoing profound changes and against such a backdrop, it is not only vital but pressing for Asia and Europe to enhance security exchanges and cooperation, said a Chinese Vice-Foreign Minister here Thursday.

In a keynote speech delivered to a multilateral conference in Europe, Vice-Foreign Minister Zhang Yesui said profound changes are taking place in the global security situation. There are not only military conflicts arising from territorial, resources and ethical contradictions, but increasingly more unconventional threats to security such as terrorism, proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, organized crime, transnational crimes and the spread of new diseases, he said.

Besides, as economic globalization develops and countries’ mutual inter-dependence deepens, security is no longer confined or isolated and their influences are becoming ever more complex, Zhang said.

“A comprehensive solution for security concerns is called for. Military mean alone cannot solve the problems. Only by meeting the challenges and extreme use of force will only bring more turmoil to the world,” he said.

He said facing the new security situation, enhancing cooperation is the only choice for countries. He suggested that Asia and Europe cooperate in the following areas.

First, they should stick to multilateralism and strengthen international cooperation and coordination.

Secondly, regional conflicts should be resolved through just and rational means, and countries should encourage mutual understanding and dialogue instead of fuelling confrontations between different civilizations.

Thirdly, political, economic, diplomatic, military and legal means should be employed to cope with security challenges instead of resorting to force only.

Fourthly, terrorism in all forms should be opposed, and in the anti-terrorism campaign a double standard should not be allowed, nor should terrorism be related to any particular nation, ethnic group or religion.

MNA/Xinhua

Bulgaria may pull fewer troops in Iraq in June

Sofia, 23 April — Bulgaria will consider pulling some troops out of Iraq by the end of June if the United Nations passes a new resolution and power is handed over to Iraqi authorities, Defence Minister Nikolai Sivaranov said.

Bulgaria, a new NATO member and staunch supporter of the US-led military operations, has promised to keep its 450-man light infantry battalion in the southern city of Kirkubala despite Spain and other countries withdrawing their forces.

But it has demanded the UN take over, and Sivaranov indicated the Balkan state may withdraw some of its troops once that happens.

“At this point (end-June) there will be a reformation of the coalition. There will be new tasks and responsibilities. I believe that the coalition would need fewer troops, so we will re-evaluate then,” he said on private television station BTV late on Wednesday.

Army Chief of Staff Nikola Kolev also said 23 soldiers will head home from Kirkubala next week, potentially undermining the activities of their unit there.

MNA/Reuters

Another power blackout hit part of Singapore

Singapore, 23 April — A power blackout on Thursday night hit five blocks of flats in Singapore’s Bedok North Street 4, less than two weeks after a four-hour long power failure in the northwestern part of the island state.

According to local Press reports, Thursday night’s blackout occurred at around 7.50 p.m. local time, and it was attributed to a cable fault in a substation in the Bedok industrial area, southeastern part of Singapore.

A spokesman for the SP PowerGrid (Singapore Power) confirmed that the power failure lasted for nearly an hour. On April 13, a power blackout, which was reportedly caused by a cable installation equipment fault, hit the northwestern part of the city state, plunging 80,000 households into darkness.

That blackout was described as Singapore’s biggest in 12 years. — MNA/Xinhua

Iran urges US to end sanctions completely

PUTRARAYA (MALAYSIA), 23 April — US sanctions on Iran should be cancelled rather than temporarily suspended, if Washington wants to show a willingness to improve relations with Tehran, a senior Iranian diplomat said on Thursday.

The Bush Administration extended for another 90 days, effective from March 25, the temporary suspension of some sanctions on Iran that were eased to speed relief supplies after a devastating earthquake last December.

Iran’s Deputy Minister for International and Legal Affairs Gholamali Khoshroui, in Malaysia for a meeting of Islamic nations, said the imposition of sanctions had no basis in the first place.

“The lifting of sanctions should be a complete and comprehensive one in order to see the signs of willingness or improvement in the attitude of the US towards Iran,” he told Reuters on the sidelines of a meeting of the Organization of Islamic Conference. The decision to renew the suspension, which had been due to expire last month, became public this week, as the United States faces an increasingly chaotic conflict in Iraq and is looking to neighbouring countries, such as Iran, to help calm the situation.

But a US State Department official, speaking anonymously, said he did not believe the issue received the kind of high level attention that normally would occur if the administration was planning to send Iran a meaningful signal.

MNA/Reuters

Jiangxi to raise huge money to expand high-school enrollment

Nanchang, 23 April — East China’s Jiangxi Province plans to raise six billion yuan (723 million dollars) in the next three years to expand local high-school education with more enrollment.

The huge investment will include 4.2 billion yuan (506 million dollars) of loans from the State Development Bank, one of the country’s policy banks, and 1.8 billion yuan (217 million dollars) from local sources.

Under the scheme, Jiangxi will put the money into upgrading and expanding local 176 high schools, to increase enrollment from the current 724,000 to one million, and to build that high-quality teaching facilities and facilities are available for 600,000 high school students.

The project is expected to help 60 percent of students who graduate from middle schools continue their study in high schools, compared with the current 44.6 percent.

MNA/Xinhua

10 kilos of hash seized in Pakistan

Islamabad, 23 April — Pakistani police Wednesday seized 10 kilos of heroin at the highway near Peshawar City, bordering Afghanistan.

A report of the Dawn newspaper-Thursday quoted police sources as saying that a police team stopped a suspected car, recovered the contraband and nabbed one drug-smuggling suspect.

Local police have registered a case against the accused and investigations are underway, said the Dawn.

MNA/Xinhua

""""""
Israeli army kills three militants in West Bank

One of the militias had been shot at close range in the head and stomach, medics said. It was unclear whether the men were armed at the time of the shooting.

The shootings occurred one day after Israeli soldiers killed nine Palestinians, including four gunmen, during a raid in the town of Bet Lahya in the Gaza Strip.

The Army said it was searching for militants firing makeshift rockets at Israeli towns and Jewish settlements in Gaza. During the raid, troops came under heavy fire from gunmen.

Nigeria arrests 15 fake drug dealers

Annur urges Cypriots to vote for unit plan

Putin vows to develop Russia-EU relations

Briton returns Malta library book after 42 years

Malta library employee has returned a history book to the Malta public library 42 years after he borrowed it and was given a cup of coffee instead of a fine.

Emir Roscuet, a resident of the Channel Islands, inadvertently picked up the book when he left Malta in 1962. He returned to Malta on Sunday after he said he had seen a news story about the book.

“It’s actually been on my conscience all this time,” he told The Times of Malta newspaper. “I returned the book on Sunday after I read the article.”

Nigeria arrests 15 fake drug dealers

Abuja, 23 April — Nigerian National Agency for Food and Drug Administration and Control (NAFDAC) has arrested 15 persons in connection with the importation and distribution of 7.5 million units of fake antibiotics and other fast selling drugs in the country.

A statement issued by the NAFDAC on Wednesday said the suspects were apprehended at the Onitsha Bridge, one day after his 65th birthday present.
Study blames corn syrup for rise of diabetes in US

WASHINGTON, 23 April—Corn syrup and other refined foods may be much to blame for the huge increase in Type-2 diabetes in the United States over the past few decades, US researchers said on Thursday.

A study of nearly 100,000 Americans shows that those who eat corn syrups eat show a huge increase in processed carbohydrates, especially corn syrup, and a large drop in the amount of fibre from whole grains, fruits and vegetables.

It parallels a spike in the number of cases of Type-2 diabetes, caused by the body’s increasing inability to properly metabolize sugars.

Mexican police on Wednesday arrested suspected Guatemalan drug trafficker Otto Herrera, believed to be one of the principal smugglers of drugs from Central America to the United States via Mexico. Herrera, high on cocaine, caused by the body’s increasing inability to properly metabolize sugars.

Mexican, major drug suspect

MEXICO CITY, 24 April—Mexican police on Wednesday arrested suspected Guatemalan drug trafficker Otto Herrera, believed to be one of the principal smugglers of drugs from Central America to the United States via Mexico.

Herrera, high on cocaine, was arrested at Mexico City airport, Attorney General Rafael Macedo de la Concha told a news conference on Wednesday.

"He was wanted by the authorities in the United States, Guatemala, El Salvador and Panama, who considered him responsible for the shipments by speedboat that operated in Central America," Macedo said.

"With this arrest, we are succeeding in breaking the chains of a criminal organization linked to the most significant transfers, distribution and sale of narcotics in Central America, whose operations included Mexico and the United States." — MNA/Reuters

Global semiconductor market to grow by 29% in 2004

LOS ANGELES, 23 April—Global semiconductor market is expected to grow by 29 per-cent in 2004, much faster than it did in 2003 with an 18.3 per-cent growth, according to a study released by In-Stat/MDR on Wednesday.

"The global semiconductor market suffered a disaster in 2001, but it has completely recovered in 2002," said Kirstein, general manager of In-Stat/MDR.

"Although we do not expect the same level of growth in 2004, the strength of the market is still very strong," said In-Stat/MDR.
China hopes to strike four weightlifting golds in Athens

CHANGSHA (China), April 23 — China hopes to strike for four gold medals in the Olympic weightlifting tournament in Athens, a top Chinese weightlifting official said here on Thursday.

Ma Wenguang, director of the weightlifting centre of the State Sports General Administration of China, said that “the Chinese strongwomen are expected to reap three to four gold medals while their men counterparts for one to two titles at the Athens Olympic Games”.

The women gold hopefuls are in the classes of 48kg, 58kg, 69kg and 75kgs and the Chinese strongmen also enjoy their upperhand in the categories of 56kg, 62kg, 69kg, 77kg and 85kg.

Ma, who was attending the national women’s weightlifting championships in Yongzhou, Hunan Province, also a trial for the Olympic Games, singled out Wu Meijing and Le Maoqiang as the hot favourites to reap gold medals for China, while injured Wang Mingjun is another strong bet after she made a clean sweep in the 2003 World Weightlifting Championships.

Marseille denied by post in Newcastle stalemate

NEWCASTLE (England), April 23 — Marseille denied their opponents the woodwork as they battled to a 0-0 draw with Newcastle United in a tense UEFA Cup semifinal first leg at St. James’ Park on Thursday.

Newcastle applied most of the pressure but were spared a damaging defeat when a stunning volley by the French team’s striker Didier Drogba hit the inside of the post and bounced out. The hosts, missing key players notably when Shola Ameobi wasted two early chances, were not to score their first goal for three minutes from time for a need-less kick on Deco Souza.

The Portuguese centre-back will miss the second leg and his absence, along with that of booked midfielder Mauro Silva, will be a threat to Deportivo’s hopes of reaching a first European final.

The referee was very rigorous as Jorge I留给’s corner was clearly to avoid a similar result. To reach the semifinals, Deportivo had promised an own goal and Porto substitute Edgaras Jankauskas should then have scored with a header from a dangerous free kick by Deco Souza late on.

Deportivo had only one opportunity to claim an away goal that would have put them in control of the tie. Walter Pandiani volleying wide from inside the penalty area after being left unmarked in the ninth minute.

La Coruna is just 275 kilometres from Porto across the border and the game had the feel of a local derby throughout.

To reach the semifinals, Deportivo had needed a heroic 4-0 win in the second leg of their quarterfinal against AC Milan after a 4-1 defeat in the away game and their objective in Porto was clearly to avoid a similar result.

China reach Cup final to close in on double

BELGRADE, April 23 — Red Star Belgrade beat bitter city rivals Partizan 1-0 in the Serbia and Montenegro Cup semifinal on Wednesday to edge closer to a domestic double thanks to an early goal from striker Marko Pantelic.

Cup holders Red Star, who lead the First Division by three points over Partizan with four matches left, deserved to win a volatile match marred by reckless tackles on a slippery pitch.

They will start the final as strong favourites against Buducnost Banatski Dvor who upset Oblic Belgrade 2-1.

Pantelic, who scored the winner against Red Star when he played for Sarid Smiderovo in last year’s final, was left unmarked in the 14th minute after a quick throw in and slid the ball past advancing goalkeeper Ivica Kralj.

“I dream of this goal since my childhood and it’s only right that I was able to set the record straight after robbing Red Star of the cup last season,” said Pantelic after scoring his first goal for Red Star against Partizan.

Partizan had made the brighter start and should have scored inside the first minute when Miroslav Radovic headed wide from an ideal position after a good cross by Ivica Iliev.

But after the lapse in concentration by Partizan’s bewildered back four, who stood and watched as Pantelic scored, Red Star regained their composure.

Indeed, they could have had a second in the 20th minute when Niko Zigic headed the ball past the goal line but, this time, was not to concede. We’ve done that, so this tie is very very much alive.

“We always fancy our chances to score goals and I’m sure we can do that away from home.” Marseille did rare their luck at times, notably when Shola Ameobi wasted two early chances to put the Premier League side ahead.

Ameobi was presented with his first opportunity when Laurent Robert curled a free kick into the penalty area but the tall striker misjudged the flight of the ball and missed an easy chance. Two minutes later, he was set free by Shearer’s flick following Shay Given’s long clearance but blasted the ball straight at goalkeeper Fabien Barthez who saved with his knee. Drogba outwitted Newcastle defenders Andy O’Brien midway through the first half after Hugo Viana had lost possession in midfield but his low shot was saved by Given.

— MNA/Xinhua

Grizzlies Brown named Coach of the Year

WASHINGTON, April 23 — Memphis Grizzlies head coach Hubie Brown beat Jerry Sloan of the Utah Jazz to win the Coach of the Year award of the NBA Wednesday.

Brown won 466 points, including 62 first-place votes, from a ballot of sportswriters and broadcasters in the United States and Canada, with Sloan receiving 424 points at second.

The 70-year-old Brown led the Grizzlies to a franchise-record of 50-32 season and the first playoff appearance.

Brown, who took the Grizzlies in the 2002-03 season, won the award in 1977-78 as coach of the Atlantla Hawks.

— MNA/Xinhua

Nerves get better of Porto, Deportivo

PORTO (Portugal), April 23 — Deportivo Coruna held Porto to a goalless draw in a jitters Champions League semifinal first leg on Wednesday that featured few clear chances and only occasional moments of quality.

Porto, European champions in 1987 and UEFA Cup winners last season, were in control for almost the entire game but a hard-working Deportivo side kept them at bay.

With the game drifting towards a goal-less draw, Deportivo have Jorge Andrade sent off three minutes from time for a need-less kick on Deco Souza.

The Portuguese centre-back will miss the second leg and his absence, along with that of booked midfielder Mauro Silva, will be a threat to Deportivo’s hopes of reaching a first European final.

The referee was very rigorous as Jorge I留给’s corner was clearly to avoid a similar result. To reach the semifinals, Deportivo had promised an own goal and Porto substitute Edgaras Jankauskas should then have scored with a header from a dangerous free kick by Deco Souza late on.

Deportivo had only one opportunity to claim an away goal that would have put them in control of the tie. Walter Pandiani volleying wide from inside the penalty area after being left unmarked in the ninth minute.

La Coruna is just 275 kilometres from Porto across the border and the game had the feel of a local derby throughout.

To reach the semifinals, Deportivo had needed a heroic 4-0 win in the second leg of their quarterfinal against AC Milan after a 4-1 defeat in the away game and their objective in Porto was clearly to avoid a similar result.

— MNA/Xinhua

Top seeds go forward in Monte Carlo Masters

PARIS, April 23 — Britain’s No 1 Tim Henman and Argentine top player Guillermo Coria moved ahead into the third round of the Monte Carlo Masters on Wednesday.

Last year’s runner-up Coria, the number three seed, had an easy work to beat German Nicolas Kiefer 6-0, 6-3, while Henman sealed a hard fight against his least favourite, beating Spanish baseliner David Sanchez 6-3, 7-6, 6-3.

In other games, Marat Safin avenged his 2004.The match finished 0-0.

In other games, Marat Safin avenged his defeat against his least favourite, beating Spanish baseliner David Sanchez 6-3, 7-6, 6-3.

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WEATHER
Friday, April 23, 2004

Summary of observations recorded at 09:00 hours MST:
During the past 24 hours, light rain or thunder-shower has been scattered in upper Sagain Division, Shan and Chin states, isolated in Kachin State, lower Sagaing and Tanintharyi divisions and weather has been partly cloudy in the remaining areas. Day temperatures were (3°C) to (4°C) above normal in Kachin and Mon states, Mandalay, Magway, Yangon and Tanintharyi Divisions, (5°C) above normal in Ayeyawady Division and Naypyidaw and about normal in the remaining areas. The significant day temperatures were (42°C) each in Mawlamyine, Mawlaung, Hmawbi and Hpa-an.

Maximum temperature was on 22-4-2004 was 41.2°C (106°F). Minimum temperature on 24-4-2004 was 22.0°C (72°F). Relative humidity at 9:30 hrs MST on 23-4-2004 was 65%. Total sunshine hours on 22-4-2004 was (10.0) hours.

Rainfall on 23-4-2004 was nil at Yangon Airport, Kaba-Aye and central Yangon.

Total rainfall since 1-1-2004 was 5.0 mm (0.2 inch) at Yangon Airport and 12 mm (0.47 inch) at Kaba-Aye and 3 mm (0.12 inch) at central Yangon. Maximum wind speed at Yangon (Kaba-Aye) was 10 mph from the south-west which reached 12 mph in the Ayeyawady Delta.

Bay influence: Weather is partly cloudy to cloudy in South and North Bay and generally fair elsewhere in the Bay of Bengal.

Forecast valid until evening of 24-4-2004: Rain or thunder-shower may be likely to be scattered in Kachin State and upper Sagain Division, isolated in Chin, Rakhine and northern Shan States. Mandalay, Magway and Tanintharyi divisions and weather will be partly cloudy in the remaining areas. Degree of certainty in (65%).

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

Outlook for subsequent two days: Thunder conditions are likely in upper Myanmar areas.

Forecast valid for Yangon and adjoining area for 24-4-2004: Partly cloudy.

Weather outlook for last weekend of April, 2004: During the coming weekend, weather will be partly cloudy in Yangon Division and possibility of isolated rain or thunder-shower in Mandalay Division.

Earthquake Report
(Issued at 10.30 hours MST on today)

An earthquake of slight intensity (4.7) Richter Scale with its epicenter inside of Myanmar about (220) miles north of Kaba-Aye seismological observatory was recorded at (08) hrs (27) min (27) sec MST on 23rd April 2004.

THE NEW LIGHT OF MYANMAR Saturday, 24 April, 2004
Increased power generation gives extra impetus to building modern, developed nation

Secretary-1 inspects hydel power projects and multi-purpose dam projects in Bago Division

YANGON, 23 April — Chairman of the National Electric Power Development Project Work Committee Secretary-1 said that it is necessary to discharge the duties of the people. So, the workers are to discharge duty in the project with goodwill. Next, the Secretary-1 and party viewed implementation of the project. They also saw over construction of the exit and entrance of the power intake tunnel. Yenwe Multi-purpose Dam Project can generate 25 megawatts of electricity and supply water for agricultural purpose. The project is being implemented on Yenwe Creek 2.5 miles south of Myochang Village, Kyaukdaga Township. On arrival at Kunchaung Hydroelectric Power Project in Pyu Township, the Secretary-1 heard reports on feasibility study for the project. On completion, the dam can generate 60 megawatts of electricity and supply water for agricultural purpose. On arrival at Pyu Creek Multi-purpose Dam Project in Pyu Township, the Secretary-1 heard reports by officials on facts about the project and construction of a 755-metre-long diversion tunnel, an intake tunnel and hydropower buildings. Deputy Minister U Myo Myint and Deputy Director-General of the Irrigation Department U Khin Zaw gave supplementary reports. With regard to the reports, the Secretary-1 gave instructions and inspected construction site. On completion of the project, the hydro electric power station will have a capacity to generate 40 megawatts and it will be able to irrigate farmlands.

Afterwards, the Secretary-1 proceeded to Khabaung Multi-purpose Dam Project in Ottwin Township in the afternoon. Director of Construction Group-5 of the Irrigation Department U Victor reported on construction of diversion tunnel, spillway, diversion weir and embankment and work progress sector-wise; and the deputy minister, on tasks being carried out by the Hydel-Electric Power Department and progress of work. The Secretary-1 gave instructions on (See page 8)