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

**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

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**Yangon, 17 March**—Member of the State Peace and Development Council Lt-Gen Maung Bo of the Ministry of Defence viewed undertakings for regional development and rubber farms in Palaw and Palauk townships in Myeik District on 12 March.

Lt-Gen Maung Bo, accompanied by Taninthayi Division PDC Chairman Coastal Region Command Commander Maj-Gen Ohn Myint, senior military officers, officials and departmental heads, inspected the rubber farm of U Su Su in Toe village-tract, Palaw Township.

Farmer U Su Su and officials of the Myanmar Perennial Crops Enterprise reported on the nurturing of rubber saplings including 50 RRIC-717 strain saplings and 120,000 BPM-24 saplings. Lt-Gen Maung Bo gave instructions to the officials and called on the rubber growers and local people to play a role in the regional development tasks.

Lt-Gen Maung Bo observed the production process at the rubber factory of U Maung Nyo in Patkon Village. On the occasion, Lt-Gen Maung Bo called for boosting production of quality products in their interests and also of the nation.

(See page 8)

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**Yangon, 17 March**—Chairman of the Leading Committee for Observance of the 60th Anniversary Armed Forces Day Member of the State Peace and Development Council Chief of Armed Forces Training Lt-Gen Kyaw Win this evening inspected display of booths to mark the 60th Anniversary Armed Forces Day at the Defence Services Museum on Shwedagon Pagoda Road.

On arrival at the museum, Lt-Gen Kyaw Win was welcomed by Chairman of the Management Committee Chairman of Yangon Division Peace and Development Council Commander of Yangon Command Maj-Gen Myint Swe, Chief of Staff (Navy) Commodore Nyan Tun, Judge Advocate-General Maj-Gen Soe Maung, Vice-Chief of Armed Forces Training Maj-Gen Aung Kyi, Vice-Quartermaster-General Maj-Gen Hin Aung Kyaw, senior military officers, Deputy Director of Defence Services Museum and Historical Research Institute Lt-Col Zaw Win and officials.

Lt-Gen Kyaw Win inspected the booths of 12 State Objectives, the booths of Defence Services (Navy), Defence Services (Air) and the Office of the rubber growers and local people to play a role in the regional development tasks.

Lt-Gen Maung Bo observed the production process at the rubber factory of U Maung Nyo in Patkon Village. On the occasion, Lt-Gen Maung Bo called for boosting production of quality products in their interests and also of the nation.

(See page 8)
In the interests of the nation and the people

Not long after its assumption of State responsibilities in 1988, the Tatmadaw Government introduced the market-oriented economic system. As a result of the new economic system and the support and encouragement of the government, the private economic enterprises have been flourishing.

The economic sector of the nation comprises State-run, cooperative and private enterprises. Cooperative and private enterprises account for 90 per cent of the economic sector.

Private ownership is becoming greater and greater in the manufacturing and trade sectors, especially in the trade sector. To be exact, 91 per cent of the trade sector is private enterprises. For sustainable development of the national economy, more investments are needed in the manufacturing sector.

The 14th Annual General Meeting of the Union of Myanmar Federation of Chambers of Commerce and Industry was held at the Myanmar Convention Centre in Yangon on 12 March and it was attended by Prime Minister Lt-Gen Soe Win.

In his address on the occasion, the Prime Minister said that now was the time for entrepreneurs to work in the interests of the nation as well as in their own, to enhance their reputation and to place emphasis on long-term interests. And he added that they were to do business that could bear benefits in the long run and that they should do so with new ideas.

Nowadays, the role of entrepreneurs, who ought to shape the national economy properly and put it on the right track, is very important. And they are required to take in consideration the future of the nation and their fellow citizens.

In executing economic transactions with other nations, they should do so not to harm the interests of the nation and the people and, in trading with the nations in the region also, they should do so in the interests of the nation and the region.

For consumption or for manufacturing, it is necessary not to depend solely on import. Therefore, emphasis must be placed on establishment of industries that produces import-substitute goods and to boost export. Only if the ratio of import and export is proportionate will the currency and the national economy of the nation be sustainable. Therefore, we would like to urge all the national entrepreneurs to do business in accordance with rules and regulations and with a view to serving the interests of the nation and the people with national and patriotic spirit.

UMFCCI OFFICIAL LEAVES: Joint Secretary of UMFCCI U Tun Aung left here by air on 15 March with national and patriotic spirit.

2 UMFCCI U Tun Aung left here by air on 15 March with national and patriotic spirit.

UMFCCI OFFICIAL LEAVES: Joint Secretary of UMFCCI U Tun Aung left here by air on 15 March with national and patriotic spirit.

People’s Desire

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

Foreign Minister sends message of congratulations to Thailand

YANGON, 17 March — U Nyan Win, Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Union of Myanmar, has sent a message of congratulations to His Excellency M. Canthu Suphamongkhon, who has been appointed as Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Kingdom of Thailand. — MNA

Basic diplomatic skills course concludes

YANGON, 17 March — A concluding ceremony of the Certificate Course in Basic Diplomatic Skills 12/2004-05 conducted by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs was held today with an address by Minister for Foreign Affairs U Nyan Win.

Also present on the occasion were Deputy Minister U Maung Myint, directors-general of the departments under the ministry, Myanmar Ambassadors, senior diplomats, rectors and professors of the institutes and universities and trainees.

Altogether 160 trainees completed the 12-week course. — MNA

Vice-Chief of Armed Forces Training

Maj-Gen Aung Kyi inspects practising drill of parade columns.— MyPry

Tatmadaw columns practice drills

YANGON, 17 March — The Tatmadaw columns which will participate in the 60th Anniversary Armed Forces Day Parade continued practising drills from Myoma Ground to the Resistance Park this morning.

During their drills, Tatmadawmen from Anawrahta Column led by Reserve Column Commander Col Tin Aye, Kyansitha Column led by Column Commander Col Tha Aung, Bayinnaung Column led by Reserve Column Commander Col Khin Maung Htoo, Nawade Column led by Reserve Column Commander Captain Myint Thein (Navy), Aungzeya Column led by Column Commander Col Myo Win, Hsinbyushin Column led by Reserve Column Commander Col Hsan Oo Hlaing, Bandoola Column led by Column Commander Col Khin Maung Oo, Myawady Column led by Column Commander Col Win Swe and Aung Sun Column led by Reserve Column Commander Col Tin Aung took part in practice session of parade drills under the command of Parade Commander Brig-Gen Nyi Tun together with Myanmar Police Force, Fire Brigade and Red Cross.

Radio play hailing 60th Anniversary Armed Forces Day

YANGON, 17 March — As a gesture of hailing the 60th Anniversary Armed Forces Day, a radio play directed by Yin Yin Hla, scenario of Soe Naung (Paukkan), will be aired at 7.15 pm on 20 March. Actress Moo Pyae Pyae Maung and staff of the Radio Myanmar participated in the play. — MNA

ANGON, 17 March — The State Peace and Development Council has appointed the following persons as heads of service organizations shown against each from the date they assume charge of their duties.

Name | Appointment
--- | ---
(a) U Soon Han Shin | Rector
Hpa-an University | Higher Education Department
(b) U Kyaw Win | Director-General
Department of Health | Ministry of Health
(c) U Ngwe Tun | Director-General
Ministry of Health | Ministry of Health
(d) U Khin Hla | Director-General
Institute of Paramedical Sciences | Ministry of Health
(e) U Kyaw Win | Director-General
Institute of Paramedical Sciences (Mandalay) | Ministry of Health
(f) U Khin Hla | Director-General
Institute of Paramedical Sciences (Mandalay) | Ministry of Health
(g) U Khin Hla | Director-General
Institute of Paramedical Sciences (Mandalay) | Ministry of Health
China, Zambia to promote women’s development

BEIJING, 16 March — President of the All-China Women’s Federation Gu Xiulian met with Zambian First Lady Maureen Mwanawasa here on Tuesday, exchanging views on women’s development in the two countries.

Gu said the Chinese Government attaches great importance to women’s development, taking such measures as enacting about 11 laws to safeguard women’s rights, assuring equal participation between men and women in both family and political lives, and improving education level for women, especially for those who live in poverty-stricken rural areas.

China has implemented a project since 1989 for helping those girls, who were unable to go to school because of poverty, go back to school and accept education, Gu said, noting that under this project, China has raised 350 million yuan (42 million US dollars) to assist about 1.5 million girl students. Gu expressed her hope that China and Zambia will strengthen exchanges on such experiences of promoting women’s development, so as to make more progress in this field.

Mwanawasa said Zambia also provides similar assistance for its women and children, hoping that China will help and support Zambia to expand such programmes to promote development of women and children.

Mwanawasa briefed Gu on major efforts made by the Maureen Mwanawasa Community Initiative, a non-governmental organization personally run by the First Lady to improve the living standards of the Zambian underprivileged family.

The First Lady said her organization has worked for helping women and children receive education, enabling vulnerable women and children access safe and clean water, and providing mobile clinics to the most vulnerable people.

Similarly with China, Zambia also gives financial support to women by providing loans to them, in a bid to improve their living standards, she noted.

Mwanawasa arrived here Monday morning on an eight-day visit to China as guest of the Soong Ching Ling Foundation, a non-governmental organization set up in 1982 to promote the welfare of youth and children.

Koizumi hails Wen’s proposal on improving bilateral relations

TOKYO, 16 March — Japanese Prime Minister Junichiro Koizumi on Monday responded positively to remarks made by Chinese Prime Minister Wen Jiabao over improving bilateral relations.

Koizumi said that he thought it was “good to realize visits at a time that is desirable to both sides,” the Kyodo news service reported.

He also said Japan agreed with Wen’s view that relations between Japan and China are one of the most important bilateral relationships.

Chinese Foreign Minister Shotaro Yachi said, “We rate the proposals highly as we also believe Japan and China must develop bilateral ties with the future in mind,” Kyodo said.

Wen told a news conference in Beijing on Monday that China and Japan should make joint efforts to create conditions for high-level exchanges of visits in a bid to improve bilateral relations.

He suggested the foreign affairs departments of the two countries should begin strategic study and research on strengthening and improving China-Japan relations.

On the means of improving the bilateral relationship, Wen proposed three principles: taking history as a mirror and look forward to the future; that Japan should adhere to the “one China” principle; and that cooperation should be strengthened to pursue common development.

Japanese Chief Cabinet Secretary Taruki Hosoda said Japan will “carefully study the contents of the three principles.”

Singapore’s CPI for households up 1.7% in 2004

SINGAPORE, 16 March — The consumer price index (CPI) for the general households in Singapore rose by 1.7 per cent in 2004 as compared with that in 2003.

According to the figures released by the Singapore Department of Statistics (SDS) on Tuesday, the increase in CPI should be attributed mainly to the higher prices for cigarettes, cooked food, petrol and newspapers, as well as tuition fees paid to foreign universities.

The CPI for the households in the lowest 20 per cent and middle 60 per cent income groups grew by 2.3 per cent and 1.5 per cent respectively in 2004, while that for households in the top 20 per cent income group experienced a moderate inflation rate of 0.3 per cent.

1,517 US troops killed in Iraq

WASHINGTON, 16 March — As of Wednesday, 16 March, 2005, at least 1,517 members of the US military have died since the beginning of the Iraq war in March 2003, according to an Associated Press count. At least 1,156 died as a result of hostile action, according to the Defence Department. The figures include four military civilians.

The AP count is six higher than the Defence Department’s tally, last updated at 10 am EST Wednesday. The British military has reported 86 deaths; Italy, 20; Ukraine, 18; Poland, 17; Spain, 11; Bulgaria, eight; Slovakia, three; Estonia, Thailand and the Netherlands, two each; and Denmark, El Salvador, Hungary, Kazakhstan and Latvia one death each.

Since 1 May, 2003, when President Bush declared that major combat operations in Iraq had ended, 1,379 US military members have died, according to AP’s count. That total includes at least 1,047 deaths resulting from hostile action, according to the military’s numbers.

Since the start of US military operations in Iraq, 11,285 US servicemen have been wounded, according to a Defence Department tally released on 8 March. There was no update this week.

The latest deaths reported by the military:

A US soldier died on Wednesday of injuries from an explosion south of Baghdad, Iraq.

Japanese college students, from left, Kureha Tsukamoto, Naoko Tateyama, and Koars Nijikubo, all age 21, try on the black robes worn by judges as they participate in a seminar, organized by the Justice Ministry, at a Tokyo courthouse on 16 March, 2005, offering the public its first chance to find out about jury trials being introduced as part of Japan’s most drastic judicial reforms since World War II.
Malaysian trade delegation to visit Thailand

BANGKOK, 16 March — A Malaysian trade and investment mission led by International Trade and Industry Minister Rafidah Aziz will begin a visit to Thailand later this week.

The 82-member mission, comprised of representatives from the Malaysian private sector as well as officials from the International Trade and Industry Ministry, the Malaysian Industrial Development Authority (MIDA) and Malaysia External Trade Development Corporation (Matrade), is aimed at promoting bilateral trade and investment between the two countries.

It will also update the Thai business sector on the latest economic situation and trade and investment opportunities in Malaysia, the Thai News Agency reported on Tuesday.

During the visit, Rafidah will hold a dialogue session with members of the Malaysian-Tha Chamber of Commerce (MTCC) on Thursday.

At a seminar on Friday, she plans to address local communities on business opportunities in Malaysia.

Thailand is ranked at Malaysia's fifth largest trading partner in the world and the second largest among ASEAN member countries.

In 2004, Malaysia's total trade with Thailand reached 11.8 billion US dollars, with exports of 6.0 billion US dollars and imports of 5.8 billion.

The mission's forthcoming visit to Thailand is part of its regional trip to ASEAN neighbours, which will also take it to Myanmar, Laos and Indonesia.

China willing to cooperate with nations in South China Sea region

BEIJING, 16 March — China is willing to continue its pragmatic cooperation with countries in South China Sea region and make it "a sea of friendship and pragmatic cooperation with countries in South China Sea to last for three years as a terror suspect, told the BBC: "The

According to the agreement, a 15-million-US dollar joint marine seismic undertaking in the South China Sea will be a historic breakthrough, during her meeting with

"Oil companies from China, the Philippines and Vietnam signed a landmark agreement in Manila on Monday," Liu said at a regular Press conference here, adding that it is an important measure for the three parties to jointly implement the Declaration on the Conduct of Parties in the South China Sea, making historic contribution to the stability and peace in the region.

According to the agreement, a 15-million-US dollar joint marine seismic undertaking in the South China Sea will last for three years, a move that Philippine President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo described as a "historic breakthrough", during her meeting with representatives of the three companies Monday afternoon.

In a joint statement, the three parties held that the agreement showed their willingness to explore the reserve of petroleum resources within the area agreed by them. But it would not undermine the basic positions held by the governments of the relevant countries in the South China Sea.

US soldier gets 45 days’ jail for Iraq incident

BAGHDAD, 17 March — A US Army platoon leader was sentenced to 45 days in a military prison on Wednesday for his role in forcing three Iraqi civilians into the Tigris River, where one of them allegedly drowned.

Army 1st Lieutenant Jack Saville, 25, was also ordered to forfeit $US2000 ($2531) of his $US2970 monthly pay for six months.

Prosecutors had recommended Saville, who chose a non-jury trial, be discharged from the Army.

Reading from a statement, Saville said he has learned from his mistakes and has been forgiven by God. His actions, he said, "adversely affected US-Iraqi trust during critical times of reconstruction".

"I hope to use these experiences for greater good," Saville said.

Saville pleaded guilty on Monday to assault and other crimes for forcing two curfew violators into the river at gunpoint in January 2004 near Samarra. One of the men allegedly drowned.

Saville was convicted on Tuesday of a lesser assault charge for doing nothing to stop another Iraqi man from being forced into the river near Balad in December 2003.

The charges carried a maximum nine-and-a-half-year sentence, though a plea deal capped the sentence at 15 months. That part of the agreement was kept secret so military judge Colonel Theodore Dixon would not be influenced, Army officials said.

Ex-British Guantanamo detainee accuses US of torture

LONDON, 16 March — A former British Guantanamo Bay detainee said on Tuesday that inmates in the US detention camp in Cuba had been tortured by US military personnel who tried to make them "go crazy."

Martin Mubanga, who had been held at Guantanamo for three years as a terror suspect, told the BBC: "The main object of the Americans in their torture...is to make you go crazy."

"There are a number of other detainees who have gone insane," he said. "I have seen beatings. I have seen humiliating treatment," said Mubanga who was released in January after being detained without charge.
Indonesia receive debt moratorium from Paris Club

JAKARTA, 16 March — The Indonesian Government will receive a debt moratorium offer from donor countries of the Paris Club, by postponing 2.6 billion US dollars debt payment for one year, an official said here on Monday.

"The debt moratorium offer will be taken, and we will think its payment, as it is the delay of debt payment, not an abolishment," Head of the National Development Planning Board Sri Mulyani Indrawati said at the Parliament building.

Last Wednesday the Club decided to delay Indonesia's debt payment for 2.6 billion US dollars for one year.

Over speeding causes train derailment in Vietnam

HANOI, 16 March — Speeding caused the derailment of a north-south express train in central Vietnam which killed 11 people and injured 78 at the weekend, state media on Tuesday quoted police as saying.

Colonel Nguyen Thanh Toan, chief detective of Thua Thien-Hue Province police, told the Tuoi Tre newspaper the train's black box showed it was running at up to 69 kilometers per hour (43 miles per hour), well above the 40 kilometers per hour limit at the turn where it derailed on Saturday. Eight of the train's 13 carriages derailed and the track was blocked for a day.

Police have launched a criminal investigation and the two drivers could face 15 years in jail if charged and found guilty. State-run Vietnam Television said originally 13 people had died, but now says two women initially listed as dead turned up among the survivors.

Iraq’s oil sector still limping along

KIRKUK, 16 March — In the northern Iraqi city of Kirkuk, where the air smells of crude and bright gas flares illuminate the night sky, the vast potential of Iraq oil industry — and its failures — are on dramatic display.

Ever since drillers un-leashed a 50-foot oil gusher near the city in 1927, Iraq has been too unstable to take full advantage of its bounty.

This year, as happened last year, almost none of Kirkuk's oil will reach the international market.

Car bomb blast in central Baghdad, six wounded

BAGHDAD, 16 March — A car bomb blew up on Tuesday morning near a Sunni mosque and the Health Ministry in central Baghdad, wounding six people, including a police officer, said police.

"I was driving my car near the booby trapped vehicle before the explosion, it was empty, there was no driver in it," Lieutenant Colonel Muhammad Saadoun, who was injured in the blast, told Xinhua.

The blast took place at about 8:30 am (0530 GMT) when a white Chevrolet detonated inside a parking lot used by the Health Ministry employees, Saadoun said.— MNA/Xinhua

China to increase chemical fertilizer import

BEIJING, 16 March — China will import four million tons of chemical fertilizer this year while ensuring prices remain low for farmers, said Li Shengjin deputy director of the National Development and Reform Commission (NDRC), here on Tuesday.

China will consume 51 million tons of chemical fertilizer this year at a 5.6-per-cent increase year-on-year while its own chemical fertilizer production is expected to be around 47 million tons he said at a national teleconference on improving supervision over farming material. "We'll take all necessary measures to guarantee chemical fertilizer supply and stabilize the domestic market prices to ensure farmers enjoy policy benefits of the government," he said. Although chemical fertilizer prices in international markets have been increasing since last year, the Chinese Government has managed to keep the domestic prices about 30-per-cent lower than international prices he said.— MNA/Xinhua

International Industry Expo to be held in Shenyang

SHENYANG, 16 March — The Eighth Northeast China International Industry Exposition will be held in Shenyang, the capital of Liaoning Province, in early April, organizers have announced.

The annual event is expected to attract more than 50,000 domestic and foreign businessmen, organizers said. Currently, more than 500 businesses from China, the United States, Germany and South Korea have ordered display booths.— MNA/Xinhua

Cypriot anti-war organization calls for end to occupation of Iraq

NICOSIA, 17 March — A popular Cypriot anti-war organization urged on Wednesday the United States and Britain to withdraw their occupation forces from Iraq.

The organization, named “Stop the War Coalition-Cyprus”, called for a speedy withdrawal of the occupation forces from Iraq in a statement on Wednesday.

“It is now acknowledged by all authorities, including Secretary-General of the United Nations Kofi Annan, that the US-led war against Iraq in 2003 was in breach of the international law,” said the statement.

It also hurled sharp criticism at US President George W Bush and his staunchest ally in the Iraqi war, British Prime Minister Tony Blair.

“The true horror of Bush and Blair’s bloody war and the subsequent occupation of Iraq has been revealed by the torture of Iraqi prisoners by the US and British troops, by the destruction of whole cities like Najaf and Falluja and the massacre of thousands of unarmed civilians,” said the statement.

The anti-war organization pointed the finger of blame at the US-led coalition forces for the rampant violence in Iraq, asserting the Iraqis have every right to resist them.— MNA/Xinhua

Iraq’s oil sector still limping along

KIRKUK, 16 March — In the northern Iraqi city of Kirkuk, where the air smells of crude and bright gas flares illuminate the night sky, the vast potential of Iraq oil industry — and its failures — are on dramatic display.

Incessant sabotage of the northern oil pipeline by guerillas has all but sealed it off from its export terminal in Turkey. Before the US-led invasion, the line handled around 750,000 barrels a day.

Across Iraq, guerillas have battered oil installations with an average of two dozen blasts a day.

"There’s always been something that held back Iraq’s oil potential," said Jamal Qureshi, an Iraqi oil analyst for Washington-based consultancy PFC Energy. "This is just another chapter in that saga."

In 1979, the country’s best year, Iraqi oil production averaged roughly 3 million barrels a day. This year, analysts say it might not reach an average of 2 million, despite Oil Minister Humam al-Ghaidan’s target of pumping 2.9 million barrels a day by year’s end — and 3.5 million a day by mid-2006.

The IMF predicts Iraqi production won’t reach 3.5 million barrels until 2009.
Japanese tugboat attacked in Malacca Strait

Tokyo, 16 March — A Japanese tugboat was attacked by pirates in the Malacca Strait on Monday, according to local media reports which differed in the fates of the crew members.

Two Japanese and a Filipino are missing, Kyodo News reported, quoting Japan Coast Guard and the International Maritime Bureau.

While Iji News said three people on board had been abducted, including two Japanese. The Japanese Foreign Ministry said it is in the process of confirming the reports.

Noel Choong, regional manager of the bureau’s Piracy Reporting Centre in Kuala Lumpur, said the centre received a distress call from one of the three crew members on board the tugboat at around 6 pm and Malaysian police were alerted, according to Kyodo.

Choong said the attack occurred somewhere north of the strait, near Malaysia’s Penang Island. The whereabouts of the tugboat’s captain, engineer and crewman were unknown, he said. “Action is still ongoing. Police are proceeding to the location. The pirates are still on board the vessel,” he said. — MNA/Xinhua

Interpol Symposium opens in HK

Hong Kong, 16 March — The 15th Interpol Symposium for Heads of Public Training, co-hosted by Interpol and the Hong Kong Police Force, opened here on Tuesday.

Some 120 delegates from more than 50 countries and regions including world police training leaders and prominent police scholars together with Hong Kong police representatives attended the event to discuss training solutions to terrorism, global and organized crime. At the opening ceremony, Interpol Secretary-General Ronald K Noble said it is vital to build an international capability to counter threats such as terrorism, trafficking of human beings, drugs and arms, as well as other forms of serious and organized crimes.

One of Interpol’s most important tasks was to develop expert knowledge about international crime, to provide expert operational advice and to support the police services in its 182 members, said he. According to Noble, training plays an invaluable role for everyone in law enforcement, and therefore, this week.

Governor Keiichi Inamine said he also requested the down-sizing or relocation of US air bases of Kadena and Futenma away from Okinawa’s densely populated main island and revision of the Status of Forces Agreement, which grants the US military jurisdiction over its troops in many legal matters.

“Of the situation proceeds in a way that is unsatisfactory to the Okinawan people, this could shake the Japan-US security relationship,” he said in a speech at the Centre for Strategic and International Studies, a Washington think tank.

Inamine, who described himself as a “consistent advocate who supports the Japan-US security alliance,” said he had lodged a similar request in Tokyo before he flew to Washington for meetings with US officials and 10 of opium to produce oneonne of heroin.

This year, Afghanistan is estimated to have supplied 87 per cent of the heroin sold worldwide. The United Nations estimated that the opium trade reached 2.8 billion US dollars this year, equivalent to 60 per cent of Afghanistan’s GDP.

A Paris-based non-governmental organization, the Senlis Council, recommended earlier this month that opium from Afghanistan should be used to fix the world’s shortage of painkillers.

Senlis estimated a shortage of drugs like morphine and codeine equated to around 10,000 tons of opium annually, whereas Afghanistan produces 4,000 tons a year. — MNA/Reuters

Japan, US urged to remove all Marines from Okinawa

Washington, 16 March — The governor of Okinawa has asked Japan and the United States to remove all of the nearly 20,000 US Marines from the southern Japanese island chain, he said on Tuesday.

According to Noble, training plays an invaluable role for everyone in law enforcement, and therefore, this week. Among officials he met in Washington was Michael Green, senior director for Asia on the White House National Security Council.

Inamine is an elected politician with limited influence on Tokyo’s policies. Japanese media quoted Foreign Minister Nobutaka Machimura as saying it was “hard to imagine” reducing the number of US Marines on Okinawa to zero. Last October, Japanese leaders were reportedly asked for the removal of 2,000 to 3,000 troops from Okinawa.

Angered by accidents, violent crimes and environmental issues, many people in Okinawa have called for reducing what they say is their unfair burden of hosting the bulk of the US military’s 47,000 personnel in Japan.

13 fall after eating scallops in HK

Hong Kong, 16 March — Hong Kong Centre for Health Protection has received five reports of suspected shellfish poisoning that affected five men and eight women aged 11 to 57.

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Afghanistan destroys drugs labs, over 2 tons of opium

Karul, 16 March — Afghan counter narcotics squads destroyed several drug laboratories and more than two tons of opium in raids in eastern Afghanistan, the country’s enforcement agency said on Tuesday.

Washington has earmarked 700 million US dollars to wage a war on drugs in Afghanistan, while Britain is putting up 100 million US dollars and seeking another 300 million US dollars from smaller countries.

The raids in Achin District in the eastern province of Nangarhar found several drug laboratories in Gul Baghak Village.

To reach the remote area agents had to fly by helicopter then hike for several kilometres (miles) through the rugged mountains that straddle the border with Pakistan.

The National Interdiction Unit said there were no casualties during the raids.

Aside from the dry opium found, the raids also netted 15 kilos of heroin and 1,750 litres (380 gallons) of liquid containing opium, as well as chemicals used by the laboratories.

“This successful operation shows that the government of Afghanistan is serious about ridding our country of drugs,” General Sayed Kamal Sadat, head of the counter-narcotics police, said in the statement.

Encouraged by the Western powers, President Hamid Karzai has vowed to wage a war on a drug trade which is threatening to turn the country into a narco-state, just three years after US and Afghan resistance forces drove the Taliban from power.

Afghanistan has ideal conditions for growing the poppy flower that produces opium — the base for heroin and morphine. It takes between eight and 10 days for opium to produce one tone of heroin.

This year, Afghanistan is estimated to have supplied 87 per cent of the heroin sold worldwide. The United Nations estimated that the opium trade reached 2.8 billion US dollars this year, equivalent to 60 per cent of Afghanistan’s GDP.

A Paris-based non-governmental organization, the Senlis Council, recommended earlier this month that opium from Afghanistan should be used to fix the world’s shortage of painkillers.

Senlis estimated a shortage of drugs like morphine and codeine equated to around 10,000 tons of opium annually, whereas Afghanistan produces 4,000 tons a year. — MNA/Reuters

MNA/Xinhua

Japan-registered tugboat ‘Idaten,’ foreground, waits off Penang Island, Malaysia, on 15 March, 2005. — Kyodo News

The Hope Pearl, part of an exhibit The Allure of Pearls, is shown at the Smithsonian’s National Museum of Natural History in Washington, on 16 March, 2005. A pearl once owned by the builder of the Taj Mahal, another on loan from actress Elizabeth Taylor, and the Hope Pearl — a former partner to the Hope Diamond — are among a dozen of the world’s rarest pearls on display in the exhibit, opening on 18 March and running through 5 Sept. — Internet

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MNA/Xinhua

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MNA/Xinhua
Government investing heavily in projects for improvement of transport and education, development of human resources and economy, and enhancement of health care. Maungmagan BEMS gets new school building

YANGON, 17 March — A new school building constructed with public contributions was inaugurated with ceremony at a basic education middle school in Maungmagan, Dawei Township, Taninthayi Division, on 13 March. Member of the State Peace and Development Council Lt-Gen Maung Bo of the Ministry of Defence attended the ceremony and spoke of the need for the development of education and health.

Present on the occasion were Taninthayi Division PDC Chairman and also Coastal Region Command Commander Maj-Gen Ohn Myint, senior military officers, responsible personnel of the SPDC Office, departmental officials, local authorities, members of social organizations, teachers, and students.

On the occasion, Dawei District Lt-Col Khin Maung Nyo, Schoolhead U Tin Maung Myint, and member of the school board of trustees U Ni for­mally inaugurated the school building. And Com­mnder Maj-Gen Ohn Myint unveiled the signboard of the school building.

Next, the commander and party viewed the computer-aided instruction room, the language lab, the print media room, and the cottage industry room at the newly-opened school building. They also en­joyed the entertainment presented by students at the music hall.

Later, U Kin Maung Win, a member of the school board of trustees, briefed on the purpose of constructing the school building.

U Kyi Win, chairman of the school board of trustees, handed over documents related to the school building to Director U Ba Ba of the No 1 Basic Education Department, who later spoke words of thanks for the construction of the school building.

Speaking on the occasion, Commander Maj­Gen Ohn Myint said Dawei district has now pos­sessed one university, three colleges, 16 high schools, 6 branches of high schools, four affiliated high schools, 23 middle schools, three branches of middle schools, five affiliated middle schools, 434 primary schools and two affiliated primary schools.

In the country, all the sectors including the education sector are developing as a result of the combined efforts made in harmony by the govern­ment, the public and social organizations.

Roofed with zinc-corrugated sheets, the school building opened today measures 202 feet by 96 feet. It is also a one-story building and cost over K 69.3 million.

Lt-Gen Maung Bo, in his address, said that the government is implementing the three projects across the country — the first for the development of border areas and national races, the second for special development zones, and the third for five­phase rural development project — to ensure equi­table progress in the Union.

The government is investing heavily in these projects to improve transport and education, to de­velop human resources and economy, and enhance health care.

Thanks to these measures, the number of high schools has risen to 1,894, that of middle schools to 2,612, that of post-primary schools to 4,774, and that of primary schools to 31,225.

Under the 30-year-long term education plan, plans have been made to open high, middle and primary schools in townships, towns and villages in 68 townships in border areas.

The school enrolment rate has now been on the increase by up to 96.56 per cent.

The government is making all-out efforts to bring about well-rounded individuals who will en­rich the land and grand in the in­ternational community.

Now is the time when nations are competing with one another to harness the science and tech­nology in protecting the national economy of their own. It is therefore necessary to arm the youths of the country with modern branches of science and technology so that they will be able to shape the future of their country.

Now, literacy rate has reached 93.3 per cent in the country, enjoying top positions in Asia.

Later, Lt-Gen Maung Bo expressed his thanks towards all who gave a helping hand to the emer­gence of the school building.

After the ceremony, Lt-Gen Maung Bo cor­dially greeted education staff, members of the school board of trustees, the parent-teacher association, and parents of students. — MNA

Development tasks in Mandalay Division inspected

YANGON, 17 March — Deputy Minister for Progress of Border Areas and National Races and Development Affairs Col Tin Nywe, accompanied by Director of Mandalay Division Development Affairs Committee U Kan Hla and Deputy Superintending Engineer U Myint Oo arrived at Myotwin village via Kume, Myittha Town­ship, Mandalay Division this morning.

During their arrival, the deputy minis­ter gave supplementary instructions concerning the reports on location of an axis to be con­nected with Gonywa village of Wundwin Town­ship and Kyaukse District road-4 presented by Deputy Super­intending Engineer U Myint Oo.

At the briefing held, the deputy minister met local people and spoke at length regarding five rural development tasks being implemented by the State. After inspect­ing measures being taken for building 30-foot wide earth road between Gonywa and Kanswa villages, he left necessary instructions.

Afterwards, the deputy minister ins­pected 19-mile long village-to-village road.

MNA

27th Inter-State/Division Golf Championship continues

YANGON, 17 March — Organized by Sports and Physical Education De­partment and Myanmar Golf Federation, mainly sponsored by Isuzu Mo­tor Ltd, the 27th Inter­State/Division Golf Championship continued at Yangon Golf Club, Danyinjno, this morning.

After third round, Yangon Division team retained its first position in the tournament with 683 strokes in total gross in the team scratch event, followed by Bago Divi­sion team with 706 and Sagaing Division team with 709.

In the individual scratch event, Naing Tun Tun Oo of Yangon Division stood first after firing 220 strokes in total gross, followed by his compatriot Nay Bala Win Myint with 229 and Thant Naing Oo of Sagaing Division with 229.

In the team handicap event, Bago Division team put its position in the first place by firing 625 strokes in total nett. His runners-up were Shan State (South) with 628 and Yangon Division with 633.

In the individual handicap event, Nay Bala Win Myint of Yangon Division stood first after shooting 203 strokes in total nett, followed by Tun Tun Oo of Rakha­me State with 205 and Kar­let of Kayah State with 207 strokes.

Han Event Manage­ment organized to suc­cessfully realize the tour­nament which continues tomorrow. — MNA

Deputy Minister Col Tin Nywe inspects construction of District-to-District road No.2 in Mandalay Division. — PRANEDA
Development tasks supervised…
(from page 1)

Lt-Gen Maung Bo held a meeting with departmental officials, members of social organizations, entrepreneurs and local residents. The township PDC chairman reported on the administration, management, community peace and stability, and prevalence of law and order, and the agriculture, education and health sectors.

Lt-Gen Maung Bo said that Palaw and Palaw Township have enjoyed development to an extent, but they are to make sustained efforts for greater progress.

In the past, the entire Taninthayi Division except some of its cities lagged behind in development due to lack of peace and stability. So, the government made efforts to restore peace and tranquillity and to ensure prevalence of law and order through national solidarity. Then, it constructed roads and bridges to improve the region’s transport sector. It is implementing the regional development projects in collaboration with local people, social organizations and respective departments. In consequence, the entire nation and Taninthayi Division are witnessing cumulative development.

This success depicts the correct leadership of the government, and harmonious cooperation of service personnel, social organizations and the people, he said, calling for further cementing of national unity for greater development.

Now, the State’s seven-point Road Map is well under way for the emergence of peaceful, modern and developed nation with flourishing discipline. Responsible personnel are to nurture the youths not only for national development but for that of human resources, and for enhancing knowledge of the youths, and convincing them with correct concepts.

The entire people on their part are to join departments and social organizations for region and national progress and to cultivate good habits to be able to practise genuine democracy with flourishing discipline.

Lt-Gen Maung Bo also inspected the construction of a post-primary school in Nantaung village, Palauk.

He met departmental officials and members of social organizations in Palauk GAD and dealt with regional development undertakings.

He visited Shinnokhali Pagoda and Loka Tharaphu reclining Buddha Image in Dawei and made cash donations to the funds of the pagodas. — MNA

Lt-Gen Kyaw Win inspects…
(from page 1)

Chief of Armed Forces Training on the ground floor, booths of military commands, nation-building endeavours and public welfare on the first floor, booths of ministries, Yangon City Development Committee, MCDC and directors of the Ministry of Defence on the second floor. Those in charge of respective booths and Deputy Director Lt-Col Zaw Win conducted him round the booths.

After leaving instructions, Lt-Gen Kyaw Win left the museum. — MNA

UMFCCI continues its annual general meeting
Yangon, 17 March — The Union of Myanmar Federation of Chambers of Commerce and Industry (UMFCCI) continued its annual general meeting at Myanmar Convention Centre on Mindama Road on 12 March. Present were Minister for Commerce Brig-Gen Tin Naing Thein, Deputy Minister Brig-Gen Aung Tun, departmental personnel, and members of the UMFCCI.

Chairman of the Panel of Patrons of the UMFCCI Minister Brig-Gen Tin Naing Thein delivered an address at the meeting. UMFCCI General Secretary U Sein Win Hlaing read out the annual report and year-end financial statement and sought approval. Amendment and addition were made to the organizational principles of the UMFCCI, and approval was also sought for it.

Acting Director-General of the Directorate of Trade U Myo Oo announced the name list of three members for the advisory board, that of 25 members for the central executive committee comprising UMFCCI President U Win Myint and General Secretary U Sein Win Hlaing, and that of 50 members for the executive committee.

Next, the acting director-general announced the name list of 12 members for the central executive committee comprising Chairman U Htay Myint and Secretary U Bo Hsaing of Myanmar Oil Palm Growers Association, that of 15 members for the central executive committee comprising Chairman U Aung Myint Htoo and Secretary U Khang Myint of the Myanmar Rubber Growers Association, that of 19 members for the central executive committee comprising Chairman U Win Aung and Secretary U Myint Kyu of the Myanmar Crop Growers Association, that of 14 members for the central executive committee comprising Chairman U Tin Soe Lin and Secretary U Aung Htwe of the Myanmar Horticulturists Association, and that of 18 members for the central executive committee comprising Chairman U Sein Win Hlaing and Secretary U Aung Than Oo of the Myanmar Rice Growers Association.

The meeting came to an end with the concluding address made by U Win Myint. — MNA

All this needs to be known
* Do not be frightened whenever intimidated
* Do not be bolstered whenever flattered
* Do not be softened whenever appealed
13th Plenary Meeting of Fifth...
(from page 16)
World Buddhist Summit successfully as a milestone of the Theravada Buddhism from 9 to 11 December 2004 attended by representatives of 38 countries including that of Asia and Europe. He asserted that the government of the State Peace and Development Council schedules to hold the religious titles offering ceremony at Maha Pasana Cave on Kaba Aye Hill on 24 March. After that, Yangon Division Peace and Development Council will donate rice and alms to the Sayadaws from the entire country on a grand scale. Joint Secretary Maha Wizitayon Monastery of Chanayethazan Township Sayadaw Bhaddanta Vicarindabhivamsa supplicated on the report of the second group of the State Sangha Maha Nayaka Committee. Next, the meeting went to recess. In the afternoon, members of the SSMNC discussed Vininnychaya, religious and education matters and decided to select the Chairman of SSMNC and its related matters. The meeting continues tomorrow. Today’s ‘soon’ donors were Daw Myint Thein and Daw Khin Win Myint of 26, Myasabei Street in Parami Yeiktha.

Also present on the occasion were Vice-Chairmen Sayadaws of the State Sangha Maha Nayaka Committee, the secretary Sayadaw, joint-secretary Sayadaws and members Sayadaws, Deputy Minister for Religious Af- fairs Brig-Gen Thura Aung Ko, Adviser U Arnt Maung and officials. — MVA

NC delegates continue group-wise ...
(from page 16)
The emcee announced the validity of the meeting. The meeting chairman delivered a speech.

U Thein Tun read and presented the proposals of the National Unity Party, and U San Tha Aung, propos- als of Mro (a) Khami National Unity Organiza- tion regarding basic principles to be laid down for the sharing of executive and judicial powers to be included in the framing of the State Constitution to the meeting chairman. Next, U Aung Thein and U Tun Kyaw read and presented the proposals of independ- ent representative-elect Dr Hnue Htan, U Aung Thein and U Tun Kyaw, and U Hla Soe, proposals of six delegates to the chairman, who then gave concluding remarks.

Delegates of State service personnel hold group-wise discussions. — MNA

Delegates of intellectuals and intelligentsia hold group-wise discussions. — MNA

The meeting chairman delivered an introductory address.

U Saw Ohn Tin of Kayin State, Daw Mary Yan of Kayah State, Daw Nyunt Nyunt Win of Bago Divi- sion, U Tin Lin of Magway Division, Daw Nan Aye Tin of Shan State and Dr Khin Shwe of Yangon Di- vision read the proposals of the delegates of national races to be submitted to the session of the NC.

The alternate chairman approved the proposals under the agreement of those present. The meeting ended at 11.30 am.

Delegate group of intellectuals and intelli- gentia
The delegate group of intellectuals and intelligentia held a coordination meeting at 2 am at meeting hall-2. Alternate chairman was Dr Thein Nyunt (Nyunt Wai-Katha) together with U Hla Myint and U Khin Zaw. Deputy Director U Thar Win and Assistant Director U Nyein Myint acted as MC and co-MC.

The attendance of the delegates accounted for 98.10 per cent. The chair- man delivered an introductory address.

Dr May Win Aung Khin read the proposals on functions and power of the president of the State submitted by delegates of intellectuals and intelli- gentia to the session of the NC regarding the laying-down of basic principles for the sectors on the sharing of executive and judicial powers to be included in the drawing of the State Constitution; Dr U Khin Zaw on executive powers of the union government, region or state government, and self-ad- ministered region or region leading bodies; and Dr U Hla Than on sector of State service personnel and sector of the sharing of judicial power.

The proposals were approved by those present, after which the meeting ended with closing remarks of the chairman at 4.20 pm.

Delegate group of State service personnel
The coordination meeting of the delegate group of State service personnel took place at meeting hall-7 at 9 am. U Myat Ko of the Min- istry of Home Affairs pre- sided over the meeting to- gether with Maj-Gen Aung Thein of the Ministry of Defence and U Hla Tin of the Ministry of Commerce. Deputy Director U Htay Win and Assistant Director U Thein Min acted as MC and co-MC.

A total of 107 out of 109 delegates, accounting for 98.17 per cent, attended the meeting. The meeting chairman spoke on the occasion.

Six delegates of the group read the proposals, to be submitted to the NC session, on the sectors of functions and power of the State president, executive powers of union govern- ment and region or state government with respect to detailed basic principles to be laid down for the del- egation of executive and judicial powers to be included in the drawing of the State Constitution.

The meeting chairman delivered concluding re- marks, which brought the meeting to an end at 10.50 am. — MNA

Delegates of representatives-elect hold group-wise discussions. — MNA

Reagent of Hepatitis C donated
17 March — Korea International Cooperation Agency (KOICA) donated medical equipment worth US $20,000 to be used in test of hepatitis C to Yangon General Hospital on 15 March.

Before the donation, the Resident Repre- sentative of KOICA explained the purpose of the donation. Afterwards, a total of 9,000 Test Kits for hepatitis C check-up were donated to the National Blood Centre and 1,000 Test Kits to the Liver Special Care Unit.

Next, Medical Superin- tendent Dr Daw Nu Nu Tha of YGH expressed thanks and presented the certificates of honours to the donors. — MNA

Korea International Co-operation Agency (KOICA) hands over the donations to Dr Daw Nu Nu Tha. — YGH

Minister U Nyan Win presents certificate to a trainee. (News on page 2) — MNA
Minister Brig-Gen Thura Aye Myint inspects arrangements for the booth of the Ministry of Sports in the Defence Services Museum. — SPED

Minister for Sports Brig-Gen Thura Aye Myint arrived at Defence Services Museum on Shwedagon Pagoda Road this morning and inspected the booth of twelve objectives of the State, the booth of nation-building endeavours and the booth of the Ministry of Sports.

After giving instructions, the minister proceeded to Youth Training Centre (Thuwunna), where he attended opening of summer basic football training course jointly-organised by Sports and Physical Education Department and Myanmar Sports Federations and gave encouragement to trainees.

Next, the minister presented cash assistance to coaches and viewed football training. A total of 27 sporting events including football has been opened in sports grounds and stadium in township-wise concerned from 14 March to 8 April. MNA

District-to-district road built in Yedashe Township

YANGON, 17 March—Director-General of Progress of Border Areas and National Races and Development Affairs U Myo Myint together with officials concerned inspected district-to-district road built by Bago Division Development Affairs Committee in Yedashe Township yesterday.

At the briefing hall near Yengan village, the director-general heard reports on progress of work presented by Director of Bago Division DAC U Maung Maung Aung, Deputy Superintending Engineer U Myint Thein.

Next, the director-general gave instructions on timely completion of the project meeting the set standard before the rainy season. Afterwards, he looked into situation of building of an axis from Yengan village to Thitkyein village and instructed officials concerned to rebuild the road in Atekyi village.

If completed, there will be easy access to Lewe and Pyinmana Townships. MNA

MINISTER ARRIVES BACK: Minister for Education U Than Aung attended the 40th South-East Asian Education Ministers’ Council Conference held in Hanoi, Vietnam, recently. Minister at the Prime Minister’s Office U Than Shwe and Minister for Health Dr Kyaw Myint welcome back Minister U Than Aung at the airport Thursday. — MNA

European regulators to tackle rise in obesity among children

BRUSSELS, 17 March—EU regulators joined forces with Europe’s advertisers and food industry on Tuesday to tackle an alarming rise in obesity, particularly among children.

Agri-food companies, consumer bodies and nutrition experts from the EU’s executive Commission will all contribute to a new think-tank set up to study obesity and recommend remedies.

“Obesity is rising rapidly, and Europe’s expanding waistline brings with it devastating consequences for public health and huge economic costs,” EU Health and Consumer Protection Commissioner Markos Kyprianou said. He told a news conference obesity-related diseases added between 2 and 8 per cent to healthcare costs across the 25-nation bloc, as well as leading to increased cancer risks.

According to international Obesity Task Force (IOTF), the prevalence of obesity has risen by 10 to 40 per cent in the majority of European countries in the past 10 years. The new think-tank plans to develop strategies to promote physical exercise, avoid advertising of high-fat foods aimed at children and tighten food labelling.

“The lifestyle of children has changed: their form of entertainment is no longer physical activity, it’s more sedentary — television, computer games,” Kyprianou said. MNA/Reuters
Researchers find new way to treat skin cancer

LONDON, 17 March—Instead of removing skin cancer cells with surgery or killing them with drugs, scientists said on Tuesday they have tricked them into a permanent coma which could open up a new way to treat the disease.

In laboratory studies, researchers at the Marie Curie Research Institute in Britain reactivated a natural self-defence mechanism that is shut off in skin cancer cells and forced them into a state of senescence, or coma, stopping them from dividing and growing.

“It offers a real hope we will be able to tackle cancer by putting cells into a permanent coma,” Thomas Hughes-Hallett, chief executive of the Marie Curie Cancer Care charity, told a news conference.

Dr Colin Goding and his team were studying a gene called Tbx2 which is overactive in melanoma, the most serious type of skin cancer, when they discovered it was linked to a mechanism that repressed senescence.

“What really surprised us was that when we inhibited Tbx2 in melanoma cells, they senesced and stopped dividing. This means we have potentially anew way of stopping cancer cells dividing,” said Goding.

Cancer develops when certain genes are mutated and cells divide uncontrollably. Goding compared it to an accelerator in a car being jammed on.

Normal, healthy cells know something is wrong — the accelerator is jammed — and put on a brake or senescence. But in cancerous cells the brake is missing or switched off.

The scientists inhibited the action of Tbx2 in melanoma cells in culture with a technical trick. They discovered that the senescence mechanism was still there but had been switched off by the Tbx2 gene.

“What we have done is switched it back on,” said Goding who reported the findings in the journal Cancer Research.

He now hopes to find in what proportion of melanoma and other cancer cells senescence can be induced and whether a drug could be developed to activate it in cancer cells.

But he said it could be up to 10 years before any new treatments based on the findings will be available.

MNA/Reuters

Cancer-causing food colourant found in KFC’s sauce

SHANGHAI, 17 March—All KFC outlets in China stopped selling New Orleans roast chicken wings and chicken hamburgers Wednesday after the cancer-causing food colouring, Sudan I, was found in the sauce Tuesday.

According to a statement released Wednesday by Yum, KFC’s parent company, the remaining “unsafe” sauce will be destroyed. Yum did not release the name of the sauce supplier.

“We feel deep sorry for this food safety accident and promise it will never happen again,” said the statement.

The statement also said KFC have already found new sauce supplier and the New Orleans roast chicken wing is expected to be back on sale next week.

Sudan I is a red dye used for colouring solvents, waxes, petrol and shoe polish. It cannot safely be used in food as it can increase the risk of cancer.

Kentucky Fried Chicken (KFC) first named the Chinese market in 1990 and now has 1,200 outlets in 260 cities nationwide.

In fact, KFC is not the only case in this “red colourant storm”.

China launched a severe food safety inspection when Sudan I was detected in a pepper sauce brand, Meiwuyuan, produced by the Guangzhou-based Heinz-Meiweiyuan Food Co, Ltd. The discovery was made in a routine inspection early this month and thousands of boxes of the sauce were destroyed.

According to the China’s General Administration for Industry and Commerce, food containing Sudan I had passed into China’s municipalities, provinces and autonomous regions including Beijing and Shanghai.

Beijing’s food safety office announced Wednesday that not only the pepper sauce and the chilli oil, but also other flavouring products made by the Heinz-Meiweiyuan Food Co, Ltd have been banned in the country’s capital.

MNA/Xinhua

Vietnam may issue intellectual property law later this year

HANOI, 17 March—Vietnam is reviewing a draft law on intellectual property (IP), which is expected to be ratified later this year as the country moves closer to the World Trade Organization (WTO)’s accession. Vietnam News reported on Wednesday.

“In the future, we will move towards a system where all IP-related disputes will be resolved in court,” Bui Manh Hai, Deputy Minister of Science and Technology, said, adding that mass media campaigns and seminars will raise awareness of the new regulations, while IP agencies will see a shake-up to improve the law’s enforcement.

The new legislation marks a giant step in Vietnam’s economic adaptation to the WTO’s legal rules, with the government vowing to push hard for the law’s ratification and protection of IP rights. The draft law has 14 chapters with 497 articles which cover various aspects of IP protection, such as copyrights, patents, industrial design, trade secrets and antitrust provisions.

Jeffrey Hardee, vice-president and regional director of the Business Software Alliance (BSA) in the Asia Pacific, is optimistic about Vietnam’s future, with the country joining the Berne Convention for the protection of literary and artistic works in October 2004, agreeing to implement the WTO’s Trade-Related Aspects of Intellectual Property Rights, and drafting a separate law on IP.

He said Vietnam with the smallest information technology sector in the region stands to see some of the biggest gains from software piracy reductions. The local sector, which earned only 400 million US dollars in 2002, could grow to one billion dollars by 2006 with the help of a 10-point drop in piracy over four years, according to a BSA research.

MNA/Xinhua

Volkswagen’s China JV to launch new Audi A6

BEIJING, 17 March—FAW-Volkswagen Automobile Co Ltd, China’s top vehicle producer, will launch a new Audi A6 to challenge BMW’s hold on China’s high-end car market, the Beijing Morning Post reported.

The new A6 will go on sale in the middle of this year with a 4.2-litre V-8 engine and the choice of front-or-all-wheel drive. It will have six gears of manual and automatic transmissions, the newspaper said.

The premium-class auto will become China’s most luxurious sedan, competing against high-volume sedans such as BMW’s 5-series, Li Wu, general manager of FAW-Volkswagen’s sales company, was quoted as saying. The new A6, like the present A6 and A4, are made at FAW-Volkswagen, German Volkswagen’s joint venture with China’s First Automotive Works Corp (FAW), in northeast China.

Before announcing the plan to produce new Audi A6, the FAW-Volkswagen cut the prices of Audi A6 and A4 by up to 43,000 yuan (5,180 US dollars) from late last week, after BMW reduced the prices of its 5-series by 80,000 yuan (9,638 US dollars) to 100,000 yuan (12,048 US dollars) in January to seize the high-end market. Audi, part of the Volkswagen group, sold 64,018 cars in China in 2004, with 46,177 units being Audi A6 and A4.

MNA/Xinhua

Japan’s Yoko! World Expo 2005

HONG KONG, 17 March—A Japanese Government information video entitled Yoko! Japan Expo 2005 Aichi will be broadcast on 18 March in Hong Kong, according to a Press release received on Tuesday from the Consulate-General of Japan in Hong Kong. The video will feature a “pre-tend” TV team from a foreign country as they visit Japan for the first time.

With the help of their Japanese assistant, they introduce some of Japan’s most famous tourist and sightseeing spots including Tokyo, Nagoya, Kyoto and especially Aichi, which hosts the World Expo from the end of March.

MNA/Xinhua

In this photo released by the Bronx Zoo two-week-old cloud rat receives a meal from veterinarian technician Christine Bayha, on 15 March, 2005 in New York. Native to the Philippines, cloud rats are on exhibit at the Zoo's Mouse House. The little male rodent is just one of the over 4,000 creatures that dedicated zookeepers and vets care for at the Bronx Zoo each day. —INTERNET

Spanish 250cc World Champion rider Dani Pedrosa takes a curve over his 250cc Honda motorcycle during the official test session at Catalunya’s racetrack, near Barcelona, Spain, on 17 March, 2005. —INTERNET
A D V E R T I S E M E N T S

YANGON GOLF CLUB
NOTICE
NOTICE is hereby given that the Annual General Meeting of the Yangon Golf Club will be held on Sunday 27th March, 2005 at Club House Premises at 10:00 hours.
Managing Member
Yangon Golf Club

CLAIMS DAY NOTICE
MY YANGON STAR VOY NO (374)
Consignees of cargo carried on MY YANGON STAR VOY NO (374) are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on 18.3.2005 and cargo will be discharged into the premises of M.I.T.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 discharged 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 EAGLE CORPORATION

Number of group tourists to Macao on surge
MACAO, 16 March — The number of tourists travelling Macao in groups reached 186,445 in January, up 17.4 per cent from the same period of last year.
According to the statistics released by the Macao Statistics and Census Bureau on Monday, 147,469 of the total visitors were from the Chinese Mainland, up 12.5 per cent from the corresponding period of last year.
Meanwhile, the number of group tourists from Taiwan surged by 41.6 per cent year-on-year to 15,046 in January.
The bureau’s statistics also showed that the number of hotel rooms reached 9,630 accommodating a total of 302,431 guests in January. The averaged hotel room occupancy rate stood at 67 per cent, while that in three-star tourist hotels averaged 74 per cent during the period.

Smuggled mammoth tusks seized in Thailand
BANGKOK, 16 March — Some 6.8 kilogrammes of mammoth tusks, believed to be of millions of years old, have been seized in Thailand, said the Customs officials.
The fossil was seized from an Afghan trader earlier March in the northern city of Chiang Mai, Bangkok Post on Tuesday quoted Customs Department chief Said Sinth Limpophan as saying.
The confiscated tusks were believed to have been smuggled into the kingdom to be sold to collectors here. The Customs displayed the tusks relic at a Press conference, stressing that trade in the fossil was prohibited.

Cuba accuses US of HR violations at Guantanamo
HAVANA, 6 March — The ill-treatment Washington gives to its prisoners at Guantanamo Bay, Cuba, is a total transgression of the most basic human rights, as those individuals do not even face charges and are not subject to a due process, Cuba said on Tuesday.
Cuba’s parliament speaker Ricardo Alarcon condemned the US military personnel for mistreatment and torture of the prisoners kept at Guantanamo Bay, telling about Washington’s recent move to promote its anti-Cuba resolution before the Human Rights Commission in Geneva. Alarcon said it would be justified to analyze and condemn the human rights violations at Guantanamo Bay instead.

US Army official sentenced to 45 days in jail
FORT HOOD (Texas), 16 March — A US Army lieutenant was sentenced on Tuesday to 45 days in jail and loss of 12,000 US dollars for his part in assaults on Iraqi detainees that may have caused one to drown in the Tigris River.
Army 1st Lieutenant Jack Saville pleaded guilty to assault for having two Iraqis thrown at gunpoint into the Tigris in Samarra, Iraq, in January 2004 and was convicted of lesser assault in a separate incident at Balad, Iraq, in December 2003.
Based on a plea agreement with prosecutors, he could have faced nearly two years in prison, but Colonel Theodore Dixon gave him just 45 days and ordered his pay cut by 2,000 US dollars a month for six months.
Saville’s lawyer, Frank Spinnler, told reporters afterward he would have preferred “non-judicial” punishment, but admitted, “I can’t really complain about the sentence.”

Over 186,000 HK people receive influenza vaccination
HONG KONG, 16 March — Hong Kong Special Administrative Region (HKSAR) government’s Influenza Vaccination Programme for 2004-05, launched in October 2004, has so far provided protection to more than 186,000 people considered at a higher risk of influenza infection and its complications.
According to a government Press release on Monday, the majority of the vaccines were given in November and December, 2004, before the expected arrival of the influenza season during the first quarter of this year.

Smuggled mammoth tusks seized in Thailand

Canadian’s manufacturing sector sees pickup
OTTAWA, 16 March — Canada’s manufacturing sector enjoyed a rebound in shipments and orders in January, Statistics Canada said Tuesday.
Shipments surged 5 per cent in January, rising to 51.5 million Canadian dollars (about 41 million US dollars). New orders soared 7.1 per cent and the country’s manufacturers saw their backlog of unfilled orders jump 5.2 per cent to end a five-month slide.

China’s Wulingyuan to raise ticket price for better preservation
CHANGSHA, 16 March — The local government will raise the ticket price of Wulingyuan scenic area, a UNESCO World Heritage site in Zhangjiajie in central China’s Hunan Province, next month.
The municipal government of Zhangjiajie said here last weekend that approved by the provincial government, the ticket price of Wulingyuan will increase from the current 158 yuan (19.1 US dollars) to 245 yuan (29.6 dollars) starting from April 16.

Wulingyuan to raise ticket price for better preservation

Stephane Lembli of Switzerland performs his men’s short programme at the World Figure Skating Championships in Moscow, on 15 March, 2005.
Lung cancer patients given Avastin live longer

WASHINGTON, 16 March — Lung cancer patients given Genentech Inc’s drug Avastin along with standard chemotherapy lived longer, the US National Cancer Institute said on Monday, sending the company’s shares up 25 per cent and raising hopes for treatment of an often fatal cancer.

Patients given the targeted therapy along with the standard chemotherapy drugs Paclitaxel and Carboplatin lived a median of 12.5 months compared to 10.2 months for patients given standard chemotherapy, said the NCI, which sponsored the study.

The results were published early because they were so important for a cancer that has a dismal cure rate, the NCI said. Additional details of the trial will be released at a meeting of the American Society of Clinical Oncology in Orlando, Florida, in May.

The news prompted a buying frenzy in Genentech shares, during which about 11.3 billion US dollars was added to the company’s market value during the final hour of trading. The stock closed up 24.77 per cent or 10.92 US dollars at 55 US dollars on the New York Stock Exchange, a two-month high, in its biggest one-day gain since May 19, 2003, when rose 45 per cent after Avastin was found to extend colon cancer patients’ lives far longer than expected.

“The exciting results of this randomized study reveal, for the first time, an improvement in survival with the addition of a targeted agent to standard chemotherapy in this patient population,” said Dr Alan Sandler, of the Vanderbilt University Medical Centre in Nashville, who led the study.

Avastin, known generically as bevazucizumab, is a monoclonal antibody—a laboratory-made immune system protein designed to interfere with vascular endothelial growth factors. Tumors use VEGF to build blood vessels to feed themselves.

This class of drug may hold promise for treatment of a number of different kinds of cancer, analysts said. “In combination with standard therapies, they (monoclonals) can be used for a variety of cancers, leading to increased patient survival,” said NCI Director Dr Andrew von Eschenbach.

IT: MBA training course. It also provides MBA courses focusing on sectors such as real estate, healthcare and telecommunications. Many other universities with MBA education have also started courses with different majors to make the education more career specific.

Some economically developed countries have begun to rank their business schools according to different categories of MBA education these schools offer. This shows clearly that more vocational-focused education has become an international trend, Tong said.

Beijing allocates 80m yuan to improve rural medical services

BEIJING, 16 March — The municipal government of Beijing plans to allocate 80 million yuan (9.63 million US dollars) this year to improve the rural medical facilities and setting up comprehensive medical service network.

As an important step, the city will devote major efforts to implementing the new-type medical cooperation system in a bid to spur exchanges between rural and urban medical staff.

The 80 million yuan appropriated by the municipal government will be mainly injected into the development of the rural illness prevention centre, mother and child health care centre, and township and village hospitals.

To date, the municipal development and reform committee has provided 41 million yuan (4.81 million US dollars) for the 21 reconstruction and renovation medical projects on the city’s outskirts.

Scientists discover how green tea helps to prevent cancer

LONDON, 16 March — Spanish and British scientists have discovered how green tea helps to prevent certain types of cancer.

Researchers at the University of Murcia in Spain (UMU) and the John Innes Centre (JIC) in Norwich, England have shown that a compound called EGC (a polyphenol) can be used as an alternative to standard therapies, they said.

“We have shown for the first time that EGC, which is present in green tea at relatively high concentrations, inhibits the enzyme dihydrofolate reductase (DHFR), which holds promise for treatment of a range of cancers including prostate, breast, ovarian, pancreatic and colon cancer. The benefit of EGC as a DHFR inhibitor is that it could be used as an alternative to standard chemotherapy in cancer treatment,” said Dr Andrew Thorneley, director of the University of Murcia’s School of Biosciences.

The scientists decided to look at EGC after they realized its structure was similar to a cancer drug called Methotrexate.

“After discovering that EGC can kill cancer cells in the same way as Methotrexate, we decided to start research on green tea, and we have now found that the polyphenol EGCG has the potential to kill cancer cells in a way that does not harm normal cells,” Dr Thorneley said.

EGCG is probably just one of a number of anti-cancer mechanisms in green tea. “We have identified this enzyme in tumour cells that EGCG targets and understand how it stops this enzyme from working. This means we may be able to develop new anti-cancer drugs based on the structure of the EGC molecule,” Thorneley explained.

Researchers have discovered that EGCG can kill cancer cells in the same way as Methotrexate, Dr Jose Navia and Dr Lopez, of UMU, a joint author of the research published in the journal Cancer Research.

EGCG binds strongly to DHFR, which is essential in both healthy and cancerous cells. But it does not bind as tightly as Methotrexate, so its side effects on healthy cells could be less severe than those of the drug.

Thorneley said EGCG could be a lead compound for new anti-cancer drugs.

Japan grants visa-free access to Macao SAR passport holders

MACAO, 16 March — China’s Macao Special Administrative Region (SAR) passport holders will be exempted from the requirement to hold a visa when travelling to Japan from 25 March this year.

Takanori Kitamura, Japan’s Consul-General in Hong Kong delivered the message about the visa exemption to Edmund Ho Hau Wah, chief executive of the Macao SAR Government when the two met here Tuesday.

The Japanese Government granted the visa-free access to Macao SAR passport holders entering Japan for the purpose of short-stay visits up to 90 days from 25 March this year.

Kitamura said that by granting the visa-free access to Macao, the Japanese Government hoped to boost the tourist industry in Japan, which welcomed 13,000 Macao tourists in 2004, up 66 per cent from 2003.

He said that Japan enjoys long and friendly relations with Macao, and expects that the mutually beneficial exchanges between Japan and Macao in various fields would be further accelerated and the friendly relations further deepened.

Presently, holders of valid Japanese passports have been able to enter the Macao SAR without a visa for a stay of 30 days maximum. From March 25, the maximum stay will also be extended to 90 days according to the Macao SAR government.

There are now 63 countries and territories granting visa-free or visa-on-arrival access to Macao SAR passport holders, 30 of which share mutual visa exemption status with Macao, and 12 are territories giving Macao visa exemption and one visa-on-arrival.

Specialized MBA education takes on in China

BEIJING, 16 March — An MBA degree may be enough to attract Chinese employers looking for the brightest talents. But potential bosses may ask one Beijing question: “Have you taken any specialized MBA courses?”

“Professional MBA education has become a trend in China’s MBA education,” said Tong Yunheng, president assistant of the training college of the Beijing-based People’s University.

Some students who take general management courses fail to apply what they have learnt in actual work, said Wang Qiang, general manager of the Beijing Xunda International Trading Company.

“The point is business schools mainly focus on general MBA education without a strong professional basis,” he said.

People’s University has recently started an MBA training course. It also provides MBA courses focusing on sectors such as real estate, healthcare and telecommunications. Many other universities with MBA education have also started courses with different majors to make the education more career specific.

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Platini runs for presidency of UEFA

PARIS, 16 March — Former France captain and manager Michel Platini plans to run for the presidency of the sport’s European governing body, UEFA.

The 49-year-old, who led France to consecutive World Cup semi-finals in 1982 and 1986, said if he was elected he would put a smile back on the face of a sport he fears is becoming ruled by big business.

“Have a letter announcing my intention to the president of UEFA,” he told reporters during a lunch on Tuesday. “There are many turbulences in the world of soccer and I want to do something about it.”

The current president of UEFA is Lennart Johansson, but the Swede has already said he would not run for election again.

“We fully support him in his bid because we believe he can bring something new, something closer to the pitch,” said French Federation president Jean-Pierre Escalente.

Platini, who was voted European Footballer of the Year three times, won the 1984 European Championships with France and helped Juventus win three Italian titles and the European Cup, said his passion for the game is the reason he is running.

“I want soccer to be something other than what it is today,” he said. “I want to prevent the most beautiful game from becoming only business.

“I don’t need the notoriety, it has already. And I don’t do this for money, because if I am elected, I will earn less money than today.”

Platini, who scored a record 41 goals for France in 72 appearances, still commands huge respect in the game and has not been afraid to voice his displeasure at aspects of modern football in various administrative roles he has held since hanging up his boots in 1987.

“Be the grassroots of the game must be protected, while the win at all costs mentality” has to change. “We have to fight for the youth academies,” he said. “It is unacceptable that a player leaves for a foreign country without having played for the club he has been formed at. We have to address this problem.”

Platini criticized the treatment of Swedish referee Anders Frisk, who ended the first leg at his request and was not even booked.

“What has happened to Anders Frisk should not be tolerated,” he said. “You know what fair play is? It is being able to lose with a smile on your face. Nowadays, it is like you are not allowed to lose.

MNA/Reuters

Gravesen defends Real’s Galactico policy

MADRID, 16 March — Real Madrid midfielder Thomas Gravesen defended the club’s Galactico policy on Tuesday, saying the project simply needed time to make the team capable of competing at the highest levels.

“I don’t think the Galactico project has been a failure. I think this is the best group of players you could have, and I believe we will show we are still a good side,” Gravesen told reporters.

“When I was at Everton, it took three to four years to build a side that could qualify for the Champions League. It is something that happens gradually. It doesn’t happen in a day.”

Real president Florentino Perez has championed a policy of pursuing high-profile purchases every year, such as Luis Figo, Zinedine Zidane and Ronaldo, and mixing them with players developed through the youth teams.

With Real now facing the prospect of a second successive season without silverware, out of the Champions League and King’s Cup and 11 points behind Barcelona in the Primera Liga, this policy has been called into question.

The 29-year-old Danish international, signed from Everton in January, has urged against knee-jerk reactions. “At the moment we know we are not playing the best football we can, so we need to stick together and stop looking to point fingers at people,” he said.

“I don’t know what kind of players will be brought into the club in the future. Maybe the most important thing would be to give the players already here that extra edge and encourage them to come together as more of a group.”

Although Real are second in La Liga with 10 games to play, last year’s end-of-season collapse under coach Carlos Queiroz is still fresh in the memory.

Real lost six of their last seven games to finish fourth behind champions Valencia.

MNA/Reuters

Chelsea stretch lead at top of Premier League

LONDON, 16 March — Chelsea stretched their lead at the top of the Premier League to 11 points with a 1-0 win over struggling West Bromwich Albion at Stamford Bridge on Tuesday.

Didier Drogba’s first-half goal takes Chelsea on to 74 points from 29 matches as they run clear of second-placed Arsenal, who are further two points adrift in third.

With nine games to play, however, Chelsea captain John Terry said there was still a long way to go after a hard-fought win in a match rearranged because of their League Cup final appearance.

“Man United are pushing us all the way, Arsenal are still there, so we can’t do it keeping our games and putting pressure on those two,” the England defender told Sky Sports.

“We still need a few wins and hopefully we can do that with performances like that (tonight),” he added.

Chelsea, who commemorated the centenary of their foundation with a celebrity-studded dinner on Monday night, dominated from the start as they put the visitors under constant pressure.

They were rewarded after 26 minutes when striker Drogba tucked the ball home from eight metres after Damien Duff lost his marker down the left and cut back a precise low cross.

It was the 50th goal West Brom have conceded in the Premier League this season and only bottom club Norwich City (58) have let in more as the pair struggle to avoid relegation.

Drogba should have scored a second goal just after the hour mark when he turned defender Thomas Gaardsoe outside the penalty area but flashed his low shot wide of Russell Hoult’s far post.

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Real lost six of their last seven games to finish fourth behind champions Valencia.

MNA/Reuters

Adriano scores hat-trick as Inter beat Porto 3-1

MILAN, 16 March — Brazilian striker Adriano scored a hat-trick as Inter Milan beat Porto 3-1 to end their reign as European champions and put Inter safely through to the last eight of the Champions League on a 4-2 aggregate.

Adriano scored after six and 63 minutes to put Inter 1-0 ahead on aggregate but they were pegged back to 3-2 when Jorge Costa scored his first goal in the competition for more than five years by scrambling home from a corner after 69 minutes.

That set up an anxious last spell for the home side who could have made life easier for themselves if Javier Zanetti had scored on a breakaway in the closing minutes but his shot was cleared off the line by Pedro Emanuel.

Instead it was left to Adriano to complete his hat-trick three minutes from time to see Inter through to Friday’s quarter-final draw along with Italian rivals AC Milan and Juventus.

The rest of the quarter-final lineup will be completed by Chelsea and Liverpool, with Italy’s AC Milan and Juventus.

Porto, surprise winners last season, become the first defending champions to fail to make it to the last eight in the subsequent season.

Adriano had scored just one goal this calendar year but it was his return to his explosive best which proved to be the difference between the two sides. By the end of the match he had taken his Champions League tally for the season to seven goals from six matches.

The burly Brazilian gave Inter the perfect start with a somewhat fortunate opening goal.

The striker latched on to a misplaced Porto pass and burst down the left flank, outpowering Jorge Costa before unleashing a left-foot drive which took a big deflection off the sliding Pedro Emanuel and looped over Porto keeper Vitor Baia into the net.

That should have settled Inter’s nerves and made it clear to the Porto gues side that they had to take Inter on.

But Porto, who made five changes from the team which on Friday suffered their worst home defeat for 30 years with a 4-0 loss to Nacional, struggled to get into the game.

Looking a poor imitation of the team which won the competition last season, when under the charge of current Chelsea manager Jose Mourinho, Porto lacked shape and incisiveness.

Inter were little better with Argentinian Juan Sebastian Veron and Serb Dejan Stankovic playing out of position on the flanks, they were unable to develop any fluidity to their game.

At the break, Porto coach Jose Cocaouiro took off the ineffectual Brazilian Claudio, replacing him with Ricardo Quaresma and he made a swift impact with a 53rd minute shot whistling just wide of the post.

MNA/Reuters

Inter Brazilian soccer star Adriano reacts after scoring his second personal goal during the Champions League first knockout, 2nd leg soccer match between Inter Milan and Porto at the San Siro Stadium in Milan, Italy, on 15 March, 2004. — INTERNET
**African nations urged to harness science, tech to combat poverty**

**Harare,** 17 March — African countries have been urged to harness existing science and technology facilities in order to address biting poverty, ill health, environmental degradation and economic stagnation.

Olivia Muchena, Minister of State for Science and Technology in the Zimbabwean President’s Office, said on Monday that Africa would not enjoy full development until it fully utilized its resources.

She was speaking at the Zimbabwe Staff College in Harare where she addressed students attending the joint Command and Staff Course Number 18 on Science and Technology policy in the country.

Mrs. Muchena said many countries in the world were making huge strides in building the capacity to innovate, adapt and regulate technology in pursuit of their national goals and priorities.

“Africa is richly endowed with mineral and biological resources that are enough to look after its people. The continent however is faced with the negative example that tourists from visiting the country are required to pay expensive admission fees. — MNA/Xinhua

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**Zimbabwe’s tea exports on steady increase**

**Harare,** 17 March — Zimbabwe’s tea exports increased to an estimated 25 million kilos last year, up from 23 million kilos in 2003, according to the Herald newspaper on Wednesday.

A total of 16.5 million US dollars was realized from tea and coffee exports last year; the figure is expected to increase to 20 million US dollars this year.

Zimbabwe’s tea exports have been steadily increasing in the last four seasons. In 2003, the Ministry of Agriculture along with Indonesia, Malawi, Uganda and Tanzania are in the small and medium exporters category accounting for around 20 per cent of the world market.

Kenya, now the world’s largest exporter of the commodity, last year boosted its exports by a whopping 23.6 per cent to 133,802 million kilos.

Zimbabwe’s tea is mainly grown in Nyanga and Chipinge, both located in the Eastern Highlands. Around 80 per cent of the tea grown in Zimbabwe is exported. — MNA/Xinhua

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**Weather**

**Thursday, 17 March, 2005**

Summary of observations recorded at 09:30 hours MST:

During the past 24 hours, weather has been partly cloudy in Kachin State and Tanintharyi Division, generally fair in the remaining areas. Day temperatures were (3°C) above normal in Kachin State and Ayeyawady Division, (5°C) below normal in Mawlamyine Division, (3°C) to (4°C) below normal in Southern Shan State, Lower Sagain and Bago Divisions and about normal in the remaining areas. The significant day temperature was (39°C) in Zaungu.

Maximum temperature on 16-3-2005 was 99°F. Minimum temperature on 17-3-2005 was 67°F. Relative humidity at 9:30 hrs MST on 17-3-2005 was 70%. Total sunshine hours on 16-3-2005 was (9) hours approx. Rainfalls on 17-3-2005 were nil at Yangon Airport, Kaba-Aye and central Yangon. Total rainfalls since 1-1-2005 were (0.59) inch at Yangon Airport, (1.54) inches at Kaba-Aye and nil at central Yangon. Maximum wind speed at Yangon (Kaba-Aye) was (3) mph from Southwest at (17:00) hours MST on 16-3-2005.

Day inference: Weather is partly cloudy in the South Bay and generally fair elsewhere in the Bay of Bengal.

Forecast valid until evening of 18-3-2005: Possibility of isolated light rain or thundershowers in Kachin State and Tanintharyi Division, weather will be partly cloudy in Yangon and Ayeyawady Divisions and generally fair in the remaining areas. Degree of certainty is (40%).

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

Look for subsequent two days: Likelihood of isolated rain or thundershowers in extreme Southern Myanmar areas.

Forecast for Yangon and neighbouring area for 18-3-2005: Partly cloudy.

Forecast for Mandalay and neighbouring area for 18-3-2005: Fair weather.

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**Tanzania ponders national park admission fee hike**

**Dar es-Salam,** 17 March — The Tanzania National Park Authority (TANAPA) has expressed intention to increase the entrance fees for its parks and nature reserves in a bid to gain more from the tourism sector.

The TANAPA, the national administrative body of the country’s national parks, nature and game reserves, is reportedly to raise the entrance fees by 33 per cent for the Kilimanjaro and Serengeti national parks in January next year. The Kilimanjaro and Serengeti national parks are Tanzania’s top-selling wildlife observance places.

Fees for the other national parks in the country will be raised by 20 per cent, according to Wednesday’s edition of local English newspaper Daily News.

The entrance fees for both the Kilimanjaro National Park and the Serengeti National Park will be increased from 30 US dollars to 35 US dollars next year. Their fees are expected to go up further to 40 and 50 US dollars respectively in 2008.

The TANAPA also proposed to raise the entrance fees for the Lake Manyara, Arusha and Tarangire national parks to 30, 35 and 40 dollars respectively before 2008. The Tanzania Association of Tour Operators, however, warned that the entrance fee hike might scare away planned and potential tourists from visiting these parks.

The tour operator association cited as a negative example that more than 50 per cent of the bookings by foreign tourists were cancelled in the year 2000 after the Kilimanjaro National Park had doubled its entrance fees.

The association predicted a drop by between 50 and 65 per cent of the number of foreign tourists in the wake of the proposed admission fee hike next year.

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**Friday, 18 March 2005**

Tune in today:

8:30 am | Brief news
8:35 am | Music: I keep it to myself
8:40 am | Perspectives
8:45 am | Music: Don’t get you away from me
8:50 am | National news / Slogan
9:00 am | Music: I need to know
9:05 am | International news / Slogan
9:10 am | Music: Don’t go away
9:15 am | News / Slogan
9:20 am | Lunch time music
9:25 am | Just to be close to you
9:30 am | Music: If you walk away
9:35 am | Music: I’ll be there
9:40 am | If you still love me
9:45 am | Talk: Fine traditions of Myanmar Tamarind
9:50 am | Music: I need to know
9:55 am | Music: Don’t go away
10:00 am | Talk: Myanmar movie
11:00 am | News / Slogan
11:05 am | News / Slogan
11:10 am | News / Slogan
11:15 am | News / Slogan
11:20 am | News / Slogan
11:25 am | News / Slogan
11:30 am | News / Slogan
11:35 am | Music: I need to know
11:40 am | Music: Don’t go away
11:45 am | Music: I need to know
11:50 am | Music: Don’t go away
11:55 am | Music: I need to know
12:00 am | Music: Don’t go away
12:05 am | Music: I need to know
12:10 am | Music: Don’t go away
12:15 am | Music: I need to know
12:20 am | Music: Don’t go away
YANGON, 17 March — The 13th Plenary Meeting of the Fifth State Sangha Maha Nayaka Committee was held at Wizaya Mingala Dhammathabin Hall on Kaba Aye Hill this morning.

Vice-Chairman Thayet Aung Mingala Monastery Sayadaw Agga Maha Pandita Agga Maha Saddhamma Jotikadhaja Agga Maha Kammathana Cariya Bhaddanta Kesara presided over the meeting. The Sayadaw delivered an Ovadakatha, saying that members of the State Sangha Maha Nayaka Committee are to perform four main tasks of the Sangha for purifying, stabilizing, ensuring propagation and organization of the Sasana without losing sight.

Thus, they should avoid misconducts in organizing the Sangha and to assign duties of the four main tasks to SSMNC members to over 300,000 members of the Sangha.

Next, Minister for Religious Affairs Brig-Gen Thura Myint Maung supplicated on religious affairs. He said that nowadays there are about 500,000 members of the Sangha including nuns in Myanmar, where Theravada Buddhism flourishes most in the world. The Government and local people donate robes, ‘soon’, monastery and medicines to members of the Sangha so as to enable them to carry out their missionary tasks. Obviously the authorities join hands with members of the Sangha to help produce venerable monks, wipe out dogmatism, nurture local and foreign missionary monks and renovate and build religious buildings. In the education sector, holding of religious examinations at different levels as well as opening of State Pariyatti Sasana Universities are aimed at turning out members of the Sangha on whom all the Theravada Buddhists can rely.

And then, Myanmar has hosted (See page 9)

NC delegates continue group-wise discussions

YANGON, 17 March—Meetings of delegate groups of representatives-elect, national races, intellectuals and intelligentsia and State service personnel took place at the meeting halls of Nyaunghnapin Camp in Hmawby Township, Yangon Division, today, attended by members of the panel of chairman and NC delegates.

Delegate group of representatives-elect

The delegate group of representatives-elect read the proposals at meeting hall-2 at 10.10 am. U Law Hsin Kwam of Kokang Democracy and Unity Party chaired the meeting together with members of the panel of chairman.

The booklet on clarifications at the Press Conference in circulation

The Information Committee of the State Peace and Development Council held a Press Conference on 15 March 2005. The Press Conference explained acts to use the ILO as a political forum, to put pressure on and coerce Myanmar to install a puppet government in their favour; the behind-the-scene narcotic drug production and trafficking business of the Ywet Sit-led SURA terrorist group on the pretext of liberating Shan State; and the motive and acts, which pose a grave danger to the Union of Myanmar and her people, of SSA, SSNA, SURA, SNLD and Shan State Intellectuals Advisory Council to establish a nominal Union, and then to secede from it. The booklet on the clarifications at the Press Conference will be distributed together with the dailies starting from 18 March 2005 issue. If the book is not attached to the daily, readers may ask it from newspaper agents free of charge.

The discussion of Delegate Group of National Races in progress at Pyidaungsu Hall of Nyaunghnapin Camp in Hmawby Township. — MNA