Lt-Gen Maung Bo attends physic nut plant growing ceremonies in Mon State

YANGON, 4 March — Accompanied by Chairman of Mon State Peace and Development Council Commander of South-East Command Maj-Gen Soe Naing and Minister for Agriculture and Irrigation Maj-Gen Htay Oo, member of the State Peace and Development Council Lt-Gen Maung Bo of the Ministry of Defence attended the ceremony to open Ymnyein Sluice Gate built by Irrigation Department in Paung Township on 27 February.

In Mottama, Lt-Gen Maung Bo oversaw progress in laying rail tracks from Mottama Station yard to the approach structure A-2, construction of the platform shed and other construction tasks.

At the briefing hall, Lt-Gen Maung Bo heard reports on construction of approach railroads by engineers. The construction of the approach railroads has completed by 93 per cent. They also inspected construction of Mawlamyine Station.

On 28 February, Lt-Gen Maung Bo proceeded to the physic nut nursery of South-East Command, and sowed physic nut seeds into the small plastic bags. He viewed participation of family members of the command in nurturing physic nut saplings. Lt-Gen Maung Bo and Commander Maj-Gen Soe Naing presented physic nut seeds to be sown at regiments and units to officials. South-East Command planted 240,000 physic nut saplings at its nursery.

At the physic nut plant growing ceremony of Mawlamyine Station, Deputy Commander Col Zaw Min reported on the target set for 144 acres of physic nut plantations nearby Shwenattaung Golf Course, and nurturing of the saplings. Lt-Gen Maung Bo planted a physic nut sapling.

In Myanmar, bio-diesel can be extracted successfully from physic nut and used in farming equipment and others. Hence, efforts are to be made for growing physic nut plants.

Emergence of the State Constitution is the duty of all citizens of Myanmar Naing-Ngan.
Extend exploration of oil and gas

Myanmar is rich in terrestrial and aquatic resources. Combined with human resources and technologies, natural resources are being tapped for the development of national economy. At present, efforts are being made with added momentum for the improvement of socio-economic status of the national people as peace and tranquillity has prevailed in the nation. Oil and gas is one of the natural resources being exploited in the nation. The Ministry of Energy has extended exploration of oil and gas for ensuring energy security of the State. In this regard, on-shore and off-shore exploration is being carried out with added momentum while off-shore oil exploration is being undertaken in cooperation with foreign companies. According to the findings in Rakhine off-shore, there have been rich gas deposits to be tapped on commercial scale. Old wells as well as new ones in Yetagun Oil and Gas field in Taninthayi off-shore are producing substantial amount of gas daily. On-shore oil and gas exploration is being conducted on an extensive scale and some oil and gas fields show bright prospects. Achievements have been made in drilling of No 32 new well in Nyaungdon Oil and Gas Field, Nyaungdon Township, Ayeyawady Division. The new well is producing 5.5 million cubic-feet of gas and 20 barrels of condensate daily. In the same way, the drilling of No 43 new well in Thagyiutu oil field, Pauk Township, Magway Division is meeting with success. The new well is producing 2.5 million cubic-feet of gas daily. Likewise, progress has been made in drilling of No 18 new well in Sabei oil field, Pauk Township, Magway Division, and the new well is now producing 1.5 million cubic-feet of gas daily. Nowadays, Thagyiutu oil field and Sabei oil field in Magway Division are producing some 420 barrels of crude oil and 20 million cubic-feet of gas daily. In view of bright prospects, officials concerned and staff members of the Ministry of Energy are to make relentless efforts to meet the domestic demand of oil and gas and to engage in extended exploration of on-shore and off-shore gas in the long-term interest of the State.

Maha Makutaramsi Myatmawtin Pagoda consecrated, Htidaw hoisted atop Myatmawtin Datpaungsu Pagoda

YANGON, 4 March—The Hndawshin Maha Makutaramsi Myatmawtin Pagoda was consecrated and the Myatmawtin Datpaungsu Pagoda was hoisted Htidaw (tiered and ornamented finial) atop at a ceremony held at the pavilion of the Hndawshin Maha Makutaramsi Myatmawtin Pagoda in Ngapawtaw Township on 27 February morning. The occasion was graced by the presence of members of the Sangha led by Member of the State Ovadacariya Pathein Okshti Monastery Saydaw Agga Maha Saddhamma Jotikadhaja Bhaddanta Vissuta, Chairman of Ayeyawady Division Peace and Development Council Commander of South-West Command Maj-Gen Thura Myint Aung and wife Daw Than Nwe, Captain Myo Myint Thun (Navy) of local station and wife and officials presented Htidaw, Hngtmyatnadaw (jewelled vane) and Bhdanta Vissuta.

Commander Maj-Gen Thura Myint Aung, wife and congregation share merit gained. — MNA

Prizes distributed to sales agents

YANGON, 4 March—A ceremony to distribute prizes to the sale agents who sold the stationery developed by Beauty World Trading Co Ltd most in 2005 in conjunction with a ceremony to throw a get-together took place at Traders Hotel, here, on 2 March. Managing Director U Khin Maung Oo of the company extended greetings. Members of the Board of Directors U Maung Tin and U Zaw Zaw, Moe presented prizes to the sales agents. The company sells a range of stationery products such as Boss, Jumbo, Boss Reynolds, and Boss Smart brand ball-point pens and the new items will be produced.—MNA

New uZap slim aid device of Osim introduced

YANGON, 4 March—A new uZap slim aid device of Osim imported by NatRay Co Ltd was introduced at Sedona Hotel, here, on 26 February. It was attended by invited guests, journalists, film stars and Osim members. This devise is suited to anyone who wants to lose weight fast. The uZap showrooms are opened at Traders Hotel and another one at No 22, 9th mile on Pyay road. — MNA

Introduction ceremony of uZap slim aid device in progress.—MNA
Putin urges end to instability in energy markets

MOSCOW, 3 March — President Vladimir Putin, harnessing Russia’s authority as an energy superpower, called on Wednesday for a strategy to tackle instability in world energy markets and spare future generations a legacy of conflict.

Putins powerful call put energy security firmly at the centre of the agenda for Russia’s presidency this year of the Group of Eight industrialized nations.

It also served to deflect Western criticism of Russia’s democratic record and offset damaging publicity linked to January’s dispute with Ukraine over the price of Russian gas, which disrupted supplies to Europe.

“Instability in hydrocarbon markets poses today a real threat to global energy supply. The gap between supply and demand is widening,” Putin said in a 1,700-word text issued by the Kremlin.

“We will strive to form a system of energy security which will take into account the interests of the whole world.”

Striking a statesmanlike note, Putin warned that world leaders had a duty to work out a strategy to end instability over energy supplies or else generations to come would suffer. A stable energy policy should reflect broad international interests, not just those of wealthy nations, he argued.

Japanese make gasoline from cattle dung

Tokyo, 3 March — Scientists in energy-poor Japan said Friday they have found a new source of gasoline — cattle dung.

Sakae Shibusawa, an agriculture engineering professor at the Tokyo University of Agriculture and Technology, said his team has successfully extracted 0.42 ounces of gasoline from every 3.5 ounces of cow dung by applying high pressure and heat.

“The new technology will be a boon for livestock breeders” to reduce the burden of disposing of large amounts of waste, Shibusawa said.

About 551,155 tons of cattle dung are produced each year in Japan, he said. Gasoline extracted from cow dung is unheard of, said Tomiaki Tamura, an official of the Natural Resources and Energy Agency. Japan relies almost totally on imports for its oil and gasoline needs.

The team hopes to improve the technology so that it can be used commercially within five years, Shibusawa said.

In a separate experiment revealing another unusual business potential for cow dung, a group of researchers has successfully extracted an aromatic ingredient of vanilla from cattle dung, said Miki Tsuruta, a Sekisui Chemical Co spokeswoman.

The extracted ingredient, vanillin, can be used as fragrance in shampoo and candles, she said.

Tsuruta said the vanillin was extracted from a dung solution in a pressurized cooker in a project co-organized by a Japanese medical research institute.

Blast hits Glaxo drug ingredient plant in Scotland

LONDON, 3 March — A GlaxoSmithKline Plc factory in Scotland making active ingredients for two medicines was damaged by a blast on Thursday, injuring four employees, Europe’s biggest drugmaker said. A company spokesman added it was too early to say what impact the explosion would have on supplies of medicines.

Industry analysts said any loss of revenues would be limited.

The Irvine plant makes ingredients for Glaxo’s HIV and antibiotics division, and the accident damaged a unit making the anti-infective Wellvone and the malaria treatment Malarone — both minor products for the group.

Production at another facility on the same site was not affected by the blast.

Former congressman gets eight-plus years

SAN DIEGO, 3 March — Former Rep Randy “Duke” Cunningham, who collected $2.4 million in homes, yachts, antique furnishings and other bribes on a scale unparalleled in the history of Congress, was sentenced Friday to eight years and four months in prison, the longest term meted out to a congressman in decades.

Cunningham, who resigned from Congress in disgrace last year, was spared the 10-year maximum by US District Judge Larry Burns but was immediately taken into custody. He also was ordered to pay $1.8 million in restitution for back taxes and forfeit $1.85 million in valuables he received.

GlaxoSmithKline (GSK) headquarters in west London. Four people were injured following a chemical explosion at a GSK factory in Scotland.  —INTERNET

THE NEW LIGHT OF MYANMAR Sunday, 5 March, 2006

Archeology exhibition in Beijing

BEIJING, 2 March— Visitors view “pottery dancers” dating back to the second century BC at an archeology exhibition in Beijing, capital of China.

The exhibition, entitled “Kings of Chu in Western Han Dynasty”, displayed 190 artworks selected from unearthed antiques from the kings’ tombs. —Internet

Former congressman gets eight-plus years

Cunningham accepted money and gifts including a Rolls-Royce and $40,000 Persian rugs from defense contractors and others in exchange for steering government contracts their way and other favors.

Federal prosecutors sought the maximum and his attorneys asked for mercy, but Cunningham, chocking up as he addressed the judge, focused on accepting blame. “Your honor I have ripped my life to shreds due to my actions, my actions that I did to myself,” he said.

Internet

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Malaysia, Iran to strengthen cooperation in infrastructure, energy

KUALA LUMPUR, 3 March — Malaysia and Iran on Thursday agreed to strengthen cooperation in the fields of infrastructure, energy, tourism and biotechnology. Malaysian Prime Minister Abdullah Ahmad Badawi held talks with visiting Iranian President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad, after which the two state leaders held a joint Press conference.

The two sides decided to further enhance cooperation in these fields in a bid to deepen social and economic ties between Malaysia and Iran, said Badawi at the Press conference held in the administrative centre of Putrajaya. He added the Malaysia-Iran Joint Commission would discuss follow-up measures to ensure a fruitful outcome. Ahmadinejad said Tehran and Kuala Lumpur shared similar views on the political front.

“Both of us are looking for peace and tranquility for all mankind based on spirituality and justice. We would like to see the realization and fulfilling of the dignity of man,” said the Iranian President.

The cooperation of Iran and Malaysia could contribute to the building of international peace and stability, said Ahmadinejad.

Earlier, business communities in the two countries signed three memorandums of understanding on construction and electricity projects to be built in Iran.

The trade between the two countries has been expanding steadily in recent years. According to local statistics, the bilateral trade for the first 11 months of the year 2005 reached 2.5 billion ringgit (664 million US dollars).

Ahmadinejad arrived here Wednesday evening on a three-day state visit. This is his first ever visit to Malaysia since he took office as Iran’s President in August last year.

Paula Abdul causes security breach at airport

LAS VEGAS, 4 March — Paula Abdul was allowed to board a plane at the Las Vegas airport without passing through a security checkpoint, prompting all passengers and luggage to be screened in California, officials said Friday.

An worker led the “American Idol” judge and a companion around the mandatory screening process before they boarded a Southwest Airlines flight headed to Burbank, Calif, Thursday afternoon, said Elaine Sanchez, a spokeswoman for McCarran International Airport.

She said she could not confirm reports that the employee was trying to help the pop star avoid a swarm of fans.

Federal Transportation Safety Administration officials were alerted to the security breach while the plane was in the air, TSA spokeswoman Jessica Altshul said.

“We are conducting an internal investigation to see who exactly was responsible,” she said.

The person who took Abdul past the checkpoint worked for an airport tenant, but not Southwest, Sanchez said. She said she could not identify the worker while the investigation was under way.

An Abdul spokes-

Franci opens inquiry into alleged CIA prisoner flights

PARIS, 3 March — The French prosecutor’s office in the northeastern Paris suburb of Bobigny opened Thursday an official inquiry into allegations that the CIA secretly transferred detained terrorism suspects through its territory, officials said.


It was also spotted 10 times in Canada and six times at Guantamano, the US military base in Cuba which is holding hundreds of suspects picked up in President George W Bush’s “war on terror”. The lawsuit aims to verify whether the aircompanies or bodies might have helped it, The French Le Figaro newspaper said. — MNA/Xinhua

At least one in ten deaths in Cyprus caused by smoking

NICOSIA, 3 March — More than one in ten deaths in Cyprus each year were caused by smoking, local Press reported on Thursday.

The result was achieved by the Cyprus International Institute for the Environment and Public Health in association with the Harvard School of Public Health after a six-month study on smoking in Cyprus. According to the statistics published in the report, 13 per cent of the deceased or 650 deaths in Cyprus every year are smoking-related, which is six times greater than the deaths in road accidents.

Meanwhile, smoking consumes the country’s nearly 8 per cent of health care costs every year.

High expenditures in medical care for the smokers and productivity drop caused by premature deaths among smokers who were still in working age bring to the country yearly losses of 132 million Cyprus pounds (264 million US dollars). In addition, smoking is expected to claim 28,000 lives among the country’s all 220,000 youngsters who are currently under 20 in the future if the smoking rate which is 25 per cent now keeps unchanged.

Therefore, experts suggested in the report to set down a long term strategic programmes on smoking cessation, including a training plan to help smokers quit cigarettes. — MNA/Xinhua

2,299 US troops killed in Iraq

WASHINGTON, 4 March — As of Friday, 3 March, 2006, at least 2,299 members of the US military have died since the beginning of the Iraq war in March, 2003, according to an Associated Press count. The figure includes seven military civilians. At least 1,805 died as a result of hostile action, according to the military's numbers.

The AP count is four lower than the Defense Department's tally, last updated Friday at 10 am EST. The British military has reported 103 deaths; Italy, 27; Ukraine, 18; Poland, 17; Bulgaria, 13; Spain, 11; Slovakia, three; Denmark, El Salvador, Estonia, Netherlands, Thailand, two each; and Hungary, Kazakhstan, Latvia, one death each. — Associated Press

Judge of the television talent show ‘American Idol’ Paula Abdul arrives at the 48th annual Grammy Awards in Los Angeles, on 8 Feb, 2006. — Internet

The Kodak Theatre is seen through a plastic tent that will be used to shield the red carpet during preparations for the 78th Academy Awards in Hollywood on 2 March, 2006. The Oscars will be presented on 5 March, 2006. — Internet

World Cup fans smile as they pose with the original FIFA World Cup Trophy on display, on 3 March, 2006 in Singapore. — Internet

The two state leaders held a joint Press conference.
**Gunmen kill four in ambush in northern Iraq**

TIKRIT, 3 March— Gunmen ambushed a convoy of minibuses carrying policemen in northern Iraq on Wednesday night, killing four Iraqis including three policemen in a high-speed getaway, a police source in Tikrit told Xinhua Thursday.

“Gunmen ambushed a convoy of minibuses carrying policemen in the northern Iraqi city of Samarra,” said Capt. Ahmed Sufyan from the highway police of Salahadin Province. “Two other policemen were wounded in the ambush, he said.

Three out of four said if they could turn back the clock they would choose to stay, and eight out of 10 said they were bored or that the classwork seemed irrelevant.

“Trade relations should not be tied to any other conditions, insisting an agreement was not appropriate at this time,” said Rashid. "Both Egypt and the US believe that signing such an agreement was not appropriate at this time," said Rashid.

**Population of artificially-bred tigers exceeds 4,000 in China**

BEIJING, 4 March — Artificial breeding has helped the population of the tigers raised in captivity in China increase to more than 4,000 from less than 10 in the early 1990s, the state forestry authorities said Thursday.

In recent years, Chinese scientists have made great progress in using artificial propagation to prevent the extinction of tigers, especially the extremely-endangered Siberian tigers, whose wild population is predicted to be no more than 10, said Zhuo Rongsheng, director of the wildlife and plants protection department of the State Forestry Administration.

To date, more than 1,300 Siberian tigers have been raised in China, said Zhuo. As the artificially-bred population of tigers increases, China has begun to launch wild training programmes for the tigers to help them live wild like their ancestors, said Zhuo.

"Only if a wild population of tigers reaches a certain stable number, can we say the species can survive," said the director, adding the wild training programmes for tigers are going well. MNA/Xinhua

**Egypt rejects "political conditions" on free trade deal with US**

CAIRO, 3 March— Egyptian Minister of Home, Foreign, Trade and Industry Rashid Mohammed Rashid said on Thursday that Egypt rejected political conditions set by the United States on a possible Egyptian-US free trade agreement.

"Trade relations should not be tied to any other circumstances, political or otherwise," Rashid told reporters following talks with visiting US Secretary of Commerce Carlos Gutierrez.

In addition, the Egyptian Minister noted that the time had not yet come for inking a free trade deal with the US.

“Both Egypt and the US believe that signing such an agreement was not appropriate at this time,” said Rashid.

Washington has indicated in the past that Egypt should meet certain conditions, such as implementing political reforms, in order to be qualified for a trade agreement with the US.

Egypt opposes such conditions, insisting that political reforms should come from within the country, but not be imposed from outside. —MNA/Xinhua

**7 killed in Venezuelan Army chopper crash**

CARACAS (Venezuela), 3 March— Seven people died when a Venezuelan military helicopter crashed near the frontier with Colombia, authorities said on Thursday.

Five Venezuelan soldiers and two civilians were killed when their helicopter went down in a southern Amazon region, Venezuela’s INAC aviation authority said. One person survived.

INAC did not say what caused the crash and a Defence Ministry spokesman had no details. Authorities said they lost contact with the helicopter late on Wednesday. —MNA/Reuters

**Woman seizes police car for 2-hour ride**

LOS ANGELES, 4 March— A 25-year-old woman grabbed a sheriff deputy’s sports utility vehicle on Thursday and led police on a two-hour televised chase through suburban Los Angeles County.

No injuries were reported in the pursuit — a staple of local TV news — in the sprawling car capital of the world.

Deputy Dave Jennings said the woman, who was described as having a long criminal record, was being questioned in the back seat of a deputy’s SUV about a stolen vehicle.

She made her way into the front seat and drove off.

Followed by police cars and news helicopters, the woman screamed and sobbed into the on-board radio as officers tried to calm her down. In the end, the woman came to a stop and was arrested at gunpoint.

She is expected to face charges of theft and evading arrest. —Internet
Suspects charged in world’s biggest peacetime robbery in Britain

LONDON, 3 March — Three suspects were charged on Wednesday in connection with the world’s largest known peacetime robbery, police said.

The charges were the first to be brought as part of the investigation into the theft of £53 million pounds (92 million US dollars) at a cash depot in the southeast Kent county last week.

The two men and one woman being charged were identified as car salesmen John Fowler, 57, and Stuart Royle, 39, and Kim Shackleton, 39, self-employed.

The two men were charged with conspiracy to rob the Securitas depot at Tonbridge, Kent, and to rob the depot’s manager, then taking his wife and young son hostage before fleeing with £53,116,760 pounds (over 92 million dollars) in cash. MNA/Xinhua

Lab confirms first Swiss bird flu case was H5N1

ZURICH, 3 March — Laboratory tests have confirmed that a duck that died of bird flu last week in Geneva, Switzerland’s first case, had the H5N1 strain, the Swiss Veterinary Office said on Wednesday.

The tests were carried out by the European reference laboratory in Britain, the Veterinary Laboratories Agency, which announced the result on its website. MNA/Xinhua

Chinese, German PMs discuss Iran nuclear issues

BEIJING, 3 March — Chinese Premier Wen Jiabao said here on Thursday there is still possibility of resolving the Iranian nuclear issue within the framework of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA).

While talking over phone with German Chancellor Angela Merkel, Wen said China supports the international nuclear non-proliferation system and advocates the issue be resolved through diplomatic talks.

China backs the talks and negotiation between Iran and Britain, France, Germany and Russia and is willing to keep contacts with concerned parties including Germany, he said.

Wen said China hopes the concerned parties will show restraint, patience and a constructive attitude in a bid to create conditions for peacefully resolving the issue.

On the Taiwan issue, Wen called on the international community to keep alert to the dangerous move by the Taiwan authorities which on Monday ceased the function of the “National Unification Council” and application of the “National Unification Guidelines”.

The move is a “grave provocation” against the one-China principle universally observed by the international community and will undermine peace and stability across the Taiwan Straits, he said.

The German Government firmly adheres to the one-China policy and is worried about the Taiwan authorities’ move, said Merkel, hoping the Taiwan issue will be resolved peacefully in line with the one-China policy.

Wen spoke highly of the close cooperation between China and Germany. He appreciates Germany’s new government for continuing its friendly policy on China. MNA/Xinhua

Canadian soldier killed, seven injured in car accident in Afghanistan

KABUL, 3 March — One Canadian soldier was killed and seven others injured in a car accident Thursday in Afghan southern province of Kandahar, a local official said.

“One Canadian soldier was killed, seven others were injured in a car overrun in the area about 10 kilometres west of Kandahar City,” Abdul Hakim Khan, the provincial police chief told Xinhua.

At the time, US military informed the accident, and said in a Press release, “Seven Coalition soldiers were injured and one died after their vehicle rolled over in Kandahar Province today.”

The service members, from the Coalition’s Multi-National Brigade South, were on a routine patrol in an armoured vehicle to the west of Kandahar City, the Press release said. “Four service members were evacuated by air to the Coalition hospital at Kandahar Airfield. One service member died soon after arrival. Two are in critical condition and one is in stable condition,” it added. MNA/Xinhua

Roadside bomb kills Iraqi policeman in western Baghdad

BAGHDAD, 3 March — A roadside bomb detonated near a police commando patrol, killing one policeman and wounding two others, in western Baghdad on Thursday, a police source said.

An improvised explosive device detonated near a police commando in Ameriyah District, killing a police commando and wounding two others, Captain Ahmed Abdullah from Baghdad police told Xinhua. Earlier in the day, the police said three people were killed and ten others wounded in a bomb blast in a busy market in southern Baghdad. MNA/Xinhua

Coal mine accident kills 2 in eastern Ukraine

Kiev, 3 March — Two miners have been killed in a coal mine accident in eastern Ukraine, the Emergency Situations Ministry said in a statement on Thursday.

A rock slide occurred late Wednesday in the Miusinska mine in the eastern Luhansk region, causing two miners’ death, the statement said. MNA/Xinhua

Some 303 girls and women from all over Japan pose with Disney characters for the celebration of the Girls’ Festival, a traditional Japanese festival celebrated on 3 March, at the Tokyo Disneyland in the capital of Japan. ISHIBASHI

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The tests were carried out by the European reference laboratory in Britain, the Veterinary Laboratories Agency, which announced the result on its website. MNA/Xinhua

A man sledgehammers the remains of a home destroyed by the earthquake in the city of Muzaffarabad in Pakistan-administered Kashmir on 3 March, 2006. INTERNET
Better and smooth transport for Dagon University students

Article and photos by Ko Ko Soe Nyunt

Under the guidance of Head of State Senior General Than Shwe, a railroad linking Yangon Central Railway Station and Dagon University was constructed for the convenience of the students pursuing education in the university as well as the general public. The 4.96-mile facility was put into commission today (4 March).

The Ministry of Rail Transportation is taking measures for the development of the transport sector while the government has been making strenuous efforts to ensure all-round development of the nation.

The Myanma Railways launched the project on 24 March 2004 and completed it on 4 March 2006.

As human resources are fundamental to the development of a nation, the officials concerned in the education sector are responsible for production of intellectuals and intelligentsia. The government is thus constructing roads and railroads for the convenience of students.

To complete the facility, 12 bridges had to be built. There will be 20 runs between Yangon Central Railway Station and Dagon University from 5.25 am to 6.40 pm daily. The fare is 10 kyats per head. The season ticket for one month costs 230 kyats. A sale centre will be opened on the campus of Dagon University for season tickets.

The Myanma Railways’ circular and suburban trains are running 15 shifts for 165 runs a day for the convenience of Yangonites. The number of daily train commuters stood at about 70,000 in 2004-2005. Now, the number has increased to about 100,000. Plans are under way to run two trains between Yangon Central Railway Station and Dagon University.

Now, the total length of railroads across the nation has reached 3,074.89 miles, up from 1,976.35 miles in 1988. The railroad will be extended from Dagon University station to Moegyopyit and Hlawga through Pale, Shwenantha, Nwekhwe, Hausaikyaunt, Heinsun, Bantbwegon and Kungyangon stations. Another inner circular railroad will be constructed between Toeygaungaly station and Mingaladon station through Dagon University, Pale, Shwenantha, Nwekhwe, Padamya and Pale stations.

The Dagon University station project was launched in April 2005 and completed in October the same year. That can shelter 150 passengers.

A girl student said, “The new railroad section is much beneficial to us, university students. Monthly bus fare is 3,000 kyats but the monthly season ticket costs only 230 kyats. The government is constructing railroads one after another, so it helps improve the transport sector as well as the education sector. We students thank the government for its drive for the development of all sectors including the education sector. We also thank the Ministry of Rail Transportation because we can now go to university by bus or by train”.

The Head of State gave guidance, saying that only with the smooth and secure transport, could a region enjoy the development in the economic, social and administrative sectors. It was required to build fine roads linking places within a region as well as with those in other regions.

In accordance with the guidance of the Head of State, the Myanma Railways is trying its best for the emergence of a network of railroads throughout the nation.

Therefore, the voices of thanks expressed by the students of Dagon University and local people living along the railroad that will emerge near Dagon University is much louder than the sirens of circular and suburban local trains which started running today.

Translation: MS
Lt-Gen Maung Bo attends physic nut plant growing ceremonies in Mon State...

(from page 1)

They also attended the Mon State physic nut plant growing ceremony in Mawlamyine. Speaking on the occasion, Lt-Gen Maung Bo said that as global countries face the fuel shock, research works are being conducted to produce biodiesel. In Myanmar, biodiesel can be extracted successfully from physic nut and used in farming equipment and others. Hence, efforts are to be made for growing physic nut plants. Afterwards, he viewed production of bio-diesel.

Mon State plans to grow 500,000 acres of physic nut plants within three years.

At the nursery in Mawlamyine, they sowed physic nut seeds. On arrival at Mon State General Hospital, Lt-Gen Maung Bo attended the ceremony to donate the machine worth K 30 million to cure cataract. On behalf of late wellwishers Nun Daw Bhirani of Khemarama Nunnery, Dr Htein Win and wife Daw Cho Cho Win handed over the machine to Medical Superintendent Dr Kyaw Thu. Eye specialist Dr Daw Myint Myint Oo explained treatment of cataract with the use of the machine.

Late Nun Daw Bhirani had donated hospital equipment worth K 34,933,000 to Mon State General Hospital.

Lt-Gen Maung Bo and party proceeded to Crumb Rubber Factory of Myanmar Perennial Crops Enterprise in Mudon, and heard reports on matters related to the factory and requirements by officials. He attended to the needs and inspected brown crumb and yellow crumb and production process.

The factory was built in Mudon to manufacture crumb rubber and provide advanced rubber production technology to the local entrepreneurs. While in Mudon, Lt-Gen Maung Bo looked into thriving summer paddy plantations at the 1,000-acre special summer paddy zone. He heard reports on cultivation of summer paddy by Mon State Agriculture Service, and instructed officials to put 150,000 acres of land under summer paddy and 1 million acres under monsoon in Mon State in 2006-2007 financial year.

On 1 March, Lt-Gen Maung Bo and party went to Sittoung Bridge (Moppalin) Construction Project site. They viewed installation of iron frames at counter span at the bridge. Lt-Gen Maung Bo gave instructions on timely completion of the construction tasks meeting set standard. Lt-Gen Maung Bo and party left the construction site.

Educative talks held at training school of PBANRDA Ministry

Yangon, 4 March
— Organized by National Race Working Group of the Myanmar Women’s Affairs Federation, an educative talk was held at the central training school of Education and Training Department under the Ministry for Progress of Border Areas and National Races and Development Affairs in Dagon Myothit (North) Township yesterday morning.

Leader of the Working Group Daw Kyin Khaing, wife of the Minister for PBANRDA, gave an introductory speech.

Deputy Leader of Legal Studies and Consultation Working Group Professor Dr Daw Than Nwe of Law Department gave a lecture on rights on marriage of Myanmar women. It was attended by officials of MWAF, trainees from the central training school and national races people from States and Divisions, totalling 195.

Next, officials of MWAF and guests viewed trainees’ works at Women’s Vocational Training School. — MNA

People Style Competition 2006 to be held

Yangon, 4 March
— A People Style Competition 2006, organized by Myanmar People Magazine, will take place. Fashion Designers may take part in the competition individually and in groups. Handsome prizes will be awarded. The competition will be held at Traders Hotel on 18 March 2006 and complimentary tickets are available. Applications are available at Inforithm-Maze Co Ltd E 11 University Housing Estate on new University Avenue in Bahan Township Tel: 559068, 559069, 546743 and they are to be sent not later than 7 March. — MNA

Italian tourists arrive

Yangon, 4 March
— A total of 49 Italian tourists arrived here today with the co-arrangements of Orchestra Travel Ltd (Myanmar) and the Agents from Italy, Masaico Tour Operator and Shrojavacca Viaggi. The guests will visit tourist sites around Myanmar covering Inle, Mandalay, Bagan and Ngapali during their stay and depart from Myanmar on 12 March. — MNA
Train shuttles ten times daily between the Central Railway Station...

Building new railroads for regional development, manufacturing carriages and wagons, locomotives and parts at home, and ensuring convenience of travelling of passengers.

Development of human resources plays an important role in building the nation. To turn out educated persons is the main function of the education sector. Hence, Myanma Railways constructed a new railroad.

YANGON, 4 March — On February 27, 2006, Taiwan leader Mr. Chen Shui-bian announced the decision to stop the operation of the “National Unification Council (NUC),” and application of the “National Unification Guidelines.”

As a nation, which has good neighbourly and friendly relations with the People’s Republic of China, the Government of the Union of Myanmar has consistently adhered to the principle of “One China Policy” and regards Taiwan as an integral part of China.

The Government of the Union of Myanmar is of the opinion that the decision would raise tensions on Cross-strait relations, and could affect the peace and stability of the Asia-Pacific region.

Therefore, as the decision of Taiwan would jeopardize the peace and stability of the Asia-Pacific region, the Government of the Union of Myanmar views that the decision is not acceptable for the region as a whole. — MNA

were 1,976.35 miles of railroads before 1988 and now there are 3,074.89 miles of railroads. The 26-mile Yemyetni-KyawUmin Road on ChaungU-Pakokku-Gangaw-Kalay section, 3.33-mile Okpozu-Thaylin Road, 5-mile Kyenichauk Railroad and 140.8-mile Pyinmana-Myihaung dway Railroad (Kyitaungkan-Myiinge section) are under construction. The circular railroad will also be built from Dagon University Station to Shwepaukkan, Shwenatha, Nwekhway, Htaukkyant, Bunt and others.

Chairman of Yangon Division Peace and Development Council Commander of Yangon Command Brig-Gen Hla Htay Win, Minister for Rail Transportation Maj-Gen Aung Min and Chairman of Yangon City Development Committee Yangon Mayor Brig-Gen Aung Thein Lin formally opened Yangon-Dagon University railroad section and the station. Lt-Gen Myint Swe, for running the train from Yangon Railways Station to Dagon University daily.

The trains have been running from the Central Railway Station and cordially greeted the passengers and university students. Construction of 4.96-mile Toegyaunggalay-Dagon University railroad section and the station started on 24 March 2004 and completed in 2006. The train shuttles ten times between the Central Railways Station and Dagon University Station beginning from 5.25 am to 5.35 pm daily. The fare is K 10 per head and monthly season ticket is K 230. Passengers are allowed to take the train free of charge till 8 March.

MA Myanmar first year student Ma Saw Myat Sandi Lwin thanks for construction of the railroad. — MNA

Chairman of Yangon Division Peace and Development Council Commander Brig-Gen Hla Htay Win, Minister for Rail Transportation Maj-Gen Aung Min and Mayor Brig-Gen Aung Thein Lin formally open railroad section and Dagon University Station. — NLM

Lt-Gen Myint Swe of Ministry of Defence grows a physic nut plant. — NLM

Commander Brig-Gen Hla Htay Win delivers an address at the opening ceremony of Yangon-Dagon University Railroad. — MNA

Minister for Rail Transportation Maj-Gen Aung Min. — MNA

MA Myanmar first year student Ma Saw Myat Sandi Lwin speaks words of thanks. Next, Lt-Gen Myint Swe formally unveiled the signboard of Dagon University Station.

Finally, Brig-Gen Hla Htay Win delivered an address at the opening ceremony of Yangon-Dagon University Railroad. — MNA

Lt-Gen Myint Swe, Minister for Rail Transportation Maj-Gen Aung Min and Mayor Brig-Gen Aung Thein Lin formally open railroad section and Dagon University Station.
Yangon, 4 March — Chairman of Yangon Division Peace and Development Council Commander of Yangon Command Brig-Gen Hla Huy Win and Chairman of Yangon City Development Committee Brig-Gen Aung Thein Lin arrived at the project zone of Fish Paste, Dry Fish and Fish Sauce Industry of YCDC near Thayetpinchaung Village in Dagon Myothit (Seikkan) Township this morning.

The commander and the mayor instructed officials to systematically perform transport services for products of the industry, and extend the plot for chilli powder production.

They attended physic nut plant growing ceremony of Dagon Myothit (Seikkan) Township at the project zone.

At the industry, the commander and the mayor inspected production of fish paste, dry fish and fish sauce, and gave necessary instructions.

They oversaw progress in construction of the 2 miles and 2 furlongs long road linking the project zone and Kyansitha Road in the township. They also inspected storage of water at Ngamoei Sylvie Gate near Sitpintaung Village. Director of Yangon Division Irrigation Department U Kyaw Then reported on supply of water to 5,895 acres of farmland.

On arrival at Yegyaw self-reliant river water pumping project near Yegyaw Village in Hlegu Township, they viewed supply of water to 600 acres of land. They oversaw thriving 500 acres of summer paddy near Malit Village. They also inspected completion of Hinphon river water pumping project.

Commander Brig-Gen Hla Huy Win visits Shwe Min Tha fish sauce factory. — MNA

Mandalay sub-printing house marks its fifth anniversary

Yangon, 4 March—To mark its fifth founding anniversary, the sub-printing house (Mandalay) under the News and Periodicals Enterprise of the Ministry of Information on 1 March offered alms food to members of the Sangha led by Member of the State Central Working Committee of the Sangha Abbot of Awaysai Yama Monastery in Maha Aungmye Township, Mandalay.

The officials also offered alms to the Sayadaws. Gifts were presented to six staff who did not take any off in 2005, and the staff of administrative, photolitho and printing sections. — MNA

Deputy Minister Brig-Gen Kyaw Myint addresses the conclusion of the Instructor Course for Early Childhood Development. — MNA

Gold plates to be offered to Sule Pagoda

Yangon, 4 March—More than 90 members of Myanmar Writers and Journalists Association, musicians, film stars and model girls and boys from 1 pm to 5 pm today contributed their voluntary services by receiving donations of pilgrimages on the four archways for all-round renovation of the Sule Pagoda in Yangon under the auspices of the pagoda board of trustees.

The programme comprises offering of gold plates to the Htudaw (tiered and ornamented finial) and the pagoda, gold foils to the Buddha images and renovation of satellite pagodas.

Today’s donations amounted to K 2,496,340. — MNA

Instructor Course for Early Childhood Development concludes

Yangon, 4 March — The Instructor Course for Early Childhood Development, co-organized by Social Welfare Department and Singapore International Foundation, concluded at No 1 Pre-Primary School in Chanayethasna Township, Mandalay, yesterday.

Deputy Minister for Social Welfare, Relief and Resettlement Brig-Gen Kyaw Myint delivered an address. The Deputy Minister and officials presented completion certificates to the trainees.

Deputy Minister gave gifts to Professors Dr Kho Kim Cho of the Singapore expert team. After the ceremony, the Deputy Minister and party visited the training halls.

The training course lasted six weeks. A total of 33 heads of pre-primary schools from Social Welfare Department, Basic Education, Maternal and Child Welfare Association, KBC, MBC, YMCA and World Vision attended the training course. — MNA

Developing Pwayhla model village in Pindaya Township, Shan State (South)

Yangon, 4 March — The government is taking measures for equitable development of all regions of the country. Development Affairs Committees in Shan State (South) are carrying out regional development tasks including building rural roads. A ceremony to grow physic nut plants took place in the village. Members of social organizations and USDA and local people collectively grew 80,000 plants. At the ceremony those present enthusiastically viewed operations of Leya-16 power tillers, generators and pumps with physic nut oil. A total of 320,000 physic nut plants have been grown on 1,898 acres of land in Pindaya township.

In Taunggyi District, 1,664,000 plants were grown during the second week of February. Plans are to be made for cultivation of 70,000 acres of physic nut in 2006. At a ceremony to donate books to Pyinya Pyogin Library of the Village Information and Public Relations Department, well-wishers donated various kinds of books to Maung Kyaw Htoo, who is physically handicapped. Committee members and doctors of State Medical Association gave medical treatment to 382 patients in Station Hospital.

Next, MCWA, MCWSC, Women’s Affairs Organization members held discussions with local women. Formation, duties and functions of the MMCWA and facts about WAO were discussed. A total of 29 elderly women were presented K 60,000 by State WAO and K 29,000 by Pa-O National Organization.

In Pwayhla model village there are one station hospital and four health care branches. The village has seen progress not only in the health sector but also in the education sector. Out of 42 students who sat in the 2005 matriculation exam, 21 passed it. The village has a population of 1,708. It has 6,395 acres of cultivable land and 2836 acres of land have been put under crops. Pindaya township has a population of 71,151. With 23,996 acres of paddy cultivation, the township has enjoyed 116.20 percent food sufficiency. It has also 1,540 acres of oil crops with 215.16 percent edible oil sufficiency. In addition, various crops are thriving in the township.

Pindaya Township catches the attention of tourists due to its beautiful scenery with various national parks such as Danu and Pa-O plus pagodas and monasteries in abundance. — MNA

Dr Daw Win Nu Nu Thant gives educative talks on measures for elimination of narcotic drugs at Pwayhla model village BEHS. — MNA
American arrested in Bali drug bust

JAKARTA, 4 March — A US citizen has been arrested this week on Indonesia’s resort island of Bali for alleged drug trafficking, police said Friday.

James Kling, 40, was arrested Wednesday in his hotel room where officers found 49 grams of marijuana and 176 grams of hashish, said Bali police spokesman Senior Com- mander Reniban.

“This man came under suspicion after we got a tip-off from the community,” Reniban was quoted by Antara news agency as saying. Reniban said the Californian refused police questioning until he was accompanied by an interpreter.

Indonesia has a tough law on drug traf- ficking which is punishable by death here.

The Bali court last month convicted nine Australian citizens of drug smuggling and sentenced them to death two of them and handed life sentence to the remaining seven.

MNA/Xinhua

Cambodian top legislator resigns

PHNOM PENH, 4 March — Cambodia’s royalist FUNCINPEC Party President Prince Norodom Ranariddh on Friday resigned his post as the National Assembly president.

In a letter to his coali- tion partner the Cambod- dian People’s Party (CPP) Chairman Chea Sim and Vice-Chairman Hun Sen, Prince Ranariddh said that he resigned because his position kept him too busy to meet his party members. He said he wants to put more time on enhancing his royalist FUNCINPEC Party’s strength.

“His departure is for the preparation on next national election in 2008.”

government spokesman Khieu Kanharith told Xinhua.

Khieu Kanharith said that Senate President Chea Sim and Prime Minis- ter Hun Sen have agreed to hold a Parliament ses- sion to elect a new presi- dent”, and that the incum- bent First Deputy Presi- dent Heng Samrin will be nominated to replace Prince Ranariddh.

Observers here said that Prince Ranariddh’s resignation was a response to the recent development of the domestic political situation.

His resignation was made a day after two sen- ior FUNCINPEC Party officials were fired from their jobs by Prime Minis- ter Hun Sen. Hun Sen dismissed FUNCINPEC’s co-ministers of Defence and Interior in a surprise move on Thursday.

Moreover, the Consti- tution was amended on Thursday to reduce the amount of lawmakers re- quired to form a govern- ment and reach quorum at sessions of Parliament from two thirds to 50 per cent plus one, which is said will make FUNCINPEC Party feel more difficult in the future.— MNA/Xinhua

Scientists find Antarctic ice sheet shrank significantly

WASHINGTON, 4 March — The Antarctic ice sheet shrank significantly during the past three years, according to the findings of a NASA study released on Thursday.

Using data from the NASA/German Aerospace Centre Gravity Recovery and Climate Experiment (GRACE), scientists concluded that Antarctica’s ice sheet decreased by about 152 cubic kilometres annu- ally from April 2002 to August 2005.

The estimated loss was enough to raise global sea level about 1.2 millimetres (0.04724 inch) during the study period or about 13 percent of the overall ob- served sea level rise for the same period, according to the study conducted by researchers at the University of Colorado, Boulder.

That is about how much water the United States consumes in three months and represents a change of about 0.4 millimetre (0.01575 inch) per year to global sea level rise, the study concluded.

Most of the mass loss came from the West Antarctic ice sheet, the study said.

“Antarctica is Earth’s largest reservoir of fresh water”, researcher Isabella Velicogna said.

“The GRACE mission is unique in its ability to measure mass changes directly for entire ice sheets and can determine how Earth’s mass distribution changes over time”, she said.

“Because ice sheets are a large source of uncer- tainties in projections of sea level change, this repre- sents a very important step toward more accurate prediction,” Velicogna said.

Measuring variations in Antarctica’s ice sheet mass is difficult because of its size and complexity.

Twin GRACE satellites, which can track tiny changes in Earth’s gravity field, monitored the entire Antarctic ice sheet as a whole. — MNA/Reuters

Parents’ loyalty may sway school satisfaction levels

LONDON, 4 March — Most parents are satisfied with their children’s school, particularly in the primary sector, although an Ofsted report said parental loyalty may be colouring their view if a school is not performing so well.

Parents of children in primary school are more forgiving of weak leader- ship and management and more tolerant of weak teaching than parents in secondary schools, the report found.

Overall the findings show parents are very satis- fied with their child’s school and that since 1997 there has been a steady improvement in parental contact with schools.

The report noted that high levels of satisfaction corresponded with schools that were good at communi- cating with parents.

Parents recognize ef- fective schools and appre- ciate the links that schools have established with them in recent years,” said Ofsted’s Director of Education Miriam Rosen.

“Schools that are good at consulting parents, tell- ing them about the progress of their children and listen- ing to their concerns, have highly satisfied parents,” Rosen said in a statement.

Parents also liked schools that had ‘positive ethos and an absence of bullying and racism. The report found schools that were rated highly tended to be those with the least number of pupils from poor backgrounds. Ofsted said parent satisfaction levels were excellent, very good or good in 88 per cent of primary schools, 77 percent of secondary schools and 91 percent of special schools.

MNA/Reuters

Vietnam, Australia end WTO negotiation

HANOI, 4 March — Vietnam and Australia on Thursday signed an agree- ment on concluding the bi- lateral negotiation on the former’s accession to the World Trade Organization (WTO).

The conclusion will usher in a new stage for the economic and trade coop- eration between the two countries, Vietnamese Deputy Minister of Trade, Luong Van Tu, said at the signing ceremony here.

The trade between the two countries reached 4.4 billion Australian dollars (nearly 3.3 US dollars) in 2005. Many Australian in- vestors are operating the fields of telecommunica- tions, banking, infrastruc- ture, transportation, food processing, healthcare and environment in Vietnam.

Vietnam is expected to finish all bilateral talks on its WTO accession be- fore the summit of the Asia-Pacific Economic Coop- eration (APEC) slated for November in the country, Vietnamese Deputy Prime Minister Vu Khoan said recently. — MNA/Xinhua

California girl’s twice-stolen prosthetic legs returned

LOS ANGELES, 4 March — Two prosthetic legs stolen from a 16- year-old California girl have mys- teriously turned up in her mother’s van, the second time in three months that an artificial limb belonging to the teen has been taken and then returned, police said on Friday.

Los Angeles County Sheriff’s Sergeant David Austin said investi- gators dusted the slightly damaged limbs for fingerprints and had inter- viewed a “laundry list” of people but were baffled by the thefts.

The two legs, which were taken from Melissa Huff’s bedroom in February, were found on Wednes- day by the back of her mother’s van, Austin said. “Mrs Huff had the van at Arcadia High School (for about two hours) and when she drove away she heard some rattling and

ultimately found the two legs that had just recently been stolen had been placed in the back of the van,” Austin said.

Melissa, who lost her right leg in 2003 when a car struck her outside the school, uses a 16,000-US-dollar prosthetic limb to play softball and also has a 12,000-US-dollar artifi- cial leg for everyday use.

MNA/Reuters
Vietnamese shrimp exporters follow US anti-dumping case

HANOI, 3 March — All 54 Vietnamese enterprises shipping shrimps to the United States between July 2004 and January 2006 have just requested the US Department of Commerce (DoC) to review anti-dumping duties, a local agency said on Thursday.

The DoC will select a number of companies in six countries targeted with anti-dumping tariffs — Vietnam, China, Thailand, India, Brazil and Ecuador — for annual tariff adjustment, the Vietnam Association of Seafood Exporters and Producers (VASEP) said, noting that it is expected to review export prices of shrimps of the selected companies in a certain period, and then impose new tariffs for them and the average rates for other firms having made the request.

The review process will cost a company at least 75,000 US dollars and the selected one will be given 90 days to make the final decision to continue with the process or not. In January 2005, the DoC determined anti-dumping duties of 4.3-25.76 per cent on four Vietnamese mandatory respondents, of 4.57 per cent on 17 voluntary respondents, and of 25.76 per cent on other local shrimp exporters.

From now to November, Vietnam is spending over 7 billion Vietnamese dong (443,000 dollars) on constructing trademarks for its shrimps and prawns, and hiring foreign consultants to map out promotion strategies to be conducted in the United States and Japan, the VASEP said.

Besides the two markets, Vietnam is promoting export of shrimps and prawns to the European Union, especially England, Germany, France, Belgium and Italy. Exports to England and Belgium currently represent some 30 per cent of Vietnam's prawn export revenue, the VASEP noted.

This year, Vietnam is boosting export of different seafood items with shrimps and prawns as a key item to traditional markets such as China, the United States, the European Union and Japan, and some new ones, including the Middle East, East Europe, Africa and South America. — MNA/Xinhua

Uranium found in Colombia not weapons grade

BOGOTA, 3 March — Two Colombians caught trying to sell uranium might have tried to offer it to Marxist rebels but the metal was depleted and unsuitable for making a nuclear or dirty bomb, according to a preliminary government report and the Attorney General's office on Thursday.

Soldiers and police arrested a man and a woman in an industrial neighbourhood of the capital Bogota on February 24 and seized 29.7 pounds (13.5 kilos) of uranium sitting on a lead base beneath polystyrene foam containers full of water and ice, according to a news release by the Attorney General's office.

Intelligence indicated the suspects, who have been released from custody but are still under investigation, were trying to sell the uranium to the highest bidder and might have tried to contact a rebel group fighting the government, said a spokeswoman for the Attorney General's office.

But a preliminary investigation by the Mining Ministry indicated the uranium was depleted, she said.

While depleted uranium has some military and industrial uses, it is not particularly dangerous, according to Joe Cirincione of the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace in Washington.

"You cannot make a nuclear weapon of this, you can't use it for a dirty bomb," Cirincione told Reuters, adding that there have been instances in which criminals have tried to con groups like al-Qaeda into buying depleted uranium.

"You could handle this stuff, you could hold it in your hand," Cirincione said. — MNA/Reuters

APEC defines 7 operation priorities for this year

HANOI, 3 March — Senior officials from the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) approved here Thursday seven priorities regarding APEC operation this year, including boosting APEC cooperation to beef up trade and investment, and improving human security.

These priority areas were approved at the first senior officials' meeting (SOM I) of APEC, said Vietnamese Deputy Prime Minister Le Cong Phung, who is also chairman of SOM I, after the two-day meeting which ended Thursday.

Five other priority areas include enhancing competitiveness of small and medium enterprises; raising integration capacity via manpower development, informatics and telecommunications cooperation and partnership for development; promoting transparency and anti-corruption; connecting APEC economies through tourism and culture exchanges; and reforming APEC towards a more efficient and dynamic community.

"These are specific directions for operation of APEC in 2006. They will be materialized during working sessions of all forums, task forces and committees in APEC," Phung said.

Regarding human security, the meeting confirmed APEC's determination in stepping up cooperation on preventing and combating natural disasters and epidemics, he said, noting that a meeting of ministers responsible for avian and pandemic influenza will be held in Vietnam's central Da Nang city in early May.

SOM I and many related meetings were held in Hanoi from February 20 to March 2 with the participation of nearly 1,580 delegates. They touched upon such fields as e-commerce, customs, intellectual property, market access, anti-corruption, and counter-terrorism. — MNA/Xinhua

Zimbabwean banker kidnapped by armed men

HARARE, 3 March — A Zimbabwean banker has been kidnapped and robbed of his Mercedes Benz by five armed men in Harare, local newspaper The Herald reported on Thursday.

NMB Bank financial director Benson Ndachena lost his car on Tuesday evening when the robbers, who had tailed him in a white pick-up truck, pounced on him as he parked his car near a friend's flat along Fife Avenue in the capital city.

Three of the attackers, two of whom were armed with a pistol and an AK 47 rifle, jumped from their truck, accosted Ndachena and ordered him to get off the wheel and move to the back seat, the report said.

One of the robbers then drove the car whilst the others flanked Ndachena in the back seat. Police believe the robbers kidnapped him because they suspected the car had an anti-hijack system, but after allaying their fears, they later dumped him near the National Sports Stadium along the Harare-Bulawayo Road.

On Monday night, Colin Benyouf of Mount Pleasant lost his Mercedes Benz E230 to four armed robbers, who had also trailed him in a pick-up truck and pounced on him at the gate to his house at around 7 pm.

Last month, a Harare family lost a Mercedes Benz and valuable goods worth billions of Zimbabwean dollars to four armed robbers. — MNA/Xinhua

Cindy Klassen of Canada skates during the 5000m World Cup speed skating finals in Heerenveen, the Netherlands on 4 March, 2006. Klassen won the combined Ladies' 3000 and 5000 meters World Cup. INTERNET

Drive safely
China, Singapore cooperate on digital movie distribution

SINGAPORE, 3 March—China Film Digital Company signed a memorandum of intent (MoI) with the Infocomm Development Authority of Singapore (IDA) and the city-state’s MediaCorp Technologies Company here Thursday on digital movie distribution.

Under the MoI, the two companies will, with the support of IDA, jointly develop a commercial digital distribution model to make Chinese digital content available to audiences in Singapore and other countries and regions in Asia sooner and in better quality.

According to a Press release issued by MediaCorp Technologies Thursday, Chinese digital movies will be transmitted to Singapore via satellite, by leveraging on the Cross Continental Transmission Project (CCTs), where subtitles in different languages and trailers creation will be added on to the movies before they are distributed to various markets in Asia.

The CCTs, which was first used to transmit digital content from the United States to Singapore successfully in last June, establishes a secure, reliable and cost-effective way of digital delivery, the Press release said.

A Chinese digital movie entitled “Sunrise, Sunset” has been delivered from Beijing to Singapore following this model.

Russia fails to send satellite into designated orbit

Moscow, 3 March—Russia failed to put a telecommunication satellite of Saudi-based Arabsat company into a designated orbit, the Russian Federal Space Agency said in a statement Wednesday.

The Arabsat-4A telecommunication satellite lifted off atop a Proton-M booster rocket at Moscow Time 23:10 (10:00 GMT) on Tuesday from the Baikonur Cosmodrome in Kazakhstan. The Briz-M upper stage on the rocket failed to function properly and failed to deliver the satellite to a designated orbit, the agency said.

The satellite’s own engines will be used to put it in the final orbit after an expert commission examines the situation, the ITAR-TASS news agency said. The Arabsat-4A is a civilian satellite made by the Austrian Astratum company for Arabsat. It will provide digital television and telephone services to the Middle East, Europe and Asia for 15 years. —MNA/Xinhua

Tanzania to woo investment in agriculture

DAKAR, 3 March—Tanzania has planned to attract this year more foreign investment into agriculture to boost the overall economic growth of the country. The East African country has worked out strategies to boost investment into such sectors as agro-processing and irrigation, according to the Tanzania Investment Centre on Thursday.

The executive director of the centre, Emmanuel ole Naiko, said that his country had been set to attract 550 million US dollars in foreign direct investment (FDI) inflows this year.

FDI inflows into Tanzania has been on the rise during the past five years, averaging 356 million dollars a year and reaching 500 million dollars last year. —MNA/Xinhua

Sweden says preliminary test finds BSE in dead cow

STOCKHOLM, 3 March—Swedish authorities said on Wednesday they have detected a suspected case of bovine spongiform encephalopathy (BSE), or mad cow disease, in a dead cow. “A quick test of a 12-year-old cow on a farm in Vaestmanland County (west of Stockholm) has come back positive for BSE,” the National Veterinary Institute said in a statement.

Samples from the animal have been sent to a laboratory in Britain. If confirmed, this would be such a case last July. —MNA/Xinhua

NASA has new plan to complete Space Station

CAPE CANAVERAL (Florida), 3 March—NASA on Thursday unveiled a plan to finish the International Space Station that could see construction resume in September after a four-year hiatus and a new laboratory launched next year.

The future of the half-built space station has been delayed by the Columbia accident, in which seven astronauts were killed.

NASA’s shuttle is the only spaceship with the cargo hold to carry the station’s modules and is scheduled for retirement in 2010.

Construction of the space station has been delayed by the Columbia accident, in which two astronauts were killed.

The station’s construction is delayed by the accident, which caused the loss of Columbia and its seven crew members.

The station is the only one in orbit, it is being built by the United States and Russia. It is scheduled to be completed in 2010.

The agency has delayed the station’s construction since the Columbia accident in February 2003, which killed the crew of the shuttle.

A Russian Proton-M rocket booster blasts off a launch pad at Baikonur Cosmodrome in Kazakhstan in December 2005. A Russian rocket launched a Saudi telecommunication satellite into space overnight, but mechanical problems complicated the last phase of placing the payload in orbit, Russia’s space agency said. —INTERNET

A female cat Tinka peeks through the bars of her so-called quarantine box on 2 March 2006 in an animal shelter in the southern town of Munich, where her owner brought him in fear of the bird flu disease. —INTERNET

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The CCTs, which was first used to transmit digital content from the United States to Singapore successfully in last June, establishes a secure, reliable and cost-effective way of digital delivery, the Press release said. A Chinese digital movie entitled “Sunrise, Sunset” has been delivered from Beijing to Singapore following this model.

Russia fails to send satellite into designated orbit

Moscow, 3 March—Russia failed to put a telecommunication satellite of Saudi-based Arabsat company into a designated orbit, the Russian Federal Space Agency said in a statement Wednesday.

The Arabsat-4A telecommunication satellite lifted off atop a Proton-M booster rocket at Moscow Time 23:10 (10:00 GMT) on Tuesday from the Baikonur Cosmodrome in Kazakhstan. The Briz-M upper stage on the rocket failed to function properly and failed to deliver the satellite to a designated orbit, the agency said.

The satellite’s own engines will be used to put it in the final orbit after an expert commission examines the situation, the ITAR-TASS news agency said. The Arabsat-4A is a civilian satellite made by the Austrian Astratum company for Arabsat. It will provide digital television and telephone services to the Middle East, Europe and Asia for 15 years. —MNA/Xinhua

Tanzania to woo investment in agriculture

DAKAR, 3 March—Tanzania has planned to attract this year more foreign investment into agriculture to boost the overall economic growth of the country. The East African country has worked out strategies to boost investment into such sectors as agro-processing and irrigation, according to the Tanzania Investment Centre on Thursday.

The executive director of the centre, Emmanuel ole Naiko, said that his country had been set to attract 550 million US dollars in foreign direct investment (FDI) inflows this year.

FDI inflows into Tanzania has been on the rise during the past five years, averaging 356 million dollars a year and reaching 500 million dollars last year. —MNA/Xinhua

Sweden says preliminary test finds BSE in dead cow

STOCKHOLM, 3 March— Swedish authorities said on Wednesday they have detected a suspected case of bovine spongiform encephalopathy (BSE), or mad cow disease, in a dead cow. “A quick test of a 12-year-old cow on a farm in Vaestmanland County (west of Stockholm) has come back positive for BSE,” the National Veterinary Institute said in a statement.

Samples from the animal have been sent to a laboratory in Britain. If confirmed, this would be such a case last July. —MNA/Xinhua

The male cat Tinka peers through the bars of her so-called quarantine box on 2 March 2006 in an animal shelter in the southern town of Munich, where her owner brought him in fear of the bird flu disease. —INTERNET
Angola's World Cup opponents win friendly matches

LUANDA, 3 March—Contrary to Angola's national team of football that lost to South Korea (0-1), Portugal, Mexico and Iran, the Angola's opponents in the World Cup of this year in Germany, won their respective friendly games in preparation for the 2006 World Cup. According to local media on Thursday, playing in Seoul under low temperature on Wednesday, Angola were beaten by the local team with a goal by Manchester United's forward, Park in the 22 minutes of the game.

On the same day, Mexico beat Ghana 1-0, Iran beat Costa Rica 3-2 while Portugal thrashed Saudi Arabia 3-0.

Uzbekistan's Klorodina Zapashkova (R) fights for the ball with Singapore's Azreena Maat (L), as Aziza Ermatova (2nd R) and Olga Kim (2nd L) watch, during their AFC U-19 Women's Championship qualifying soccer match at Amman International Stadium, on 3 March, 2006. Uzbekistan won 2-0.—INTERNET

Lampard misses League game, struggling to make Barcelona

COBHAM (England), 4 March—Chelsea's Frank Lampard will miss Saturday's Premier League game at West Bromich Albion because of a hamstring injury and may struggle to be fit for Tuesday's Champions League showdown with Barcelona.

The 27-year-old midfield stalwart, who has sat out only one other Premier League game this season, was sent home from England's training camp this week and missed the friendly against Uruguay after tweaking the hamstring in training.

A Chelsea spokesman said on Friday that Lampard, runner-up in the World and European player of the year awards, was a certain absentee from the match against struggling West Brom.—MNA/Reuters

Ronaldinho left out of Real squad for Madrid derby

MADRID, 4 March—Striker Ronaldinho has been left out of Real Madrid's squad for the city derby against Atletico Madrid on Saturday. The Brazilian has been criticized by Real fans for below-par performances and hinted last week he wanted to leave.

On Thursday Real's new president Fernando Martin said he would not put up with players who failed to put in the required effort. Real coach Juan Ramon Lopez Caro said the player had been left out for tactical reasons. "I don't think he is being singled out for what happened during the week," Ronaldo's Brazil and Real teammate Julio Baptista told reporters.

"He wasn't angry with the decision. "On form he is the best striker in the world. We need to remain calm. Next Wednesday we have an important game and he will be well rested for it."—MNA/Reuters

Hiddink, Russian association deny reaching agreement

AMSTERDAM/ MOSCOW, 4 March—PSV Eindhoven coach Guus Hiddink has denied reaching an agreement with the Russian Football Association (RFU) to become their new national coach after this year's World Cup finals.

After Friday's training session with the Dutch leaders Hiddink said he had never spoken to RFU vice-president Nikita Simonyan, who on Thursday told Dutch television NOS Sport that Hiddink had been named as Russia's new coach.

Hiddink backtracked on Friday, saying there had been a misunderstanding.

"It seems all a bit premature," Hiddink told reporters.

"We had some contacts but not only with the Russian association, also with other associations. "I never spoke with that men (Simonyan) and don't know him. Put people before a camera and microphone and they will say these things, you can't prevent that." I expected this announcement earlier from a different side," Hiddink added.

The RFU issued a statement on Friday saying that no contract with the 59-year-old Dutchman had been signed.

"There was a misunderstanding. I have no information that Hiddink has been appointed Russian coach," Simonyan told Reuters.—MNA/Reuters
Bush arrives in Pakistan after protests, bomb

ISLAMABAD, 4 March — A nationwide strike called by Islamist parties paralyzed Pakistan on Friday hours before US President George W Bush arrived for talks in which he is expected to urge greater efforts against Islamist militants.

Bush flew in with his wife, Laura, aboard Air Force One to a military airbase near Islamabad from Pakistan’s old rival India, where he called for the South Asian neighbours to settle their decades old dispute over the Kashmir region.

His visit a day after a suicide car bomber killed an American diplomat and two other people in the city of Karachi has angered Islamists opposed to the US-led war on terrorism and President Pervez Musharraf’s support for the campaign.

Speaking in India shortly before he left, Bush said he and Musharraf, who is due to meet on Saturday, would discuss efforts to tackle militancy.

“I will meet with President Musharraf to discuss Pakistan’s vital cooperation in the war on terror and our efforts to foster economic and political development so we can reduce the appeal of radical Islam,” he said.

Bush also gave reason for Pakistan opposition groups to hope that Washington will push Musharraf, who came to power in a military coup seven years ago, to move faster to strengthen democratic institutions ahead of a general election next year.

“I believe that a democratic, prosperous Pakistan will be a steadfast partner for America, a peaceful neighbour for India and a force for freedom and moderation in the Arab world.”

A White House official later said Bush meant to say ‘Muslim world’.

ASLEEP IN JESUS
Dr June Po Yein
Age 72
Dr June Po Yein, daughter of (Mt D’Silva and Daw Hla Oo), mother of Deborah Din (a) Thida Yein-Saw Nicky Din and grandmother of Sarah-Anne Din, beloved wife of (U Robert Po Yein), fell asleep in Jesus on Wednesday, 1st March 2006, at 5:40 pm. Funeral service will be held at Ywama Baptist Church, Insein on Monday, 6th March 2006 at 10:00 am and thence to Yayway cemetery for crementation.

Bereaved Family

WEATHER

Saturday, 4 March, 2006
Summary of observations recorded at 09:30 hours MST: During the past 24 hours, rain have been widespread in Taninthayi Division, isolated in Kachin and Shan States and weather has been generally fair in the remaining areas. Day temperatures were (3°C) below normal in Kachin State, (3°C) to (4°C) above normal in Mon State, Sagaing, Mandalay and Magway, Ayeyawady and Taninthayi Divisions and about normal in the remaining areas. The significant day temperatures were Minbu and Magway (40°C) each. The noteworthy amount of rainfall recorded was Dawei (1.54) inches.

Maximum temperature on 3-3-2006 was 97°F. Minimum temperature on 4-3-2006 was 66°F. Relative humidity at 09:30 hrs MST on 4-3-2006 was (80%). Total sunshine hours on 3-3-2006 was (8.4) hours approx.

Rainfalls on 4-3-2006 were nil at Mingaladon, Kaba-Aye and central Yangon. Total rainfalls since 1-1-2006 were nil at Mingaladon, Kaba-Aye and central Yangon. Maximum wind speed at Yangon (Kaba-Aye) was (5) mph from Southwest (at 18:30) hours MST on 3-3-2006.

Bay inference: Weather is partly cloudy in the Andaman Sea, Southwest and Westcentral Bay and generally fair elsewhere in the Bay of Bengal.

Forecast valid until evening of 5-3-2006: Isolated light rain are likely in Kachin and Northern Shan States, upper Sagaing and Taninthayi Divisions and weather will be partly cloudy in Rakhine, Mon and Kayin States, Yangon and Ayeyawady Divisions and generally fair in the remaining areas. Degree of certainty is (60%).

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

Outlook for subsequent two days: Likelihood of slight decrease of day temperatures in the northern Myanmar areas.

Forecast for Pyinmana and neighbouring area for 5-3-2006: Fair weather.

Forecast for Mandalay and neighbouring area for 5-3-2006: Partly cloudy.
YANGON, 4 March — The Yangon-Dagon University Railroad Section, constructed by Myanma Railways under the Ministry of Rail Transporta- tion, was inaugurated in front of Dagon University Station in Dagon Myothit (East) Township this morning.

Present on the oc- casion were Lt-Gen Myint Swe of the Minis- try of Defence, Chairman of Yangon Division Peace and Development Council Commander of Yangon Command Brig-Gen Hla Htay Win, Min- ister for Rail Transporta- tion Maj-Gen Aung Min, Chairman of Yangon City Development Com- mittee Mayor Brig-Gen Aung Thein Lin, Deputy Minister for Rail Trans- portation U Pe Than, sen- ior military officers, de- partmental heads, local authorities, the rector of Dagon University, fac-ulty members, students, social organization and local people.

First, Commander Brig-Gen Hla Htay Win delivered an address. He said that the State Peace and Development Coun- cil is building a peaceful, modern and developed nation with the aims of enabling the nation to stand shoulder to shoul- der with other countries, developing the national economy, and ensuring uplift of living standard of the national people. Therefore, sector-wise progress has been witnessed obviously. Thanks to active partici- pation of the people resid- ing in Yangon Division in the respective sectors, Yangon Division meets re- markable development in all aspects.

The Head of State had given guidance that only then will better trans- port contribute to enhance- ment of economic, social and administrative sectors of the respective regions; and that roads in the re- gion need should improve for development of the region.

While implement- ing the plans of regional development in line with the guidance of the Head of State, Yangon Division Peace and Development Council is giving priority to improvement of the re- gional transport network for ensuring economic, health, education and so- cial development of the local people. As part of efforts for better trans- port, the Ministry of Rail Transporta- tion had con- structed the railroad from Yangon Central Railway Station to Dagon Univer- sity for the smooth trans- portation of Dagon Uni- versity students residing in the townships along the railroad, and local people. In conclusion, the commander thanked em- ployees of Myanma Rail- ways who constructed the railroad section and the station.

Afterwards, Minis- ter for Rail Transporta- tion Maj-Gen Aung Min said that the railroad sec- tion from Yangon Cen- tral Railway Station to Dagon University, and Dagon University Station were built for smooth transport of students who are pursuing education at Dagon University in ac- cord with the guidance of Head of State Senior General Than Shwe.

Myanma Railways is performing the tasks of upgrading railroads and (See page 9)