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Safeguard national solidarity

The history of the Union of Myanmar has been based upon the unity of the national races of the Union. It has been clearly seen that in the times when national unity was dynamic, the strength of the Union of Myanmar was great and solid and her prestige was high, but in the periods when national unity was weak, political, economic, security and social situations and standards declined.

As the unity of all national people was shown firmly at Panglong Conference, the Union of Myanmar became an independent sovereign nation. For perpetuation of sovereignty that has been acquired, all the national people will have to safeguard national solidarity.

Senior General Than Shwe
Chairman of the State Peace and Development Council
Commander-in-Chief of Defence Services
(From message on the 52nd Anniversary Union Day)

Prime Minister looks into development tasks in Mandalay Division

YANGON, 1 Feb— Prime Minister General Khin Nyunt, accompanied by the ministers, the chairman of the Civil Service Selection and Training Board, the deputy ministers, officials from the State Peace and Development Council Office, departmental heads and officials, left here by air on 30 January and arrived at Toungoo airport in Bago Division at 1 pm. Brig-Gen Thura Myint Thein of Toungoo Station, Deputy Commander of Southern Command Brig-Gen Thura Maung Ni, officials and social organization members welcomed the Prime Minister and party. Afterwards, the Prime Minister and party arrived at Lewe Township, Yamethin District in Mandalay District, where Tactical Operations Commander Col Aye Lwin, Yamethin District and Township PDC members, officials and social organization members welcomed them.

Myanmar Education Committee Chairman Prime Minister General Khin Nyunt visited No 1 BEHS in Lewe, where members of the board of trustees of the school, Schoolhead Daw Mya Sein, teachers and students welcomed them. The Prime Minister and party inspected the CD library, computer skills room, computer aided instruction room and language lab. In meeting with the township education officer, the schoolheads and teachers at the hall of the school, the Prime Minister heard the reports of the schoolhead and gave necessary instructions.

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Prime Minister General Khin Nyunt inspects coffee plantations in PyinOoLwin on 31-1-2004. — MNA



The Paunglaung multi-purpose dam project in Pyinmana Township of Mandalay Division seen on 31-1-2004. MNA

Lebanese PM sends felicitations to Prime Minister General Khin Nyunt

YANGON, 31 Jan — The following is the message of felicitations sent by Mr Rafic Hariri, Prime Minister of the Republic of Lebanon, to Prime Minister of the Union of Myanmar General Khin Nyunt on the occasion of the 56th Anniversary Independence Day which falls on 4-1-2004.

“On the occasion of the Anniversary of the Independence of the Union of Myanmar, I have great pleasure to extend to Your Excellency, my sincere congratulations and to your people, my best wishes of continued progress and prosperity. I am fully confident that the existing ties of friendship and cooperation between our two peoples will be further strengthened and developed. Please accept. Excellency, the assurances of my highest consideration.” — MNA

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

PERSPECTIVES

Monday, 2 February, 2004

More roads and bridges for regional development

With the aim of raising the living standard of the entire national people, the Government is implementing various projects in respective sectors. Infrastructures for development of the transport sector and others are being built to enable the people to enjoy the fruitful results of development.

It is necessary to build a strong economic infrastructure in implementing development projects of a nation or a region, and transportation plays a pivotal role in the process.

Better transportation contributes much towards the development of economy, trade and manufacturing sector of a region. And, at the same time, it can help raise the economy, education, health and social standards of local people. The Government, nowadays, is building new roads and bridges with added momentum for regional development.

A ceremony to open Pansay Bridge constructed by bridge construction project special group-14 of Public Works, the Ministry of Construction was held at the bridge in TadaU Township, Mandalay Division on 26 January. Member of the State Peace and Development Council Lt-Gen Ye Myint of the Ministry of Defence attended the ceremony and made a speech.

The bridge is situated on the six-lane highway to Mandalay International Airport from Innwa Bridge of Sagaing. There are two major bridges on the road, one is spanning Dokhtawady River and the other Pansay Creek. Dokhtawady River crossing bridge was opened in January, 1999.

Air passengers from Sagaing, Monywa and Shwebo can now go to the airport in no time through the bridge.

The reinforced concrete bridge is 200 feet long and 72 feet wide. It has six feet wide walkways on either side. Its clearance is 80 feet wide and 10 feet high. It can bear 60 tons of load.

Emergence of roads and bridges one after another in the country will surely help develop the whole Union and it will also forge unity and amity among national brethren.

At a time when earnest efforts are being made for emergence of a peaceful, modern and developed nation, we firmly believe that more and more roads and bridges that will contribute to regional development will continue to be built in various parts of the nation.

Yangon Trade Fair 2004 continues

YANGON, 1 Feb—The Yangon Trade Fair 2004 continued for the third day at Yangon Trade Centre on Upper Pazundaung Street here today. Various kinds of local- and foreign-made cosmetics, drinks and commodities were put on sale by Dagon Win Win Co, Dagon Brewery Co, Summit World Industries Co, Owl International Ltd. There were also entertainment programmes presented by Star Entertainment.

MNA



Exhibition booth of advanced laminated tiles of Great Summit International Co Ltd at the Yangon Trade Fair 2004 on Sunday. — MNA

The 57th Anniversary Union Day objectives

- for all national races to safeguard the national policy— non-disintegration of the Union, non-disintegration of national solidarity and perpetuation of sovereignty
- to keep the Union Spirit ever alive and dynamic among the national people
- for all national people to defend and safeguard the Union for its perpetual existence
- to prevent, through national solidarity, the danger of internal and external destructive elements undermining peace and stability of the State and national development, and
- for all national races to make concerted efforts for successful implementation of the seven-point future policy programme.

All this needs to be known

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

Buddha Pujaniya of Lawka Chantha Abhaya Labha Muni to be held

YANGON, 31 Jan — The third Buddha Pujaniya Festival of the Lawka Chantha Abhaya Labha Muni Buddha Image kept on Mindhamma Hill in Insein Township will be held on a grand scale from 4 to 6 February.

On 29 January 168 groups of people from all over the country will demonstrate traditional *chinson* playing and Buddha Pujaniya will be held from 1 to 3 February. Htamahne preparation competition will be on 4 February and Wut associations will recite religious verses from 4 to 6 February. On 5 January, *soon*, offertories and rice will also be offered to monks. — MNA

MMA women chapter meets

YANGON, 31 Jan—The 2003 annual meeting of the women chapter of Myanmar Medical Association (Yangon) was held at MMA this morning, attended by leading patron of the women chapter of MMA (Yangon) Dr Daw Khin Win Shwe. Also present were patrons, adviser doctors, Chairman of MMA Dr Myo Myint, executives and woman doctors. Chairman of woman chapter of MMA Dr Daw Yi Yi Hla spoke on the occasion. General Secretary Dr Daw Khin Mar Aye reported on the 2003 annual report and treasurer Dr Nyunt Nyunt Than on financial statement for approval. Next, eight members of panel of patrons led by leading patron Dr Daw Khin Win Shwe and 15 executives were elected for 2004/2005. New Chairman of woman chapter Dr Daw Khin Lay Gyi extended greetings. —MNA

Stimulant tablets seized

YANGON, 31 Jan — A combined team comprising members of local intelligence unit and Hpa-an Special Anti-drug Squad, acting on a tip-off, on 13 January searched Ma Wa Let Hti in Letpan Village in Hpa-an Township and arrested her together with 1292 stimulant tablets bearing WY letters from her bag.

Similarly, on 24 January members of Mandalay Special Anti-drug Squad searched Aung Myint (a) Aik Myint who was putting up at Nansa Hotel between 28th and 82nd Streets in Chanayethazan Township and arrested him along with 2,310 stimulants tablets bearing WY letters. Further investigation led to the seizure of 490 stimulant tablets bearing WY letters under the bed of Aung Myint (a) Aik Myint at Mann Ayeya Hotel on 33rd Street in Mandalay.

In connection with cases, action is being taken against the culprits under the Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances Law. — MNA

People's Desire

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



Daw Win Win Han and Daw Zin Mi Mi Htwe. UMFCFI

Officers leave to attend training

YANGON, 1 Feb—Assistant Administrative Officers Daw Win Win Han and Daw Zin Mi Mi Htwe of the Union of Myanmar Federation of Chambers of Commerce & Industry left here by air at 10 am today to attend Training on International Multimedia Development in Thailand. They were seen off at the Yangon International Airport by UMFCFI President U Win Myint, General Secretary U Sein Win Hlaing and officials. — UMFCFI



Vice-President of the Myanmar Wushu Federation Daw Kyu Kyu hands over cash donation of K 150,000 for Kaba Aye Youth Training School to Deputy Director of Social Welfare Department Major Sein Win. — NLM

Cash donated to Kaba Aye Youth Training School

YANGON, 1 Feb — A ceremony to donate cash profits accrued from Happy Lunar New Year Fair of Blazon Department Store was held at the store here yesterday evening. Blazon Department Store Director Daw Myint Myint Win donated K 100,000 realized from the fair to Kaba Aye Youth Training School. Deputy Director of the Social Welfare Department Major Sein Win accepted the cash donation. Next, Director Daw Myint Myint Win donated K 150,000 to the Myanmar Wushu Federation which presented entertainment programme at the fair. MWF Vice-President Daw Kyu Kyu accepted the cash donation and she then handed it over to Major Sein Win for the funds of the Kaba Aye Youth Training School. The Chinese Haikyan Quanta temple also donated K 50,000 to the youth training school. — (H)



Salone Traditional Festival 2004
(Sea Gypsy Festival)
Ma Kyone Galet Village,
Meyeik Archipelago, Union of Myanmar
(14 to 17 February 2004)

Northern Iraq blasts kill three US soldiers

MOSUL, 1 Feb—A bomb-laden car plowed through a razor wire fence and exploded outside a police station in the north of the country Saturday, killing nine Iraqis and injuring 45, including policemen there to pick up their pay.

In a separate incident, three US soldiers from the 4th Infantry Division were killed Saturday in a roadside bombing near the northern oil centre of Kirkuk. Their deaths brought to 522 the number of American service members who have died since the Iraq war began March 20.

It was unclear if the attack

on the police station in Mosul was a suicide bombing or the driver fled before the explosion. US officials have said recent vehicle bombings and suicide attacks in Iraq bear the mark of al-Qaida.

Repeated attacks by insurgents on police, politicians and other Iraqis who work with the US-led

coalition have been increasing in an apparent attempt to undermine support for the US occupation authority and frighten the population into avoiding contact with the foreign administration. Also Saturday, a bomb exploded under the car of police Col Adnan Radeef al-Ani in front of his house in Baghdad,

slightly injuring five children in the street. Al-Ani told The Associated Press the bomb apparently was triggered by a timer but no one was in the vehicle when it exploded.

In the southern Iraqi city of Basra, a remote-controlled bomb hit a car belonging to a Danish relief organization Danchurchaid on Saturday, wounding two aid workers and several Iraqis, according to the Danish group and military officials said.

Internet



Iraqi policemen survey the scene of an explosion in front of a local police station in the city of Mosul on 31 Jan, 2004. Guerillas detonated a car bomb outside a police station in Mosul on Saturday, causing several casualties.—INTERNET

Venezuela says January 2005 FTAA target doomed to fail

CARACAS (Venezuela), 1 Feb—Venezuela, the loudest critic of US free-trade plans for the hemisphere, said on Friday Washington would not be able to complete the trade pact by January 1, 2005, because it would be “defeated from the inside.”

Speaking before trade talks in Mexico next week, Venezuelan negotiator Victor Alvarez said President Hugo Chavez’s government was opposed to the Free Trade Area of the Americas proposal in its current form.

“The game is blocked... The conviction is there won’t be any FTAA by 2005,” Alvarez told a news conference in Caracas.

Despite threats by left-winger Chavez to pull out of the negotiations, Alvarez said oil-rich Venezuela would stay in the talks to try to force radical changes in the US plan to create a free-trade area from Alaska to Patagonia.

“We might as well go for the fight. The FTAA is going to be defeated from the inside,” he said.

At every summit for three years, Chavez has condemned the Americas free-trade plan as an “imperial” scheme by Washington to extend US commercial power over Latin America.

He has called the FTAA “the road to hell,” dismissed the negotiations as a waste of time and predicted that poor regional economies

would be placed at the mercy of voracious US corporations “like throwing a pig to an alligator.”

Alvarez will join negotiators from around the continent for FTAA talks in the Mexican city of Puebla starting Monday.

He said Venezuela would press for concessions from Washington in areas like reducing farm subsidies, respecting intellectual property rights and allowing sovereign states the freedom to apply their own domestic purchasing policies.

“Venezuela will do eve-

rything possible to radically modify the philosophy behind the (US) proposal,” Alvarez added.

Although Chavez has so far played the noisiest role against the FTAA, the left-leaning presidents of Brazil and Argentina, Luiz Inacio Lula da Silva and Nestor Kirchner, have also criticized US President George W Bush’s free-trade crusade.

Alvarez said English-speaking Caribbean nations also backed Venezuela’s position.

MNA/Reuters

“Columbia” shuttle debris in last resting place

CAPE CANAVERAL (Florida), 1 Feb—NASA allowed reporters to see debris from the space shuttle *Columbia* in its final resting place on Friday, a space that is part shrine and part laboratory, described by a NASA official as “the Arlington Cemetery for *Columbia*”.

The viewing of the depository, at Cape Canaveral where the US space agency launches its shuttles, took place just ahead of Sunday’s first anniversary of the most recent US space disaster. The 34,147 pounds of recovered shuttle pieces are neatly labelled and bar-coded and displayed or crated with a sense of order and composure that contrasts sharply with the violent demise of the United States’ oldest shuttle craft.

Columbia, returning to Earth with a wing damaged during lift-off 16 days earlier, broke apart in the skies over Texas on February 1, 2003, killing all seven astronauts aboard.—MNA/Reuters

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Iraq’s Governing Council bans Al-Jazeera from government offices, news conferences

BAGHDAD, 1 Feb—US-appointed Governing Council has barred the Arab news channel Al-Jazeera from government offices and news conferences for one month, the council said in a statement Saturday.

The ban on one of the most popular television news stations in the Middle East went into effect Wednesday and is punishment for the disrespect the station allegedly showed toward prominent Iraqis, according to the statement. It is the second such ban against Al-

Jazeera since September.

Al-Jazeera spokesman Jihad Ballout told The Associated Press that “it’s yet another unfortunate situation.”

“Al-Jazeera is trying to ascertain exactly what happened with a view to rectify the matter,” Ballout said from Qatar, where Al-Jazeera is based. “All that Al-Jazeera wants is to do its job professionally.”

According to the council’s statement, Al-Jazeera has shown “disrespect to Iraq and its people and harmed prominent religious and national figures.”

The statement listed senior Shiite clerics Mohsen al-Hakim and his sons Mohammed Baqir al-Hakim and Mohammed Mahdi al-Hakim as among those whose memory have been tarnished by Al-Jazeera. It also mentioned Mustafa Barzani, the late father of Kurdish leader Massoud Barzani.

The statement did not say when Al-Jazeera is supposed to have committed the offenses but regional news reports have cited the station’s controversial program “The Opposite Direction,” or “Ittigah al-Moakis.”

Adnan Pachachi, the Governing Council’s current President, described the ban as a warning to Al-Jazeera for what he said was a “very abusive” program. He told a news conference that he hoped Al-Jazeera would in the future refrain from such “inflammatory” material.

Internet

In Iraq, anti-US pop music sells

FALLUJAH, 1 Feb—The rhythm, you can almost dance to. The lyrics call for guerrilla war.

“America has come and occupied Baghdad,” singer Sabah al-Jenabi croons. “The army and people have weapons and ammunition. Let’s go fight and call out the name of God.”

Americans have flooded Iraq’s airwaves with radio stations playing innocuous Western and Arab pop tunes. But the next battle Americans may have to fight in Iraq may be waged in the cassette and CD players of Iraqis.

The US-led occupation force has outlawed media calling for violence against coalition troops or other Iraqis. But on the streets of Baghdad, Fallujah and Ramadi, al-Jenabi’s cassette tapes — and others calling for violent insurrection against the Americans — are the hottest sound around.

“The men of Fallujah are men of hard tasks,” al-Jenabi sings in an Arabic dialect peculiar to people from Fallujah and Ramadi. “They paralyzed America with rocket-propelled grenades. May God protect them from (American) airplanes. “ Even Iraqis generally supportive of the US occupation admit they’re attracted to the music.

Driver Ahmad Hossein plays al-Jenabi’s cassettes in his car. “I like the music and the lyrics,” said Hossein, a member of Iraq’s Shiite majority, which was oppressed by Saddam Hussein’s regime. “I don’t know why. I don’t agree with what it’s saying. It just makes me feel good.”

Though the lyrics are contemporary, the music is based on a form of centuries-old religious music called praising. The Sufi-influenced praisers say they’ve been told by the coalition authorities not to write songs that call for violence.

Dan Senor, a spokesman for the coalition, told reporters recently that “any sort of public expression used in an institutionalized sense that would incite violence against the coalition or Iraqis” is banned under Iraq’s current rules.

Yet CD shops and cassette stalls sell al-Jenabi’s albums as well as those of other musicians calling for war against the Americans for about 2,000 Iraqi dinars (less than \$1.25). They appear to be mass-produced by the CD shops themselves, with different versions carrying the imprints of the shops selling them. —Internet



A car is smashed under a concrete protection wall following an explosion in front of a local police station in the city of Mosul, some 500 km north of Iraqi capital Baghdad on 31 Jan, 2004.—INTERNET

British protesters seek Iraq inquiry

LONDON, 1 Feb—About 200 protesters gathered outside the Prime Minister's residence Saturday to demand an inquiry into why Britain went to war in Iraq, while employees of the British Broadcasting Corp placed an ad supporting a BBC executive who resigned over a report on Iraqi weapons.

A majority of people in Britain think Prime Minister Tony Blair's reputation was hurt, not helped, by a judge's report that cleared the government of exaggerating evidence on Iraqi weapons of mass destruction, according to a poll published Saturday.

Blair had argued that military action was necessary to remove the threat from Saddam Hussein's alleged weapons, but coalition forces have so far failed to find evidence of such arms.

Waving posters that read "Blair," the demonstrators burned a copy of the report by senior judge Lord Hutton, which harshly criticized the BBC for alleging that the government knowingly hyped the threat from Iraqi arms.

"The report is exactly the whitewash and the establishment cover-up that we predicted, with a cherry on top," said George Galloway, a lawmaker vehemently opposed to the war who was expelled from Blair's Labour Party last year.

Meanwhile, thousands of BBC employees took out a full-page ad in The Daily Telegraph newspaper Saturday voicing support for their former director general, Greg Dyke, who quit after Lord Hutton issued his report. Andrew Gilligan, the correspondent who broadcast the radio piece that set off a bitter feud between the BBC and the government, stepped down on Friday, the third resignation prompted by the report.

Gilligan's on 29 May piece quoted an anonymous official as saying the government had "sexed up" intelligence

in a September 2002 dossier summing up evidence on Iraqi weapons for the public.

Government scientist David Kelly killed himself days after being identified as the source of the report, and Lord Hutton, a senior appeals judge, was appointed to investigate the death.

On Wednesday Hutton exonerated the government but excoriated the BBC, calling Gilligan's report "unfounded," the broadcaster's editorial procedures "defective" and the board of governors' oversight inadequate. BBC chairman Gavyn Davies quit Wednesday.

Although Lord Hutton largely cleared the government of any wrongdoing, a poll for Sunday's edition of the News of the World newspaper showed that 54 percent of people believed Blair's reputation had deteriorated following the report.

The survey, conducted by the ICM polling agency and released Saturday, found that 14 percent of respondents thought Blair's standing had improved as a result of Lord Hutton's findings.

But the BBC has also lost public confidence, according to the poll. It found that 56 percent of people believed they should not have to pay the annual fees on TV sets that fund the broadcaster.

ICM interviewed 533 adults on Jan. 29-30 for the poll, which had a margin of error of 4 percentage points.

Internet

India, Pakistan finalizing MoU for second hotline

NEW DELHI, 1 Feb—India and Pakistan are in the process of finalizing a draft memorandum of understanding (MoU) on setting up of a second hotline between the two countries, a senior Indian Coast Guard official said on Friday.

"We have exchanged a number of papers on the draft MoU," Vice-Admiral Sureesh Mehta, Director-General of Coast Guard told reporters here. The MOU is likely to figure in the talks between the two countries in Islamabad beginning on 16 February. —MNA/Xinhua



A US soldier takes cover as an Iraqi man (not in picture) opens fire and refuses to give up his weapon near a US military base in Tikrit.—INTERNET

Blair's trust ratings fall despite win over BBC

LONDON, 1 Feb — British Prime Minister Tony Blair's trust ratings have slumped despite his emphatic victory over the BBC in a long-running feud over Iraq, opinion polls showed on Friday.

As ousted BBC head Greg Dyke hit back at a judge's report which lambasted the broadcaster over its reporting, analysts noted the government's satisfaction at its win did not seem to be shared by the voting public.

"Tony Blair and other ministers may imagine they are now in the clear but a substantial majority of the public takes a different view," said Anthony King, professor of government at Essex University. Opinion polls in three newspapers on Friday and accusations of a whitewash suggested there may yet be a political price to pay.

An ICM poll in the *Guardian* showed Blair's trust rating down two points at minus 17 and that support for the invasion of Iraq to counter the threat

of still unfound chemical and biological weapons had fallen six points in a week to 47 percent. A Populus poll in the *Times* indicated public trust in both Blair and the BBC had fallen almost equally and a YouGov survey for the *Daily Telegraph* showed 52 percent of their sample thought Blair had behaved improperly.

"The poll figures...do give rise to very considerable concern, I think, among everybody involved in political life," said senior government minister Lord Falconer.

Kelly killed himself last July after being named as the source of the BBC's claim the government knowingly exaggerated the threat posed by Iraq — triggering a fierce battle between the government and the broadcaster.—MNA/Reuters

Briton arrested on drug charges in Thailand

BANGKOK, 1 Feb — A 35-year-old Briton was arrested in Thailand on Friday on charges of smuggling 9,000 ecstasy tablets with an estimated street value of five million baht (127,600 US dollars) into the country, police said.

Alan John Kiernan, who arrived in Thailand late on Thursday, was arrested while walking in downtown Bangkok. He is accused of bringing the pills in from Zurich, Switzerland. If found guilty, he could face the death penalty. "The pills were found wrapped neatly in a plastic bag and hidden in his sweat pants. They were specially made with several layers," one police officer said. Police said Kiernan had told them he wanted to sell the pills to foreigners in Bangkok. A British teenager, Michael Connell, was caught trying to bring 3,400 ecstasy tablets into Thailand in November. Connell, 19, who also faces the death penalty, pleaded not guilty in court on Monday.

MNA/Reuters

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Castro says "I will die fighting" if US invades Cuba

HAVANA, 1 Feb—Cuban President Fidel Castro vowed on Friday to die fighting "with a gun in my hand" if the United States invaded Cuba to overthrow his Communist government.

"I don't care how I die, but for sure, if they invade us, I will die fighting," the 77-year-old leader said at a meeting of anti-free trade activists from across the hemisphere.

Castro, the target of countless CIA assassination attempts in the 1960s, called on the Bush Administration to clarify to the world its policy was on Assassinating Foreign Leaders.

"We don't want a conflict, but we will not give an inch on our principles," Castro said in a rambling five-and-a-half-hour speech.

Castro said Cuba was prepared to resist invasion, with "hundreds of thousands" of soldiers ready to defend the island with guerilla tactics he had used in the Sierra Maestra mountains to seize power in 1959.

He said instructions have been given in the case he were to die in a surgical strike.

"This nation will never surrender. ... We have taken all the measures. Everyone knows what to do," Castro said.

Western diplomats said Cuban authorities were preparing the population for a possible invasion with training drills.

Castro spoke to more than 1,000 activists, from Andean Indians and landless Brazilians to Canadian postal workers, who met in Havana to plan protests against the US-backed Free Trade Area of the Americas.—MNA/Reuters

More Belgium-US trouble over criticism of US Army

BRUSSELS, 1 Feb—Belgium has again provoked the ire of the United States after its Defence Minister criticized the US Army, prompting a sharp phone call from Secretary of State Colin Powell, officials said on Friday.

Belgium has only recently got relations with Washington back on track after a falling out over the war in Iraq and Belgium's controversial war crimes law.

The latest row broke out over remarks by Defence Minister Andre Flahaut, which prompted Powell last Friday to telephone his Belgian counterpart Louis Michel, a government source told Reuters.

Flahaut, who has a record of irritating Washington, told the weekly *Humo* in an interview last week that if he was a US citizen he would vote Democrat in the November presidential election. He also said the US Army was inefficient.

"The Americans are throwing so much money at their Army that it simply can't function efficiently anymore. When they have to move 15 men from point 'A' to point 'B' they deploy three planes to make sure it works," Flahaut said.

"We deploy one plane, or better still, first check with an ally whether we can't take a ride on their plane."

MNA/Reuters



A soldier with the 101st Airborne Division kicks away a piece of a car bumper while posting security around a car bombing site at an Iraqi police station

on 31 Jan, 2004 in Mosul, Iraq.—INTERNET

Blair urged to admit Iraq mistake

LONDON, 1 Feb—Britain's Ex-Foreign Secretary Robin Cook has urged Prime Minister Tony Blair to admit that intelligence he presented to Parliament on Iraq was "wildly wrong", the British Broadcasting Corporation (BBC) reported Friday.

"It's getting embarrassing to watch our government still trying to deny reality," said Robin Cook, who resigned from British Cabinet as leader of the House of Commons last year in protest against Blair's policy supporting a war against Iraq.

He said the Prime Ministers should admit that although he believed information on supposed weapons of mass destruction "in all good faith", it was incorrect.

"Now that Lord Hutton has cleared Tony Blair of lying, he is in a strong position," he said. "He will never have a better opportunity to say that he believed in all good faith the intelligence he was given and he gave to Parliament, but that it has turned out to be wildly wrong."

Condoleezza Rice, the US' National Security Adviser has acknowledged possible flaws in pre-war intelligence, following former senior US weapons inspector David Kay's claims that intelligence that Iraq possessed

stockpiles of chemical and biological weapons were false.

"Now that even the White House has admitted they may have got it wrong, it's embarrassing to watch our government still trying to deny reality. The game is up," Cook said. "Does Britain now accept, as the US Government now seems to believe, that weapons of mass destruction will not be found?"

Blair is due to be quizzed over intelligence on Iraq's weapons of mass destruction (WMD) when he makes his regular appearance before the influential Commons liaison committee of select committee chairmen on Tuesday.

Shadow foreign secretary Michael Ancram also called on Tony Blair to explain why he still believed the WMD intelligence and pressed for an independent inquiry into the lead up to the Iraq war.

"It seems that Tony Blair is the only person still certain that weapons of mass destruc-

tion will definitely be found. He must explain why he is the odd man out and produce the evidence as to why," he said.

But the inquiry calls were brushed aside by Blair's official spokesman, who said the Iraq Survey Group should be allowed to complete its work. "The Prime Minister has said that he did believe the intelligence was right and he did believe there would be an explanation," he said.

MNA/Xinhua

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Iraqis demonstrate in Kufa, Iraq on 30 Jan, 2004.—INTERNET

Annan says UN election team to go to Iraq within days

BRUSSELS, 1 Feb—UN Secretary-General Kofi Annan said on Friday he would send a team to Iraq within days to explore the feasibility of holding an early election, after he received security assurances from US-led occupation forces.

"The coalition has promised to do (the) maximum to protect the team... so I think in the coming days, the team

will travel and start working," he told journalists on a visit to Brussels.

Annan sent security experts to Iraq last weekend to examine whether it was safe for UN international staff to return to Baghdad, where they suffered two deadly bombings last August and September that killed special envoy Sergio Vieira de Mello and many other UN relief workers.—MNA/Reuters

Malaysia prevents bird flu outbreak effectively

KUALA LUMPUR, 1 Feb—The measures taken by the government so far had been effective in preventing the outbreak of bird flu in Malaysia, Health Minister Chua Jui Meng said here on Friday.

"Although many countries, including our neighbours, have been affected by the outbreak, we are still safe," he told a Press conference. Chua said Malaysia was prepared to face the outbreak and had taken initial preventive steps by banning poultry imports from Thailand, besides drawing up specific plans of action if the disease spreads to Malaysia.

He said his ministry had not received any reports of the bird flu or avian influenza virus attacking the poultry bred in the country.

Chua said if the outbreak reaches Malaysia, the first step that must be taken was to destroy the chicken and ducks in the farms to ensure the virus did not infect human beings.

"This step has been taken in Hong Kong, the United States and in the Netherlands not long ago, it proved successful to contain the disease," he said.

Chua also urged livestock breeders to monitor and submit reports to the ministry as soon as possible if they spotted signs of infection in their animals besides carrying out immunization.

The ministry had also ordered hospitals and medical laboratories to be ready to face the possibility of dealing with the virus like conducting early diagnosis of the disease, quarantining or monitoring the affected areas, he said.

He said the Veterinary Services Department had

also been asked to monitor bird sanctuaries and other locations to detect if the bird flu virus was carried by migratory birds.

Earlier, Chua attended a meeting in Bangkok and discussed the bird flu outbreak along with agriculture and health ministers from the region, besides officials and experts from the European Union, the United States, the World Health Organization (WHO) and the UN Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO).

MNA/Xinhua

Second Baghdad blast kills one

BAGHDAD, 1 Feb—A blast ripped through a Baghdad neighbourhood late on Saturday killing at least one person and wounding several others, witnesses said.

The explosion was in the same Baldiyyat District of Baghdad where an earlier explosion killed at least five civilians, according to hospital sources.

Relatives said one man died on the way to hospital from shrapnel wounds sustained in the explosion.

"We heard the blast and saw that the deceased was missing," said Ali Muzan. "He died on the way to the hospital." US troops have warned of the possibility of increased violence ahead of the Muslim Eid al-Adha holiday, given that guerillas have often struck on significant dates.

MNA/Reuters



Claudia Hein (C), Inka Weickel (L), and Jana Neuhaus (R) pose for photographers after the Miss Germany election in Rust, Germany, on 31 Jan, 2004. Hein from the Nordrhein-Westfalen region won the competition ahead of Inka Weickel from Rheinland-Pfalz and Jana Neuhaus from Schleswig-Holstein.—INTERNET

Brazil's President urges battle against "WMD" of hunger

GENEVA, 1 Feb—Calling hunger a "weapon of mass destruction", Brazilian President Luiz Inacio Lula da Silva on Friday joined French President Jacques Chirac and others in demanding new and better funding for the fight against misery.

But the leaders, who also included United Nations Secretary-General Kofi Annan and Chilean President Ricardo Lagos, stopped short of giving immediate backing to Lula's call to tax some international transactions, such as the arms trade.

"If we want a safer world, we must fight for a more just and equitable world," said the burly former union leader. "There can be no peace without economic development and no peace, nor economic development without social justice," he added.

Lula, who has championed an international campaign against poverty since

taking office a year ago, said that hunger was a "weapon of mass destruction... that kills 24,000 people each day and 11 children each minute".

At the Brazilian's instigation, the four met in Geneva to urge more international resources be made available to help meet UN development goals, including a target of halving the number of hungry and undernourished people by 2015.

Chirac said hunger was "increasingly unacceptable" in a world which was also getting richer as trade grew, adding that the 50 billion US dollars a year that some agencies had estimated would be

needed to resolve the problem was a "mere drop of water."

But their 15-point declaration dodged an immediate decision on how this new financing was to be raised.

Instead, Brazilian and French experts would meet to examine new financing mechanisms, which could include such taxes as those proposed by Lula, and report back to their leaders by September.

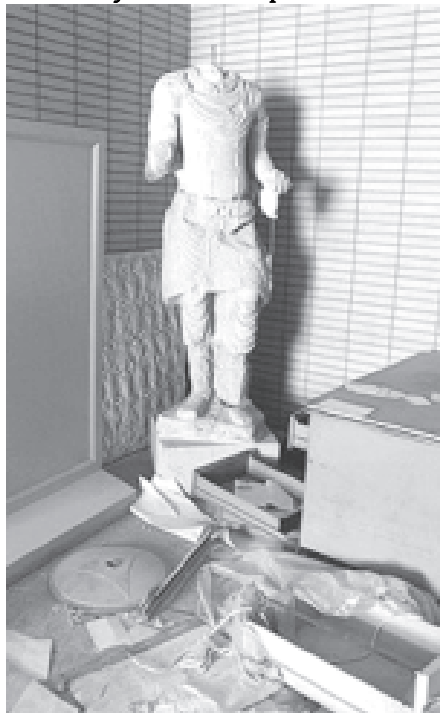
They would also study whether the best way to channel additional financing to the hungry would be through a special hunger fund, another Lula idea.

MNA/Reuters

Iraq under US and allies' occupation

Lost treasures of Iraq in the wake of US invasion

In the days following the US occupation of Baghdad in April 2003, the Iraq Museum was looted. Experts have so far been unable to make any comprehensive damage assessment of location. The full extent of the damage to the museum's collection may not be known for a long time, but it seems clear that thousands of items were either stolen or destroyed. Irrespective of



A statue is left in a room after a mob of looters ransacked and looted Iraq's largest archaeological museum in Baghdad.



Several members of the media and a US serviceman have been caught attempting to ship Iraqi paintings, weapons and other war souvenirs to America. At least 15 paintings, gold-plated firearms, ornamental knives, bonds and other items have been seized at airports in Atlanta, Boston, London and Washington on 23 April, 2003.

Lost treasures of Iraq

Picture	Item	Period
	Gold helmet of King Meskalamdug	2400 BC
	A statue of worshipper	2500 BC
	A grey stone bowl	3000 BC
	Fluted gold beaker	2400 BC
	Gold dagger	2400 BC
	Seated male figure	2400 BC
	Steatite bowl	3000 BC
	Spouted jar	3000 BC
	Upper part of a statuette	3000 BC
	Ivory plaque	8th century BC



A statue of former Iraqi President Abdel-Rahman Aref is seen at the Iraqi National Museum in Baghdad, Iraq, on 6 May, 2003, after being recovered. Work has begun on recovering some of civilization's earliest artifacts, items of incalculable value that disappeared in the orgy of looting that followed the US invasion of Iraq.

Troops 'are letting looters smuggle Iraqi antiquities'

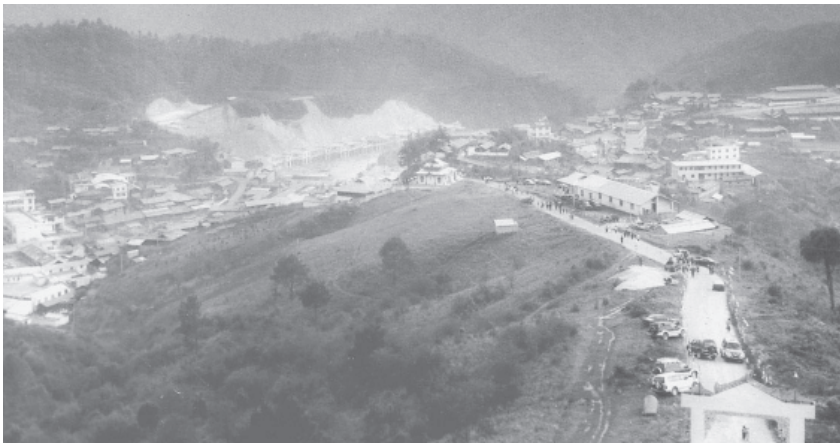
The American military was accused of doing nothing to prevent the mass smuggling of Iraq's antiquities.



A US soldier looks at a painting as workers at Baghdad's Archaeological Museum carry in some of the recovered items that had been looted following the US-led invasion to the Iraqi capital city.

Hailing the 57th Anniversary Union Day:

Development images of Kachin State in the time of the State Peace and Development Council



An aerial view of developing Panwa in Kachin State.

Development Sector	1988	2004
Agriculture		
Sown acreage	over 3.6 million	over 5.6 million
Paddy production	not sufficient	sufficient
Irrigation facility		
Diversion weir	-	4
Water pumping station	-	2
Transport		
Miles of road	2154	2686
Bridge	2	8
Communication		
Post office	64	73
Telegraph office	20	28
Auto-exchange	12	38
Rural communication centre	-	12
Ground satellite station	-	5
Microwave station	-	13



The 2688-foot-long Bala Min Htin Bridge across Ayeyawady River in Myinkyina, Kachin State.

Development Sector	1988	2004
Electric power		
Hydropower plant	-	4
Information		
TV retransmission station	2	18
Sub-printing house	-	1
Education (basic)		
High school	30	43
Middle school	68	85
Primary school	1080	1181
Education (higher)		
University	-	1
College	1	5
Health		
Hospital	14	18
Station hospital	17	20
Rural health centre	35	58
Rural health centre (branch)	182	206



The Kandawyan Thitkhet Diversion Weir in Waingmaw Township, Kachin State, which benefits 12,000 acres of farmland.



The three-storey main building of Government Technical Institute under construction in Mohnyin Township, Kachin State.



The scale model of Myitkyina Government Computer College.



Hopin Bridge, 200 feet long and 75 feet wide, plays a vital role in linking Kachin State to Central Myanmar.

Marching toward Golden Land in unity and amity

Unity is strength

National solidarity consolidated at the Panglong Conference was sharp and effective strength for the independence struggle. The people broke up the imperialists' colonial yoke with the strength of national solidarity and regained the independence. The British tried to break up the national solidarity of the people many times by sowing discord in national brethren but in vain. In time of emergency, national races who had lived together for thousands of years became united. The independence was regained on 4 January 1948 after sacrificing a lot of lives, blood and sweat of Myanmar national races. Independent Union of Myanmar built through the strength of solidarity of the national races has

stood tall among the nations of the world.

Only three months after regaining the independence, Burma Communist Party (BCP) holding extreme leftists and dogmatism went underground on 28 March 1948. It can be said that the BCP was the first to start internal insurgency. At the same time, Yebawbyu (People's Volunteer Organization-PVO) and other national race organizations revolted against the government. So, there was no peace nationwide.

And this threatened and harmed national solidarity and the situation posed danger to disintegration of the Union. These were crises of the Union of Myanmar that occurred between 1949 and 1950. National races who loved the Union

hand in hand with the Tatmadaw managed to overcome these crises with national solidarity. And peace was thus restored in the Union.

Meanwhile beginning 1951, KMT nationalist Chinese that intruded into Myanmar became a threat to the country as a decoy of the network of the imperialist spy organisation. The Tatmadaw together with national races drove out KMT intruders under Yangyiaung, Bayint-naung, Naganang and Mekong operations. Through political and diplomatic means, the country lodged a complaint with the United Nations against the plot of the imperialist spy with firm evidence.

The State prevented and warded off the KMT nationalist Chinese intrusion in Myanmar through military and political means and at the same time it had to solve the problem of internal political instability. International imperialist spies



In the auspicious morning of 4 January 1948, a ceremony to hoist State Flag to mark the Independence Day of the Union of Myanmar was held.

such, nation-building tasks could not be undertaken. For example, implementation of the Pyidawtha Plan with the assistance of imperialist spy was not successful and the plan deepened the poverty of the people and the country.

There was a conflict within the AFPFL

was assigned duties to temporarily lead the State after formation of the caretaker government. The Tatmadaw government promptly carried out the tasks on peace and tranquillity and prevalence of law and order and welfare of the people. Armed forces were reorganized in accord with the constitution. Under the supervision of the Tatmadaw government the Pyithu Hluttaw election was held on 6 February 1960. Nationalities Hluttaw election on 29 February in a free and fair manner.

On 4 April, the State power was transferred to the clean AFPFL (Pa Hta Sa) government which won the election. In this way, the Tatmadaw managed to overcome the political difficulties that broke out during the period from 1958 to 1960. It safeguarded the national solidarity and removed the danger of the breaking up of the Union. However, there were major conflicts within the government and forming of "U", "Bo" and "Thakin" groups in the ruling gov-

ernment resulting from the distribution of the ministers portfolios in the government. Conflicts also took place because of the pledges made before the election. These situations created the problem to cause disintegration of national solidarity and misunderstanding among the national races. The ruling government lost political and organizational power and support of the people.

The international colonialist group took advantage of the situation and got in touch with some Sawbwas who did not want to give up their feudal power and privileges and some political parties with racial views. Unable to solve the problem completely, the AFPFL government tried to organize a seminar between the leaders of the hills regions and the plains from 24 to 28 February in 1962 in order to appease them. All the situations however led to threatening the national solidarity and the perpetuation of the Union.

(See page 9)

Kyai Phyu

interfered in the internal affairs of others with the help of minions using diplomatic channel, economic assistance, education and propaganda methods. As non-governmental organizations such as Ford Foundation and Asia Foundation they penetrated in political, economic, social, literature and cultural aspects. As

government. In 1958, the AFPFL government split into two — stable and clean. The two vied for power in the Pyithu Hluttaw. The clean won seats in the Pyithu Hluttaw with the alliance of opposition Pa Ma Nya Ta. The clean AFPFL government could not tackle the problem of violence and anarchy that erupted due to internal political unrest. This harmed national solidarity. Political problems threatening the Union arose. On 28 September 1958, it transferred State power to the Tatmadaw government through the Pyithu Hluttaw. The Tatmadaw



The remnants of KMT No (93) LID seen preparing to leave for home as Myanmar Tatmadaw drive them out of Myanmar.

All the situations however led to threatening the national solidarity and the perpetuation of the Union. The Tatmadaw therefore took over the responsibilities of the State on 2 March 1962 so as to stabilize the country after forming the Revolutionary Council. Later on 11 June 1963, the Revolutionary Council invited armed insurgent groups in a bid to make peace with them through negotiation and to restore stability in the country.

Our national brethren, our own might

The Tatmadaw therefore took over the responsibilities of the State on 2 March 1962 so as to stabilize the country after forming the Revolutionary Council. Later on 11 June 1963, the Revolutionary Council invited armed groups in a bid to make peace with them through negotiations and to restore stability in the country. The White Flag Communist Party (BCP), the Red Flag Communist Party and other six insurgent groups totalling eight groups came to meet with the Revolutionary Council. Of them, only the Karen Revolutionary Council-KRC group led by Saw Hanta Tha Hmwe reached agreement with the Revolutionary Council.

In order to build national solidarity the Revolutionary Council abolished all political parties. In the post-independence period, the AFPFL government and the Pa-hta-sa (Union) government were not able to carry out work effectively for development of national races on account of the danger of internal strife and the interparty splits. The development measures and road transportation tasks being carried out at bor-



Prime Minister General Khin Nyunt cordially shakes hands with U Aung Kham Hti, leader of PaO National Peace Group.

der areas did not meet with success either in the time of the Revolutionary Council government because armed insurgent groups were dubious about such measures as they were fooled by the colonialists.

In other words, the lack of tranquillity and stability in the region then distanced the development opportunity. Therefore, the regional stability is of great importance in developing a region or a country. The restoration of peace and stability in Myanmar today accounts for the unity of national brethren and unshakeable Union Spirit.

With the changing

situation and rising repercussion in socialist countries in addition to the personal as well as functional weaknesses, the leftist and rightist political parties, external and internal as well as above-ground and under-ground elements created conditions to cause disintegration of the Union, as the Socialist Programme Party government endeavoured to turn the country into a socialist state. There arose political and administrative hardships, followed by anarchic acts along with lootings, cases of arson and torture. For the worst of it, the situation was on the verge of the disintegration of national soli-

darity. There were also signs of disintegration of the Union. Owing to such situations, anarchic acts loomed large in the country. The international colonialist conspirators assuming themselves to be parliamentarians and diplomats tried to find elements who would follow their dictates. And they also provided their lackeys with financial and political support. At the same time, the BCP group and other groups plotted to seize State Power by trying to take an upper hand politically and militarily.

Owing to those circumstances, the Tatmadaw had to assume the responsibilities of the State on 18 September 1988 as an answer to the call of national duty on the ground of the unity of national people. With the national policy — non-disintegration of the Union, non-disintegration of national solidarity and perpetuation of sovereignty, the Tatmadaw has been making peace with armed groups in order to build national unity since the beginning of 1989. So far, a total of 17 armed groups have returned to

Poem

To the New Golden Nation

* Myanmar means there is unity
Not to allow pride of nation and people to wane
Nationalism was given priority
Sacrificed sweat, blood and life
For generations to be victorious
Laid down with forethought for future
To be more than sufficient in food
With emergence of a strong industrial era
And electric power provided for
With roads, bridges, dams in all regions
Like flowers blooming step by step
With strength and tenacity, hand in hand
We will soon arrive at the New Golden Nation.

* Myanmar means equality in thought
In all States and Divisions
Mass of nationals as a family
Will not be enslaved by colonialists
Repulsed and crushed and
Independence regained with unity of thought
Even if a trap is laid through deliberate schemes
Hand-in-hand with much imagination
A new era of human resources
Ushered in throughout all regions
Like stars spangled step by step
With strength and tenacity, marching forward
We will soon arrive at the New Golden Nation.

* Toward an era of the New Golden Nation
Completely in this new journey
Our throne, our sovereignty, amazingly
From the sparkling era
We waned and fell into servitude
The reason why we suffered thus
Must be reassessed for future sake
For even colonialists wedge and interfere
With resolve never to be destroyed
We've found the right path, let's move forward
True blood brothers, Myanmars
To step forward with unity
A new era has dawned
Let's move forward unitedly.

Thiha Aung (Trs)

Hailing the 57th Anniversary Union Day



After ending meeting with the Revolutionary Council, members of Communist party turned their back on people and went back to the jungles.

the legal fold. They are now actively cooperating with the Government, the Tatmadaw and national people in carrying out the nation-building tasks and taking development measures. There will be no better way than to express that they become united in the time of emergency as they are our brethren and our strength.

In a nutshell, the entire national people living in the Union are now working together energetically with breathing

nationalism and patriotism in tandem with unyielding Union Spirit for the emergence of a peaceful, modern, developed and discipline-flourishing democratic state in the future.

Thus, what is important is to be always aware of internal and external destructive elements including the wicked colonialists bent on undermining the unity and Union Spirit of the national brethren.

Translation: NY+KTY

Regional stability is of great importance in developing a region or a country. The restoration of peace and stability in Myanmar today accounts for the unity of national brethren and unshakeable Union Spirit.

Prime Minister receives Chinese guests

YANGON, 1 Feb—Prime Minister General Khin Nyunt received President of China Export and Credit Insurance Corporation of the People's Republic of China Mr Tang Ruoxin at Zeyathiri Beikman Hall on Konmyinthta this evening. Present on the occasion together with the Prime Minister were Minister for Agriculture and Irrigation Maj-Gen Nyunt Tin, Minister for Industry-1 U Aung Thuang, Minister for National Planning and Economic Development U Soe Tha, Minister for Foreign Affairs U Win Aung, Minister for Transport Maj-Gen Hla Myint Swe, Minister for Electric Power Maj-Gen Tin Htut, Deputy Minister for Industry-2 Lt-Col Khin Maung Kyaw, Deputy Minister for Finance and Revenue Col Hla Thein Swe, Deputy Minister for Foreign Affairs U Khin Maung Win and Director-General of Protocol Department Thura U Aung Htet. The President of China Export and Credit Insurance Corporation of the PRC was accompanied by Vice-President Mr Liang Zhidong and PRC Ambassador to Myanmar Mr Li Jinjun.

MNA



Prime Minister General Khin Nyunt greets Mr Tang Ruoxin of China Export & Credit Insurance Corporation. — MNA

Prime Minister looks into...

(from page 1)

The Prime Minister instructed to upgrade a BEHS (Branch) into a BEHS, an affiliated BEHS into a BEHS (Branch).

Afterwards, the Prime Minister presented a TV, a VCD player and a set of computer for the school through the schoolhead.

The Prime Minister then visited No 2 BEHS in Lewe and presented a TV, a VCD player and a set of computer for the school through Schoolhead U Kyaw Aye.

National Health Committee Chairman Prime Minister General Khin Nyunt and party arrived at Lewe People's Hospital where Medical Superintendent Dr Aye Mar Kyi, doc-

was welcomed by Medical Superintendent Dr Myo Thant, specialists, doctors and nurses. He inspected the surgical theatre, surgical, child ward, delivery room and outpatient unit and gave instructions on renovation and sanitation tasks.

The Prime Minister met with Yamethin District and Township PDC members and officials at the hall of the hospital. Yamethin District PDC Chairman Lt-Col Aung Kyi Shein reported on education and health tasks in the district and requirements. Officials concerned also presented reports on growing and production of monsoon and summer paddy, growing of beans and

opment of the regions.

He said regional authorities are responsible for implementation of guidance of high-ranking officials in accord with State's development arrangements and measures for improvement of quality of life of the people.

Officials at different levels are to make field trips to grassroots levels and to fulfil requirements for better transport in the region, success of agricultural, livestock breeding and other economic enterprises, improvement of education and health standard of rural people, he said.

He said township level departmental official are fully responsible for rural development. Only when the requirements of local people are ful-

ling of irrigated farming.

Minister for Electric Power Maj-Gen Tin Htut reported on construction of diversion tunnel and related buildings, power intake and underground power station that has 38 tunnels, installation of machinery and 230 KVA power grid and Pinyinmana power station (Branch), being constructed by the ministry. The Prime Minister gave instructions on systematic implementation of the projects, durability and construction of the buildings in accord with the standard set.

The Prime Minister inspected construction tasks for the spillway and the main rapel-filled dam, digging of the tunnel, and installation of four machines at powerhouse. The Paunglaung multi-purpose dam is being implemented on Paunglaung River 11 miles to the east of Pinyinmana. On completion, it will supply water to 35,000 acres of land and generate 911 million kilowatt hours.

Afterwards, the Prime Minister and party arrived at Central Institute of Civil Service (Upper Myanmar) in Pinyinmana Township to attend the conclusion ceremony of Special Refresher Course No 1 for university/college teachers.

On arrival at Pinyinmana, Minister for Forestry Brig-Gen Thein Aung, Pinyinmana Station Commander Brig-Gen Min Aung Hlaing and military and civil officers welcomed the Prime Minister and

party.

At the guest house of National Kandawgyi Garden in Pinyinmana, Minister Brig-Gen Thein Aung reported on arrangements being made for natural landmarks of states and divisions in the extended part of the garden. The Prime Minister and party looked around the garden and inspected storage of water, growing of trees and maintenance tasks.

At the briefing hall of Coffee Research and Development Centre in Pinyinmana, Minister for Agriculture and Irrigation Maj-Gen Nyunt Tin and officials reported to the Prime Minister on coffee sown acreage and production of states and divisions in Myanmar, land reclamation for coffee plantations covered in the project to extend growing of coffee on 100,000 acres, arrangements for growing of coffee between Pinyinmana and Naungkio townships in line with the guidance of the Head of State, arrangements to supply water and distribution of coffee saplings.

After giving necessary instructions, the Prime Minister heard the reports of private entrepreneurs and attended to the needs. He then greeted FAO resident representative Mr Tang Zhengping who offers help to grow coffee.

The Prime Minister viewed the sample mushrooms and various medicines produced from mushrooms. He inspected coffee nursery,

macadamia plantation, coffee crusher and lab. At the Medical Research Department (Upper Myanmar), Director-General Dr Htay Aung and staff welcomed the Prime Minister and party.

The director-general reported on research works for producing medicine from indigenous medicinal plants for malaria, TB, diabetes, hypertension, and diarrhoea, collection of 449 medicinal plants from states and divisions and organization of scholars for research works. The Prime Minister gave instructions to systematically set up an indigenous medicine garden.

After looking around there, the Prime Minister and party proceeded to Mandalay International Airport and arrived back here in the evening.

Minister for Information Brig-Gen Kyaw Hsan who accompanied the Prime Minister on 30 January night met with the Yamethin District Staff Officer, and staff officers of Pinyinmana, Lewe, Tatkon and Pyawbwe township Information and Public Relations Department at the IPRD office in Pinyinmana.

Yamethin District Staff Officer U Maung Ko and township staff officers reported on implementation of tasks. Pinyinmana TV Retransmission Station Head reported on retransmission of TV programmes to three townships. The minister gave necessary instructions.

MNA



Prime Minister General Khin Nyunt inspects construction of tunnel at the entrance to the hydro-electric power station at Paunglaung Multi-purpose Dam Project in Pinyinmana Township in Mandalay Division on 31-1-2004. — MNA

tors and nurses welcomed them. After looking around there, the Prime Minister instructed to upgrade the 16-bed hospital into a 25-bed one. They stopped for the night at Pinyinmana.

On the next morning, the Prime Minister and party paid obeisance to Presiding Sayadaw of KanU monastery of Mahasi Sasana Yeiktha Sayadaw Agga Maha Kammahtanacariya Bhaddanta Vajama and members of the Sangha at Mingala Zeyon Pariyatti Sarthintaik in Pinyinmana.

The Prime Minister also visited Pinyinmana People's Hospital (100 bed) where he

pulses, industrial crops and sugarcane and local rice sufficiency.

Minister for Agriculture and Irrigation Maj-Gen Nyunt Tin presented a supplementary report.

Prime Minister fulfilled the requirements. In his discussions, he said officials from central level laid down national plans for harmonious development of all parts of the Union and raising of socio-economic life of national people. They made trips to grassroots level and fulfilled requirements for improvement of economic basic foundations, education and health standard, transport and devel-

filled can progress be made in the rural regions.

He spoke of the need for them to actively participate in rural development tasks after formation of committees on various sectors under the supervision of departments concerned. He called on them to strive for realization of the objectives.

The Prime Minister and party then flew to Paunglaung multi-purpose dam in Pinyinmana Township. At the briefing hall there, Minister Maj-Gen Nyunt Tin reported matters on construction of main rapel-filled dam and spillway built by the Irrigation Department and launch-



The hydro-electric power station seen at Paunglaung Multi-purpose Dam Project in Pinyinmana Township in Mandalay Division on 31-1-2004. — MNA

Myanmar soccer team leaves for Thailand

YANGON, 1 Feb —Minister for Sports Brig-Gen Thura Aye Myint this morning met members of the Myanmar team which will take part in the U-18 soccer tournament of BIMST-EC member nations to be held in Phuket, Thailand and spoke words of encouragement to them at the airport.

The soccer team was seen off by officials of the Ministry of Sports and Myanmar Football Federation.

The team led by Deputy Director-General U Thein Aung of the Sports and Physical Education Department comprises 25 members—five manager/coach/referees and 20 footballers. MFF President U Win Aung (Chairman, Dagon International Ltd) and Secretary U Tin Aung also accompanied the team. —MNA

Don't smoke

Pakokku U Ohn Pe literary award winners announced

YANGON, 1 Feb —With the interest of the literary funds donated by Pakokku U Ohn Pe to the State, literary awards have been presented yearly since 1993. The winners of the 11th Pakokku U Ohn Pe literary award were announced today.

In the poem anthology category, Kaung Nyunt Wai (Yesagyo) won the first prize, Maung Pyi Hline (Thandwe) the second and Shwe Hinth (MU) the third.

In the novel category, Patheingyi Aung Than Oo won the first prize, Shi (Ingyin) the second and Thwe Hta Nyo (Thakkala) the third. In short story anthology category, Thein Zaw (Shweli Oo) won the first prize, Kyaw Phone Myint (Chemistry) the second and Ko Zaw Htay (Culture) the third.

In the thesis category, Ni Nyein (Anyatekkatho) won the first prize, Htan Hlaing the second, and Shin Htwe Yin (Anthropology) the third.

In the research literary category, Min Shin Aung (Twantay) won the first, U Hsaung (Forestry) the second and Shwenaga Tin Win the

third. The life-long literary award for 2003 went to Sayamagyi Daw Yin Yin (Saw Hmon Nyin).

The winners of Pakokku U Ohn Pe scholarship and winners from the University of Culture will be announced. The prize-presentation ceremony for the literary awards will be held in Pakokku on 22 February (Sunday).

Award winners are to contact the Chief Editor, Sarpay Beikman, 529-531, Merchant Street, Yangon. Ph- 252560, 240048 and 381449. —MNA



Hlawga Feedstuff factory of Ministry of Livestock and Fisheries in Shwepyitha Township. — MNA



Progress in construction of Yangon Institute of Computer Science in Shwepyitha Township in Yangon North District. — MNA



Progress in construction of Yangon Institute of Computer Science in Shwepyitha Township in Yangon North District. — MNA



School buildings at Yangon West University construction site in Htantabin Township in Yangon North District. — MNA

41st Myamma Gems Emporium from 13 to 21 March

YANGON, 1 Feb —The 41st Myamma Gems Emporium will be held on 13 March 2004 and the national gems entrepreneurs are to contact the Myamma Gems Enterprise (Head Office) not later than 10 February to ensure the sale of their gems and jewellery at the gems emporium.

As foreign gems merchants are filled with the aspiration to buy quality gems, jade and pearls, the new gems merchants in addition to the gems merchants who attended the previous gems emporia have been making contact with the MGE to attend the 41st Myamma Gems

Emporium.

The MGE has been coordinating with the departments concerned to enable the gems entrepreneurs to have the right to import fuel, dynamites and other related equipment to be used in gems mining with the export earnings realized from the sale of gems

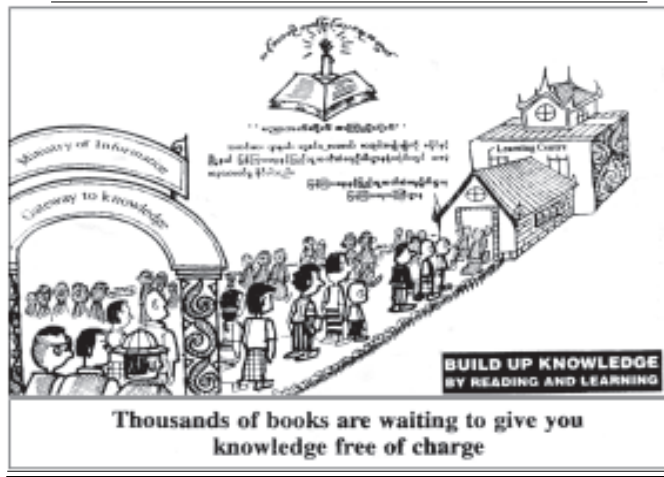
and jewellery at the gems emporium.

Thus, the gems entrepreneurs are to contact the MGE for fixing the floor prices of gems and jewellery to be put on sale at the gems emporium as well as other requirements during the fixed days

MNA

Minister meets Karate-do team

YANGON, 1 Feb — Myanmar Olympic Committee Chairman Minister for Sports Brig-Gen Thura Aye Myint met with members of Myanmar Karate-do team who are going to participate in the 6th Asia Karate-do Federation Senior Karate-do Championship to be held in the People's Republic of China from 3 to 9 February, and attend the Karate-do Conference and Asia Level Karate-do Coaching Course at National Sports Stadium-1 this afternoon. First, the minister was introduced to each member of the team and he heard reports on arrangements for participating the championship. The team includes eight members led by Vice President of Myanmar Karate-do Federation. — MNA



ADVERTISEMENTS

China's auditors recovered 14.82b yuan last year

BEIJING, 1 Feb— China's National Audit Office recovered 14.82 billion yuan (1.79 billion US dollars) last year after auditing more than 130,000 work units across the country, Auditor-General Li Jinhua said Friday at a national conference in Beijing.

Auditors helped to save 1.01 billion yuan (122 million US dollars) in budgetary allocations and subsidies and returned 9.07 billion yuan (1.1 billion US dollars) to allocating bodies. They also forwarded 1,867 cases to prosecution and disciplinary authorities, including 13 major cases involving more than one billion yuan (121 million US dollars) that were directly reported to the State Council.

Li said the financial malpractice fell into three main categories:

- Units and individuals cheating on individual consumption loans, such as housing and car loans, with false documents, and local governments applying for huge city building loans beyond their repayment abilities.
- Enterprises cheating on huge loans by writing false bank acceptance bills without any real trading.
- Criminals colluding with bank employees in fraudulently obtaining loans involving affiliated enterprises, causing serious credit fund losses.

Li said the office also organized economic liability audits of leading members of the former state-run National Power Corporation last year, finding that slack management had caused serious state assets losses. Audits of the implementation of central budgets was another focus as uncovering problems in the distribution and management of the budgets and subsidies from the central government for local expenditure was always a priority, Li said. — *MNA/Xinhua*

HK's Public Health Laboratory Centre opens

HONG KONG, 1 Feb—The Public Health Laboratory Centre of the Hong Kong Health Department opened here Friday, aiming to provide hospitals and the public with services such as microbiological tests and neonatal screening.

Yeoh Eng-king, secretary for health, welfare and food of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region government, said at the opening ceremony that Hong Kong's microbiology laboratories played an important role during the severe acute respiratory syndrome (SARS) outbreak. He believed that the centre will become an indispensable unit for the prevention and control of infectious diseases in Hong Kong in the future. As introduced by Yeoh, the Centre's Microbiology laboratories provide public health and microbiology laboratory services to clinics, hospitals and other health care institutions in Hong Kong. The laboratories process patients' specimens and surveillance samples for the diagnosis and screening of infections.

According to the Health Department, The Government Virus Unit of the Centre is a specialized laboratory for the diagnosis and surveillance of viral, chlamydial and rickettsial infections. It is designated by the World Health Organization as the National Influenza Centre and National Poliovirus Laboratory for Hong Kong and Macao.

The centre also works on common diseases of neonates. The Neonatal Screening Laboratory is the main local service provider in neonatal screening in Hong Kong that serves both public and private hospitals. The laboratory is equipped with modern analyzers and is run by a team of proficient medical, scientific and technical staff. — *MNA/Xinhua*

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Dated: 2 February 2004

National Bird Flu Prevention HQs founded in China

BEIJING, 1 Feb — The State Council on Friday decided to establish the National Bird Flu Prevention Headquarters in an effort to intensify the prevention and control work on bird flu.

Vice-Premier Hui Liangyu was appointed director-general of the headquarters, and State Councilor Hua Jianmin was appointed deputy director-general.

The headquarters consists of the State Development and Reform Commission, Ministry of Finance, Ministry of Health, Ministry of Agriculture, State Administration of Quality Supervision, Inspection and Quarantine, State Administration for Industry and Commerce, Ministry of Science and Technology, Ministry of Commerce and General Administration of Customs.

The headquarters office was located in the Ministry of Agriculture. — *MNA/Xinhua*

Donate blood

ပြည်တွင်းပြန်လှူငွေ

China committed to active participation in regional cooperation

TAGAYTAY (Philippines), 1 Feb— China is committed to active participation in regional cooperation and will, as always, attach importance to expanding and deepening cooperation with Latin American countries, a senior Chinese official said Friday.

At the plenary session of the Second Foreign Ministers' Meeting of the Forum for East Asia-Latin America (FEALAC) here, Chinese Vice-Foreign Minister Wang Yi said China is committed to opening wider to the out-

side world and active participation in regional cooperation, and stands ready to make its contribution to the sound growth of the forum.

"I am very pleased to announce that in the next two years, China will continue to host group visit to China by senior Latin American diplomats and a series of programs for cultural exchanges and cooperation," Wang said.

"At the same time, China is considering positively to continue the training course for Senior Civil Servants from Latin American and Caribbean countries," he added.

Likewise, Wang said for the past 25 years, the Chinese economy has been growing rapidly at an average annual rate of 9.4 per cent, and as a result, its importance has increased to the Asian and world economy.

Nevertheless, he added, China are still the largest developing country that faces daunting tasks of development and still requires many years of hard work to

achieve a comprehensive, coordinated and sustainable development in economic, social and environmental areas.

Wang also said China's economic and social development is fundamentally aimed at the well-being of its people, with rural population living below the poverty line reduced to 30 million in 2000 from the original 250 million in 1978.

The Chinese Government will vigorously press ahead with poverty-relief through development so that the poor will be lifted out of poverty as soon as possible and the national economy will grow with a larger scale and on a higher plane, he added.

Delegates from 32 member states, including the newly admitted Guatemala and Nicaragua, met in Tagaytay City, south to Manila to give the moving will and the guiding spirit of the members to the Manila Plan of Action, which is expected to be adopted Saturday. — *MNA/Xinhua*

MyDoom author sought as Microsoft offers reward

SEATTLE, 1 Feb— Microsoft Corp offered a 250,000 US dollars reward on Thursday for the person responsible for the MyDoom worm, as the reported number of infected computers more than doubled overnight.

The world's largest software maker said it would pay the money for information leading to the arrest and conviction of those responsible for unleashing a variant of the malicious software code, called MyDoom.b, which is designed to attack Microsoft's web site in an apparent attempt to shut it down this weekend.

The Microsoft offer follows a similar 250,000 US dollars reward offered by SCO Group Inc, the small software maker suing International Business Machines Corp. over the use of code for the Linux operating system. The first version of the worm was designed to attack the web site of SCO, which has drawn ire of Linux advocates.

MyDoom, also known as Novarg or Shimgapi, has infected computers around the globe by enticing users to open a file attachment that releases a programme that potentially allows other attackers to gain unauthorized access.

Computer security experts got a little closer to finding the perpetrator, who apparently signed the worm with the name "Andy". "There's no way to tell if that's the author's real name," said Craig Schmugar, a virus research manager at Network Associates Inc.'s McAfee anti-virus unit.

Schmugar said MyDoom also contained a message from the author, "I'm just doing my job, nothing personal, sorry."

Computers infected by the worm can be turned into launchpads for other attacks. Network Associates said the number of infected computers more than doubled to 400,000 or 500,000 as of Thursday, up from Wednesday's estimate of 100,000 to 200,000 machines.

Computer security vendor Symantec Corp has detected thousands of attempts to contact infected computers, suggesting they could be used to spawn new attacks.

MyDoom, which is designed to entice the recipient of an email to open an attachment with an .exe, .scr, .zip or .pif extension, are a form of spam, often with official-looking subject lines and addresses, leading many into believing they are from network administrators. — *MNA/Reuters*

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(For Allen & Gledhill, Advocates & Solicitors, Singapore.)

Dated: 2 February, 2004

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India wants peaceful relations with neighbours

NEW DELHI, 1 Feb— Indian Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee Saturday said that India wants to have peaceful, friendship and cooperative relations with all its neighbours and resolve all outstanding issues with Pakistan through dialogues.

Addressing the on-going Global Convention on Peace and Non-violence, Vajpayee said that India is alive to the responsibility to contribute to peace, friendship and co-operation both in the region and around the world.

Speaking of the South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC) summit held earlier this month in Islamabad, the Prime Minister said that the summit was a major step forward in regional cooperation. He urged the countries in the region to work collectively to change South Asia's image and standing in the world.

Addressing a galaxy of

dignitaries including diplomats, Gandhians and others, Vajpayee said that the modern world was seeing new threats to peace and terrorism inspired by religious extremism.

The threat of terrorism had to be dealt with firmly — both through the action of individual nations and through international solidarity, he said, expressing the confidence that this was a passing phase and the world's collective efforts would succeed in dealing with this menace.

The Prime Minister said that certain objective factors like power of democracy and treaties adopted by the inter-

national community for peace and disarmament have strengthened the forces of peace relative to the forces of violence.

He noted that the importance of these treaties should not be belittled and all countries should act upon these treaties with sincerity and great powers have a greater responsibility than others to act with responsibility and self-restraint.

"Collectively, we must take the world swiftly towards the goal of disarmament and, specifically, elimination of all weapons of mass destruction in the 21st Century," he said.

MNA/Xinhua

Hu Jintao, Arab League leader meet to boost ties

CAIRO, 1 Feb— Chinese President Hu Jintao met with Arab League Secretary-General Amr Mahmoud Moussa Friday to boost ties and push for more cooperation. President Hu, who arrived in Cairo Thursday on a four-day state visit, visited the Arab League's Headquarters in Cairo and met with delegates from its 22 member states.

President Hu said that consolidating and developing friendly cooperation with Arab states is the working guideline of the Chinese Government.

President Hu also proposed to develop a new type of partnership between China and Arab states through promoting political relations based on mutual respect, forging closer trade and economic links to achieve common development, expanding cultural exchanges to draw upon each other's experience, and strengthening cooperation in international affairs to safeguard world peace and promote common development.

Moussa concurred with President Hu's suggestion, saying that it would be an important guideline for the development of Sino-Arab ties. President Hu viewed the foundation of the China-Arab states coop-

eration forum as an important measure to boost ties between two sides in a new international environment. Hu said it would enrich China's relationship with Arab states as well as consolidate and develop cooperation on different levels and in different areas.

President Hu said the Chinese people are willing, alongside the Arab people, to build the forum into a new platform for collective dialogue and cooperation between China and Arab countries.

Moussa also highly praised the announcement by China and Arab League to set up a forum Friday and said he was looking forward to his forthcoming visit to China and signing an agreement on the activities of the forum. President Hu concluded that no matter how the international situation changes, Chinese people are always sincere friends with the Arab people.—MNA/Xinhua

Pakistan denies of planned US military operation

ISLAMABAD, 1 Feb— Pakistan's Foreign Minister Khurshid Mehmood Kasuri Friday denied that the United States will launch a military operation in Pakistan's territory hunting for

Osama bin Laden.

The minister, in a statement, contradicted news items from Western media regarding mounting of offensive operation by American forces in Pakistan, not-

ing that these items are "ridiculous, senseless and without any foundation".

He added that the US armed personnel's mission is limited in neighbouring Afghanistan.

The Foreign Minister said Pakistan has all the resources needed to operate against terrorism in its own territory and there is no question of allowing any foreign force to operate in Pakistan.

Pakistan, sharing a 2,600-kilometre volatile border with Afghanistan, has long been witnessed as a hideout of the al-Qaeda and taleban fugitives since the US-led anti-terror war ended in 2002.

The Pakistani Government boasted of having deployed some 70,000 troops along the Pakistani-Afghan border to keep terror remnants from sneaking into its territory. In the past two years, around 500 foreign terrorists have been captured in Pakistan.

MNA/Xinhua



This image shows the Mars Exploration Rover Opportunity's view of the martian horizon after the rover rolled off its lander and onto the rusty soil of Mars at 3:01 am PST, on 31 Jan, 2004. The image was taken by the rover's front hazard-identification camera.—INTERNET

Iran says no plans to receive US Congress team

TEHERAN, 1 Feb— Iran's Foreign Ministry spokesman said on Saturday there were no plans for US congressional aides to visit Teheran next month, in what some US senators had said could be a step towards improving relations.

"Such a trip is not on our agenda," Hamid Reza Asefi told the official IRNA news agency.

US Senator Arlen Specter said in Washington on Friday that a group of US congressional aides would visit Iran in February, in a potential step toward renewing official contacts, severed after the 1979 Iranian Revolution.

Specter said the staff delegation "was confirmed to go next month" but he declined to be more specific.

Asefi gave no reason for Iran's apparent change of mind. Iran this month rejected a proposed visit by a US humanitarian delegation led by Senator Elizabeth Dole after December's devastating earthquake in south-eastern Iran.

It would be the first such visit to Iran since Washington broke ties with Teheran shortly after the 1979 Islamic Revolution when radical students stormed the US Embassy and held 52 hostages for 444 days.

Specter and Senator Bob Ney said they hoped a February visit would lead to official meetings between members of Congress and Iran's Parliament.

But US officials have spoken in recent weeks of a willingness to resume a dialogue with Iran which last year agreed to snap inspections of nuclear facilities Washington believes could be part of a secret atomic bomb making programme.

MNA/Reuters

Sri Lankan PM to visit Thailand next month

COLOMBO, 1 Feb— Sri Lankan Prime Minister Ranil Wickremesinghe will pay a three-day official visit to Thailand early next month at the invitation of his Thai counterpart Thaksin Shinawatra, the Foreign Ministry said in a statement on Friday.

"During Prime Minister Wickremesinghe's visit to Bangkok, a number of important agreements on bilateral cooperation in the fields of agriculture, trade and IT will be signed," the statement said.

Wickremesinghe's visit, scheduled for February 9-11, is in reciprocation of his Thai counterpart Thaksin who vis-

ited Sri Lanka in August last year.

Officials said that Wickremesinghe's delegation will include government officials and businessmen whose mission will be to promote trade relations between the two nations.

The Prime Minister is scheduled to address the Thailand business commu-

nity at a special forum. He will explain to them the investment opportunities Sri Lanka has to offer for the Thai businessmen, officials said.

They said that meetings will also be arranged between Sri Lankan and Thai businessmen to enhance bilateral trade relations.

MNA/Xinhua

Officials claim no reports of bird flu in India so far

NEW DELHI, 1 Feb—No case of bird flu has been reported in India so far, officials in the Agriculture Ministry said on Friday.

The government is collecting reports from all the states and there are no reports of any outbreak in the country, the officials said.

They said that border states were taking more precautions to avert any illegal import of poultry. The central government had on Thursday banned import of all poultry products.

Officials said India had negligible import of poultry products but that too had been banned.

Meanwhile, screening of passengers on Samjhauta Express trains from Pakistan to India was on, they said.

MNA/Xinhua



A woman builds a pair of snowmen after snow fell overnight in El Ajusco, a mountainous forrest region on the southern outskirts of Mexico City, on 31 Jan, 2004.

INTERNET

SPORTS

Mboma closes in on Cup scoring record

TUNIS, 1 Feb—Cameroon striker Patrick Mboma is closing in on the record for goals scored at African Nations Cup finals after his hat-trick on Thursday against Zimbabwe.

The Japanese-based forward, who was drafted late in the Cameroon squad after government pressure, has now notched 11 goals in four tournaments — three off the record set by Laurent Pokou of the Ivory Coast three decades ago.

Mboma, 33, is now third on the list of all-time Nations Cup goalscorers behind Pokou and Nigeria's Rashidi Yekini, who managed 13 for Nigeria in four successive tournaments between 1988 and 1994. Pokou scored 14 goals in the 1968 and 1970 finals, including a record five in one match.

Mboma already has four goals in two games at the tournament in Tunisia to add to seven goals in his appearances at the preceding three Nations Cup finals.

He failed to score for Cameroon at the Nations Cup finals in Burkina Faso in 1998, where he made just one starting appearance, but was a pivotal figure in their triumph in the 2000 edition with four goals.

At the last tournament in Mali, he managed three goals before missing the semifinal and final through injury.

MNA/Reuters



Manchester United's Quinton Fortune (R) slides in to tackle Southampton's Fitz Hall during their Premiership clash at Old Trafford at Manchester on 31 Jan, 2004.

INTERNET

Niang steers Senegal to first victory

BIZERTE (Tunisia), 1 Feb — Senegal got their African Nations Cup campaign firmly on track with a comfortable 3-0 victory over Kenya in Group B on Friday.

The World Cup quarterfinalists, who drew their opener 0-0 with Burkina Faso, went ahead through Mamadou Niang after only four minutes and midfielder Pape Bouba Diop's 19th-minute effort along with another from Niang put them three up before halftime.

Kenya striker Dennis Oliech missed a second-half sitter that could only have made the scoreline more respectable as his team ensured themselves a first round exit.

Victory lifted Senegal to provisional top slot in the group before Mali, who

started with a 3-1 win over Kenya, took on Burkina Faso in the day's late kick-off in Tunis.

Senegal, losing finalists to Cameroon in 2002, were under orders from coach Guy Stephan to make the Kenyan net bulge and needed only minutes to comply.

Striker Niang, who had already missed a free header, made no mistake when he latched on to El Hadji Diouf's defence-splitting pass, rounded keeper Francis Onyiso and steered the ball past the last defender.

Their ideal start could eas-

ily have gone awry, though, with some better finishing from Kenya strikers Oliech and Mike Okoth, who both failed to exploit some sloppy Senegal defending.

Kenya paid the price in the 19th minute, when a first effort by Henri Camara was cleared off the line from a Diouf corner and Diop rifled the clearance back through a packed goalmouth.

Niang added his superb second in the 31st minute, working a one-two with Camara on the edge of the area and smacking his shot past Onyiso.

Senegal were then able to ease off, despite Kenya's probing long balls for Oliech.

Diouf should have added a fourth just after the restart. Diop fed the ball through for Camara on the right flank and his low cross left the former African Footballer of the Year with the net at his mercy. A moment's hesitation, though, was enough to allow Onyiso to grab the ball at the second attempt.

Oliech fared even worse after an hour, beating one defender and rounding keeper Tony Sylva only to hit the legs of Pape Malick Diop from just a few metres out. — MNA/Reuters

Parker added to English revolution at Chelsea

LONDON, 1 Feb — Chelsea, the Premier League club owned by a Russian and coached by an Italian, bought local lad Scott Parker for 10 million pounds (18.11 million US dollars) on Friday and said the team's future lay in their English backbone.

The club, notorious under previous boss Gianluca Vialli for fielding a team consisting entirely of overseas players, signed the 23-year-old London-born England midfielder on a 4-1/2-year contract from Charlton Athletic.

"This is an indication that the future Chelsea will be an exciting blend of the very best home players with the very best international players," acting chief executive Paul Smith told a news conference on Friday.

Claudio Ranieri, who took over from Vialli in September 2000, has made no secret of his admiration for what he describes as the hard-working, committed English style of play. "Parker is ... like Frank Lampard, up and down the pitch, strong, working hard, shooting at goal, defending well — a complete player," Ranieri said.

Ranieri said Parker would make his debut against Blackburn Rovers on Sunday, bolstering a midfield depleted by injury as the club battle for league, FA Cup and Champions League glory. Juan Sebastian Veron has had surgery for a herniated disc and could be

out until May, Emmanuel Petit is making his way back after knee surgery while winger Damien Duff suffered a muscle strain after several weeks out with a dislocated shoulder. With Geremi away at the African Nations Cup with Cameroon, extra pressure has fallen on midfield stalwarts Claude Makelele and Lampard with the latter already having played 35 matches in all competitions this season.

"Scott gives me a lot of opportunities. Maybe Frank and Claude can get some rest," Ranieri said. Ranieri said he had been chasing Parker, who has been the driving force behind Charlton's rise to fourth place in the Premier League, for two years. Parker, who first tasted fame as a boy juggling a football in a television commercial, said he understood that in a club with a big pool of talent, he would not play every week. "But this is where I want to prove myself," he said.

After two acrimonious weeks, Charlton eventually caved in to the transfer they made clear they never wanted, turning down two offers and insisting part of the deal involved their keeping Chelsea striker Carlton Cole on loan for another season.

In another indication of the change in direction at Stamford Bridge, one of the reason's Parker offered for his move was that he knew several Chelsea players from his time with England's youth teams.

"I know them well — John Terry, Joe Cole. There are lots of English players and it's helped a lot with my decision," said the midfielder, who made his full England debut last November in a friendly against Denmark. — MNA/Reuters

Kanoute scores again as Mali progress

TUNIS 1 Feb — Frederic Kanoute got on the scoresheet again at the African Nations Cup finals as Mali became the second team to book a quarterfinal place after a 3-1 win over Burkina Faso on Friday.

The Tottenham Hotspur striker took his tally in the tournament to three for his new country, opening with a well-taken finish in the 34th minute after a superb through ball from captain Mahamadou Diarra.

The goal brought to life a dull encounter in cold conditions, further enlivened three minutes later when Diarra got a goal of his own.

The Lyon midfielder rose high to head home a corner and double the score, stunning a Burkina Faso team that had contested every ball in the opening half-hour.

But Burkina Faso fought back even stronger after the break and pulled a goal back through substitute Dieudonne Minoungou, who had come on at the interval.

Burkina Faso pressed forward in search of an equalizer but target man Moumouni Daganou missed two good chances midway through the second half.

His header from Saidou Madi Pananditigui's cross in the 74th minute was the best of his opportunities but was off target.

MNA/Reuters

Freund joins Leicester on loan

LONDON, 1 Feb — Former Germany midfielder Steffen Freund has joined Leicester City on loan from Kaiserslautern until the end of the season, the Premier League side said on Friday.

Freund is no stranger to English football after a five-year stint at Tottenham Hotspur, which ended last year after he was not offered a new deal by the club's then manager Glenn Hoddle.

The 34-year-old, a member of Germany's 1996 European championship-winning team and the Borussia Dortmund side who won the Champions League in 1997, will have to wait for his debut as he has not joined in time to play against Aston Villa on Saturday.

Leicester are third from bottom in the league, two points from safety.

MNA/Reuters

Answer for yesterday's Crossword Puzzle

W	A	T	T	S	C	O	O	K	I	N	G
O	S	O	R	C	O	S	R	S	N	S	U
R	E	P	R	O	O	F	S	B	A	S	L
S	S	A	S	W	F	S	I	S	P	S	S
H	A	Z	E	L	E	N	T	R	E	A	T
I	S	S	S	E	P	E	S	S	C	S	S
P	S	E	U	D	O	S	A	R	C	T	I
S	S	X	S	S	L	A	T	E	S	S	A
S	A	T	C	H	E	L	S	D	R	O	O
C	S	R	S	U	S	W	S	U	S	M	S
A	L	A	R	M	S	A	N	C	I	E	N
N	S	C	S	A	S	Y	S	E	S	G	A
T	E	T	A	N	U	S	S	D	R	A	W



Real Betis' goalkeeper Toni Prats, left, vies for the ball against Celta de Vigo's Savo Milosevic, from Serbia and Montenegro, during a Spanish league soccer match in Seville, southern Spain, on 31 Jan, 2004. —INTERNET



Lt-Gen Ye Myint and party inspect the construction of Yonbin Bridge near Ywathit Village in Lewe Township on 29-1-2004. (News reported)—MNA

Lt-Gen Ye Myint tours Thayet

YANGON, 1 Feb —Member of the State Peace and Development Council Lt-Gen Ye Myint, together with Mandalay Division Peace and Development Council Chairman of Central Command Commander Maj-Gen Ye Myint, Magway Division Peace and Development Council Chairman Col Zaw Min and departmental officials, left Aunglan for Magway yesterday morning.

In meeting with the division/district/township level departmental officials at the hall of Thayet District PDC Office, Lt-Gen Ye Myint heard report by Thayet District PDC Chairman Lt-Col Maung Maung San on growing of monsoon and summer paddy and oil crops, local rice sufficiency, social, education, health and livestock breeding tasks, increase of per capita income. Departmental officials concerned presented supplementary reports.

Lt-Gen Ye Myint made a speech. He said local authorities and people are to actively cooperate in the

tasks for regional development. He spoke of the need to grow paddy on virgin and vacant land for local rice sufficiency and other crops suitable to the region. Arrangements have been made for rural development tasks, road transportation, education, health and social sectors. So, departments concerned are to cooperate and local people are to join in the tasks for regional development.

At the briefing hall of the local battalion, he met with officers and other ranks. He spoke of the need to take part in the development tasks in the interest of the public and to engage in agriculture and livestock breeding tasks on a manageable scale and to successfully discharge assigned duties.

Then, Lt-Gen Ye Myint left for Aunglan. At the hall of local battalion, he met with officers and other ranks and made a speech. Lt-Gen Ye Myint left there and arrived back here in the evening.—MNA



Minister for Information Brig-Gen Kyaw Hsan meets officers and staff of IPRD in Yamethin District at the Pynmana Township IPRD Office on 30-1-2004. (News on page 1) —MNA

Industry-1 Minister inspects factories in Thayet, Thayawady

YANGON, 1 Feb —Minister for Industry-1 U Aung Thaung, accompanied by officials, this morning, inspected spare parts taken off from the crushing machine of Cement Plant under Myanma Ceramics Industries in Thayet, Magway Division.

Next, the minister looked into major overhaul of the crushing machine, running of the machine and transportation of crushed lime stone to the factory.

Factory Manager U Tin Aung and Managing Director Col Soe Yi reported on the salient points of the factory to the minister who attended to the requirements.

Afterwards, the min-

ister inspected running of Furnace No1 and Furnace No 2 of the factory, power control room and other machines. Factory Manager U Tin Aung reported on running capacity of the machines.

At 9 am, Chairman of Myanma Industrial Development Committee Minister for Industry-1 U Aung Thaung met with industrialists and members of Khittaya Industrial Zone Supervisory Committee at the meeting hall of the industrial zone.

First, Chairman of the Committee Lt-Col Tun Yi and Secretary U Sein Win reported on matters related to production of Khittaya vehicles by the in-

dustrialists.

Next, Minister U Aung Thaung fulfilled the needs.

Next, the minister viewed Pajero vehicles produced by the industrial zone and test-production of auto spare parts and farm spare parts.

On arrival at Mya Sanda Soft Drinks Factory of Myanmar Foodstuff Industries in Pyay, the minister inspected production of soft drinks and gave instructions.

Next, the minister proceeded to Shwedaung Textiles Factory under Myanma Textiles Industries and inspected functions of the factory. The minister viewed the substitution of

the old machines for the new ones.

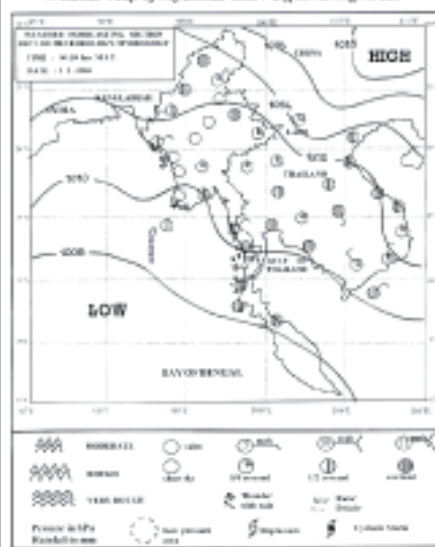
At the Myanma Traditional Weaving Division, the minister inspected weaving of Rakhine Longyi, Inma Longyi and Si Longyi.

At the briefing hall, the minister met with officials of the factory and gave instructions on meeting the target and the set standard.

On arrival at the ceramics factory in Thayawady, the minister and party inspected the new filter press and gave instructions.

After inspecting the extension of the ceramics factory, the minister left instructions on timely completion of the work.—MNA

Weather Map of Myanmar and Neighbouring Areas



WEATHER

Sunday, 1 February, 2004

Summary of observations recorded at 09:30 hours MST: During the past 24 hours, rains have been isolated in Taninthayi Division, weather has been generally fair in the remaining areas.

Night temperatures were (5°C) above normal in Mon State and Taninthayi Division, (3°C) below normal in Kachin, Chin States, Mandalay and Magway Divisions, (4°C) to (5°C) below normal in Rakhine State and about normal in the remaining areas.

Maximum temperature on 31-1-2004 was 36.0°C (97°F). Minimum temperature on 1-2-2004 was 15.0°C (59°F).

Relative humidity at 9:30 hrs MST on 1-2-2004 was 67%.

Total sunshine hours on 31-1-2004 was (9.0) hours approx.

Rainfall on 1-2-2004 was nil at Yangon Airport, Kaba-Aye and central Yangon. Total rainfall since 1-1-2004 was 3 mm at Yangon Airport, nil at Kaba-Aye and central Yangon.

Maximum wind speed at Yangon (Kaba-Aye) was 14 mph from North at (07:30) hours MST on 1-2-2004.

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

Forecast valid until evening of 2-2-2004: Possibility of isolated light rain in Kachin State, upper Sagaing and Taninthayi Divisions and weather will be partly cloudy in the remaining areas. Degree of certainty is (40%).

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

Outlook for subsequent two days: Possibility of isolated rain in extreme Southern Myanmar areas.

Forecast for Yangon and neighbouring area for 2-2-2004: Partly cloudy.

Forecast for Mandalay and neighbouring area for 2-2-2004: Partly cloudy.

OBITUARY

DAW THEIN MYINT @ MRS. AGNES HO (B.A) Aged (93) Years

Retired Teacher, Methodist English High School

Daw Thein Myint, daughter of (U A Lam and Daw Gye May), beloved wife of (K.T.Ho @ U Si), eldest sister of (U Hein Tin @ Harry-Daw Thein Nu @ Lily), (George Lee @ U Nyunt Hla)-Pauline Lee, (U Mya Thaung @ Spencer-Daw Thein Zin @ Margaret), beloved mother of Harry Soe Win (Asean Focus Group)-Daw Mu Mu @ Rosebud (Diplomatic School, Yangon) beloved aunt of Dr Aung Kyaw-Dr Khin Than Tin @ Delphine, Lt. Comdr Myint Thane @ Melvin (Retd.)-Daw Win Shi Sho, Alan Burrell-Daw Khin Soe Tin @ Suzie, U Aye Maung Maung @ Raymond-Daw Khin Swe Tin @ Candy and beloved grandmother of Win Mu Aye @ Primrose, (Saw Si Soe) and Win Mu Soe @ Elizabeth (Diplomatic School, Yangon) passed away peacefully at her residence, No. 38, Bawdi Yeiktha Rd. (Windermere) Bahan Township at 6.00 pm on 29th January, 2004 and cremated at 10:00 am at Ye Way Cemetery on 30th January 2004.

Friends and Relatives, Please accept this as the only Intimation.

Bereaved Family.

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



Prime Minister General Khin Nyunt watches the performance of National Symphony Orchestra. — MNA

Prime Minister enjoys performance of the National Symphony Orchestra

YANGON, 1 Feb—Prime Minister General Khin Nyunt watched performance of the National Symphony Orchestra of the Ministry of Information at the National Theatre on Myoma Kyaung Road this morning.

On arrival at the National Theatre, Prime Minister General Khin Nyunt was welcomed by Chairman of Yangon Division Peace and Development Council Commander of Yangon Command Maj-Gen Myint Swe, the ministers, the deputy ministers, officials of the State Peace and Development Council Office, heads of departments, members of National Symphony Orchestra Committee, musicians and officials.

Minister for Information Brig-Gen Kyaw Hsan reported on implementation of the guidance on formation of the National Symphony Orchestra.

Next, Director-General of Myanma Radio and Television U Khin Maung Htay reported on musical instruments of the National Symphony Orchestra, hire of a conductor and practice of playing instruments.

The Prime Minister gave instructions and watched performance of the National Symphony Orchestra. He was welcomed by Conductor and Music Director Mr Mitch Markowitz and officials.

Musicians of the National Symphony Orchestra led by

Conductors Captain Thet Tin Aung and U Tin Thein presented playing of national anthems of ASEAN member nations, Conductor Mr Mitch Markowitz and the musicians played the national anthem of the Union of Myanmar with the use of new orchestral arrangement, Brandeburge concert No 2 by Mr Mitch Markowitz playing Violin Solo, instrumental version of symphony 8 in D of Suhubert and Symphony No 41 of Mozart.

Next, the Prime Minister cordially greeted Mr Mitch Markowitz and the musicians. He posed for documentary photos together with them.

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Prime Minister General Khin Nyunt inspects Yangon (West) University, Institute of Computer Science and Kandawgyi Gardens

YANGON, 1 Feb—Chairman of Myanmar Education Committee Prime Minister General Khin Nyunt inspected construction of Yangon (West) University and Yangon Institute of Computer Science and upgrading of Kandawgyi Gardens this afternoon.

Accompanied by officials of the State Peace and Development Council Office, the Prime Minister arrived at the construction site of Yangon (West) University in Htantabin Township, Yangon North District at 1.30 pm. They were welcomed there by Chairman of Yangon Division Peace and Development Council Commander of Yangon Command Maj-Gen Myint Swe, ministers, the Yangon Mayor, deputy ministers, heads of department, rector of the university and faculty members and officials.

At the briefing hall, Deputy Minister for Education U Myo Nyunt reported to the Prime Minister on academic and administrative matters of the university. Minister for Education U Than Aung gave a supplementary report. Next, Managing Director of Wa Wa Win Construction Co U Shwe Hlaing reported to the



Prime Minister General Khin Nyunt inspects the booth of Myanmar rare medicinal herbs in Yangon Kandawgyi Gardens. — MNA

Prime Minister on progress in construction of archway and lecture halls, future tasks and greening work. After giving instructions, the Prime Minister looked into the computer training centre, construction of the theatre, the two-storey lecture hall, the archway of the university.

Next, the Prime Minister and party proceeded to Yangon Institute of Computer Science in Shwepyitha Township, Yangon North District where they were welcomed by Minister for Science and Technology U Thaung, Minister for Livestock and Fisheries Brig-Gen Maung Maung Thein, heads of department, rector

of the institute and faculty members. At the briefing hall, Rector of the institute Dr Paik Tin reported to the Prime Minister on academic and administrative matters of the institute. Minister U Thaung gave a supplementary report. After that, Managing Director of Shwekyapyan Construction Co Dr Zaw Tun reported on progress in construction work, water and power supply, progress in construction of the entrance road to the institute, greening tasks and communications.

After giving instructions, the Prime Minister viewed the scale model of the institute, progress in construction

of lecture room and lecture halls and three-storey lecture hall under construction.

Afterwards, the Prime Minister and party proceeded to Hlawga Feedstuff Factory of the Livestock, Feedstuff and Dairy Products Enterprise in Shwepyitha Township. They were welcomed there by officials. At the briefing hall there, Minister Brig-Gen Maung Maung Thein reported matters on providing pedigrees, feedstuff and technical know-how; distribution of pellets for fish breeding and investment and construction of feedstuff factory. Prime Minister General Khin Nyunt gave

necessary instructions and inspected round the factory. The Hlawga Feedstuff Factory is built to produce 10 tons of feedstuff per hour (100 tons per day). Later, the Prime Minister and party went to Kandawgyi Gardens Central Symbol Zone. At the temporary briefing hall there, Chairman of the Committee for All-round Upgrading of Kandawgyi Gardens Environs and Zoological Gardens Yangon Division Peace and Development Council Chairman Yangon Command Commander Maj-Gen Myint Swe reported matters on the Relaxation Zone, Education Zone and Central Symbol Zone

projects and work progresses. Minister for Agriculture & Irrigation Maj-Gen Nyunt Tin, Yangon City Mayor Brig-Gen Aung Thein Lin and Minister for Livestock & Fisheries Brig-Gen Maung Maung Thein, Deputy Minister for Science & Technology U Nyi Hla Nge and Designer Mr John Inada reported on work progresses. The Prime Minister gave necessary instructions. Then, he inspected round the modern fish garden, floral exhibition booth and medicinal plants in the Education Zone. After giving necessary instructions to officials, he left the Kandawgyi Gardens. MNA