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Friday, 28 January 2005

President of Uzbekistan sends felicitations to Senior General Than Shwe

YANGON 27 Jan — *The following is a message of felicitations from Mr Islam Karimov, President of the Republic of Uzbekistan, sent to Senior General Than Shwe, Chairman of the State Peace and Development Council, on the occasion of the 57th Anniversary Independence Day of the Union of Myanmar:*

Your Excellency,

On behalf of the people and the government of the Republic of Uzbekistan let me extend to you congratulations on the occasion of the Independence Day of the Union of Myanmar.

I wish Your Excellency good health and success as well as peace and well-being to the people of Myanmar.—MNA

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

Lt-Gen Kyaw Win inspects sales of fuel, supply of power in Mandalay Division

YANGON, 27 Jan — Chairman of the Supervisory Committee for Utilization of Power and Fuel Member of the State Peace and Development Council Chief of Armed Forces Training Lt-Gen Kyaw Win, accompanied by Tactical Operations Commander Col Win Swe, Mandalay Division Police Force Commander Police Col Aung Htut, General Manager U Tun Myint Oo of Central Oil Installation and officials of Myanma Petroleum Products Enterprise and Myanma Electric Power Enterprise,

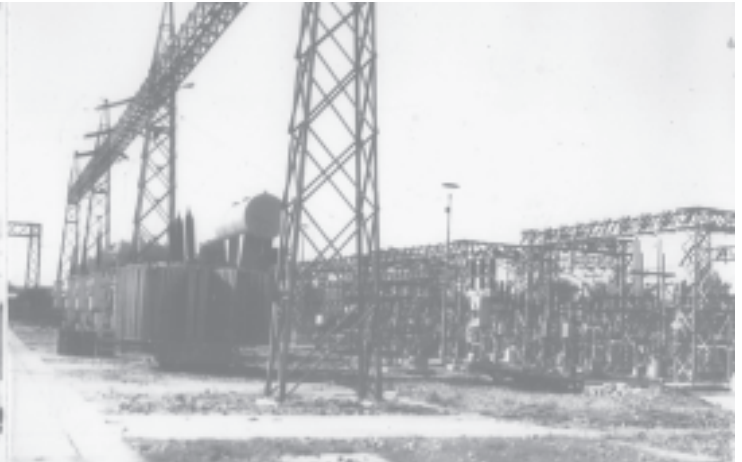
measures and systematically keep accounts and data.

He proceeded to Filling Station No 0633 in Pyigyidagun Township and oversaw storage functions and sales of fuel to vehicle. Lt-Gen Kyaw Win gave instructions on emphasis to be placed on satisfying the customers and minimizing loss and wastage.

On arrival at the Main Sub-Power Station of Myanma Electric Power Enterprise in the township, Lt-Gen Kyaw Win together with Managing Director



Lt-Gen Kyaw Win overses Main Sub-Power Station of Myanmar Electric Power Enterprise in Pyigyidagun Township.—MNA



inspected pumping of fuel from the oil tanker to the main oil tank of the Central Oil Installation in west Thanhlyethmaw ward of Maha Aungmye Township this afternoon.

Lt-Gen Kyaw Win gave instructions on tasks to be carried out systematically for minimizing loss and wastage, distribution of fuel in time and curbing misconduct.

He checked storage of fuel in the tank and data, and instructed officials to take fire preventive

Dr San Oo of MEPE inspected functions of the power control room and power supply. He gave instructions on power supply matters.

Lt-Gen Kyaw Win and party headed for Singaing Township and arrived at the CNG Filling Station of Myanma Oil and Gas Enterprise at the Chanthagon Junction. He viewed arrival of new compressors and gave directives on repair of the damaged compressors as soon as possible.

MNA

UMEHL sells 246 gem lots, 199 jade lots

YANGON, 27 Jan — Foreign and local merchants bought 246 lots of gems and 199 lots of jade at the sales of Union of Myanmar Economic Holdings Ltd here till 5.20 pm today.

A total of 576 merchants at home and abroad were at the Myanma Gems Emporium on Kaba Aye Pagoda Road to buy the gems and jade through bargain and auction systems.

Auction sales started after the list of merchants who would buy the gems and jade in bargain system were announced.

Officials announced the list of bargain buyers after inspecting the sealed tenders.

Managing Director of UMEHL Maj-Gen Win Hlaing (Retd) and officials presented gifts to the highest bidders. — MNA

Fourth Myanmar ICT Week-2005 concludes successfully

YANGON, 27 Jan — The programmes of the Fourth Myanmar ICT Week-2005 concluded at the MICT Park in Hline Township this evening.

In the Myanmar National Counter Strike Championship, officials presented K 500,000 to the first prize winner, K 300,000 to the second and K 100,000 to the third in the amateur class and K 1 million to the first prize winner, K 500,000 to the second and K 300,000 to the third in the professional class. — MNA

INSIDE

By means of Pade Reservoir, irrigation water can be supplied to all the farmland in the region all the year round. The reservoir can also assure local food sufficiency.

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KYAW SEIN

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

PERSPECTIVES

Friday, 28 January, 2005

Participate in implementation of Road Map

The national people of the Union of Myanmar have been living together for ages in unity and amity through thick and thin, fighting back all their enemies within and without. Moreover, they have always worked in concert for eternal existence and development of the Union.

In the present age, the State Peace and Development Council, taking lessons from the history of the Union, has laid down Our Three Main National Causes — non-disintegration of the Union, non-disintegration of national solidarity and perpetuation of sovereignty — as its national policy. As a result, there has been closer friendship, more consolidated unity and mutual understanding among the national people and they have been successful in almost all they do.

At present, measures are being taken to reach our national goal — the emergence of a peaceful, developed and discipline-flourishing democratic state. The seven-point policy programme to establish a democracy was publicly declared on 30 August, 2003. The National Convention, the first stage of the programme, was started on 17 May, 2004, and it was adjourned on 9 July, 2004. It has now been planned to resume the National Convention on 17 February, 2005, and the entire national people are enthusiastically hailing it as it is the very first and most important stage for the success of the entire programme.

The seven-point policy programme, also known as the Road Map, is the only way to a genuine democracy and the people have been longing for it for long. Mass rallies hailing the seven-point policy programme were held in all states and divisions from 20 September to 19 October, 2003. In the same way, mass rallies hailing the National Convention and the 58th Anniversary of Union Day are being held in states and divisions, starting from 25 January.

We would like to urge all the national brethren of the Union to lend themselves to the task of making the seven-point policy programme a complete success. Only in this way will democracy, development of the Union and prosperity of the people be ensured.

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

Both Gaya pilgrimages by chartered flight

YANGON, 27 Jan — Arrangements are being made for facilitating Both Gaya pilgrimages by chartered flights of Myanma Airways every Sunday beginning February.

Those wishing to join the pilgrimage individually or in groups may submit applications to Daw Thazin Myint Aung (Aung Chan Tha Both Gaya Pilgrimage), Power Palace Hotel, at 16, Pyithaya Road, Baukhtaw, Yankin Township, Tel: 708156, 660843, 544287, 548210, 549668, 099926108, 095022454 and U Htein Lin, Yangon Both Gaya Pilgrimage Service, at 55, 17th Street, Latha Township, Tel: 665383, 225989 and 225915.

MNA

Myanmar Gazette

YANGON, 27 Jan—The State Peace and Development Council has confirmed the appointment of the following heads of service organizations on expiry of the one-year probationary period.

Name	Department
(1) U Nyan Lin	Director-General Consular and Legal Affairs Department Ministry of Foreign Affairs
(2) U Thein Win	Principal Bago Degree College Higher Education Department (Lower Myanmar) Ministry of Education

The SPDC has appointed Col Tin Maung Tun of the Ministry of Defence as Managing Director of the Myanma Airways of the Ministry of Transport on probation from the date he assumes charge of his duties. — MNA

Commander Maj-Gen Myint Swe inspects summer paddy field in Phayagon Village, Thanlyin Township. — YANGON COMMAND



Commander makes inspection trip in Thanlyin, Kyauktan

YANGON, 27 Jan — Maj-Gen Myint Swe, Chairman of Yangon Division Peace and Development Council and Commander of Yangon Command, oversaw agriculture and regional development of Thanlyin and Kyauktan Townships yesterday afternoon.

At Phayagon Village in Thanlyin Township, he inspected 349 acres of summer paddy grown with the use of water from Zamani Dam, storage of water at Thilawa Dam and its functions to irrigate 38 acres of summer paddy and utilization of water from Alwanhsut Creek for agricultural purpose.

On arrival at Bantbwegon Dam near Nyaungwaing Village of Kyauktan Township, the Commander and officials looked into storage of water at the dam, cultivation of summer paddy and water supply system.

Maj-Gen Myint Swe and party proceeded to the office of Modern Farming Special Zone near Myaingthaya Village of Kyauktan Township and met with local farmers.

The commander heard reports on their requirements and attended to the needs.

After that, they inspected thriving paddy and bean plantations.

They went to Eastern Yangon University and met with the rector and faculty members. Rector U Kyi Win submitted reports on academic matters and construction tasks concerning the university.

The commander explained arrangements for smooth transport of the students and faculty members, power supply and communications supply, and fulfilled the requirements.

MNA

Ministry of Forestry holds coord meeting

YANGON, 27 Jan — A coordination meeting of the Ministry of Forestry was held at Tawwin hall of Forestry Department, Insein Township yesterday morning, and it was attended by Minister for Forestry Brig-Gen Thein Aung.

First, the minister delivered an address on the occasion. In his speech he said officials concerned were to carry out the tasks for export of wood and wood based finished products, earning foreign exchange, prevention and curbing illegal logging, conservation of plantations in watershed areas, greening the arid zone and cultivation of teak plantation and conservation as guided by the Head of State and the ministry.

Next, directors and deputy general managers at state and division levels reported on forest conservation and timber extraction, collection of tax, arrangements to be made for curbing illegal logging

while directors-general and managing directors reported regarding the sector-wise measures.

Concerning the reports, the minister laid down the future tasks.

MNA

Minister visits Zeebingyi BEHS

YANGON, 27 Jan—Minister for Education U Than Aung, accompanied by directors-general and officials, held a meeting with the principal and teachers at Zeebingyi affiliated Basic Education High School in PyinOoLwin Township, Mandalay Division, on 25 January.

The minister dealt with measures for ensuring high matriculation exam pass rate of the school. Next, the minister presented teaching aids to the school and viewed the students learning their lessons. He chose the site for construction of a new building. — MNA

နိုင်ငံတော်အစိုးရဌာနပိုင် မော်တော်ယာဉ်များမသုံးစွဲရနေ့
လစဉ်လ၏ ဒုတိယပတ် (တနင်္ဂနွေနေ့) နှင့် နောက်ဆုံးပတ် (တနင်္ဂနွေနေ့) တို့သည် ရုံးလုပ်ငန်းအတွက် မဖြစ်မနေ သွားလာရန်လိုအပ်သည့် ကိစ္စရပ်များမှအပ မော်တော်ယာဉ်များ မသုံးစွဲရနေ့ဖြစ်သည်။
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All this needs to be known

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

India, Bhutan sign landmark accord on rail line

NEW DELHI, 26 Jan— Taking bilateral relations to new heights, India and Bhutan signed Tuesday a landmark accord for establishing rail links between bordering towns and agreed to step up cooperation in agriculture and power sectors.

Under the Memorandum of Understanding (MoU), inked in the presence of Indian Prime Minister Manmohan Singh and visiting Bhutan King Jigme Singye Wangchuk, the two sides have agreed to conduct feasibility studies for extension of Indian railway network from West Bengal State, located in East India and Northeastern Indian state of Assam to the nearest border towns of Bhutan, the *Press Trust of India* reported.

This comes as part of India's overall strategy of upgrading border infrastructure and connectivity with Bhutan.

The MoU was signed by Minister of State for Railways Naranbhai J Rathwa and Bhutanese Foreign Minister Lyonpo Khandu Wangchuk.

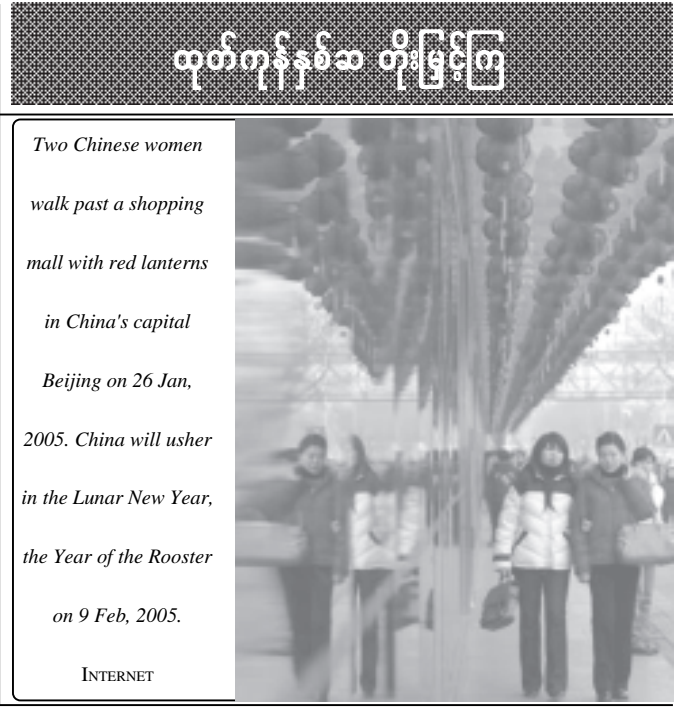
Another MoU was signed in the pres-

ence of the two leaders by Indian Power Minister P M Sayeed and the Bhutanese Foreign Minister on preparation of detailed project reports for two hydroelectric projects in Bhutan.

Cooperation in the power sector is one of the hallmarks of India's mutually beneficial relationship with Bhutan.

The two sides also signed a MoU on cooperation in the field of agriculture and allied sectors. Inked by Indian Agriculture Minister Sharad Pawar and the Bhutanese Foreign Minister, it provides the framework of institutional cooperation in agriculture and allied sectors.

The King, who is the chief guest at Wednesday's Republic Day celebrations, said the agreements would go a long way in furthering the close relations between the two countries.—*MNA/Xinhua*



Two Chinese women walk past a shopping mall with red lanterns in China's capital Beijing on 26 Jan, 2005. China will usher in the Lunar New Year, the Year of the Rooster on 9 Feb, 2005.

INTERNET

HK activates notification system to follow up potted plants

HONG KONG, 26 Jan — The Hong Kong Administration has activated the notification system to follow up the incident that potted plants for supply to Hong Kong could not go through Customs clearance, a spokesman for the Health, Welfare and Food Bureau said here Tuesday.

Upon receiving reports by the trade on 17 January that potted plants aimed for delivery to Hong Kong for the Lunar New Year were stranded in Guangdong, the Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department (AFCD) had immediately inquired the situation with relevant inspection and quarantine authorities in the Chinese Mainland, the spokesman said.

The department learned that Mainland authorities had stepped up inspection and quarantine measures of potted plants and nursery stock for supply to Hong Kong, hence, causing the delay in exporting these plants to Hong Kong.

The spokesman added that AFCD had been following up the situation with the authorities but it was not until Monday that notification was received from Shenzhen Municipality that "red fire ants" (*Solenopsis invicta* Buren) were found in some parts of Guangdong.—*MNA/Xinhua*



Japan's toy maker Takara employee Nozomi Saeki displays bean plants with messages such as 'Good luck,' sprouted from a can. The plants also bloom to read 'I love you'.—INTERNET

Efforts beefed up in Shanghai to draw qualified overseas staff

SHANGHAI, 26 Jan— Shanghai, Chinese economic powerhouse, will beef up efforts to draw quality professionals from abroad as part of a new human resource plan for this year, Tuesday's *China Daily* reported.

"Shanghai is striving to shape itself into a world-class cosmopolis, and for this human resources are crucial," Director of the Shanghai Municipal Personnel Bureau Ding Xuexiang was quoted as saying.

He said top-notch overseas professionals have already shown how useful they have been in modernizing Shanghai and making it an international city, which would continue absorbing more and more talents.

Under the latest local government plan, there will be 50 major infrastructure projects and developments in pillar industries.

The bureau is currently working with other organizations to pin down the exact number of professionals needed to complete the 50 projects, said the English newspaper.

Wang Anshun, deputy party secretary of Shanghai, said they are planning to launch a global recruitment

campaign for competent overseas staff.

The bureau has so far set up a liaison office in Britain, Germany and Australia. They are particularly interested in overseas Chinese who would like to start their own businesses in the city.

"We are now building up liaison offices in the United States, Canada, Russia and other developed countries and regions for the same purpose," Ding said. In latest statistics from the Shanghai Municipal Personnel Bureau, 4,805 first-class overseas professionals and 1,287 quality Hong Kong professionals were drawn to work in the city in 2004.

The Shanghai Administrative Centre for Employment of Foreigners under the Shanghai Municipal Labour and Social Security Bureau said that in 2004, the numbers of overseas newcomers to the city reached 15,573, a 40-plus per cent rise over 2003.

MNA/Xinhua

Top US commander says Iraqi forces not ready

BAGHDAD, 27 Jan—The top American commander in Iraq on Wednesday said US-trained Iraqi security forces were still not ready to take over the counterinsurgency and there was no guarantee they will ever be able to defeat it on their own.

Gen George Casey said the 130,000 Iraqi police and soldiers still lack leaders to direct them in a fight against rebels, and local police forces who've deserted in the thousands in the face of intimidation and withering assaults by guerillas remain a key weak point.

Training and equipping Iraqi troops to eventually take the lead role here is a central pillar in US efforts to rein in insurgents and eventually pull American and other foreign troops out of the country. But the Iraqi forces have been criticized for poor training and lack of leadership.

"Can I sit here and look you in the eye and say that the Iraqi security forces guaranteed 100 percent are going to be able to defeat this insurgency by themselves? Of course not," Casey said. "From what I've seen in the seven months that I've been here, I believe that we can achieve capable Iraqi security forces over a period of time that can deal with the Iraqi insurgency that's here."—*Internet*

1,416 US troops killed since beginning of Iraq war

WASHINGTON, 27 Jan—As of Wednesday, 26 Jan, 2005, at least 1,416 members of the US military have died since the beginning of the Iraq war in March 2003, according to an *Associated Press* count. At least 1,080 died as a result of hostile action, the Defence Department said. The figures include three military civilians.

The AP count is thirty-nine higher than the Defence Department's tally, last updated at 10 am EST Wednesday.

The British military has reported 76 deaths; Italy, 20; Poland, 16; Ukraine, 16; Spain, 11; Bulgaria, seven; Slovakia, three; Estonia, Thailand and the Netherlands, two each; and Denmark, El Salvador, Hungary, Latvia and Kazakhstan one death each.

Since 1 May, 2003, when President Bush declared that major combat operations in Iraq had ended, 1,278 US military members have died, according to AP's count. That includes at least 971 deaths resulting from hostile action, according to the military's numbers.

The latest deaths reported by the military: A US soldier died Wednesday from an explosive in Baghdad, Iraq. Thirty Marines and one sailor died Wednesday when their helicopter crashed near Ar Rutbah, Iraq while conducting security operations.—*Internet*



A Chinese man stops his motorized bicycle near an advertisement showing an athlete lifting a heavy weight on a street of Beijing, China, on 25 Jan, 2005.

INTERNET

စက်မှုဦးအား ခေတ်ကျော်ဖွား

China, Mauritius to further legislative cooperation

BEIJING, 26 Jan — The Chinese legislative body attaches importance to developing its relations with the Mauritian Parliament and desires to further promote bilateral cooperation, said Chinese top legislator Wu Bangguo here Tuesday.

“The National People’s Congress (NPC) of China has long maintained friendly cooperation with its Mauritian counterpart.

This has played an active role in promoting the state-to-state relations, deepening friendship of the two peoples and expanding bilateral economic cooperation and trade,” said Wu, chairman of the NPC Standing Committee, at a meet-

ing with visiting Mauritian Prime Minister Paul Raymond Berenger.

Wu said that the Sino-Mauritian relations have developed smoothly since the two countries forged diplomatic ties and they have maintained mutual trust and sound economic cooperation.

He expressed appreciation for Mauritius’ adherence to the one-China policy.

MNA/Xinhua

Southern Airlines to launch its first direct cross-straits flight

BEIJING, 26 Jan— China’s Southern Airlines is expected to carry the first-ever direct flight from the Chinese Mainland to Taiwan. The flight will leave Guangzhou at 8:00 am and arrive in Taipei at 9:30 on 29 January.

During the upcoming Spring Festival, also called the Chinese New Year, six Mainland airlines will operate 24 two-way passenger flights, a total of 48 flights, across the Taiwan Straits. The six airlines are Air China, Eastern Airlines, Southern Airlines, Shanghai Airlines, Xiamen Airlines and Hainan Airlines, according to the General Administration of Civil Aviation of China (CAAC).

Six Taiwan airlines will be allowed to operate direct cross-straits passenger flights during the same period. — MNA/Xinhua

Philippine President signs new tax reform law

MANILA, 26 Jan— Philippine President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo Tuesday signed a new tax reform bill into law, which imposes a reward and penalty system for the Customs and internal revenue bureaus to improve revenue collections.

Under the law, Customs and internal revenue officials receive either rewards or sanctions if they exceed or fail to meet their collection targets, the Presidential Palace said in a statement.

The lateral attrition bill, which was dubbed by Arroyo as the accountability reform law, will help in the country’s

economic recovery.

Bureau of Internal Revenue chief Guillermo Parayno lauded the passage of the new law, saying it is long overdue.

He added that he will not hesitate to fire nonperforming employees to enable the agency to meet its revenue targets.

The Attrition Law of 2005 is the second pal-

ace-endorsed tax reform measure to be ratified by both houses of Congress in a bid to raise revenues for the government.

The first tax bill approved by Congress was the “sin tax” law which collects higher excise tax on tobacco and alcohol products. Arroyo also called on lawmakers to ensure the swift passage

of the expanded value added tax, which is one of eight tax proposals being pushed by the Administration to increase revenues.

She said Palace officials will vigorously coordinate with Congress to ensure the bill has safety nets to shield the poor from its effects.

MNA/Xinhua

US Army documents show Govt failed to investigate detainee abuse

NEW YORK, 26 Jan — US Army internal documents show that the government failed to seriously investigate allegations of detainee abuse including killings, brutal beatings and sexual abuse of an elderly Iraqi woman, a civil rights group said on Monday.

The documents are the latest to be made public by the American Civil Liberties Union, which has periodically obtained records under a Freedom of Information Act lawsuit. The FOIA allows citizens access to public federal records and a Manhattan federal judge has previously ordered the government to turn over papers on detainee abuse.

“Some of the investigations have basically whitewashed the torture and abuse. The documents that the ACLU has obtained tell a damning story of widespread torture reaching well beyond the walls of Abu Ghraib,” said ACLU Executive Director Anthony Romero.

The ACLU said that in numerous cases investigations were dropped before witnesses were questioned. In some instances, soldiers who were found to have tortured prisoners were sent back to their posts with “what

amounts to a slap on the wrists”. The internal reports contained allegations of questionable deaths and horrific abuse including detainees given electric shocks, beaten so badly that their bones were broken and being

forced to drink urine.

The ACLU said many of the newly released documents implicated Special Forces, including a joint CIA-military team known as Task Force 20.

MNA/Reuters

LG Electronics posted \$1.45b net profit in 2004

SEOUL, 26 Jan — South Korea’s second largest electronic company LG Electronics announced earlier Tuesday that it posted 1.5 trillion won (1.45 billion US dollars) in net profit on sales of 24.6 trillion won (23.76 billion dollars) in 2004.

LG Electronics, the world’s sixth-biggest mobile phone handset manufacturer, sold 44 million handsets last year, up 61.6 per cent from 2003, reported South Korean *Yonhap* news agency.

LG Electronics said it expects 2005 sales to total between 28 trillion won (27 billion dollars) and 30 trillion won (28.9 billion dollars), up almost 20 per cent from last year’s sales.

The company will spend 1.7 trillion won (1.64 billion dollars) on facility investments and another 1.8 trillion won (1.73 billion dollars) on research and development activities, reported *Yonhap*.

To strengthen its high-tech business divisions, the company also planned to hire 3,000 new workers this year.

MNA/Xinhua

31 troops die in copter crash in Iraq

BAGHDAD, 27 Jan—A Marine CH-53E Super Stallion transport helicopter went down at about 1:20 am local time (5.20 pm Tuesday EST) near the town of Rutbah, about 220 miles west of Baghdad, while conducting “security and stabilization operations,” a Marine statement said. On board were 30 Marines and one sailor, the statement said.

Gen John P Abizaid, the commander of US forces in the Middle East, said in Washington that the helicopter crashed in severe weather while on “a routine mission” in support of Iraq’s elections on Sunday. Abizaid, visiting Capitol Hill to brief members of Congress on the Iraq war effort, said there were no reports of enemy fire in the area and that the cause of the crash was under investigation.

Other defence officials, however, attributed

the crash to a heavy sandstorm in Iraq’s western desert.

Four Marines were later reported killed in combat operations against enemy forces in Anbar Province. In addition, one US soldier was killed and two others were wounded when guerillas attacked an Army patrol near the northern town of Duluiyah, the military said. In the Baghdad area, a roadside bomb claimed the life of another soldier and left two others injured, the military said.

The latest deaths pushed the toll of US military fatalities in Iraq over 1,400. It was the deadliest day since the war began in March 2003, surpassing the third day of the war on 23 March, when 29 US troops died, mostly in fierce fighting in and around Nasiriyah in southern Iraq. The deadliest single incident before today was also a helicopter crash: a November 2003 collision of two UH-60 Black Hawk helicopters in which 17 service members were killed. —Internet



Iraqi woman and a child cross in front of British soldiers based out of the headquarters of 4th Armoured Brigade, as they patrol in central Basra, Iraq, on 25 Jan, 2005.—INTERNET

Indonesian President urges revival of oil industry

JAKARTA, 26 Jan — Indonesian President Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono has called on oil and gas industries to increase production within five years in efforts to boost revenue from the sector.

"The era when oil and gas industries were the backbone of the state revenues has become a history... Indonesia now imports crude oil and fuel," Susilo was quoted Tuesday by *Bisnis Indonesia* newspapers as saying.

He said oil production in Indonesia has dropped to 1.1 million barrels per day (BPD)

against 1.3 million in the previous years.

Susilo noted that the state revenues now depend largely on taxes, which made up some 80 per cent of total revenues.

Indonesia was the only Southeast Asian country which joined the Organization of Oil Exporting Countries (OPE).

MNA/Xinhua

First HK citizen's small business registered in Shanghai

SHANGHAI, 26 Jan — Hu Hongxiang, a Hong Kong female citizen who used to trade handicraft pieces in the name of her relative in the Mainland, received a business licence and became the first small-business proprietor from Hong Kong in this economic hub of east China.

Chinese Government has allowed citizens from Hong Kong and Macao to register individually-owned small firms on the Mainland as of 1 January, 2005.

Over the past 24 days, the Shanghai Administration of Industry and Commerce received inquiries about small business registration from scores of citizens of Hong Kong and Macao.

As one of the inquirers, Hu Hongxiang

opened a small shop at the city proper of Shanghai in the name of her cousin to sell jewellery and handiwork about two years ago. The store has been brisk business, however, Hu felt upset because she was not the official owner of the shop.

After she heard of the policy for small business owners from Hong Kong like her to be permitted to register in Shanghai, Hu called at the industry and commerce administra-

tion's branch in Jing'an District for related information. With all documents ready, she went through the examination and approval procedures within three working days.

Kong Xiangyi, head of the registration section of the Shanghai Administration of Industry and Commerce, said in comparison with incorporation, establishment of individually-owned small businesses requires less

and cost low. To allow citizens from Hong Kong and Macao to register will facilitate citizens from Hong Kong and Macao to do business on the Mainland, Kong added.

Now citizens from Hong Kong and Macao are allowed to engage in retailing and catering and to open beauty parlours, provide bathing services and repair home electrical appliances and other daily requisites.

MNA/Xinhua



China launches temporary direct trains for peak season

BEIJING, 26 Jan — A record 260 pairs of temporary trains will be launched on China's railways for the peak travel season, according to the Ministry of Railways here Tuesday.

Hu Yadong, Vice Minister of Railways, said at a Press conference on national transportation for the Lunar New Year that there will be 646 pairs of direct trains altogether.

Chinese travellers buy train tickets at Hongkou Gymnasium where 40 temporary ticketing counters have been set up in Shanghai on 26 Jan, 2005.—INTERNET

This is 76 pairs more than that for last year's festival.

The peak travel season, which started Tuesday, will end March 5. During the 40 days, the ministry predicted that a total of 145 million people will take train, up 3.5 per cent year-on-year, among which direct passengers accounting for 59.5 million, up by 10 per cent.

The railways transport currently averages 2.74

million passengers a day, Hu said. This is about 890,000 less than the figure of days on the eve of the Spring Festival and 1.76 million less than that of the peak days.

The ministry predicted that the passenger flow will get its before-festival peak of 3.6 million from February 4 to February 6, 80,000 passengers more than the same period last year. The first

after-festival peak is expected to be seen from February 15 to 17 and second rush from February 25 to February 28, both 100,000 more than that of last year.

Students and migrants workers started their journey's home a month before the new year's day so there were less passengers during the peak days before the festival.

MNA/Xinhua

China's grain output hit 469.5 million tons in 2004

BEIJING, 26 Jan — A senior Chinese official said here Tuesday that China's total grain output in 2004 reached 469.5 million tons, a hefty increase of 38.8 million tons or 9.0 per cent over the previous year.

Both total grain production and average yield of cereals crops in 2004 went an all time high, said Li Deshui, commissioner with the National Bureau of Statistics at Tuesday's Press conference.

Average per-hectare grain yield was 4,620 kilos, up 6.6 per cent, said Li.

MNA/Xinhua

Cambodia's drug smuggling cases increased in 2004

PHNOM PENH, 26 Jan — During 2004 in Cambodia, 489 drug smugglers were arrested in 217 separate busts, compared with 179 busts in 2003, the *Cambodia Daily* reported on Tuesday.

According to a report from the National Authority for Combating Drugs, more than 860,000 amphetamine pills were confiscated in 2004 compared with 299,527 in 2003. Moreover, the authority also confiscated about 14,439 bottles of Ketamine last year. Drug smuggling across Cambodia borders continued to rise over the last 12 months despite government initiatives to hamstring the trade, drug officials said. Among those arrested were 388 Cambodians.—MNA/Xinhua

Beijing, Madrid to strengthen tourism cooperation

BEIJING, 26 Jan — Beijing Tourism Bureau and the Madrid Municipal Economic Development Department signed an agreement here Monday to strengthen bilateral tourism cooperation, according to the tourism bureau. The two cities will establish links on their home pages and have regular meetings on tourism every year, which the cities will take turns hosting, the source said.

The agreement focuses on personnel training. Madrid will provide three-month scholarships for two Chinese professionals studying in its tourism college, and vice versa.

MNA/Xinhua

More Australian soldiers injured in Iraq

BAGHDAD, 27 Jan — Several Australian soldiers were injured in a suspected car bomb attack near their patrol vehicle in Baghdad, the Defence Department said.

The department issued a statement saying the Australian light armoured vehicle was targeted by insurgents while on a routine patrol in the Iraqi capital.

Two of the injured soldiers were undergoing surgery on Thursday, she said, but there was no immediate word on their condition or details of injuries to any other soldiers involved in the attack. In an earlier incident, insurgents fired on Australian forces near the Australian embassy in Baghdad.

No Australians were hurt.

The attacks came a week after two Australian soldiers were injured in a car

bomb blast outside the quarters of the Australian security detachment in Baghdad.

They also followed the reported death of a man shot by Australian soldiers on Monday and found to have been carrying several fuel drums in his car.

Australia's Middle East Task Force Commander Greg Evans said on Wednesday he had received unconfirmed reports the man had died.

In reporting the most recent attack, the Department of Defence said "a number of soldiers" were injured, with two requiring surgery, when the bomb exploded during a routine patrol.

The statement said "an Australian Light Armoured Vehicle (LAV) patrol was engaged by a suspected vehicle borne explosive device".—Internet



US soldiers from the 1st Infantry Division leave Gabe base in the Iraqi town of Baquba, for a routine mission, on 25 Jan, 2005.—INTERNET

China continues to uproot corruption

BEIJING, 26 Jan— In response to a motion of tailing after government officials, state-owned business leaders or their kin to deal with possible corruption, which has been implemented in pilot places since early 2004, the Communist Party of China (CPC) Central Commission for Discipline Inspection (CCDI) vowed at a recent meeting to keep running the work.

The Central Committee of Taiwan Democratic Self-Government League, which proposed of the motion, said that the number of government officials and state owned enterprises' (SOEs) leaders fleeing abroad with huge sums of money has risen in recent years, so keeping records of these people's major moves has become compulsory to detect corruption.

The CCDI has been

recording officials' travel plans and their children's job applications since July, 2004. Xiangfang, in central China's Hubei Province, Shuozhou, in north China's Shanxi Province and other two big enterprises in Beijing, are pilot locations for the programme.

"China will accumulate experience from the pilot spots and come up with the next steps," an official with CCDI who

declined to be named was quoted as saying in *China Youth Daily* last week.

The records should contain items such as the person involved and his relative's destinations for studying or living abroad, their expense resources and authentic certificates, the proposal says. Chinese anti-corruption experts have worked put a "modus operandi" for fugitive officials.

MNA/Xinhua



An employee shows the new product AC-LED lamp by Seoul Semiconductor Co on 26 Jan, 2005.—INTERNET

Singapore amends telecommunications act

SINGAPORE, 27 Jan— The Parliament passed on Tuesday several amendments to Singapore's Telecommunications Act, according to local media reports.

Under the revised act, the Infocomm Development Authority (IDA) of Singapore will be entitled the right to suspend or cancel telecom licences in case that the operators go into liquidation.

Operators who breach rules and regulations repeatedly will be penalized more toughly while the offenders will get additional fines of up to about 61,000 US dollars, which is ten times more than the present limit. However, the maximum fine of about 612,000 US dollars remains unchanged, the reports said.

As a new option offered by the amended act, operators who face the penalties may choose to ask the IDA to reconsider its decision, apart from appealing to the government minister.

The amendments also simplify the procedures operators should take when ownership changes occurs, and stipulate that operators have to share their telecom infrastructure for the use of broadcasting services.

Balaji Sadasivan, Senior Minister of State for Ministry of Information, Communications and the Arts, noted that the revisions are made to ensure the Telecommunications Act remains relevant to the industry, which has undergone many changes including the market's full liberalization in 2000 since the act was last reviewed six years ago. — MNA/Xinhua

Virus that killed five in Bangladesh confirmed to be "Nipah"

DHAKA, 26 Jan— Five death cases in central Bangladesh have been confirmed to be caused by Nipah virus, as over 20 more patients have been reported suffering from the viral infection since January 5.

A release by Directorate General of Health Services (DGHS) Tuesday confirmed the outbreak of Nipah virus in the northern district Tangail adjacent to Dhaka.

According to the release, the health department one week ago sent the samples of blood, human tissue and urine collected from the infected patients to the Centre for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) Atlanta, USA. The CDC on 20

January conveyed the test report that shows some sample is Nipah positive.

So far there are 12 people who died of the infection in January with flu-like syndromes including high fever and muscle pains, while many villagers in the district begin to flee homes in panic.

The DGHS in the wake of the CDC report has taken immediate measures to further investigate the mode of transmission and epidemiology of the virus.—MNA/Xinhua

Hu Jintao urges CPC to maintain its advanced nature

BEIJING, 27 Jan— Hu Jintao, General Secretary of the Communist Party of China (CPC) Central Committee, Tuesday urged the CPC always to maintain their advanced nature by keeping pace with the times and meeting people's demands.

Hu, also President of China, called for stepping up efforts to maintain the Party's advanced nature and increase its ruling capacity in order to "realize, safeguard and develop the fundamental interests of the overwhelming majority of the Chinese people".

Hu made the remarks

while presiding over the 19th Workshop of the Political Bureau of the CPC Central Committee, at which Professor Li Zhongjie, from the CPC institute on the Party history, and Wang Tingda, a researcher from the national society on Party building, gave lectures on the topic of how to help

the CPC members maintain their advanced nature.

Hu urged to firmly build up and implement a scientific concept on development, develop socialist democratic politics and socialist culture, and constantly push forward economic and social coordinated development.

He urged all the CPC members always to keep people in mind, make substantial efforts to help resolve the problems people ever encounter in their work and life, and firmly oppose and correct all kinds of activities that may be harmful to the people.

MNA/Xinhua

China awards units, individual involved in manned space programme

BEIJING, 27 Jan — Two institutions and an individual have received meritorious titles from the Central Military Commission (CMC) for their contribution to the development of the country's manned space programme and strategic weapons.

A decree to this effect was recently signed by Hu Jintao, general secretary and CMC chairman of the Communist Party of China (CPC).

One of the projects awarded is a landing station under the General Armament Department of the Chinese People's Lib-

eration Army (PLA), which is the only unit responsible for recovering returned satellites and space vehicles. It is entitled as a "Meritorious Landing Station".

The second award went to the battalion of the Chinese PLA Secondary Artillery Force, which

is awarded the title of a "Pioneer Missile Projection Battalion".

The third is Wang Yongzhi, chief designer of China's manned space programme, who obtains the title of a "Meritorious Scientist for Manned Space Voyage".

MNA/Xinhua

Seven dead after boat sinks in Thailand

BANGKOK, 26 Jan— Seven people have been confirmed dead after a boat full of tourists turned over and sank on Tuesday morning on the sea close to Thailand's southeastern resort island Samui.

The accident occurred when a boat full of some 40 passengers sailed back from the island of Phangan to Samui around 5:00 am.

Most of the passengers were foreign tourists wearing no life jacket for the short distance of the trip, reported the local radio station FM 100.

The authorities are still racing to rescue the passengers and believe the boat was seriously overloaded.

Both Samui and Phangan are two idyllic islands lying some 685 kilometres southeast of Bangkok.—MNA/Xinhua



A Chinese boy runs past a residential property billboard in Shanghai on 25 Jan, 2005.—INTERNET

Pade Dam will guarantee a year-round supply of irrigation water

Article by **Kyaw Sein**

Photos by **Thein Win Lay (Myanma Alin)**

The Pade Dam oir Project is located on Pade Creek near Natmauk village, 36 miles south-east of Aunglan township, Thayet district, Magway Division. The project is being undertaken by Construction Group 3 of the Irrigation Department.

The water-flow area of the dam is 61.19 square miles. Aunglan township has an average rainfall of 30.97 inches. The annual volume of water flowing into the reservoir is 34,000 acre-feet. The embankment of the irrigation facility is of earthen type, with 118 feet in height and 2,400 feet in length. The construction of the embankment will enable the facility to store a total of 32,900 acre-feet of water to the brim. As its regular storage of water is 7,300 acre feet, the surface area will be 1,340 acre-feet.

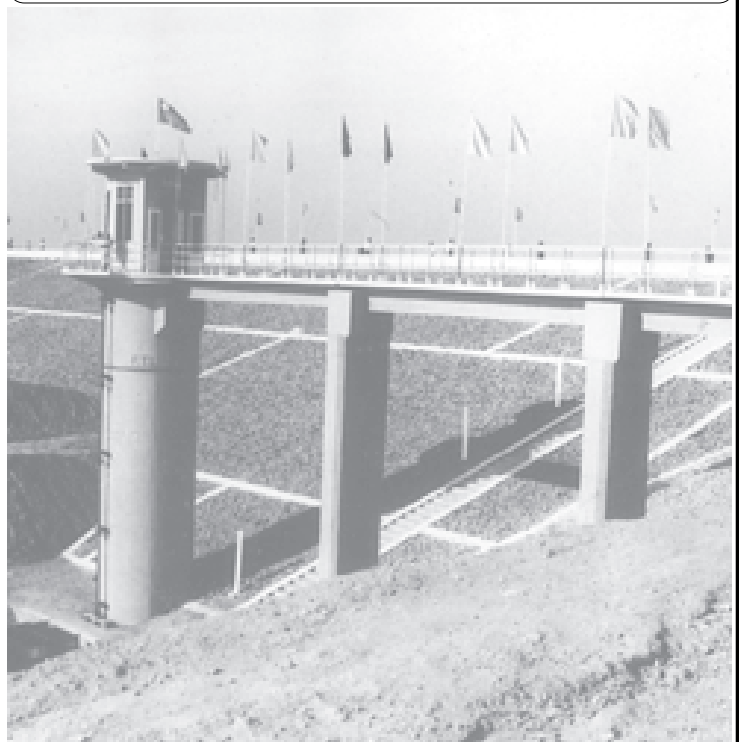
A conduit pipe was also constructed to feed irrigation water into farmland. The conduit pipe is of reinforced concrete type, with six feet in height and four feet in width. Water will flow through it at the rate of 150 cubic feet per second. A 150-foot-wide

spillway, which is of broad-crested type, was also constructed to save the dam from being damaged by the swell of Pade Creek triggered by heavy rain.

By means of Pade Dam, irrigation water can be supplied to all the farmland in the region all the year round. The facility can also assure local food sufficiency. Furthermore, regional development tasks are also gaining speed as transport has been improved. When the construction of Pade Dam started, roads were constructed to ensure easy access to the construction site. Now, local residents are enjoying the fruitful results of better transport. The government constructed the facility at great expense exceeding K 1,800 million. Efforts are being exerted on the timely completion of the main dam, the conduit pipe, the water control tower and the spillway. In the future not too distant, the dam will be inaugurated as the 170th irrigation facility.

Note: The facility was opened on 24-1-2005.—Ed

Translation: **KTY**
Myanma Alin: 23-1-2005



Completion of Pade Dam built by Construction-3 of the Irrigation Department near Shwepandaw Village of Aunglan Township on 16-1-2005. The dam is an earthen one measuring 118 feet high and 2,400 feet long situated in Pade Creek, 36 miles from Aunglan.



Daw Khin Thet Htay presents mosquito nets for Pre-Primary Schools in 10 townships to a chairperson of Township Maternal and Child Welfare Association. — MNA

Steps for control of dengue haemorrhage fever discussed

YANGON, 27 Jan—Yangon Division Health Committee and Yangon Division Maternal and Child Welfare Association Supervisory Committee met at the office of the committee on West Myinpyaingkwin Road in Bahan Township yesterday morning, to hold discussions on mass activities for control of dengue haemorrhage fever in the division.

On the occasion, President of the Supervisory Committee Daw Khin Thet Htay give a speech, and presented mosquito nets treated with insecticide to the pre-primary schools run by Maternal and Child Welfare Associations

in the ten townships, where dengue haemorrhage fever is common, through respective officials.

Secretary of the Supervisory Committee Head of Division Health Department Dr Hla Myint dealt with preventive measures against dengue haemorrhage fever; Division Specialist (Malaria) Dr Win Naing, outbreak of dengue haemorrhage fever and work programmes; and Deputy Director-General of the Division Health Department Dr Ye Myint and Director (Disease Control) Dr Kyaw Nyunt Sein, control and educative talks on the disease.

MNA



The meeting chairman and party seen at the ceremony to hail Union Day and support National Convention in Eindu Village of Hpa-an Township. — MNA



USDA members and local people marching to the ceremony hailing Union Day and supporting National Convention. — MNA

Union Spirit plays vital...

(From page 16)

nation. In the process, the State's seven-point Road Map has been laid down, and so the national brethren are to collectively take part in the drawing of the State Constitution with a sense of duty. And they are also to be in support of the resumption of the National Convention



Hpa-an District USDA Secretary U Saw Aye Lwin. — MNA

wholeheartedly to enable the nation to exist till doomsday and to stand tall among the world nations.

Around 70 per cent of the nation's population of more than 50 million live in rural areas, so the government is speeding up the implementation of the five rural development tasks to narrow down the development gap between the urban regions and border areas. It has done its utmost in the undertakings for in the sectors of security, transport, agriculture, livestock breeding, education and health in far-flung areas, bringing fruitful results to the national races. It indeed indicated the result of the struggle for equitable progress of all parts of the Union, he added.

All the people are thus to further cement the unity in terms of receiving the ancestor's heritage of absolute solidar-

ity, he said.

In conclusion, he exhorted the members to be equipped fully with Union Spirit to translate the seven-step programme into reality for the emergence of a peaceful, modern and developed nation in future.

Hailing the Union Day, Hpa-an District USDA Executive U Saw Soe Naing Lin said that the 58th Anniversary Union Day will be observed in accord with the five objectives. It is the duty of all the nationalities to re-



Hpa-an Township USDA Executive Daw Khin Mar Cho. — MNA

alise the 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 polity programme.

The Union of

Myanmar is formed with various national races, including Kachin, Kayah, Kayin, Chin, Bamar, Mon, Rakhine and Shan. The 12th of February has been marked as Union Day every year as the historic Panglong Agreement was reached on 12 February 1947. Union

The association has erected 25 mini-hydel power plants in rural areas of Hpa-an, Thandaung, Hlaingbwe, Kawkareik, Kya-in Seik-kyi, Papun and Myawady townships, spending K 6.7 million.

spirit plays a vital role in building a peaceful, modern and developed nation with the strength that comes out from amity and unity of the national



Hpa-an District USDA Executive U Saw Soe Naing Lin. — MNA

people. The bitter experiences of the past and the present international situation should be taken as lessons in developing the nation.

The people should keep in the fore Our Three Main National Causes in building a modern and developed nation. Unity is also important in the nation-building task. Sustainable developments in all sectors stand witness to the Government's endeavours. Based on the sound foundations, the Government laid down and is materializing the seven-point Road Map. Moreover, implementing the 24-zone development

project is in progress at present, and the development drive has reached every part of the Union including border areas. In addition, new infrastructures are emerging in all the regions.

Taking into account the lessons of the past and present international

trend, the people can know that firm nationalism is required for perpetuation of the Union. The people need to unitedly ward off all destructive elements inside and outside the country.

They should follow the correct leadership of the Government and strive with goodwill and ardent efforts for the nation to stand shoulder to shoulder with other nations.

In support of the National Convention, Executive of Hpa-an Township USDA Daw Khin Mar Cho said that since its assumption of the State duties, the Government has been safeguarding the nation, while keeping in the fore the national policy — non-disintegration of the Union; non-disintegration of national solidarity; and perpetuation of sovereignty.

It is also implementing the four political objectives, four economic objectives and four social objectives for peace, stability and progress of the nation. It is achieving sustainable progress in restoring peace, stability, the rule of law and national consolidation with the help of the people.

At present, the Gov-

ernment is in the process of materializing the seven-point Road Map for emergence of a constitution and to build a modern and developed nation in accord with the constitution. The holding of the National Convention, the first step of the seven-point Road Map, is in progress. All the delegates of political parties, national races, peasants, workers, intellectuals and intelligentsia, State service personnel, and other invited delegates, and representatives-elect are attending the Convention. They are laying down the basic principles for the constitution in unity. The National Convention, as important as life and blood of the nation, will resume on 17 February.

Papun Township



Hpa-an District USDA Executives Daw Tin Tin Hlaing and Daw Pa Pa Win act as MC and co-MC. — MNA

USDA Executive Daw Khaing Khaing Win said that the USDA is implementing the five rural development tasks, and accelerating its organizational drive for proportionate development of all the regions of the nation.

It has built rural roads, and renovated schools and furnished them with furniture. The association has erected 25 mini-hydel power plants in rural areas of Hpa-an, Thandaung, Hlaingbwe, Kawkareik, Kya-in Seik-kyi, Papun and Myawady

townships, spending K 6.7 million. Water from mountain springs are being supplied to villages. Clean water has been distributed to villages in Thandaung, Kawkareik and Hlaingbwe townships. Thanks to pumping stations many regions of Kayin State can now grow summer paddy in addition to monsoon paddy.

The pumping stations have helped Tayokhla, Bakat and Htonaing model villages in Hpa-an Township to grow more summer paddy to meet the local food requirement. In addition, the rural areas in the region can cultivate other crops and conduct farming. Health standard of the region is also improving thanks to the increasing number of infrastructures.

At present the development gap between urban and rural areas, home to 70 per cent of the nation's population, has now become narrow.

Afterwards, the chairman declared the approval of the motions to commemorate the Union Day



Papun Township USDA Executive Daw Khaing Khaing Win. — MNA

and to support the National Convention and rural development tasks. Next, the new generation students, USDA members sang the song titled 'Eternal Union' in honour of the Union Day, and the meeting ended with chants of slogans.—MNA

Independence and sovereignty regained through united strength Myanmar now on track for modernization Mass rally held in NyaungU to hail Union Day, support National Convention



Ceremony to hail Union Day and support National Convention in progress in Thantsinkyel model village of NyaungU Township.— MNA

YANGON, 27 Jan — The ceremony to hail the Union Day and support the National Convention organized by NyaungU District Union Solidarity and Development Association was held at Thantsinkyel model village in NyaungU Township this morning.

Present on the occasion were Secretary of Mandalay Division USDA U Tin Maung Soe, Joint-Secretary U Sein Myint and executives, organizers and members of NyaungU District and Township USDAs, members of War

emonies.

They saluted the State Flag before the ceremony.

In his speech, NyaungU District USDA Secretary U Htay Lwin said that the Union Day ceremony is held annually.

ties, the industrial sector, the development of human resources, the health sector and the tourism industry.

He continued to say that the government is carrying out the national races development plan, the 24-

unanimously vowed to live in unity, was designated Union Day.

It is united strength that freed the country from the yoke of the colonialists and brought freedom and sovereignty to the country.

Now, the government has got the country on track of modernization through Our Three Main National Causes. The government is striving to ensure stability and prosperity in the country. It is due to these correct endeavours that 17 armed groups returned to the legal fold. Now, they are taking part in the development tasks of their respective regions.

In conclusion, he called for combined efforts to ward off with na-

country as a democracy.

She continued that the government has announced that the National Convention will resume on 17 February this year. The draft of the constitution will be formulated at the National Convention as the constitution is the life-

step rural development project. The members of NyaungU District USDA are now lending themselves to construction of village-to-village roads in concert with local residents.

To ensure the availability of safe drinking water, tube-wells were sunk at a cost of K 2.26 million in villages in the region. In the education sector, basic education schools are also being upgraded at great expense.

He also said that K 1 million will be donated to the fund for construction of a biogas plant in Ahtnyin village plant. Later, he pledged that local USDA members will gear up themselves for the rural development tasks in cooperation with the government.

Afterwards, U Nyunt Win handed over documents related to the repair of the schools through an education officer and other documents related to the sinking of (See page 15)



The meeting chairman and co-chairpersons of the ceremony to hail Union Day and support National Convention in NyaungU Township.— MNA

Veterans Organization, Myanmar Women's Affairs Federation, Maternal and Child Welfare Association, Red Cross and Auxiliary Fire Brigades and local people totalling 3,550.

Secretary of NyaungU District USDA U Htay Lwin presided over the ceremony together with Secretary of NyaungU District Organization for Women's Affairs Daw Su Su, member of TWA Daw Tin Tin Myint, Chairman of Township War Veterans Organization U Aung Myint and U Aung Thein of Thantsinkyel Village. Executives of the District USDA Daw Le Le Swe and Daw Than Than Wai acted as masters of cer-

The present government, upholding Our Three Main National Causes— non-disintegration of the Union, non-disintegration of national solidarity and perpetuation of sovereignty, is building the nation. The State Peace and Development Council Government is carrying out development of the country day in and day out. It can be seen unprecedented development in the agriculture sector that a total of 170 dams and embankments have been built in a short time and that more dams are under construction. In addition, all the people can enjoy fruitful results of river water pumping projects. Furthermore, he added in his speech on progress of transport facili-

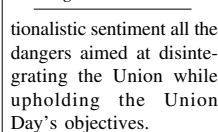
ties, the industrial sector, the development of human resources, the health sector and the tourism industry.

Concerning the National Convention, the meeting chairman said that the Government has laid down the seven-point Road Map. And, the National Convention, the first step of the Road Map, resumed for drawing the Constitution in May last year. Nowadays, arrangements have been made to resume the National Convention on 17 February again.

NyaungU Township USDA Executive U Aung Mon Han, in hailing the Union Day, recalled that the date, 12 February 1947, on which the entire national people



NyaungU Township USDA Joint-Secretary U Aung Zaw Min.— MNA



NyaungU Township Executive Daw Htar Htar Win.— MNA

Win, executive of NyaungU District USDA, in his explanation concerning the rural development tasks being carried out in the region, said to ensure equitable prosperity across the nation, the government is implementing the five-



NyaungU District USDA Secretary U Htay Lwin.— MNA

blood in the establishment of a democratic nation. She concluded that the onus is on the entire national people to do their bit in this task.

Later, U Nyunt



NyaungU Township Executive Daw Htar Htar Win.— MNA

Win, executive of NyaungU District USDA, in his explanation concerning the rural development tasks being carried out in the region, said to ensure equitable prosperity across the nation, the government is implementing the five-



NyaungU District USDA Executive Daw Le Le Swe and Township Executive Daw Than Than Wai act masters of ceremonies.— MNA

UDNR trainees entertained with Anyeint

YANGON, 27 Jan—The Shwemyinmo Anyeint troupe of Yangon Command Headquarters presented entertainment programmes to the trainees of the BEd Four-year Course No 36 of the University for Development of National Races at No 1 Transit Centre on Bayintnaung Street in Hline Township this evening.

Among the spectators were Chairman of the Work Group for organizing the excursion tour of the trainees Chairman of Yangon Division Peace and Development Council Commander of Yangon Command Maj-Gen Myint Swe and wife



Commander Maj-Gen Myint Swe and wife, UDNR trainees enjoy entertainment of Shwemyintmo Anyeint troupe of Yangon Command.— YANGON COMMAND

Daw Khin Thet Htay, Chairman of the Civil Service Selection and Training Board U Than Nyun and members, offi-

cials, Rector Col Zaw Min Thein, faculty members and guests. After the programmes, the commander presented

cash assistance of K 254,000 to the trainees, and K 100,000 to the cultural troupe.

MNA

UDNR trainees continue excursion in Yangon

YANGON, 27 Jan—The trainees of the BEd Four-year Course No 36 of the University for Development of National Races, accompanied by Director-General of the Civil Service Selection and Training Department U Hla Kyi, Rector Col Zaw Min Thein and officials, visited the Memorial to Fallen Heroes on Arzarni Street in Bahan Township this morning.

They laid a wreath and paid tribute to the fallen heroes. Next, they visited the Shwedagon Pagoda and made cash donations to the funds of the pagoda.

They proceeded to Dagon University in Dagon Myothit (East) and observed the classrooms of respective subjects there.

Upon arrival at the University of Culture in Dagon Myothit (South), they were entertained with traditional dances and songs by the students.

They visited the students creating paintings and handicraft.

In the afternoon, they went to the National Sports Stadium (Thuwunna) on Waizayanda Road in Thingangyun Township, where they were welcomed by Chairman of Myanmar Olympic Committee Minister for Sports Brig-Gen Thura Aye Myint, Director-General of the Sports and Physical Education Department U Thuang Htaik and officials, members of the Leading Panel of Patrons of Myanmar Women's Sports Federation, and second leader of the Working Group for Nationalities Affairs Dr Daw May Win Aung Khin and members.

On the occasion, the minister extended greetings and dealt with measures for promotion of the Myanmar's sport standard, and presented sports gear to the UDNR.

The trainees enjoyed the skill demonstrations of respective Myanmar sports federations.

They also visited Dagon Centre in Sangyoung Township.

MNA

MNA

Irrigation facilities in Aunglan, Myanaung inspected



Minister for Agriculture and Irrigation Maj-Gen Htay Oo inspects progress of Kazunkhon river water pumping project.— A&I

YANGON, 27 Jan—Minister for Agriculture and Irrigation Maj-Gen Htay Oo saw over thriving 1,000 acres of summer paddy with the use of irrigation facilities from Bwetgyi Dam in Aunglan Township on 24 January.

At Kazunkhon river water pumping

project in Myanaung Township, the minister inspected the still water pond and supply of water through the canal and met with local farmers.

The project is being implemented so as to double cultivation tasks including summer paddy. On completion, the project can benefit 5,000

acres of farmland in the township.

On arrival at Ngapiseik river water pumping project in the same township, the minister looked into the place for the pumps in Ayeyawady River, the main still water pond, canals and the power intake structure. He heard re-

ports on arrangements being made for supply of water to 7,000 acres of farmland, findings from feasibility studies for implementing river water pumping projects near Myanaung Township and Ayeyawady Division presented by officials. Before he left the project site, he gave instructions to officials.

MNA

The 5th meeting of Committee of experts/officials of BIMSTEC held

YANGON, 27 Jan—The 5th meeting of Committee Experts/Officials for energy sectors programmes of BIMSTEC countries to be hosted by Myanmar took place this morning at Dusit Inya Lake Hotel on Kaba Aye Pagoda Road in Mayangon Township.

Present at the meeting were Minister for Energy Brig-Gen Lun Thi, Deputy Minister Brig-Gen Than Htay, Deputy Min-

ister for Electric Power U Myo Myint, directors-general and managing director of the department and enterprises under the Ministry of Energy, delegates to the ministries of Energy, Electric Power, Mines, Forestry, Science and Technology, Foreign Affairs, Ambassadors and delegates of BIMSTEC member nations, Bangladesh, Bhutan, Myanmar, India, Nepal, Sri Lanka and Thailand.

Minister Brig-Gen Lun Thi made an opening address. After the opening ceremony, the delegates had documentary photo taken together and the meeting continued.

Director-General of the Energy Planning Department U Soe Myint presided over the meeting. At the meeting, the future tasks of the projects being implemented in energy sectors of BIMSTEC were coordinated.—MNA



The group photo shows participants of the Fifth Meeting of Committee of Experts/Officials of BIMSTEC Energy Sector.— ENERGY

Kuwaiti banks assets deposits loans rose during 2004

KUWAIT CITY, 26 Jan — The assets, deposits and loans of Kuwaiti banks rose during the Year 2004 in comparison with 2003, a bulletin released Monday by Central Bank of Kuwait (CBK) indicated.

The Kuwaiti banks scored the achievement despite the local, regional and world changes in the banking industry.

Kuwait News Agency quoted the bulletin as saying that the local banks concluded the year 2004 with 19 billion Kuwaiti dinars (62.7 billion US dollars) assets with a 1-per cent increase from 2003.

In 2004, the local banks hit a new record in the amount of their deposits hiked by 11.57 billion dinars (38.18 billion dollars) in comparison with 10.22 billion dinars (33.73 billion dollars) in 2003.

The private sector's deposits engrossed the biggest percentage of the banks' deposits with about 10.99 billion dinars (36.27

billion dollars) with an increase of about one billion dinars (3.3 billion dollars) in 2003. The CBK's bulletin showed an increase in the amount of loans and facilities the banks have offered the private sector with a value of about 9.8 billion dinars (32.34 billion dollars) and an increase of more than 1.4 billion dinars (4.62 billion dollars) in 2003.

The overall loans given to the real estate sector reached about 1.6 billion dinars (5.28 billion dollars) while the commercial sector obtained 1.4 billion dinars (4.62 billion dollars) as the building and construction sector received about 701 million dinars (2.31 billion dollars). — *MNA/Xinhua*



A view of the Palais des festivals where the influential annual music trade fair (MIDEM) takes place in Cannes on 25 Jan, 2005.
INTERNET

Paraguay proposes free trade with China

BUENOS AIRES, 26 Jan — Paraguay will negotiate a free-trade agreement with China if it receives approval from MERCOSUR, major trade bloc in South America, Paraguayan Foreign Minister Leila Rachid said on Monday.

The lack of official relations between Paraguay and China would not prevent Paraguay from proposing negotiations for a free trade agreement with the Asian country, Rachid told a Press conference in Asuncion, capital of Paraguay.

However, Rachid said the proposal did not mean the two countries would establish official relations.

"We haven't started dialogue yet, because it

depends on a joint decision of the four full members of the bloc," Rachid added.

MERCOSUR, or the Common Market of the South, has Argentina, Brazil, Paraguay and Uruguay as full members and Bolivia, Chile, Peru and Venezuela as associate states.

Political analysts expect that Paraguay would start commercial dialogue with China despite the lack of diplomatic relations between the two countries.

Currently, Paraguay and China have a bilateral trade of 187.6 million US dollars a year.

— *MNA/Xinhua*

Brazil, Spain vow to strengthen strategic partnership

BRASILIA, 26 Jan — Brazilian President Luis Inacio Lula da Silva and visiting Spanish Prime Minister Jose Luis Rodriguez Zapatero said on Monday that the two countries are to take measures to enhance their strategic partnership.

The two sides will increase political dialogues between high officials, support each other in the international arena, and strengthen cooperation in social development, infrastructure construction, environment protection and other fields, they said in a statement.

Rodriguez Zapatero, who arrived here on Sunday night, also urged Brazil to help forge closer ties between South America's MERCOSUR trade bloc

and the European Union. Lula said trade between the two nations had risen to around three billion US dollars a year but was still far below its potential.

He called on Spain to increase investment in health and infrastructure sectors in Brazil and South America.

Brazil exported about 1.8 billion dollars of goods to Spain last year, including soy, iron ore, coffee and meat.

Spain, the second largest foreign investor in Brazil, has invested 26 billion dollars in Brazil's financial and telecommunications sectors.

Rodriguez Zapatero, on his first visit to South America since taking office last year, will fly to Argentina on Tuesday for talks with President Nestor Kirchner, and then to Chile to meet with President Ricardo Lagos in Santiago.

— *MNA/Xinhua*

People having hypertension can develop Alzheimer's disease

WASHINGTON, 26 Jan — People who have high blood pressure, cholesterol, diabetes or who smoke in midlife have a much higher risk of developing Alzheimer's disease later on, US researchers reported on Monday.

And the more factors a person has, the higher the risk. People with all four risk factors have more than double the risk of Alzheimer's, the team at the Kaiser Permanente Division of Research in Oakland, California found.

"The message is that the risk factors that are bad for the heart are bad for the brain," said Dr. Marilyn Albert, chair of scientific and medical research at the nonprofit Alzheimer's Association.

"That largely is because what happens to blood vessels in the heart is same as what happens to blood vessels in the brain," added Albert, whose group was not involved in the study.

For the report, published in the journal *Neurology*, Rachel Whitmer and colleagues studied nearly 9,000 people living in northern California.

The men and women from various ethnic groups were followed for 27 years. Those with diabetes at age 40 to 45 were 46 per cent more likely to develop dementia later on.

People with high cholesterol were 42 per cent more likely to develop dementia while those with high blood pressure were 24 per cent more likely.

Smokers were 26 per cent more likely to develop dementia. Smokers with diabetes, high blood pressure and

high cholesterol were more than twice as likely to develop dementia, Whitmer and colleagues reported.

People who were treated for their conditions lowered their overall risk of Alzheimer's, however.

"The real strength of our study is the large, multiethnic cohort of men and women, followed up for 27 years, all with equal access to medical care," Whitmer said. Alzheimer's affects an estimated 4.5 million Americans but this number is expected to jump to 16 million by 2050 as the population ages.

A team at Thomas Jefferson University in Philadelphia reports in the *Public Library of Science* this month that taking statin drugs, which lower cholesterol, also reduces the risk of Alzheimer's. Heart experts believe the drugs not only reduce cholesterol levels but somehow also keep the linings of blood vessels healthy.

Doctors say the prescriptions for avoiding heart disease and for lowering the risk of Alzheimer's are similar — eat plenty of fresh fruits and vegetables and nuts, and exercise daily.

The Alzheimer's Association advocates mental and physical exercise to help lower the risk of the deadly and incurable brain disease. — *MNA/Reuters*

Repsol announces more investments in Argentina

BUENOS AIRES, 26 Jan — Hispanic-Argentine petroleum firm Repsol YPF announced Monday that its investments in Argentina will surpass 1.2 billion US dollars in 2005, 35 per cent more than in the previous year.

The announcement was made after a meeting between Argentine President Nestor Kirchner and Repsol YPF Chairman Antonio Brufau.

Repsol's investment plan presented to Kirchner includes the expansion of the North Gas-Pipeline,

through which 1.8 million cubic feet of gas will be transported per day.

The petrol firm will invest 100 million US dollars in the project.

As to the building of the Northwest Gas-Pipeline due to carry Bolivian natural gas to Argentina,

Repsol explained that it is still not decided yet. Also, Repsol announced its plans this year to invest 750 million US dollars in infrastructure for the drilling and production of natural gas and petroleum and in offshore exploration plans. — *MNA/Xinhua*

Costa Rican President to start first Ecuador visit in 10 years

QUITO, 26 Jan — Costa Rica President Abel Pacheco will pay an official visit to Ecuador Thursday, the first by a Costa Rican President in 10 years, the Ecuadorean Foreign Ministry said Monday.

During the visit, two sides are expected to discuss how to strengthen cooperation and exchanges in such areas as commerce, technology, environmental protection, eco-tourism, and the development of small- and

medium-sized firms, local media reported.

Pacheco is going to meet with his Ecuadorean counterpart, Lucio Gutierrez, after the Summit of Banana Producing and Exporting Countries, which is scheduled for

Wednesday in Quito. They will also sign a joint declaration after their talks, according to Roberto Betancourt, undersecretary of bilateral affairs of the Ecuadorean Foreign Ministry.

— *MNA/Xinhua*

Chile's commercial sales grew 4.6% in 2004

SANTIAGO, 26 Jan — Chile's commercial sales in 2004 increased by 4.6 per cent compared with those in 2003, said official figures.

The whole year's increase came after a 6.2 per cent growth in December 2004 compared with December 2003, said a report of the National Chamber of Commerce, Services and Tourism (CNC).

The commercial sales in 2004 fell below expectations basically due to a

high rate of unemployment, said the CNC report. The CNC report also showed that domestic demand has a close relationship with the sales performance.

The report predicted commercial sales in 2005 will increase by 5 per cent compared with those in 2004.

— *MNA/Xinhua*

Italian, French PMs meet over economic issues

ROME, 26 Jan — Italian and French leaders on Tuesday called for a more flexible interpretation of the European fiscal pact and vowed to strengthen their economic cooperation.

Speaking at a joint conference here with his visiting French counterpart, Jean-Pierre Raffarin, Italian Prime Minister Silvio Berlusconi said they were "in perfect agreement" to seek "new criteria for interpreting" the Stability and Growth Pact at the European Union (EU) summit scheduled for March 23.

The document, signed in 1997, rules that member states of the euro-zone should keep their public debt under 60 per cent of their gross domestic product (GDP). Italy's public debt has surpassed 100 per cent of its GDP.

Berlusconi said the pact should be changed and be interpreted with more "flexibility," noting public debt can only be reduced in a gradual way.

Raffarin, on a one-day working visit to Italy, said the debt criteria are "certainly important" in the pact's reform. "But the most important aspect is that of

controlling the deficit," he said. France and Italy "have a joint strategy" for the pact, Raffarin said.

The two leaders also discussed cooperation in other economic areas.

Berlusconi said Italy and France have agreed to bring Italy's troubled airline Alitalia into French flag-carrier Air France.

"Alitalia has problems which must be solved, and we will solve them," he said, hoping it can become part of Europe's biggest air alliance between Air France and the KLM Royal Dutch Airlines. — MNA/Xinhua

Austria to offer air defence support for Davos meeting

VIENNA, 26 Jan — Austria will provide Switzerland with air defence support to prevent terrorist attacks on this year's World Economic Forum annual meeting in Davos, the *Austria Press Agency* (APA) reported Tuesday.

The Austrian Air Force will move several warplanes, hundreds of troops and radar equipment from central Austria to boost air defence in the west of the country for the

five-day event, said the APA.

Davos lies only 15 kilometres from the Austrian border.

The Austrian military said Tuesday that air defence cooperation between the two countries is necessary for quick response to possible terrorist attacks on the Davos event.

A "no-fly zone" will be established for the meeting. The Austrian air

defence system can detect any suspicious flying objects and react properly, said the military.

Austrian warplanes may also have to cross the border for certain missions, it added.

The Davos meeting in the following five days is expected to attract 2,250 delegates from 96 countries and territories, among them more than 20 heads of state or government.

MNA/Xinhua

Bulgarian police seize chemicals used to make amphetamines

SOFIA, 26 Jan — Bulgarian police have raided an illegal drugs lab and seized enough chemicals to make \$1.4 billion worth of amphetamines, officials said on Tuesday.

In a joint operation with Turkish authorities, police commandos found 280 kilos (617 pounds) of a chemical that could produce 56 million amphetamine pills when they

stormed a workshop in a Sofia suburb late on Monday, Interior Ministry Chief Secretary Boiko Borisov said.

He said at around 25 US dollars each, the amphetamine pills have a street value worth 1.4 billion US dollars in all.

"It's the largest amount of amphetamines ever seized in Bulgaria," Borisov told *Reuters*. Po-

lice arrested two men at the scene and were searching for two more suspects.

Borisov said the operation was the final strike to crush a Bulgarian, Serbian and Turkish drug ring following two other raids earlier this month.

The end-product drugs were to be smuggled into western Europe and the Middle East, he said.

MNA/Reuters

Netherlands intensifies fight against terror

BRUSSELS, 26 Jan — The Dutch Cabinet has presented a series of measures to the Parliament which are designed to intensify its fight against terrorism, according to a Radio Netherlands report monitored here Tuesday.

In a letter to the Parliament, Interior Minister Johan Remkes and Justice Minister Piet Hein Donner said they have earmarked a total of 400 million euros (about 520 million US dollars) for anti-terror programmes in the next five years.

There will also be 600

new jobs in the intelligence services, while 90 new positions will be created in police departments and the Public Prosecution Service.

The Cabinet has declared Amsterdam's Schiphol Airport a permanent security zone, which means that police are authorized to carry out preventive searches at all time.

A colour-code system indicating the level of a terrorist threat will be introduced in March, the report said.

MNA/Xinhua

Portugal suffering from severe drought

RASQUINHA (Portugal), 26 Jan — Jose Maltez the 60-year-old rancher has lost more than 30 cows this winter — a quarter of his herd — as Portugal's driest January in a century threatens to bring on the worst drought in more than a decade.

"Unfortunately, more will die in coming days," said Maltez, who has turned to chopping branches from trees in an attempt to keep them alive with leaves.

About 40 sheep and five cows are dying each day from starvation in the

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Win Mu Tin, M.A., H.G.P., D.B.L for IMPERIAL CHEMICAL INDUSTRIES PLC.
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Dated: 28 January 2005

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TIN OHNMAR TUN
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P.O. Box. 109, Ph: 248 108/723043

(For. Ella Cheong, Spruson & Ferguson, Singapore)

Dated: 28 January 2005

DONATE

BLOOD

Alentejo farm region.

A pond had about three feet of water in it although the water line was about 10 feet higher. Dusty fields were covered with brown patches where there should have been verdant pasture.

"Last year at this time the grass was up to here," Maltez said, motioning with his hand to just above his knee.

The lack of rain is bad news for Portugal, the poorest country in Western Europe, as it struggles to revive its economy.

MNA/Reuters

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Nominees for US' 77th Academy Awards

LOS ANGELES, 26 Jan— Following is a list of nominees in the major categories for the 77th Academy Awards. The nominations were announced on Tuesday:

- | | | |
|--|---|---|
| Best Picture:
"The Aviator"
(Miramax, Initial Entertainment Group, Warner Bros.)
"Finding Neverland"
(Miramax)
"Million Dollar Baby"
(Warner Bros.)
"Ray"
(Universal)
"Sideways"
(Fox Searchlight/20th Century Fox)
Best Actor:
Don Cheadle in "Hotel Rwanda"
Johnny Depp in "Finding Neverland"
Leonardo DiCaprio in "The Aviator"
Clint Eastwood in "Million Dollar Baby"
Jamie Foxx in "Ray"
Best Actress:
Annette Bening "Beating Julia"
Catalina Sandino Moreno in "Maria Full of Grace"
Imelda Staunton in "Vera Drake"
Hilary Swank in "Mil- | lion Dollar Baby"
Kate Winslet in "Eternal Sunshine of the Spotless Mind"
Best Director:
Martin Scorsese for "The Aviator"
Clint Eastwood for "Million Dollar Baby"
Taylor Hackford for "Ray"
Alexander Payne for "Sideways"
Mike Leigh for "Vera Drake"
Best Animated Film:
"The Incredibles"
(Pixar Animation Studios Inc., distributed by The Walt Disney Co.)
"Shark Tale"
(DreamWorks Animation SKG Inc.)
"Shrek 2"
(DreamWorks)
Best Foreign Language Film:
"As It Is in Heaven"
(Sweden)
"The Chorus (Les Choristes)" (France)
"Downfall" (Ger- | many)
"The Sea Inside"
(Spain)
"Yesterday" (South Africa)
Best Supporting Actor:
Alan Alda in "The Aviator"
Thomas Haden Church in "Sideways"
Jamie Foxx in "Collateral"
Morgan Freeman in "Million Dollar Baby"
Clive Owen in "Closer"
Best Supporting Actress:
Cate Blanchett in "The Aviator"
Laura Linney in "Kinsey"
Virginia Madsen in "Sideways"
Sophie Okonedo in "Hotel Rwanda"
Natalie Portman in "Closer"
Best Adapted screenplay:
"Before Sunset," |
|--|---|---|



Director and star Clint Eastwood (L) is shown with actress Hilary Swank on the set of their film 'Million Dollar Baby.' Eastwood received an Oscar nod for best director, Swank for best actress, Morgan Freeman for best supporting actor and the film for best picture as nominations were announced by the Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences in Beverly Hills on 25 Jan, 2005. The Oscars will be awarded on 27 February.—INTERNET

screenplay by Richard Linklater, Julie Delpy and Ethan Hawke; story by Richard Linklater and Kim Krizan
"Finding Neverland," screenplay by David Magee
"Million Dollar Baby," screenplay by Paul Haggis
"The Motorcycle Diaries," screenplay by Jose Rivera
"Sideways," screenplay by Alexander Payne and Jim Taylor
Best Original screenplay:
"The Aviator," written by John Logan
"Eternal Sunshine of the Spotless Mind," screenplay by Charlie Kaufman, story by Charlie Kaufman & Michel Gondry & Pierre Bismuth
"Hotel Rwanda," written by Keir Pearson & Terry George
"The Incredibles," written by Brad Bird
"Vera Drake," written by Mike Leigh
Miramax is a unit of The Walt Disney Co. Warner Brothers is the studio owned by Time Warner Inc. Fox Searchlight and 20th Century Fox of News Corp Inc.
Universal Pictures is a unit of General Electric Co.-controlled NBC Universal.
MNA/Reuters

Scientists study chimp behaviour

LONDON, 26 Jan— Chimpanzees have a sense of fair play but how much they will tolerate depends on who they are dealing with, scientists said on Wednesday.

They will put up with being short-changed if they are close to the animal getting the better deal, but won't allow any monkey business if it's a stranger.
"We found variation in the response of the chimpanzees that was based on the social group they were in," said Sarah Brosnan, a researcher at the Yerkes National Primate Research Centre of Emory University in Atlanta, Georgia.
"It is interesting because social psychologists have found that humans have this variability in response based on the quality of the social relationship," she added in an interview.
Brosnan and her colleague Frans de Waal first demonstrated a sense of fairness in non-humans when they showed that capuchin monkeys do not settle for any injustice at all. The capuchins did not show the same variable response as did the chimpanzees.
Their latest findings, which are reported in the Proceedings of the Royal Academy of Sciences, Series B web site, give new clues about the role relationships play in primate and human decision-making.—MNA/Reuters



A Belarus man runs next to a woman pushing her child cart under heavy snow in Minsk. A cold snap gripped much of western Europe with temperatures dipping below zero and snow and ice affecting traffic in many areas.—INTERNET

AIDS patients receiving ARVs in developing countries rise

GENEVA, 26 Jan—The number of AIDS patients receiving life-extending drugs in poor countries has jumped to 700,000 from 440,000 six months ago, UN agencies said on Wednesday, but warned much more needed to be done.

The figure only amounted to 12 per cent of the estimated 5.8 million adults needing antiretroviral therapy (ARV) in developing and transitional countries, they said.
Enormous barriers remained, including a two-billion-US-dollar funding gap, to reaching a target of three million people by the end of 2005, according to the Progress Report on the UN initiative known as "Three by Five".
About 38 million people worldwide, including 25 million in sub-Saharan Africa, are living with HIV/AIDS.
Compiled by the World Health Organization (WHO) and the Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS (UNAIDS), which set the goal on World AIDS Day 2003, the report was being presented to the annual gathering of world and business leaders at the Swiss resort of Davos.
"The progress in the second half of 2004 has been dramatic, reaching the December milestone of 700,000 people," which the report said had been the end-2004 target.
Patients receive drugs through national programmes, aid agencies, the private sector, the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria, the US President's Emergency Plan for AIDS relief, the World Bank and other partners.
In Washington, the US global AIDS coordinator Randall Tobias told reporters that 155,000 people in the 15 countries targeted under the US bilateral plan are getting the drugs.
But the high cost of ARV drugs, averaging at least 300 US dollars per person per year, remained a barrier, according to the UN agencies, which are seeking a price of 50 US dollar-200 US dollar by end-2005.
MNA/Reuters

Infections early in life develops adult's immune systems

CHICAGO, 26 Jan—Exposure to a younger sibling's infections during the first six years of life helps the elder child's immune system develop and cuts the risk of multiple sclerosis later on, Australian researchers said on Tuesday.

To test the "hygiene hypothesis" — that infections early in life may reduce the risk of developing allergies and autoimmune diseases in adulthood — the researchers looked at the life histories of 136 Tasmanian adults with multiple sclerosis and compared them with 272 without the disease.—MNA/Reuters

Birmingham's loan deal to Pennant put on hold

LONDON, 27 Jan — Birmingham City said on Tuesday that Jermaine Pennant's loan deal from Arsenal had been put "on hold" and that the 22-year-old has not joined them until the end of the season.

The former England Under-21 midfielder was charged with drink driving on Monday and faces a possible prison sentence because he was already serving a 16-month ban imposed for another drink-driving offence last February.

Although both clubs said on Monday that Pennant was joining Birmingham, a statement on Birmingham's web site said the deal had not been concluded.

"The position is presently on hold and will be reviewed shortly. Whilst Birmingham City wants to loan Jermaine Pennant and both Arsenal and the player wish this to happen, Jermaine Pennant's present circumstances are such that a loan agreement cannot be signed at the present time," the statement said.

MNA/Reuters



Chelsea's Frank Lampard gets a shot past Manchester United's Paul Scholes during their Carling Cup semi-final second leg football match at Old Trafford in Manchester.—INTERNET

Van der Sar signs contract extension with Fulham

LONDON, 27 Jan — Dutch international goalkeeper Edwin van der Sar has signed a contract extension with Premier League Fulham until 2006.

"I have enjoyed my time at Fulham since I joined in 2001 and my family are happy and settled here," the 34-year-old, who has 86 caps, told Fulham's web site on Tuesday. Van der Sar's decision to sign a new deal ends speculation linking him with a possible move to Manchester United or Arsenal.

Fulham manager Chris Coleman was pleased to hang on to van der Sar and Portuguese winger Luis Boa Morte, who signed a new deal earlier this month.

"During the transfer window the media speculated that our best players were expected to leave, but we have managed to secure deals with two key players and that shows the commitment of the chairman and the board to the future potential of this club," Coleman said. Fulham lie 13th in the 20-team Premier League.

MNA/Reuters

Davenport reaches semifinals at Australian Open

MELBOURNE, 27 Jan — World number one Lindsay Davenport fought back from a mid-match slump to hold off local hope and 10th seed Alicia Molik 6-4, 4-6, 9-7 on Wednesday to reach the semifinals of the Australian Open.

Davenport faltered badly at the end of the second and third sets with a string of unforced errors but clung on desperately to ruin Australia Day celebrations for a capacity crowd at Rod Laver Arena centre court.

Molik was playing in her first Grand Slam quarterfinal and had been unbeaten in 12 previous matches this year. She worked hard to force a dramatic deciding set, saving one match point on Davenport's serve before the American finally prevailed.

Davenport, the 2000 champion, grabbed the advantage with a service break in the 15th game of the final set and now plays 19th seed Nathalie Dechy of France for a place in her second Australian Open final.

MNA/Reuters



Alicia Molik of Australia hits a return against Lindsay Davenport of the US in their women's singles quarter-final match at the 2005 Australian Open tennis tournament in Melbourne. Davenport won 6-4, 4-6, 9-7 to advance to the semifinals.—INTERNET

Man Utd's first defeat of domestic cup semifinal

MANCHESTER (England), 27 Jan — Resilient Chelsea put Manchester United in their place on Wednesday with a 2-1 victory at Old Trafford that secured a League Cup final date with Liverpool next month.

Ireland winger Damien Duff scored the decisive goal with a floated free kick five minutes from time which deceived the United defence after Ryan Giggs had cancelled out Chelsea's first-half opener by Frank Lampard in a storming semifinal second leg match.

It gave Jose Mourinho's side a 2-1 aggregate victory and the runaway Premier League leaders will now face Liverpool at Cardiff's Millennium Stadium on February 27.

Liverpool booked their place with a 1-0 win over Second Division Watford on Tuesday.

The defeat was

Manchester United's first in a domestic cup semifinal for 30 years and it showed the grit of the London side, who are 10 points clear at the top of the league.

Victory was extra sweet for Mourinho, who was celebrating his 42nd birthday on Wednesday. His Porto side also eliminated United from the Champions League last season with a last-minute goal at Old Trafford.

He will now go to Cardiff seeking his first piece of silverware in English football.

Chelsea were at full strength but curiously,

United's Alex Ferguson opted to play Louis Saha as a lone attacker from the start, leaving Wayne Rooney on the bench.

United monopolized early possession but failed to create a clear opportunity and were then stung on the break.

Dutch winger Arjen Robben was the instigator, cutting infield and feeding Didier Drogba down the left. The Ivory Coast striker stepped inside Gary Neville before feeding the ball to the onrushing, unmarked Lampard whose cross-shot flew into the corner of the net with United's defence

nowhere.

Chelsea did not deserve to be in front but the goal deflated United and they finished the half frustrated and with two rejected penalty shoots the sum total of their efforts.

United came out after the interval with eyes bulging and laid siege to the Chelsea goal. Claude Makelele was lucky to stay on the pitch after swinging a boot at United winger Cristiano Ronaldo.

For all the home side's vigour it was Chelsea who almost scored next when US goalkeeper Tim Howard denied the outstanding Lampard with his fingertips and Robben with an out-stretched boot in quick succession.

Those saves proved crucial. United, with Rooney adding further purpose to their attack, levelled the scores in spectacular style midway through the second period when Giggs delicately flicked a neat, left-footed cross by Gary Neville over Chelsea keeper Petr Cech with the outside of his boot.

Extra time beckoned until Duff lofted over a free kick from the right and it eluded everybody, bouncing into the net off the woodwork.

The visitors still needed a goal line clearance by Wayne Bridge and a superb Cech save from Ronaldo, though, before securing their tickets to Cardiff.

The last time United lost a semifinal in the FA Cup or League Cup was in 1975, when Norwich City beat them over two legs in the League Cup.

MNA/Reuters

Sharapova set for semifinals at Australian Open

MELBOURNE, 27 Jan — Wimbledon champion Maria Sharapova fought back from a sloppy start to wear down fellow Russian Svetlana Kuznetsova 4-6, 6-2, 6-2 on Tuesday to reach the Australian Open semifinals for the first time.

Fourth seed Sharapova was tentative and error-prone in the first set and was out-hit by the aggressive US Open champion Kuznetsova, 19, who used pace and depth from the back of the court.

The 17-year-old then staged a remarkable comeback after losing her serve to fifth seed Kuznetsova in the first game of the second set.

Sharapova rallied as her opponent's game wilted on a scorching hot Rod Laver Arena where the temperature reached 33 degrees Celsius (91 degrees Fahrenheit).

"I need a wheelchair right now," Sharapova said in a television interview after her victory.

"Mentally I just tried to tough it out. I thought this was one of the toughest matches of my life.

Kuznetsova lost confidence in the face of Sharapova's fightback. Her groundstrokes disintegrated and she failed to hold serve in the last two sets, surrendering eight straight service games to slip to defeat in 137 minutes.

A dispirited Kuznetsova was 40-15 up in her final service game but lamely handed Sharapova her first match point with a double fault.

Sharapova clinched victory following a desperate rally, lunging across the baseline to whip a forehand cross court past

a stranded Kuznetsova.

She now plays seventh seed and 2003 champion Serena Williams or second seed and 1999 runner-up Amelie Mauresmo in the semifinals.

The start of Kuznetsova's Open campaign was overshadowed by a doping row when a Belgian Government minister said she had tested positive for ephedrine, a stimulant commonly found in cough medicines, at an exhibition tournament last month.

But outraged tennis officials defended Kuznetsova, saying ephedrine was not banned at "out of competition" exhibition events.

MNA/Reuters

Yangon Division Cooperatives Society holds meeting

YANGON, 27 Jan — The Annual General Meeting for 2003-2004 of Yangon Division Cooperatives Society Ltd was held this morning at the meeting hall of the Ministry of Cooperatives with an address by Director-General of the Cooperatives Department Col Soe Win.



'Director-General Col Soe Win addresses Annual General Meeting for 2003-2004 of Yangon Division Cooperatives Society Ltd.— COOPERATIVES

At the meeting, prizes were presented to township cooperatives societies with high performance. Afterwards, the Director-General awarded the prize to Thakayta Township General Economic Cooperatives syndicate which managed to successfully open food-stuff and grocery shops,

Chairman of Yangon Division General Economic Cooperatives Syndicate U Ye Aung to the members of the board of directors of Thakayta General Economic Cooperatives Syndicate and Deputy Direc-

tor of the CD to the Staff Officer of Thakayta Township Cooperatives Department who assisted Township Cooperatives societies.

Next, Chairman of Yangon Division GECS

U Ye Aung, Vice-Chairpersons U Myint Naing and Daw Toe Nanda presented prizes to Insein, South Okkalapa and North Okkalapa Township cooperatives societies. — MNA

Annual meeting of MRCS held

YANGON, 27 Jan — The 56th annual meeting of Central Council for Myanmar Red Cross Society was held this morning at the hall of Nursing Institute on Bogyoke Aung San Road, attended by President of MRCS Central Council Dr Kyaw Win and CEC members.

The President of MRS Central Council made an opening address. Afterwards, Executive Director of MRCS U Aung Than read out the minutes of the meeting which was held on 24 and 25 June and sought the approval. Next, the report, financial statement and budget of executive committee were submitted.

Afterwards, the CEC members read out the functional reports of state/division Red Cross supervisory committees. Later, Executive Director U Aung Than explained the agenda of the 6th MCS Conference and the meeting went into recess.

In the afternoon, the meeting continued. Those present took part in the discussions concerning the reports of the executive committee submitted to the meeting and approved the decisions. Next, Dr Kyaw Win gave the concluding remarks. — MNA

Independence and sovereignty...

(from page 9) tubewells through a township official of the development affairs committee.

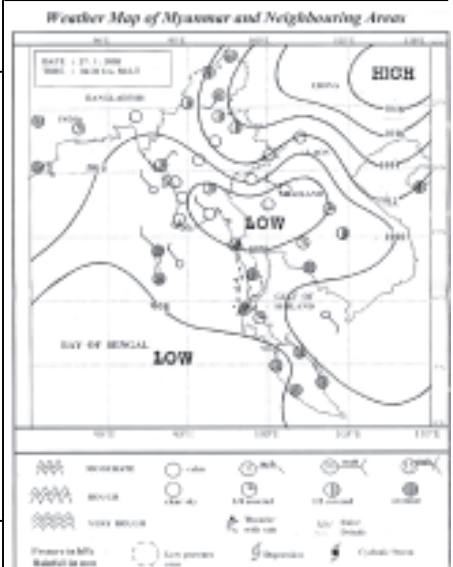
On the occasion, NyaungU District USDA donated K 1.5 million to the funds for construction of the biogas factory that will generate electricity.

Next, U Aung Zaw Min, joint-secretary of NyaungU Township USDA, seconded the motions made by three USDA representatives in support of the National

Convention and in honour of the Union Day.

Afterwards, the chairman of the rally sought the approval of those present in connection with honouring the Union Day, upholding our three main national causes, hailing the National Convention, and supporting the regional and rural development tasks.

The rally came to an end successfully.



Mr Kenji Tokunaga of Pentel Co Ltd of Japan presents a prize to Maung Nay Aung Shu who stands first in the painting competition held at the opening ceremony of Myanmar Tong Tah Trade Fair-2005 on 26 January this year.

TV Myanmar logo and a list of programs for Friday, 28 January, including 'View on today', '7:00 am' (Recitation of Parittas), '7:15 am' (Burmese songs), '7:25 am' (Healthy exercise), '7:30 am' (Morning news), '7:40 am' (Nice and sweet song), '7:55 am' (Mirror Images of Musical Oldies), '8:05 am' (Burmese songs), '8:15 am' (The Mirror Images of Musical Oldies).

8:25 am (Burmese songs), 8:30 am (International news), 8:45 am (English for Everyday Use), 4:00 pm (Martial song), 4:15 pm (Songs to uphold National Spirit), 4:30 pm (Practice in reading), 4:45 pm (Musical programme), 4:50 pm (Burmese songs), 5:15 pm (Songs of National Races), 5:25 pm (Burmese songs), 5:30 pm (Burmese songs), 5:40 pm (Burmese songs), 5:50 pm (Burmese songs).

5:50 pm (Burmese songs), 6:00 pm (Songs of yesteryear), 5:40 pm (Discovery), 6:15 pm (Burmese songs), 6:30 pm (Evening news), 7:00 pm (Weather report), 7:05 pm (Burmese songs), 7:35 pm (Burmese songs), 8:00 pm (News), 8:15 pm (International news), 8:30 pm (Weather report), 8:45 pm (Myanmar Video Feature), 9:00 pm (The next day's programme).

Radio Myanmar logo and a list of programs for Friday, 28 January, including 'Tune in today', '8:30 am' (Brief news), '8:35 am' (Music), '8:40 am' (Perspectives), '8:45 am' (Music), '8:50 am' (National news/Slogan), '9:00 am' (Music), '9:05 am' (International news), '9:10 am' (Music), '1:30 pm' (Lunch Time), '1:40 pm' (Music), '9:00 pm' (World of music), '9:15 pm' (Article/music), '9:25 pm' (Music at your request), '9:45 pm' (News/Slogan), '10:00 pm' (PEL).

WEATHER Thursday, 27 January, 2005 Summary of observations recorded at 09:30 hours MST: During the past 24 hours, weather has been generally fair in the whole country. Night temperatures were (6°C) below normal in Yangon Division, (3°C) to (4°C) below normal in Eastern Shan State and Taninthayi Division, (5°C) above normal in Chin State and about normal in the remaining areas. The significant night temperatures were Namsam (3°C) and Pinlaung (4°C) each. Maximum temperature on 26-1-2005 was 95°F. Minimum temperature on 27-1-2005 was 55°F. Relative humidity at 9:30 hrs MST on 27-1-2005 was 74%. Total sunshine hours on 26-1-2005 was (8.2) hours approx. Rainfalls on 27-1-2005 were nil at Yangon Airport, Kaba-Aye and central Yangon. Total rainfalls since 1-1-2005 were nil at Yangon Airport, Kaba-Aye and central Yangon. Maximum wind speed at Yangon (Kaba-Aye) was 5 mph from Northwest at (14:30) hours MST on 26-1-2005. Bay inference: Weather is partly cloudy in the South Bay and generally fair elsewhere in the Bay of Bengal. Forecast valid until evening of 28-1-2005: Weather will be partly cloudy in Kachin State and generally fair in the remaining areas. State of the sea: Seas will be slight in Myanmar waters. Outlook for subsequent two days: Generally fair weather in the whole country. Forecast for Yangon and neighbouring area for 28-1-2005: Fair weather. Forecast for Mandalay and neighbouring area for 28-1-2005: Fair weather.

Lt-Gen Tin Aye visits UMEHL jade, gem sales



Lt-Gen Tin Aye attends 18th Gems and Jade Sales of Union of Myanmar Economic Holdings Ltd.—MNA

YANGON, 27 Jan — Member of the State Peace and Development Council Lt-Gen Tin Aye of the Ministry of Defence visited the gem and jade sales of Union of Myanmar Economic Holdings Ltd at Myanma

Gems Emporium on Kaba Aye Pagoda Road here today.

On arrival at the emporium, Lt-Gen Tin Aye was welcomed by Managing Director of UMEHL

Maj-Gen Win Hlaing (Retd) and officials.

He watched the sale of gems and jade through auction system at the Auction Hall of the emporium, and left in the evening. — MNA

**Union Spirit plays vital role in building peaceful, modern and developed nation
Hpa-an District hails Union Day, supports National Convention**



YANGON, 27 Jan—A ceremony to hail Union Day and support the National Convention took place at the sports ground in Eindu model village, Hpa-an Township, Hpa-an District, Kayin State, this morning.

Present on the occasion were executives of

Kayin State, district and township USDAs, service personnel, members of USDA, Myanmar War Veterans Organization, Myanmar Women's Affairs Federation, Myanmar Maternal and Child Welfare Association, Red Cross Society, Auxiliary Fire Brigade,

locals and students numbering more than 1,000.

The columns of the participants took positions in the sports ground.

Hpa-an District USDA Secretary U Saw Aye Lwin presided over the meeting together with Hpa-an District MCWA Chairperson Daw Nan Aye May, Hpa-

an District Organization for Women's Affairs Chairperson Daw Angela Pe, Hpa-an District WVO Supervisory Committee member U Saw Tun Hla Myaing and village elder of Eindu model village U Tun Sein. Hpa-an District USDA executive Daw Tin Tin Hlaing acted as MC and Hpa-an District USDA executive Daw Pa Pa Win as co-MC.

After the meeting chairman's announcement of the start of the ceremony, the participants

saluted the State Flag.

The meeting chairman in his speech said that the Union of Myanmar is home to more than 100 national races such as Kachin, Kayah, Kayin, Chin, Bamar, Mon, Rakhine and Shan. Since yore, the national brethren have lived in amity and unison crushed at risk to their lives the enemies harming the motherland. During the over-100-year colonial period, the colonialists resorted to all possible ways and means to intentionally undermine national solidarity and national fervour. However, it is known to all that the national brethren managed to overcome the subversives with Union Spirit and built up consolidated unity at the Panglong Conference held on 12 February 1947. The annual celebration of Union Day reflects the sheer unity of all the national races, he said.

Now is the time when the country is marching towards a peaceful, modern and developed nation, and the National Convention is under way for emergence of the State Constitution, the soul of the (See page 8)

Government has been safeguarding the nation, while keeping in the fore the national policy — non-disintegration of the Union; non-disintegration of national solidarity; and perpetuation of sovereignty.



Local people join the ceremony to hail Union Day and support National Convention at the sports ground in Eindu model village, Hpa-an Township, Kayin State. — MNA