

**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

## Senior General Than Shwe congratulates Russian President

NAY PYI TAW, 7 March — Senior General Than Shwe, Chairman of the State Peace and Development Council of the Union of Myanmar, has sent a message of congratulations to His Excellency Mr Dmitry Medvedev, on his election as the President of the Russian Federation.—MNA

## True patriotism

- \* It is very important for everyone of the nation regardless of the place he lives to have strong Union Spirit.
- \* Only Union Spirit is the true patriotism all the nationalities will have to safeguard.

## SPDC Spoke Authoritative Team meets Special Adviser to UN Secretary-General

**Supporting criticisms and economic sanctions instead of providing assistance means hindering and disrupting efforts to achieve goal of democracy**

**Trying to frame a pattern desired by western countries may undermine task of offering impartial advice**

NAY PYI TAW, 7 March — The Spoke Authoritative Team of the State Peace and Development Council and Special Adviser to the Secretary-General of the United Nations Mr Ibrahim Agboola Gambari held a meeting at the Guest House of National Defence College, in Yangon, at 9.45 am today.

Present at the meeting were Leader of the Spoke Authoritative Team of the SPDC Minister for Information Brig-Gen Kyaw Hsan, members Minister for Foreign Affairs U Nyan Win and Minister for Culture Maj-Gen Khin Aung Myint.

At the meeting, Leader of the Spoke Authori-

tative Team of the SPDC Minister for Information Brig-Gen Kyaw Hsan explained matters related to Myanmar affairs to Special Adviser to the Secretary-General of the United Nations Mr Ibrahim Agboola Gambari.

(See page 7)



*Spoke Authoritative Team of State Peace and Development Council meeting with UNSG's Special Adviser Mr Ibrahim Agboola Gambari .—MNA*

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

# PERSPECTIVES

Saturday, 8 March, 2008

## Build more railroads for regional development

The government is building more railroads and motor roads along with a variety of large and small bridges to bring about equitable development the length and breadth of the nation.

Nowadays, the Kyangin-Pakokku railroad is being built, dividing it into three sections—the Kyangin-Thayet section, the Thayet-Pwintbyu section and the Pwintbyu-Pakokku section. And the Kyangin-Okshitpin section along the Kyangin-Thayet section was opened on 1 March.

The Kyangin-Pakokku railroad is being built for development of regions on west bank of Ayeyawady River. Upon completion, one will be able to directly travel from Pathein of Ayeyawady Division to Kalay of Sagaing Division by train.

Making use of the Kyangin-Pakokku railroad, access to Pathein, Kyangin, Pakokku, Monywa, Shwebo and Myitkyina by train can be possible through the Pathein-Kyangin railroad and the Pakokku-Kalay railroad.

In the meantime, the emergence of the Kyangin-Pakokku railroad will largely pave the way for better transport in different regions, thereby making the national brethren to form a deep and lasting friendship and contributing to development of the economic, social and education sectors of their regions. As the Pathein-Kyangin-Pakokku-Kalay railroad is passing through regions of Ayeyawady Division, Bago Division, Magway Division and Sagaing Division on west bank of Ayeyawady River it will contribute to development of trade and commerce of the regions.

The government is building a network of railroads section by section across the nation for better transport. And on completion, they will contribute a great deal to regional development.

### နိုင်ငံတော်အစိုးရဌာနပိုင် မော်တော်ယာဉ်မသုံးစွဲရနေ

လစဉ် လ၏ ဒုတိယပတ် (တနင်္ဂနွေနေ့) နှင့် နောက်ဆုံးပတ် (တနင်္ဂနွေနေ့) တို့သည် ရုံးလုပ်ငန်းအတွက် မဖြစ်မနေသွားလာရန် လိုအပ်သည့်ကိစ္စရပ်များမှအပ မော်တော်ယာဉ်များ မသုံးစွဲရနေဖြစ်သည်။

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## 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



USDA Secretary-General U Htay Oo meeting with departmental officials, residents and members of USDA in Kyi Village, Pyawbwe Township. — A&I

## USDA Secretary-General looks into regional developments in Mandalay Division

NAY PYI TAW, 7 March — Secretary-General of the Union Solidarity and Development Association U Htay Oo accompanied by departmental officials on 1 March inspected the village development road linking Yintaw and Kyi villages collectively maintained by rural people and USDA members in Pyawbwe Township.

The secretary-general met with the departmental officials, rural people and members of USDA, and presented books and journals to the people.

While in Kyi Village, he inspected progress in

construction of the Basic Education Post-Primary School comprising eight classrooms and gave necessary instructions.

He also oversaw renovation of Minthargyi Lake near Kyi Village. The 1,550 feet long and 25 feet high lake irrigates over 2,000 acres of land.

After paying homage and donating alms to Presiding Sayadaw Bhaddanta Nipuna of Thanlyin Tawya Minkyaung Monastery in Yintaw village in Pyawbwe Township, Secretary-General U Htay Oo paid obeisance to Yanmyoang Pagoda.—MNA

## Inter-School New Recruit Cricket Tournament continues

YANGON, 7 March — Organized by the Myanmar Cricket Federation, the Inter-School New Recruit Cricket Tournament 2008 continued at the Cricket Training Ground in Bahan Township this morning.

In the first semifinal of the women's event, Kyimyindine BEHS No 3 A-team beat Ahlon BEHS No 4 by 6-wickets, while Tamway BEHS No 3 kicked out Bahan BEHS

No 1 by 2-wickets in the second semifinal.

Ahlon BEHS No 4 won over Bahan BEHS No 1 by 5-wickets in the women's third place match.

In the men's first semifinal match, Tamway BEHS No 3 Team edged out Kyimyindine BEHS No 3 team by 2-wickets. In the second semifinal match, Ahlon BEHS No 4 defeated Lanmadaw

BEHS No 1 by 15-Runs.

The women's and men's final matches will be held at 7 am on 8 March at the same venue. Kyimyindine BEHS No 3 A-Team will play against Tamway BEHS No 3 team in the final match of women's event, and Tamway BEHS No 3 team will compete with Ahlon BEHS No 4 team in the men's final match. — H

## Winners of Myanmar Amateur Open Golf Championship awarded

YANGON, 7 March— Under the arrangements of the Myanma Golf Federation, the Myanmar Amateur Open Golf Championship 2008 continued the fourth round along with prize presenting ceremony at Yangon Golf Club Danyingon this afternoon, attended by President of Myanmar Golf Federation Maj-Gen Win Hlaing (Retd), executives, guests and golf fans.

General Sales Manger of Dagon Brewery Ltd U Tha Phyto presented prizes to daily best golfers.

Next, U Aung Kyi, general secretary of Myanmar Golf Federation, presented the first prize to Nay Bala Win Myint who fired 291 total nett strokes, the second prize to Aung Win (Monywa), 294 strokes and the third prize to Bo Bo, 294 strokes.

Co-sponsors were Dagon Brewery Ltd, Han Golf Masters Pte Ltd and Srixon. The championship was organized by Han Event Management.

MNA



Nay Bala Win Myint poses for photo after winning Myanmar Amateur Open Golf Championship 2008. — MGF

## Iran team in Iraq for security talks with US

TEHERAN, 7 March — An Iranian delegation arrived in Baghdad on Wednesday for a new round of talks with US officials on security in Iraq, an Iranian news agency said, but an Iraqi official said no date for the meeting had been set.

Easing a diplomatic freeze between Washington and Teheran lasting almost three decades, Iranian, US and Iraqi officials held three round of talks in Baghdad last year on ways to help

end violence in Iraq.

A meeting scheduled for last month was postponed by Iran for what it called technical reasons, prompting Washington to question Teheran's commitment to dialogue.

"Based on the prediction of the Iraqi Government the fourth round of ... talks about Iraq's security ... is supposed to take place on Thursday," Reza Amiri-Moghadam, head of the Iranian delegation, was quoted as saying by the

ISNA news agency.

"The Islamic Republic of Iran attaches a great deal of value to the provision of security in Iraq and will do its best in order to achieve this goal," he said after arriving in the Iraqi capital.

But Iraqi Government spokesman Ali al-Dabbagh told *Reuters*: "So far, no date has been set."

The US-Iranian talks on Iraq are one of the few forums in which officials from the two arch-foes have direct contact.

MNA/Reuters



Chinese President Hu Jintao on Thursday talks to a deputy of the Tibet Autonomous Region in Beijing while joining the panel discussion. He stressed stability and social harmony in Tibet.—XINHUA

## China's military power no threat to any country

BEIJING, 7 March— China maintains a limited military power only to secure the nation's independence, sovereignty and territorial integrity, and will not pose a threat to any country, said a senior officer of the People's Liberation Army (PLA) on Wednesday.

Chinese Government has persisted in the "coordinated development"

of national defence and economic growth, and raised military spending "moderately" with the backdrop of rapid economic development and growing fiscal revenue, said Liao Xilong, director of the PLA General Logistics Department.

A rise of defence budget can help match the building of defence infrastructure

with the manifold missions entrusted to the Armed Forces, said Liao, who is attending the annual session of China's top legislature, in an exclusive interview with *Xinhua*.

Jiang Enzhu, spokesman for the First Session of the National People's Congress (NPC), the top legislature, revealed on Tuesday that China plans to increase its defence budget by 17.6 per cent to 417.769 billion yuan in 2008.

MNA/Xinhua



Photo taken on 26 February shows dead ibex at Taxkorgan wildlife conservation area in Taxkorgan, northwest China's Xinjiang Uygur Autonomous Region, on 4 March, 2008.—XINHUA

## Warren Buffett is world's richest man

NEW YORK, 7 March — Warren Buffett, the famed US investor who heads Berkshire Hathaway Inc, replaced his friend and Microsoft Corp founder Bill Gates as the richest man in the world, *Forbes* magazine said on Wednesday.

The magazine estimated Buffett's worth at 62 billion US dollars in its annual ranking of the world's wealthiest people. Mexican telecoms tycoon Carlos Slim came in second with an estimated worth of 60 billion US dollars, pushing Gates to third place after 13 years of holding the No 1 spot.

The magazine estimated Gates' worth at 58 billion US dollars.

Buffett's rise to No 1 was particularly note-

worthy, *Forbes* said, as it came at a time of great financial turmoil and as Buffett has begun to siphon off part of his fortune to charity.

MNA/Reuters

## SAF finds body of missing French soldier in W Darfur

KHARTOUM, 7 March—The Sudanese Armed Forces (SAF) have found the body of a French soldier who had been reportedly missing following a clash with Sudanese troops in West Darfur on Monday, the official *SUNA* news agency reported on Wednesday. The body of the French soldier was found at the Abujaradel area, neighbouring Chad, according to *SUNA*. The Sudanese Foreign Ministry announced on Tuesday that the Sudanese troops exchanged fire with foreign troops who twice strayed across the border from Chad into west Sudan and killed at least one civilian.

The EU peacekeeping mission in Chad reported one soldier missing after troops "accidentally" strayed into Sudan on Monday. France and the EU have apologized to Sudan for the frontier violation. — MNA/Xinhua

## INTERNATIONAL NEWS

### US to court-martial Marines for Japan rape case

TOKYO, 7 March— The US military will court-martial four Marines accused of raping a Japanese woman in the western city of Hiroshima last year, the Marine Corps said on Thursday.

The move follows outrage in Japan over the

suspected rape of a 14-year-old girl by another US Marine on the southern island of Okinawa last month.

Two of the four Marines accused of the rape in Hiroshima will face a general court-martial in late April and early May, a spokesman from the Iwakuni Marine Corps Air Station said. Dates for the remaining two have yet to

be scheduled.

Media had reported last October the Marines had allegedly raped the 19-year-old woman in a car at a car park after meeting her at an event hall.

The four were charged in December by the US military with several violations including rape, sexual assault and other sexual misconduct.

MNA/Reuters

### Small explosion hits New York's Times Square

NEW YORK, 7 March — A small explosion damaged a US military recruiting station but caused no injuries in New York's Times Square before dawn on Thursday, triggering a Pentagon alert for other stations across the country.

"We're treating it as if it were an incident of vandalism," Army spokesman Paul Boyce said at the Pentagon.

Times Square — the normally bustling "Crossroads of the World" with shops, restaurants, hotels, theaters and office towers — was largely empty when the crude bomb went off at about 3:45 am (0845 GMT).

MNA/Reuters



This photo released by the New York Police Dept from a private security camera shows an explosion at the Times Square military recruiting station on 6 March, 2008 in New York.—INTERNET



An injured Israeli youth is evacuated from the scene of a shooting attack in Jerusalem on 6 March, 2008. —XINHUA

## Most Americans dissatisfied with US global status

WASHINGTON, 6 March — A new Gallup poll showed Wednesday that 68 per cent of Americans are dissatisfied with the United States' global status, indicating a complete reversal of Americans' view over the tenure of President George W Bush's administration.

According to the poll, the discontent rate,

fluctuated greatly with the war in Iraq, which rose sharply to 50 per cent in run-up to the war in 2003 when the administration pushed for the military action, quickly fell to 29 per cent when the war broke out, but had risen again steadily since then.

The survey, conducted from 14 February to 18 February and polling 1,007 adults, also found

that Americans believing the world views the United States favourably have declined to 43 per cent from 75 per cent in February 2001.

Majority Republicans surveyed said that they are satisfied with the country's position in the world but most Democrats polled said the opposite.

Xinhua

### Soak potatoes for healthier chips

BEIJING, 7 March — A new British study suggests that simply soaking potatoes in water before frying can significantly cut down the levels of the suspected carcinogen acrylamide, media reported on Friday.

Acrylamide, the potentially cancer-causing chemical, is created when starch-rich foods are cooked at high temperatures above 120°C, such as frying, baking, grilling or roasting.

The study finds that washing raw chips, soaking them for 30 minutes and soaking them for two hours can reduce the formation of acrylamide

by up to 23 percent, 38 percent and 48 percent respectively.

The study is conducted only if the fries were cooked to a light colour. It's not clear whether the same reductions could be achieved if French fries are cooked to a deep, dark brown. "There has been much research done by the food industry looking at reducing acrylamide in products but less so on foods cooked at home, and we wanted to explore ways of reducing the level of acrylamide in home cooking," said lead author Rachel Burch of Leatherhead Food International. —Xinhua

### Singapore to join Hague Child-protection Convention

SINGAPORE, 6 March — Singapore plans to accede to The Hague Convention on Civil Aspects of International Child Abduction this year, the government said on Wednesday.

Globalization and increased international mobility have given rise to trans-border child abduction. "As a responsible member of the international community, Singapore is committed to doing its part to minimize the harmful effects of such family disputes on children.

Accession to the Convention will help Singapore to fulfil such a commitment," said a statement by the Ministry

for Community Development, Youth and Sports.

"Singapore is targeting to lodge our instrument of accession this year," it added.

Xinhua

### 11 Beijing medical institutions to provide test-tube baby tech

BEIJING, 7 March — Beijing has designated 11 medical institutions to provide assisted reproduction service, or test-tube baby operations, said an official Thursday.

Deng Xiaohong, vice director of the municipal health bureau, said that all these institutions have carried out more than 6,000 successful operations, among nearly 20,000 people who received the treatment.

These institutions include the No 3 Clinical Hospital attached to Beijing University, where the first baby conceived via external fertilization and embryo transplantation was born on 10 March, 1988.

Xinhua

### Mexican farmers unearth 3,500-year-old archaeological pieces

MEXICO CITY, 6 March — Farmers from Mexico City's southeastern district of Tlahuac have unearthed a number of archaeological pieces dating back to 1500 BC, local media reported Wednesday.

Mexican archaeologist Victor Arribalzaga said the discovery also included some "younger" archaeological pieces that might have been produced between 200 AD and 800 AD.

The expert was quoted as saying that an archaeological site called Tlaltenco in the Tlahuac District was home to a variety of archaeological materials, including pots, small obsidian knives among other pieces.

Xinhua

### OPEC supports Venezuela in dispute against Exxon Mobil

CARACAS, 7 March — The Organization of Petroleum-Exporting Countries (OPEC) supported Venezuela Wednesday in its dispute with US oil company Exxon Mobil in international courts.

The organization's support was unanimous, Venezuelan Energy and

Oil Minister Rafael Ramirez told a Venezuelan television network from Vienna, where he is attending an OPEC conference.

Exxon Mobil said that it has frozen assets worth some 12 billion US dollars owned by Venezuelan state oil company Petroleos de Venezuela SA (PDVSA) in Britain, the Netherlands and the United States.

Exxon Mobile filed a lawsuit against PDVSA demanding compensation for losses suffered following Venezuela's drive to nationalize its energy sector.

The nationalization of the Orinoco Oil Strip, which began on 1 May, 2007, ended Exxon's role as a prime associate of PDVSA.

Xinhua

### All items from Xinhua News Agency

### Coal mine fire kills 17 in N-E China

CHANGCHUN, 7 March — A fire in a coal mine in northeast China's Liaoning Province killed 17 people on Wednesday morning, the provincial coal industry bureau said.

Another 13 miners survived the blaze that broke out at 7:30 am on Wednesday at the Jin'an Coal Mine at Dongliao County of Liaoyuan City, said Yin Yuke, a bureau spokesman.

Altogether, 30 miners were working in the tunnel about 85-metre underground.

Rescuers recovered the bodies of the dead at 1:50 pm on Wednesday.

"The miners all suffocated," said the official, adding their families had arrived at the scene to deal with the aftermath.

Experts from Yin's bureau and the provincial work safety supervision administration confirmed the fire was caused by the spontaneous combustion of coal. Part of the tunnel later collapsed which cut off the escape route for the trapped miners.

Xinhua



Children wrap dumplings together with their moms at the Golden Dock Bilingual Art Kindergarten in Caohu, east China's Anhui Province, on 6 March, 2008. —XINHUA



Photo taken on 17 Oct, 2005 shows the re-entry capsule of China's second manned spacecraft, Shenzhou-6, at its landing site in Siziwang Banner (County), north China's Inner Mongolia Autonomous Region. The re-entry capsule of the Shenzhou-6 spacecraft, which blasted off on 12 Oct, from the Jiuquan Satellite Launch Centre in northwest China's Gansu Province, touched down at the landing site in Siziwang Banner.

XINHUA

## Russia, Ukraine agree to restore gas supplies

MOSCOW/KIEV, 7 March — Ukraine and Russia reached agreement to restore gas supplies to Ukraine, averting the risk of cuts in deliveries to Western Europe, Russian gas giant Gazprom and Ukraine's state company Naftogaz said on Wednesday.

But the two sides still have to work out the difficult details of a scheme of how supplies are to be organized for the rest of the year, particularly the use of intermediaries.

"Transit of Russian gas through Ukrainian territory is proceeding in full," said a joint statement, read out in Kiev by Naftogaz spokesman Valentyn Zemlyansky. "All restrictions for use by Ukrainian consumers have been lifted."

Russia had cut gas supplies to Ukraine in half on Tuesday over a protracted payment dispute, sparking concern in Brussels and Washington about the security of energy supplies. A quarter of Europe's gas comes from Russia, most of it through Ukraine.

MNA/Reuters

## China to create 10 m jobs in cities

BEIJING, 6 March—The Chinese Government will work to create 10 million jobs this year and try to keep registered urban unemployment rate at around 4.5 per cent, Premier Wen Jiabao said here on Wednesday.

China's urban unemployment rate in the past five years has been contained within 4.3 per cent, government figures show.

To increase job opportunities, China spent a total of 66.6 billion yuan in the form of subsidies from the central government budget to support employment programmes over the past five years, said the Premier in a government work report delivered at the opening meeting of the top legislature's annual full session.

As a result, he said, more than 10 million urban people got jobs and eight million rural workers found jobs in nonagricultural sectors per year on average.

The problem of finding other employment opportunities for workers laid off from state-owned enterprises was basically solved, and the work of incorporating basic cost of living allowances for laid-off workers into the unemployment insurance system was completed.

MNA/Xinhua

## German auto part plant to operate in DPRK's Kaesong

SEOUL, 7 March—A German auto part maker will become the first foreign company to operate in the Inter-Korean Industrial Complex in Kaesong on Wednesday, said South Korea's *Yonhap* news agency. The Stuttgart-based Prettl, which has 16 branch offices worldwide, had a ceremony to mark the start of construction of its factory in Kaesong,

a border city of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea (DPRK), on Wednesday, *Yonhap* said. Two other foreign manufacturers, both Chinese, finished contracts last year to start business in the complex, said Kim Mingyeong, an official of the inter-Korean joint office managing the complex.

Sixty-nine South Korean companies are now

operating in Kaesong to benefit from cheap costs of labor and land. About 23,000 North Koreans are now working there, according to Kim.

Rolf Prettl, chairman of the German company, said in his speech at the ceremony that it is "very special" for a company from western Germany to have a factory in DPRK.

MNA/Xinhua

## Vietnam's footwear export rises in two months

HANOI, 7 March—Vietnam gained 769 million US dollars from exporting footwear between January and February, seeing a year-on-year increase of 25.3 per cent, according to a local industry organization on Wednesday.

To foster export, Vietnam is diversifying footwear products, and turn out more sport and cloth shoes, and slippers, the Vietnam Leather and Footwear Association said, noting that the country made total footwear export turnovers of roughly four billion dollars in 2007, up 10.3 per cent against 2006.

Vietnamese footwear producers and exporters are intensifying tapping their three largest markets

—the European Union, the United States and Japan, and boosting export to new ones with big purchasing power like Indonesia, Malaysia, the Middle East, Africa, South Asia, Russia and Mexico.

MNA/Xinhua

*The largest multilevel garage in Beijing is under construction to ease the traffic congestion near the Panjiayuan secondhand goods market.*  
INTERNET



## ECONOMIC NEWS

### Vietnam's rice export up in first two months

HANOI, 7 March—Vietnam exported 331,000 tons of rice worth 130 million US dollars in the first two months of this year, posting year-on-year rises of 26.5 per cent and 53.9 per cent, respectively, according to the Trade Information Centre under the Vietnamese Ministry of Industry and Trade on Wednesday.

Vietnamese five-per cent broken rice is now priced 460 US dollars per ton; and 25-per cent broken rice 430 US dollars, increasing 50-53 per cent over last March.

The ministry forecast that the commodity's prices in the world market will continue to rise, due

to thinner supplies of big rice exporters such as Vietnam and Thailand due to unfavourable weather.

Vietnam, the world's second biggest rice exporter after Thailand, exported 4.5 million tons of rice worth nearly 1.5 billion US dollars, mainly to the Philippines, Malaysia, Cuba, Indonesia and Japan, in 2007, down 3.1 per cent in volume but

up 13.9 per cent in value against 2006, according to the country's General Statistics Office.

The country had a total rice-growing area of 7.2 million hectares which churned out nearly 35.9 million tons of paddy rice in 2007, down 1.7 per cent in acreage but up 0.1 per cent in output against 2006.

MNA/Xinhua

### Oil falls ahead of OPEC meeting

LONDON, 6 March—Oil dropped below 100 US dollars a barrel on Tuesday, in a retreat from a record of almost 104 US dollars a barrel in the previous session. The market is awaiting the outcome of an OPEC meeting on Wednesday, where the oil producer group is expected to leave output unchanged despite high prices.

US light crude for April delivery was down 2.60 US dollars at 99.85 US dollars a barrel by 1629 GMT, after touching a record high of 103.95 US dollars on Monday.

Prices had retreated from the peak later on Monday to settle 61 cents higher at 102.45 US dollars.

London Brent crude was down 2.48 US dollars at 98.00 US dollars.

Oil is near record highs because of long-term supply constraints and also because of investor inflows seeking alternatives to the dollar, equities and bonds.

"Investors concerned about inflation and the outlook for the US dollars have preferred to park their money in other assets and commodities have been a principal beneficiary of this trend," said David Dugdale of MFC Global Investment Management. — MNA/Reuters

# People should not yield to demands of subversive elements

*Kyaw Min Aye*

I have been engaged in Myanmar's politics for nearly 60 years. I did not gain firsthand experience about the rule of the colonialists and the Fascists. But, I have noticed that our nation had to rise from the ashes, resulting from the evil consequences of alien rule. In the post-independence period, the nation went through hell due to the armed revolts waged by the extremists with sectarianism and racism at the instigation of the colonialists.

I came of age, leading a harsh life under the flames of internal armed conflicts, like other people. When I was in my teens, I experienced campaigns of canvassing and buying of votes. I happened to try some leftist books together with my classmates. Some of them lost their bright future due to wrong views.

I learnt that the Tatmadaw formed the Revolutionary Council and assumed power in 1962. I felt very pleased to read Shei-tho (Forward) Journal featuring the cordial discussions with farmers from many regions at Popa, Duya, Khabaung and Ohndaw. When I saw the photo of members of the Burma Communist Party (BCP) who returned to the jungle, following the failure to reach an agreement in the peace talks, I felt very sorry although I did not know exactly what the photo meant.

I came to be familiar with the military words such as CENTO, SEATO, NATO and Warsaw and news about those military blocs. I grew up in the time of the Myanma Socialist Programme Party. I came to enjoy reading. I came to know about the harsh life Myanmar people had led before I was born, reading some books such as Thu Kyun Makhon Byi (We'll never yield to the colonialists), Myanmar Pyi Thar (Myanmar citizen), Sit Atwin Khayee The (Traveller in the war), Ashei Ka Naywin Htwet The Pamar (Like the sun's rising in the east), and Bon Bawa Hmar (Experiences in my life), along with historical documentaries. So, I came to equip myself with patriotic spirit and nationalistic fervour.

I felt disgusted at the Burma Communist Party (BCP)'s policy "Dismiss, Remove, and Kill" after reading the books "Thakin Than Tun's Last Days" and "Last Year of Zin and Chit". And I realized "the strength of a nation lies within" after reading the book "People's Battle, Our Battle".

My blood pressure was running high when I heard news about Kunlon 40-Day Battle, and Point 6041 Battle. Then, I appreciated the life of a Tatmadaw member. While I was in service, I strictly upheld and lived in the mottoes such as "We must serve public interest", and "We must show loving-kindness in dealing with the public". I had to travel to many regions around the country, so I understood and had sympathy for local national race people. And I valued their honesty and sincerity. Then, I came to realize more the motto "Organize the people, while discharging military duties, and discharge military duties, while organizing the people".

I used to read many books in the genres of international affairs, political science and warfare, and assess world's historic battles and regional wars. Then, I noticed a salient point that every country put the interests of their peoples in the fore. I came to notice that the armed conflicts among the national races in Myanmar were due to narrow dogmatism. My experiences and knowledge made my concept firm that we should not bow to the aliens when they resorted to force, and we would be able to defend our motherland only when we repulsed alien intrusion. I gained more knowledge about the nature of national-defence duties.

**I conducted a review to know what Kuomintang troops did who intruded into Myanmar's territories under the control of CIA. I came to know the root cause of Myanmar's poppy issue and the importance of Myanmar's geopolitics after reading the book "Nationalist Chinese Kuomintang Troops, Golden Triangle Region, and Circle of Heroin".**

**I gained just a little firsthand experience about the 1988 unrest, and I felt uneasy to watch true stories about the unrest. I was worried that the unrest would spread and anarchic incidents would be rife throughout the nation unless the Tatmadaw took up State's duties in time. I was in a rage when I learnt that a fleet of the US intruded into Myanmar's waters with the intention of interfering in the nation's internal affairs in the time of the unrest.**

I got emotional while watching the film "Papi Ma". I felt very pleased to learn about the reunion of the parents and their children students who, at the invitation of the Tatmadaw, returned to the motherland from the border areas they had stayed at the instigation of leftist and rightist destructionists. People felt sorrow and happy at the same time when they saw that the students wept heavily when they met with their parents at the airport.

**It was very encouraging to note that many national race armed groups returned to the legal fold after realizing the benevolent attitude of the government. Later, border areas became free from the reverberation of guns and bomb fires, and cries of fear. And then, the areas were covered with the sounds of bells ringing at schools and the students' reciting their lessons. That made me peaceful.**

There have emerged many large bridges in the regions that were difficult of access in the past. The regions have enjoyed adequate output of rice, a large number of buildings, smooth transport, swift commodity flows and a higher living standard. Writer Thaw Dar Swe in one of his stories said that when he moved to urban cities from a rural village, he noticed the living standard of urban people was getting high, and the higher their living standard, the more they had to withstand stresses and strains of urban life.

**I, by reading, learnt about the experiences of those who had been abroad that in the countries that had developed due to their exercise of the market economy two or three decades earlier than Myanmar, the citizens of those countries were always in a hurry doing things. And all the citizens obeyed the rules and regulations. That meant the processes of democratic transition. So, Myanmar will reach these steps one day.**

**Whenever I watched on TV and read news about suicide bomb attacks, armed conflicts stemming from localism, racism and grudge, problems about power sharing and food shortage, I was pleased by the fact that our country was a peaceful land. When I learnt about the collapse of nations that took place in some Unions following the wedge driven by aliens, I was willing to urge the people to remain united and harmonious.**

I still remember that the whole nation was happy with the holding of the National Convention in unison in 1993.

I felt inconsolable when the National Convention resumed in 1996. I was worried in case it would take longer for the National Convention to be completed. I felt heartened when the National Convention resumed in 2004.

Around that period, I was irritated when I learnt about bomb explosions that took place at the ceremony to keep Buddha's Tooth Relic temporarily for public homage in Maha Pasana Cave, Kaba Aye, and a series of boom blasts at three supermarkets. Hearing the news about the attacks of the twin towers in New York in September 2001, I considered that terrorists had no boundaries owing to the globalization process.

**No country wants to come under attacks waged in retaliation and hatred. All the countries want to maintain friendly relations and put an end to bad relations with other partners. All the religions have urged the people for thousands of years to refrain from all forms of evil deeds and have love-kindness for others. However, the world will see evil consequences constantly so long as localism, racism, personality cult, dogmatism and attachments to the party concerned are rampant.**

**So, it has become important that political affairs should not be associated with personal affairs in the Myanmar's political trend. Maybe, some people lost patience with the National Convention taking long to be in session. It was because if the constitution was drawn perfunctorily and in haste, that would be followed by undesirable consequences. If so, the posterity of the people will fall victim to the evil consequences of defects of the constitution.**

Indeed, the period during which the people had to wait for the completion of the National Convention was a prudent investment for the posterity. In that regard, the people should take lesson from the contest between Kan Yazagyi and Kan Yazange of Dagaung Period for the throne. In the event, Kan Yazange gave priority to the throne, whereas Kan Yazagyi gave priority to reconstruction of the country. From whose attitude will the nation emulate from—Kan Yazagyi or Kan Yazange?

Now, nation-building tasks have been accomplished to a certain degree. Every construction task costs investments, sacrifices and losses to an extent. The Myanmar's political affairs is not a bed of roses. In the drive for democratic transition, the government had to deal with a variety of sanctions and blockages, failures.

**The national goal should not be diverted from its route due to the interference of some elements making demands to convene the National Convention from the beginning again. And all the efforts of the people in this regard should not be wasted. The people should not yield to the demands of destructive elements.**

The drive for approving the draft of the State Constitution is like a relay race for Myanmar. A generation has drafted the new constitution and is making arrangements to hand over the draft to the next generation. Therefore, the next generation should take care because it will have to march forward the goal.

Translation: MS

Myanma Alin, Kyemon: 7-3-2008

**The national goal should not be diverted from its route due to the interference of some elements making demands to convene the National Convention from the beginning again.**

## SPDC Spoke Authoritative Team meets Special Adviser to...

(from page 1)

The clarification of Leader of the Spoke Authoritative Team of the SPDC Minister for Information Brig-Gen Kyaw Hsan is as follows:-

Good morning, Your Excellency. At the outset, I would like to say that Your Excellency and delegation members are warmly welcomed and I am very glad to meet you again. Originally, Your Excellency's visit was arranged to be in April. However, in response to UN Secretary-General's coordination, the visit was brought forward to this early March.

We have made arrangements for Your Excellency to meet those have been asked to meet during the visit. Your Excellency have yesterday met with the Minister for Foreign Affairs, diplomatic missions, representatives of UN agencies and ICRC. Today, after meeting with us, it has been arranged for Your Excellency to meet with the Commission for Holding Referendum. It is also arranged for Your Excellency to meet with the persons worthy to be met in the following days.

As you may be aware, our team is the Spokes Authoritative Team of the State Peace and Development Council. We would like to express at the beginning that Your Excellency can discuss with us frankly and comprehensively.

**Before your visit, Secretary-General Mr Ban Ki Moon sent a letter dated 19th February to our Head of State Senior General Than Shwe. The letter stated that the UNSG recognized the constructive developments of Myanmar after your two visits as well as the announcements to hold National Referendum in May and multi-party democracy general elections in 2010 as they are the time-frame of the seven-step Roadmap. We would like to express thanks to the UNSG for welcoming and recognizing them.**

Moreover, the UNSG's letter urged to discuss five points on our country. Regarding these five points, I would like to explain first our stance and what we do. The first point is for regularization of engagement including Your Excellency's regular trip to Myanmar and flexibility of programme during the trip as well as for allowing a staff member of your office to base in Myanmar. We have discussed this matter during your previous trips. If Your Excellency propose a trip, we will allow it but it will be depending on the availability of the responsible officials. As regards the flexibility of the trip agenda, arrangements have been made for you to meet conveniently with persons, parties and organizations who should be met out of those you asked for to meet. Regarding the matter to allow a staff member of your office to be based in Yangon, you have already known that many UN agencies have their resident offices here and appointed resident representatives in Myanmar. Through these UN agencies and staff, you can contact with us easily. Likewise, direct contacts can also be made with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. Hence, we assume that there is no need to let your staff member to be based in Yangon.

**The second point mentioned in Mr Ban Ki Moon's letter is to ensure all inclusiveness in constitution drafting process. As Your Excellency have known, the Constitution has already been drafted and it should not be amended again. The majority of the people do not demand to amend it.** However, Fundamental Principles and detailed basic principles for formulating the Constitution were adopted at the National Convention which was convened with the most extensive participation of delegates representing the entire people. It was very much inclusive that before holding of the National Convention, a coordination meeting was held with representatives-elect from political parties including NLD and individuals.

With the consent of all, the National Convention commenced in the year 1993. It was participated by delegates from 8 delegate groups representing all masses and classes such as delegates of political parties including NLD, representatives-elect, delegates of national races, delegates of peasants, delegates of workers, delegates of intellectuals and intelligentsia, delegates of service personnel and other invited persons.

However, NLD did not accept the essence of democracy to give priority to the majority's consent and it walked out of the National Convention in November 1995. But, the remaining delegates continued to attend the National Convention which was temporarily adjourned in 1996. In fact, NLD had got the right to submit, discuss and coordinate its stance and views and it participated till 104 Fundamental Principles and some of the detailed basic principles for formulating the State Constitution were adopted. **Moreover, when the National Convention resumed in 2004, NLD was invited again. However, it did not participate of its own volition and deviated from the national political path.**

I would explain with facts and figures to Your Excellency how extensively the people's desire are inclusive in the National Convention. In the NC sessions during the period from 1993 to 1996, there were 702 delegates and out of them over 200 were delegates of national races. The ratio of national race delegates to townships stands at least one delegate from one township and most of the townships have two delegates who attended the National Convention. So, in the NC sessions from 2004 to 2007, altogether 1,080 delegates participated in the NC and of them, the number of delegates of national races amounted to 635. In ratio to 325 townships, at least one or two delegates represent each township in the country. You can see how extensively and comprehensively the principles reflect the people's desire.

So far, based on the Fundamental Principles and detailed basic principles, the State Constitution has been drafted. It will be approved through National Referendum in coming May. As regards the draft Constitution, there are objections and accusations by internal and external anti-government groups including NLD. According to the democratic practice, it is impossible and inappropriate to discuss and coordinate again with all including NLD after the consensus have been gained through discussions and coordinations amidst contradictions. Yet, the Constitution draft is to be approved by the National Referendum. Those who agree with the draft and those who object it can vote freely at the referendum in accordance with law. When the Constitution has been approved, those in favour of it or those against it will have rights to establish political parties, organize and enter elections in accordance with laws concerned at appropriate time.

When the representatives are elected at the multiparty democracy general elections by people's vote, they can participate as Hluttaw representatives. They will have the rights to discuss and coordinate political, economic and social affairs of the nation at the Hluttaw. There cannot be anymore all-inclusiveness in this process.

**Moreover, anti-government groups within and outside the country have constantly been accusing that the Road Map is lacking time-frame and it is being delayed. They also argued that the National Convention, the first step of the Road Map, lasted for 14 years and some said they could no longer wait for another 14 years for the next step. Now, the Government has announced time frame to hold Referendum in May and general elections in 2010. Then, they criticize that we are in a hurry and lack honesty and transparency. However much we tried our best, they are not optimistic. So we can clearly know their actual motives.**

**I have time and again explained the matter**

**regarding transparency how coordinations were made with all parties including NLD before the National Convention; how over 1,000 delegates of national races and all walks of life attended it; and how principles were adopted by gaining consensus through thorough discussions and coordinations. When the National Convention was in session, diplomats, military attaches and foreign correspondents were invited to observe it occasionally. The discussions and decisions made at the National Convention were broadcast through radio, television and inserted in daily papers. The Fundamental Principles and detailed basic principles for formulating the State Constitution were also inserted chapter-wise in the daily newspapers.** The principles are also published in book form for extensively enabling the public to study them. In addition, the Draft Constitution will also be published soon for the public.

The third point is to have a credible, time-frame and all inclusive discussion between the Government and Daw Aung San Suu Kyi including possible support by the United Nations. In this regard, the National Convention is the most credible and all inclusive political discussion. Now, discussions between Minister for Relations U Aung Kyi and Daw Aung San Suu Kyi are under way in accord with your advice. **The Government issued Announcement No 1/2007 asking Daw Aung San Suu Kyi to declare the giving up of her policies of Confrontation, Utter Devastation, and Demanding Four kinds of Sanctions including economic sanction. The announcement further stated that if she declares so, the Head of State himself will meet her. That announcement is the basis of all existing situations today. The Government opens the door for 'Win-Win' situation.**

However, NLD and Daw Aung San Suu Kyi replied that she did not demand for imposing the four kinds of sanctions and thus she could not declare. Actually, we have ample evidence of what Daw Aung San Suu Kyi spoke, wrote and asked to have international help for imposing the four sanctions. These facts are known to Myanmar people as well as the international community. The denial shows that NLD and Daw Aung San Suu Kyi will stick to the sanction weapon if their demands are not met. Therefore, it can be seen that although we have opened the door for 'win-win' situation, NLD and Daw Aung San Suu Kyi are refusing to join hands.

The fourth point is to lift restrictions against Daw Aung San Suu Kyi and to release her and other political prisoners. In fact, there are no political prisoners in Myanmar. There are only those who have been punished according to law for violating law. Of them, however, those who should be or can be pardoned were released by the Government in consideration of your Excellency's request. Hence, **it is reaffirmed that the existing prisoners are not political prisoners but those serving sentences for violating law.**

Regarding the matter of lifting restrictions against Daw Aung San Suu Kyi, she was restricted at home for the first time as her political defiance stance posed danger to the State. During the restricted period, mutual understanding was built up and the first restriction was lifted. However, the next day the restriction was lifted, Daw Aung San Suu Kyi held a press conference and stuck to confrontation and utter devastation policies by shouting that the Government had to choose either dialogue or utter devastation. Consequently, she slandered the National Convention and asked NLD to walk out of the National Convention. Moreover, she demanded for summoning Hluttaw using it as an attack and attempted to convene Hluttaw by herself. Finally as her activities posed a grave danger and became uncontrollable, she was restricted for the second time.

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During the second restriction, the party led by the Head of State met and discussed with her for four times and the group comprising ministers for 20 times. Then, with some mutual agreements, the restriction was lifted. She was shown round the achievements in nation building works. At the beginning, she stood properly as agreed but later she tried to turn back to the former old track.

Showing the reason of party organizational works, she meddled in things at the places she arrived and there took place riots against the local populace. Hence, she was restricted for the third time.

**As today is a very crucial turning point in democratization, stability of the State is essentially required. Moreover, we assume that there are three main requisites which are reasonable and reflecting the desire of the entire people. The first is that every person wants to see the development of the nation together with the uplift of socio-economic life respectively. The second is that today's people do not want to live with strikes, violence and turmoil. They want to live in peaceful and secure life. The third desire is to earn livelihood freely in accordance with law. The people want to achieve progress of life by grabbing opportunities available under the shade of law. So, peace and stability essentially required for the country and aspired by the people cannot be harmed. Hence, the Government issued Announcement No 1/2007 to pave the way for bringing about the best outcome. I would like to reaffirm that the Announcement No 1/2007 is the basic for all the situations.**

**The fifth and last point is to establish inclusive National Economic Forum for addressing economic and social affairs, and cooperative mechanism for humanitarian assistance sector with the assistance of UN. Regarding this I have clarified during your previous visits. We appreciate your wish to give assistance. But, the main cause for encountering obstacles and hardships in our development endeavours is various sanctions imposed against our country. If Your Excellency help to lift economic sanctions, aid, loan sanctions, etc, it might be more effective than the Economic Forum you proposed. Giving assistance for poverty reduction while imposing sanctions will never produce right solution.**

I would also like to brief political endeavours and developments of the Tatmadaw Government. I have clarified comprehensively during your previous trips. Your Excellency have generally understood, we hope.

At present, the State Constitution has been drafted completely on 19-2-2008 based on the Fundamental principles and detailed basic principles adopted by the National Convention. Commission for Holding Referendum has been formed for holding referendum in May. The Referendum Law and rules have already been promulgated. The process is in progress according to the laws and rules concerned for convening free and fair referendum. In holding the referendum, and the multi-party democracy general elections as well as implementing the remaining steps, all have the equal right to participate either they are supporters or antagonists to the Government. The multi-party democracy adopted by the National Convention will successfully be brought about within the two years' period. When there emerges Hluttaw, discussion and coordination on affairs of the nation can be made at Hluttaw which is much inclusive than tripartite discussion.

The draft Constitution to be approved by ref-

erendum soon is based on actual conditions of the country. If democracy is brought about beyond the actual conditions blindly, it will result in disadvantages than advantages.

If one reviews the draft Constitution, one can see that rights for individuals as well as national races are provided in this draft constitution much more than in the previous Constitutions. Regarding the citizens, rights for citizens and responsibilities, there were 23 such articles in the 1947 Constitution and 26 articles in the 1974 Constitution. Now, there are 50 such articles in this draft constitution. Thus, original rights for citizens are provided more extensively in this draft.

As there were weaknesses and loopholes as regards rights for national races in the previous Constitutions, there emerged internal insurgencies and the nation lagged behind in development. Hence, in adopting basic principles now, the rights for national races are provided to the most possible extent according to the prevailing conditions. The 1947 Constitution provided States for only four national races namely Kachin, Kayah, Kayin and Shan. The 1974 Constitution provided three more States for Chin, Mon and Rakhine. In addition to seven States, the constitution draft now provides one Self-Administered Division and 5 Self-Administered Zones. Moreover, national races can form Region/State Hluttaws; Region/State Governments; and Region/State High Courts to deal with their own affairs. Similarly, Self-Administered Division and Self-Administered Zones can exercise legislative and administrative powers by forming respective SAD/SAZ leading bodies.

In addition, the national race whose population exceeds 0.1 per cent of the total population of the entire nation and without having Region/State or SAD/SAZ can send a representative to participate in Region/State Hluttaw concerned for legislation. Likewise, that representative can participate in Region/State Government concerned as minister for minorities. The national race whose population is more than 10,000 residing in SAD or SAZ can have a seat in respective SAD/SAZ leading bodies.

Moreover, the constitution will not remain unchanged for ever. The democratic rights of the countries where democracy has flourished are different from the democratic rights when they started to practise democracy. It took time for these countries to make their democratic rights mature to the present level. We also will change and develop gradually.

The more developed a nation with economic growth and the more mature the people who practise democracy, the better opportunities the people of the nation will enjoy democratic rights. So, the Chapter "Amendment of the Constitution" is prescribed in the constitution. In accordance with these provisions, Members of the Hluttaws have the rights to make amendments to the constitution, as necessary at the future Hluttaws. So, it is vividly clear that today, this constitution is the best and the most suitable for our country and our people. We have to make ongoing efforts on the basis of this constitution to transform our country into democratic people's administrative mechanism steadfastly.

Regarding the process of drawing a constitution, I would like to present you some points about Thailand's drafting of its 17th constitution. Thai National Security Council firstly selected 2,000 persons for the conference to draft a constitution. The 2,000 persons had to elect 200 from among themselves and the list of the elected 200 persons was submitted to the National Security Council. And the National Security Council selected and appointed 100 of them as representatives to a conference for drafting a constitution. Then, the 100-member conference for drafting the constitution had to elect 25 outsiders as

members for the committee for drafting the constitution, and the National Security Council had to select 10 members. And they were not to be the ones who were in the membership of a political party in last two years. The 35-member committee for drafting the constitution drafted and submitted the draft to the conference for drafting the constitution.

In our country, more than 1000 people's representatives took part in the process of adopting the principles. And based on the principles, the 54-member commission for drafting the constitution drafted the constitution. So, there is a great difference between the two countries in taking time, holding discussions, and mobilizing representatives from the four corners of the country.

In Thailand, the upper chamber is made up of 150 representatives. Among them, a representative was elected from each of the 76 provinces. The commission for holding elections had to select and appoint 74 seats from intellectuals and intelligentsia, State service personnel and eminent persons from the private sector. Twenty-five percent of our Pyidaungsu Hluttaw representatives will be directly-appointed Tatmadaw member representatives, whereas directly-appointed representatives make up nearly 50 percent in their country.

Now, Thai people have approved and started to practise the constitution of Thailand. But, none of the candidates of PPP Party and the opposition democrat party had the right to participate in the process. To make it clearer, in Iraq, Shiite militants who opposed the US, and Sunni militants who had links with Al Qaeda had no right to participate in the process of drafting a constitution. Similarly, in Afghanistan, Talebans had no right to draft the constitution. We haven't heard any objection to these events by those persons and organizations who are objecting us. But in drafting the constitution in our country, many are criticizing and pointing out that certain persons were not among the representatives in the process. It is not reasonable.

Consequently I would like to affirm that Myanmar's today situation do not pose any threat to regional peace and stability let alone global peace and stability. It is agreed upon by ASEAN countries, Non-Aligned Movement member countries and neighbouring countries. In fact, the situations today in some countries are very bad and posing a great threat to regional and international peace and stability. It can be seen that the situations in those countries are much worse than the situation of our country. However, all-round pressures are being put on our country's internal affairs which are not as bad as these international issues. It is not fair. The United Nations should stand fair and square without bias.

**So, you should extend a helping hand to the democratic process we are carrying out in accordance with the prevailing conditions of the nation and the people. If so, we will achieve the goal of democracy earlier than expected, as aspired by Myanmar people, the UN, the international community and anti-government groups. Supporting the criticisms and economic sanctions instead of providing assistance means hindering and disrupting our efforts to achieve the goal of democracy. So, you are kindly requested to understand these conditions and stand on the right side. Furthermore, I would like to suggest NLD and its associates through you to join us in implementing the seven-step Road Map and to take new steps to stand for election in accordance with the policies and laws for democracy practice.**

Consequently, I would like to clarify about the demands of NLD. Now, NLD is opposing the government through the strategy of holding on the 1990 election results and the demand for a dialogue.

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Regarding the demand for a dialogue, the government's Announcement No 1/2007 I have presented is the basis of all the conditions and achievement of a dialogue. So, I will not explain it any more. However, I would like to explain briefly about the 1990 election results. In 1990, Myanmar's population was just 42 million, and the number of the people eligible for voting was just over 20 million. Over 15 million people voted in the elections and NLD representatives won more

**tatives-elect of NLD, other political parties and independent representatives-elect is only 120 which is over 24 per cent of the total number of representatives-elect. In view of the international norms, a Hluttaw session can be held only when at least one-third of Members of the Parliament call for. In the 1974 constitution says, "The Council of State shall convene a session of the Pyithu Hluttaw as soon as possible if 34 per cent of the total number of Hluttaw representatives call for". So, the demand**

Now, I would like to discuss the role of the UN and your role. I am glad to know that the UN Secretary-General and you welcomed and recognized the progress of our nation's democratization processes. The majority of the people believe and hope that the Secretary-General's good offices will be able to contribute to in the processes for progress. Therefore, I would like to present some points about cooperation.

For the fourth time, you visited Myanmar, we showed our seriousness in the UNSG and Your Excellency as well as our willingness to cooperate by appointing U Aung Kyi as Minister for Relations to discuss with Daw Aung

present conditions; and stability, development and peace in border areas of national races. In addition, we made arrangements for you to witness the support of the majority of the people for successful completion of the National Convention. We also informed you the Fundamental Principles and detailed basic principles adopted at the National Convention.

We made the arrangements to enable Your Excellency, the Special Envoy of UNSG, to know and understand the points being claimed by a handful of anti-government groups, prevailing situations of the nation, and the stances of the majority of the people. I believe that you would assess the situations and stand on the correct side without any bias.

But the actual result was not like that. When you arrived in Singapore after leaving Myanmar, you, on behalf of Daw Aung San Suu Kyi, issued a statement concerning her stance. We have nothing to say about Daw Aung San Suu Kyi's act to unilaterally violate the original mutual agreement first without any consideration. But we are very astonished and dismayed for your involvement in this matter. We have been dealing in good faith with you as a mediator, a special envoy of the UN Secretary-General. Sadly, you went beyond your mandate. Hence, the majority of people are criticizing it as a biased act. Some even believe that you prepared the statement in advance and released it after coordinating with Daw Aung San Suu Kyi.

Because of the statement you released on behalf of Daw Aung San Suu Kyi, our mutual-confidence building work was hurt followed by undesirable obstacles and difficulties and annoyances and confusion among the nationalities. In the statement, Daw Aung San Suu Kyi in her condescending tone said "it is my duty to give constant and serious considerations

to the interests and opinions of as broad a range of political organizations and forces as possible, in particular those of our ethnic nationality races". Actually, other political parties and national races are not her subordinate parties. So, they are going to deal with their own affairs and requirements. Hence, they have never accepted the statement released by Daw Aung San Suu Kyi of her own accord. Parties of nationalities and ethnic armed groups responded to the statement with harsh denouncements.

The statement was dangerous to the degree of hurting the prevailing peace and stability of the nation in addition to harming the already-achieved national unity. In this regard, the government had to restore the situation to normal while maintaining national stability and unity.

Now, we would like to discuss the UN's role. We understand that you have been assigned by the Secretary-General to offer good offices under General Assembly Resolution No 61/232. We therefore believe that you would carry out the tasks in accordance with the responsibilities and mandates covered by the good offices. Good offices, we understand, refers to an Impartial Adviser. **Good offices is to give advice to two parties in dispute and the advice must be non-binding. A person tasked with good offices should not have preconceived intentions. Then only, may he be able to find a just and fair solution.**

We learnt that you have visited some countries including those of western bloc and had discussions before coming to Myanmar. According to article 100 (1) of the UN Charter, we understand that the UNSG and staff in discharging duties are not to seek or receive instruction from any government or from any other authority external to the UN. We believe that you tried to find an answer in just and fair manner as

an Impartial Adviser in those countries. However, if you try to frame a pattern desired by the western countries, we are concerned that your task of offering impartial advice may be undermined. Hence, we believe that Your Excellency will be able to frankly and cordially discuss and exchange views with us free from the influence of the West Bloc.

We have expended a great deal of time and energy seeking valuable suggestions and views to carry out the seven-step Road Map. You may consider yourself whether it is appropriate to comply with the demand for restarting the plan from the first step at a time when we have reached the fourth step of the seven-step Road Map. In the remaining steps there are opportunities for all who may participate freely and fairly in the process according to law. It is obvious that at such a crucial stage, peace and progress are vital requirements of the nation and the people. We, on our part, will take special care in dealing with all matters keeping in mind national interests. We will apply a method designed to find a 'win-win' solution without harming the seven-step Road Map, which, at present, is the correct path to be chosen and followed and which is suitable to bring about a peaceful transition to a new democratic nation.

To sum up my clarifications, **the new constitution has not been drafted to be accepted by just particular organization or person. Since it is meant for the long-term interest of the nation and the people, we will seek the opinion and decision of the people. We look forward to a democratic nation which the international community would like to see in a matter of two years if the process goes on unhindered. With this belief, we will carry on the work through relentless efforts. We will take all possible measures to**  
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Special Adviser to UN Secretary-General Mr Ibrahim Agboola Gambari says prayers at Bengali Sunni Jama'i Mosque. —MNA

than seven million votes. So, it is found that NLD won 30 per cent of the eligible voters. Although NLD won in the majority of constituencies, it did not win with support of the majority of the people.

**In reviewing the representatives-elect, it is found that NLD won 392 of the 485 constituencies. Of the 392 representatives, 312 persons are no longer representatives-elect as some of them have become independent representatives-elect, have died, have resigned, are no longer qualified, are serving prison terms for violating existing laws for various reasons. So, the number of the remaining NLD representatives-elect is 80. Today, the remaining represen-**

**of 80 representatives-elect of NLD for summoning Hluttaw is in no way conformity with international norms. And the tenure of a Hluttaw is minimum 4 years and maximum 5 years. Hence, time has passed so much and thus it is against the time limitation.**

Today, the people's educational qualification, knowledge and concept have improved much if compared with those in 1990. The infants in the cradle then have now turned 18 and have come of age to vote. So, it is not logical for NLD to demand by referring the election result of 18 years ago. I would like to suggest through you that NLD give up such unreasonable and impossible demands.

San Suu Kyi, lifting curfew, releasing prisoners and making arrangements for you to meet individuals, parties and organizations you wish. In addition, the prevailing conditions and current situations of Myanmar were also clarified. We also explained to you the September protests that took place due to the instigation of the anti-government groups. Moreover, we arranged trips for you to witness the situations that last September, few townships such as Yangon and Mandalay saw protests of a small number of people and monks, and the remaining parts of the nation was stable and peaceful; the majority of the people did not favour riots and were pleased with

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enable the entire mass of the people to take part in the referendum to be held soon and the multi-party democracy elections. We shall not accept any attempt to hinder or reverse the process of the seven-step Road Map. However, we will heartily welcome the positive suggestions of the UN to help implement the seven-step Road Map.

In conclusion, we believe Your Excellency have already studied the delicate and extensive nature of Myanmar political and racial conditions to some extent. If Your Excellency make use of this knowledge and offer your appropriate and just advice and assistance we will be always thankful to the constructive endeavours of the UN Secretariat in the affairs of Myanmar. While welcoming and appreciating such constructive involvement of the UN Secretariat we are prepared to cooperate with it in all seriousness.

Thank you!

### Replies of Mr Gambari

Giving replies, Mr Gambari, Special Adviser to the United Nations Secretary-General, said he believes he has been a representative always standing by Myanmar. And he will continue to stand by Myanmar. He said he will put forward the minister's clarification to the Secretary-General. He said he welcomes the time frame announcement of the government regarding the implementation of the seven-step Road Map. It will be better if all are to cooperate for the success of the Road Map, noted Mr Gambari. He also said he assumes that the Myanmar people alone will have to address the issue as the Myanmar's issue is the concern of all Myanmar. He said he recognizes Myanmar's cooperation with the United Nations and the UN itself will also fully cooperate with Myanmar.

#### Meets Commission

Next, Mr Ibrahim Agboola Gambari met representatives of the Commission for Holding Referendum at the Seinle Kantha State Guest House at 1:30 pm.

Next, Mr Ibrahim Agboola Gambari said prayers at Bengali Sunni Jama'i Mosque on Sule Pagoda Road at 5 pm.

In the evening, member of the Commission for Drafting State Constitution Minister for Culture Maj-Gen Khin Aung Myint hosted a dinner in honour of Mr Ibrahim Agboola Gambari at Mya Yeik Nyo Royal Hotel. —MNA

## Prize-presentation to be held for four-clean songs

YANGON, 7 March — With the aim of disseminating health knowledge to the children aged 5-9 based on four cleans, a prized giving ceremony for four cleans songs, organized by Myanmar Motion Picture Asiayon, will take place at the Grand Plaza Park Royal Hotel on 9 March. Prize winning songs will be announced on that day. All the participants are invited to attend the ceremony without fail.

MNA

## Myanmar Furniture Fair-2008 extends two days

YANGON, 7 March — The Myanmar Furniture Fair-2008 continued as the fifth day at Convention Hall, here, today.

Furniture, wood-based products, glue, paints and related materials, machinery and spare parts are displayed at 167 booths. An educative booth to disseminate the knowledge on forest conservation is put on display.

Some local companies signed agreements on furniture trade with foreign companies at the fair. The fair is being kept open till 9 March.

MNA



MHF executives, teachers and students pose for a documentary photo at the opening of Summer Basic Hockey Training for Students. —MNA

## Ministry of Mines and gold entrepreneurs hold discussions

NAY PYI TAW, 7 March — Ministry of Mines and gold entrepreneurs held discussion on promotion of gold production at Thiri Yadana hall of Ministry of Mines here at 9 am today with an address by Minister for Mines Brig-Gen Ohn Myint.

Next, Director-General U Than Myint of Mining Department explained matters on mining law and bylaw and review of the gold prices control committee. And Managing Director U Hla Thein of No 2 Mining Enterprise explained on matters relating to gold production.

The officials of States and Divisions Peace and Development Council reported on matters on gold production and management.

Next, Vice-Chairman U Maung Thin of Myanmar Gold Entrepreneurs Association, representatives of gold entrepreneurs and gold entrepreneurs took part in the discussions.

The meeting ended with the concluding remarks by Minister Brig-Gen Ohn Myint.

MNA



Minister Brig-Gen Ohn Myint addresses meeting on boosting gold production. —MNA

## Deputy Health Minister observes eye surgical operations

YANGON, 7 March — Deputy Minister for Health Dr Paing Soe presented a fruit basket to Medical Director Dr David Hunter Cherwek and party of Orbis Eye Treatment Team on Orbis International Flying Eye Hospital at

Mandalay International Airport on 4 March.

The deputy minister viewed eye surgical operation and teaching jointly being performed by the eye specialists of Myanmar and the Orbis Eye

Treatment Team. He observed teaching on Phacoemolification method and, Cataract and Retina operations.

Since 1991, the Orbis International Flying Eye Hospital team has made donation of medical

equipment, given talks on eye treatment and surgical operation methods and provided nine time-medical treatment for eye patients including this time at Yangon and Mandalay International Airport. —MNA

## Over 100 students receive skills for hockey

YANGON, 7 March — Myanmar Hockey Federation conducted a training course on hockey skills at Theinbyu Artificial Turf Hockey Pitch in Mingala Taungnyunt Township on 3 March.

Over 100 students from five schools are attending the summer course for 2008 which is

jointly organized by Sports and Physical Education Department and Myanmar Hockey Federation, and will end on 10 April.

On behalf of the president of the federation, Vice-President of MHF U Kyaw Kyaw Hlaing delivered opening address.

At the ceremony to open the course, in a bid

to develop hockey sports in Myanmar, executives of MHF provided five schools in Yangon Division with sports gears for hockey.

Myanmar Olympic Committee's Chairman's Trophy round-robin match of hockey tournament for 2008 will launch at the same pitch on 9 March. —MNA

## Ex-US sailor convicted on terrorism charges

BOSTON, 7 March — A former US Navy sailor stationed in the Middle East was convicted on Wednesday of spying and providing material support to terrorists.

A federal jury in Connecticut convicted Hassan Abujihad, 32, formerly known as Paul Hall, of providing classified information to a London-based publication called Azzam Publications while knowing that it would be

used in a conspiracy to kill US citizens.

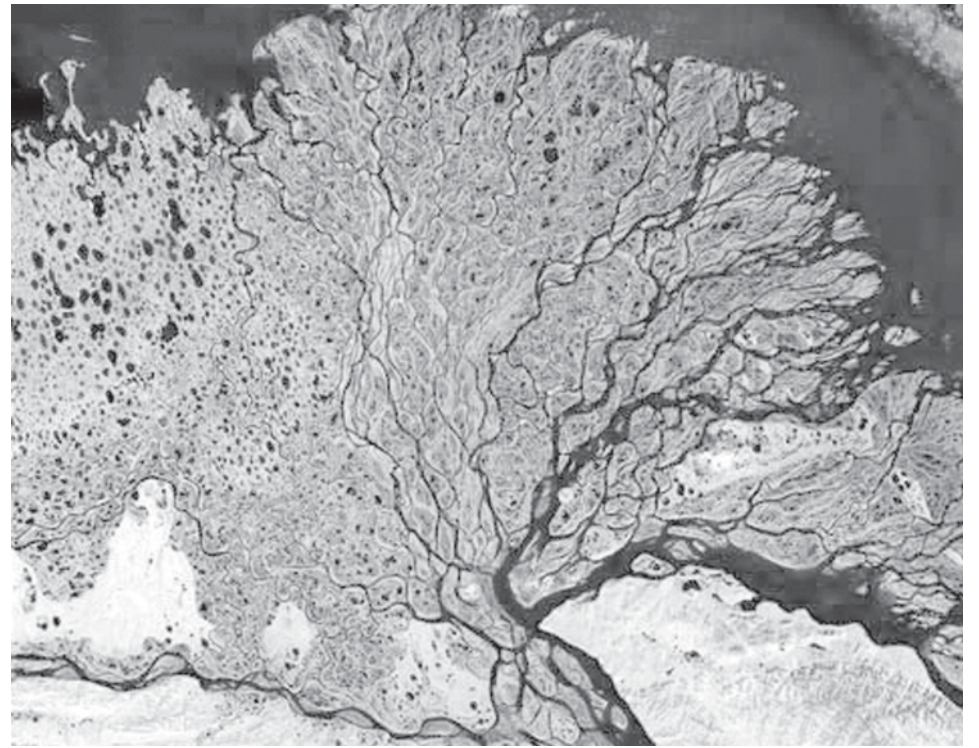
Abujihad, arrested in Phoenix, Arizona, on 7 March, 2007, is due to be sentenced on May 23 and faces a maximum term of 25 years in prison, said Thomas Carson, a spokesman for the US Attorney's office in New Haven, Connecticut.

Prosecutors accused Azzam of engaging in a conspiracy to provide material support and communi-

cations links to people involved in terrorism, including the disclosure of a US Navy battle group's movements in 2001.

"The evidence in this case showed that Hassan Abujihad provided classified information to terrorists which could have been used to kill American sailors," Julie Myers, director of US Immigration and Customs Enforcement, said in a statement.

MNA/Reuters



Believe it or not, pictures of globe.—INTERNET

## Small Vietnamese tanker spills oil, 14 crew missing

HANOI, 7 March — A small Vietnamese oil tanker capsized off the south-central coast, spilling fuel oil and leaving 14 crew missing, provincial officials said on Thursday.

The officials in Binh Thuan Province said the tanker Duc Tri was carrying 1,700 tons of fuel oil, about 30 tons of which have leaked 50 kilometres (32 miles) off the popular beach resort of Mui Ne

on 2 March.

"The search for the missing is still ongoing and rescuers are also trying to contain the oil spill," an official in the Binh Thuan Province information centre said by telephone.

She said one crew member had been rescued. Binh Thuan is about 300 kilometres (186 miles) northeast of Ho Chi Minh City.

The oil spill was about

two square nautical miles, state media quoted Trinh Vu Anh, Deputy Director of the Southern Oil Spill Prevention Centre, as saying.

MNA/Reuters

## Sri Lanka says 104 soldiers, policemen killed in Feb

COLOMBO, 6 March — The Sri Lankan Government said Wednesday that some 104 soldiers and police officers were killed in February during the conflicts between government troops and the Tamil Tigers, but the government's military campaign has yielded results.

Nimal Siripala de Silva, Health Minister and the government's chief negotiator with the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE) told Parliament that 822 soldiers and police personnel were also injured in February in the confrontations in the north. De Silva added that 80 civilians were killed while 201 were injured in the conflicts. He said the LTTE has faced a series of military reversals in the north and is facing setbacks internationally, while the government's military campaign against the rebels is yielding results. —MNA/Xinhua

## McCain wins Bush endorsement for presidency

WASHINGTON, 6 March — President George W. Bush formally endorsed Republican John McCain for president on Wednesday, calling him a man of character who is "not going to change" when it comes to taking on Islamic extremists.

"He's going to be the president who will bring determination to defeat an enemy and a heart big enough to love those who hurt," Bush said in a Rose Garden ceremony at

which McCain sometimes had trouble getting a word in edgewise.

Bush gave McCain the red-carpet treatment at the White House, a day after McCain sealed the Republican presidential nomination with victories in four states. The two men had a bitter battle for the nomination in 2000 and have disagreed famously on several fronts over the years since then.

The endorsement will likely help McCain rally

disenchanted conservatives behind his candidacy, and with Bush helping him raise much-needed campaign cash, it will give him a significant boost headed into the campaign for the November election.

But the endorsement also gave Democrats ammunition to use against McCain, since Bush is unpopular among many Americans because of the Iraq war and the ailing US economy.—MNA/Reuters

## Iran says new sanctions will not hurt economy

TEHERAN, 6 March — Iran said on Wednesday new UN sanctions on Teheran over its disputed nuclear plans would cause no damage to the economy, saying its firms could still secure trade

finance and investment was rising.

"If we had any special difficulty in opening credit for merchants, the volume of investment in the country would not have increased compared with

last year," Economy Minister Davoud Danesh-Jafari was quoted as saying by the ISNA news agency.

The UN Security Council voted on Monday to introduce a third sanctions resolution against Iran over its refusal to halt nuclear work that major powers fear is aimed at making bombs but which Teheran says is designed to generate electricity.

Economists say UN and separate US punitive measures imposed on Iran since 2006 are making Western companies more wary of investing in the Islamic state even though it remains a magnet for oil majors because of its vast energy resources.

MNA/Reuters

## Uzbekistan gives US limited use of Termez base

MOSCOW, 6 March — Uzbekistan will allow US nationals to use its Termez airbase under strict conditions, officials said on Wednesday, almost three years after ordering out US troops in a row over human rights.

Robert Simmons, NATO's envoy for the Caucasus and Central Asia, said Uzbekistan had agreed to allow limited numbers of US staff to use the facility near Afghanistan, which was once used by Soviet forces and currently operated by Germany.

"We welcome the fact Uzbekistan has shown readiness to allow other countries to use this airbase," he was quoted as saying in Moscow by Russian news agencies. "As far as I understand, the United States is beginning to use this facility." —MNA/Reuters



A model presents a creation from designer Felipe Faisca's Autumn/Winter 2008-2009 collection during Lisbon Fashion Week in Estoril, Turkey on 6 March, 2008.—XINHUA

**ADVERTISEMENT**

**CLAIMS DAY NOTICE**

**MV NOBLE-CORAL VOYNO (5)**

Consignees of cargo carried on MV NOBLE-CORAL VOYNO (5) are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on 8.3.2008 and cargo will be discharged into the premises of Myanma Port Authority where it will lie at the consignee's risk and expenses and subject to the byelaws and conditions of the Port of Yangon.

Damaged cargo will be surveyed daily from 8 am to 11:20 am and 12 noon to 4 pm up to Claims Day now declared as the third day after final discharge of cargo from the vessel.

No claims against this vessel will be admitted after the Claims Day.

**SHIPPING AGENCY DEPARTMENT  
MYANMA PORT AUTHORITY  
AGENT FOR: EASTERN CAR LINER LTD.**  
Phone No: 256924/256914

**Vietnam posts bigger crude oil export earnings**

HANOI, 7 March—Vietnam exported over 2.3 million tons of crude oil worth 1.7 billion US dollars in the first two months of this year, down 11.4 per cent in volume but up 46 per cent in value year on year, a trade agency said on Wednesday.

Vietnam is expected to export 15 million tons of crude oil, mainly to China, Singapore, Japan, Britain and the United States, in 2008, the Trade Information Center under the Ministry of Industry and Trade said, noting that the country ships abroad roughly 15.1 million tons of oil in 2007, totalling nearly 8.5 billion US dollars.

Vietnam is reducing export of fossil fuels like crude oil and coal to foster its petroleum and petrochemical industries, and to ensure sufficient supplies for energy-thirsty industries like electricity and cement.

Dung Quat, Vietnam's first refinery with an annual processing capacity of 6.5 million tons of crude oil in central Quang Ngai Province, is scheduled to operate in early 2009.—MNA/Xinhua

**China to stipulate, update 7,700 food, drugs standards**

BEIJING, 7 March—China will stipulate or update more than 7,700 national standards for the safety of food, drugs and other consumer goods this year, as part of the efforts to ensure product quality and safety, Premier Wen Jiabao said here on Wednesday.

"It is imperative that the people feel confident about the safety of food and other consumer goods and that our exports have a good reputation," said Wen while delivering a report on the work of his Cabinet at the opening meeting of the annual full session of the National People's Congress (NPC), China's

top legislature. While stressing that the formulation and updating is meant to put in place a sound system of standards for product safety, the Premier promised that all requirements and testing methods for the safety and quality of food and other consumer goods will comply with international standards.

"China's exports will meet both international standards and the laws and regulations on technical standards of the importing countries," he told nearly 3,000 national legislators and more than 2,000 political advisers at the Great Hall of the People in downtown Beijing.

MNA/Xinhua

**Two Caribbean drug kingpins convicted in Florida**

MIAMI, 7 March—Two Caribbean smugglers who were designated by the White House as international drug kingpins were convicted on smuggling charges and could face life in prison, US prosecutors said on Wednesday.

Jamaican Leebert Ramcharan led a sophisticated drug smuggling organization that received as many as 15,000 kilos of cocaine from the north coast of Colombia from 1998 to 2004, prosecutors said.

The shipments were stored in Jamaica, later sent to the Bahamas and then transported to the US market, they said.

**Singapore Govt to help lower-income people**

SINGAPORE, 6 March—The Singapore Government said on Wednesday there will be more enhancements to the public assistance scheme to allow more needy individuals to benefit.

The Singapore Ministry for Community Development, Youth and Sports announced in Parliament on Wednesday that it is setting aside 168 million Singapore dollars (about 120 million US dollars) to help the low income and needy people, up 14 per cent from last year's 147.4 million Singapore dollars. For a start, the Public Assistance rate will be increased by between

40 Singapore dollars and 165 Singapore dollars a month, depending on the household type.

The eligibility criteria will also be expanded. Needy individuals with working children who are unable to provide for them, will now be able to qualify for public assistance. This is provided that these family members earn less than 1,000 Singapore dollars and have to support their own children.

Currently, the needy individual would not have qualified for public assistance if he had children who are working.

The ministry also

announced a new Com-Care transition scheme, which will provide interim assistance to those who are temporarily unable to work and do not qualify for the Public Assistance scheme.

These include those who have medical certificates or have heavy care giving responsibilities. This new scheme, expected to aid some 1,400 needy households, allows families to get financial help for up to a year. As for the elderly, the ministry will invest 3 million Singapore dollars over the next five years to help day care centres for seniors to enhance their exercise programmes.

MNA/Xinhua

**China to resist raising refined oil prices**

BEIJING, 6 March—The Chinese Government has asked its refined oil sellers not to raise prices amid global oil price rises, in a bid to curb rising inflation pressure.

Refined oil sellers across the country should follow the state-regulated prices. Arbitrary price rises are not allowed, according to a joint statement issued by the National Development and Reform Commission (NDRC) and the Ministry of Commerce on Tuesday.

The global crude prices hit a new high of 103.95 US dollars per barrel during Monday's trade session. Domestic diesel prices showed signs of edging up amid the global price rises. The price of crude oil in China is set by the global market, but the refined price is still regulated by the government.

Policy makers are working to determine when to close the gap between the comparatively lower prices of refined oil

products in China and the record-setting global price.

Timing is not good because China is already in a high-inflation circle, said an NDRC spokesman last month, adding fighting inflation is a priority for this year.

The authorities also tightened standards on the opening of gas stations, urging local authorities to prudently assess the application in line with technical standards and regional development plan.—MNA/Xinhua

**Uzbek police seize 568 kilos of heroin**

ALMATY, 7 March—The Uzbek police have seized 568 kilos of heroin in the southern state of Kashkadarya, the country's national security agency said Thursday.

It is the largest amount of heroin that has ever been seized in Uzbekistan, the agency said.

The seized heroin, which can be made for seven tons of drugs, has a street value of 10 billion US dollars, according to local media.

About 70 per cent of drugs that have been seized in the country came mainly from Afghanistan through Tajikistan.

MNA/Xinhua

**Afghan police seize 670 kilos of opium in Helmand**

KABUL, 7 March—Afghan police have captured 670 kilos of opium in a latest anti-drug operation in southern province of Helmand, a statement of Afghan Interior Ministry issued here said Thursday.

The drug was recovered Wednesday from a car in Washir District of

Helmand, a known hotbed of Taleban militancy, and three people with suspected links to drug trafficking were arrested, it added. In 2007, some 193,000 hectares in Afghanistan were devoted to the illicit cultivation of opium poppy, and the Central Asian nation now supplies an estimated 93 per cent of the global illicit market for opiates, according to a report issued Wednesday by International Narcotics Control Board (INCB), an anti-drug organization under the UN. "Afghanistan must do more to address its escalating drug problem," the INCB said.

MNA/Xinhua

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



## Renewed fears for rare Mekong dolphin in Cambodia

PHNOM PENH, 7 March—A sharp drop in the number Mekong dolphins born in Cambodia has renewed fears for the survival of the rare mammals, wildlife experts said on Wednesday.

Only three baby dolphins, one of them dead, were found during an annual survey conducted in late November, down from six newborns in previous years, Touch Seang Tana told *Reuters*.

Their weight had also dropped to under two kilos (4.4 pounds) from five kilos (11 pounds) in the 1980s, the chairman of the Commission for Mekong Dolphins Conservation said.

“A group of 10 full-grown dolphins living in the upper Mekong River had no babies at all this year,” he said, blaming a shortage of fish and rising water temperatures which might have affected their reproductive systems.

There are about 150 dolphins living in the upper Mekong River, up from only 90 before a 2006 ban on net fishing in the eastern provinces of Kratie and Steung Treng.—*MNA/Reuters*

## British researchers develop new steroid test technique

LONDON, 6 March—British researchers have developed a new, highly sensitive, anti-doping steroid test technique using hydrolysis, a technique that has previously been used for oil exploration.

Researchers at the University of Nottingham has refined the hydrolysis technique which uses high pressure environments to investigate the chemical structure and make-up of a sample to develop highly accurate tests for detecting levels of illicit steroids in the urine of athletes, according to a Press release on Wednesday by the university.

The test procedure is already in the process of being commercialized and is expected to be ready

for use in the 2012 Olympics, it said.

High pressure hydrogen is used to bombard the sample at pressures of 150 atmospheres and temperatures of up to 500 degrees Celsius, leaving

sample molecules in a cleaner, less degraded state than other extraction techniques, thus allowing more accurate readings to be taken, according to the researchers.

*MNA/Reuters*



An aurist examines the ear for a child at a school in Hanshan County of east China's Anhui Province, on 3 March, 2008 the ninth National Ear Health Care Day. An activity of testing ears free of charge for children whose parents work in other cities was held in Hanshan on Monday.—*XINHUA*

*Gentoo penguins rest on an island near the Changcheng (Great Wall) Station, one of China's Antarctic research station, on 12 Jan, 2008. China's 24th scientific expedition team arrived at the Changcheng Station on 5 Jan, aboard the "Xuelong" scientific exploration ship (Back).—XINHUA*

## Indonesians in Java scared by seeping gas

PORONG (Indonesia), 6 March—Gas seeping from the ground in a village hit by a mud volcano in Indonesia's East Java Province is triggering safety concerns

and calls for an evacuation, residents said on Wednesday.

The gas is in an area where thousands of homes and factories have been submerged by hot mud since a mud volcano first started to erupt in May 2006, forcing about 15,000 people to abandon their homes.

“Every two or three days, people find gas flares, big and small,” said Rahmat Sudirman, a resident in Mindi village, where a canal of mud passes on its way to the Porong River.

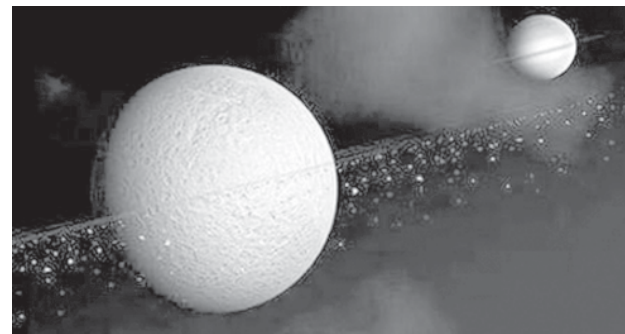
*MNA/Reuters*

## Saturn's moon Rhea also may have rings, research shows

WASHINGTON, 6 March—NASA's *Cassini* spacecraft has found evidence of material orbiting Rhea, Saturn's second largest moon. This is the first time rings may have been found around a moon, said NASA on Thursday.

A broad debris disk and at least one ring appear to have been detected by a suite of six instruments on *Cassini* specifically designed to study the atmospheres and particles around Saturn and its moons.

“Until now, only planets were known to have rings, but now Rhea seems to have some family ties to its ringed parent Saturn,” said Geraint Jones, *Cassini* scientist, and lead



An artist concept of the ring of debris that may orbit Saturn's second-largest moon, Rhea.

author on a paper that appears in the 7 March issue of the journal *Science*.

Rhea is roughly 1500 kilometres in diameter. The apparent debris disk measures several thousand kilometres from end to end. The particles that make up the disk and any embedded rings probably range from the size of small

pebbles to boulders.

Since the discovery, *Cassini* scientists have carried out numerical simulations to determine if Rhea can maintain rings. The models show that Rhea's gravity field, in combination with its orbit around Saturn, could allow rings that form to remain in place for a very long time.—*Internet*

## 101-year-old man to compete in London Marathon

BEIJING, 7 March—A 101-year-old man will compete in the London Marathon in a bid to become the world's oldest competitive runner, according to media reports on Friday.

Buster Martin, who has already been the oldest employee in Britain, said he has been training in his spare time for the London Marathon on 13 April, aiming to become the world's oldest marathon runner.

The former Army physical training instructor has 17 children and returned to work three days a week at the age of 99 after two years of retirement.

He also holds three world title records for the oldest person to run the 5K, 10K and the half marathon after completing a half marathon last weekend in five hours 13 minutes.

The previous record for world's oldest marathon runner is 93-year old.—*Internet*

## Marine collision in western Japan water kills one

TOKYO, 7 March—Three ships collided in waters off western Japan's Kobe City Wednesday afternoon, overturning a ship and killing one person.

The three ships, including a cargo ship and a tanker, collided in waters about 2.5 kilometres east of the Akashi Strait Bridge at about 2:30 pm, local coast guard said. The Belize-registered 1,466-ton cargo ship, which was heading to South Korea from Osaka Port with nine Philippine crew members onboard, sank shortly after. One of the six rescued was confirmed dead at a local hospital while the other three remained missing, Coast Guard officials said.

According to initial investigation, the cargo ship collided with the tanker, which was hit by the third ship on the stern while the three were all heading west.

Fuel leaked from the sunk cargo ship formed an oil slick of more than 3,500 metres long, Japanese media reported.—*MNA/Xinhua*

# SPORTS

## Messi out for six weeks with thigh injury

BARCELONA, 7 March — Barcelona forward Lionel Messi will be sidelined for around six weeks after tearing a muscle in his left thigh, the club said on Wednesday.

The Argentine international will miss both legs of his side's Champions League quarterfinal tie at the start of April, up to seven Primera Liga matches and the return leg of the King's Cup semi-final against Valencia.

Messi sustained the injury just before halftime of his side's 1-0 Champions League win over Celtic at the Nou Camp on Tuesday.

It is the fourth time in the last three years that the 20-year-old has suffered a similar injury and he was sidelined for five weeks earlier this season with the same problem.

Barcelona's medical services said the player had been following a special training programme since the start of the present campaign.

"The data obtained from the different controls that the player has undergone has determined his availability for each match," they said on the club's website (www.fcbarcelona.com).

MNA/Reuters

## All England badminton C'ships

LONDON, 7 March — China's Lin Dan stuttered in the defence of his All England badminton title on Wednesday with an 16-21, 21-8, 21-11 opening-round victory over Anup Sridhar of India.

Sridhar had been expected to test the top seed after stretching him at last year's world championships where the Indian had earlier beaten Olympic champion Taufik Hidayat of Indonesia.

But after taking the first game Sridhar could not follow through and eventually lost in 42 minutes.

There was a major surprise in the women's event where Lin's girlfriend and defending champion Xie Xingfang lost her first match against unseeded Pui Yin Yip of Hong Kong 22-20, 21-19.

Xie has won the All England title for the last three years but bowed out in 43 minutes to her unheralded opponent.—MNA/Reuters

## Maldini may postpone retirement for season

MILAN, 7 March — Paolo Maldini may reconsider his decision to retire at the end of the season, the AC Milan captain said on Thursday.

"I'm being pushed to play another year. Three months ago I was very unfit but now I am better," the 39-year-old defender told Sky television. "I like this sport, I like training."

Milan's elimination by Arsenal in Tuesday's Champions League last 16 tie had looked like Maldini's last European match.

The one-club man, one of Milan's few good players on Tuesday, had been desperate to play in a record ninth European Cup final and pick up a sixth winners' medal.

Club president Silvio Berlusconi and chief executive Adriano Galliani want him to play another season and Maldini, who started his Milan career in 1985, is tempted.

"(They) are pushing me to continue for another year. We will see," he said.

MNA/Reuters

## Former Finnish coach sentenced for attempted match-fixing

HELSINKI, 7 March — A former Finnish coach and another man were given suspended sentences for trying to fix soccer matches and ordered to pay a total of 148,550 euros (227,100 US dollars) in compensation by a Finnish court on Thursday.

Former Warkaus JK coach Pertti Nissinen and Ville-Veikko Lepisto were sentenced for offering bribes to the coach of Finnish club Jaro and players of FC Honka and Rakuunat between 2003 and 2005. None of the players or staff accepted the bribes.

The court also said Nissinen decided not to use his best goalkeeper while coaching Warkaus in a Third Division match against Jyvaskyla JJK on June 6, 2004. He and Lepisto then bet on the outcome of the game, which JJK won 2-0.

MNA/Reuters



Chinese badminton player Bao Chunlai returns a shot against Chen Yu during their men's singles match of the All-England Open badminton championships in Birmingham, Britain on 6 March, 2008, Bao won by 2-1.—XINHUA

## Panathinaikos stay a point clear of Olympiakos

ATHENS, 6 March — Panathinaikos stayed top of the Greek Super League with a 1-0 win at Atromitos Athens thanks to a second-half header by defender Josu Sarriegi on Wednesday.

AEK Athens won 3-0 at home to Xanthi while Olympiakos Piraeus were awarded a victory over Apollon Kalamaria who used an ineligible player in round 19 of the championship.

Panathinaikos lead the table with 53 points from 23 matches, one ahead of Olympiakos with AEK in third place on 49.

Panathinaikos made hard work of beating Atromitos to record their seventh 1-0 league win this season after Sarriegi headed home a cross from Ezequiel Gonzalez in the 54th minute. — MNA/Reuters

## Mourinho will return next year in Italy or Spain

MILAN, 7 March — Jose Mourinho hopes to return to soccer management next year in either Italy or Spain, the former Chelsea coach has said.

The Portuguese tactician added that he wants to go back to England before finishing his coaching career as Portugal's national team boss.

"Now no, I am studying," the 45-year-old told Thursday's Gazzetta dello Sport when asked if he wanted to return to coaching. "From next year however, yes."

He was sacked by Chelsea in September after a disagreement with club chiefs despite winning two Premier League titles, an FA Cup and two League Cups in three years at Stamford Bridge.

"Italy or Spain," Mourinho said when asked about his future. "Afterwards I want to go back to England and finally be national coach of Portugal."

MNA/Reuters

## Capello says Beckham likely to get 100th England cap

LONDON, 7 March — David Beckham will get his 100th England cap as long as he is fit and in form, manager Fabio Capello told national team fans on Wednesday.

"I know Beckham very well from Real Madrid and I hope David will play the 100th game and get that cap," Capello told representatives of the official England supporters club.

"He will get his 100th cap if he is fit and in form."

Beckham was left out of Capello's first squad for the friendly against Switzerland at Wembley Stadium last month because Major League Soccer (MLS) was in its close season and the midfielder was by not match-fit. Speaking mostly in English on Wednesday, Capello said he or his assistant Franco Baldini would travel to the United States this month to see the 32-year-old former England captain in action for his MLS club Los Angeles Galaxy.

"I understand from reading his last interview that at this moment his fitness isn't good. I will phone him because I want to know exactly what he thinks.

"Los Angeles play in Dallas on 14 March and Franco or I will go to see him and assess his fitness.

MNA/Reuters

## Pele joins Brazil's 2014 organizing committee

RIO DE JANEIRO, 7 March — Pele, who was conspicuously absent from the ceremony when Brazil were awarded the 2014 World Cup last year, is now joining the tournament's organizing committee.

"I want to be part of a World Cup which will be worthy of Brazil," he told Globo television in an interview on Thursday, standing next to Brazilian Football Confederation (CBF) president Ricardo Teixeira.

"I hope that Brazil can put on a World Cup which will serve as an example to FIFA and the world.

"I believe I can make a big contribution to the success of the World Cup in our country."

Brazil, the only candidate to stage the tournament, were confirmed as hosts by FIFA last October.

At the time, Teixeira dismissed the absence of a player who for most people symbolises football in the South American country.

"I don't know where he is but we invited two players here that represent the great generation of players during my presidency," he said, referring to former captain Dunga, now national team coach, and striker Romario.

Teixeira has been CBF president since 1989 and his relationship with Pele has often been frosty.

MNA/Reuters



Andy Roddick of the US returns the ball to Spain's Rafael Nadal during their quarter-final match at the ATP Dubai Tennis Championships on 6 March, 2008. Roddick wins Nadal by 2-0.—INTERNET

**Asleep in Jesus  
Kay Thwe Phone (An Gu)  
(32) years**

Eldest daughter of Captain Maung Maung Phone (MV Jitra Bhum) and Daw Brigid Po of No.2583 Aung Mingalar Lane, 6th Ward, Mayangone Township, Yangon, beloved sister of Otto Win Latt Phone- Naw Mary and Khin Eindere Phone (Ann Marie) fell asleep in Jesus peacefully in Singapore on 5th March 2008 at 12:10 pm.

**Bereaved Family**

**Thai exam cheat triggers  
phone-watch ban**

BANGKOK, 7 March — Thai students will be barred from wearing watches in national university entrance exams this weekend after a student was caught cheating using a mobile

phone wrist watch, Education Ministry officials said on Wednesday.

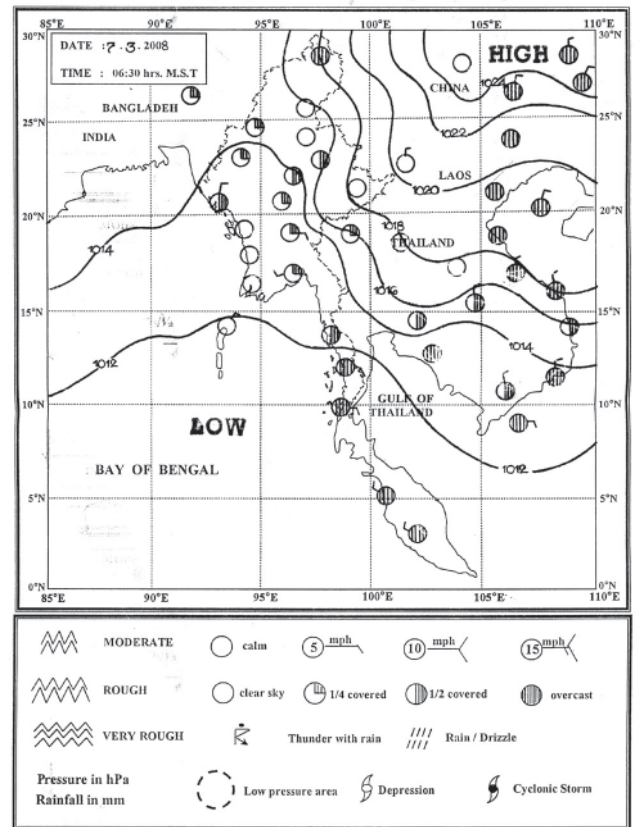
Photographs of the phone watch would be sent to exam centres around the country and students would have to rely on wall clocks, they said.

"I have ordered the 18 examination centres nationwide to ban students wearing all kinds of watches to the exams this weekend," senior ministry official Sumate Yamnoon told reporters.

The ban followed invigilators catching a student receiving text messages on his phone watch during a national exam in Bangkok last weekend.

MNA/Reuters

Weather Map of Myanmar and Neighbouring Areas



**WEATHER**

Friday, 7 March, 2008

**Summary of observations recorded at 9:30 hours MST:** During the past 24 hours, weather has been partly cloudy in Kachin, Shan, Kayah, Kayin and Mon States, upper Sagaing, Magway, Yangon and Taninthayi Divisions and generally fair in the remaining areas. Day temperatures were (3°C) above March average temperatures in Mon State and Ayeyawady Division, (3°C) to (4°C) below March average temperatures in Shan State, upper Sagaing and Mandalay Divisions and about March average temperatures in the remaining areas. The significant day temperatures was Patheingyi (38°C).

Maximum temperature on 6-3-2008 was 98°F. Minimum temperature on 7-3-2008 was 66°F. Relative humidity at (09:30) hours MST on 7-3-2008 was 69%. Total sunshine hours on 6-3-2008 was (8.5) hours approx.

Rainfall on 7-3-2008 was (Nil) at Mingaladon, Kaba-Aye and Central Yangon. Total rainfall since 1-1-2008 was (0.67) inch at Mingaladon, (0.47) inch at Kaba-Aye and (0.35) inch at Central Yangon. Maximum wind speed at Yangon (Kaba-Aye) was (5) mph from South at (17:00) hours MST on 6-3-2008.

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

**Forecast valid until evening of 8-3-2008:** Possibility of isolated rain or thundershowers in Taninthayi Division and weather will be partly cloudy in Mon and Kayin States and generally fair in the remaining States and Divisions. Degree of certainty is (40%).

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

**Outlook for subsequent two days:** Likelihood of slight increase of day temperatures in the Southern Myanmar areas.

**Forecast for Nay Pyi Taw and neighbouring area for 8-3-2008:** Generally fair weather.

**Forecast for Yangon and neighbouring area for 8-3-2008:** Generally fair weather.

**Forecast for Mandalay and neighbouring area for 8-3-2008:** Generally fair weather.

**Weather Outlook for second weekend of 8-3-2008:** During the coming weekend, weather will be generally fair in Nay Pyi Taw and Mandalay Division, partly cloudy in Yangon Division.

**France, UAE, Qatar end war games in tense Gulf**

AL-HAMRA (United Arab Emirates), 7 March — France, the United Arab Emirates and Qatar ended over a week of military exercises on Iran's doorstep on Wednesday, with troops repelling a simulated attack from a nearby state.

"Gulf Shield 1", the first joint war games between the three states, came amid growing tension in the Gulf two months after US and Iranian vessels came close to confronting each other.

French plans to set up a new military base in the UAE, across a short stretch of water from the Islamic Republic, have drawn criticism from Teheran, which also accused Paris of taking an "unfriendly" position in its nuclear row with the West.

The base will keep

France near sea lanes through which over a third of global oil shipments pass.

In the final phase of the exercises on Wednesday, blasts sent clouds of black smoke into the desert sky as armoured vehicles charged toward an invisible enemy and helicopters fired missiles from above. In all, 3,676 troops took part in the exercises.

French and UAE officers told reporters the games were not tied to recent tensions but were meant to ensure stability in a region where US and

Iranian forces make regular displays of military might.

"This exercise was planned four years ago and bears no relation to anything going on on the political stage in the region," said Major-General Faris al-Mazrouei of the UAE Army.

"As countries of the region, we are interested in stability ... and these kinds of exercises help achieve this balance, and help us to know each other at close quarters."

MNA/Reuters



Saturday, 8 March  
Tune in today

- 8:30 am Brief news
- 8:35 am Music -Girls & Boys
- 8:40 am Perspectives
- 8:45 am Music -Kiss
- 8:50 am National news
- 9:00 am Music -An apple a day
- 9:05 am International news
- 9:10 am Music -Because of you
- 1:30 pm News/ Slogan
- 1:40 pm Music at your request -White wedding
- 9:00 pm ASEAN news Exchange news form ASEAN member countries
- 9:20 pm Myanma Culture...Dr Khin Maung Nyunt -King Anawrahta
- 9:30 pm Souvenirs -Bermuda
- 9:45 pm News/Slogan
- 10:00 pm PEL



Saturday, 8 March  
View on today

- 7:00 am
  1. Recitation of Parittas by Missionary Sayadaw U Ottamathara
- 7:25 am
  2. To be healthy exercise
- 7:30 am
  3. Morning news
- 7:40 am
  4. Nice and sweet song
- 7:55 am
  5. အတီးပြိုင်ပွဲ
- 8:05 am
  6. Musical programme
- 8:15 am
  7. ရခိုင်ချောင်းတံတား
- 8:20 am
  8. (၆၃)နှစ်မြောက်တပ်မတော်နေ့, ဂုဏ်ပြုအစီအစဉ်
- 8:30 am
  9. International news
- 8:45 am
  10. Grammar made easy
- 11:00 am
  1. Martial song
- 11:15 am
  2. Musical programme
- 11:30 am
  3. Games for children
- 11:50 am
  4. Round up of the week's TV local news
- 12:25 pm
  5. နိုင်ငံခြားဇာတ်လမ်းတွဲ "စစ်သူကြီးဆွန်ကြီး" (အပိုင်း-၁၂)
- 1:10 pm
  6. "ငွေကြေးကိစ္စမှန်သမျှတက်ကိုသာ အားကိုးကြ" (ခန့်စည်သူ၊ ဖြိုးငွေစိုး၊ မင်းရာဇာ၊ သဇင်၊ ပုလဲဝင်း၊ ဖူးစုံ) (ဒါရိုက်တာ-မြင့်စိုး(ဝ/သရန်ကုန်)
- 1:35 pm
  7. မိတ္ထီလာဝါကြိုတစ်ရက်နှင့်ပွဲများနှင့်ချည်အရည်အသွေး စမ်းသပ်ခြင်း
- 1:50 pm
  8. အတီးပြိုင်ပွဲ
- 2:05 pm
  9. Dance of National Races
- 2:20 pm
  10. "သတိနဲ့ယှဉ် အသိနဲ့ပြင်" (အပိုင်း-၁)(ဝါးခယ်မရဲမောင်၊ ဘုန်းလျှန်၊ မြတ်ကေသီအောင်၊ ရတနာခင်၊ ဟန်နီထွန်း၊ ပြည့်ဖူးခိုင်၊ နီနီရွှေရည်၊ ဆောင်းနှင်းဝေ၊ ဝင်းစုခိုင်သိန်း၊ အိုင်းရစ်လေးပြည့်၊ (ဒါရိုက်တာ-မင်းအုတ်စိုး)
- 2:35 pm
  11. ဗိုလ်ချုပ်ချစ်ထွန်းတံခါး
- 2:45 pm
  12. International news
- 4:00 pm
  1. Martial song
- 4:15 pm
  2. Song to uphold National Spirit
- 4:30 pm
  3. အဝေးသင်တက္ကသိုလ် ပညာရေး ရုပ်မြင်သံကြား သင်ခန်းစာ-ပထမနှစ် (ရူပဗေဒအထူးပြု) (ရူပဗေဒ)
- 4:45 pm
  4. တပ်မတော်နေ့ဂုဏ်ပြု တေးသီချင်းပြိုင်ပွဲ ဆုတေးများ (၂၀၀၄ ခုနှစ်)
- 4:55 pm
  5. မြန်မာ့မလေ့ရိုးရာလက်တွေ့
- 5:10 pm
  6. Games for children
- 5:30 pm
  7. ရသပေါ်လွင်သရုပ်ဆောင် လွင်ပြင်
- 6:00 pm
  8. Evening news
- 6:30 pm
  9. Weather report
- 6:35 pm
  10. အလှူရှာမယ်၊ လှူကမ္ဘာဝယ်
- 7:00 pm
  11. (၆၃)နှစ်မြောက်တပ်မတော်နေ့ ဂုဏ်ပြုအစီအစဉ်
- 7:10 pm
  12. နိုင်ငံခြားဇာတ်လမ်းတွဲ "ချစ်သူအားမာန်" (အပိုင်း-၁၉)
- 8:00 pm
  13. News
- 14. International news
- 15. Weather report
- 16. နိုင်ငံခြားဇာတ်လမ်းတွဲ "မာယာထောင်ချောက်" (အပိုင်း-၇)
- 17. The next day's programme

# People's Desire

- ★ We favour stability.
- ★ We favour peace.
- ★ We oppose unrest and violence.

## Lt-Gen Aung Htwe presents prizes to winning bands in 16<sup>th</sup> Defence Services (Army, Navy and Air) Military Band Competition

NAY PYI TAW, 7 March — The 16<sup>th</sup> Defence Services (Army, Navy and Air) Military Band Competition to mark the 63<sup>rd</sup> Anniversary Armed Forces Day 2008 concluded at the parade ground, here, this morning.

Chairman of the Leading Committee for Observance of the 63<sup>rd</sup> Anniversary Armed Forces Day Member of the State Peace and Development Council Chief of Armed Forces Training Lt-Gen Aung Htwe attended the prize presentation ceremony for the Military Band Competition.

First, military bands took the designated positions at the parade ground and saluted Lt-Gen Aung Htwe. They also saluted the State Flag, paid

tribute to the fallen Tatmadawmen and recited four Oaths.

Next, Lt-Gen Aung Htwe awarded K 1 million and shield to Eastern Command team that stood third in the competition, K 1.5 million and second prize shield to Yangon Command team and K 2 million and first prize shield to Central Command team.

Also present on the occasion were Adjutant-General Maj-Gen Thura Myint Aung, Chairman of the Management Committee for Observance of the 63<sup>rd</sup> Anniversary Armed Forces Day Commander of Nay Pyi Taw Command Maj-Gen Wai Lwin, Chairman of the Organizing Committee for the Military Band Competition Vice Adjutant-General Maj-Gen Hla

Shwe, senior military officers of the Ministry of Defence, members of the Management and Sub-committees for Observance of the Armed Forces

Day, members of the Panel of Judges of the band competition and servicemen of the Defence Services (Army, Navy and Air).

MNA



## Religious treatises available at RAD bookstall

YANGON, 7 March — Varieties of treatises, Tipitaka Pali-Myanmar dictionaries, Jataka Atthakatha, Pathana treatise, tri Pitaka treatises in Pali version, Vinicchaya affairs, manuals of Sangha Nayaka, books on Tikakyaw, the explanation on basic Abhidhamma, monthly published the Light of Sasana magazine and others are available at reasonable prices at Treatises Bookstall of Religious Affairs Department on Kaba-Aye Pagoda Road.

Those wishing to donate treatise books may dial 660843 and 660463. — MNA

**Lt-Gen Aung Htwe awards shield to Eastern Command that stood third in the Military Band Competition. — MNA**

## People should not yield to demands of subversive elements

It has become important that political affairs should not be associated with personal affairs in the Myanmar's political trend. Maybe, some people lost patience with the National Convention taking long to be in session. It was because if the constitution was drawn perfunctorily and in haste, that would be followed by undesirable consequences. If so, the posterity of the people will fall victim to the evil consequences of defects of the constitution.

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KYAW MIN AYE

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