

The NEW LIGHT OF MYANMAR

Volume XII, Number 283

Fullmoon Day of Pyatho 1366 ME

Monday, 24 January 2005

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



Myanmar Computer Science Development Council Chairman Secretary-1 Lt-Gen Thein Sein addresses opening ceremony of Fourth Myanmar ICT Week 2005.— MNA

Earnest and sustained efforts exerted for using ICT in education and ICT human resource development Government fully committed to ICT development

YANGON, 23 Jan — The Fourth Myanmar ICT Week 2005 jointly organized by e-National Task Force and Myanmar Information and Communication Technology Development Corporation was held at MICT Park in Hline Township this morning, attended by Chairman of Myanmar Computer Science Development Council Secretary-1 of the State Peace and Development Council Lt-Gen Thein Sein.

Also present were Chairman of Yangon Division Peace and Development Council Commander of Yangon Command Maj-Gen Myint Swe, the ministers, the chief justice, the attorney-general, the

chairman of Civil Service Selection and Training Board, the Yangon mayor, the deputy ministers, senior military officers, members of e-National Task Force, presidents and officials of Myanmar Women's Affairs Federation and Myanmar Maternal and Child Welfare Association, officials of the State Peace and Development Council Office and heads of departments, ambassadors, Charge d' Affairs and military attaches, resident representatives of UN Agencies, officials of the Union of Myanmar Federation of Chambers of Commerce and Industry, members of Board of Directors of MICTDC, chairmen and

officials of Myanmar Computer Federation, Myanmar Computer Scientists Association, Myanmar Computer Industry Association and Myanmar Computer Enthusiasts Association, officials of Mandalay ICT Park, technicians, IT computers technicians and guests.

First, Chairman of Myanmar Computer Science Development Council the Secretary-1 formally launched the Fourth Myanmar ICT Week 2005.

On behalf of the Chairman of e-National Task Force, member of CSSTB Vice-Chairman of e-National Task Force U Aung Myint extended greetings.

He said the week will be held from 21 to 27 January and there will be seminars, workshops, ICT competition and product presentation of ICT companies.

Next, the Secretary-1 Lt-Gen Thein Sein said today, Myanmar is striving to become a modern and developed state. Politically, we are already taking measures for the implementation of the seven-step Road Map that would ensure the emergence of a peaceful, stable, prosperous and democratic society. In the field of economy, vigorous efforts for economic development have resulted in a steady and sustained economic growth. In the social sector, significant achievements have been made, particularly in health, education and human resource development.

(See page 8)



Secretary-1 Lt-Gen Thein Sein inspects booths at Fourth Myanmar ICT Week 2005. — MNA

INSIDE

To be in conformity with the emergence of a university in Myanmar, which has been able to confer degrees on traditional medicine, the government built a magnificent building for the university spending a large amount of funds.

(Page 7)

DR THEIN SWE

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

PERSPECTIVES

Monday, 24 January, 2005

Add momentum to health researches

The State Peace and Development Council is investing heavily in the health sector for the health and fitness of the entire national people.

Acting on the directives of the National Health Committee, the Ministry of Health takes charge of such measures as prevention of disease, promotion of health standard, diagnosis and rehabilitation to ensure development of public health care.

Moreover, the ministry makes harmonious efforts to escalate the tasks for prevention and treatment of disease as well as for promotion of health standard after setting two main goals: one is to enjoy full life expectancy and the other is to live a healthy life.

Head of State Senior General Than Shwe gave guidance on the research into the six commonest diseases— malaria, tuberculosis, diarrhoea, dysentery, diabetes and hypertension.

The Ministry of Health held Myanmar Health Research Congress 2004 on 14-19 January this year. The research conference is held every year with the aim of enabling the researchers to exchange their findings among themselves and to disseminate the outcomes to those who will put them into practice.

The Ministry of Health, relevant ministries, and local and foreign researchers attended the recent research conference, and they submitted 70 research papers on health.


Among them were papers related to the six major diseases as guided by the Head of State. A total of 10 papers were read in connection with malaria alone. And there were altogether six papers concerning traditional medicines.

Research paper implies the accomplishment of a research work. Therefore, it is necessary to make the findings solid, acceptable and applicable for the many.

As regards the six major diseases, the research on traditional medicines should go along with the research on effective therapies and potent medicines.

Furthermore, a constant vigil should be kept for emerging infectious diseases while laboratory researches into them are being conducted.

All in all, it is necessary to push forward with the health research tasks for the provision of public health care on a greater scale.



**MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE AND IRRIGATION
SETTLEMENT AND LAND RECORDS DEPARTMENT**

The Meeting for Directors-General of Agricultural Statistics
and Information in ASEAN+3 Countries
and
The Third Focal Point Meeting of AFSIS Project

Kandawgyi Palace Hotel, Yangon, Myanmar.
24-28, January 2005

All this needs to be known

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

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

PTA MEETING HELD: Dagon BEHS No 2 held the parent-teacher association's meeting on 22-1-2005. Daw Khin Than Nwe, wife of Lt-Gen Tin Oo, presents certificate of honour to a wellwisher.

(News reported)

MNA



Hotels and Tourism Minister leaves for Malaysia

YANGON, 23 Jan — Minister for Culture Maj-Gen Kyi Aung, Minister at the Prime Minister's

Office U Than Shwe, Deputy Minister for Hotels and Tourism Brig-Gen Aye Myint Kyu and

officials this morning saw off the Myanmar delegation led by Minister for Hotels and Tourism Brig-

Gen Thein Zaw at Yangon International Airport.

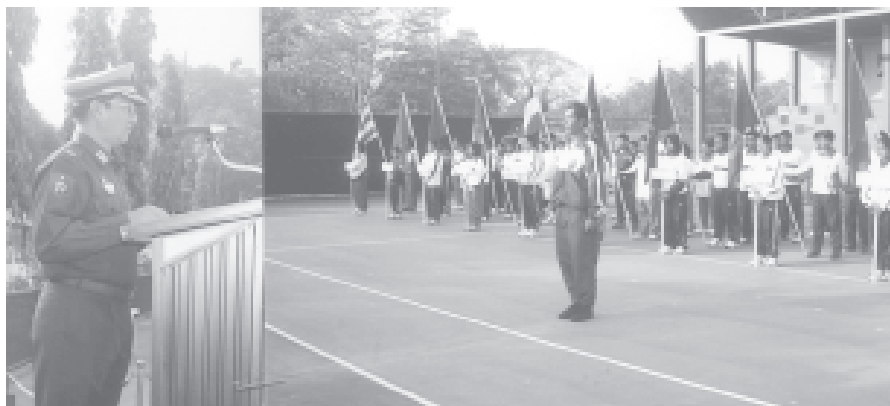
The Minister will join the 8th Meeting of ASEAN Tourism Ministers, the 4th Meeting of ASEAN, China, Japan and Korea Tourism Ministers and the 1st meeting of ASEAN-India Tourism Ministers to be held in Lankawi Island of Malaysia on 24 and 25 January at the invitation of the Malaysian Minister for Tourism.

The minister was accompanied by Deputy Director-General U Tin Maung Shwe of the Directorate of Hotels and Tourism.— MNA



Minister for Hotels and Tourism Brig-Gen Thein Zaw being seen off at the airport on departure for Malaysia.— MNA

42nd ISD Tennis Tournament commences



Minister for Sports Brig-Gen Thura Aye Myint speaking at opening ceremony of 42nd ISD Tennis Tournament.— SPED

YANGON, 23 Jan — Chairman of Myanmar Olympic Committee Minister for Sports Brig-Gen Thura Aye Myint formally opened the 42nd Inter-State/Division Tennis Tourna-

ment at Theinbyu Tennis Court this morning. Before delivering an opening address, the minister accepted the championship shield from previous champion Mandalay Division

women's team. Altogether 16 men's teams and eight women's teams are taking part in the tournament which will last up to 29 January.

MNA



China now ranks equal to US in trade partner with Japan

TOKYO, 22 Jan—Japanese Prime Minister Junichiro Koizumi said here Friday that China now ranks equal with the United States in its importance as a trade partner with Japan.

Stable relations between Japan and China are of great importance to the whole international community, Koizumi told a parliamentary session.

The two countries should dedicate themselves towards building bilateral ties and strengthening comprehensive cooperation despite differences in some areas, he said.

“Even if we (Japan and China) have different opinions, I will enhance cooperation in wide-ranging fields from a broader viewpoint,” Koizumi said.

As for foreign policy, the Prime Minister said Japanese-US relations are the basic axis of Japan’s foreign policy. The

alliance between the two countries is the basis to maintain security in Japan as well as in the whole world.

Japan will continue to carry out cooperation with the United States in both political and economic fields and further strengthen bilateral ties, he stressed.

In addition, Japan will make joint efforts with the United States, South Korea, China and Russia to completely solve the nuclear issue in the Korean Peninsula in order to realize the normalization of diplomatic relations between Japan and North Korea.

As for the territorial dispute with Russia, Koizumi said Japan’s

policy of seeking clarification that four Russian-held islands belong to Japan has not changed but added he will try to deepen trust with Russia in the light of the visit of President Vladimir Putin to Japan this year.

On domestic reforms, Koizumi said postal privatization is a “most drastic and effective” reform for revitalizing Japan’s economy and producing efficient government.

The Japanese Government will try to pass during the 150-day session a set of bills to privatize Japan Post in April 2007 based on the basic policy adopted last September despite a lack of support from the ruling parties.

MNA/Xinhua



China, Thailand establish mutual judicial assistance

BEIJING, 22 Jan—China and Thailand on Friday exchanged instruments of ratification of the Treaty between the People’s Republic of China and the Kingdom of Thailand on Mutual Legal Assistance in Criminal Matters.

Chinese Vice-Foreign Minister Wu Dawei and Thai Ambassador to China Jullapong Nonsrichai, on behalf of their home countries, exchanged the instruments of ratification.

The treaty will take effect on 20 February.

The Chinese Foreign Ministry said China and Thailand have cooperated well in judicial matters, and have so far concluded three treaties on legal cooperation including this one.

The other two are Agreement on Judicial Assistance in Civil and

Commercial Matters and Cooperation in Arbitration between China and Thailand, and Treaty between China and Thailand on Extradition.

The establishment of legal assistance between China and Thailand on criminal matters will expand the two countries’ cooperation foundation in the legal arena, and will be favourable to combating transnational crimes and safeguarding bilateral trade and personnel exchanges, an official with Chinese Foreign Ministry said.

MNA/Xinhua



Book fair in Shanghai on 22 Jan, 2005. China has launched an attack on publications that might threaten social stability, state media said. Books, electronic media and even mobile phone messages would be ‘closely examined’.—INTERNET

Chinese Embassy in Iraq confirms hostages release

BAGHDAD, 23 Jan—The Eight Chinese hostages held by Iraqi guerillas have been released, the Chinese Embassy in Iraq confirmed on Saturday.

The Al-Arabiya television station reported on Saturday that the eight Chinese were freed and handed to the Committee of Muslim Scholars.

A videotape aired by Al-Arabiya said the Islamic Resistance Movement, Al-Numan Battalion, had decided to release the eight Chinese citizens as a goodwill gesture for the friendship between the two countries of Iraq and China.

“They were not harmed during the period they were held and also they weren’t exchanged for any amount of money,”

a guerilla said in the tape.

The eight Chinese were abducted en route to Jordan by gunmen identifying themselves as the Islamic Resistance Movement, according to a video tape released by the group on Tuesday.

Earlier reports said that the kidnapers had asked the Chinese Government to ban its nationals from entering Iraq.

The Chinese Embassy on Wednesday contacted the Committee of Muslim Scholars, which helped in the release of seven Chinese hostages last April, in a bid to free the eight men.

The eight hostages, aged between 18 and 40, were identified as citizens from Pingtan County, east China’s Fujian Province.

The Chinese Embassy in Baghdad said the hostages are ordinary Chinese citizens who traveled to Iraq for job opportunities.

“After their contracts expired, they rented a car to leave Iraq for home ahead of the Chinese Spring Festival, the most important festival for Chinese like Eid al-Adha (the feast of sacrifice) for Muslims,” the embassy said in a statement.

MNA/Xinhua



China’s Embassy in Iraq confirmed that eight Chinese hostages, shown here, held by Iraqi guerillas have been released, the official Xinhua news agency reported from Baghdad.—INTERNET

S Africa expects more foreign tourists in coming years

JOHANNESBURG, 22 Jan—South Africa has the potential to boost its annual foreign tourist intake to 10.5 million from the current 6.5 million in the next five years as global economy continues to grow, said the country’s tourism marketing chief.

The International Monetary Fund has projected a 4.3 per cent of global economic growth in the next year, which means more people are going to have more money to spend on travel, said Moeketsi Mosola, chief executive officer of the South African Tourism.

Quoted by Friday’s newspaper *Business Day*, Mosola said tourism trends worldwide were returning to normal following three difficult years that saw tourism destinations hit by major events, such as the 11 September terror attacks in the United States in 2001, the US-led war in Iraq and the effects of the severe acute respiratory syndrome epidemic in Asia.

Despite this potential for growth, Mosola said South Africa still had to ensure that it integrated its tourism offerings to the world and make sure it remained competitive on a global scale. Growth in world tourism for the first nine months last year had been 12 per cent, while South Africa as an international destination grew only 1.9 per cent, the World Tourism Organization (WTO) figures show. Compared with other regions, tourism to Asia at a world level grew 37 per cent, but incoming tourism to South Africa from Asia grew only 6 per cent, Mosola said.

Mosola also played down talk of opportunities arising from the tidal wave

catastrophe that hit 12 southeast Asian and East African countries that represent 4 per cent of global tourism stock of about 31 million people.

He said early indications from the WTO showed that between 70 per cent and 80 per cent of operations affected were already up and running and that tourists were returning. In Maldives, of the 87 resorts affected, 64 were fully operational.

“The tourism stock directly affected in the six countries most badly affected by the tidal wave is only estimated to be 1 per cent of the total global stock, which is small, it is not as big as people are saying it is,” said Mosola.—MNA/Reuters

Reception marks 50th anniversary of China-Afghanistan dip ties

BEIJING, 22 Jan— The Chinese People's Association for Friendship with Foreign Countries (CPAFFC) and the Afghan Embassy to China held a reception here Thursday to mark the 50th anniversary of the establishment of China-Afghanistan diplomatic relations.

Vice-Chairmen of the National Committee of the Chinese People's Political Consultative Conference Bai Lichen, President of the (CPAFFC) Chen Haosu, CPAFFC vice-president Wang Yunze, Vice-Foreign Minister Wu Dawei and Afghan Ambassador to China Qiamuddin Rai Barlas attended the reception. Chen Haosu said China and Afghanistan, as two developing countries, share much in common, such as the same goals of developing the economy and raising living standards. Strengthening the relationship between the two countries is in the fundamental

interest of both sides and is conducive to regional peace and stability.

He said China will make efforts to work with Afghanistan to contribute to the China-Afghanistan friendship, the world peace and common development.

Barlas said the China-Afghanistan relations set a good example for other neighbouring nations in this region. Afghanistan will continue to promote the relationship.

Pictures recording the history of friendly relations between China and Afghanistan were displayed at the reception. — MNA/Xinhua

Koizumi plans to privatize Japan's postal system

Tokyo, 23 Jan— Prime Minister Junichiro Koizumi threw down the gauntlet to opponents of his plan to privatize Japan's postal system — the world's biggest financial institution — as he opened a debate on Friday that puts him at odds with many in his own party.

Brushing aside objections by the ruling Liberal Democratic Party (LDP), Koizumi told an opening session of Parliament that he intended to split the postal delivery, insurance and savings system into four separate businesses.

In the most extreme scenario, conservative LDP barons could block the legislation, prompting Koizumi to strike back by calling a snap election, a move that could result in breaking up the party that has ruled Japan for most of the postwar era.

If Koizumi compromises — which analysts say is more likely — he risks going down in history as the Premier who squandered the best chance in decades to scrap an arcane money machine that has financed wasteful public works projects, distorted the financial industry and fed pork-barrel politics. "I believe that the privatization of postal

services opens the door to a new Japan, and I will do my utmost to make it happen," Koizumi said.

At the core of the debate is the fate of the postal savings service, the world's largest deposit-taking institution with 227 trillion yen (2.2 trillion dollars) in assets, and insurance services offered at post offices, worth 122 trillion yen or about the same as Japan's top four life insurers combined.

Together, the two services account for roughly a quarter of Japanese household financial assets totaling 1,400 trillion yen. Because these funds are fully state-guaranteed and yet offer higher returns than private-sector products, the financial industry has long called for a level playing field.

Proponents of privatization also note that the funds have bankrolled the government's Fiscal Investment and Loan Pro-

gramme (FILP), known as the "second budget" for its role in funding public works and debt-laden state companies.

"We must shift fund flows to the private-sector by reforming the whole mechanism, in which money comes in through postal savings and insurance and ends up at semigovernment enterprises, with FILP acting in the middle to allocate funds," Koizumi said.

Koizumi's record on such reforms to date is mixed, and opposition to his postal plan is strong. The LDP has long relied on the FILP funds for pet projects to woo voters and on the heads of local post offices to run political machines. The main opposition Democratic Party includes many lawmakers who are backed by a postal workers' union, which is fiercely against losing the benefits awarded to public servants. — MNA/Reuters



Planes of flag carrier Air China at Beijing airport on 23 Jan, 2005. China's fledgling private airline industry could take off in the first half of this year, using busy holiday travel seasons to launch their services, state media said. — INTERNET

China's top legislator meets Canadian PM

BEIJING, 22 Jan— Wu Bangguo, China's top legislator, met Canadian Prime Minister Paul Martin here Friday and vowed to further legislative cooperation between the two countries.

Wu, chairman of the Standing Committee of National People's Congress (NPC), told Martin that the two countries, have made remarkable progress in developing bilateral relations since the establishment of diplomatic ties 35 years ago. He attributed this to frequent high-level exchanges and booming economic and trade cooperation.

"China and Canada, both of great influence in the world, have kept good cooperation in multilateral occasions," said Wu. China attaches great importance to its relationship with Canada, he said.

The NPC has kept good relations with Canadian Senate and House of Commons, and the special panels of the two countries have also continued exchanges and cooperation, he said.

The NPC is willing to make joint efforts with Canadian Parliament to enhance exchanges, further cooperation, deepen understanding and promote mutual trust so as to push forward the all-round partnership of cooperation between China and Canada, he said.

Martin said his visit to China has been successful, with agreements reached by the two sides in various fields. This will boost the Canadian-Sino relations forcefully, he said.

He agreed on further exchanges between the two legislatures. He expressed belief that this kind of exchanges will push forward the bilateral cooperation in economy and trade and other fields as well as promote mutual understanding. — MNA/Xinhua

Egypt received 7.5 million tourists in 2004

CAIRO, 23 Jan— An official report said Friday that the number of tourists to Egypt in 2004 reached 7.5 million, an increase of 17.2 per cent compared with 6.4 million in 2003, Egypt's official MENA news agency reported.

The report issued by the Cabinet's Information and Decision Support Centre showed the number of floating hotels and tourist villages reached 1,408 in 2004 and the number of tourist rooms jumped to 136,500.

Ahmed Khadem, chairman of the Egyptian Tourist Authority, said the tourist nights reached almost 82 million last year. In the meantime, a report by the Egyptian Central Bank said rev-

enues from tourism were estimated at 6.1 billion US dollars in 2004.

In early January, Egyptian Minister of Tourism Ahmad el-Maghrabi said at a Press conference that the country expected to see the number of tourists hit 12 million by 2010 and 25 million by 2014. Tourism has been one of Egypt's top hard currency earners, along with Suez Canal revenues, expatriate remittances and oil exports. — MNA/Xinhua



A woman has her blood pressure checked in Singapore on 22 Jan, 2005. A medical firm in Singapore has invented a wristwatch that tracks blood pressure around the clock without causing pain or discomfort. — INTERNET

Nepal to ratify Kyoto Protocol

KATHMANDU, 23 Jan— The Nepali Government has already given approval in principle to the Kyoto Protocol and is preparing to ratify it next month, a government official said Saturday.

"Homework is being done with the objective of ratifying the protocol by February 25," Minister for Population and Environment Bachaspati Devkota told reporters. The people's standard of living can be raised if the use of products that give out green-house gases could

be reduced through the use of alternative energy sources such as solar energy, bio-gas, wind and hydro-electricity, Devkota said.

"A country like Nepal can earn a decent foreign currency through the carbon trade after signing the protocol," he added. The Nepali Parliament passed

the Kyoto Protocol in 1997. The protocol, which aims to control the "greenhouse" gas emissions that cause global warming, imposes cuts in emissions of the polluting gases by 5.2 per cent from the level of 1990 by 2010 for most industrialized countries. — MNA/Xinhua

Masako to visit central Japan next month

TOKYO, 23 Jan—Japan's ailing crown Princess may visit central Japan next month in her second official duty in as many months after over a year of seclusion, public broadcaster NHK said on Friday.

Crown Princess Masako, 41, once a cheerful and outgoing career diplomat, spent about 13 months away from official duties because of a stress-related disorder court officials said was caused by the strain of adapting to royal life. The crown Princess made a return to official duties on January 2 when she briefly joined Emperor Akihito and other family members on a palace balcony to greet thousands of well-wishers in a traditional New Year rite.

NHK said she was likely to perform another official duty next month with a two-day trip from February 26 with her

husband, Crown Prince Naruhito, to the central Japanese city of Nagano to see the 2005 Special Olympics World Winter Games. The two are planning to attend an opening ceremony and also to watch a floor hockey match during their visit, NHK said, adding that the couple want to take along their only child, three-year-old Princess Aiko.

Since Masako has not fully recovered, the Imperial Household Agency will monitor her health until right before the expected visit, NHK said. — MNA/Reuters

Nepal to hold birds festival in wetlands

KATHAMANDU, 23 Jan—Nepal is exploring a new bio-tourist destination in the country's largest wetlands by holding a bird festival in its eastern region, the Nepal Tourism Board (NTB) said here Friday.

Speaking at a Press conference, Director of NTB Subhash Nirola said, "Koshi Tappu is one of the richest natural resources which can be used for sustainable development of the areas enclosed nearby".

Therefore, the Fifth National Koshi Tappu Birds Festival scheduled on February 2-6 is aimed at preserving migratory

birds, which will eventually promote bio-tourism in Nepal, Nirola said.

According to Nirola, the five-day festival comprises of series of activities like bird watching, preparation of list of migratory birds, street play for the conservation of bio-diversity of the region, cultural programmes of

ethnic groups, honouring people working for bird conservation.

Koshi Tappu Wildlife Reserve was established in 1976, and covers an area of 175 square kilometres. The reserve is named after the biggest river of Nepal, the Koshi. The waterbody supports 465 species of birds including 17 globally threatened species.

MNA/Xinhua



Baron (L) and Emperor, two three-week-old white lion cubs from the same father but two different mothers rest at Prein's circus near Agen, south western France.—INTERNET

Putin hails relations with France

Moscow, 22 Jan—Russia attaches special significance to the development of relations with France and the two countries share similar views over world affairs, President Vladimir Putin said while meeting with two top French officials here on Friday.

During talks with visiting French Foreign Minister Michel Barnier and Defence Minister Michele Alliot-Marie in the Kremlin, Putin said that France is not just "a priority partner", but also one with which "we are building very trusting relations and intend to develop specific ties in both the economic and security spheres." Interfax news agency reported.

The Russian leader confirmed that Moscow and Paris "coincide in large part" on the development of the world situation.

Putin stressed that he is especially upbeat about the prospects for Russian-French arms trade, citing the joint project of developing a heavy helicopter based on Russia's MI-26.

He also expressed interest in building an

Unmanned Aerial Vehicle (UAV) and Alliot-Marie assured Putin that the programme would be discussed.

The French Defence Minister said joint defence-oriented work "is moving ahead in military cooperation and on armament issues", and such cooperation also needs to develop successfully on fleets, aviation and ground forces.

The high level of industry in Russia and France makes it possible

to further cooperate in weapons design, Alliot-Marie pointed out.

Russian Defence Minister Sergei Ivanov said after meeting with Alliot-Marie earlier in the day at the Russian-French Security Cooperation Council here that the two countries will conduct joint training exercises to work out ways to combat terrorism and the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction.

MNA/Xinhua

US soldier killed in raid north of Baghdad

BAGHDAD, 23 Jan — A US soldier was killed and another wounded Friday in a pre-dawn raid on a bomb-making cell north of Baghdad, the US military said.

The soldier from the 1st Infantry Division was

killed in the operation in the town of al-Duluyyah that resulted in the capture of 22 members of the bomb-making cell, the military said in a statement.

One Iraqi was killed in the raid, the statement

added. Duluyyah, some 100 kilometres north of Baghdad, has long been a hot spot of insurgency against the US-Iraqi forces since the invasion of the country in March 2003.

MNA/Xinhua

Cuba, Iran sign accord to boost economic ties

HAVANA, 23 Jan — Cuba and Iran have signed an agreement to boost bilateral economic and commercial cooperation, said local Press Friday.

The agreement was signed during a session of the Inter-Governmental Commission for Economic and Sci-tech Collaboration, which concluded on Friday.

Under the agreement, Cuba will receive a credit from Iran, which will be used to boost Cuba's agricultural production and its light industry and help it overcome the effect of severe drought in its east and central regions.

Cuba will provide Iran with pharmaceutical technology, which will enable the Asian country to produce Cuban medicines like the Hepatitis B vaccine on its own.

Ricardo Cabrisas, Cuba's Interior Minister and co-president of the meeting, said the session strengthened the official and commercial ties between the two countries and that both governments would continue efforts to deepen and extend bilateral cooperation. — MNA/Xinhua

Chile keen on developing ties with India

NEW DELHI, 23 Jan—Chilean President Ricardo Lagos said Friday his country was keen on strengthening ties with India in diverse areas including IT and biotechnology.

Speaking to reporters on his arrival at the airport in Bangalore in Karnataka State in south India, he hailed the achievements

of Karnataka in the fields of IT and biotechnology and said Chile looked forward to developing and intensifying close ties with India including these areas, the Press Trust of India reported.

Asked about the proposal of India to sell Advanced Light Helicopter Dhruv to Chile, he said his country was still considering it.

According to Hindustan Aeronautics Limited (HAL), it has been interacting with Chile for possible cooperation in HAL's indigenously designed and developed Dhruv. HAL had recently conducted a live demonstration of Dhruv in Chile. Later, Lagos visited software major Infosys at the electronics city on Bangalore outskirts.

MNA/Xinhua



Diew, a five year-old Thai elephant, demonstrates how to use and flush a toilet at an elephant camp in Chiang Mai Province, in northern Thailand. Having taught Thailand's elephants to paint, dance and play musical instruments, their Thai handlers are now toilet-training the beasts, media reported.—INTERNET



People look at a space suit worn by Chinese astronaut Yang Liwei. Shanghai plans to build a 'space city' to assist China's ambitious astronaut programme, which includes a space walk within the next few years, state media reported. — INTERNET

World Disaster Reduction Conf ends with decade framework

World Disaster Reduction Conf ends with decade framework

KOBE, 23 Jan — The World Conference on Disaster Reduction concluded here on Saturday with the adoption of the Hyogo Declaration and the Hyogo Framework for Action 2005-2015.

The participants had intensive discussions on the recent Indian Ocean natural disaster, reflecting on the lessons and

agreeing on pushing forward with the establishment of an early warning system in the Indian Ocean region.

The conference aimed to substantially cut the disaster losses in the 10 years to come, and make schools and hospitals disaster-proof, said Jan Egeland, UN Under-Secretary General for humanitarian affairs, at the closing session.

The framework said the expected outcome for the next 10 years is "the substantial reduction of disaster losses, in lives and in the social, eco-

nomics and environment assets of communities and countries."

The document also set up strategic goals, such as the more effective integration of disaster risk considerations into sustainable development policies.

As for the disaster, the participants agreed that the United Nations will be responsible for coordinating the efforts for building the Indian Ocean disaster early warning system which could be basically in place in about one year. —MNA/Xinhua

Iranian President terms African tour as fruitful

TEHERAN, 23 Jan — Iranian President Mohammad Khatami on Thursday night termed his seven-nation African tour as "fruitful", the official IRNA news agency reported on Friday.

"During the recent tour to Africa, several documents on transfer of technology in line with the international criteria and Iran's interests were signed," Khatami was quoted as saying upon his arrival at Mehrabad Airport in Teheran.

The President also noted that cooperation in the fields of agriculture, training technicians, presenting technical and engineering services were the subject of agreements with several African states.

Khatami referred to the African continent as a virgin land which has been released from the grip of colonial grip.

"The Africans are keen to make up for their backwardness by taking steps toward development," Khatami said.

On January 11, Khatami kicked off his visit to seven African nations, namely, Nigeria, Senegal, Mali, Sierra Leone, Benin, Zimbabwe and Uganda.

MNA/Xinhua

Philippine Finance Secretary resigns

MANILA, 23 Jan — Philippine Finance Secretary Juanita Amatong resigned Friday and will be replaced by Secretary of Trade and Industry Cesar Purisima, the ABS-CBN news channel reported.

"Purisima and I are talking on when he can take over. The President has other plans for me," Amatong said. "It will be a seamless transition."

Amatong did not say when her resignation would take effect or what she would be doing afterwards. Earlier, there has been talk that Amatong, who has been in the job since November 2003, was resigning.

The Philippines — Asia's most active sovereign bonds issuer outside

Japan — registered a budget deficit of 186.1 billion pesos (3.35 billion US dollars), or 3.9 per cent of the gross domestic product, lower than the government target of 197.8 billion pesos (3.53 billion dollars).

The Philippine Government expects to reduce the deficit by 10 per cent this year due to administrative measures and a higher tax on alcohol and tobacco passed by Congress late last year.

MNA/Xinhua

China to lift ban on marriage, childbearing for university students

BEIJING, 23 Jan — An official from Chinese Ministry of Education (MoE) on Friday said the current restriction on marriage and childbearing for college and postgraduate students will be lifted.

Addressing a forum on the subject, held by the Centre for Women's Law and Legal Services of prestigious Peking University, Fan Yi, an official with the student affairs department from the MoE, acknowledged that the draft regulation on college student management will no longer have specified articles

prohibiting college students and graduate students getting marriage and having children while in school.

The MoE began to draft a new regulation on college student management as early as in 1996. Fan did not disclose when the draft regulation will be officially passed.

MNA/Xinhua

135 confirmed victims of food poisoning in Melbourne

CANBERRA, 23 Jan — At least 135 people have been confirmed victims of a food poisoning outbreak in Melbourne, state capital of Victoria, with 15 hospitalized.

Salmonella is most likely to be behind the outbreak, announced John Camie, Victoria Department of Human Services (DHS) acting chief health officer, on Saturday.

"The specific type of salmonella won't be confirmed until Monday following further laboratory tests," he said. The outbreak originated from Turkish eateries The Alasya Restaurant and Alasya 2 in Sydney Road, Brunswick.

MNA/Xinhua

British Foreign Secretary proposes areas of cooperation with China

BEIJING, 23 Jan — Visiting British Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs Jack Straw said here Friday that Britain and China focus efforts on the reform of the United Nations, working closely to better the future of Africa and tackling the threat from global climate change.

Straw gave the keynote speech, titled "Britain and China: A Growing Global Partnership", at a seminar on multilateral responses to global challenges held in the Chinese Academy of Social Sciences (CASS).

Straw said these efforts would help consolidate and further strengthen Britain-China relations, which continuously progressed and deepened in the past years.

The two countries have maintained close contact over in recent years, and have cooperated in many international affairs, Straw said. British trade with China has doubled over the last five years.

The comprehensive strategic

partnership not only benefits the two countries, but also contributes to world stability and development, he said.

Straw said Britain supports the European Union's reconsideration of the arms embargo on China it has maintained since 1989.

Britain supports the acknowledgment of China's full market economy status, and will maintain its support in the future, he said.

More than 30 government officials, experts and scholars from the two countries attended in the seminar.

Straw arrived in Beijing Thursday for an official visit to China as guest of Foreign Minister Li Zhaoxing.

MNA/Xinhua



Might the Mac mini mean a bigger bite of the personal computer market for Apple Computer Inc.? That's the hope of Apple whose approximately 100 retail stores are opening an hour early on 22 Jan, 2005 as the highly touted and low-priced Mac mini computer and iPod Shuffle portable music player go on sale. Apple CEO Steve Jobs shows the two devices at a MacWorld Conference on 11 Jan. —INTERNET

University of Traditional Medicine

Dr Thein Swe

Myanma traditional medicine has been flourishing for years countable by the thousand. It is also a typical Myanma heritage. Myanma traditional medical science is a reliable and effective practice which is subtle and delicate. Myanma traditional medical science complete with fine attributes invariably has improved as the government is giving encouragement to it, and it lagged behind when the government gave no encouragement to it. In the course of history, it is obvious that Myanma traditional medical science did not make progress as much as it should.

Myanma traditional medicine is now making progress. The State Peace and Development Council after assumption of the State duty has been making all-out efforts for development of traditional medicines. In this connection, it opened 237 traditional medicine centres of township and district level, twelve 16-bed traditional medicine hospitals and two 50-bed traditional medicine hospitals. As priority is being given to research on traditional medicines there have been fruitful results in taking care of patients with the help of traditional medicines.

In the past, there was only one institute of



General Thura Shwe Mann unveils the stone plaque of the University of Traditional Medicine in Mandalay.

traditional medicine, which had been able to confer diploma but the University of Traditional Medicine, which would confer degree on the course graduates, was opened on 19 December 2001 with the aim of enhancing the standard of Myanma traditional medicine. Both of them are in Mandalay. The opening of the two institutions is seen as a great victory in history of Myanma traditional medicine.

Myanma traditional medicine practitioners in successive eras handed down a legacy of traditional medicine to posterity. Later on, they formed traditional medical associations and imparted traditional medical science as much as they could. The Institute of Traditional Medicine was opened in Mandalay in 1976. The Head of State had given guidance on

establishing a university of traditional medicine that had been able to confer degree on the graduates. In accord with the guidance of the Head of State, the Ministry of Health exerted energetic efforts to be able to open a university of traditional medicine complete with the characteristics of a university. With this end in view, experts and Myanma traditional medicine practitioners held discussions at different levels to draw curricula for the university and despatched scholars abroad.

Candidates who passed matriculation with science combination subjects are admitted to the University of Traditional Medicine. The five-year course—four-year for practical and one-year for apprentice is conducted there. BMTM (Bachelor of Myanmar Traditional Medicine) is conferred

on trainees who have completed the course. Six subjects on Myanma traditional medicines, five subjects on Western medicines and eight subjects on arts and science including acupuncture are being taught at the university.

Faculty members with the university are Myanmar traditional medicine practitioners as well as doctors who have obtained degrees on Western medicine. To possess the characteristics of a university, the institution has been facilitated with teaching and learning aids, library, museum, language lab and a 50-bed teaching hospital. It is sure that the university will be able to produce traditional medicine practitioners of international standard.

To be in conformity with the emergence of a university in Myanmar, which has been able to

confer degrees on traditional medicine, the government built a magnificent building for the university spending a large amount of funds. The facility was successfully opened on 26-12-2004. At the opening ceremony, member of the State Peace and De-

velopment Council General Thura Shwe Mann made a speech on the occasion. He pointed out in his speech that following the guidance of the Head of State as a work guideline, systematic steps are to be taken for development of Myanma traditional medicines and for the university to possess the characteristics of a university of international level.

Minister for Health Dr Kyaw Myint on the occasion also presented a report, assuring that the health staff, on

Member of the State Peace and Development Council General Thura Shwe Mann made a speech on the occasion. He pointed out in his speech that following the guidance of the Head of State as a work guideline, systematic steps are to be taken for development of Myanma traditional medicines and for the university to possess the characteristics of a university of international level.

velopment Council General Thura Shwe Mann, Chairman of the National Health Committee Secretary-1 of the State Peace and Development Council Lt-Gen Thein Sein, member of the State Peace and Development Council Lt-Gen Ye Myint, Chairman of Mandalay Division Peace and Development Council Commander of Central Command Maj-Gen Ye Myint, ministers and officials concerned were present.

Member of the State Peace and Development Council General Thura Shwe Mann made a speech on the occasion. He pointed out in his speech that following the guidance of the Head of State as a work guideline, systematic steps are to be taken for develop-

ment of Myanma traditional medicines and for the university to possess the characteristics of a university of international level.

their part, will make relentless efforts for producing qualified traditional medicine practitioners and providing better public health care services.

As the government is striving for human resources development the emergence of such a university like this will contribute much to ensuring human resources development. At a time when efforts are being made for development of Myanma traditional medicines the onus is on Myanma traditional medicine practitioners to contribute their shares in successful realization of the project.

(Translation: TS)
Myanma Alin:
20-1-2005



The newly-built University of Traditional Medicine.

Earnest and sustained efforts...

(from page 1)

In our endeavours for modernization, we particularly recognize the vital role of Information and Communication Technology. We are aware that ICT has become an indispensable tool in our daily life and it has changed our way of life. Information Technology is the ultimate mean that influences access to resources, enhances the efficiency of the production process and improves productivity, helps broaden trade and competitiveness and facilitates to provide better services. ICT promises a great future in the advancement of mankind. It is important as well as urgent for Myanmar to develop a level of ICT appropriate to its level of development to seek the opportunities brought about by this advanced technology.

Our Government is fully committed to ICT development and I am proud to note that through the cooperation and coordinated efforts of the Government, the private sector, computer scientists, entrepreneurs and enthusiasts as well as the assistance from our friends from abroad, Information and Communication Technology had made rapid and significant progress in the last few years. I would like to give the assurance that we are committed to ICT development, we will speed up our efforts on ICT development and the government will continue to provide full support to both public and private sectors for the development of ICT in Myanmar.

I am greatly delighted and elated to see significant results in Myanmar ICT development and would like to take this opportunity to share some of our efforts on ICT development and the progress we have made.

Strategic planning for ICT development efforts started with the promulgation of Myanmar Computer Science Development Law in 1996. Myanmar Computer Science Development Council, Myanmar Computer Federation, Myanmar Computer Professional Association, Myanmar Computer Industry Association and Myanmar Computer Enthusiast Association were formed in 1998.

Formation of e-National Task Force in 2002 created a conducive environment for cooperation of public and private sector with e-National Task force at the public side and MCF and its Associations at the private side. Consequently, the pace of ICT development in Myanmar speeds up rapidly.

One of the very important results is establishment of MICT Parks. Myanmar ICT Park was opened in January 2002 and Mandalay ICT Park was opened in August 2003. ICT Parks provides international level environment for ICT develop-



Secretary-1 Lt-Gen Thein Sein formally opens Myanmar ICT Week-2005.—MNA

ment with broadband Internet access, reliable power source, and other facilities. It is most inspiring to note the rapid development of MICT Parks. ICT Parks were established as part of the ICT Master Plan to stimulate the development of ICT application and Industry in Myanmar.

Formulation of ICT Master Plan in 2000 provided the direction for ICT development. We identified six focus areas namely ICT infrastructure, ICT Legal framework, ICT Education, ICT application, ICT Industry and ICT Liberalization. With the recognition that present ICT Master Plan needs to be updated, we are now implementing ICT Master Plan preparation project under the Initiative for ASEAN Integration (IAI) Programme.

Preparation of Cyber laws is progressing satisfactorily. Electronic Transaction Law was promulgated in 2004. It will create proper environment for e-Government and e-Commerce development. We expect to have comprehensive Cyber Laws in not distant future.

Formulation of ICT standards including Myanmar Character set and related standards for Myanmar Language implementation on computer. These Standards will allow development of interoperable systems is progressing smoothly liberalization of ICT products and services is progressing according to ASEAN agreements.

Earnest and sustained efforts are exerted for using ICT in Education and ICT human resource development. All high schools have Multimedia classrooms and data broadcasting system and educational Intranet facilities which are the significant progress in the ICT sector. For ICT human resource devel-

Through the exhibition, government officials, business people, general public and visitors from other countries will have a chance to have clear idea of ICT status and trend in Myanmar. ICT companies have good opportunities for introducing their products and services.

opment, two Computer Universities and twenty four Government Computer Colleges are already established. Other universities are also providing ICT degree courses. Moreover, Myanmar Computer Federation and its Associations are working energetically in ICT capacity building and human resource development by conducting professional courses and certification programmes such as JITEE and MCPA. We expect that the nation will have a very good pool of qualified ICT professionals in the near future. At this very special occasion, I wish to acknowledge the valuable contribution made by our international partners. Today, Myanmar is cooperating actively with Japan, India, Malaysia, Singapore, Korea, Thailand and China. It is our hope that we will be able to expand our international relations in ICT field.

Through the exhibition, government officials, business people, general public and visitors from other countries will have a chance to have clear idea of ICT status and trend in Myanmar. ICT companies have good opportunities for introducing their products and services. I am also glad to learn that various seminars and workshops will be held during the current ICT week reinforcing the theme "Towards the e-Society" and the competitions of Programming and Networking. The deliberations will surely be of great benefit and serve to promote ICT knowledge in the country.

In conclusion, I would like to congratulate and urge e-National Task Force, Myanmar ICT Development Corporation, Myanmar Computer Federation and associations to keep up their efforts in ICT development and to cooperate and collaborate closely with other local and international institutions.

Once again, on behalf of the Government and Computer Science Development Council, I would like to reiterate that we will support and provide you every possible assistance.

Chairman of MICTDC U Thein Oo presented the Secretary-1 with a gift in commemoration of the Fourth Myanmar ICT Week. The Secretary-1 cordially greeted the local and foreign guests.

The Secretary-1 and the guests visited the booths and computer and other accessories booths.—MNA



Secretary-1 Lt-Gen Thein Sein visits a booth at Fourth Myanmar ICT Week-2005 at MICT Park.—MICTDC

Secretary-1 meets Vice-Chairman...

(from page 16)

them and its continued cooperation in national development tasks.

The National Convention representing those form all social strata including national race organizations will resume soon, he said. The National Convention is laying down basic detailed principles to draw the State constitution that will guarantee national solidarity and perpetuation of sovereignty of the State and serve the interests of all the national people of the country.

The Secretary-1 added that after adopting these basic detailed principles, step-by step programmes will also be drawn to write the State constitution and to hold a referendum and free and fair elections in accord with the State constitution. He said it is necessary to take time to fully implement the work programmes to ensure the perpetuation of the Union of Myanmar and national consolidation which are the national heritage of our ancestors.

Some western powers, which do not understand the objective condition of Myanmar and definition and essence of the Union, is putting pressures on her.

It is of utmost importance for the emergence of a peaceful, modern, developed and discipline-flourishing democratic nation that is in conformity with the historical trends of the State, the people and the Union culture and traditions of Myanmar and the attributes of the Union as well as for creating sound foundations for perpetuation of the Union.

Nowadays, peace and stability prevailed in the nation. At such a time like this, the seven-point Road Map has been laid down and is being implemented for



Secretary-1 Lt-Gen Thein Sein poses for a documentary photo with Vice-Chairman of Kachin State Special Region-2 U Gaw Yi Zaw Hsaing and party at Dagon Yeiktha of Yangon Command.— MNA

the emergence of a peaceful, modern and developed nation. In conclusion, the Secretary-1 called on all the national race organizations to participate in successful realization of the seven-point Road Map based on the National Convention by doing their bit for the emergence of a peaceful, modern, developed and discipline-flourishing democratic nation that the entire national people had longed for.

Next, Vice-Chairman of Kachin State Special Region-2 U Gaw Yi Zaw Hsaing spoke. He said that there has been a historical tradition in which Kachin national races hand in hand with other national brethren drove the colonialist invaders out of the nation until the independence was regained.

At the present time also, Kachin national races are participating in the National Convention with their support for the seven-point Road Map since it was announced by the government.

In conclusion, he reiterated that all their Kachin national races and their organizations will take part in successful realization of the seven-point Road Map laid down by the government for ensuring national solidarity and perpetuation of the Union.

Afterwards, high-ranking officials and national race leaders of Kachin State Special Region-2 held a discussion on regional development including development of transport, economic, social sectors in Kachin State as well as hydel power project.—MNA



Secretary-1 Lt-Gen Thein Sein greets Vice-Chairman of Kachin State Special Region-2 U Gaw Yi Zaw Hsaing at Dagon Yeiktha of Yangon Command.— MNA



Secretary-1 Lt-Gen Thein Sein presents gifts to Vice-Chairman of Kachin State Special Region-2 U Gaw Yi Zaw Hsaing and party.— MNA

Work coordination meeting of LBVD, LFDPE held

YANGON, 23 Jan—The work coordination meeting of the Livestock Breeding and Veterinary Department and the Livestock, Feedstuff and Dairy Products Enterprise under the Ministry of Livestock & Fisheries took place at the meeting hall of the LFDPE (Head Office) in Insein Township this morning with an address by Minister for Live-

stock & Fisheries Brig-Gen Maung Maung Thein.

Also present on the occasion were directors-general and managing directors of departments and enterprises under the ministry, heads of department, pro-rector of the University for Veterinary Science, heads of the State/Division LBVDs, deputy general managers, factory managers and others.

The heads of the State/Division LBVDs and the pro-rector reported on work carried out by the LBVD and Director-General U Maung Maung Nyunt presented other salient points.

The meeting continued in the afternoon, and deputy general managers concerned reported on work carried out and General Manager U Than Shwe on the pedigree production.

Managing Director U Khin Maung Aye and Director-General U Kyaw Lwin gave a supplementary report.

The meeting ended with the concluding remarks by Minister Brig-Gen Maung Maung Thein.— MNA

Coord meeting of NPED...

(from page 16)

year and the future tasks. Next, the minister instructed that all are necessary to strive for maintaining the good conditions and the staff are to strive for the department to win the trust and respect of the people.

In conclusion, the minister said that efforts are to be made for becoming the qualified staff who can enhance the prestige of the respective departments and the nation. In the afternoon, the meeting ended.

MNA

Fourth Myanmar ICT Week 2005 teeming with visitors

YANGON, 23 Jan — The Fourth Myanmar ICT Week 2005 continued at MICT Park in Hline Township today, which was teeming with enthusiasts. It displayed 14 booths of the ministries and 196 booths of local and foreign companies. Measures taken for development of information and technology were shown at the booths of the ministries. Services for people carried out by Yangon City Development Committee with the use of ICT and performances for ICT development by Mandalay ICT Park were also displayed. Products, computers and accessories, software and hardware manufactured from private ICT companies were on display.

IT Product Presentations were held at the ICT Week. Enthusiasts, computer researchers and students took part in discussions on Natural Language Processing at MICT Conference Hall this afternoon. The Programming, Web Development and Network Game took place at Building Nos 7, 4 and 8 in MICT Park. The Network Game was separated into professional and amateur levels. Altogether 68 teams competed in the amateur level. The professional level will be held tomorrow. — MNA

DISTRICT NEWS

Over 1m fish released into Toe River in Dedaye

DEDAYE, 21 Jan — Under the supervision of Ayeyawady Division and Pyapon District Fisheries Departments, Dedaye Township FD organized the ceremony to free various kinds of

fingerlings into Toe River, at the jetty in Dedaye on 15 December.

Chairman of Pyapon District Peace and Development Council Lt-Col Ye Htut, Head of District Fisheries Department U

Aye Lwin, Dedaye Township Peace and Development Council U Htein Lin and officials released 1.01 million of fish into the river with a view to developing water resources.

KYEMON



Chairman of Pyapon District Peace and Development Council Lt-Col Ye Htut and officials release fish into Toe River in Dedaye.— KYEMON

Gratis class opened in Twantay Township

YANGON, 23 Jan — Member of the Central Executive Committee for the Union Solidarity Development Association, also Chairman of Yangon City Development Committee Mayor Brig-Gen Aung Thein Lin, accompanied by Secretary of Yangon Division USDA U Aye Myint and officials, addressed the opening of free education programme launched at the office of Twantay USDA this morning. Present were the secretary and executives of Yangon South District and Twantay Township USDAs, departmental officials, townselders, teachers, members of social organizations, students and wellwishers.

After delivering the

address, Brig-Gen Aung Thein Lin donated one television, one VCD, and teaching aids to be used at the programme through Dr Thein Zaw Myint, secretary of Twantay Township USDA.

Next, Dr Thein Zaw Myint presented 1,252 membership application forms to the mayor.

U Nyunt Oo of Sanda Nyunt Publishing House, U Hla Myint of Pan Wai Wai Publishing House, U Sein Myint Aung of Shwe Gangaw Publishing House, U Than Sein (Maths) and U Kan Chun (Eco) donated matriculation exam guide books worth K 1,200,750. The mayor accepted the donations and presented certificates of honour to the

wellwishers.

According to the education programme, well-known private teachers will give lectures free of charge to matriculation students on Wednesdays, Saturdays and Sundays as of today from 7 am to 4 pm. Later, Brig-Gen Aung Thein Lin toured the Twantay Basic Education High School and made arrangements for donation of furniture required for the school. The mayor also inspected the town link roads being repaired by the local development affairs committee together with social organizations and local people. Afterwards, he attended to the requirements for the road construction.

MNA

Progress of agriculture and livestock breeding farm inspected in Twantay

YANGON, 23 Jan — Chairman of Yangon City Development Committee Mayor Brig-Gen Aung Thein Lin inspected functions of the wetland agriculture and livestock breeding farm being undertaken by the Production Department of YCDC in Yangon pauk-Kyaikthale region, Twantay Township, this morning.

Officials of the farm briefed the Mayor on breeding of carp,

golden carp and river catfish in 1,234 acres of fish ponds, distribution of fish to tax-free markets and other markets, nurturing of fingerlings and agricultural matters.

The Mayor oversaw No 2 fish pond, processing for selling them to the markets and the hatchery.

Before his inspection tour, the Mayor instructed the officials to supervise functions and duties of the farm

and take care of its security. — MNA

Landscaping of Bago Yoma under way

YANGON, 23 Jan — U Ko Ko Lat, Director of Arid Zone Greening Department of Magway Division, visited forest reserves, plantations and nursery farms in Natmauk township, Magway Division, on 20 January. In his inspection tour, the director suggested that fire-preventive measures be taken systematically for forest reserves as the open season is just around the corner. He also instructed the officials concerned to put the finishing touches to the tasks in nursery farms and work hard for the success of Bago Yoma's greening projects. — MNA

Kalewa-Mawlaik Motor Road (Mawlaik section) put into service

MAWLAIK, 21 Jan — Kalewa-Mawlaik Motor Road (Mawlaik section) was opened at the junction of Pyinnya Road leading to Basic Education High School on 30 December morning.

Chairman of Mawlaik District Peace and Development Council Lt-Col Win Naung gave a speech. Chairman of the Town-

ship Peace and Development Council U Myint Thein cut the ribbon to open the road together with officials of the District Union Solidarity and Development Association.

Chairman of Mawlaik District Peace and Development Council Lt-Col Win Naung, Commanding Officer Lt-Col Khin Lat

Gyi of the local battalion and departmental officials inspected the road.

Two buses of Yaung Ni Oo Bus Association carrying passengers started their run plying from Mawlaik to Kalewa. Kalewa-Mawlaik Motor Road, 36 miles long, is two miles shorter than the water way. — KYEMON

Self-reliant village library opens in Pyapon

PYAPON, 18 Jan — A ceremony to open Pyinnya Beikman self-reliant library at Ywama Monastery in Naukme Village of Ama Town, Pyapon Township in conjunction with the furniture and cash donation ceremony was held at Zeyatheikdi Prayer Hall of the monastery on 16 January.

Captain Lin Oo of the local battalion, Staff Officer U Aye Kyu of District Information and Public Relations Department and Chairman of Village Peace and Development Council U Aye Hlaing formally opened the library.

Sayadaw Bhaddanta Naninda of the monastery gave an Ovadakatha. Staff Officer U Aye Kyu and Head

of Township IPRD U San Win gave lectures on durability of the library and its development.

Next, Staff Officer U Aye Kyu and officials accepted K 2 million for the library donated by the Sayadaw and three wellwisher families and over K 400,000 by 18 wellwishers.

MYANMA ALIN

Rural and urban development carried out in Sagaing Division, Mon State

YANGON, 23 Jan — Township Development Affairs Committees under the Department of Development Affairs of the Ministry for Progress of Border Areas and National Races and Development Affairs have been undertaking rural and urban development tasks with momentum.

In Sagaing Division,

YeU Township DAC has constructed the 1,450 feet long and 14 feet wide Magyitaw gravel road and the three miles and two furlongs long Tinteinyan-Dabayin rural gravel road during 2004-2005 financial year. Furthermore, the committee has sunk a two-inch diameter tubewell in Zigon Village.

Likewise, Kyaikmaraw Township DAC in Mon State has built the 320 feet long and 12 feet wide Ngwethazin Road in Yanmyoang Ward, the 647 feet long and 12 feet wide Dhammazedi Road in Shinsawpu Ward and the Bawga gravel road measuring 597 feet long and 12 feet wide. — MNA

Irrigation Department D-G's Cup Golf Tournament held



YANGON, 23 Jan — The 15th Irrigation Department D-G's Cup Golf Tournament 2005, mainly sponsored by United Machinery Group and Bagan Machin-

ery, was held at Okkalapa Golf Course, here, yesterday morning.

Director-General U

Kyaw San Win of ID gave a speech and opened the tournament by teeing off the smoke ball.

Altogether 120 players participated in the tournament which lasted two days on 22 and 23 January. The prize presentation ceremony was held at the Irrigation Department in the evening.

Later, they were served with dinner. — H



U Kyaw San Win tees off the smoke ball at the 15th Irrigation Department D-G's Cup Golf Tournament 2005.—H



Germany's Georg Hackl, Russia's Albert Demtschenko and Italy's Armin Zoeggeler (L-R) celebrate on the podium after the men's World Cup Luge competition in the western German town of Winterberg on 23 Jan, 2005. Russia's Albert Demtschenko won the competition and is overall World Cup winner ahead of Germany's Georg Hackl and Italy's Armin Zoeggeler.—INTERNET

No one killed as huge fire razes Philippine tourist resort

MANILA, 23 Jan — The huge fire that razed a flea market of Boracay Island in Aklan, central Philippines, Friday night destroyed an estimated 200 million pesos (3.57 million US dollars) worth of properties, but killed or injured nobody, said police on Saturday.

Lieutenant Edgar Ibanez, station commander of the Philippine Coast Guard in Caticlan, central Philippines, said Saturday the fire began at around 6 pm. Friday at the "Talipapa", The flea market supplies all the food needs of hotels and resorts operating in Boracay Island.

The Bureau of Fire Protection in Boracay specifically said that the fire started in an establishment known as the KC Bagtas Sandals Manufacturing, until the blaze reached "general alarm".

The fire lasted for four hours before firefighters were able to extinguish the flames. It was put out at 10:30 pm. There were no reported injuries nor casualties in the blaze. Manila-based arson probes dispatched to the area Saturday have initially ruled out a possible terrorist attack.

The flea market supplies almost all the 124 major hotels and resorts with fresh food. It was not clear what caused the blaze. "It's so big! Please call for help.

Hindi namin kaya ito (We cannot put this out)," Charlie Blanza of the Boracay Special Protection Unit (BSPU) told the *Philippine Daily Inquirer*. The island-resort has only one fire truck.

Resort owners said hotels and beach bungalows were crammed with thousands of foreign tourists because of an influx of people diverted from tsunami-hit areas in Asia. "The sky is glowing from the fire. I can see it from the beach," Joanne Lobo, a tourist said.

Blanza said they asked the Mactan Airbase in Cebu for helicopters to help put out the fire but it would take at least an hour for the helicopters to arrive. Firefighters doused the area starting from the Casa Pilar Resort around 50 metres from the market to prevent the fire from spreading towards Boat Station 2.

There are around 150 stores in the flea market, known as the Talipapa. It is a popular destination for tourists for souvenirs, beachwear, eateries and grocery stores because the prices are cheaper compared to high-end stores on the island catering to foreign tourists. It is ringed by at least 15 popular resorts and restaurants. — MNA/Reuters

Chirac to attend Davos World Economic Forum

PARIS, 23 Jan — French President Jacques Chirac is to attend the annual World Economic Forum of political and economic leaders at the Swiss resort of Davos on Wednesday to present France's proposals on financing the development, French presidency announced Friday.

The forum will last from January 26 to 30, grouping 2,250 participants from 96 countries, in the purpose to make the world a better, safer place by political and economic sessions.

"With the New York summit in September and the Group of 8 world's most industrialized countries (G-8) under British presidency, to which

France brings its support, 2005 is the year of development. We have to make capital decisions," Chirac's spokesman Jerome Bonnafont said.

"(Chirac) will join Davos World Economic Forum on January 26," he said, adding that Chirac will present there France's proposals on financing the development. British Prime Min-

ister Tony Blair, current rotating president of G-8, will open Wednesday the forum, to which will also participate Palestinian leader Mahmud Abbas, German Chancellor Gerhard Schroeder, new Ukrainian President Viktor Yushchenko along with representatives from Brazil, Nigeria and South Africa.

MNA/Xinhua

Blast injures three passengers in Kuala Lumpur

KUALA LUMPUR, 23 Jan — Three passengers were injured when a blast occurred under their seat in a monorail coach at the capital city's Chow Kit Station at 9 p.m. Friday, a spokesman of the Civil Defence Department said.

The passengers — a woman, her daughter and a niece — were sent to the Kuala Lumpur Hospital, *Malaysia National News Agency* quoted the spokesman as saying on Saturday.

The woman had a serious injury on the right leg, her daughter injured the fingers of her right hand and the niece also injured her right hand, the spokesman said.

He said the cause of the blast could not be ascertained but it is learnt that the incident happened soon after the coach from KL Sentral pulled into the Chow Kit station.

Reporters who rushed to the scene were

told to stay away from an employee at the station who did not wish to say anything about the incident.

They were told to wait for an official statement from an officer of the monorail management who was said to be on his way to the station. However, the officer did not turn up during the one hour the reporters waited there.

Fifteen Civil Defence personnel led by an officer rushed to the station 15 minutes after being summoned by members of the public.

The Kuala Lumpur Monorail authorities, when contacted, declined to comment on the incident. —MNA/Xinhua

NATO chief urges EU, US to cooperate on Iran

BRUSSELS, 23 Jan — NATO Secretary-General Jaap de Hoop Scheffer on Friday called on the United States and European Union (EU) to coordinate a joint strategy on Iran.

Addressing a new year reception at the headquarters of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO), the NATO chief said the EU was putting all its emphasis on negotiations while the United States only concentrated on threats.

The two should establish a policy of "carrot and stick" to tackle the nuclear issue of Iran, de Hoop Scheffer said.

De Hoop Scheffer was reacting to comments by US President George W. Bush, who said earlier that he would not rule out military action if Iran did not abandon its nuclear programme.

Washington has asserted that Iran is working on a nuclear bomb, an accusation which Teheran denies.

According to the NATO chief, the issue might be discussed when Bush comes to Brussels next month for summits at the NATO Headquarters and with the EU leaders.

It was reported that following talks in Moscow, Russian and French officials said on Friday that only negotiations would prevent Iran from developing nuclear weapons. — MNA/Xinhua

Police uncovers nanny smuggling ring in Italy

ROME, 23 Jan — Italian Police have uncovered a vast organization dedicated to smuggling nannies and other home support staff from Peru, Italian media reported on Friday.

A total of 23 people are under investigation, 13 Peruvians and 10 Italians, on charges ranging from conspiracy to favouring illegal immigration, hiring illegal aliens and falsifying documents.

In an operation code-named "Andes", Italian police discovered that members of the organization contacted women in Peru and offered them jobs in Europe as nannies, housekeepers and companions. Those accepting the offers would have to pay the organization 5,000 dollars up front or more if they repaid the sum after starting their jobs.

MNA/Xinhua



Two passers-by make their way across the Boston Common near the Statehouse in Boston, on 22 Jan, 2005. Massachusetts Gov. Mitt Romney has declared a state of emergency for the state, where as much as one to two feet of snow are expected in places by Sunday. —INTERNET

skytrax
a world
5 Star Airline

DID YOU KNOW?
QATAR AIRWAYS CABIN CREW
HAVE BEEN VOTED BEST IN THE MIDDLE EAST
IN 2003 AND 2004 BY SKYTRAX.

HOWEVER, WE WON'T BE SATISFIED
UNTIL WE SEE ONE WORE SMILE. Yours.

QATAR AIRWAYS القطرية
Taking you more personally

For further information, please contact your nearest Qatar Airways office or your local travel agent.
To join Privilege Club, our Frequent Flyer programme, visit www.qatarairways.com

**TRADE MARK
CAUTION NOTICE**
BAYER CROPSCIENCE INC., a company organized under the laws of U.S.A. and having its principal office at 2 T.W. Alexander Drive, Research Triangle Park, North Carolina 27709, United States of America is the owner and sole proprietor of the following Trademark:-

SEVIN

Reg. No. 681974 &
4/3489/2004
The above trademark ownership was changed from Aventis CropScience USA Inc. to Bayer CropScience Inc., with effect from 20th day of September, 2002. Any unauthorized use, imitation, infringements, or fraudulent intentions of the above mark will be dealt with according to law.

TIN CHINMAR TUN
B.A.(LAW), LL.B.,
LL.M (UK)
P.O. Box 109
Ph: 348108/723043
(For: Donnam Sanglat & Boonma, Attorneys at Law, Thailand)
Dated: 24th January, 2005.

US science centre to open around the clock for body show

LOS ANGELES, 22 Jan — The California Science Centre will stay open around the clock over the weekend to accommodate crowds wanting a last glimpse of the "Body Worlds" exhibit before it closes on Sunday, local media reported on Friday.

"Body Worlds: The Anatomical Exhibition of Real Human Bodies" will open early at 7 am Saturday local time and stay open until midnight on Sunday.

The exhibit, featuring real, preserved human bodies on display for the first time in the United States, has drawn more than half a million visitors locally and nearly 1.6 million worldwide.

"Body Worlds" is the most successful exhibit in the history of the Science Centre, with more than 600,000 visitors so far. About 235,000 visitors viewed "Titanic: The Artifact Exhibit", the SC's second best attended exhibit.

The exhibit is scheduled to open at the Museum of Science and Industry in Chicago in February. But "Body Worlds 2" will open January 29 in Los Angeles.

MNA/Xinhua

Chinese, British leaders to exchange visits

BEIJING, 22 Jan — Top-ranking leaders of China and Britain are expected to exchange visits this year, Chinese Foreign Minister Li Zhaoxing said here Friday after his talks with visiting British Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs Jack Straw.

Li said the foreign ministries of both nations have agreed to make preparations for the upcoming high-level events, "to strengthen dialogue and communication and to deepen their cooperation in handling international affairs".

Both sides agreed to "enhance dialogue and consultation on issues pertaining to Sino-European relations and to strive to raise China-Europe ties to a higher height", he said.

At a joint Press conference, Li said significant progress has been scored in Sino-British relations since Premier Wen Jiabao visited Britain in May last year.

"China and Britain have agreed to develop a comprehensive strategic

partnership," Li said. "This decision did not come accidentally. It's beneficial to the long-term interests of both countries and world peace and stability."

Calling 2005 "a crucial year to the development of Sino-UK ties," Li acknowledged that China and Britain will take up the presidency of the Group-20 and Group-8 separately this year while Britain will also take up the presidency of the European Union in the latter half of the year.

"China is ready to work together with Britain to implement the agreement both countries' leaders have reached last year and bring more progress to the Sino-British ties," he said.

Straw said he fully agreed with the proposals

of Li Zhaoxing in boosting the two countries' co-operation. He also expressed sympathy and cordial regards to Chinese victims amidst the tsunamis in the Indian Ocean and his appreciation to the contributions and generosity of the Chinese Government and Chinese people in helping out people of tsunami-ravaged countries.

Britain was very proud to be the largest European investor in China and a major country Chinese students would like to go for higher education, Straw said.

Before the Press conference, Straw signed an agreement with He Guangwei, director-general of the China National Tourism Administration, making Britain an approved tourism destination for Chinese travellers. "We welcome more Chinese to come and see our country," said the British Foreign Secretary.

MNA/Xinhua

THE ASEAN SECRETARIAT IN JAKARTA INVITES ASEAN NATIONALS TO APPLY FOR THE FOLLOWING VACANCIES

Project Specialists (2 posts) – Priority Sector Team

The Project Specialist provides expert support to the Bureau for Economic Integration (BEI) of ASEAN Secretariat to coordinate, facilitate, monitor and evaluate the implementation of measures to accelerate economic integration in the 11 priority sectors. The detailed Terms of Reference and Job Description of the Project Specialists are available at the ASEAN and UNDP websites www.aseansec.org/job.asp and www.unip.org/jobs. The Project Specialists will be funded by the ASEAN-UNDP Partnership Facility (AUPF).

The applicant should possess at least a master's degree in economics, development economics, or any other related social science discipline with a major in economics from a reputable institution, having 8 years' experience in the Government or an international organization dealing with economic and development policy research, external trade, investment or market integration. The candidate must have excellent analytical, research, writing, presentation and leadership skills. Experience in regional economic integration would be an added advantage. Other required qualities are excellent fluency in written and spoken English; computer proficiency especially in the use of Microsoft Office tools; ability to multi-task and work long and irregular hours; ability to function effectively independently and as part of a team in a multi-cultural environment; and a willingness to travel frequently at short notice.

The successful candidate will be offered a one-year contract, with possibility of extension, depending on performance and availability of funds. The post carries a lump-sum monthly remuneration of between USD 4,900-5,300 per month (all inclusive) depending on the candidate's qualifications and experience.

Send your application, including CV, a recent passport-sized photograph and certified true copies of educational qualifications and other supporting documents to: Personnel and Training Unit, ASEAN Secretariat, 73A Jalan Sisingamangaraja, Jakarta 12110, Indonesia, within three weeks from the date of this advertisement. You may also email your application to hr@aseansec.org. Only short-listed candidates will be notified.

**MIN KYAW MIN'S
SPOKEN ENGLISH CLASS**

သုံးလ သင်တန်းသစ်ကို
၂-၂-၂၀၀၅ ရက်တွင်စမည်။
တနင်္လာ၊ ဗုဒ္ဓဟူး၊ သောကြာ 9.00 am - 11.30
Multi-media style lab, audio-visual aid နှင့်
ခေတ်မီအထောက်အကူများသုံးမည်။
၁၀ တန်း၊ သွေးချို သွေးလွန်များအတွက်
အကျိုးဝင်၊ အသုံးဝင်မည်။
တမ်းနားလမ်းနှင့် ၄၃ လမ်းထောင့်၊
ဗိုလ်တထောင်ပြင်လယ်၊ ရန်ကုန်မြို့။
စုံစမ်းရန် ဖုန်း-၂၉၆၁၆၁

Donte blood

ပညာရေးနှင့် ခေတ်မီပွဲများတိုးတက်လာ ခိုင်ခံ့တော်ကြီး စည်ပင်သာယာမှု

Titan covered by ice ridges, seas of liquid natural gas

LOS ANGELES, 22 Jan—Saturn's moon Titan is covered by "dirty" ice ridges and seas of liquid natural gas, a team of scientists said on Friday after a week of research into data from the space probe Huygens.

"We've got a flammable world," said Toby Owen, an atmospheric scientist, at a news conference from European Space Agency offices in Paris monitored on NASA TV.

After a seven-year piggyback trip from Earth on board the Saturn probe Cassini, the European-designed Huygens separated in December and fell toward Titan, entering the moon's atmosphere last Friday.

The probe, part of a three-billion-US-dollar joint mission involving NASA and the European and Italian space agencies, sent back readings on the moon's atmosphere, com-

position and landscape.

Slowed by parachutes, Huygens took more than two hours to float to the icy surface, where it defied expectations of a quick death and continued to transmit for hours.

That surface, which scientists have said was the consistency of wet sand or even creme brulee, features ice rocks, channels, and abundant indications of liquid from rain.

"There's lots of evidence of fluid flow," said Marty Tomasko, the principal investigator for Huygens' on-board imaging instruments. While it does not rain every day on Titan, Tomasko and col-

leagues speculated there must be some sort of regular precipitation on the surface.

The methane can exist in liquid form on Titan's surface because it is so cold, -290 degrees Fahrenheit (-179 degrees Celsius). Methane is also a key component in Titan's atmosphere, along with nitrogen. But as opposed to the Earth, the atmosphere of Titan lacks oxygen, which is essential to fire.

"There's no source of oxygen available, which is a good thing or Titan would have exploded a long time ago," Owen said.

Though the mission

teams collected just a few hours' worth of data, they expect to spend years analyzing it for clues as to how Titan formed, how it works and what it can say about the Earth's own development.

Titan is larger than the planet Mercury and, because of its atmosphere, a popular setting for science-fiction tales of human colonization and exploration.

And while manned missions are not necessarily on the horizon, researchers are already talking about what they might do next with Titan, if they had enough money to launch a mission that could probe the solid surface more actively. "This is highly possible, we can now dream seriously of sending rovers to Titan," said Jean-Pierre Lebreton, the Huygens mission manager for the ESA.

MNA/Reuters

Brazil pledges to help crack down on drug traffickers

RIO DE JANEIRO (Brazil), 23 Jan—Brazil's Government has pledged to help the state of Rio de Janeiro crack down on violent drug traffickers and may send its security forces to back up local police, the state said.

With two weeks to go before hundreds of thousands of tourists flood the city for its famous Carnival bash, Rio is stepping up its fight against the criminal gangs that control its hillside slums. The gangs have given the seaside city one of the world's highest murder rates.

On Thursday evening, three children were killed by stray bullets from a shootout between rival drug gangs. Last month, at least 10 people were killed in a turf war between gangs.

Federal officials will arrive in Rio next week to decide what kind of forces to use and in what manner,

according to a statement posted on the Rio de Janeiro state public safety department's web site late on Friday. It was unclear if the government would send special police forces or also call in military troops. The last time the federal government sent military troops to safeguard Rio was during its 2003 Carnival, when drug gangs pledged to disrupt the pre-Lenten festivities.

Rio state's security secretary, Marcelo Itagiba, said the combined operations would include between 800 and 1,500 men and three or four helicopters to apprehend the drug

gangs.

Brazil's President, Luiz Inacio Lula da Silva, said last week that Rio is a priority for public security since crime there affects the country's image abroad. Such violence rarely affects tourists, although a spate of muggings at the end of last year caused concerns among hotel owners, who demanded that authorities act fast to stop it. Loud rehearsals of Rio's famed samba troupes and merry street processions have already begun, attracting hordes of tourists and Rio revellers alike.

MNA/Reuters

37 killed, 22 injured in Nepal bus accident

KATHMANDU, 23 Jan—At least 37 passengers died and 22 others were injured when an overcrowded bus fell into a stream in western Nepal on Friday evening, police said Saturday.

"The bus carrying 60 passengers including a marriage party fell down 100 metres into a stream at Tiram in Pyuthan District Friday evening," a local police officer said.

The bus was going from Sonpur locality in Dang District of far-southwestern Nepal when it met the accident at Tiram, about 400 kilometres west of Kathmandu.

"The bridegroom was also killed in the accident," the officer said on condition of anonymity.

Eight injured passengers are undergoing treatment at Bijpur Hospital in western Nepal while 14 others have been taken to other districts for treatment, he added.

While the investigation is underway, the police said the accident was mainly caused by overcrowding.—MNA/Xinhua



An African lion yawns in a zoo in Kunming, capital of southwest China's Yunnan Province, on 22 Jan, 2005. Temperature soar in the area to around 20 degrees Celsius or 68 degrees Fahrenheit in Kunming, bringing a taste of spring to the animals here.—INTERNET

Hollywood actors unions gain pay rise for actors

LOS ANGELES, 23 Jan—Hollywood's two major actors unions have signed a new three-year contract with film and TV producers that will give actors a pay rise, the Screen Actors Guild (SAG) said Friday.

The 200-million-dollar deal, reached Thursday night by the SAG and the American Federation of Television and Radio Artists (AFTRA) which represent nearly 200,000 members, will give actors a 9-per-cent pay raise over three years, increase money for the unions' health and pension plans and offer greater protections for stunt actors and extras.

The two unions had been negotiating with the Alliance of Motion Picture and Television Producers since December 6.

However, the unions failed to get a larger share

of DVD residuals in the recent negotiations.

"I am proud of what we accomplished in this agreement," AFTRA President John Connolly said. "We made gains in nearly every priority area." He described the fight for increased money from DVD sales as "an uphill battle from the start, and the next round would have been a lockout or a strike".

The joint board of SAG and AFTRA will consider the new deal on January 29, after which the contract must be approved by union members.

MNA/Xinhua

Venezuela to support OPEC's production cut

CARACAS, 23 Jan—Venezuelan Energy and Mining Minister Rafael Ramirez said Friday that his government will support the Organization of Petroleum-Exporting Countries (OPEC) to cut production.

Ramirez said crude oil prices began to fall because the OPEC is pumping about one million barrels a day above its official quotas.

At the end of January, OPEC's 11 members will meet in Vienna to evaluate the current market situation.

This week, OPEC's crude oil prices stood at about 47.10 US dollars per barrel. If the price conti-

nued to go down, the cartel would further reduce its daily output.

On 10 December, OPEC members agreed to trim daily output by one million barrels to meet their quota of 27 million barrels a day in a bid to keep the prices stable.

Venezuela, an OPEC member, is the world's fifth largest oil exporter, producing 3.1 million barrels a day.—MNA/Xinhua



A gorilla in the Democratic Republic of Congo. A major conference on biodiversity opens in Paris on Monday.—INTERNET

S
P
O
R
T
S

Inter come from behind to draw 1-1 with Chievo Verona

ROME, 23 Jan— Inter Milan preserved their unbeaten record in Serie A this season as they came from behind to draw 1-1 with Chievo Verona at the San Siro on Saturday.

Inter's run of 19 games without defeat seemed on the verge of ending when Chievo defender Davide Mandelli volleyed the visitors into the lead from a corner in the 73rd minute.

Ten minutes later, however, 20-year-old striker Obafemi Martins equalized when he fired home from close range after Alvaro Recoba's long-range effort bounced loose in the box.

The result, which was Inter's 14th draw in 20 games, meant the Italian giants remained fourth in the table on 32 points, 12 behind leaders Juventus who take on Brescia on Sunday.

Despite starting with a strike trio of Christian Vieri, Martins and Recoba, Inter struggled to threaten the Chievo goal in a sterile first half.

Their clearest chance arrived on the stroke of halftime, when Recoba curled a free kick against the post and teammate Dejan Stankovic blasted the rebound over an open goal.

Vieri did put the ball in the net shortly after the restart but it was ruled offside and it was Chievo who took the lead through Mandelli's fine strike.

Martins' equalizer raised the possibility of another Inter comeback like that against Sampdoria earlier this month, when they overturned a 2-0 deficit in the 88th minute to win 3-2.

Instead, it was Chievo who almost netted a late winner when ex-Inter winger Luciano hit the post five minutes from time.—MNA/Reuters

Kuwait, Norway tie 1-1 in World Cup warm-up match

KUWAIT CITY, 23 Jan— Kuwait national soccer team tied 1-1 with Norway in an international friendly in here on Saturday as part of the country's build-up for Asian Zone qualifications for World Cup 2006 in Germany, the *Kuwait News Agency* reported.

Kuwait's Bashar Abdullah opened the scoring in the 26th minute, before the Norwegians netted their equalizer three minutes into the second half.

The game took place in Kuwait Club Stadium amid a downpour which affected the performance of both teams.

Kuwait is expected to play another warm-up game with Syria next Wednesday, before the team go for their qualifying match with South Korea on February 9. —MNA/Xinhua

Monaco outclass RC Lens 2-0

PARIS, 23 Jan— Monaco outclassed a weak RC Lens 2-0 on Saturday to put pressure on second-placed Lille who host leaders Olympique Lyon in Sunday's big Ligue 1 showdown.

First-half goals by Javier Saviola and Maicon were enough for the principality team to join Lille on 39 points.

Monaco will overtake their northern rivals if Lille lose at home to champions Lyon, the only unbeaten team in top flight.

Argentine Saviola nodded home in the 21st minute after a fine move by Manuel Adebayor and Brazil's Maicon made it two with a splendid shot five minutes before the break.

Beaten on penalties by Caen in the League Cup last week, AJ Auxerre took their revenge in Normandy with a 2-0 victory which takes them back to third in the standings on the heels of Lille and Monaco.

Auxerre are level on 38 points with Marseille, who earned their third straight league win this year thanks to in-form Peguy Luyindula, who scored the only goal in their 1-0 victory at Metz.

Luyindula's 25th-minute strike, a close-range volley from a cross deflected by defender Habib Beye, was his fourth in four matches and sixth since moving from Lyon in the close season.

Marseille, who have been impressive since the end of the short winter break, are also unbeaten away since coach Philippe Troussier replaced Jose Anigo in December.

"It's not in our interest to start looking at the standings," said former Japan manager Troussier.

"But to insist on winning matches away is part of my game plan. If we keep winning games like this, we should not be too far from our objectives."

Extremely solid in defence, Marseille can also thank goalkeeper Fabien Barthez who made some crucial saves when Metz were pushing in the second half.

"Everybody did what he had to do, from Peguy down to me. We scored on our only chance and now we have won three games in succession," Barthez said.

Sochaux hopeful Jeremy Menez, 17, was the star of the evening with his first top-flight hat-trick as his team crushed Girondins Bordeaux 4-0. His goals came in the space of nine minutes.

Bordeaux were a man down after losing defender David Jemali, who was sent off in the 54th minute.

MNA/Reuters

Real Madrid extends agreement for Sports School of El Salvador

MADRID, 23 Jan— Florentino Perez, President of Real Madrid, and Enrique Garcia, President of the Sports School of El Salvador, signed on Friday in Santiago Bernabeu Stadium here the renewal of the agreement for the Sports School the club created in the Central American country.

The agreement ratifies and extends the activities of the school, which currently trains nearly 500 boys and girls from the poorest social classes in the country.

MNA/Xinhua



(From L) Liverpool players Norwegian defender John Arne Riise, English midfielder Steven Gerrard, goalkeeper Chris Kirkland warm up during a training session. Southampton grabbed a Premiership survival lifeline with a brilliant 2-0 victory against out-of-sorts Liverpool.—INTERNET

Southampton complete miserable week for Liverpool

LONDON, 23 Jan— Southampton earned their third win of the season and completed a miserable week for Liverpool when they deservedly beat the Merseysiders 2-0 in an early Premier League game at St Mary's Stadium on Saturday.

Liverpool, beaten at home by Manchester United in the league last Saturday and dumped out of the FA Cup by Second Division Burnley on Tuesday, produced a limp display and can have no complaints about the result.

This latest setback left them in fifth place, still seven points adrift of city rivals Everton in fourth and 21 behind leaders Chelsea.

Southampton remained in the bottom three on 18 points but will be delighted with their first win since November and first under Redknapp, the former Portsmouth manager who took charge in early December.

Southampton got off to a great start with a goal in the fifth minute after newly-arrived Argentine defender Mauricio Pellegrino was caught in possession by midfielder David Prutton on the edge of the box.

He played a one-two with striker Peter Crouch before driving low past Jerzy Dudek from a tight angle.

The two Southampton men swapped roles in the

22nd minute as Prutton crossed from the right for the unmarked Crouch to head home the second. It was a well-deserved lead for the Saints against a Liverpool side who looked disorganized and short of motivation.

The visitors improved a little in the second half and Steven Gerrard grazed the bar in the 58th minute.

However, it was a rare bright moment for the England midfielder and he was in the main overshadowed by former teammate Jamie Redknapp, who had his best game since joining father Harry three weeks ago.

Liverpool striker Fernando Morientes whipped a shot wide in the 76th minute but Southampton keeper Antti Niemi was never seriously tested throughout the match and it ultimately proved a comfortable victory.

MNA/Reuters

Chelsea extends winning run to seven with easy victory

LONDON, 23 Jan— Chelsea continued the relentless assault on their first league title for 50 years on Saturday when they comfortably beat Portsmouth 3-0 to equal a club record of seven successive top-flight victories.

The west London club, who have not conceded a goal in that run, are now 11 points clear of Manchester United, who beat Aston Villa 3-1, and 13 clear of champions Arsenal, who host Newcastle United on Sunday.

Everton remain fourth on 44 points after they lost 1-0 at home to Charlton Athletic, while fifth-placed Liverpool's bad run continued with a 2-0 defeat at struggling Southampton.

Liverpool have 37 points along with Charlton and Middlesbrough, who led Norwich City 4-1 with 12 minutes remaining at Carrow Road only to draw 4-4.

Crystal Palace shocked Tottenham Hotspur 3-0, Fulham won 2-1 at Birmingham City while bottom side West Bromwich Albion completed a good day for the strugglers with a 2-0 victory over Manchester City.

Chelsea needed only first gear to ease past Portsmouth and the match was effectively over once they moved 2-0 up after 21 minutes.—MNA/Reuters

Answers to yesterday's Crossword Puzzle

S	8	E	8	P	8	S	8	B	U	Y	E	R
M	A	J	O	R	I	T	Y	8	M	8	L	8
A	8	E	8	O	8	R	8	A	B	B	E	Y
S	E	C	L	U	D	E	D	8	R	8	P	8
H	8	T	8	D	8	S	8	L	E	T	H	E
8	P	8	E	8	A	S	S	8	L	8	A	8
C	A	N	T	E	R	8	O	B	L	O	N	G
8	T	8	E	8	M	E	W	8	A	8	T	8
B	E	R	R	Y	8	N	8	N	8	W	8	J
8	R	8	N	8	A	C	C	U	R	A	T	E
S	N	A	I	L	8	O	8	D	8	F	8	T
8	A	8	T	8	F	R	A	G	M	E	N	T
P	L	O	Y	S	8	E	8	E	8	R	8	Y

Mini-donor conf to be held in Portugal for Guinea-Bissau

LUANDA, 23 Jan — A meeting to drum up financial support from donor nations to help Guinea-Bissau's Government plug its projected budget deficit for this year could take place in Portugal's Lisbon next month, Bissau's Prime Minister said Friday.

According to a report reaching here on Saturday, Carlos Gomes Junior said the "mini" donor conference would have to take place in the first half of February, between the expected approval of the budget plans by the Bissau Parliament and legislative elections in Portugal on 20 February.

This meeting is now due after May presidential elections in Guinea,

the last stage in a phased return to constitutional democracy in the wake of the 2003 military uprising.

Gomes Jr. said a mini-donor conference would probably significantly reduce the 61 million euros deficit envisaged for this year in his government's budget proposals, due to be debated in Parliament late January. — MNA/Xinhua

Guyana expects int'l assistance after heavy rains

HAVANA, 23 Jan — Guyana is expecting response from the international community to its appeal for assistance to cope with flood caused by heaviest rains in more than a century, reports reaching here said.

Guyanese President Bharrat Jagdeo ordered to build at least 15 shelters along the bank of Demerara River to receive a growing number of displaced people.

Thousands of victims housed in makeshift shelters are in urgent need of boats, preserved food and other materials, authorities said. Schools, churches

and other official facilities were set up as shelters, while boats and other vehicles were arranged to deliver water and food to the affected areas.

Health authorities said measures are being taken to prevent the outbreak of epidemics like cholera and diarrhoea.

MNA/Xinhua

Tanzania ponders rejoining COMESA

DAR-ES-SALAAM, 23 Jan — Tanzania is contemplating a comeback to the Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa (COMESA) after more than four years of pulling out of the regional free trade area.

The Tanzanian Government is conducting consultation that is expected to result in a decision on whether to rejoin the COMESA that now has 19 member countries spanning the African continent.

Tanzanian Minister for Industry and Trade Juma Ngasongwa said on Thursday that consultation had begun at the government level but the consultation might take as long as three to four months.

Tanzania withdrew from the COMESA in September 2000 following the withdrawals of Mozambique and Lesotho. But Tanzania's withdrawal has since been the centre of debate in the business circle of the country. Another reason for the comeback consideration lies in the fact that Tanzania's affiliation with the East African Community (EAC) and the Southern Africa Development Community (SADC) at the same time may cost the country its status to negotiate with the European Union for preferential trade treatment.

Both the EAC and SADC are regional economic

integration blocs through Customs union mechanisms. But the EU is negotiating preferential trade agreements only with the SADC at the time being. During his brief stay in Dar-es-Salaam, EU trade negotiator Karl Falkenberg said that the COMESA is a free trade area that is different from a Customs union, hinting that a COMESA membership does not block Tanzania's negotiation with the EU.

Founded in 1993, the COMESA now consists of Angola, the Comoros, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Djibouti, Egypt, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Kenya, Madagascar, Malawi, Mauritius, Namibia, Rwanda, Seychelles, Sudan, Swaziland, Uganda, Zambia and Zimbabwe. The COMESA boasts of a combined population of 340 million and a combined GDP of 190 billion US dollars. — MNA/Xinhua

British Christmas sales worst since 1981

LONDON, 23 Jan — British retail sales fell unexpectedly in December as high street stores had their worst Christmas since 1981, official figures showed Friday.

The Office for National Statistics (ONS) said a retail sales fall of 1.0 per cent in December followed a 0.6-per-cent rise in November and went completely against market expectations of a 0.3-per-cent rise.

The last time retailers endured a tougher Christmas was 23 years ago, when sales plunged 1.7 per cent.

While clothing, department stores, supermarkets and other non-specialist stores were the worst hit, sales in the non-store retailing and repair category, which includes Internet sales, climbed strongly by 1.0 per cent in December, the ONS said.

Based on the poor performance of retailing in December, the ONS cut its previously estimated retail sales growth rate for 2004 from 5.9 per cent to 3.2 per cent. — MNA/Xinhua



WEATHER

Sunday, 23 January, 2005

Summary of observations recorded at 09:30 hours MST: During the past 24 hours, weather has been generally fair in the whole country. Night temperatures were (3°C) below normal in Chin State, (3°C) to (4°C) above normal in Bago, Ayeyawady and Taninthayi Divisions and about normal in the remaining areas. The significant night temperatures were Hakha (1°C), Namsam, (2°C), Lashio, Mindat and Pyin Oo Lwin (4°C) each.

Maximum temperature on 22-1-2005 was 94°F. Minimum temperature on 23-1-2005 was 60°F. Relative humidity at 9:30 hrs MST on 23-1-2005 was 87%. Total sunshine hours on 22-1-2005 was (8.1) hours approx. Rainfalls on 23-1-2005 were nil at Yangon Airport, Kaba-Aye and central Yangon. Total rainfalls since 1-1-2005 were nil at Yangon Airport, Kaba-Aye and central Yangon. Maximum wind speed at Yangon (Kaba-Aye) was 6 mph from Northwest at (12:30) hours MST on 22-1-2005.

Bay inference: Weather is partly cloudy to cloudy in the Southwest and central Bay and generally fair elsewhere in the Bay of Bengal.

Forecast valid until evening of 24-1-2005: Possibility of isolated light rain in Kachin, Chin, Rakhine and Northern Shan States, Mandalay and Sagaing Divisions and weather will be partly cloudy in the remaining areas. Degree of certainty is (40%).

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

Outlook for subsequent two days: Likelihood of isolated light rain in Northern Myanmar areas.

Forecast for Yangon and neighbouring area for 24-1-2005: Partly cloudy.

Forecast for Mandalay and neighbouring area for 24-1-2005: Partly cloudy.



Monday, 24 January

Tune in today:

- 8:30 am Brief news
- 8:35 am Music: -Love for all seasons
- 8:40 am Perspectives
- 8:45 am Music: -Radio
- 8:50 am National news/Slogan
- 9:00 am Music: -Reach
- 9:05 am International news
- 9:10 am Moments
- 1:30 pm News/Slogan
- 1:40 pm Lunch Time Music: -Moonlight shadow
- Do I have to say the words
- Paper roses
- 9:00 pm Spotlight on the star
- Could you ever Say it again
- Lov'll never die
- 9:10 pm Article
- 9:20 pm Women's Affairs -Why make every mother child count?
- 9:35 pm Vocal Gems
- 9:45 pm News/Slogan
- 10:00 pm PEL



Monday, 24 January

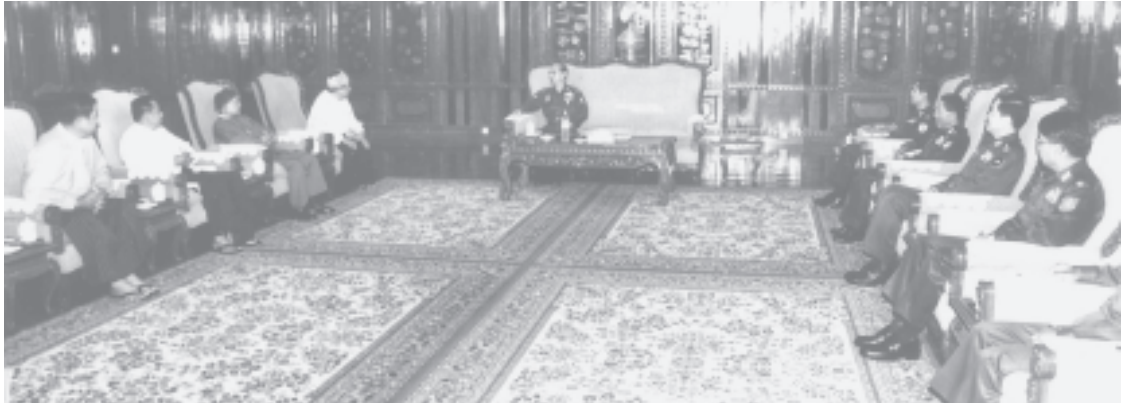
View on today:

- 7:00 am
 1. ငွေချုပ်ရှင်မင်းကျွန်းဆရာတော် ဘုရားကြီး နိုင်ငံတော်သံယဇာတိ နာယကအဖွဲ့အစည်းတော်အားလှူဒါန်း အားပေးဟောပြောရန် အားပေးဆရာ မဟာသဒ္ဓမ္မဇောတိက၊ တိပိဋကဓရ ဓမ္မဘာဏ္ဍာဂါရိက၊ ဆရာတော် ဘဒ္ဒန္တဝိစိတ္တ သာရာတိဝံသ၏ ဝရိတ်တရားတော်
- 7:15 am
 2. တိပိဋကဓရ၊ ဓမ္မဘာဏ္ဍာဂါရိက၊ အဂ္ဂမဟာပဏ္ဍိတ၊ ဘဒ္ဒန္တသိရိန္ဒာ သိင်္ခ(မဟာဆရာတော်)ဟောကြား တော်မူအပ်သော ဥပုသ်တသန္တံ ပါဠိတော်
- 7:25 am
 3. To be healthy exercise
- 7:30 am
 4. Morning news
- 7:40 am
 5. Nice and sweet song
- 7:55 am
 6. Song of national races

- 8:10 am
 7. Cute little dancers
- 8:20 am
 7. ဆင်ဖြူရှင်တော်
- 8:30 am
 8. International news
- 8:45 am
 9. Grammar made easy
- 4:00 pm
 1. Martial song
- 4:15 pm
 2. Songs to uphold National Spirit
- 4:30 pm
 3. Practice in Reading
- 4:45 pm
 4. Musical programme
- 5:00 pm
 5. အစောင့်တရားသို့လှည့်လည်ရန် ရုပ်မြင်သံကြားသင်ခန်းစာ (တတိယနှစ်) (ရုပ်စောင့်)
- 5:15 pm
 6. Musical programme
- 5:30 pm
 7. အစိုးရသို့
- 5:35 pm
 8. Song and dances of national races
- 5:40 pm
 9. မြန်မာစာ၊ မြန်မာစာတော်
- 5:55 pm
 10. Musical programme (The Radio Myanmar)
- Modern Music Troupe)
 - 8:05 pm
 11. Discovery
 - 6:10 pm
 12. နိုင်ငံခြားကာတွန်းဆော်လမ်းတွဲ "ဓမ္မာတိပင်ရူပနိ" (အပိုင်း-၆၁)
 - 6:30 pm
 13. Evening news
 - 7:00 pm
 14. Weather report
 - 7:05 pm
 15. ကမ္ဘာ့ဗုဒ္ဓသာသနာတိပိဋသိပ္ပံလောင်း (ဒုတိယနေ့) နံနက်ပိုင်း အစီအစဉ် (၁၀-၂၂-၂၀၀၄)
 - 7:30 pm
 16. "မောင်မြန်မာလျှော်စစ်တော်" ရိုတယ်၊ ဓောနိုင်း(ရှမ်းပြည်)၊ ပုလဲဝင်း ဒါရိုက်တာ-တင်အောင်ရွှေ (သုတေသီ)
 - 7:45 pm
 17. Musical programme
 - 8:00 pm
 18. News
 19. International news
 20. Weather report
 21. နိုင်ငံခြားစာတော်လမ်းတွဲ "သံဃာ့ဗုဒ္ဓဗျူဟာ" (အပိုင်း-၃၂) မင်းကျွန်းဆရာတော်ဘုရားကြီး ဦးဝိစိတ္တသာရာတိဝံသ၏ အရပ်ထယ်မျက်နှာ ဓမ္မဘာဏ္ဍာဂါရိက ဖွားဖွားမြင်းတရားတော်
 23. The next day's programme

Secretary-1 meets Vice-Chairman of Kachin State Special Region-2 U Gaw Yi Zaw Hsaing

YANGON, 23 Jan — Lt-Gen Thein Sein, Secretary-1 of the State Peace and Development Council, received Vice-Chairman of Kachin State Special Region-2 U Gaw Yi Zaw Hsaing and party at Dagon Yeiktha of Yangon Command at 3 pm today. Those present together with the Secretary-1 were Yangon Division PDC Chairman Yangon Command Commander Maj-Gen Myint Swe, Minister for Progress of Border Areas and National Races and Development Affairs Col Thein Nyunt, Minister for Electric Power Maj-Gen Tin Htut, Deputy Minis-



Secretary-1 Lt-Gen Thein Sein receives Vice-Chairman of Kachin State Special Region-2 U Gaw Yi Zaw Hsaing and party at Dagon Yeiktha of Yangon Command.— MNA

ter for Hotels and Tourism Brig-Gen Aye Myint Kyu, SPDC Office Director-General Col Pe Nyein

and senior military officers. Vice-Chairman of Kachin State Special Region-2 U Gaw Yi Zaw

Hsaing was accompanied by Secretary Dr Lagya and peace mediators Dr Zabwe John and U Khun

Myat. On the occasion, Secretary-1 Lt-Gen Thein Sein said he had met na-

tional race organizations to explain the government's attitude towards (See page 9)

NPED Ministry holds coord meeting

YANGON, 23 Jan — A coordination meeting of the Ministry of National Planning and Economic Development was held at the meeting hall of Na-

tional Archives Department on Pyidaungsu Yeiktha Road this morning with an address by Minister for National Planning and Economic

Development U Soe Tha. Present on the occasion were directors-general, deputy directors-general, directors, deputy directors and heads of the

Planning Department under the ministry. In his address, the minister said that as the government has laid down and is implementing the

third five-year short-term plan from 2001-2002 to 2005-2006, the target of the project has been overfulfilled in the third year of the plan in 2003-

2004. All the departments are to participate in harmony with added momentum in implementing the plan for the economic development of the nation.



Minister U Soe Tha addresses coordination meeting of Ministry of National Planning and Economic Development.— MNA

The minister stressed the need to put emphasis on laying down the plans for serving the long-term interest of the nation and applying the information and communication technology effectively and widely. Afterwards, directors-general and heads of the departments under the ministry reported on the tasks which were implemented from April to December in 2004-2005 financial (See page 9)

Two mily commands, two LIDs take part in Mily Band Competition

YANGON, 23 Jan — To mark the 60th Anniversary Armed Forces Day 2005, the 14th Defence Services (Army, Navy and Air) Military Band Competition continued at the People's Square, here, this morning.

The bands comprising students from Tamway Basic Education High School No 2 and Mayangon BEHS

No 1 performed skills demonstration.

Next, the band representing North-East Command, the bands representing the No 66 LID, Western Command and the No 44 LID took part in the competition.

Afterwards, Chairman of the Committee for Observance of the Military Band Competition Vice Adju-

tant-General Maj-Gen Hla Shwe presented cash prizes to leaders of the bands of the schools.

Also present on the occasion were Vice-Quartermaster-General Maj-Gen Htin Aung Kyaw and senior military officers, members of the panel of judges, guests, Tatmadaw family members and students.

MNA



Vice-Adjutant-General Maj-Gen Hla Shwe and Vice-Quartermaster-General Maj-Gen Htin Aung Kyaw enjoy performance of bands in Military Band Competition.— PUPR