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Senior General Than Shwe sends message of felicitations to Indian President

YANGON, 26 Jan — On the occasion of the 56th Anniversary of the Republic Day of India which falls on 26 January 2005, Senior General Than Shwe, Chairman of the State Peace and Development Council of the Union of Myanmar, has sent a message of felicitations to His Excellency Dr APJ Abdul Kalam, President of the Republic of India. — MNA

Senior General Than Shwe sends message of felicitations to Australian Governor-General

YANGON, 26 Jan — On the occasion of the anniversary of the Australia Day, which falls on 26 January 2005, Senior General Than Shwe, Chairman of the State Peace and Development Council of the Union of Myanmar, has sent a message of felicitations to His Excellency Major-General Michael Jeffery, AC, CVO, MC (Retd), Governor-General of Australia. — MNA

Vice-Senior General Maung Aye sends message of felicitations to Indian Vice-President

YANGON, 26 Jan — On the occasion of the 56th Anniversary of the Republic Day of India which falls on 26 January 2005, Vice-Senior General Maung Aye, Vice-Chairman of the State Peace and Development Council of the Union of Myanmar, has sent a message of felicitations to His Excellency Mr Bhairon Singh Shekhawat, Vice-President of the Republic of India. — MNA

Four political objectives

- * Stability of the State, community peace and tranquillity, prevalence of law and order
- * National reconsolidation
- * Emergence of a new enduring State Constitution
- * Building of a new modern developed nation in accord with the new State Constitution

Four economic objectives

- * Development of agriculture as the base and all-round development of other sectors of the economy as well
- * Proper evolution of the market-oriented economic system
- * Development of the economy inviting participation in terms of technical know-how and investments from sources inside the country and abroad
- * The initiative to shape the national economy must be kept in the hands of the State and the national peoples

Four social objectives

- * Uplift of the morale and morality of the entire nation
- * Uplift of national prestige and integrity and preservation and safeguarding of cultural heritage and national character
- * Uplift of dynamism of patriotic spirit
- * Uplift of health, fitness and education standards of the entire nation

MWVO urged to become strong, prestigious organization MWVO Central Organizing Committee meets

YANGON, 25 Jan — The meeting 1/2005 of Central Organizing Committee of Myanmar War Veterans Organization was held at MWVO Headquarters in Mayangon Township this evening.

Present were Chairman of Central Organizing Committee of MWVO, Secretary-1 of the State Peace and Development Council Adjutant-General Lt-Gen Thein Sein, Vice-Chairman Vice-Admiral Kyi Min (Retd), member ministers, senior military officers, the deputy ministers and officials.

In his address, the Secretary-1 said efforts are to be made for consolidation of MWVO and to be a united one with new thought and outlook and fresh

ideas after reviewing weak and strong points. He said it is important for an organization to follow a single policy, belief and concept for its unity. Our Three Main National Causes are the belief and concept, he said. He spoke of the need for officials of the organization to discuss the national policy of non-disintegration of the Union, non-disintegration of national solidarity and perpetuation of sovereignty, as the national duty.

He said the government is making endeavours for emergence of discipline-flourishing modern developed nation after laying down the seven-point Road Map. The first step, an important one, the

National Convention is in progress. The National Convention resumed from 17 May to 9 July 2004 successfully. It will resume on 17 February. It is the Convention where eight delegate groups namely, (See page 8)

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The implementation of every stage of the seven-point policy programme calls for time and serious consideration to ensure complete success of the whole programme and eternal existence of the Union and ever-lasting national unity.

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Secretary-1 Lt-Gen Thein Sein addresses the regular meeting No 1/2005 of Central Organizing Committee of Myanmar War Veterans Organization.—MNA

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

PERSPECTIVES

Wednesday, 26 January, 2005

Work in concert for complete success of seven-point Road Map

In the Union of Myanmar, foundations are being laid down for the emergence of a peaceful, modern, developed and discipline-flourishing democratic state in accordance with the historical backgrounds, traditions and culture and for the perpetuation of the Union through the step-by-step implementation of the seven-point policy programme. Now, the National Convention, the very first and important stage of the seven-point Road Map, is in the process.

Secretary-1 of the State Peace and Development Council Lt-Gen Thein Sein met Vice-Chairman of the Kachin State Special Region-2 U Gaw Yi Zaw Hsaing and party at the Dagon Yeiktha of Yangon Command on 23 January. At the meeting, the Secretary-1 said that it was necessary for all the national people to actively take part in every stage of the seven-point policy programme to ensure the total success of the road map for the future of the nation and the emergence of a peaceful, modern, developed and discipline-flourishing democratic state.

All the national people from various walks of life are participating in the National Convention, which is to resume on 17 February. At the National Convention, the delegates are discussing the basic principles to be based in drafting a constitution that can ensure national unity, national interests and perpetuation of sovereignty.

After the draft constitution has been drawn, the national referendum will be held to approve it and then measures will be taken to hold free and fair elections.

The implementation of every stage of the seven-point policy programme calls for time and serious consideration to ensure complete success of the whole programme and eternal existence of the Union and ever-lasting national unity.

At such a time like this, we must keep constant vigilance against the interferences of some western nations, which are putting pressure on our nation without realizing the meaning and essence of the Union and its objective conditions.

We would like to call on all the entire national people to ward off all the internal disturbances and external interferences and to work in concert till the seven-point policy programme is fully realized.

Myanma Tatmadaw Medical Conference on 9-11 February

YANGON, 25 Jan—The 13th Myanma Tatmadaw Medical Conference will be held at the Defence Services Orthopaedic Hospital (500-bed) in Mingaladon from 9 to 11 February 2005.

Medical experts, house surgeons, cadets from Defence Services Medical Academy and Defence Services Nursing Institute and those interested may attend the conference, and they are to register in advance with the DSMA (Tel 03135063), Defence Services General Hospital (1000-bed) in Mingaladon (Tel 03135079), No 2 Military Hospital (500-bed) (Tel 03131253) starting from 1 February.

MNA

People's Desire

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



Minister for Transport Maj-Gen Thein Swe inspects Shwepyithit vessel at Nanthida Jetty. —TRANSPORT

New vessels of IWT launched at Nanthida Jetty

YANGON, 25 Jan — A ceremony to launch Shwepyithit high speed vessel, a 500-ton cargo ship and Waiponla double-decker passenger vessels built at Dalla Shipyards of Inland Water Transport under the Ministry of Transport was held at Nanthida Jetty, Pansodan this morning, which was attended by Minister for Transport Maj-Gen Thein Swe, Deputy Minister Col Nyan Tun Aung, Officer at Special Duty Brig-Gen Myo Tin, Managing Director of the IWT U Soe Tint, heads of department and officials of the IWT.

During the ceremony, the minister delivered an address. In his address he said the ministry could build good high speed-vessels and take innovative measures for water transport services for a long run. Building of cargo vessels is meant to ease the cost of inland cargo transport. As a result, ways and means will be sought for building of cargo vessels. After that, Managing Director U Soe Tint reported on

progress in building the vessels.

Next, U Soe Tint presented related documents to carry out the tasks for water transport to the Assistant General Manager (Transport) and a scale model for Shwepyithit vessel to the minister as a gift. Afterwards, the minister and party inspected Shwepyithit, 500-ton cargo and Waiponla double-decker at Nanthida Jetty.

Two 396 HP engines installed Shwepyithit high speed vessel is 110 feet long, 13 feet wide and 6 feet high and it can run 16 nautical miles per hour and carry 20 passengers.

It will be used for tourists on Bagan-NyaungU and Mandalay trips. Waiponla double-decker will run on Lutputta-Yangon route. The 500-ton cargo ship is 160 feet long, 34 feet wide and 7 feet and 6 inches high, which can carry 32 containers each measuring 20 feet long, 8 feet wide and 8 feet high.

MNA

Talks on knowledge, Myanma traditional sports contests held

YANGON, 25 Jan — The Work Group for Preventing Violence Against Women and Rehabilitation under Myanmar Women's Affairs Federation held talks on knowledge and Myanma traditional sports contests at Women Development Centre on Thalwin Street here on 23 January morning.

First, member of the work group Daw Khin Myo Myint talked on salient points on preventing violence against women, Police Capt Aung Than on human trafficking and Daw Myat Myat Kyaw on child rights and codes of conduct.

Present on the occasion were work group leader Daw Khin Aye, second leader Daw Khin Myo Myint, work group leaders Prof Daw Htay

Htay, Daw Khin May Soe, Daw Kyi Kyi Mya, Daw Po Po Kyi and members, officials of Social Welfare Department and trainees of Vocational Training School and Women Development Centre.

After Myanma traditional Htoke-Hsi-Toe sports contest, officials presented prizes to winners. — MNA

Delegates to JCC Bangkok call on Chairman of GMS-BF

YANGON, 25 Jan — A two-member delegation led by General Secretary of Japanese Chamber of Commerce, Bangkok Mr Keisuke Matsumoto together with Managing Director of JETRO in Yangon Mr Tomohiro ANDO and Director of JCCY Mr Hajime Tamanyu called on Chairman of Greater Mekong Subregion Business Forum (GMS-BF) U Win Aung, Vice-President of Union of Myanmar Federation of Chambers of Commerce and Industry U Aung Lwin and CEC members at the office of the UMFCCI on 20 January morning.

At the call, they frankly discussed matters related to arrangements for holding Investment Seminar for Myanmar to be held in Bangkok about the first week of May 2005, for attending the seminar and for submitting papers on economy and investment. — MNA

Gems and jade sale of UMEHL continues

YANGON, 25 Jan — The 18th gems and jade sale of Union of Myanmar Economic Holdings Limited 2005 continued for the second day at Myanma Gems Mart on Kaga Aye Pagoda Road from 9 am to 5 pm today.

When Managing Director of UMEHL Maj-Gen Win Hlaing (Retd) arrived at the mart this morning, he was welcomed by members of board of directors and officials. After cordially greeting gem merchants, the managing director left there at noon.

A total of 495 gem merchants— 370 from home and 125 from abroad observed lots of gems and jades at the mart. — MNA

ASEAN seeks to woo back worried tourists

LANGKAWI (Malaysia), 25 Jan— Southeast Asian Governments urged foreigners Monday not to scrap vacation plans over concerns, saying the region is taking steps to ensure its resort islands and beaches are safe.

Tourism ministers from the 10-member Association of South-East Asian Nations began a two-day meeting on Malaysia's Langkawi Island on how to revive their industry from its latest setback, which followed earlier scares due to avian influenza, SARS and terrorism.

ASEAN members will cooperate to promote their region as "one big tourism destination," inviting international travel writers to attractive destinations and sending out video clips overseas to lure potential visitors, Toyad said.

Tourism is a big money-earner for Southeast Asia. Before the tsunami, the ASEAN Tourism Association expected nearly 50 million tourists to visit this year, with the number projected to rise

to 56 million in 2006.

Tourism generated 27.7 billion US dollars (¥21.3 billion) for ASEAN in 2002 — excluding Brunei — or 4.8 per cent of its gross domestic product.

Khirk-Krai Jirapaet, Thailand's Deputy Tourism Minister, said he was optimistic that this week's conference would help limit the fallout from the 26 December tsunami.

"This is the first time we're meeting after the disaster, so we have to come out with some decisions," he said.

The ministers also will meet with senior tourism officials from China, Japan and South Korea on Tuesday to coordinate new measures to jointly speed up the development of the region's travel industry. — MNA/AP



Tourism ministers from ten ASEAN countries, from left, Vietnam's Dr. Pham Tu, Singapore's Vivian Balakrishnan, Cambodia's Lay Prohas, Philippines' Joseph H. Durand, Brunei's Pehin Haji Abdul Rahman Talib, Malaysia's Leo Michael Toyad, Indonesia's Jero Wacik, Thailand's Khirk Krai Jirapaet, Laos's Somphong Mongkhonvilay, Myanmar's Thein Zaw and Deputy Secretary General Mashor Pengiran Ahmad of Brunei join hands during a group photo session before the 8th ASEAN Tourism Ministers meeting in Langkawi Island, Malaysia, Monday, Jan. 24, 2005.—INTERNET

Goh to visit Malaysia for bilateral talks in February

SINGAPORE, 25 Jan— Singapore's Senior Minister Goh Chok Tong plans to visit Malaysia after the Chinese New Year in February to have talks with Malaysia's Prime Minister Abdullah Badawi.

According to local media reports on Sunday, Goh was speaking at a Marine Parade Constituency event when he called the proposed visit a progress in the development of bilateral relations.

"I will be going up sometime after the Chinese New Year to see Prime Minister Badawi, so I suppose that's progress. Then let's see how it goes from that meeting," Goh said. Goh, who has been authorized to handle Singapore's negotiations with Malaysia, discussed outstanding bilateral issues with Badawi during their last meeting on 13 December last year in Kuala Lumpur.

Progress has been made recently on the land reclamation issue when the two countries agreed in principle to end the dispute by signing an agreement after consultations.—MNA/Xinhua



Eri Kameda, an employee of Sega Toys Co, Ltd with the toy maker's new pet dog robot, 'idog,' in Tokyo on 24 Jan, 2005. Depending on how the robot dog feels, 'idog' plays creative sounds. Owners can speak to it, sing for it, play music for it, and it communicates back with melodies. It can also dance if connected to a music player at a jack at its leg.—INTERNET

Cotton prices remain low in Chinese market after bumper harvest

BEIJING, 25 Jan — Cotton prices on Chinese market will stay at their current low level for a while, due to bumper domestic harvests, temporary cash shortages among spinning mills and an uncertainty about exports, according to Monday's China Daily report.

"Prices will continue lingering around at a low level before the domestic growing season sets in April," Gao Fang, secretary-general of the China Cotton Association (CCA), was quoted as saying. According to CNCotton.com, a leading Chinese cotton information portal, the cotton price of spot transactions stood at 11,887 yuan (1,437 US dollars) per ton Friday.

That was in stark contrast to 13,900 yuan

(1,680 US dollars) before the harvest in August of last year, let alone the peak of 18,000 yuan 2,176 US dollars earlier last year.

The harvest is the most pronounced factor that drags down prices, she said. The nation reaped a record of 6.32 million tons of cotton in 2004 while the output was 4.86 million in 2003, according to figures released by the National Development and Reform Commission, China's top economic planner.

"When output rises sharply, however, demand become somewhat sluggish. Cotton users are reluctant to ink big purchases," Gao added.

Cotton spinners and textile producers say they are running out of money due to credit tightening placed by the central government in May, aimed at cooling down the blistering economy.

"We are struggling with a shoe-string budget. It's much harder for us to get bank loans now," said

Yang Chao, a manager with a Yangzhou-based textile company. "Before the Spring Festival, we have no intention to buy big stocks of cotton."

The Spring Festival, or Chinese Lunar New Year, falls on 9 February this year.—MNA/Xinhua

Fire at south Iraqi hospital kills 14

ROME, 24 Jan— Fire killed 14 people at a southern Iraqi hospital in an area manned by Italian troops, the Italian news agency ANSA said on Sunday. Another 75 people were injured in the fire in the Nassiriyah region, ANSA reported, adding that all of the casualties were Iraqis and none Italians.

Several thousand Italian troops are stationed around Nassiriyah and four Italian military ambulances were helping to evacuate people from the hospital, ANSA said.

Officials had yet to determine the cause of the fire but said they had no reason to suspect it was the result of an attack by guerillas, ANSA said.

Some reporters suggested it could have been caused by a short circuit in the hospital's electrical system, ANSA said.—MNA/Reuters

Syria denies interference in Iraq

WASHINGTON, 24 Jan—Syrian Foreign Minister Farouq al-Shara on Sunday denied US charges that Damascus is interfering in Iraq.

If anti-American guerillas "cross any bordering state to Iraq, it is against the will of the government of Syria," Shara said in an interview with CNN Television's Late Edition with Wolf Blitzer. "We are not friendly, even with them, because this is not the right way to help the Iraqis," the minister added.

President George W Bush has demanded that Syria — as well as Iran — stop guerillas and money from entering Iraq ahead of next Sunday's landmark elections. Iraq's interim Defence Minister has accused both countries of working with the network of al Qaeda Islamist Abu Musab al-Zarqawi in Iraq. Military options have also not been ruled out.

Shara denied charges by an Iraqi official that "tens of thousands" of high-ranking members of Saddam Hussein's Iraqi Baathist Party are in Damascus, including Izzat Ibrahim al-Douri, a leader of the Revolutionary Command Council.

Many Iraqis have fled to Syria for

"safety" but "all the Iraqi previous regime members are not welcome," he insisted.

Shara also predicted Syrian military forces would remain in Lebanon "only a couple of years" more. Syria has been under intense UN pressure to leave neighboring Lebanon, where it has 14,000 troops.—Internet

African summit focusing on food security to open in Abuja

ABUJA, 25 Jan — The African Union (AU) committee of permanent representatives held a meeting Monday afternoon in the Nigerian capital Abuja, in a buildup to the summit of heads of state from the world's most impoverished continent that will focus on food security.

The two-day meeting of the committee, made up of AU ambassadors, is to be followed by another two-day meeting of the AU executive council of foreign ministers which comes up Thursday, according to draft agendas of the pan-African body.—MNA/Xinhua



Chinese travellers wait in line to enter the Beijing western railway station 25 January, 2005. China's peak Lunar New Year travel season, the world's biggest annual human migration, began on Thursday with about 2 billion journeys expected over 40 days, state media said.—INTERNET

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1,372 members of the US military killed since the beginning of the Iraq war

BAGHDAD, 24 Jan—As of Monday, 24 Jan, 2005, at least 1,372 members of the US military have died since the beginning of the Iraq war in March 2003, according to an Associated Press count. At least 1,077 died as a result of hostile action, the Defence Department said. The figures include three military civilians.

The AP count is four higher than the Defence Department's tally, last updated at 10 am EST Monday.

The British military has reported 76 deaths; Italy, 20; Poland, 16; Ukraine, 16; Spain, 11;

Bulgaria, seven; Slovakia, three; Estonia, Thailand and the Netherlands, two each; and Denmark, El Salvador, Hungary, Latvia and Kazakhstan one death each. Since 1 May, 2003, when President Bush declared that major combat

operations in Iraq had ended, 1,234 US military members have died, according to AP's count. That includes at least 968 deaths resulting from hostile action, according to the military's numbers.

Internet

Petroleum technology companies look to India for talent

NEW DELHI, 25 Jan — Abundant availability of skilled manpower is attracting a large number of petroleum consultancy firms to India with a number of them setting up a base here to service other markets.

A Britain-based knowledge provider to petroleum exploration companies, Paradigm, has decided to make India a hub for its Asia-Pacific operations.

"We have a team of 25 geoscientists in Mumbai and we have plans to expand it to service markets in Asia-Pacific," Eldad Weiss, Group CEO of Paradigm, told PTI.

But contrary to IT companies, who set up base in India for software development, the Britain-based company would not shift its IT functions to India.

"We have 15 per cent of the world-wide exploration and production software market but we will not shift software development functions to India. We want to develop the geoscience consultancy market and capability in India," he said.

Paradigm, which entered the country two years ago, is also looking at acquiring clients in India.

"We are already working with Reliance and Oil and Natural Gas Corporation and going forward, we would like to deepen our engagement with them," Weiss said.

Aker Kvaerner Geo, a consultancy arm of the six billion dollars Norwegian company Aker Kvaerner, is setting up an Exploration and Production Data Management Centre in India in collaboration with Scicom Infotech.

While Scicom was already working on data management for petroleum exploration companies, tie-up with global consultancy firm Aker will improve the range of its offerings.

For the new venture, both companies have made significant commitments.

"At present, a small team from Scicom is in Norway for a pilot. Later experts from Aker will fly down to India to train Scicom team in India," Steinar Kristiansen, Administrative Director of Aker Kvaerner Geo, said.

"In next 12 to 24 months the team working on the joint initiative of both companies can grow to anywhere between 50 to 100," Indranil Chakravarty, Managing Director of Scicom, said.

MNA/PTI

Beijing Olympic venues construction to speed up

BEIJING, 25 Jan— Construction of Olympic infrastructure will move into overdrive this year with work starting on stadiums, the athletes village, roads and rail lines, the Mayor of Beijing was quoted as saying Monday.

"We will spare no efforts to ensure a successful completion of Olympic venues and auxiliary facilities," Mayor Wang Qishan said of the 2008 Olympics in a report on the work of the municipal government.

"New venues, the National Conference Centre, the Olympic Village and the journalists' village will start construction this year," *China Daily* cited him as telling the 12th Beijing Municipal People's Congress.

"We will speed up road building and building facilities surrounding the venues and start work on scenic projects in the central area of the Olympic Park," Wang said. Construction of four urban railway lines to cope with the influx of visitors expected to visit the Chinese capital would also be sped up, he added.

While Wang did not say which venues would get started this year, the main 80,000-seat National Stadium is already under way, with construction of a new and cheaper version beginning last month.

Initial plans to equip the stadium with an expensive retractable steel roof have now been scrapped amid a general austerity drive.

Construction of the stadium, nicknamed the "Bird's Nest" because of its giant lattice-work structure of irregularly angled metal girders, was abruptly halted in late July.—MNA/AFP

Israeli airline staff exposed to high radiation

JERUSALEM, 25 Jan— Israeli airline workers in the new airport terminal are exposed to levels of electromagnetic radiation up to five times greater than the government allows, according to a report released by *Haaretz* on Sunday.

Those exposed to this level of radiation from antennas and electrical networks risk "a drop in the concentration of acetylcholine in the blood" and increased levels of an agent that causes blood clotting, the report noted.

The airline argued that two other reports had not shown "any irregularity endangering workers' health".

MNA/Xinhua

Singapore's birth rate hits record low in 2004

SINGAPORE, 25 Jan— A historic low record of 36,900 babies were born in Singapore last year, 700 fewer than that of the previous year, according to the Ministry of Health on Monday.

Though 50,000 new-born babies are needed for the population replacement in Singapore, birth figures have been declining since 1990 and fell below the 40,000-mark in 2002.

To encourage more couples to have babies, the Singapore Government announced last August a

pro-family package of 300 million Singapore dollars (about 184 million US dollars) as well as measures like the five-day week for the civil service and the extended maternity leave. Local media reports said on Monday that experts have seen 1-2 per cent more new expectant mothers every month

since last August and expect at least 40,000 new-born babies this year.

MNA/Xinhua

Hostage warned against coming to Iraq before being shot dead

DUBAI, 24 Jan— An Egyptian hostage warned foreign drivers against going to Iraq in an Internet video before he was shot dead in public by a group led by al-Qaeda ally Abu Musab al-Zarqawi.

The body of Egyptian driver Ibrahim Mohammed Ismail, who worked for a Kuwaiti company, was found by Iraqi police on 16 January, dumped in a street in the western city of Ramadi. The video, which was posted on an Islamist web site on Sunday, showed guerillas' growing confidence. The hostage was taken out into a street and shot four times by a masked militant in broad daylight as cars passed by.—MNA/Reuters



(L to R) Contestants Lisa Wang Yueqi of Chicago, Jolene Chin Yeng Mun of Kuala Lumpur, Linda Tomko Marie of Seattle, Mary Sy Grace Siy of Manila and Patricia Hon Wing Yen of Calgary attend a news conference for the Miss Chinese International Pageant 2005, in Hong Kong on 24 Jan, 2005.—INTERNET

Honda seeks to boost sales in Indonesia

JAKARTA, 25 Jan— Japanese auto giant Honda Motor Corp has projected to boost its car sales in Indonesia to 52,000 units this year and to raise the capacity of its Indonesia-based assembly plant.

Indonesian branch PT Honda Prospect Motor (HPM) has announced that its car sale volume in the country rose sharply to 46,500 units in 2004 from 21,650 units in the previous year.

"With the assumed national car sales of 520,000 units this year, Honda has targeted to grab at least 52,000 units," HPM Marketing Manager Jonfis Fandy was quoted

Monday by *Bisnis Indonesia* newspaper as saying.

The new target is also based on the company's plan to boost its production capacity to 50,000 units this year from 40,000 units in 2004, he said.

Meanwhile, HPM will cut the import of completely built-up cars by 37.5 per cent to 10,000 units this year, he said.

Honda managed to

grab 9.6 per cent of last year's total automotive market of 483,417 units thanks to high demand for its compact car Honda Jazz.

The sale of Jazz, which was launched last March, reached 24,844, or 53 per cent of Honda's total sales. Fandy said Honda Jazz will be fully assembled in its West Java-based factory for local markets.

MNA/Xinhua



A Samsung Electronic employee walks past the company logo in the lobby of its main office building in Seoul on 24 Jan, 2005. The company said it had started mass-producing what it called the world's fastest data-processing memory chip for multimedia applications.—INTERNET

Chinese firm becomes Vietnam's first housing foreign investor

HANOI, 25 Jan— China's Success Investment and Development Company has become the first foreign investor licensed to develop a housing project for low-income earners in Vietnam's Ho Chi Minh City.

The company will invest 80 million US dollars in building apartment blocks of 5-15 stories high on a 37.7-hectare site in District No 12, and several public facilities such as schools and parks, local newspaper *Vietnam Investment Review* reported on Monday.

The project, once completed by 2010, will accommodate about 200,000 people. Most of the apartments will be sold in installments, said the company's director Lin Yin Sang.

The project is in line with the city's overall plan to develop houses for low-income people, said the city's deputy mayor, Nguyen Huu Tin.

Ho Chi Minh City, which is home to more than 6 million people, has targeted to raise its average accommodation acre-

age to 9-12 square metres per person by 2010.

To lure more investors in the housing sector, the city will offer suitable locations to investors who implement projects using their own capital, and grant preferential treatment to those who set aside 60 per cent of their allotted land for construction of multi-story buildings and 15 per cent of their housing for lease or sale in installment.

Besides, investors will not have to pay land use tax on land accommodating low-income earners, land rentals, corporate tax and value added tax. Ho Chi Minh City plans to build 190,000 new houses for low-income earners by 2010, which will require a total funding of 15 trillion Vietnamese dong (955.4 million US dollars).

MNA/Xinhua

Cellular phone users register fast growth in Indonesia

JAKARTA, 25 Jan— Cellular phone operators in Indonesia have reported a remarkable rise of 61.6 per cent in the number of subscribers in 2004 to set a record high.

The number of cellular phone subscribers in Indonesia rose to 29.9 million in 2004 from 18.5 million a year earlier, *Bisnis Indonesia* newspaper reported Monday.

"It represents the fastest growth ever," Indonesian Cellular Phone

Operators Association (TSI) Secretary-General Rudiantara was quoted as saying. He said intense competition has forced operators to cut registration tariff that eventually drove up the number of cellular phone users.

MNA/Xinhua

Filipino missing in Saudi Arabia suspected to be kidnapped

MANILA, 25 Jan— An overseas Filipino worker has been missing for two weeks and he was suspected of being kidnapped in Saudi Arabia, a local TV reported Monday.

According to the ABS-CBN news channel, the 40-year-old missing, identified as Suelito Leong, worked as a power technician for a telecommunication company named Detecon al-Saudi.

The Department of Foreign Affairs (DFA) confirmed to the television that Leong's co-workers at

Detecon al-Saudi called up the Philippine Embassy in Riyadh on 18 January to report Leong's disappearance. His colleagues said that Leong was asked by his employer to pick up plane tickets about 40 kilometres from their office on 11 January, and then he went missing.—MNA/Xinhua

Oppsn demands withdrawal of Italian troops from Iraq

ROME, 25 Jan — Italian opposition legislators demanded Sunday that Italian troops be pulled out of Iraq, saying that the government had "masked" the operation in Iraq as a peace mission.

Opposition legislator Marco Rizzo said the government has deceived Italians by presenting the presence of Italian troops in Iraq as for humanitarian purpose.

Rizzo cited Gustavo Selva, head of the Italian Lower House Foreign Affairs Committee, as saying that the government had to "mask the mission in Iraq as a humanitarian operation. Otherwise it would have failed to get approval from the head of state".

Opposition Green Party legislator Paolo Cento also called on the government to stop claiming that "Italian troops were on a peace mission in Iraq".

MNA/Xinhua



An LG Electronics employee displays a 3-D game phone loaded with a chip capable of processing data five times faster than currently available chips. South Korea's LG Electronics said its net profit surged 130 per cent to 1.48 billion dollars on record sales last year, although a weak dollars slowed fourth quarter performance.—INTERNET

China donates relief materials to Kenya, Somalia

NAIROBI, 25 Jan— Hundreds of packages bearing the picture of the Chinese national flag were loaded off a chartered cargo plane on Sunday at the Kenyatta International Airport in Kenyan capital Nairobi.

Those are relief materials worth 10.22 billion shillings (1.31 million US dollars), donated by the Chinese Government to Kenya and Somalia, which were affected by the tsunami disaster as well as severe drought.

The relief materials include 250 tents, 4,000 towelling coverlets, 350 power generators, medicines, food and daily necessities, said Guo Chongli, China's ambassador to Kenya, who was at the airport to oversee the arrival of the cargo.

"The Chinese Government has recently donated 100,000 US dollars respectively to the Kenyan Government and the Somali Government. This time, China sends a planeload of relief materials to further support the disaster-hit people in both countries," said the Chinese ambassador.

Officials from the Kenyan and the Somali presidential offices were at the airport to receive the materials on behalf of their respective governments. Both sides expressed their sincere thanks to the Chinese Government and the Chinese people, saying

China has always been helpful and the Chinese people are really friends indeed. The Chinese donation will be distributed to people in affected areas as soon as possible, they said.

About 200 Somalis were killed and many more were missing after the tidal waves struck the Somali coast late December as the effect of a series of strong undersea Sumatra earthquakes hit the east African coast. The disaster caused extensive property damage in the Horn of Africa country.

Kenya also suffered a severe blow in which one person was killed, several others were injured and many boats destroyed at the coast. Besides, Kenya has been suffering from drought in 27 of its 71 districts in eight provinces since last July. An earthquake measuring 8.7 on the Richter Scale was registered on 26 December, west of the island of Sumatra, triggering tsunami, or tidal waves, in South and Southeast Asia.

Over 165,000 people in Sri Lanka, India, Indonesia, Bangladesh, Maldives, Thailand and Malaysia have been killed in the disaster.

MNA/Xinhua

China, Mauritius to promote bilateral relations

BEIJING, 25 Jan— Chinese Premier Wen Jiabao and his Mauritian counterpart Paul Raymond Berenger vowed here Monday to further relations between the two countries.

"Sino-Mauritian relationship is a new type of partnership based on mutual trust, reciprocity and overall cooperation. It is in the fundamental interests of the two countries to enhance the relationship," said Wen. He expressed hope that the two countries should enhance mutual support in international affairs to safeguard the interests of the developing countries and expand cooperation in economy, trade and other fields.

Mauritius is an island country in the Indian Ocean. Wen said that China would like to coop-

erate with Mauritius and other relevant countries on disaster early warning and prevention. He expressed his appreciation of Mauritius' adherence to the one-China policy.

Referring to the Sino-African relationship, Wen noted that China and the African countries have supported each other in political affairs while conducted fruitful economic cooperation, adding that China has reduced and exempted the debts of some African countries, and began to give tariff free treatment to some goods imported from the

most underdeveloped African countries from January 1 this year.

He said that China would like to enhance cooperation with African countries and try to promote the international community's more concern about the development of Africa.

Berenger said that Mauritius adheres to the one-China policy and China's reunification cause, and would like to further cooperate with China on trade, economy and other fields to benefit the people of the two countries.

MNA/Xinhua



A sales assistant puts out computers at a retail outlet of China's largest manufacturer of personal computers Lenovo, in Beijing recently.—INTERNET

Israeli reserve duty to be reformed

JERUSALEM, 25 Jan— By 2008, Israeli reservists will be called up only in times of emergency or to undergo training, according to the reform plan on reserve duty published on *Jerusalem Post* on Sunday.

The reforms mean that many conscripts serving in support and administrative positions will not do reserve duty at all. According to the plan, soldiers will be required to carry out a total of 14 days reserve duty a year and no more than 42 days in a three-year period.

Officers will be required to serve up to 70 days in a three-year period, said the plan. The intention to carry out reforms on reserve duty is to eventually lower the age of exemption, for now it remains at age 40 for reservists and 45 for officers, said the report.

The plan will also provide reservists with extra financial benefits in addition to the remunerations they are currently paid due to loss of work or studies when called up for service. The recommendations will be presented soon to the Knesset (Parliament) Foreign Affairs and Defence Committee for approval, and then forwarded for the Cabinet's approval. erve-duty bill and brought to a vote in the plenum. — MNA/Xinhua

CPC to strengthen multi-party cooperation, political consultation

BEIJING, 25 Jan— The Political Bureau of the Communist Party of China (CPC) Central Committee held a meeting here Monday to discuss issues on how to further strengthen multi-party cooperation and political consultation under the leadership of the CPC.

The move is of "great importance" to developing socialist democracy, maintaining social stability and unity and building a socialist harmonious society, said the meeting. Chaired by General Secretary of the CPC Central Committee Hu Jintao, the meeting discussed a draft of guidelines put forward by the CPC Central Committee on further strengthening construction of the system of multi-party cooperation and political consultation under the leadership of the CPC.

"Practice has shown the system conforms with the situation in China and possesses great superiority and strong vitality," the meeting said.

The meeting noted that since China's reform and opening to the outside world, important progress has been made in promoting cooperation between the CPC and democratic parties. The democratic parties and personages without party affiliation have been playing further roles in participation in and discussion of political and government affairs and democratic su-

pervision, it added.

The meeting stressed that development should be the fundamental task of multi-party cooperation and political consultation. In addition, cooperation with democratic parties and personages without party affiliation should be strengthened and alliance with non-CPC members consolidated. Promotion of socialist political civilization must proceed from China's actual conditions and persevere in taking the political development road with Chinese characteristics.

"We should draw upon the beneficial achievements in political civilization of the mankind, but never totally imitate other countries' modes of political system," the meeting said. The guidelines discussed at the meeting have taken into consideration of opinions of the central committees of democratic parties and representatives of personages without party affiliation. They will be officially issued after further soliciting their views. — MNA/Xinhua

Fact-finding mission to probe journalist slayings

MANILA, 25 Jan— A joint team of international and Filipino mediemen would launch a fact-finding mission this week to probe into the increasing number of murders of Filipino journalists, the National Union of Journalists of the Philippines (NUJP) said on Monday.

The NUJP said that the team, composed of International Federation of Journalists (IFJ) delegates and NUJP officials, will fly to General Santos City in the south. Tuesday to meet with families of murdered journalists and police investigators and local journalists to learn more about the murder cases over the years.

The delegation is set to present its preliminary findings in Manila on 31 January while a two-day workshop on safety for journalists will also be held in the capital, the NUJP said.

The Brussels-based IFJ said in a recent re-

port that a recorded 129 journalists were killed in 2004 in comparison with 93 killed in 2003, showing that journalists were increasingly being considered as legitimate targets as they reported on war zones and investigated corruption.

Iraq, where 19 reporters and other media workers were killed last year, was ranked first in the list of the most dangerous countries to media, followed by the Philippines, where 13 journalists were murdered, according to the report.

It noted that the issue of journalist safety in the Philippines had

reached a crisis point.

"Time and time again, journalists who were vigorous and independent in their reporting are singled out and murdered with apparent impunity," the report said.

The IFJ is the world's largest organization of journalists, with more than 500,000 member journalists.

The NUJP, IFJ's Philippine affiliate, is the country's largest journalist union, with more than 30 chapters nationwide.

MNA/Xinhua

Vietnam to export more tea in 2005

HANOI, 25 Jan— Vietnam plans to export 100,000 tons of tea worth 107 million US dollars this year, posting year-on-year increases of more than 3 per cent and 15 per cent, respectively.

To fulfil the target, the country will maintain key markets such as China, Taiwan, Russia, Iraq and the United States, according to the Ministry of Trade on Monday.

It will also enhance quality of its processed tea by applying advanced technologies in tea cultivation and processing, using new tea strains, and diversifying tea products.

MNA/Xinhua

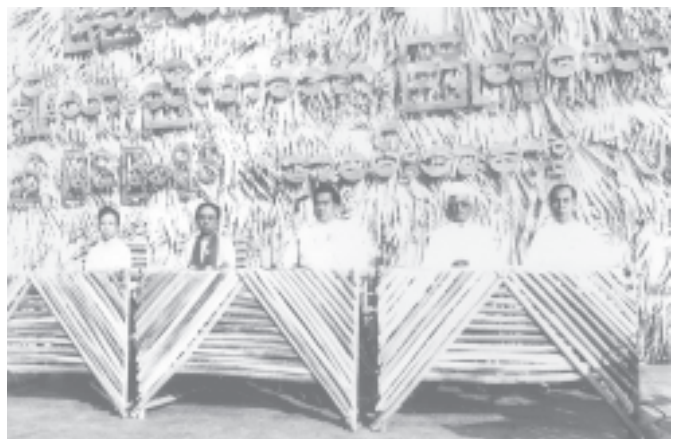


A Chinese opera actor performing on 24 Jan, 2005. China is launching an ambitious digitisation plan to help save traditional Chinese operas from dying out amid the country's rapid modernisation. — INTERNET

Don't smoke



Members of USDA and social organizations and local people marching to the ceremony to commemorate Union Day, support National Convention.— MNA



Members of the panel of chairmen at the ceremony.— MNA

National Convention vital...

(from page 16)

Natogyi Township Maternal and Child Welfare Association President Daw Ohn Tin, Township organization for Women's Affairs chairperson Daw Ohn Myint, Township WVO Chairman U Ko Ko Gyi, and townselder of Pyinsi Village U Toe Hlaing.

Myingyan Township USDA Executive Daw Wah Wah Soe acted as MC and Member of Organizational Group of Ward 16 USDA of Myingyan Township Daw Aye Mya Thu, as co-MC.

The chairman announced the start of the ceremony, and those present saluted the State Flag.

Chairman U Aung Zan in his speech said that the purpose of the ceremony was to commemorate Union Day and to support the National Convention, which would resume on 17 February 2005.

It reached an agreement in Panglong in Shan State on 12 February 1947 that all the national races would carry on living as a cohe-



Myingyan Township USDA Executive Daw Wah Wah Soe emcees with member of Ward 16 organizational group of Myingyan Township USDA Daw Aye Mya Thu.— MNA

sive Union keeping nest and eggs intact, and due to the agreement, that date went down the history of the nation, he added.

The entire national people in the Union of Myanmar managed to

throw off the yoke of slavery on 4 January 1948 thanks to the might of unity. So, Union Day has been celebrated annually in the nation, he remarked. The government is now building a new nation through the three national tasks — non-disintegration of the Union, non-disintegration of national solidarity and perpetuation of sovereignty. At the same time, it is making endeavours with might and main day in, day out for transforming the nation into a modern and developed one, he disclosed.

Efforts are thus to be made for enabling the mother country to stand shoulder to shoulder with the global nations, and steps are to be taken effectively for the nation to be able to stand tall as a sovereign state as well as to be a modern state. Only when the



Myingyan Township USDA Executive Daw Kyi Kyi Sein.— MN

nation is modern, will the economy of the entire people be strong, he remarked.

The government is taking all possible measures in diversified areas to modernize the nation. A total of ten dams were constructed during the region of Myanmar kings, eight in the colonial period, 51 in the Parliament Period, and 69 in the time of the Socialist Programme Party amounting to 138 dams during the period of 1000 years. In the time of the present government, altogether 169 dams have been built in 16

years, and it reflected the government's genuine goodwill to the people, he pointed out. Besides, the entire nation has enjoyed smooth transport with a network of roads, he said.

With respect to the health sector, the government has made investment heavily on the public health care services. In the past, the people had to go to cities like Yangon or Mandalay to receive medical operations, but they can now receive such medical treatments in their regions, he stated.

Regarding the basic education sector, the State has opened 40,505 basic education schools across the nation to enable every citizen to pursue basic edu-



Myingyan District USDA Executive U Aung Win Kyi.— MNA

cation. The school enrolment rate has increased to 96.9 per cent, compared to 77 per cent in the past, and literacy rate has risen from 78 to 93.3 per cent, he said. It has increased the number of universities and colleges from 33 to 156 the length and breadth of the nation, and now the doctoral courses are producing doctorate degree holders in respective subjects. In consequence, the nation has been able to produce human resources unremittingly, he said. It is also implementing border areas and national races development projects, the 24 regions development project and the rural development tasks simultaneously.

Its drive to build up a peaceful, modern and developed nation means the

flourishing democracy in the nation. With this end in view, the government adopted the State's seven-point Road Map, and the National Convention, the very first stage of the Road Map, was held in May 2004 to frame the basic principles. He said that before long, the National Convention will resume, calling on the entire people to be fully imbued with patriotism, Union Spirit and nationalist sentiment to participate in the drive for successful realization of the programme.



Myingyan Township USDA Joint Secretary U Nyi Nyi Naing.— MNA

Regarding the Union Day, Joint Secretary of Myingyan District USDA U Nyi Nyi Naing said all the national people decided to live in unity in the country on 12 February 1947. Later, the day was designated as Union Day. We regained independence and sovereignty due to the historic unity and the country existed again as an independent nation in the world. The Union Day is

held every year.

This year the Union Day will be observed with the following objectives

— for all national races to safeguard the national policy—non-disintegration of the Union, non-disintegration of national solidarity and perpetuation of sovereignty — to keep the Union spirit ever alive and dynamic



Natogyi Township USDA Secretary U Aye Thant Swe.— MNA

among the national people

— for all national people to defend and safeguard the Union spirit for its perpetual existence

— to prevent, through national solidarity, the danger of internal and external destructive elements undermining peace and stability of the State and national development, and

— for all national races to make concerted efforts for successful implementation of the seven point future policy programme.

He said the objectives are filled with political essence. The government has laid down Our Three Main National Causes as national



Myingyan District USDA Secretary U Aung Zan. MNA

policy and is implementing the tasks hand in hand with the people and we are on the development path. The government made efforts for peace and tranquillity and national development through unity and made peace with 17 armed groups. It launched border area development tasks spending a great deal of money on security, transport, agriculture, livestock breeding, education and health sectors.

The government also implemented tasks for development of transport, education and health sectors in Panglong region where Union spirit was conceived. Now there are Panglong University, Technological University, Computer College and Loilem Hospital in the region.

(See page 15)



Myingyan District USDA Joint-Secretary U Aung Zaw Myint presents K 1.7 million to Ngazun Township USDA Secretary U Myat Thu.— MNA

MWVO urged to become strong, prestigious organization

(from page 1)

delegates of national races, delegates of official political parties, delegates of representatives-elect, delegates of workers and delegates of peasants, delegates of State service personnel, delegates of intellectuals and intelligentsia, delegates of those who had returned to the legal fold took part in the discussion.

The State Constitution essential for future democratic State is to be drawn based on fundamental principles and detailed basic principles reached at the previous conventions. Therefore, successful holding of the National Convention is important, he added.

He warned that the government, the Tatmadaw and the people in cooperation with WVOs, USDA, Myanmar Women's Affairs Federation, MMCWA and other social organizations must prevent against the danger of internal and external destructionists who want to destroy the National Convention.

He also spoke of the need to make concerted efforts to become a strong and prestigious organization which can defend the State and to stand as an auxiliary force. He urged the members of the Central Organizing Committee to provide assistance for WVOs in states and divisions.

Next, Joint-Secretary of the Central Organizing

Committee Vice-Adjutant-General Maj-Gen Hla Shwe reported on minutes of MWVO's 3/2004 meeting and work of meeting 1/2005 for approval.

Vice-Chairman Vice-Admiral Kyi Min (Retd) reported on implementations of MWVO Headquarters in 2003-2004 and strength of the members of the organization.

Members of Central Organizing Committee and leaders of five major tasks and organizational tasks reported on the work done.

The Secretary-1 took part in the discussions and the meeting came to a close after giving concluding remarks by the Secretary-1.—MNA

Pade Dam in Aunglan Township inaugurated

YANGON, 25 Jan— The inauguration of the Pade Dam, constructed by the Construction Group-3 of the Irrigation Department under the Ministry of Agriculture and Irrigation, was held at the pandal near Natmauk Village, Aunglan Township, Thayet District, Magway Division, yesterday morning.

Present on the occasion were Chairman of Mandalay Division Peace and Development Council Commander of Central Command Maj-Gen Ye Myint, Minister for A & I Maj-Gen Htay Oo, Magway Division

cal farmers, members of the Union Solidarity and Development Association, Myanmar Women's Affairs Federation, Myanmar War Veterans Organization, Red Cross Society and auxiliary fire brigade.

The commander delivered an address to the ceremony, saying that the SPDC is implementing one of the four objectives — development of agriculture as the base and all-round development of other sectors of the economy as well. With the development of the agricultural sector, the nation will enjoy



Commander Maj-Gen Ye Myint gives a speech to the inauguration of Pade Dam.—MNA

double or triple cropping, he urged.

He noted that Chairman of the SPDC Commander-in-Chief of Defend Services Senior

part of the nine districts greening project, adding that the government is making provision for the future of the nation by means of pouring invest-

durability and effective use of farm machinery.

Minister Maj-Gen Htay Oo and Col Phone Maw Shwe also gave speeches.

facility.

Next, the commander formally unveiled the stone inscriptions of the dam. The commander, the minister and the Magway Division PDC chairman formally opened the dam.

They posed for a documentary photo together with the farmers and officials of the social organizations in front of the archway. Afterwards, they viewed the main embankment, spillway, watershed area, conduit and control tower.

The earthen dam is located on the Pade Creek with the 2,400-foot-long and 118-foot-high embankment. It can store 32,900 acre feet.

MNA



Commander Maj-Gen Ye Myint unveils the stone inscriptions of Pade Dam.—MNA

PDC Chairman Col Phone Maw Shwe, ID Director-General U Kyaw San Win, local authorities, officials, lo-

higher economy, so emphasis is to be placed on extended cultivation of crops, boosting per acre yield, and stepping up

General Than Shwe has given guidance on agricultural progress. He said the Pade Dam will benefit Thayet District,

ments into projects for construction of irrigation facilities. In conclusion, he called for maintenance of the facilities for

A local farmer of Shwepan Village, Aunglan Township, expressed gratitude to the government for the



Pade Dam on the Pade Creek in Aunglan Township, Thayet District, Mangway Division.—MNA

Navy's main duty, to...

(from page 16)

should have discipline and qualifications. The 140,000-square-mile Myanmar territorial waters include a 1,385-mile long coastline from Naff River mouth to the Cape of Bayintnaung. In addition, Myanmar waters are rich in natural resources. The main duty of Navy is to guard the waters against alien intrusion and ensure security to exploit the natural riches systematically.

Together with the developments in science and technologies, the ocean economy is taking a greater role in today's world. There will be stability in Myanmar waters, only if there is regional stability. Thus, the Tatmadaw (Navy) will have to work in cooperation with navies of other countries on common interest. Thus, the officers are required to be skilled in their work. They should live and act in accord with the qualifications of a junior naval officer to win the trust and reliance of their subordinates. At present, the Government is in the process of building a peaceful, modern and developed nation as well as a strong and efficient Tatmadaw. All the national races will have to lend their helping hand to reach the goal. Union Spirit is an essential need for the nation formed with seven states and seven divisions. The additional duty of the junior officers is to foster Union Spirit in anyplace of the nation they are assigned to and to play a role in building a modern Tatmadaw. The 12 objectives have been laid down for all to take part in the task of building a modern and developed nation, while keeping in the



Dignitaries at the concluding of Management Course No 65 for Junior Officers and Engineering Course No 39 for Junior Officers of the Tatmadaw (Navy). — MNA

fore Our Three Main National Causes.

The Commander-in-Chief (Navy) inspected the guard of honour and the graduating company. In addition to their military drills, the junior officers saluted the Commander-in-Chief (Navy) from a flotilla of naval boats.

Vice-Admiral Soe Thein presented best cadet awards to Sub-Lt Moe Kyaw Htein of course No 65 and to Sub-Lt Khun Aung Hsan of course No 39. — MNA



Vice-Admiral Soe Thein presents Best Cadet Award (course No 65) to Sub-lieutenant Moe Kyaw Htein. — MNA



Vice-Admiral Soe Thein presents Best Cadet Award (course No 39) to Sub-lieutenant Khun Aung Hsan. — MNA

Foreign Minister sends message of felicitations to Indian counterpart

YANGON, 26 Jan — On the occasion of the 56th Anniversary of the Republic Day of India which falls on 26 January 2005, U Nyan Win, Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Union of Myanmar, has sent a message of felicitations to His Excellency Mr K Natwar Singh, Minister of External Affairs of the Republic of India. — MNA

Foreign Minister sends message of felicitations to Australian FM

YANGON, 26 Jan — On the occasion of the anniversary of the Australia Day, which falls on 26 January 2005, U Nyan Win, Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Union of Myanmar, has sent a message of felicitations to His Excellency Mr Alexander Downer, MP, Minister for Foreign Affairs of Australia. — MNA

Enthusiasts throng Fourth MICT Week

YANGON, 25 Jan— The Fourth Myanmar Information and Technology Week 2005 continued for the fifth day at the Myanmar Information and Technology Park (MICT) in Hline Township today.

It was packed with ICT science enthusiasts, businessmen, teachers and students and the public.

On display at the exhibition are ICT products and computer related equipment from 14 booths of the ministries concerned and 196 booths of local and foreign companies.

The booth of MMG Technologies offer services such as data, voice, video communication, network security

support, maintenance support, multi-vendor support, regional support, systems integration, structural cabling solutions and services and wireless network solutions.

Computer accessories, UPS, printers, scanners, Intel CPU and Intel motherboard of DCD (Direct Channel Distribution) Co were displayed. Moreover, Parami

Group Co Ltd, ZEST Co

Ltd, Aisa Tech Co Ltd and Forever Group also displayed their functions and items.

The exhibition will be kept open until 27 from 10 am to 5 pm.

MNA



Visitors at the pavilion of the MMG Technologies Co Ltd. — MNA

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

YANGON, 25 Jan—The Meeting of Directors-General of Agricultural Statistics and Information in ASEAN+3 Countries and the Third Focal Point Meeting of AFSIS Project continued for the second day at Kandawgyi Palace this morning.

At the meeting, representatives from Brunei, Indonesia, Malaysia, the Philippines and Singapore presented statistics and data utilization for agriculture policies and representatives from the People's Republic of China, Japan and Republic of Korea presented matters related to technological development and its application to agricultural statistics and information.

In the afternoon, those present dealt with the expected output and contribution of the AFSIS project during the period of 2005-2007 and adoption of summary report.

The Third Focal Point Meeting of AFSIS Project will continue tomorrow—MNA

Textile and dyeing and printing factory opens in Yamethin

YANGON, 25 Jan — The textile and dyeing and printing factory of Myanmar Textile Industries of the Ministry of Industry-1 was opened at the factory in Yamethin Township this morning, attended by member of the State Peace and Development Council Lt-Gen Ye Myint of the Ministry of Defence.

The textile and dyeing and printing factory built on the plot of 26.48 acres is situated by Yangon-Mandalay Road, five miles north of Yamethin Township.

Also present were Chairman of Mandalay Division Peace and Development Council Commander of Central Command Maj-Gen Ye Myint, Minister for

Industry-1 U Aung Thuang, Yamethin Station Commander Brig-Gen Hla Myint, officials of the ministry, Chairman of Yamethin District Peace and Development Council Lt-Col Aung Kyi Shein, members of District and Township Peace and Development Councils, members of the Union Solidarity and Development Association, members of Women's Affairs Committee, Maternal and Child Welfare Association, Red Cross and Fire Brigade, local people and members of royal drum troupe totalling 3,000.

Lt-Gen Ye Myint, Maj-Gen Ye Myint, Minister U Aung Thuang and depart-



Lt-Gen Ye Myint views production process at the Dyeing and Printing Factory (Yamethin). — MNA



The Dyeing and Printing Factory (Yamethin) of Myanmar Textiles Industries. MNA

Hockey related equipment donated to hockey teams of Tatmadaw (Navy), Tatmadaw (Air)

YANGON, 25 Jan — Chairman of Myanmar Olympic Committee Minister for Sports Brig-Gen Thura Aye Myint this evening attended the Myanmar Olympic Committee Chairman's Trophy round robin Hockey Tourney for 2005 held at the Theinbyu Hockey Pitch and made a speech on the occasion.

Also present were officials of the Ministry of Sports, President of Myanmar Hockey Federation Commander of No 2 Military Region Commandant of Defence Services Records Office Brig-Gen Myo Myint, Vice-Presidents U Kyaw Naing, U Kyaw Kyaw



Mr Nara Yan of ACCL Co presents hockey sticks to Brig-Gen Myo Myint. — MHF

Hlaing and U Khin Maung Latt, executives, guests, well-wishers and enthusiasts. Afterwards, the ceremony to donate hockey

related equipment to the hockey teams of Tatmadaw (Navy) and Tatmadaw (Air) followed.

Chairman of Myanmar Olympic Committee Minister for Sports Brig-Gen Thura Aye Myint presented those equipment. Vice-President of MHF U Kyaw Naing and Chairman of Tatmadaw (Air) Hockey Sub-Committee Lt-Col Kyaw Nyein accepted the donations. Next, U Kyaw Min of MMM Construction and Mr Nara Yan of ACCL Co also donated hockey related equipment for MHF to President Brig-Gen Myo Myint.

MNA

mental officials took the designated place and Managing Director of MTI U Oo Thein Maung and Chairman of Yamethin District PDC Lt-Col Aung Kyi Shein formally opened the factory.

Next, Lt-Gen Ye Myint formally unveiled the signboard of the factory and visited the factory. Lt-Gen Ye Myint and party inspected machines and 400 looms.

Managing Director of MTI U Oo Thein Maung reported on detailed facts of the factory. He presented K 50,000 each for Township USDA, Township MCWA and Township Women's Affairs Committee to officials concerned.

Twenty four machines were installed at the factory which is capable of producing various kinds of fabric.

Construction of dyeing and printing factory began on 22 October 2001 and the 400-loom factory on 30 May 2003.

Lt-Gen Ye Myint and party later visited the soap factory (Yamethin) and they inspected production of *Carbolic*, *Sunlight* and *Hmwe* soaps.

The factory lies at Shweda Village near Yangon-Mandalay Road in Yamethin Township and it produces 40 tons of soap a day and it can also produce 13,200 tons of washing soap and 1,900 tons of toilet soap a year. — MNA



Minister Col Thein Nyunt addresses the meeting on promotion of development affairs tasks. — MNA

Minister attends coord meeting to upgrade development affairs

YANGON, 25 Jan — Minister for Progress of Border Areas and National Races and Development Affairs Col Thein Nyunt delivered an address at the coordination meeting to promote development affairs held at the meeting hall of Development Affairs Department, at No 245, Botahtaung this morning.

Also present on the occasion were Deputy Minister Col Tin Ngwe, Officer on Special Duty Brig-Gen Kyaw Thu, Director-General of Development Affairs Department Col Myo Myint, directors-general and directors of State and Division DACs, deputy superintending engineers, Township DACs executive officers and engineers in-charge.

At the meeting, the minister instructed officials concerned to build

district-to-district roads which are projects of priority, to take measures for potable water in the arid zone and to step up construction of rural model houses meeting the set standards.

Next, Directors of DAC in Yangon, Bago (West) and Mandalay Divisions reported on measures taken for district-to-district roads and Directors of DAC in Sagaing, Magway and Mandalay Divisions that for water supply in their divisions.

Afterwards, Deputy Minister Col Tin Ngwe, Officer on Special Duty Brig-Gen Kyaw Thu gave supplementary reports.

Arrangements were made for 8,042 villages in three divisions in the arid zone to get potable water in a ten-year period.

MNA



TONG TAH TRADE FAIR: Preliminary inspection of preparations for Myanmar Tong Tah Trade 2005 took place at Yangon Trade Centre on 25-1-2005. Officials of Libraries, Museums and Exhibitions Supervisory Committee present certificate of permission to in charge of the trade fair U Khin Maung Latt. — H

Vietnam has bigger cement demand this year

HANOI, 25 Jan — Vietnam will consume 28-29 million tons of cement this year, a year-on-year rise of 8-12 per cent against last year, according to the country's biggest cement producer on Monday.

The producer, Vietnam National Cement Corporation, plans to record total sales of 12.5-12.8 million tons this year. Meanwhile, it will import 1.5-2 million tons of clinker for cement production, up from nearly 2.2 million tons of the product last year.

The country's cement demand is estimated

at 46.8 million tons in 2010, some 62.5 million tons in 2015 and around 69 million tons in 2020. A small part of the demand will be met by imports, said the corporation.

To increase domestic cement production and reduce imports, Vietnam will focus its investment on upgrading existing plants, and building new

ones in southern, central and northern mountainous regions in the 2005-2008 period. It will not license cement projects which employ outdated technologies.

Vietnam currently has over 60 cement facilities with annual combined capacity of more than 20 million tons.

MNA/Xinhua



ARMED FORCES DAY RECEPTION: Member of the State Peace and Development Council Lt-Gen Maung Bo being welcomed at the reception to mark the Armed Forces Day of Thailand at the Thai Embassy on 25-1-2005. Photo shows Thai Military Attache Col Prissapa Suvanatat and wife greeting Lt-Gen Maung Bo and wife. — MNA

Outbreak of infectious diseases under control in Sri Lanka

COLOMBO, 25 Jan — Sri Lanka's Centre for National Operations (CNO) said Monday that due to timely action by health authorities, the outbreak of infectious diseases in Sri Lanka is under tight control following the tsunami disaster.

According to the latest figures released by the Health Ministry for the week of January 8 to January 14, there have been only 135 cases of diarrhoea and 579 cases of viral fever in the tsunami-affected areas.

This is well below the baseline for epidemics, the CNO was quoted by the

local Lankapage web site as saying.

They attribute this situation to prompt action taken by the Health Ministry in deploying systems to combat the spread of disease as early as December 27.

This is all the more impressive considering the substantial loss of as-

sets by the ministry in terms of damages to hospitals and the lives of medical personnel, the CNO said.

According to Health Ministry sources, the other important factor was that the affected areas were virtually free of such diseases prior to the tsunami.

MNA/Xinhua



A Chinese worker installs lotus-shaped lanterns in a lake in a park in Xi'an, in northwest China's Shaanxi province, on 24 Jan, 2005. A month-long lantern festival will be held in the park starting from the first day of the Chinese Lunar New Year, which falls on 9 Feb. — INTERNET

China's Aviation head wins CAPA's annual award

SINGAPORE, 25 Jan — Yang Yuanyuan, Director General of Civil Aviation Administration of China (CAAC), shared the Minister of the Year Award for 2004 by the Centre for Asia Pacific Aviation (CAPA) with Singapore Transport Minister Yeo Chew Tong on Monday.

The CAPA awarded Yang for "concluding a process of domestic airline consolidation in a commercial and orderly manner, demonstrating strategic leadership in adjusting to a more liberal operating environment, and introducing

new bilateral and multi-lateral liberalization initiatives".

Macau Airport won the Asia Pacific Airport of the Year award while the Airline of the Year award went to Qantas Airways of Australia.

Also presented were

the Low Cost Airline of the Year, the Cargo Airline of the Year and the Airline Turnaround of the Year, which were won by the budget carrier AirAsia, Korean Air Cargo and Sri Lankan Airlines respectively.

MNA/Xinhua

Singapore to unveil cyber networks security plan

SINGAPORE, 25 Jan — Singapore will unveil its national infocomms security plan in about three weeks, said Deputy Prime Minister Tony Tan on Monday.

Speaking at a security dialogue with businessmen on Monday, Tan said that the plan, drawn up by the National Security Coordination Centre and the Infocomm Development Authority (IDA), is to ensure the safety of the cyber networks.

Calling the cyber networks one vulnerable area in Singapore, Tan said the plan will prepare establishments doing business by electronic means

against any terrorist attacks and guide them to cope with the government in maintaining cyber security effectively.

According to local media reports, Minister for Home Affairs Wong Kan Seng said a survey conducted last November showed that about 400 hotels and businesses have formed security watch groups in the past two years. Of them, 80 per cent have hired secu-

rity guards, more than 70 per cent conduct personal security checks and 50 per cent have also set up barricade structures around their premises.

Regarding itself as a possible terrorist attack target, Singapore has been strengthening its anti-terrorism measures. The government also initiated several dialogues on national security to keep the public in vigilance.

MNA/Xinhua

Kamal Nath to lead delegation to Davos WEF Summit

NEW DELHI, 25 Jan — India's Commerce and Industry Minister Kamal Nath will lead a high-powered delegation to the Davos World Economic Forum Summit beginning January 26 to be followed by a WTO mini-ministerial.

The WEF meeting assumes importance as it comes at a time when Indian manufacturing and exports were looking up and Nath will use this opportunity to showcase the country as an ideal destination for Foreign Direct Investment (FDI).

Nath is being accompanied by Junior Minister for Science and Technology Kapil Sibal and a 50-member delegation of the Confederation of Indian Industries for the four-day summit.

With India emerging as a low-cost manufactur-

ing centre for pharmaceuticals, a delegation of the industry, which is expected to grow at 35 per cent, is expected to go with the minister to Switzerland. There will be four important meetings during the Summit, including a session on how India meets WTO obligations, Kamal Nath told PTI.

He will also have discussions with his Chinese counterpart in a bid to further strengthen the growing economic ties between Beijing and New Delhi.

Apart from interactive sessions with top European

CEOs, Nath will utilize this opportunity to build a coalition for tsunami reconstruction.

He will also have a one-to-one meeting with outgoing US Trade Representative Robert Zoellick on January 28, a day ahead of the mini-ministerial and G-20 meeting on the sidelines of the Summit. About 30 trade Ministers, including those from India, US, EU, China and Brazil are expected to attend the ministerial in which strategies would be formulated to take the WTO talks forward. — MNA/PTI



Indian labourers warm their hands in front of a fire on a pavement in Kolkata on 24 Jan 2005. A cold snap blowing in from Europe dumped a blanket of snow on north India and cut off several Himalayan tourist resorts. — INTERNET

17 killed as bus with wedding party falls off road in Nepal

KATHAMANDU, 24 Jan — A bus carrying a wedding party fell off a hilly road into a river in west Nepal killing 17 people including the bridegroom, his father and a brother, police said on Saturday.

The bride was among more than a dozen people injured in the accident late on Friday in the remote Pyuthan District.

MNA/Reuters

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Palestinian groups signal to help maintain calm in Gaza

GAZA, 24 Jan — Palestinian militants signalled on Sunday they would help maintain calm in Gaza for at least a month but denied Israeli reports they had agreed to a ceasefire at the behest of Palestinian leader Mahmoud Abbas.

Abbas, whose election this month as Yasser Arafat's successor revived hopes for Middle East peace, has been trying to get militants to call off a 4-year-old armed revolt while he negotiates for a state in Israeli-occupied territories.

Militants indicated they would carry out no further attacks on Israelis unless provoked while they were conducting "na-

tional unity" dialogue with Abbas expected to go on for about a month, when a firm decision about a ceasefire could be reached.

Both Israel and the militants have avoided going first in declaring a truce. But relative quiet has taken hold in Gaza since Abbas began trying to swing Palestinian gunmen behind his agenda of non-violence.

In a further sign of the change in atmosphere, Israeli Prime Minister Ariel Sharon held a Cabinet meeting on Sunday in Sderot, a southern Israeli town often hit by rocket fire from nearby Gaza until a few days ago.

MNA/Reuters

20 die in Nigerian auto accident

LAGOS, 25 Jan — At least 20 passengers, including children, died in a motor accident involving an 18-seater bus in the southern Nigerian state of Delta, the *Punch* daily reported Monday.

The accident occurred Saturday evening at Issele-Asagba Junction, about four kilometres to Asaba, capital of Delta state, when the propeller of the bus in which the passengers were travelling to Nigeria's biggest city Lagos suddenly pulled at top speed, forcing the vehicle to somersault several times.

Eyewitness said the ill-fated vehicle later went

up in flames, trapping all the 28 passengers on board, identified as indigenes of Oha-Ozara community in neighbouring Ebonyi State.

The report said 16 of them were instantly burnt to death while 12 others who sustained varying degrees of burns were rushed to various hospitals in Asaba.

The 16 deceased were given mass burial at the scene of the accident by the combined team of the Federal Road Safety Corps and Delta State Police Command in the early hours of Sunday, it added.

Four of the passen-

gers reportedly died on Sunday morning.

According to official statistics, Nigeria is one of the world's hardest hit by road accidents, in which over 7,000 people die and some 26,000 are injured annually.

Poor conditions of vehicles and roads plus speeding, overloading and reckless driving are blamed to be the main causes.

On Wednesday last week, at least 30 people, including a pregnant woman and a baby, were killed in a road accident involving five vehicles in Lagos. — MNA/Xinhua

Four killed in helicopter crash in England

LONDON, 25 Jan — Four people were killed in a helicopter crash in Somerset, southern England, a BBC report said Sunday.

The wreckage of a privately owned *Jetranger 206B* was found in a field south of Wellington at

about 0900 GMT on Sunday, the report said.

The dead are all male and include a 15-year-old boy. An air accidents team is investigating the accident.

The crashed helicopter took off Saturday from

Gloucestershire Airport in southwestern England and disappeared after hours of flight. A police helicopter and an Royal Air Force *Sea King* helicopter searched the missing aircraft throughout the day and night. — MNA/Xinhua

Strong earthquake hits Sulawesi Island early Monday

JAKARTA, 24 Jan — A large earthquake measuring 6.2 on the Richter Scale shook Indonesia's eastern Sulawesi Island early on Monday, damaging buildings and panicking residents, officials and local media reports said.

The tremor comes a month after a massive quake off Aceh Province in western Sumatra Island that sent a tsunami hurtling across the Indian

Ocean, killing more than 234,000 people, most of them in Indonesia.

A large quake was also felt in the Aceh provincial capital, Banda Aceh, on Monday morning, rattling buildings and sending residents into the streets.

There were no immediate reports of casualties as a result of the Sulawesi quake which hit at 3:10 a.m. (2010 GMT Sunday), the meteorological and

geophysics agency said.

Police went around the streets calming residents, many of whom feared a tsunami could be headed towards the Sulawesi coast, local radio stations reported.

"At least eight houses are damaged, but there is no report of casualties yet," meteorological and geophysics agency official Sutiono told *Reuters*.

MNA/Reuters

Whooping cough, measles kill 28 Afghan children

KABUL, 24 Jan — At least 28 Afghan children have died from outbreaks of whooping cough and measles in central Afghanistan in the past week, the public health minister said on Sunday.

The Public Health Ministry has rushed medical teams and equipment by road and air to prevent an epidemic of measles and whooping cough in

Deh Rawud District of Uruzgan and in Gezab District of Dai Kundi provinces, he said.

Sayed Mohammad Amin Fatemi said 25 children had died from whooping cough in Gezab while three children had died of measles in Deh Rawud.

"The deaths have happened in a period of a week's time," Fatemi told

a news conference.

Both Uruzgan and Dai Kundi are among the most remote and impoverished parts of war-torn Afghanistan.

Fatemi said the government was planning to launch a massive immunization campaign in the two affected areas after assessing the extent of the disease outbreaks.

MNA/Reuters



A Thai fisherman repairs his boat in Thailand's southern fishing town of Ban Nam Khem on 24 Jan, 2005.

INTERNET

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Global warming has hit the danger point

LONDON, 25 Jan— Global warming has hit the danger point and immediate steps are needed to reduce pollution to prevent extinction of human race, R Pachauri, the Indian origin chairman of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change has said.

"The world has already reached the level of dangerous concentrations of carbon dioxide in the atmosphere and immediate and very deep cuts in the pollution are needed if humanity is to survive," Pachauri said at a recent conference of Small Island Developing States in Mauritius.

"Climate change is for real. We have just a small window of opportunity and it is closing rather rapidly. There is not a moment to lose," he told the conference attended by representatives from 114 countries.

"Widespread dying of

coral reefs, and rapid melting of ice in the Arctic, has driven me to the conclusion that the danger point the IPCC has been set up to avoid has already been reached," Pachauri said.

Reefs throughout the world are perishing as the seas warm up: as water temperatures rise, they lose their colours and turn a ghostly white. Partly as a result, up to a quarter of the world's corals have been destroyed.

A multi-year study by 300 scientists in November concluded that the Arctic ice was warming twice as fast as the rest of

the world and that its ice cap had shrunk by up to 20 per cent in the past three decades. The ice is also 40 per cent thinner than in the 1970s and is expected to disappear altogether by 2070.

According to a report in The Independent Sunday, Pachauri's remarks were given a hostile reception by the Bush Administration. Pachauri was appointed as IPCC chairman after the oil major Exxon complained to the US Government that his predecessor was too "aggressive" on the issue.

MNA/PTI

Obesity may hinder prostate cancer screening's accuracy

ATLANTA, 25 Jan — A new US study suggests a man's weight may affect the accuracy of a common test to detect prostate cancer, leading researchers to warn that doctors could be missing the dangerous cancer in obese men.

Researchers at the University of Texas Health Science Center in San Antonio studied 2,779 men without prostate cancer between 2001-04. In the study released online Monday in the journal Cancer, they reported finding that the more obese the men were, the lower their levels of prostate-specific antigen or PSA, a PSA of 4.0 or lower usually means no cancer.

Previous studies have shown that prostate cancer is more aggressive in obese men than in men of average weight. The researchers wanted to see if the cancer's detection was somehow being delayed in obese men.

The Texas study found that the most morbidly obese men had about 30 per cent lower PSA levels than men of normal weight.

"That tells us it's likely or it's possible that prostate cancer detection may be delayed in overweight or obese men," said Jacques Baillargeon, associate professor of epidemiology at the Health Science Center.

The research may encourage many doctors to take a closer look at the tests of obese men.

"For sure, I will be more vigilant in my patients who are obese in evaluating their PSA," said Dr Nelson Stone of Mount Sinai School of Medicine,

who was not involved in the study. "We may be losing some of the sensitivity of the test in the obese patient in our ability to detect prostate cancer. We may have to set our sights lower."

The antigen used in the screening test is made by normal prostate cells and is measured in blood. The higher the antigen level, the more likely the chance of prostate cancer, as the cells multiply uncontrollably, according to the American Cancer Society.

But having high PSA levels is not a definitive diagnosis of cancer, which is why the Atlanta-based society recommends men with high PSA levels have a biopsy.

The latest study builds on previous research released in May in the New England Journal of Medicine that found that men with a "normal" PSA actually had cancer 15 per cent of the time and that two-thirds of those men with cancer had aggressive cases.

The Texas study did not explain why obese men have lower PSA levels. But doctors believe obese men produce more estrogen, which drives down testosterone levels and could affect cells that produce the antigen used in the test. — MNA/AP

Producers Guild named

"The Aviator" best film for 2004

LOS ANGELES, 25 Jan — The Producers Guild of America, often an important barometre of Oscar sentiment, on Saturday night named "The Aviator," director Martin Scorsese's film biography of billionaire Howard Hughes, best film of 2004.

In 11 of the past 15 years, the Producers Guild has honoured films that went on to win the best picture Oscar — including "The Lord of the Rings: The Return of the King" last year.

The producers are the first of three craft guilds to name their best picture for the year prior to the Oscars on February 27. Next Saturday night, the Directors' Guild will se-

lect its best film and then on February 5, the Screen Actors Guild will do the same.

"The Aviator," starring Leonardo DiCaprio, has strong competition as Oscar season enters its final weeks. Critics have hailed comedy "Sideways" and Clint Eastwood's tragic boxing drama "Million Dollar Baby" and many Oscar experts say there will be a

tight race between the three films.

"The Aviator" was named best dramatic picture at last week's Golden Globe Awards, but Clint Eastwood was named best director for "Million Dollar Baby." In other awards, the Producers Guild named HBO's "Angels in America" as the year's best TV movie or miniseries. It also gave two other HBO shows awards: "The Sopranos" was named best drama series and "Curb Your Enthusiasm" best comedy series.

NBC's "The Ellen DeGeneres Show" was named best TV variety programme and "The Amazing Race" on CBS was named best reality series.—MNA/Reuters



US actor Leonardo DiCaprio and Australian actress Cate Blanchett arrive to the premiere of their film 'The Aviator' in Berlin. Hollywood held its breath, hours ahead of a pre-dawn unveiling of the 2005 Oscar nominations, as three films jostled for poll position in the race for cinema's top prize.

INTERNET

Britain cancels 31 US flights due to blizzards

LONDON, 25 Jan— As many as 31 flights between Britain and cities in northeastern United States hit by severe blizzards have been cancelled, BBC reported Sunday.

London's main Heathrow Airport cancelled all the 29 flights between London and the US cities of New York, Boston and Philadelphia, which were hit by

heavy snowfall, the report said.

"There's minor congestion in the terminals but not a situation where people are stranded," a Heathrow spokeswoman was cited as saying.

Manchester Airport in northwestern England said one flight from New York has been cancelled, as well as a US Airlines flight from Philadelphia. Passengers have been booked on alternative flights.

"All other flights are operating as normal, but some are late," a Manchester spokeswoman said.

MNA/Xinhua

MNA/Xinhua

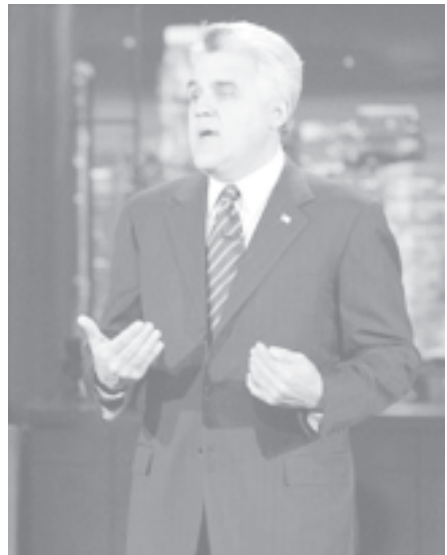
Talk show host Johnny Carson dies at 79

WASHINGTON, 25 Jan — Johnny Carson, the NBC "Tonight Show" TV host from 1962 to 1992, died early Sunday morning at the age of 79, NBC reported.

Nebraska-born Carson interviewed scores of celebrities during his three decades with NBC's "The Tonight Show Starring Johnny Carson." The popular late-night talk show king entered the Television Hall of Fame in 1987 and was

awarded the Presidential Medal of Freedom in 1992.

Starting his career at Nebraska stations in the late 1940s, Carson spent nearly all of his professional life in television. He retired in May 1992 and had since lived a quiet life. His final show was seen by an audience of 50 million across the United States, according to NBC.



Jay Leno, the host of 'The Tonight Show with Jay Leno,' pays tribute to Johnny Carson.—INTERNET

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Panathinaikos keep top spot in Greek 1st division

ATHENS, 24 Jan— Panathinaikos kept top spot in the Greek first division in spite of dropping points in their match at Ionikos on Sunday. The champions, who were without Argentine midfielder Ezequiel Gonzalez and German Marcus Munch as well as defender Sotoris Kiriagos, who completed his transfer to Rangers on Thursday, could only manage a 0-0 draw.

They stayed top when their greatest rivals, Olympiakos Piraeus could also only manage a point, drawing 1-1 away to Kallithea.

AEK Athens kept up their bid for the title with a 1-0 home win over Egaleo which lifts them into second place ahead of Olympiakos.

Panathinaikos top the table on goal difference from AEK with both teams on 33 points.

Olympiakos are two points behind but face an appeal hearing on Monday into the crowd violence that caused their match against Panionios earlier in January to be called off. The Piraeus Club were docked three points and the game was ordered not to be replayed with both sides taking no points. —MNA/Reuters

Australian open advances to quarterfinals

CANBERRA, 25 Jan— **Linsley Davenport, Andy Roddick, Lleyton Hewitt, Alicia Molik and Patty Schnyder** marched into the singles quarterfinals of the Australian Open in Melbourne on Monday.

In just over one hour, Davenport, women's world No. 1 and top seed breezed into the quarters, beating 13th seed Karolina Sprem of Croatia 6-2, 6-2.

In another round 4 match, 12th seeded Patty Schnyder of Switzerland cast aside 6th seed Elena Dementieva of Russia 6-7 (8-6), 7-6 (7-4), 6-2.

Roddick, men's second seed, defeated the 125th in the world, Germany's Philipp Kohlschreiber in straight sets.

Although Roddick had to work harder in the second set but managed to win 6-3, 7-6 (8-6), 6-1.

In the second round

match between Kohlschreiber and Nicolas Massu, the Chilean retired due to an injury, helping the German into the third round.

Hewitt, the third seed and Australia's No. 1, who had never been beyond the last 16 at the Australian Open, overcame an injury, beating unseeded Spaniard Rafael Nadal 7-5, 3-6, 1-6, 7-6 (7-3), 6-2.

In the quarters, Hewitt's opponent will be either 6th seed Guillermo Coria or fellow Argentinian David Nalbandian, the ninth seed. Russia's 3rd seed Anastasia Myskina was



Serena Williams waves to the crowd after defeating Amelie Mauresmo.—INTERNET

cast aside by Nathalie Dechy of France in straight sets.

Dechy won 6-4, 6-2 over Myskina, the reigning French Open champion.

Meanwhile, another Russian Elena Dementieva, whom Myskina beat at the French Open final, was demolished by 12th seed Swiss Patty Schnyder.

Australia's 10th seed Alicia Molik beat former world No. 1 Venus Williams 7-5, 7-6 (7-3), adding her straight sets victory this year to 12. The victory also brings Molik's world ranking to top 10. —MNA/Xinhua



Fourth seed Russia's Marat Safin chases to return the ball during his quarter-final match against Slovakia's Dominik Hrbaty, the number 20 seed, at the Australian Open tennis tournament in Melbourne January 25, 2005. Safin won 6-2 6-4 6-2.—INTERNET

Valencia misses chance to close gap on Barcelona

MADRID, 24 Jan— **Third-placed Valencia** missed a chance to close the gap on Primera Liga leaders Barcelona on Sunday as they lost 3-1 at local rivals Villarreal.

A hat-trick by Argentine playmaker Juan Roman Riquelme, who masterminded Villarreal's victory over Barcelona two weeks ago, left Valencia 12 points behind the leaders after 20 matches.

With second-placed Real Madrid playing later, Valencia had the first opportunity to cut Barca's lead but Riquelme was on inspirational form, scoring with a penalty after 17 minutes.

The Argentine netted a second on the stroke of halftime after a meandering run left him space to drill a long-range shot past startled goalkeeper Santiago

Canizares.

Valencia clawed back a goal with a penalty by Pablo Aimar in injury time but Riquelme then added his third, also from the penalty spot, in the last minute of the game.

Espanyol slipped to fifth place after a 4-1 drubbing at Deportivo Coruna with the Galician side finding the key to unlock what had been the Primera Liga's tightest defence.

Sevilla moved into the fourth Champions League qualifying spot with a comfortable 2-0 victory at lowly Albacete. —MNA/Reuters

Pathan wins international sports personality of 2004 award

LONDON, 25 Jan— **India's left-arm seamer Irfan Pathan** was chosen the International Sports Personality of the year 2004 at a glittering awards ceremony here.

Former flamboyant batsman and wicketkeeper Farokh Engineer was conferred upon with the 'Lifetime Achievement Award' instituted by Sony Entertainment Television.

Twenty-year-old Pathan outvoted Sri Lanka's legendary off-spinner Muttiah Muralitharan and World No 1 golfer Fiji's Vijay Singh in a keen contest.

Pathan was not present at the ceremony held Saturday night at Hilton Hotel and Indian-origin singer Raghav received the trophy, sponsored by well known caterer, Madhu's Brilliant, on his behalf.

"After exceptional performances against Australia and Pakistan, Irfan Pathan celebrated winning the Young Player of the Year Award at the ICC Cricket Awards here in the summer. He

ended 2004 by achieving personal best figures of 11 for 96 against Bangladesh in Dhaka," the award citation said.

Pathan, who had a consistent run in Tests taking 38 wickets in nine Tests last year, was recently voted Indian Cricketer of the Year by a leading web site in a worldwide poll.

Receiving the award, 67-year-old Engineer, now a distinguished commentator for Sky Sports, said: "This is a very special occasion. I am also glad to see so many young Asian talents coming up and making a mark in different sports events".

Mumbai-born Engineer, who began his Test career in 1961, played 56 Tests for India scoring over 3000 runs and claiming over 100 catches.

MNA/PTI

Lille beat Olympique Lyon 2-1

PARIS, 24 Jan— **Matt Moussilou's double for Lille** handed champions Olympique Lyon their first Ligue 1 defeat of the season and closed the gap at the top to three points.

Second-placed Lille's 2-1 victory on Sunday halted Lyon's surge towards a fourth consecutive title, while Monaco's 2-0 victory over RC Lens on Saturday keeps them in touch.

Moussilou put Lille ahead after three minutes and ruined Lyon's hopes of a comeback when he added a second from a counter-attack midway through the second half.

Lyon, who fielded an attacking team in the second half, halved the deficit when Brazil international Juninho Pernambucano scored a 77th-minute penalty.

Lille had already beaten Lyon in the League Cup second round in November, while the French champions' only other defeat came against Manchester United in the Champions League.

Lyon have 45 points from 22 games, Lille have 42 and Monaco are a further three points back. AJ Auxerre and

Olympique Marseille both have 38 points after victories on Saturday.

Lyon coach Paul Le Guen said: "It hurts. We would have liked to keep that unbeaten label a little bit longer.

"Now we must recover physically and mentally to bounce back against Stade Rennes and Bastia.

"It's a peculiar week with three games at different times of the day. We will have to adapt."

Lyon host Rennes on Wednesday at 1700 GMT and travel to Bastia on Saturday for a 1630 kickoff. Lille face a tricky trip to Nice in midweek.

Le Guen said the title race had never been over, despite his team's domination so far. "It's a tight fight against teams like Lille, Auxerre, Monaco and Marseille. The competition has always been wide open and we know we're going to have to fight all the way," he said.

MNA/Reuters

Sharapova overcomes slow start, reaches Australian open quarters

MELBOURNE, 24 Jan— Wimbledon champion and fourth seed Maria Sharapova overcame a slow start to battle past Italian Silvia Farina Elia 4-6, 6-1, 6-2 on Sunday to reach the quarterfinals of the Australian Open for the first time.

Sharapova, 17, will now play compatriot and fifth seed Svetlana Kuznetsova after the US Open champion held off another Russian in Vera Douchevina 6-4, 6-2.

Sharapova appeared out of sorts against an opponent almost twice her age but grew in confidence and finally managed to close out the match against 15th seed Farina Elia after two hours and 13 minutes on Melbourne Park's Vodafone Arena.

She lost a tight struggle in the first set and then handed the 32-year-old Italian a service break at the start of the second in a surprisingly meek display.

However, the Russian started to find her range with her groundstrokes to break

Farina Elia three times in the second set.

Sharapova then battled through an untidy third set littered with six service breaks before she finally prevailed.

MNA/Reuters



Brazilian Fernandinho (L) and Uruguayan Cristian Rodriguez jump for the ball during their second round match of the South American under-20 soccer championship in Pereira, Colombia, January 24, 2005. Brazil won 4-2.—INTERNET

National Convention vital...

(from page 7)

Implementation of border area development tasks strengthens national solidarity and Union Spirit and leads to perpetuation of the Union. He said the mass meeting highly values historic Union Day with noble tradition.

Myingyan District USDA Executive U Aung Win Kyi said that the convening of the National Convention is of vital importance for the nation, as the task involves the laying down of basic principles in drawing a constitution, the first stage of the seven-point Road Map. The National Convention will resume on 17 February. Only if the entire people play a role in the respective sectors, will the Convention be able to realize its aims. Myanmar is home to over 100 national races. It is a common knowledge for all that the Government has been giving priority to unity and stability of the state as unity is the basic requirement for the nation. At the same time, it is implementing the three major development projects, border areas and national races development project namely, the 24-development zone project and the five rural development tasks. In this regard, the entire nation at present is enjoying peace and stability and security and rapid progress in all sectors, offering opportunities for all the nationalities to take part in the development undertakings, fostering Union Spirit and patriotism, and developing the human resources. Rays of hope are shining for emergence of a

constitution, and it is sure that the nation will successfully materialize all the seven stages of the Road Map. Moreover, the people will have to join hands to reach this end. But all will have to beware of the destructionists at home and abroad. All will have to ward off the attempts to harm unity and Union Spirit. USDA announced the seven-stage Bagan Declaration in 2003.

Myingyan District USDA Executive Daw Kyi

Rays of hope are shining for emergence of a constitution, and it is sure that the nation will successfully materialize all the seven stages of the Road Map.

Kyi Sein said that the USDA is implementing the five rural development tasks to narrow the gap between the urban and the rural. It has built over 23 miles of rural roads, renovated 27 schools, sunk 1,169 tube-wells, installed 7,943 hand pumps and dug 1,004 lakes in the district. The association has also rendered assistance to erect nine water pumps to irrigate 10,600 acres of crops and 19 dams irrigating 14,739 acres. It has also helped people to grow more rice and other crops and run farming on manageable scale for social development. Forty-nine doctors including four specialists, 29 health assistants, 74 nurses and 219 midwives are working in the district. The USDA donated K 10.38 million to sink 20 tube-wells in villages, K 4.5 million to build 11 schools for the second time. It also donated K 1.7 million to

renovate four schools. In addition to its efforts to develop many other sectors, the association has installed bio-gas power generation stations in 14 villages.

Myingyan District USDA Secretary U Aung Zaw Myint presented a document related to renovating of 11 BEPSs to district education officer, U Kaung; documents related to sinking of 20 tube wells in 20 villages of the district which cost K 10.38 million to Deputy Director of Development Affairs Depart-

ment U Kyaw Nyein; K 1.7 million for four basic education schools in Myingyan, Taungtha, Kyaukpadaung and Ngazun townships to Ngazun township USDA Secretary U Myat Thu; and K 2 million for bio-gas used power supply for the villages of Myingyan township to township USDA Secretary U Mya Aung.

Next, Natogyi township USDA Secretary U Aye Than Swe seconded the motions submitted by the three representatives, saying that we regained our independence due to the national unity through which there emerged the Union Day. As a result, Myanmar enjoyed its sovereignty and can stand tall among the global nations. The mass rally was held to hail the Union Day. At the same time, U Aye Than Swe said, the National Convention, which will resume on February 17, is a one

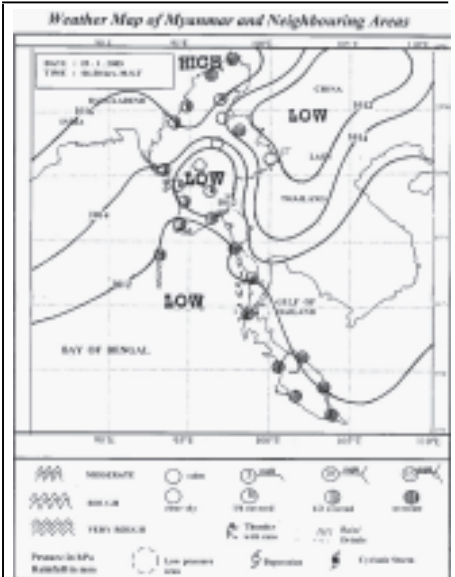
that adopts detailed basic principles for writing the State Constitution to be able to build up a discipline-flourishing democratic nation. In doing so, the first step of the seven-point Road Map is to hold the National Convention to lay down the detailed basic principles that will be included in the State constitution, he added. It is incumbent upon all the national people including those present at this mass rally to take their respective roles in realizing the goals of the National Convention. Arming themselves with the sense of national solidarity and Union Spirit, all national people of the country held a mass rally in Bagan Archaeological Zone and fully supported the seven-point Road Map. So, U Aye Than Swe said, on behalf of the people, he welcomed and supported the National Convention which will resume on 17 February.

Meanwhile, it is heartening to note that the State in cooperation with the USDA and social organizations implemented the tasks to help develop our region by building roads, bridges and schools and giving other necessary assistance. So, he said, he appreciated the efforts for rural development work in Myingyan District. The people are urged to take active part in the efforts to

serve the interest of the region, he concluded. Afterwards, the mass rally made resolutions that they honour the Union Day, and support the National Conven-

tion and the efforts for rural development tasks by keeping the three main national causes in the fore.

The meeting ended, shouting slogans. — MNA



WEATHER

Tuesday, 25 January, 2005

Summary of observations recorded at 09:30 hours

MST: During the past 24 hours, weather has been partly cloudy to cloudy in Kachin State, upper Sagaing and Taninthayi Divisions and generally fair in the remaining areas. Night temperatures were (3°C) to (4°C) above normal in upper Sagaing and Taninthayi Divisions, (3°C) below normal in Mandalay and Yangon Divisions, (5°C) below normal in Chin State and about normal in the remaining areas. The significant night temperatures were Pinlaung (4°C), Lashio and Namsam (5°C) each and Pyin Oo Lwin (6°C).

Maximum temperature on 24-1-2005 was 94°F. Minimum temperature on 25-1-2005 was 58°F. Relative humidity at 9:30 hrs MST on 25-1-2005 was 78%. Total sunshine hours on 24-1-2005 was (6.8) hours approx. Rainfalls on 25-1-2005 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 (14:40) hours MST on 24-1-2005.

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

Forecast valid until evening of 26-1-2005: Weather will be partly cloudy to cloudy in Kachin, Chin and Rakhine States, Sagaing, Ayeyawady, Yangon and Taninthayi Divisions and generally fair in the remaining states and divisions.

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

Outlook for subsequent two days: Generally fair weather in the whole country.

Forecast for Yangon and neighbouring area for 26-1-2005: Partly cloudy to cloudy.

Forecast for Mandalay and neighbouring area for 26-1-2005: Fair weather.

TV Myanmar

Wednesday, 26 January

View on today:

7:00 am

1. Recitation of Parittas by Missionary Sayadaw U Ottamathara

7:15 am

2. ဝိပဿနာ၊ ဓမ္မာနုပဏ္ဍိတ၊ အဋ္ဌမဟာပဏ္ဍိတ၊ ဘဒ္ဒန္တဝိနိဗ္ဗာန်၊ အိန္ဒိယ (မဟာမာရဏီ) ဟောကြားတော်မူအပ်သော ဥပုသ်တော်

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. မြန်မာ့ပြည်ထောင်စုအတွက်

8:10 am

7. အဆိုပြိုင်ပွဲ

<p>8:20 am</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 8. မြန်မာ့အလင်းတံတား <p>8:30 am</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 9. International news <p>8:45 am</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 10. Let's go <p>4:00 pm</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Martial song <p>4:15 pm</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 2. Songs to uphold National Spirit <p>4:30 pm</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 3. Demonstration Exercises for Correct Pronunciation <p>4:45 pm</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 4. Musical programme <p>5:00 pm</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 5. အစောင့်အရှောက် ရုပ်ရှင်ကြားသင်ခန်းစာ - ဒုတိယနှစ် (ခေတ်ဓမ္မ၊ ရုပ်ဓမ္မ၊ သတ္တဓမ္မ အထူးပြု) (ခေတ်ဓမ္မ) <p>5:15 pm</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 6. Song of national races <p>5:30 pm</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 7. Classical Song <p>5:45 pm</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 8. ရှုမဝရုပ်ရှင် အားပေးအစီအစဉ် <p>6:00 pm</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 9. Discovery 	<p>6:15 pm</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 10. မဟာနိဗ္ဗာန်သံဃာ့အစီအစဉ် <p>6:30 pm</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 11. Evening news <p>7:00 pm</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 12. Weather report <p>7:05 pm</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 13. မြန်မာ့အလင်း မြန်မာစကား <p>7:20 pm</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 14. Musical programme <p>7:20 pm</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 15. "ရှုမဝရုပ်ရှင်" ရုပ်ရှင် ဝေဖန်ပွဲ၊ ချီးမြှင့်ပွဲ၊ ခါရိုက်တာ-ကြည့်ခိုင်း <p>7:40 pm</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 16. ထူးကဲမြင်မြင် ပုစေအပ်သည့် သာသနာ့အစီအစဉ် (အပိုင်း-၂) <p>8:00 pm</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 17. News 18. International news 19. Weather report 20. မေ့မိသောအလင်း (အပိုင်း-၇) ကဏ္ဍတိုင်းလေးတစ်ချက်ကို ရိုက်ကူးကြား၊ ချိုက်၊ ခော်တီး၊ စမ်းစမ်းအား၊ စင်စစ်အား၊ အစွဲချိုး နှင်းတော်စဉ်သော်လည်း၊ အရှည်ကြီး၊ ခော်တီး၊ ခါရိုက်တာ-သတိတော် 21. The next day's programme
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Radio Myanmar

Wednesday, 26 January

Tune in today:

8:30 am Brief news

8:35 am Music:
-Mu heart beats like a drum

8:40 am Perspectives

8:45 am Music:
-Baby I would

8:50 am National news/Slogan

9:00 am Music:
-Good guys

9:05 am International news

9:10 am Music:
-Sha La La

1:30 pm News/Slogan

1:40 pm Lunch Time Music
-Show me the meaning of being lonely
-What becomes of the broken hearted
-Lay all your loving on me

9:00 pm Variations on a tune
-A taste of honey

9:15 pm Article/music

9:25 pm Music at your request
-Hey baby
-First love
-Kissy Kissy

9:45 pm News/Slogan

10:00 pm PEL

Asleep in Jesus
Kerry Tin Win
Age (45) years
Master Mariner
Chief Mate

A.S. Moellar Co. (MAERSK LINK) Kerry Tin Win, firstborn son of Lt.Cdr. Soe Win (Rtd) and Daw May Soe Win, of No 2 Padonma Road, Dagon Township, Yangon, beloved husband of Michiko @ Aye Aye Yin, father of Kyaw Tin Win, Tin Win Kyaw and Tin Kyaw Win, son in law of Dr Tin Maung Tun and (Daw Si Win) died suddenly and unexpected on 23rd January 2005. Funeral arrangements will be announced later.

The bereaved family

Prime Minister Lt-Gen Soe Win sends message of felicitations to Indian counterpart

YANGON, 26 Jan — On the occasion of the 56th Anniversary of the Republic Day of India which falls on 26 January 2005, Lt-Gen Soe Win, Prime Minister of the Union of Myanmar, has sent a message of felicitations to His Excellency Dr Manmohan Singh, Prime Minister of the Republic of India. — MNA

Prime Minister Lt-Gen Soe Win sends message of felicitations to Australian counterpart

YANGON, 26 Jan — On the occasion of the anniversary of the Australia Day, which falls on 26 January 2005, Lt-Gen Soe Win, Prime Minister of the Union of Myanmar, has sent a message of felicitations to His Excellency Mr John Howard, MP, Prime Minister of Australia. — MNA



Vice-Admiral Soe Thein addresses conclusion of Management Course No 65 for Junior Officers and Engineering Course No 39 for Junior Officers.—MNA

Navy's main duty, to safeguard Myanmar territorial waters to enable nation to exploit her riches systematically

YANGON, 25 Jan — Management Course No 65 for Junior Officers and Engineering Course No 39 for Junior Officers of the Tatmadaw (Navy) concluded at the Naval Training Command Headquarters here today.

Present were members of the State Peace and Development Council Quartermaster-General Lt-Gen

Thiha Thura Tin Aung Myint Oo, Chief of Armed Forces Training Lt-Gen Kyaw Win and Lt-Gen Tin Aye of the Ministry of Defence, Commander-in-Chief (Navy) Vice-Admiral Soe Thein, Commander-in-Chief (Air) Lt-Gen Myat Hein, senior military officers of the Ministry of Defence, senior naval officers, officials and relatives of the junior officers.

Commander-in-Chief (Navy) said that as they have been assigned as junior naval officers, they need to know the fine traditions and history of the Tatmadaw to be able to discharge the important duties in the Tatmadaw (Navy). The junior officers should have a high morale to do their duties well. In addition, they (See page 9)

National Convention vital importance for nation Myingyan District USDA commemorates Union Day, supports National Convention



YANGON, 25 Jan—A ceremony to commemorate Union Day and to support the National Convention took place at Pyinsi model village, Natogyi Township, Myingyan District, Mandalay Division, this morning.

It was attended by Mandalay Division Union Solidarity and Development Association Secretary U Tin Maung Oo, Joint-Secretary U Sein Myint and executives, Myingyan District USDA executives, secretaries, joint-secretaries and executives of USDAs of Myingyan, Taungtha, Natogyi, Kyaukpadaung and Ngazun townships, organizers, executives and members of ward and village USDAs, members of Myanmar War Veterans Organization, Myanmar Women's Affairs Federa-

tion, Red Cross Society and Auxiliary Fire Brigade, and locals totalling more than 9,200. Members of Ngazun Township USDA, social organizations and local people led by Township Executive U Tin Hla, members of Natogyi

Township USDA, social organizations and local people led by Township Executive U Aye Kyaw, members of Kyaukpadaung Township USDA, social organizations and local people led by Natogyi Township Executive U Myo Myint Khaing, members of USDA, social organizations and local people led by Natogyi Township Executive U Tin Hlaing, members of USDA, social organizations and local people led by Natogyi Township Executive U Soe Myint took positions at respective sites in the ground.

Myingyan District USDA Secretary U Aung Zan presided over the meeting together with (See page 7)



Ceremony to commemorate Union Day and support the National Convention in progress at Pyinsi model village in Natogyi Township.—MNA