Senior General Than Shwe accepts credentials of Ambassador of Cambodia

NAY PYI TAW, 3 Feb—H.E Mr Chhong Toeun, newly-accredited Ambassador of Cambodia to the Union of Myanmar presented his credentials to Senior General Than Shwe, Chairman of the State Peace and Development Council of the Union of Myanmar, at Bayintnaung Yeiktha, here at 10 a.m. today. Present on the occasion were Secretary-1 of the State Peace and Development Council Lt-Gen Thiha Thura, Deputy Minister for Foreign Affairs U Maung Myint and Director-General U Kyaw Kyaw of the Protocol Department. MNA

Chairman of the State Peace and Development Council of the Union of Myanmar Senior General Than Shwe accepts credentials of Mr Chhong Toeun, newly-accredited Ambassador of Cambodia to the Union of Myanmar at Bayintnaung Yeiktha in Nay Pyi Taw.

MNA

Senior General Than Shwe accepts credentials of Ambassador of the Socialist Republic of Vietnam

NAY PYI TAW, 3 Feb—H.E Mr Chu Cong Phung, newly-accredited Ambassador of the Socialist Republic of Vietnam to the Union of Myanmar presented his credentials to Senior General Than Shwe, Chairman of the State Peace and Development Council of the Union of Myanmar, at Bayintnaung Yeiktha, here at 10.30 a.m. today. Present on the occasion were Secretary-1 of the State Peace and Development Council Lt-Gen Thiha Thura, Deputy Minister for Foreign Affairs U Maung Myint and Director-General U Kyaw Kyaw of the Protocol Department. MNA

Senior General Than Shwe receives Mr Chu Cong Phung, newly-accredited Ambassador of the Socialist Republic of Vietnam to the Union of Myanmar at Bayintnaung Yeiktha in Nay Pyi Taw. — MNA
PERSPECTIVES

Wednesday, 4 February, 2009

Use high-yield strains of crops to achieve mechanized farming

Today, science and technology dominate other sectors. In relation to the agricultural sector, agricultural researchers focus on production of hybrid strains of crops, improving agricultural methods, and use of proportionate ration of fertilizers.

Myanmar is trying to introduce modern farming or model farming system in its bid to transform conventional into mechanized farming, which calls for broader use of high-yield quality strains.

Now, farmers across the nation are encouraged to replace usual strains of crops with high-yield ones. The Agricultural Research (Yezin) in Nay Pyi Taw Pyinmana is producing high-yield strains to meet the demand.

The new paddy strains the Agricultural Research (Yezin) has produced through research are Thukhayin, Hsinthweyin, Hsinthhuca, Yadanaote and Yehsinya (9). The per acre yield of those paddy strains is over 100 baskets. Here, farmers have to choose suitable strains of paddy.

Other crops under research are groundnut, sesame, beans and pulses, sugarcane, cotton, jute and physic nut. So, farmers have to use high-yield strains in order to boost agricultural production.

Therefore, farmers should use the strains of crops produced by the Agricultural Research (Yezin) to be able to boost their incomes and agricultural production of the nation.

Reflections on transforming economy and developing market force on 7 Feb

YANGON, 3 Feb— With the sponsorship of Dynamic Engineering & General Trading Co Ltd, the Union of Myanmar Federation of Chambers of Commerce and Industry is holding the subject-wise educative talks every month.

At 2 pm on 7 February, the UMFCCI will conduct the educative talks on the first floor of UMFCCI tower in Lanmadaw Township, here.

Professor Daw Yi Yi Myint will give lecture on “Reflections on the transforming economy and the developing market force” at the talks.

Executives and members of UMFCCI and other associations and interested persons may attend the talks.— MNA

Electric Power No. 2 Minister inspects national power grid projects

YANGON, 3 Feb— Minister for Electric Power No. 2 Maj-Gen Khin Maung Myint accompanied by officials, went to 230/33/11 KV (60 MVA) Kamanat (Bago) main power station yesterday morning, storage of construction materials, installation of Control Panel Boxes, and maintenance of batteries and stressed the need concerning the reports.

The minister inspected construction of towers and connection of power grids of 230 KV Kamanat-Thanlyn power grid (7.7 miles) and arrival of construction materials and left necessary instructions.

MNA

Foreign Affairs Minister sends message of felicitations to Sri Lankan counterpart

YANGON, 4 Feb— On the occasion of the 61st Anniversary of the Independence Day of the Democratic Socialist Republic of Sri Lanka which falls on 4th February 2009, U Nyan Win, Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Union of Myanmar, has sent a message of felicitations to His Excellency Mr Rohitha Bogollagama, Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Democratic Socialist Republic of Sri Lanka.

MNA

Applied Paddy Production Development Course commences

YANGON, 3 Feb—Myanmar Agricultural Produce Trading opened the Applied Paddy Production Development Course No. 2/2009 at the hall of Yangon Division MAPT this morning.

It was attended by Managing Director U Kyaw Htoo of MAPT, officials, responsible persons of associations and trainees.

Altogether 59 trainees are attending the two-week course.— MNA
Iraqi military puts Anbar Province under curfew

Baghdad, 3 Feb—Iraq’s military clamped a vehicle ban Monday on the Sunni-dominated province of Anbar after tribal sheikhs sent gunmen into the streets claiming Sunni rivals linked to the Shi'ite-led govt stole votes in last weekend’s elections.

The brewing crisis threatens to trigger new violence in Anbar, the vast, mostly desert territory that had been centre-stage in the Sunni insurgency until tribes there turned against al-Qaeda in Iraq two years ago.—INTERNET

Gaza rocket hits Israeli city; no injuries

Jerusalem, 3 Feb—A long-range rocket from Gaza landed in the Israeli city of Ashkelon on Tuesday as delegates from the territory’s militant Islamic Hamas rulers met in Cairo for talks with Egyptian officials striving to mediate a long-term truce with Israel.

The Grad rocket was the first of its kind to be fired at the city of 122,000 since informal cease-fires were declared separately by Israel and Hamas two weeks ago at the end of Israel’s bruising three-week-long offensive in Gaza. No one was injured in the attack, police said.

Bomber in police uniform kills 25 Afghan policemen

Kandahar, 3 Feb—A suicide bomber in a police uniform detonated his explosives inside a police training centre in southern Afghanistan on Monday, killing 25 officers and wounding at least 20, officials said. The Taleban claimed responsibility.

The bomber entered the training facility in Tirin Kot, the capital of Uruzgan Province, as the police reservists were exercising, said Juma Gul Himat, the provincial police chief.

The Interior Ministry said the attacker was disguised in a police uniform, a tactic Taleban militants have used in several high-profile attacks.

The Taleban has made a comeback in the last three years after their initial defeat following a US invasion in 2001. Southern Afghanistan is the centre of their fight against the government and international military forces, and militants control wide swathes of territory.  

Dutch PM sets up committee to investigate decision-making on Iraq

Brussels, 3 Feb—Dutch Prime Minister Jan Peter Balkenende announced Monday that a committee will be set up to investigate the decision making process which led to the Dutch government’s support for the invasion of Iraq by the United States and Britain in 2003.

The committee will be chaired by former Dutch Supreme Court president J M Davids, who can choose the other members. The committee may include one or more cabinet ministers, Balkenende said.

The committee will have access to all information it requires, including those of the intelligence, security and defence departments. Hearing of persons, but not under oath, will also be possible. The committee should present its report by 1 November, Balkenende said.

The prime minister’s announcement followed a string of revelations last month by the Dutch media, which embarrassed the government and rekindled the debate about a possible parliamentary inquiry into the Dutch government’s decision making on the Iraq war.

According to documents obtained by Dutch media, the Dutch government in 2003, under the then prime minister Balkenende, had planned to give military support to the invasion of Iraq but dropped the plan in the face of opposition from the Labor Party.—INTERNET

Iraq tribes threaten to take up arms over poll

Ramadi, 3 Feb—Tribal sheikhs who helped drive al Qaeda militants out of Western Iraq threatened on Monday to take up arms against the provincial government because of what they said was fraud in the weekend’s elections.

The election was the most peaceful in Iraq since the fall of Saddam Hussein, but the west of the country has seen tension between Sunni Arab groups, many of whom boycotted the last provincial ballot in 2005.

Anbar Province, Iraq’s vast western third, was once the heartland of the Sunni Arab insurgency against US troops but is now largely quiet, thanks to tribal guard units known as Awakening councils that helped drive out al Qaeda militants.

In one of the toughest-fought contests of the election, the tribes have challenged the Iraqi Islamic Party (IIP), a Sunni religious party which has run the province since 2005.

With the IIP claiming the results will keep it in power, Awakening leaders alleged fraud in the voting.—INTERNET

Afghan demonstrators gather at a demonstration as black smoke billows from burning tires in the background, following a US operation on their village in Qarabagh district of Ghazni, west of Kabul, Afghanistan, on 2 Feb, 2009. The US military said that its overnight raid in southeastern Ghazni province targeted a militant who coordinates attacks using roadside bombs and other weapons.—INTERNET

An Afghan man takes a photo of mangled wreckage at the site of a suicide bomb attack in the outskirts of Kabul on 1 Feb. The Pentagon said that insurgent violence was on the rise across Afghanistan and that international forces lacked the troops and resources to control the country’s south.—INTERNET

US military deaths in Afghanistan region at 573

Washington, 3 Feb—As of on Monday, 2 Feb, 2009, at least 573 members of the US military had died in Afghanistan, Pakistan and Uzbekistan as a result of the US invasion of Afghanistan in late 2001, according to the Defence Department.

The department last updated its figures on Monday at 10 am EST.

Of those, three were the result of hostile action.

Outside the Afghan region, the Defence Department reports 67 more members of the US military died in support of Operation Enduring Freedom.

Of those, three were the result of hostile action.

The military lists these other locations as targets of US military clamped a vehicle ban Monday on the Sunni-dominated province of Anbar after tribal sheikhs sent gunmen into the streets claiming Sunni rivals linked to the Shi’ite-led government stole votes in last weekend’s elections.

The brewing crisis threatens to trigger new violence in Anbar, the vast, mostly desert territory that had been centre-stage in the Sunni insurgency until tribes there turned against al-Qaeda in Iraq two years ago.—INTERNET

The committee will have access to all information it requires, including those of the intelligence, security and defence departments. Hearing of persons, but not under oath, will also be possible. The committee should present its report by 1 November, Balkenende said.

The prime minister’s announcement followed a string of revelations last month by the Dutch media, which embarrassed the government and rekindled the debate about a possible parliamentary inquiry into the Dutch government’s decision making on the Iraq war.

According to documents obtained by Dutch media, the Dutch government in 2003, under the then prime minister Balkenende, had planned to give military support to the invasion of Iraq but dropped the plan in the face of opposition from the Labor Party.—INTERNET

Iraq tribes threaten to take up arms over poll

Ramadi, 3 Feb—Tribal sheikhs who helped drive al Qaeda militants out of Western Iraq threatened on Monday to take up arms against the provincial government because of what they said was fraud in the weekend’s elections.

The election was the most peaceful in Iraq since the fall of Saddam Hussein, but the west of the country has seen tension between Sunni Arab groups, many of whom boycotted the last provincial ballot in 2005.

Anbar Province, Iraq’s vast western third, was once the heartland of the Sunni Arab insurgency against US troops but is now largely quiet, thanks to tribal guard units known as Awakening councils that helped drive out al Qaeda militants.

In one of the toughest-fought contests of the election, the tribes have challenged the Iraqi Islamic Party (IIP), a Sunni religious party which has run the province since 2005.

With the IIP claiming the results will keep it in power, Awakening leaders alleged fraud in the voting.—INTERNET

Afghan demonstrators gather at a demonstration as black smoke billows from burning tires in the background, following a US operation on their village in Qarabagh district of Ghazni, west of Kabul, Afghanistan, on 2 Feb, 2009. The US military said that its overnight raid in southeastern Ghazni province targeted a militant who coordinates attacks using roadside bombs and other weapons.—INTERNET

An Afghan man takes a photo of mangled wreckage at the site of a suicide bomb attack in the outskirts of Kabul on 1 Feb. The Pentagon said that insurgent violence was on the rise across Afghanistan and that international forces lacked the troops and resources to control the country’s south.—INTERNET

US military deaths in Afghanistan region at 573

Washington, 3 Feb—As of on Monday, 2 Feb, 2009, at least 573 members of the US military had died in Afghanistan, Pakistan and Uzbekistan as a result of the US invasion of Afghanistan in late 2001, according to the Defence Department.

The department last updated its figures on Monday at 10 am EST.

Of those, three were the result of hostile action.

Outside the Afghan region, the Defence Department reports 67 more members of the US military died in support of Operation Enduring Freedom.

Of those, three were the result of hostile action.

The military lists these other locations as targets of
**Taleban violence spreads in Afghanistan**

WASHINGTON, 3 Feb—The Pentagon said that militiant violence was on the rise across Afghanistan and that international forces lacked the troops and resources to control the country’s south.

In a report to Congress, the US Defence Department described a dramatic increase in militant attacks in the spring and summer of 2008, saying the period marked the worst violence since the Taleban’s ouster in 2001.

A resurgent Taleban was challenging the Kabul government for control of the south and east of the country, “and increasingly in the west,” the report said.

**India and IAEA sign nuclear inspections deal**

VIENNA, 3 Feb—The International Atomic Energy Agency says it has signed a nuclear inspections deal with India.

The so-called safeguards agreement is meant to give UN monitors access to 14 additional Indian civilian nuclear reactors by 2014.

Six of these reactors already fall under existing agreements.

The IAEA’s 35-member board of governors approved the agreement by consensus on 1 Aug. Approval came despite criticisms from some countries that ambiguous wording could limit international oversight of India’s reactors and undermine the international nonproliferation treaty.—Internet

**Argentina upset at Prince William’s deployment to Falklands**

BUENOS AIRES, 3 Feb—Prince William’s military deployment to the Falkland Islands has reignited the festering issue of the archipelago’s sovereignty, Argentina said on Monday.

“This circumstance only serves to once again highlight Britain’s ongoing military presence in land and sea areas that are part of the Argentine Republic’s national territories,” an aide to Foreign Minister Jorge Taima said.

Argentina claims ownership of the islands it calls the Malvinas.

Prince William, second in line to the throne, will be sent to the Falklands by the Royal Air Force to serve as a search and rescue pilot for a period of three months, after he completes his 18-month RAF course in 2009, Britain’s Daily Telegraph said on Sunday, quoting RAF News.

Britain and Argentina fought over the Falkland islands in 1982, when Argentinian forces invaded the islands, prompting then-British prime minister Margaret Thatcher to deploy naval forces to retake the territory.—Internet

**Us manufacturing sector shrinks for 12th straight month**

WASHINGTON, 3 Feb—Economic activity in the US manufacturing sector failed to grow in January for the 12th consecutive month, and the overall economy contracted for the fourth straight month, the Institute for Supply Management (ISM) reported on Monday.

The Tempe, an Arizona-based trade group, said its manufacturing index, which reflects the opinions of purchasing managers at factories, plants and utilities, registered 35.6 last month, representing an improvement from a nearly three-decade low of 32.9 in December 2008.

A reading above 50 indicates growth while a reading below 50 indicates contraction. For January, the ISM’s production index registered 32.1, up from December’s 26.3. The index for new orders, meanwhile, rose to 33.2 from a reading of 23.1 the previous month.

**Iran sends domestic satellite to orbit**

TEHERAN, 3 Feb—Iran’s state radio says the country has successfully sent its first domestically made satellite into orbit.

The Tuesday report says the satellite was launched late Monday after President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad gave the final approval.

Teheran unveiled the satellite and inaugurated its first space center in 2008.

State radio says the satellite was sent into orbit by a Safir-2, or ambassador-2 rocket. Iran has long held the goal of developing a space programme, generating unease among world leaders already concerned about its nuclear and ballistic missile programmes.—Internet

**Snow brings deaths and travel chaos to Europe**

LONDON, 3 Feb—Snow storms brought travel chaos to western Europe, grounding most flights at London-Heathrow airport after one jet slid off a taxiway and killed at least five people in storm incidents.

Two climbers died on Mount Snowdown in Wales and three people were killed in accidents and from the cold in Italy. London lay under 10 centimetres (four inches) of snow, the most recorded in the British capital in 18 years. The storms also hit France and Spain, closing roads and rail tracks, and spread as far south as Morocco.

A Cyprus Airways plane with 104 passengers came off the icy taxiway at Heathrow, the world’s busiest international airport, airport operator BAA said. No injuries were reported.

Both runways were temporarily closed, however, and Heathrow halted all flights for several hours.

British Airways called off all short-haul flights for the day. A number of other British airports were closed or had cancellations and severe delays.

Eurostar advised passengers against travelling between London and Paris on high-speed trains because of snow delays. Internet
Unemployment appeals pile up in California

LOS ANGELES, 3 Feb—California state officials are overwhelmed by a massive backlog of unemployment appeals filed by tens of thousands of jobless Californians, it was reported on Monday.

In all, a record number of 68,135 jobless people have filed unemployment appeals and the Unemployment Insurance Appeals Board (UIAB) is supposed to decide within 30 days whether the state wrongly denied an individual’s jobless benefits, the paper said.

About nine out of 10 appeals come from the newly unemployed who are denied benefits by the California Employment Development Department, according to the paper.

The number of those appeals has increased steadily since last summer as California’s unemployment rate climbed to 9.3 percent in December, when 1.7 million Californians were without jobs, the paper said.

South Korea declares bid for 2018 or 2022 World Cup

SEOUL, 3 Feb—South Korea has declared its bid to host the World Cup finals in 2018 or 2022, the Korean Football Association (KFA) said at a statement on Tuesday.

“South Korea has notified FIFA of its intention to host the 2018 or 2022 World Cup finals,” the KFA said.

The sport’s world governing body, FIFA, has asked all aspiring bidders for the two football tournaments to present their bid by 2 Feb.

Japan, the United States, Mexico, Australia, England, Russia, Indonesia and Qatar have reportedly expressed interest in hosting the World Cup finals in 2018 or 2022.

FIFA will simultaneously determine the hosts of the 2018 or 2022 World Cup at a FIFA meeting in December 2010.

Cambodia to reform commune-level policing, border security in 2009

PHNOM PENH, 3 Feb—Cambodian National Police Commissioner Neth Savoeun has pledged to reform commune-level policing and border security in 2009, said English-Khmer language newspaper the Cambodia Daily on Tuesday.

One such reform would be establishing telephone hotlines to take complaints at municipal and provincial police headquarters and “national police will check up on the situation of the network and system of administrative police across the country,” he told the annual national assembly of Cambodian police here on Monday.

In addition, boxes have been set up at all 76 commune police stations in Phnom Penh to accept comments and criticism from local residents, he said.

The system is still in trial phase, but will expand to all 24 provinces in 2009, he added.

Villagers must provide more feedback to both commune police and border police about illegal activities to help improve security, he said.

Russian space agency plans to build new space station

MOSCOW, 3 Feb—The Russian Space Agency Roscosmos is considering a plan to build a new space station as the current one approaches its retirement, officials said recently.

The new orbital station will not only inherit the role of the International Space Station (ISS) as a base for scientific experiments, but will also serve as a foundation for lunar programmes and space tours, Alexei Krasnov, director of the manned space programme at Roscosmos, said. The first module of the new station could be finished in 2020, Krasnov said.

The plan is still under discussion, and concerned parties will engage in the construction of the new orbital station before they make their final decision to terminate the service of ISS, which is designed to work until 2015, he said.

Chinese shipbuilders see profits up 50 percent in 2008, outlook gloomy

BEIJING, 3 Feb—Profits of China’s shipbuilders rose 50 percent in 2008 from the same period a year ago, despite rising material costs and the appreciation of the Renminbi, according to data released Monday by the Ministry of Industry and Information Technology (MIIT).

Profits jumped 50.5 percent to 28.34 billion yuan (4.05 billion US dollars). The industry value (MIIT). Profits jumped 50.5 percent to 28.34 billion yuan, up 61.2 percent year on year.

New orders comprised 37.7 percent of the world’s total, with a production capacity of 28.81 million deadweight tons (DWT), or 29.5 percent of the world’s total, up from 22.9 percent in 2007, according to MIIT figures.

A official with the MIIT said China’s shipbuilders had remarkably strengthened their capabilities in innovation and had improved their techniques notably in making bulk cargo ship, oil carrier and container ships.

They also had the world’s leading techniques in making ships that could meet the standards of the international classification society, according to the MIIT official.

Unemployment appeals pile up in California

Members of armed police take part in an anti-terrorism drill for the 24th Winter Universiade 2009 in Harbin, capital of northeast China’s Heilongjiang Province, on 2 Feb, 2009. An anti-terrorism drill was held on Monday to test the policemen’s capabilities of dealing with emergencies during the 24th Winter Universiade. Over 500 special equipment have been prepared to secure the universiade. —XINHUA
Prime Minister General Thein Sein receives…

(from page 16)

Also present at the meeting were Minister for Foreign Affairs U Nyan Win, Minister for National Planning and Economic Development U Soe Tha, Minister for Information Brig-Gen Kyaw Hsan, Minister for Culture Maj-Gen Khin Aung Myint, Minister for Health Dr Kyaw Myint, the director-general of the government office, the director-general of the International Organizations and Economic Department and the deputy director-general of the Protocol Department.

At the meeting, Prime Minister General Thein Sein said Mr Gambari was taken to Cyclone Nargis-affected areas. Though he should visit Pyinsalu, he was not conveyed to Pyinsalu due to time limit. Pyinsalu was devastated by the storm as it is located five ft above the sea level. The whole storm-affected areas have returned to normal thanks to the assistance of the government, the UN and international communities. Agricultural sector, fishery sector and salt businesses in the storm-affected areas have returned to normal. Not only the government but also WHO and UNICEF provided assistance, and the reconstruction and repairing of hospitals and clinics under the Ministry of Health and the hospitals and clinics have been nearing completion.

Schools were destroyed and out of them, two-thirds of the damaged schools have been reconstructed, and the government has funded the reconstruction of the remaining schools and UNICEF has also provided assistance to the reconstruction of the schools.

Eighteen cyclone shelters are under construction in the storm-affected areas. The cyclone shelters have a seating capacity of 500 and 1000 and are being constructed at the cost of US$ 800,000 per shelter.
Prime Minister ...  
NAY PYI TAW, 3 Feb—Prime Minister General Thein Sein of the Union of Myanmar received Special Advisor to the Secretary-General of the United Nations Mr Ibrahim Agboola Gambari at Zeyathiri Beikman in Yangon on Konmyinthya in Yangon at 3 p.m. today. Also present at the meeting together with Prime Minister General Thein Sein were Minister for Foreign Affairs U Nyan Win, Minister for National Planning and Economic Development U Soe Tha, Minister for Information Brig-Gen Kyaw Hsan, Minister for Culture Maj-Gen Khin Aung Myint, the Director-General of the Government Office, the Director-General of International Organizations and Economic Department and the Deputy Director-General of Protocol Department under the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

The Spokes Authoritative Team of the State Peace and Development Council met with Special Advisor to the Secretary-General of the United Nations Mr Ibrahim Agboola Gambari at the five-storey guest house in Yangon at 1 p.m. today for the second time.

Also present on the occasion were Leader of the Spokes Authoritative Team of the SPDC Minister for Information Brig-Gen Kyaw Hsan, members Minister for Foreign Affairs U Nyan Win and Minister for Culture Maj-Gen Khin Aung Myint.

Mr Gambari left Yangon by air in the evening.

Prime Minister General Thein Sein felicitates Sri Lankan counterpart
NAY PYI TAW, 4 Feb—On the occasion of the 61st Anniversary of the Independence Day of the Democratic Socialist Republic of Sri Lanka which falls on 4th February 2009, General Thein Sein, Prime Minister of the Union of Myanmar, has sent a message of felicitations to Mr Ratnasiri Wickramanayaka, Prime Minister of the Democratic Socialist Republic of Sri Lanka. —MNA

Prime Minister receives UNSG’s Special Advisor
NAY PYI TAW, 3 Feb—Prime Minister General Thein Sein of the Union of Myanmar received Special Advisor to the Secretary-General of the United Nations Mr Ibrahim Agboola Gambari at Zeyathiri Beikman in Yangon. —MNA

Senior General Than Shwe receives newly-accredited Ambassador Mr Ye Dabo of the People’s Republic of China to the Union of Myanmar at Bayintnaung Yeiktha in Nay Pyi Taw (News on page 16).—MNA

Therefore, the UN should start to lift the economic sanction and restrictions on granting visas. For example, it looks like a person who is forced to run quickly while his legs are tied together. However, Myanmar has taken measures which should be taken as part of efforts for cooperation with the UN.

The UN Secretary-General’s visit to Myanmar depends on time and circumstances of the country and the visit would be taken into consideration according to time and circumstances. The issue of extending the life of Tripartite Core Group will be taken into consideration, the Prime Minister added. There were talks with the Foreign Affairs Minister and the issue will be kept open till June, 2009. Measures will be taken as necessary after June, 2009.

Next, Mr Gambari said the UN Chief and he will act as partners of Myanmar and assistance will be provided for Myanmar’s political and economic progress. Myanmar should be peaceful, prosperous, united and democratic one. This is the requirement of the nation and its people.

Prime Minister General Thein Sein said as Mr Gambari saw the past political achievements of Myanmar one after another, he will see such achievements in the future. He said politics and economy are interrelated. If there is economic stability, there will be political stability. Despite many difficulties, the government is trying its best.

If one’s legs are tied by ropes, it is impossible for him to run. His legs need to be untied. Being a member of the UN, Myanmar will cooperate with the UN.

The Prime Minister wished Mr Gambari well in the new year and nice trip back home.—MNA

4-2-09 NL
Prime Minister inspects modern agriculture (Model farming system) in special zone in Yangon East District

Prime Minister General Thein Sein, accompanied by Lt-Gen Myint Swe of the Ministry of Defence, Chairman of Yangon Division Peace and Development Council Commander of Yangon Command Brig-Gen Win Myint, Chairman of Yangon City Development Committee Mayor Brig-Gen Aung Thein Lin, the director-general of the Government Office, departmental heads and officials, inspected modern agriculture (Model farming system) in special zone in Yangon East District this morning.

At the block No 1 the special zone-1, the Prime Minister was briefed on progress of work in the modern agriculture special zone by the chairman of Dagon International Co Ltd, Htoo Trading Co Ltd and Golden Dragon Co Ltd, entrepreneurs and departmental officials.

The commander, the mayor and officials reported on assistance provided in each sector regarding modern agriculture.

The Prime Minister gave instructions on cultivation of high quality paddy such as Hsinthweyin and Hsinthwelatt, breeding of fish, growing of vegetables, producing seeds, conducting research and courses on modern cultivation techniques for farmers and making efforts for turning out major model farm.

They viewed construction of canals and irrigation system in block No 3 of special zone, cultivation of summer paddy through irrigation and land preparation.

The Prime Minister and party inspected cultivation of 125 acres of summer paddy and 350 acres of ploughed farmland in block No 5 of special zone by Htoo Trading Co Ltd.

The Prime Minister went to special zone-2 in Dagon Myothit (South) Township where Chairman of Golden Dragon Co Ltd U Win Myint reported on work being undertaken.

The Prime Minister inspected erecting lamp-posts and power supply, construction of pump stations and construction of canals and cultivation of summer paddy.

The Prime Minister fulfilled the requirements and gave necessary instructions.

---

State affairs are the internal affairs to be handled by the people themselves

SPDC Spokes Authoritative Team holds first meeting with UNSG’s Special Advisor Mr Gambari

NAV PI TAW, 3 Feb.—The Spokes Authoritative Team of the State Peace and Development Council and Special Advisor of the United Nations Secretary-General Mr Ibrahim Agboolu Gambari held the first meeting at the five-storey guest house in Yangon at 8.45 a.m. on 1 February.

Present at the meeting were Leader of the team Mr Minn for Information Brig-Gen Kyaw Hsan and members Minister for Foreign Affairs U Nyan Win and Minister for Culture Maj-Gen Khin Aung Myint.

Discussions of Mr Gambari

Mr Gambari said that the UN Secretary-General wished Myanmar a success in building a peaceful developed democratic nation at a time when the international community was seeing changes around the world; that the cooperation of the UN, Myanmar and international community in the post-Nargis brought about development of the storm-hit areas; that similarly he hoped they would continue to cooperate in future programmes; that he had three purposes in his trip: to review the points he had proposed in the previous trip, to hold a dialogue between the government, NLD and Daw Aung San Suu Kyi, and to make arrangements for the UN Secretary-General’s trip to Myanmar; that he would like to call for dialogues as progress could be made through dialogues; that political prisoners were among the 9002 released, so the UN Secretary-General welcomed that; that so he hoped the government would continue to release political prisoners; that moreover he suggested to review long prison terms; that the seven-step Road Map was going to be completed, so all the persons concerned at home should have opportunities to participate in the process and the international community needed to accept it widely; that so he would like to know the programmes to form a committee for holding elections and prescribe laws; that previous trip he had suggested to set up a regular communication system between the government and the office of the UN Secretary-General and him; that he proposed that the government accept regular visits of his staff; and that both the UN Secretary-General and he were ready to work together with the government in the democratic transition.

We are now implementing railroad, motor road, hydropower and long-term natural disaster preparedness projects in Rakhine coastal region.

Prime Minister Tehin Sein views thriving summer paddy plantation of Htoo Trading Ltd in Block No. 3 of modern agriculture (Model farming system) in special zone (1). —MNA

Clarification of Minister Brig-Gen Kyaw Hsan

Next, Minister Brig-Gen Kyaw Hsan said: At the outset, we are pleased to extend a warm welcome to Your Excellency and members. Moreover, we would also be glad to express our great pleasure to have this opportunity to meet with Your Excellency again. This is Your Excellency’s seventh visit to Myanmar and the fifth meeting with the Spokes Authoritative Team of the State Peace and Development Council. In this regard, we assume that Your Excellency now has a broad range of knowledge on political, economic and social conditions of our nation, accomplishments in the national reconsolidation, and the aspirations of the people today.

Our country has been practising the independent and active foreign policy and also extending relations with neighbouring countries, regional countries and global countries in accord with the Five Principles of Peaceful Co-Existence. In addition, being a member of United Nations, we are continuously cooperating with the global body and it is the main point of our foreign policy. We are cooperating with the UN at present in all seriousness, and we will continue to do so in the future also.

Similarly, we highly regard the role of the UN Secretary-General and Your Excellency’s efforts. We hope that Your Excellency, who has understood well the real conditions of Myanmar, will play a constructive role.

So, we on our part will render cooperation for the greater (See page 10)
Ovadacariya Sayadaws give advice on construction of Uppatasanti Pagoda

Nay Pyi Taw, 3 Feb — A ceremony to seek advice from Ovadacariya Sayadaws on construction of Uppatasanti Pagoda was held at a religious building in the compound of the pagoda today.

Chairman of the leading committee for construction of Uppatasanti Pagoda Secretary-1 of the State Peace and Development Council Lt-Gen Thaha Thuura Tin Aung Myint Oo attended the ceremony and presented offerings to the Sayadaws.

Present were Member of the Central Working Committee of the Sangha Presiding Sayadaw of Ngwetaung Monastery in Tatkon Agga Maha Bhaddanta Paññasiri and Members of the Sangha, Commander of Nay Pyi Taw Command Maj-Gen Wai Lwin, members of the leading committee and sub-committees for construction of the pagoda, invited guests and donors.

The ceremony was opened with three times recitation of Namo Tassa and the congregation led by Secretary-1 Lt-Gen Thaha Thuura Tin Aung Myint Oo took the Five Precepts from Sayadaw Agga Maha Pandita Bhuddantti Paññasiri.

Afterwards, the Sayadaws and wellwishers presented offerings to the Sayadaw and Members of the Sangha. Secretary-1 Lt-Gen Thaha Thuura Tin Aung Myint Oo supplicated on matters related to construction of the pagoda to the Sayadaws.

Secretary-1 Lt-Gen Thaha Thuura Tin Aung Myint Oo supplicates on religious objects to be enshrined at Uppatasanti Pagoda to Ovadacariya Sayadaws.

Secretary-1 Lt-Gen Thaha Thuura Tin Aung Myint Oo supplicates on religious objects to be enshrined at Uppatasanti Pagoda to Ovadacariya Sayadaws.

According to democracy practice, the minority will have to accept the majority’s wish. It will be undemocratic if the constitution approved by the majority is to be reviewed and amended because of the minority’s wish.
The people are worried about harming or causing hindrance to the prevailing development due to instability and lack of peace in the country. Therefore, they are willingly supporting the peaceful transition to democracy to maintain the national development.
State affairs are the internal... (from page 10)

Myanmar. Therefore, the Government, seeking advice from economic experts, has been taking pre-emptive measures.

Now, I am going to explain the third desire of the country. The seven-step Road Map is the most suitable and appropriate to bring about democracy.

We firmly believe that the way to bring about democracy peacefully and harmlessly is the seven-step Road Map.

SPDC Spokes Authoritative... (from page 9)

Your Excellency has explained a principle saying that the country concerned has to present its requirements first. Hence, we would like to inform Your Excellency that after the formation of the Election Commission, it will make contacts if there are any requirements for technical assistance.

Your Excellency has requested to establish a regular contact system or to allow Your Excellency or one of your staffs to make regular visits to Myanmar for the effectiveness and success of the role of the good office of Secretary-General. In connection with his majesty, we have learned that Your Excellency can use other means in addition to the method of sending a staff to the respective country. For example, work can be carried out through the UN agencies in Myanmar or through the Myanmar representatives at the UN. Moreover, you or your assistant can make contact with us as necessary to visit Myanmar.

We have known that the UN Secretary-General wishes to visit Myanmar. Concerning the matter, we should say that it depends on time and situation. As you have been already working on behalf of the Secretary-General, we believe that the work is going well.

The approval of the State Constitution with 92.48 percent public support amounted not only to ratification of the constitution but also to giving mandate to carry out the democratization process in accordance with the constitution. It also means an approval to go ahead with the process according to the seven-step Road Map. At the referendum, the constitution was ratified with the 92.48 percent yes votes against the 6.1 percent no votes. According to democratization practice, the minority will have to accept the majority’s wish. It will be undemocratic if the constitution approved by the majority is to be reviewed and amended because of the minority’s wish. All who cherish and favour democracy will have to accept the essence of democracy. In all seriousness, I would like to say that we will carry on the democratization process through the seven-step Road Map in accord with the mandate of the majority of the people.

Our democratization process is the process favoured by the Myanmar people as well as the UN and the international community. The seven-step Road Map is the most suitable, appropriate and harmless to carry out the democratization process in a peaceful and stable manner.

Democracy reform must be based on the prevailing condition. It will be mature step by step. We will get less advantage and much disadvantage if the democratization process is based on the wishes of the people rather than on the prevailing conditions. As regards the matter, there are many international examples from which we can take lessons.

We believe that we are on the right path and democracy is within our reach. Trying to reverse the process will bring no benefits, and this cannot be done at all. I would like to emphasize that it is time the UN and international community and those who oppose the Road Map joined hands for soonest completion of our democracy transition.

For the democracy to become mature and flourishing, we should nurture it from its foundation. And according to prevailing condition, it is the most appropriate method.

Thank you.

Speech of Mr Gambari

Mr Gambari said that Myanmar was pursuing constant cooperation with the United Nations as its main foreign policy, and he thanked Myanmar for its acceptance of the proposal for his seventh visit and arrangements for his convenience.

He also thanked Myanmar for her hospitality and cooperation, and said that moreover he valued the personal friendship; and that he thanked the nation for the arrangements for him to meet all the persons he should have met in the trip.

He again thanked the government for its amenable attitude and arrangements for him to meet with Daw Aung San Suu Kyi and party including NLD executives, and with Shan Nationalities League for Democracy.

He said that the meetings could make significant contribution to understanding the situation of Myanmar; that he would report that when he met the UN Secretary-General; that he was under constant pressure to achieve tangible results in the trip; that he expected the meetings would be tangible results; that official contacts included the UN Secretary-General welcomed the release of prisoners by the Myanmar government; that he requested the government to continue to release prisoners from the humanitarian point of view; that he recognized the efforts the government was making to hold a dialogue with Daw Aung San Suu Kyi, and he would like the government to continue to do what should be done; that he thanked for the explanations about preparations for formation of the commission for holding elections and promulgation of Election Law; that he would like to call for emergence of a process that was acceptable to all in the carrying out those tasks; that he was given permission to meet respective ministers regarding Economic Forum, that he would bring counter proposals in the next trip; that he honoured the Myanmar government’s cooperation with the UN and progress in post-Nargis; that it was required to value the experiences of the Tripartite Core Group; that he would like to suggest to extend the term of the Tripartite Core Group; that he expected that the cooperation could be boosted through long-term cooperation; that furthermore he was in a mood to visit Myanmar for the next time for his role; that he would like to reiterate that the UN Secretary-General was willing to work together with the government; and that he would like to visit again together with the UN Secretary-General.

The meeting ended at 2 p.m.

MNA
Japan’s Hitachi posts 4.0 billion dollar nine-month loss

Tokyo, 3 Feb—Japanese high-tech giant Hitachi reported Tuesday a 4.0-billion-dollar net loss for the nine months to December and maintained its forecast to end the year deep in the red. Hitachi Ltd reported a loss of 356.9 billion yen for the first three quarters of the fiscal year, against a year-earlier loss of 559 million yen.

The electronics and engineering giant, which is slashing up to 7,000 jobs, is bracing for a 700-billion-yen loss for the full financial year to March as the global economic slowdown crushes demand for electronic goods. Japan’s export-dependent companies have also been hit hard by a strong yen, which reduces the value of their overseas earnings.

Hitachi said it made a net loss of 371 billion yen in the fiscal third quarter to December, more than wiping out profits made earlier in the year.—Internet

CLAIMS DAY NOTICE

MV GATI MAJESTIC VOY NO (-)

Consignees of cargo carried on MV GATI MAJESTIC VOY NO (-) are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on 4.2.2009 and cargo will be discharged into the premises of M.L.T.T where it will lie at the consignee’s risk and expenses and subject to the byelaws and conditions of the Port of Yangon.

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

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

SHIPPING AGENCY DEPARTMENT
MYANMA PORT AUTHORITY
AGENT FOR: M/S GATI COAST TO COAST
Phone No: 256908/378316/376797

CLAIMS DAY NOTICE

MV KOTA TEGAP VOY NO (429)

Consignees of cargo carried on MV KOTA TEGAP VOY NO (429) are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on 3.2.2009 and cargo will be discharged into the premises of A.W.P.T where it will lie at the consignee’s risk and expenses and subject to the byelaws and conditions of the Port of Yangon.

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

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

SHIPPING AGENCY DEPARTMENT
MYANMA PORT AUTHORITY
AGENT FOR: M/S ADVANCE CONTAINER LINES
Phone No: 256908/378316/376797

CLAIMS DAY NOTICE

MV VASCO DA GAMA VOY NO (145)

Consignees of cargo carried on MV VASCO DA GAMA VOY NO (145) are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on 4.2.2009 and cargo will be discharged into the premises of A.W.P.T where it will lie at the consignee’s risk and expenses and subject to the byelaws and conditions of the Port of Yangon.

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

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

SHIPPING AGENCY DEPARTMENT
MYANMA PORT AUTHORITY
AGENT FOR: M/S INTERASIA LINES
Phone No: 256908/378316/376797

Macy’s to cut 7,000 jobs, slash dividend

New York, 3 Feb—Macy’s Inc. announced Monday that it will eliminate 7,000 jobs, almost 4 percent of its work force, and cut capital spending, reduce its contributions to its employees’ retirement funds and slash its dividend to preserve cash amid a severe pullback in consumer spending.

The Cincinnati-based department store chain also announced the national rollout of a plan to localize merchandising to specific markets, which it began in some regions last year.
South Korean company bus plunges into Philippine ravine, 19 hurt

MANILA, 3 Feb—A bus carrying at least 50 workers of South Korean construction firm Hanjin Heavy Industries, Inc plunged into a ravine in northern Philippines, wounding at least 19, local media reported on Tuesday.

Police said the bus, owned by a local contractor of the South Korean firm, was racing with two other buses when its driver lost control of the wheels near Hanjin's facilities in Subic town of Zambales province.

The injured, whose nationalities are not immediately clear, were brought to two hospitals, local TV network GMA News said.

The report quoted hospital staff saying at least two are in critical conditions while most of the others suffered only bruises.—Internet

Somalis say AU force kills 18 civilians

MOGADISHU, 3 Feb—African Union peacekeepers opened fire on Monday on civilian vehicles and fatally shot 18 people after an AU vehicle was hit by a land mine, officials and a witness said.

The peacekeepers fired at three minibus taxis carrying civilians after the land mine damaged an AU vehicle in the Somali capital, Mogadishu, said the city's deputy mayor, Abdirahim Shawey. AU peacekeeping force spokesman Bahoku Barigye said the Ugandan soldiers started shooting at people in the three buses wildly.

Ali Muse, one of the coordinators of Mogadishu's ambulance service, said the service transported 18 dead and 11 people wounded from the scene of the violence. Muse said the dead and wounded had gunshot wounds.—Internet

Gunmen fire on Peru attorney general's car

LIMA, 3 Feb—A top prosecutor says gunmen tried to kill Peru's attorney general, who is heading a high-profile corruption investigation.

Prosecutor Jose Pelaez says on Saturday's attack on Attorney General Gladys Echaiz was an assassination attempt—not a robbery, as officials earlier suggested.

He said on Monday that many prosecutors are being threatened for doing their jobs.

Officials say nobody was hurt in the shooting in central Lima and police are hunting for the two attackers.

Echaiz heads investigations into a bribery scandal involving state oil executives and an illegal wiretapping ring allegedly run by Peruvian navy officers.—Internet

Goat detained over armed robbery

Police in Nigeria are holding a goat on suspicion of attempted armed robbery.

Vigilantes took the black and white beast to the police saying it was an armed robber who had used black magic to transform himself into a goat to escape arrest after trying to steal a Mazda 323.

"The group of vigilante men came to report that while they were on patrol they saw some hoodlums attempting to rob a car. They pursued them. However one of them escaped while the other turned into a goat," Kwara state police spokesman Tunde Mohammed told Reuters by telephone.

"We cannot confirm the story, but the goat is in our custody. We cannot base our information on something mystical. It is something that has to be proved scientifically, that a human being turned into a goat," he said.

Belief in witchcraft is widespread in parts of Nigeria, Africa's most populous nation. Residents came to the police station to see the goat, photographed in one national newspaper on its knees next to a pile of straw.

Mobile 'bird flu' from Russia found in Indonesia

A mobile virus that had only previously been seen in Russia, has now been found on an Indonesian cell phone, the leading Russian antivirus programmer, Kaspersky Lab reports. Experts say the spread of the virus will increase.

The as yet unnamed virus is a Trojan and takes control of the victim's mobile account, and steals money from it.

Those at risk are phones which run the Symbian file system for mobile devises and have SMS money transfer enabled. After infecting the system, the virus operates by sending unauthorised SMS texts to a service number requesting a money transfer from the victims account.

As wireless phone and PDA networks become more numerous and more complex, it has become increasingly difficult to secure them against viruses. Though a major mobile epidemic is still to come, a few viruses have already been released.

Tortoise thieves make quick getaway

Ten rare and expensive tortoises have been stolen from a private museum in Singapore, its third theft in two years, local media reported on Monday. The thieves struck on Saturday, escaping with tortoises worth $575,000 ($49,730) that were on display at the Live Turtle and Tortoise Museum. Three endangered radiated tortoises, one of the rarest tortoises in the world, and seven Indian star tortoises were stolen, owner Danny Tan told local media.

I opened the tortoise museum to educate the public about tortoises, yet thieves happen. Of course I feel disappointed," Tan said. "Tortoise theft is illegal due to their endangered status, while Indian star tortoises are banned as pets in Singapore. Police said they were investigating.

Teams play the video game “counter-strike” in Cologne, Germany. Spending more hours watching television or playing video games as a teenager may lead to depression in young adults, according to a study published on 2 Feb, 2009. Internet

Performers from the Tourism Authority of Thailand's Thai dance group pose before a rehearsal at the People's Association headquarters in Singapore ahead of on Friday's Chingay Street and Floats Parade. About 4,000 local and international performers will participate in the annual parade on Friday and on Saturday according to the organizer.
**SPORTS**

**Bosingwa escapes FA action**

LONDON, 3 Feb—ChelseadefenderJose
Bosingwaescaped any
disciplinary action Mon-
day for deliberately kick-
ingYossiBenayoun in the
back during the Blues’ 2-0
Premier League loss to
Liverpoolat Anfield on
Sunday.

Bosingwa’s reckless act late in the match looked a far more blatant foul than the challenge which saw Chelsea and EnglandmidfielderFrankLampard sent-off on the hour mark.

**Arshavin joins Arsenal till 2012**

London, 3 Feb—Russia
ternational midfielder
Andrei Arshavin of Zenit
St Petersburg has joined
Arsenal till June 2012 for
12 million pounds (13.3
million euros), sources at
the Premier League club said
on Monday.

The Gunners are now
merely waiting on the Pre-
miere League to sign all
the necessary paperwork
for the deal to be made offi-
cial.

The fee was far from the initial asking price the
reigning UEFA Cup winners wanted of 20 million
pounds, but included a substantial performance-linked
bonus.

Conflicting signals had been emerging from Arse-
nal’s Emirates stadium and Russia throughout that
as the 1700GMT deadline came and went and a Zenit club
spokesman had even said the deal had fallen through.

The deal apparently hit a last minute snag when Zenit
demanded a portion of Arshavin’s signing on fee.

But other Russia news agencies were reporting that a
deal had been struck on a three-and-a-half year contract
between Arse
nal and Zenit.

Gazeta.ru site announced that Arshavin, one of the
stars at Euro 2008, had passed his medical and was now
ready missing Tiger
Woods birdied the final
round at the Buick Invitational.

**South Africans go ‘wild’ as Open returns**

JOHANNESBURG, 3 Feb—Local ‘wildcards’ Rik de Voest and Raven Klaasen upset
Spanish opponents Monday as the SA Tennis Open returned to the ATP scene after
a 14-year absence.

De Voest always had the edge over sixth seed Ivan Navarro en route to a 6-3, 6-
4 win while Raven Klaasen overcame early nerves to oust Ruben Ramirez Hidalgo
6-3, 7-5 at the Tuscan-style Montecasino entertainment centre.

The tournament began with Leonardo Mayer outplaying Sergio Roitman 6-2, 6-
4 in an all-Argentine duel and German Simon Gruel was another straight-set
winner, eliminating Romanian Victor Crives 6-2, 6-4 on the second court.

Warm, overcast weather greeted competitors at a venue transformed from
car park to four courts within a few months and South Africans did not have to wait long
for something to celebrate.

**Mediate withdraws from Buick Invitational**

SAN DIEGO, 3 Feb—Already missing Tiger
Woods as he recovers from knee surgery, Torrey
Pines lost the other half of
its US Open memory when Rocco Mediate
withdrew Monday from the Buick Invitational.

The Buick Invitational starts Thursday at Torrey
Pines, the public course that staged a riveting US
Open last June when Woods had been in the final
hole to force a playoff against Mediate, then ral-
lied the next day to beat him in 19 holes.

Woods is the four-time defending champion at the
Buick Invitational, but he is not expected to return
to competition until the end of the month at the ear-
est. Mediate, whose appeal increased because of
his everyman qualities, cited personal reasons for
pulling out.

**Quaresma joins Chelsea on loan**

LONDON, 3 Feb—Ricardo Quaresma has
joined Chelsea on loan from Inter’s Milan for the rest of the season, the
English Premier League side said on Monday.

The London club added
on their official website that the Premier League had ratified the deal, which
was announced some two hours after Monday’s
1700GMT transfer win-
dow deadline had passed.

Quaresma, 25, a winger
who can play on either
flank, became the sixth
Portuguese player at
Stamford Bridge follow-
ing the pre-season arriv-
als of Deco and Jose
Bosingwa. He has also
worked under Blues boss
Luiz Felipe Scolari at in-
ternational level, includ-
ing during Euro 2008.

However he fell out of
favour with former Chelsea
manager Jose
Mourinho at Inter, whom
he joined before the start of
this season.

The former Porto and
Barcelona forward was
boomed by Inter’s own fans
during the recent 1-1 draw
with Torino where he shot
over the bar after coming on as a second-half sub-
inute.

Chelsea were left five
points behind league lead-
ers Manchester United af-
fter losing 2-0 to title rivals
Liverpool on Sunday.

**Keane rejoinstTottenham from Liverpool**

LONDON, 3 Feb—Robbie Keane rejoined
Tottenham Hotspur from Liverpool on Monday’s
transfer deadline day barely
six months after leaving the
London club for their Pre-
nier League rivals.

“It was a difficult deci-
sion to make to leave
Tottenham in the summer,”
Republic of Ireland striker
Keane told Tottenham’s
official website, who has rejoined on a four-year deal,
with the fee starting at a reported 12 million pounds
before rising with add-ons.

That would see Tottenham making a tidy profit after
selling Keane to Liverpool for 20 million pounds in
July.

However Keane, speaking ahead of what could be
his second debut for the club, against arch rivals
Arsenal, on Sunday, said: “It proved not to be the right
move for me.

“I know some Spurs fans will feel I let them down
by leaving but I can assure them I shall be giving my
all for this club.

“We’ve got to get on and fight our way up that
league table,” added Keane, who returns to White Hart
Lane with Spurs just a point above the drop zone.

Tottenham, criticised by Liverpool manager Rafael
Benitez for the way in which they made their interest
in Keane public this month, were delighted to have
the 28-year-old forward back in their ranks.

“We never wanted Robbie to leave in the summer,”
acknowledged the six years dedicated service he
gave this club and reluctantly let him go,” said Spurs
chairman Daniel Levy.—Internet
Four plead guilty to US election night violence

NEW YORK, 3 Feb—Four New York men have pleaded guilty to a string of racially motivated assaults on the night Barack Obama was elected as the first Black US President, a court spokesman said on Monday.

The three assaults in the New York City borough of Staten Island on 4 November targeted Black men, court documents said. The accused ringleader, Ralph Nicodetti, 18, pleaded guilty in US District Court in Brooklyn to taking part in assaults that included striking a teenager with a metal pipe, pushing another man to the ground and driving a car into a third man.

The third victim was seriously injured and remained in a coma for several weeks after the attack, court papers said. As a condition of his plea, Nicodetti agreed to a sentence of 12 years in prison, although the length is subject to a judge’s approval, said court spokesman Robert Nardozza.

Three other men—Brian Carranza, 21, and Michael Contreras and Bryan Garaventa, both 18—pleaded guilty to conspiring to commit hate crime assaults, Nardozza said. Each faces up to 10 years in prison.—MNA/Reuters
Senior General Than Shwe accepts credentials of Ambassador of the People’s Republic of China

NAY PYI TAW, 3 Feb—Mr Ye Dabo, newly-accredited Ambassador of the People’s Republic of China to the Union of Myanmar presented his credentials to Senior General Than Shwe, Chairman of the State Peace and Development Council of the Union of Myanmar, at Bayintnaung Yeiktha, here at 11 a.m. today. Present on the occasion were Secretary-1 of the State Peace and Development Council Lt-Gen Thaha Thura Tin Aung Myint Oo, Deputy Minister for Foreign Affairs U Maung Myint and Director-General U Kyaw Kyaw of the Protocol Department.

MNA

Senior General Than Shwe felicitates Sri Lankan President

NAY PYI TAW, 4 Feb—On the occasion of the 61st Anniversary of the Independence Day of the Democratic Socialist Republic of Sri Lanka which falls on 4th February 2009, 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 Mr Mahinda Rajapaksa, President of the Democratic Socialist Republic of Sri Lanka.—MNA

Economic sanctions have damaged human rights and caused unemployment.

Prime Minister General Thein Sein receives Special Advisor to Secretary-General of UN

NAY PYI TAW, 3 Feb — Prime Minister of the Union of Myanmar General Thein Sein received Mr Ibrahim Agboola Gambari, Special Advisor to the Secretary-General of the United Nations, at Zeyathiri Beikman in Yangon today.

(See page 6)

Prime Minister General Thein Sein receives Mr Ibrahim Agboola Gambari, Special Advisor to the UN Secretary-General. — MNA