Prime Minister General Thein Sein to attend 14th ASEAN Summit

NAY PYI TAW, 24 Feb—At the invitation of H.E Mr Abhisit Vejjajiva, Prime Minister of the Kingdom of Thailand, General Thein Sein, Prime Minister of the Union of Myanmar will be attending the 14th ASEAN Summit scheduled to be held in Hua Hin, Thailand, in the near future.—MNA

As education opportunities within reach, students should try to become outstanding intellectuals and intelligentsia

PM looks into progress in storm-hit regions in Ayeyawady Division

Arrangements are being made for establishment of technical school in which youths in Pyin Khayaing are able to seek vocational knowledge such as carpentry, masonry, lathe skills, mechanics and electronics both theoretically and practically.

Chairman of National Disaster Preparedness Central Committee Prime Minister General Thein Sein inspects the new two-storey building of Chaungwa BEHS (Branch) in Labutta Township.—MNA

Chairman of National Disaster Preparedness Central Committee Prime Minister General Thein Sein looks into construction of Yazudaing Bridge in Mawlamyinegyun Township.—MNA

Chairman of Ayeyawady Division Peace and Development Council Commander of South-West Command Maj-Gen Kyaw Swe, the ministers, the deputy ministers, the Director-General of Government Office, and departmental officials, on 22 February, went to Integrated Farm of Division Fisheries Department in Nga-aik-chaung in Pathein and inspected water convolvulus, chilli, roselle, onion tops and (See page 8)
**UPGRADING OF SUMPRABUM-PUTOAO ROAD IN PROGRESS**

* 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

_Nay Pyi Taw, 23 Feb—Maj-Gen Ohn Myint, Chairman of the Kachin State Peace and Development Council, inspects the Mulashidee bridge project of the nation._

In Mulashidee, he inspected durability of the Mulashidee suspension bridge and conferred on certificates those who passed examinations.

_Maj-Gen Ohn Myint_ presented the certificates to the people who passed the exams. He also visited the Putao District Public Works department and discussed regional development with the officials. He further inspected the bridge and discussed durability with the local people.

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Win, who accompanied Maj-Gen Ohn Myint, presented gifts and foodstuff to students.

After visiting Putao Station, Maj-Gen Ohn Myint inspected Malikha Hotel project at Mulashidee village in the township. He then met with the departmental personnel at the hotel and discussed regional development undertakings. His tour included the inspection of the durability of the Mulashidee suspension bridge, situation of the Putao District Public Works department, and discussed regional development with the officials. He further inspected the bridge and discussed durability with the local people.

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Iran to begin operation of 1st nuclear power plant

Tehran, 23 Feb—Iran’s first nuclear plant will begin long-delayed pilot operations on Wednesday, the state atomic energy agency said.

A nuclear official in Russia, which is helping build the plant, however, said no major milestone is expected on that day.

“The pilot stage operation of the power plant will start on Wednesday,” Iranian atomic agency spokesman Mohsen Delaviz told the state news agency on Sunday. He added that the preliminary phase will take place during a visit by Sergei Kiriyenko, the head of Russia’s state nuclear agency.

The long-awaited, 1,000-megawatt light-water reactor, which was built in the southern Iranian port of Bushehr with the help of Russia under a $1 billion contract, was previously scheduled to become operational in fall 2008. Some 700 Iranian engineers were trained in Russia to operate the power plant.

Rosatom spokesman Sergei Novikov, however, said no major milestone in the preparations for Bushehr’s start-up is expected during Kiriyenko’s visit.

Phone call, mysterious speed-boats threaten Mumbai whole day

New Delhi, 23 Feb—The Indian financial capital Mumbai lived a day of high tension Sunday as the city’s railway stations received a phone call threatening bombing attacks and fishermen reported seeing two mysterious speed-boats off the coast of the city.

The Coast Guard and Mumbai Police were put on alert after fishermen reported sighting two unidentified speed-boats Sunday afternoon off the north Mumbai coast, the Indo-Asian News Service reported quoting an official source.

Some fishermen saw the mysterious speedboats around 110 kilometres to the north near Tarapur, “where sensitive installations of national importance are located,” said the report.

The Police in Mumbai Sunday also staged a re-search operations in the city’s railway stations after receiving a phone call threatening to blow up four train stations of the city.

The Police said nothing substantial has been found and the threat call could be a hoax.—MNA/Xinhua

Iraqi search for recyclables on a garbage dump near Najaf, Iraq, on 20 Feb, 2009.—INTERNET

US military deaths in Iraq war at 4,247

Washington, 23 Feb—As of Sunday, 22 Feb, 2009, at least 4,247 members of the US military had died in the Iraq war since it began in March 2003.

The figure includes eight military civilians killed in action. At least 3,411 military personnel died as a result of hostile action, according to the military’s numbers.

The British military has reported 179 deaths: Italy, 33; Ukraine, 18; Poland, 21; Bulgaria, 13; Spain, 11; Denmark, seven; El Salvador, five; Slovakia, four; Latvia and Georgia, three each; Estonia, Netherlands, Thailand and Romania, two each; and Australia, Hungary, Kazakhstan and South Korea, one death each.—INTERNET

14 militants killed in southern Afghanistan

Kandahar, 23 Feb—A battle just outside southern Afghanistan’s largest city has killed at least six Taleban fighters, while an air strike against militants elsewhere in the south killed eight, officials said Sunday. A battle in the Panjwayi district — 15 miles (25 kilometers) west of Kandahar city — began late Saturday after Taleban militants ambushed a police patrol, wounding two officers, said Abdullah Khan, the province’s deputy police chief.

NATO and Afghan forces responded, unleashing bombs that could be heard by residents in Kandahar city. Khan said at least six militants have been killed in the fighting, which continued into Sunday. In neighboring Helmand Province, an air strike on a minivan killed eight militants late Saturday, said Daud Ahmadi, the governor’s spokesman. Ahmadi said an informant told the government that insurgents were riding in the vehicle and authorities told coalition military officials, which hit it with an air strike.—INTERNET

Iraq accuses lawmaker of bomb attacks

Baghdad, 23 Feb—The government of Shi’ite Prime Minister Nuri al-Maliki is seeking the arrest of a Sunni politician accused of masterminding a string of attacks including a suicide bombing inside the Iraqi Parliament.

Officials have asked Parliament to lift the immunity of Mohammed al-Daini, a member of the Iraqi National Dialogue Front, after issuing a warrant for his arrest and detaining two of his bodyguards, said Qassim Moussawi, a military spokesman.

Moussawi broadcast tapes at a news conference of the bodyguards, Riyadh Ibrahim al-Daini and Alaa al-Maliki, apparently recounting their involvement in kidnappings, mortar attacks and car bomb attacks ordered by Daini.

“When 11 of Daini’s security guards were killed ... he asked militant groups to abduct about 100 people — he wanted 10 people for each of his guards,” one of the guards, who is also Daini’s nephew, said in what Moussawi called a “confession”.

Daini’s nephew said his uncle was involved in the suicide bombing in 2007 that killed eight people in Parliament in the heart of the heavily fortified Green Zone.—INTERNET

Protesters hold banners and flags as they gather for anti-NATO demonstrations in Krakow, Southern Poland on 19 Feb, 2009. European countries are expected to come under increased US pressure to send troops to Afghanistan at high-level NATO talks which opened in Krakow on Thursday after Washing-ton announced it would send an extra 17,000 soldiers there.—INTERNET

THE NEW LIGHT OF MYANMAR Tuesday, 24 February, 2009

The destroyed restaurant inside the Iraqi parliament building after a suicide attack on 12 April, 2007. A Sunni Muslim MP has been accused of ordering the deadly blast in the parliament canteen that killed eight people including a fellow lawmaker.—INTERNET

USA Today
UAE to upgrade armed forces with advanced equipment

ABU DHABI, 23 Feb — The United Arab Emirates (UAE) intended to modernize its armed forces with the world’s most sophisticated equipment, UAE President Sheikh Khalifa bin Zayed al-Nahayan said on Sunday as his nation is holding the biggest Middle East defence show.

“The military strategy of the UAE and its plans for building an integrated, strong defence system are based on determination to protect its higher interests, defend the nation,” the president was quoted by WAM news agency as saying. “We will forge ahead with drive to back our strategic plans and modernization of our armed forces... with the most sophisticated equipment and weaponry ever produced by the world’s defence industry,” Sheikh Khalifa added.

He said that to modernize the military is in response to regional threats, and the UAE will lay particular emphasis on developing anti-missile defence technologies.

In December, the UAE signed deals totaling nearly 4 billion US dollars with two major US defense firms, Lockheed Martin and Raytheon, including providing an advanced version of the US Patriot anti-missile system, according to UAE daily The National.

Defence experts said anti-missile systems are vital for the UAE and other Gulf states because a number of countries in the Middle East have large stocks of ballistic missiles.

One killed, three hurt in Los Angeles shooting

LOS ANGELES, 23 Feb — Police say one man has been killed and three people are injured in a suspected gang-related shooting near downtown Los Angeles.

Syria urges to stop war against civilians under various pretexts

DAMASCUS, 23 Feb — Syrian President Bashar al-Assad urged on Sunday to stop war and aggression against innocent civilians under various pretexts, the official SANA news agency reported.

Israel destroyed a high-security prison with the most sophisticated equipment and weaponry ever produced by the world’s defence industry,” Sheikh Khalifa added.

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Assad made the remarks while meeting with visiting President of the UN General Assembly Miguel d’Escoto Brockmann, stressing the importance to activate the role of the UN with all its bodies in implementing international resolutions.

Assad also called for more efforts to immediately lift the Israeli siege on Gaza Strip and open all crossing points.

The two sides also discussed the global economic crisis and how to deal with it and the necessity to reform the United Nations. D’Escoto, a former foreign minister of Nicaragua, took up his one year term in September 2008 and presides over the 63rd session of the UN General Assembly.

Top Republican senator says US embargo on Cuba “has failed”

WASHINGTON, 23 Feb — The US economic embargoes on Cuba “has failed,” top Republican lawmaker Richard Lugar has said in a report likely to fuel momentum for a shift in US decades-old policy toward the island.

“After 47 years ... the unilateral embargo on Cuba has failed to achieve its stated purpose of ‘bringing democracy to the Cuban people,’ said the senator from Indiana — a senior member or the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, “it may have been used as a foil by the regime to demand further sacrifices from Cuba’s impoverished population.”

The report, entitled “Changing Cuba Policy - In the United States National Interest,” is due for release on Monday.

It is likely to frame the debate on overhauling US policy after almost five decades of policy seeking to isolate America’s only communist country.

The report also comes one year after former leader Fidel Castro stepped aside after decades as the island’s president, although he remains from all appearances an important behind-the-scenes player in the island’s politics.

US President Barack Obama has pledged dialogue with all foreign leaders including the US’ traditional foes, in sharp contrast to successive US administrations which have sought to isolate Havana. But so far he has offered few details on how far he might be willing to go in reaching out to Cuba.

Egypt briefly opens Gaza border for 1,000 to cross

GAZA CITY, 23 Feb — Hundreds of travellers left blocked Gaza for Egypt on Sunday, in one of the sporadic openings that enable students, patients and others with Egyptian visas to cross the border.

About 1,000 university students and holders of foreign residency permits were eligible to cross, and by mid-afternoon on Sunday, about 600 people had made the trip, border officials said.

Also Sunday, the bodies of four people were found in a smuggling tunnel under the Gaza-Egypt border, a day after another body was discovered in the area. Medics said all five suffocated.

The 20-month closure of Gaza border and Egypt has boosted smuggling of arms and consumer goods through hundreds of border tunnels.

Israel destroyed dozens of tunnels during its three-week offensive against Gaza’s Hamas rulers last month, but smuggling continues.

The fate of Gaza’s borders is key in two sets of Egyptian-brokered talks — on a truce deal between Israel and Hamas, and on a power-sharing agreement between Hamas and its rivals from President Mahmoud Abbas’ Fatah movement.

Hamas ousted Abbas’ forces in a violent takeover of Gaza in June 2007.

Two escape Athens prison by helicopter, for 2nd time

ATHENS, 23 Feb — For the second time in their lives, two robbers escaped from a high-security prison Sunday by scaling a rope ladder to a hovering helicopter amid a gun battle with guards.

The men remained missing late Sunday night. They had been scheduled to appear before a magistrate Monday about their first escape — from the same prison — three years ago.

The shaken government quickly dismissed three Justice Ministry officials, and the prime minister scheduled an emergency meeting of part of his cabinet Monday to discuss the country’s prisons.

“This was an insult which I will not accept ... I will take measures as harsh as necessary,” Justice Minister Nikos Dendias announced.

Vassilis Paleokostas, 42, and Alket Rizaj, 34, were picked up by a helicopter that flew over the courtyard of Athens’ Korydallos prison Sunday afternoon. They climbed the rope ladder thrown to them by a woman passenger, the Justice Ministry said.

In this image made from amateur video footage provided by Alter TV, a helicopter is seen flying above Korydallos prison, as two robbers make their escape from the high security prison, in Athens, Greece, on 22 Feb, 2009. —XINHUA

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Chinese Vice President wraps up six-nation tour

BEIJING, 23 Feb—Chinese Vice President Xi Jinping concluded his six-nation tour here Sunday and left for home.

Xi arrived in Valletta on Saturday for a two-day official visit to Malta. During his visit, Xi met with Acting Maltese President George Hyzler, Speaker of House of Representatives Louis Galea and held talks with Prime Minister Lawrence Gonzi.

During the meeting with Hyzler, Xi said that Sino-Maltese relations have been developing very well in recent years, with a frequent exchange of high-level visits, enhanced mutually beneficial co-operation, and active ex-changes in such fields as culture, education and judicature.

China and Malta understand and support each other in major international and regional affairs, he said, adding that the two nations are “old friends and good friends” that have stood the test of time. For his part, Hyzler thanked China for the sincere help it has provided for Malta, and congratulated China on the great achievements of its modernization drive. He also noted that there has been a good cooperative relationship between Malta and China.

2010 World Expo, challenge and opportunity

BEIJING, 23 Feb—Hosting a successful World Expo in 2010 is always going to be a tall order. It becomes even more formidable after the splendid Beijing Olympics last August. Now, the world economic crisis has made this “economic and technological Olympics” even more arduous.

To call it an arduous and exciting task reflects the Chinese perception of a crisis, which brings both danger and opportunity.

A triumphant expo would bring much-needed hope and confidence to China and the world to combat sweeping economic woes, which are spreading like wildfires from the developed world into developing countries.

In this sense, the Shanghai Expo could be a great platform for countries and corporations to prove what they are capable of in times of great difficulties. This is indeed challenging and exciting.

Also exciting is the fact that the Shanghai Expo is likely to be the largest of its kind in history, regardless of the eco-nomic hardships. Already 231 countries and international organizations had promised by 4 Feb to attend the extravaganza.

Mexican tourism revenue exceeds $13 bl in 2008

MEXICO CITY, 23 Feb—Mexico’s tourism revenue reached 13.289 billion US dollars in 2008, up 3.4 percent from that in 2007, Tourism Minister Rodolfo Elizondo said on Sunday.

Mexico received 22.6 million foreign visitors in 2008, up 5.9 percent from that in 2007, Elizondo said.

Foreign visitors spent an average 760 dollars per person, up 1.4 percent from that in 2007, the minister added.

Hotels in Mexico received 62 million local tourists in 2008, an increase of 1.4 percent over that in 2007.

The ministry said the positive tourism balance in 2008 amounted to 4.763 billion dollars, an increase of 6.4 percent over 2007.

Explosion occurs in NHK building, no one hurt

TOKYO, 23 Feb—A suspected manipulated blast occurred on Sunday at a regional office building of Japan Broadcasting Corp, known as NHK, but no one was hurt, local police said.

The explosion happened at an entrance of the Fukuoka bureau around 5:30 pm. The NHK bureau said its security camera recorded a man wearing a white mask and sunglasses placing a bag at the site and walking away shortly before the explosion.

The police have begun an investigation on suspicion of attempted arson, as a bag containing a polyethylene tank with gasoline or oil and a cooking gas canister was found at the site of the explosion.

The broadcaster said it had not received any blackmails or threats.

Cairo blast kills French woman, injures 20

CAIRO, 23 Feb—At least one French tourist was killed and 20 people were wounded in a blast in Cairo’s populous al-Hussein district on Sunday evening, the Health Ministry said in a statement.

A French woman died in hospital of wounds sustained in the explosion, which happened on a small square between the al-Hussein mosque and the Khan al-Khalili bazaar in Cairo, capital of Egypt.

Security forces were combing the place with explosive detectors and sniffing dogs.
Shanghai offers permanent residence for some after seven years

Shanghai, 23 Feb—People who have lived for seven years cumulatively in Shanghai, China’s leading economic hub, could have a chance to get permanent residence, under a regulation posted on Monday on the municipal government website.

Applicants for resident status should also have participated in the social security system for seven years and paid taxes in Shanghai.

Other conditions include holding middle-level professional certificates and abiding by the country’s “one-child” policy.

Under the regulation, the city will impose an unspecified quota on new permanent residents.

Oil hovers near $40 amid weak demand, OPEC cuts

Singapore, 23 Feb—

Oil prices hovered near $40 a barrel on Monday in Asia as investors weighed a deepening US recession against signs that OPEC production cuts are eroding supply. Benchmark crude for April delivery rose 25 cents to $40.28 a barrel by midency in Singapore on the New York Mercantile Exchange. The contract fell 15 cents to settle at $40.03 on Friday.

The March contract expired Friday at $38.94 a barrel. Dismal jobs, industrial production and corporate earning reports so far this year have heightened investor fears that the worst US recession in decades is deepening. JC Penney Co reported a 51 percent drop in fourth-quarter profit as customers sharply cut spending on clothing and other more discretionary items. The department store chain also projected a wider first-quarter loss than analysts had predicted. —Internet

AU strongly condemns attacks on Somalia peacekeepers

Addis Ababa, 23 Feb—The African Union (AU) on Sunday evening condemned serious attacks on Somalia peacekeepers “in the strongest terms,” describing these as “criminal and cowardly attacks.”

In a statement, AU Commission Chairperson Jean Ping said he was following “with utmost concern” the ongoing developments in Mogadishu, where the Burundian contingent of the AU Mission in Somalia (AMISOM) has been under intense mortar attacks.

“These attacks have reached today an unprecedented level, resulting in the killing of 11 Burundian soldiers, while 15 others have sustained serious injuries,” Ping said.

These attacks were perpetrated “by elements bent on undermining the ongoing efforts to promote peace and security in Somalia, and whose only aim is to bring about more violence and destruction, incomplete disregard of the aspirations of their people and the interest of their country,” he said.

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In Dubai, guest workers are stranded without jobs

Dubai, 23 Feb—The world’s economic shadows caught up with Employee N 861 at the tip of a construction site on Dubai’s desert outskirts.

The foreman tapped on the dump truck’s window and broke the news: The project was slowing and fewer workers were needed. Muhammad Munir Bahadar’s next paycheck would be his last.

Such scenes have been repeated in millions of variations from corner offices to factory lines as the global economic landslide rumbles on.

Police shoot chimp after it attacks woman

A 175-pound chimpanzee kept as a pet was shot and killed by a police officer on Monday after it attacked a woman visiting its owners’ home, leaving her with serious facial injuries, authorities said.

The injured woman, described by police as in her 50s, was taken to a hospital; her condition and identity were not immediately known. The 15-year-old chimpanzee’s owner and two officers also were hurt, though police said the extent of their injuries was not immediately known.

The Advocate of Stamford reported on its Web site on Monday night that the primate’s owner called 911 and tried to stop the chimp from attacking the woman by stabbing it with a butcher knife.

As emergency crews arrived to treat the victim, the chimpanzee — named Travis — revived and opened the door of a police cruiser. The officer inside fired several shots, killing the chimp. The Advocate reported.

Christine Hsu pets two Paro therapeutic robots on display at the 2009 Consumer Electronics Show in Las Vegas, Nevada. The show kicked off with exhibitors displaying gadgetry ranging from snazzy new smart phones to envelope-sized computers to 3D high-definition television sets.

Man tries to steal six-storey building

A New York man is facing charges he stole a six-story apartment building and then tried to get a $1 million mortgage on it, city officials said.

Fernando Maldonado, 47, of Brooklyn allegedly filed a phony deed with the New York City Finance and Buildings departments and then tried to defraud a lender, the city said in a news release. He now faces numerous charges that could land him behind bars for years, city officials said.

“Stealing a building and using it in an effort to steal more than a million dollars in loan money, as charged here, is about as brazen a scam as can be imagined,” city Investigation Department Commissioner Rose Gill Hearn said. “But with a paper trail of phone documents, and a string of charges that can lead to substantial prison terms, the foolishness of the scheme has been exposed.”

This undated handout photo released by the International Polar Foundation shows Belgium's new Princess Elisabeth base in Antarctica. Forty years after the closure of King Bauduin base, Belgium inaugurated a revolutionary scientific research station combining high-end technologies and a total respect for the environment. The “zero emission” station is the only station to be entirely built during the International Polar Year.
Anawrahta Bridge (Chauk) linking Chauk with Seikphyu

Article, photos: Reporter Magway Hla Myint

I am on my way to Chauk to draw some money from the bank. Sinbyugyun is more than 20 miles from Chauk. Previously, I had to spend a night there, but now I don’t need to do so. After drawing money, I can go back the same day. So, I thank the government for that.”

Pony cart driver U Saw Tun said, "Really, I had never dreamt about such a fine bridge. We three-wheeled cycle drivers have got one more run between Chauk and Seikphyu. We have to pay 100 kyats to the toll gate for a run and we charge 200 kyats per head. Now, we can lead a secure life. If there is a sick person, we can send those, who badly need prompt medical treatment, to the hospital in time. The commodity flow has got quicker at low fares. So, commodity prices are going down.”

So, it is fair to say that the bridge helps improve the living and working conditions of local people or nearby regions.

Translation: MS
Myanma Alin: 16-2-2009

I am my way to Chauk to draw some money from the bank. Sinbyugyun is more than 20 miles from Chauk. Previously, I had to spend a night there, but now I don’t need to do so. After drawing money, I can go back the same day. So, I am grateful to the government.

(Maung Kyaw of Sinbyugyun)

A three-wheeled motorcycle driver said, "We three-wheeled cycle drivers are making a lot of money due to the bridge. On average, we make four or five runs a day. We have to pay 200 kyats to the toll gate for a run. We charge 300 kyats per head.”

So, it is fair to say that the bridge helps improve the living and working conditions of local people or nearby regions.

Translation: MS
Myanma Alin: 16-2-2009

They had to spend excessive money and time if they wanted to travel from one side to the other side.

Now, the situations have changed a lot. The meeting 2/95 of the Special Projects Implementation Committee of the Union of Myanmar held on 24 May 1995 gave the green light to launch Anawrahta Bridge Project. In compliance with the guidance of the Head of State, Public Works of the Ministry of Construction launched the project on 26 July 1996. The project finished on 10 March 2001. Chairman of the State Peace and Development Council Senior General Than Shwe opened the facility on 4 April 2001. The upper structure of the 5090 feet long bridge is of steel girder type, and the lower structure, of reinforced concrete type. It can withstand 60 tons of loads.

The bridge was coping with a constant flow of vehicles including three-wheeled motorcycles and pony carts. In an interview, a traveler said, "I am Maung Kyaw. I am a farmer. Now, I am on my way to Chauk to draw some money from the bank. Sinbyugyun is more than 20 miles from Chauk. Previously, I had to spend a night there, but now I don’t need to do so. After drawing money, I can go back the same day. So, I am grateful to the government."

(Maung Kyaw of Sinbyugyun)

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We three-wheeled cycle drivers are making a lot of money due to the bridge.

(A three-wheeled motorcycle driver)

I have never dreamt of seeing such a large bridge in my region.

(U Saw Tun, pony cart driver)— MNA

Daw Htay Htay of Seikphyu said, "Previously, it was very difficult for us to get across the river. Chauk was not far from here, but we had to take much time, waiting motorboat and crossing the river. So, we had to spend much time and money to make a trip. Now, I have sent my goods (roasted and fried lablab beans) to the market of Chauk by 8 o’clock in the morning, but I don’t have to spend much for transport charges. I distribute roasted lablab beans wholesale to my customers at the price of 600 kyats a quarter of a viss. I get back to Seikphyu before lunch-time. Then, I go home by three-wheeled motorcycle, or by pony cart. It is very convenient for me to do my business, now. So, I thank the government for that.”

Pony cart driver U Saw Tun said, "Really, I had never dreamt about such a fine bridge. We three-wheeled cycle drivers have got one more run between Chauk and Seikphyu. We have to pay 100 kyats to the toll gate for a run and we charge 200 kyats per head. Now, we can lead a secure life. If there is a sick person, we can send those, who badly need prompt medical treatment, to the hospital in time. The commodity flow has got quicker at low fares. So, commodity prices are going down.”

So, it is fair to say that the bridge helps improve the living and working conditions of local people or nearby regions.

Translation: MS
Myanma Alin: 16-2-2009

Anawrahta Bridge (Chauk) linking Chauk with Seikphyu

I have never dreamt of seeing such a large bridge in my region.

(U Saw Tun, pony cart driver)— MNA

Daw Htay Htay of Seikphyu said, "Previously, it was very difficult for us to get across the river. Chauk was not far from here, but we had to take much time, waiting motorboat and crossing the river. So, we had to spend much time and money to make a trip.

We three-wheeled cycle drivers are making a lot of money due to the bridge.

(A three-wheeled motorcycle driver)

I am on my way to Chauk to draw some money from the bank. Sinbyugyun is more than 20 miles from Chauk. Previously, I had to spend a night there, but now I don’t need to do so. After drawing money, I can go back the same day. So, I am grateful to the government.

(Maung Kyaw of Sinbyugyun)
Objectives of the 64th Anniversary Armed Forces Day

1. To work hard together with the people to accomplish the State’s seven-step Road Map in building a peaceful, modern and developed nation
2. To uphold Our Three Main National Causes as the national policy at risk to life
3. To crush, in cooperation with the people, internal and external subversive elements that are disrupting stability, peace and development of the nation
4. To build a strong and patriotic modern Tatmadaw capable of safeguarding the sovereignty and territorial integrity of the nation

As education opportunities within...

(from page 1)

aubergine plantations, cultivation of mushrooms and worm breeding tanks.

Next, the Prime Minister looked into breeding of pigs, ducks, cows, and goats, construction of biodigesters, and gave instructions on conducting training courses for Mobile Community Development Team for the dissemination of integrated farming system among rural folks.

Afterwards, the Prime Minister left Pathein for Labutta in helicopters to inspect the developments of storm-ravaged areas, road networks projects and construction of cyclone shelters in Ayeyawady Division and arrived at Pyin Khayaing of Labutta Township at 9 am, welcomed by Brig-Gen Myo Myint Than of the local station and personnel.

At the briefing hall, U Kyaw Naing, General Manager of Shwe Thanlwin Co explained facts about earthworks, bore piles and storage of construction materials for construction of cyclone shelters and the Prime Minister stressed the need for completion of cyclone shelters before monsoon season.

The Prime Minister and party then looked into cyclone shelter near Kanhtu Kantha ward donated by Mittha Development Foundation where they were conducted round by patron of the Foundation Daw Tin Aye.

The Prime Minister proceeded to Kanhtu Kantha ward where he cordially greeted the locals and urged them to strive for progress of their own region, cultivation of shady trees as windbreak and growing of vegetable plants in vacant lands.

Afterwards, the Prime Minister looked into growing of vegetable plants in households, CDMA telephone service of Myanmar Post and Telecommunications.

On arrival at affiliated BEHS of Chaungwa village in Labutta Township, the Prime Minister inspected the two-storey RC building donated by Shwe Thanlwin Co.

In his speech at a ceremony to hand over the new school building to Ministry of Education held at the temporary classroom in the school compound, the Prime Minister said that he was there to inspect the developments of storm-ravaged regions, road networks and cyclone shelters construction projects and fulfill the needs for completion of the projects before rainy season.

The Prime Minister said that he was attending the ceremony to handover the new two-storey building of Chaungwa village sub BEHS to Ministry of Education during his trip, he said.

(See page 9)
As education opportunities within... (from page 8)

The new school building opened today is strong, firm and the height of the building was raised higher than the older one for enduring water and wind, he said.

The Prime Minister continued to say that arrangements are also being made for establishment of technical school in which youths in Pyin Khayaing are able to seek vocational knowledge such as carpentry, masonry, lathe skills, mechanics and electronics both theoretically and practically.

So, youths in the region will be able to pursue vocational knowledge as well as basic education in their own regions easily, he said.

The Prime Minister said that parents should enroll their children at schools as soon as they reach the school age and should encourage their children to pursue education till completion of basic education. As the education opportunities are within their reach, students should try to become outstanding intellectuals and intelligent students. Parents as well as children are required to effectively use the sound opportunities for education created by the government. Service personnel, local elders and social organizations should lend a helping hand to youths further improve their social lives.

Teachers on their part are responsible for nurturing their pupils to become the ones who know the morals and manners, observe discipline, and possess strong patriotism and Union Spirit in addition to disseminating knowledge.

Next, Minister for Education Dr Chan Nyein and Minister for Mines Brig-Gen Ohn Myint and General Manager of Shwe Thanlwin Company U Kyaw Naing presented related documents to the Headmaster of Konthaya Basic Education Middle School.

Minister Brig-Gen Ohn Myint handed over the Prime Minister’s gift, a computer and a printer, to Headmaster U Tun Myint.

Minister Dr Chan Nyein presented stationery, school uniforms and sports gear to a teacher.

Minister Dr Chan Nyein spoke words of thanks.

The Prime Minister and Maj-Gen Ko Ko of the Ministry of Defence presented gifts to mobile rural development educative team No 1 and No 2.

The Prime Minister cordially greeted those present.

The Prime Minister and party inspected Labutta-Thongwa-Oktwin-Htaiksoon Road.

They went to Konthaya Village where they toured development in motor-cadre. They attended a ceremony to hand over a new building of Konthaya Basic Education Middle School.

Minister Brig-Gen Ohn Myint, Managing Director of Myamma Salt and Marine Chemicals Enterprise U Win Htein inspected construction of cyclone shelters in Kwingyi Village by FMI Co, salt farms and construction of Thingangon-Thongwa-Labutta road.

The Prime Minister met village people in Magyibin Village and had a chat with them about economy, employment and education. He fulfilled the requirements for construction of basic education high school (Magyibin branch).

As education opportunities within... (continued)

The Prime Minister and party inspected Kwin Kone Village by FMI Co.

They arrived back in Pathimin in the evening.

On arrival at the site of Nalinkyaw Bridge, the Prime Minister inspected construction of bridge and Labutta-Thingangyi-Saluseik road section and construction of bridge.

The Prime Minister issued instructions on completion of road projects before monsoon, completion of small bridges except major ones, maintenance of the piles of the bridge, construction of wooden Bailey and reinforced concrete bridges and hillocks in time.

The Prime Minister and party left for Labutta 3-mile camp and inspected construction of Thingangyi-Labutta Road and allotment of land.

Parents as well as children are required to effectively use the sound opportunities for education created by the government.
As education opportunities within…
(from page 9)

and construction of cyclone shelters by TZTM Co.
Superintending Engineer U Kyaw Lin reported on
construction of Labutta-Thingangyi road section,
Thingangyi-Saluseik road section, Saluseik-Pyinsalu
road section and 18 hillocks and Deputy Superintend-
ing Engineer U Kyaw Lwin on construction of 150 feet
Natinkyaw Bridge. The Prime Minister said local
people can use the roads and bridges as emergency
escape routes. The roads and bridges contribute to-
wards the education and health conditions of local
people and their families and others. He urged the of-

ficials to complete the projects before monsoon.

The Prime Minister and party inspected Labutta-
Thingangyi road section and they arrived at Zinywelay
Village.

They inspected the sites for construction of cy-

clone shelters and hillocks where Director U Thaung
Sein of Eya Shweswa Co reported on the projects.

The Prime Minister gave instructions on growing
of windbreak trees, coconut trees and areca palms
around the hillocks and bananas on the embankments.

The Prime Minister and party inspected
Thingangyi-Saluseik-Pyinsalu road and construction of
hillocks and cyclone shelters in Pyinsalu by Max
Myanmar Co and A-1 Co.

He gave instructions on completion of the con-
struction before monsoon and inspected cyclone shel-
ter donated by the Ministry of Industry-1.

The Prime Minister fulfilled the requirements for
development of the town.

He left Pyinsalu by helicopter. On the way, he in-
pected construction of Pyinsalu-Kwinpauk-Polaung-
Hinebone road, bridges, cyclone shelters and hillocks.

The Prime Minister gave instructions on comple-
tion of the bridge and road work. They arrived back
in Yangon in the afternoon.

MNA

Minister meets
villagers in two
townships

Yangon, 23 Feb —Minister for Industry-
U Aung Thaung visited cotton purchasing centre of
Myanmar Textile Industry in Myakantha village,
Patheingyi Township, Mandalay Division on 20 Feb-
uary and inspected the purchase of Ngwechi -6 long
staple cotton and Winthuza shop. The Minister also
visited the cotton purchasing centre in Kyauktada vil-
lage, Madaya.

In Madaya, the Minister met with the local
people and social organizations of Sakyi, Winsu,
Tangamyauk, Yenatha, Mwehintha, Mweponkan,
Myashwekhe and Tangataiw village-tracts. He pre-

tended K 10 million for construction of a road between
Sakyin and Tangamyauk villages.

At No 2 Marble Factory (Branch) of Myanma
Ceramics Industries, he observed production of deco-
rative tiles. The minister spoke of the need to strive
to meet the target.

He also met departmental personnel and lo-
cal people and social organizations of 29 villages in
Nandau and Village, Patheingyi Township.

MNA

Educative talk at MWAF

Yangon, 23 Feb —An educative talk con-
ducted by Nationalities Affairs of Myanmar
Women’s Affairs Federation was held at Central
Training School of Education and Training Depart-
ment under the Ministry of Progress of Border Areas
and National Races and Development Affairs in
Dagon Myothit (North) Township today.

Present were the re-

sponsible personnel from MWAF, 23 trainees from
Advanced Domestic Scien-
ce Course No. 20, 160
trainees from Clerical
Course No. 58 and 59 and
37 staff from CTS.

Chairman of Yangon
Division Peace and De-
velopment Council Com-
mander Brig-Gen Win
Myint fired a shot into the
air to launch the race at
Thuwanna Sports
Ground.

The ceremony to kick
off the race was attended
by Chairman of Myanmar
Olympic Committee Min-
ister for Sports Brig-Gen
Thura Aye Myint, officials
from Ministry of Sports,
officials of Myanmar Cy-
cling Federation and
sports athletes.

A total of 66 cyclists
are participating in the
course in-charge and the race and they will cross
the finishing line near the
Haukkyanri Toll Gate.

MNA

Regional organizer of Myanmar Women’s Affairs Federation
Dr Daw Hla Dar Ni Chain gives a talk on denial and oral health.

MNA

Chargé d’ Affaires ai of Brunei Darussalam Mr Pengiran Hsaini
Alauddin and wife welcome Chairman of Civil Service Selection and
Training Board U Kyaw Thu and wife at a reception to mark the 25th
Anniversary National Day of Brunei Darussalam.—SNA

380-mile cycling race launched

Yangon, 23 Feb —A cycling race of 380 miles from Yangon to
Mawlamyine and from Mawlamyine to Yangon was launched here today.

Commander Brig-Gen Win Myint launches the 380-mile cycling race at Thuwunna Sports Ground.—SPED
Nowadays, anti-government groups are trying to deceive the people into misunderstanding the government, under the pretext of the shortage of electric power and water supply, instead of following an honest way.

The government is working with might and main to complete the projects for adequate supply of electric power and safe water for the entire people.

The following table depicts the success the government has achieved in implementing the projects for development of electric power sector the length and breadth of the country.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Subject</th>
<th>Unit</th>
<th>1988</th>
<th>After 1988</th>
<th>Progress</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Power consumption in units</td>
<td>million</td>
<td>1559.308</td>
<td>4507.916</td>
<td>2948.608</td>
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<tr>
<td>Hydro Power Stations station</td>
<td>station</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>36</td>
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<tr>
<td>Hydro power Projects under construction</td>
<td>project</td>
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<td>23</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Joint-venture projects</td>
<td>project</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hydro power projects to be implemented</td>
<td>project</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* Out of 14 hydro power stations before 1988, there are only two major hydro power stations — Bilu Chaung-2 (Lawpita) Hydro Power Station and Kintar Hydro Power Station. Today, there are 15 major hydro power stations out of 50 stations.

* Among 23 hydro power stations which are under construction, Ah tet Paunglaung, Nancho, Yeywa, Kunchaung and Pyuchaung will be completed in the 2009-2010 fiscal year. Thaukyekhat-2 and An projects will be completed in 2010-2011; Thahtay Hydro Power Project in 2011-2012 and Ah tet Kengtawng project in the 2012-2013. Upon completion of those projects, the electricity production will reach 2999.5 megawatts and the electricity will be in surplus in the country.

* Upon completion of the 13 joint-venture projects, over 21,000 megawatts would be generated and would sell the electricity to neighbouring countries. Those 13 projects are Shweli-2, Hramanithi, Tarhsan, Hatgyi, Ayeawady confluence Chibwe, Chibwe Ngé, Tarpain-1, Tarpain-2, Ah tet Thanlwun, Taninlhyi, Biluchaung-3 and Saitin.

* Plans are under way to implement 13 more projects, and on completion, those projects will generate 11,850 megawatts.

* To supply power to the people sufficiently, power grid and main sub-power stations are being constructed in states and divisions.

Upon completion of the 23 hydropower projects, electricity production will reach 2999.5 megawatts exceeding the domestic demand.

The following table shows the achievements in implementing the projects for sufficient supply of power in Mandalay Division.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Subject</th>
<th>Unit</th>
<th>1988</th>
<th>After 1988</th>
<th>Progress</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Power Consumption in units</td>
<td>million</td>
<td>183.59</td>
<td>1058.613</td>
<td>875.023</td>
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<td>Households</td>
<td>household</td>
<td>81421</td>
<td>311696</td>
<td>230275</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hydro power stations station</td>
<td>station</td>
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<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hydro power Stations under construction</td>
<td>station</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* Before 1988, there was only Kintar Hydro Power Station in Mandalay as a major hydro power station. After 1988, Hsedawgyi Hydro Power Station (25 MW) and Paunglaung Hydro Power Station (280 MW) were constructed in Mandalay Division.

* Hydro power stations which are under construction in Mandalay Division are Yeywa Hydro Power Station (790 MW), Ah tet Paunglaung Hydro Power Station (140 MW) and Nancho Hydro Power Station (40 MW), and on completion, those projects will generate 970 megawatts in total.

* As part of power supply in Mandalay Division, eight 230-KV cable system and seven 132-KV cable system including Shweli-Mansan-Shwesaryan Power grid, seven 230-KV main sub-power stations and two 130-KV main sub-power stations have been constructed to supply power to the people.

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**Government’s achievements in power supply sector**

*Thahtay Hydropower Project of Rakhine State.*

Upon completion of the 23 hydropower projects, electricity production will reach 2999.5 megawatts exceeding the domestic demand.

**Bilu Chaung No. 1 Hydropower station (Lawpita) Lawpita.**
Illegitimate trade threatens Indonesia’s box turtles

Traffic urged Indonesian authorities to crack down on illegal trade, and set limits on how many can be safely harvested each year. It said that Indonesia’s official annual export quota for the box turtle was just 18,000 a year, but that unregulated trade could be between 10 and 100 times the legal level.

The current level of illegal exploitation will result in Southeast Asian box turtles being systematically wiped out across Indonesia, indications of which are already obvious at collection and trade centers,” said the report’s author, Sabine Schoppe.

“Traumatic brain injury is a significant risk indicator for epilepsy many years after the injury,” they wrote.

Indian Govt fully prepared against security threats

New Delhi, 23 Feb — The Indian Government Sunday said that it was “fully prepared” to deal with any security threat to the country whether it is from land, air or water.

“We are fully prepared to deal with any kind of security threat to the country whether from land, air or water. Terrorist outfits like the Taleban, al-Qaeda and Jaish-e-Mohammed are spreading seeds of violence in different cities all over the world,” Union Minister of State for Home Shirprakash Jaiswal said. He was delivering the inaugural speech at the 12th India International Security Expo in the national capital which will display security devices and gadgets from 80 domestic and foreign companies till 25 February.

It is important to generate consciousness in our industrial, corporate and defense organizations and general public in view of security threats that lurk under various garbs. Hence, the government has now allowed the Central Industrial Security Force (CISF) to provide its services to the private sector,

Brain injury raises epilepsy risk for years

London, 23 Feb — A severe brain injury puts people at high risk of epilepsy for more than a decade after they are first hurt, a finding that suggests there may be a window to prevent the condition, researchers said Monday.

A Danish team found that the odds of epilepsy more than doubled after mild brain injury or skull fracture and was seven times more likely in patients with serious brain injury. The risk remained even 10 years on, more so in people older than 15.

Taubes, a CDC expert on the subject. But they highlight a health threat that many people exaggerate and misunderstand, according to some experts. Scientists have counted more than 250 food-related types of illness — from viruses to bacteria to parasites. Most common are Norwalk-like viruses — famous for sickening cruise-ship passengers. They account for about two-thirds of known food-poisoning cases, according to the CDC.

Food poisoning strikes 1 in 4 Americans each year

Atlanta, 23 Feb — Next time you have a case of diarrhea that lasts a day or more, chances are better than 1 in 3 that it was food poisoning. As many as a quarter of Americans suffer a foodborne illness each year — though only a fraction of those cases get linked to high-profile outbreaks like the recent salmonella-peanut scare, according to the US Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

“Outbreaks are dramatic instances,” says Dr Robert Tauxe, a CDC expert on the subject. But they highlight a health threat that many people exaggerate and misunderstand, according to some experts. Scientists have counted more than 250 food-related types of illness — from viruses to bacteria to parasites. Most common are Norwalk-like viruses — famous for sickening cruise-ship passengers. They account for about two-thirds of known food-poisoning cases, according to the CDC.

Internet
Tourism to Mexico rose nearly 6 pct in 2008

MEXICO CITY, 23 Feb — The number of foreign tourists visiting Mexico surged to 23 million in 2008, up 5.9 percent from the year before, spurred by the tumbling value of the peso against the dollar, the Tourism Department said Sunday.

Mexico's foreign currency income from tourism was $13.3 billion last year, up 5.4 percent from 2007, the department said in a statement.

If the trend continues, it would be a glimmer of hope for a country on the brink of economic recession as exports and oil production plunge. But Mexican officials worry that rising drug crime will turn some foreigners away.

The US State Department renewed a travel advisory last week warning Americans about an increase in violence along the border.

Mexico attributes the rise in tourism in part to the tumbling peso and a drop in fuel prices that has made air travel less expensive. The department estimates that 80 percent of tourists in Mexico come from the United States.

On Friday, the peso weakened to a record 14.89 to the US dollar. Mexico's currency has lost about 30 percent of its value against the dollar since August, boosting the costs of imports but making goods cheaper for tourists with dollars.

List of Oscar winners

HOLLYWOOD, 23 Feb — Following is the list of winners at Sunday night's 81st Academy Awards ceremony, which was held at the Kodak Theatre in Hollywood of Los Angeles.

Best Picture — "Slumdog Millionaire," Christian Colson, producer

Director — Danny Boyle, "Slumdog Millionaire"

Actress — Kate Winslet, "The Reader"

Supporting Actor — Heath Ledger, "The Dark Knight"

Supporting Actress — Penelope Cruz, "Vicky Cristina Barcelona"

Adapted Screenplay — "Slumdog Millionaire," Simon Beaufoy

Original Screenplay — "Milk,"Written by Dustin Lance Black

Art Direction — "The Curious Case of Benjamin Button," Art Direction: Donald Graham Burt; Set Decoration: Victor J. Zolfo

Cinematography — "Slumdog Millionaire," Anthony Dod Mantle

Costume Design — "The Duchess,"Costume Designers: Johnnie B. McFee, Eithne Lennon

Makeup — "The Curious Case of Benjamin Button," Anthony Menchaca

Documentary Feature — "Man on Wire"

Documentary Short Subject — "Smile Pink!

Film Editing — "Slumdog Millionaire," Chris Dickens

Foreign Language Film — "Departures," Japan

Foreign Language Film — "The Curious Case of Benjamin Button," Greg Cannom

Original Score — "Slumdog Millionaire," A.R. Rahman

Original Song — "Jai Ho" from "Slumdog Millionaire," Music by A.R. Rahman, Lyrics by Gulzar

Original Screenplay — "WALL-E" Adapted Screenplay — "Slumdog Millionaire," Screenplay by Simon Beaufoy

Original Screenplay — "Milk,"Written by Dustin Lance Black

Sound Editing — "The Dark Knight"

Sound Mixing — "Slumdog Millionaire," Ian Tapp, Richard Pryke and Resul Pookutty

Original Song — "Chains in the Night of the Moon" from "The Imaginarium of Doctor Parnassus," Music by Inogen

Sound Mixing Award — "In the Valley of Elah," Mark Weitzman, John Keasler, Randy Thom and David White

Actor — Sean Penn, "Milk"

Actress — Kate Winslet, "The Reader"

Supporting Actor — Heath Ledger, "The Dark Knight"

Supporting Actress — Penelope Cruz, "Vicky Cristina Barcelona"

New: Animated Feature Film — "Surf's Up"

Animated Short Film — "La Maison en Petits Cubes"

International Feature Film — "Guitar Hero: The Movie"

Documentary Feature — "Trouble dans la cuisine de Sophie"

Documentary Short Subject — "Smile Pink!"

Animated Short Film — "Bike Race"

Best Foreign Language Film — "1438"

Best Supporting Actor — Heath Ledger, "The Dark Knight"

Best Supporting Actress — Penelope Cruz, "Vicky Cristina Barcelona"

Best Original Song — "Jai Ho" from "Slumdog Millionaire," Music by A.R. Rahman, Lyrics by Gulzar

Best Original Screenplay — "WALL-E" Adapted Screenplay — "Slumdog Millionaire"

Best Adapted Screenplay — "The Curious Case of Benjamin Button"

Best Documentary Feature — "The Flight of the Conchords"

Best Documentary Short Subject — "Smile Pink!"

Best Cinematography — "Slumdog Millionaire"

Best Art Direction — "The Curious Case of Benjamin Button"

Best Costume Design — "The Duchess"

Best Makeup — "The Curious Case of Benjamin Button"

Best Original Score — "Slumdog Millionaire"

Best Original Song — "Jai Ho" from "Slumdog Millionaire"

Best Animated Feature Film — "WALL-E"

Best Animated Short Film — "La Maison en Petits Cubes"

Best International Feature Film — "1438"

Peruvian President urges people to join reforestation efforts

LIMA, 11 Feb — Peruvian President Alan Garcia Sunday called on his people to take an active part in the National Reforestation Campaign to make the country a better place. "We must make Peru green ... each (of us) can do it in front of your house. Go out of your house and plant a tree," Garcia said.

In a symbolic move, Garcia planted a tree in the district of Brena, saying the campaign has benefited the environment and generated over 100,000 jobs across the country. Garcia requested the Agriculture Ministry to plant 50,000 trees in Costa Verde and build a boulevard to link the province of Callao with Lima's Chorrillos district.

"Costa Verde (Green Coast) does not have anything green ... If we start to plant trees in Costa Verde of Lima, that great boulevard could really have that color," Garcia said.

Garcia also urged the Peruvian Environment Ministry to have more sea water treated to support the forestation effort. The National Reforestation Campaign led by the Agriculture Ministry has been launched to counter the effect of climate changes and global warming.

Parental link found in Alzheimer’s disease

BEIJING, 23 Feb — Parental link of Alzheimer’s disease has been found by a study released by researchers at Boston University School of Medicine, according to media reports.

The study showed that participants of a group who carried a gene strongly linked to Alzheimer’s had worse performance in memory tests than the other group who had the same gene but did not have a parent with Alzheimer’s disease. There are 715 people, averaged 59 years old, taking part in the ongoing Framingham Heart Study, including 282 whose parents, one or both, had been diagnosed with Alzheimer’s or other dementia. When given a battery of cognitive tests, those who logged the lowest scores on verbal and visual memory tasks were people who were carriers of the ApoE4 gene and had parents with dementia. The difference in memory between the two groups was equivalent to approximately 15 years of brain aging, researchers found.

"How big an effect we saw was surprising," said Dr Sudha Seshadri, a BU associate professor of neurology and senior author of the study. "It was like you were comparing two groups, 55-year-olds to 70-year-olds."
Valencia travel sickness continues as Villa sees red

Deportivo Coruna’s Juan Rodriguez (R) vies with Valencia’s Carlos Marchena (L) during their Spanish first league football match at the Riazor Stadium in Coruna. The match ended in a 1-1 draw.—Internet

complicated finish but was then sent off in the 76th minute, collecting a second booking for a late challenge on goalkeeper Daniel Aranzubia.

Deportivo’s Adrian Lopez punished the ten-man visitors equalising three minutes later.

Valencia host their last five away league matches, but the draw will still frustrate manager Unai Emery with his team now two points behind fourth-placed Villarreal.—Internet

Zamora helps Fulham see off Albion

LONDON, 23 Feb—Bobby Zamora finally ended his goal-drought to help Fulham beat struggling West Bromwich Albion 2-0 on Sunday.

Zamora bagged his first league goal since September with a close-range finish but was then sent off in the 76th minute. Fulham are now two points behind fourth-placed Villarreal.—Internet

Benitez admits Liverpool’s title hopes are fading

LIVERPOOL, 23 Feb—Rafa Benitez admits that Liverpool’s flickering title hopes now rest on the outcome of their next two Premier League games after Dirk Kuyt’s equaliser salvaged a 1-1 draw against Manchester City.

Failure to claim all three points against Mark Hughes’ team on Sunday has left Liverpool seven points adrift of reigning champions Manchester United, who host Benitez’s team at Old Trafford on March 14.

But despite this latest setback in Liverpool’s bid to end their nineteen-year title drought, manager Benitez insisted they still live in hope of outpacing Sir Alex Ferguson’s European champions.—Internet

Next week will be crucial, says Beckham

ROME, 23 Feb—David Beckham revealed on Sunday that something could happen next week with his proposed transfer from Los Angeles Galaxy to AC Milan.

Beckham’s on-off transfer saga has been dominating column inches over the past few weeks with both the former England captain and the Italian giants making clear they want to make his loan deal permanent.

But Galatas are holding out for four-times the reported three million dollars Milan have offered for the 33-year-old.

“I honestly don’t know but I know that next week will be important,” said Beckham when asked about his transfer following Milan’s 1-0 victory over Cagliari.

“I want to stay at Milan. I’ve not heard anything from Galaxy but when it’s like that you could say it could be good news.”

Seedorf fires Milan back to winning ways

ROME, 23 Feb—AC Milan got back to winning ways and gave themselves a boost ahead of Thursday’s UEFA Cup last 32 second-leg clash against Werder Bremen with a 1-0 home victory against Cagliari on Sunday.

Clarence Seedorf scored the only goal of the game with a simple tap-score in midway through the second half of a match in which the visitors were the better side for long periods.

The win allowed third-placed Milan to narrow the gap between themselves and table-topping city rivals Inter Milan, who won 2-1 at Bologna on Saturday, to 11 points; Juventus are second after beating Palermo 2-0 on Saturday.

Jansen double fires 10-man Leverkusen

BERLIN, 23 Feb—Germany defender Marcell Jansen scored both goals to put 10-man Leverkusen back on top of the Bundesliga on Sunday in a 2-1 win at Bayer Leverkusen.

Jansen’s goals means Hamburg now lead Hoffenheim by two points with Hertha Berlin dropping to third while Bayern Munich are fourth - four points behind Hamburg - with Bayer Leverkusen fifth and six points behind the leaders.

It was the first time Jansen has scored twice in a league game in his career. “I’m delighted,” said the 23-year-old, who has 28 caps for Germany.

Lyon cheered as Marseille, Bordeaux draw a blank

PARIS, 23 Feb—Marseille and Bordeaux did their French title aspirations no favours at all on Sunday as they lumbered to draws with relegation haunters Le Mans and St Etienne.

Marseille failed to hit the target at the Stade Velodrome despite dominating possession against a Le Mans side fighting to the draw, while Bordeaux thanked a last-gasp Fernando Cavenaghi goal to save their blushes at St Etienne.

Blaise Matuidi had scored with a magnificent drive eight minutes after the restart for Les Verts, but the hosts failed to climb out of the bottom three when Argentine Cavenaghi bundled home from close range following Marouane Chamakh’s nod on after a corner with just seconds remaining. Bordeaux coach Laurent Blanc said he had to accept that his men did not deserve to win.—Internet

Marseille’s Karim Ziani (L) vies with Le Mans’ Roland Lamah (R) during their French L1 football match Marseille vs. Le Mans at the Velodrome stadium in Marseille.—Internet

Hamburg’s defender Dennis Aogo (R) celebrates with his teammate and goal scorer defender Marcell Jansen during the German first division Bundesliga football match Bayer Leverkusen vs Hamburg SV in the western German city of Leverkusen. Hamburg won 2-0.—Internet
Greece says pirates seize cargo ship off Somalia

ATHENS, 23 Feb — Pirates seized a Greek-owned cargo ship off the coast of Somalia on Sunday, Greece's Merchant Marine Ministry said.

"Pirates seized the Maltese-flagged cargo ship Salduha, with 22 crew, off Somalia," the ministry said. It said the vessel, loaded with coal, was sailing to Slovenia. Piracy off Somalia, one of the world's busiest shipping areas, and other coasts of Africa has increased sharply over the past year, earning the pirates millions of dollars of ransom payments and pushing up maritime insurance rates. — MNA/Reuters

WEATHER

Monday, 23 February, 2009

Summary of observations recorded at 09:30 hr MST: During the past 24 hours, light rain has been isolated in Taninthayi Division, weather has been partly cloudy in Kachin State and Yangon Division and generally fair in the remaining States and Divisions. Night temperatures were (3˚C) to (4˚C) below February average temperatures in Shan State, lower Sagaing, Mandalay, Magway, Bago and Yangon Divisions, (3˚C) to (4˚C) above February average temperatures in Mon State and Taninthayi Division and about February average temperatures in the remaining areas. The significant night temperatures were Namsan (0˚C), Loliem (2˚C), Lashio (3˚C) and Heho (4˚C).

Maximum temperature on 22-2-2009 was 99˚F. Minimum temperature on 23-2-2009 was 62˚F. Relative humidity at (09:30) hours MST on 23-2-2009 was 68%. Total sunshine hours on 22-2-2009 was (9.9) hrs approx.

Rainfall on 23-2-2009 was (Nil) at Mingaladon, Bago and Yangon Divisions, (3˚C) to (4˚C) below February average temperatures in Shan State, lower Sagaing, Mandalay, Magway, Bago and Yangon Divisions. Total rainfall since 1-1-2009 was (Nil) at Mingaladon, Bago and Yangon. Maximum wind speed at Yangon (Bago-Aye) was (5) mph from Southwest at (18:30) hours MST on 22-2-2009.

Bay influence: Weather is generally fair in the North Bay and partly cloudy in the Andaman Sea and elsewhere in the Bay of Bengal.

Forecast valid until evening of 24th February 2009:

Possibility of isolated light rain in Kachin State and Taninthayi Division, weather will be partly cloudy in Chin, Rakhine and Mon States, Yangon Division and generally fair in the remaining States and Divisions. Degree of certainty is (40%).

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

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

Forecast for Nay Pyi Taw and neighbouring area for 24-2-2009: Generally fair weather.

Forecast for Yangon and neighbouring area for 24-2-2009: Partly cloudy.

Forecast for Mandalay and neighbouring area for 24-2-2009: Generally fair weather.
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Tuesday, 24 February, 2009

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

YANGON, 23 Feb—Secretary-1 of the State Peace and Development Council of the Union of Myanmar Quartermaster-General Lt-Gen Thiha Thura Tin Aung Myint Oo and wife Daw Khin Saw Hnin attended the reception to mark the Russian Armed Forces Day held at Chatrium Hotel in Tamwe Township, Yangon this evening.

Also present on the occasion together with Secretary-1 of the SPDC Quartermaster-General Lt-Gen Thiha Thura Tin Aung Myint Oo and wife were Lt-Gen Myint Swe of the Ministry of Defence and wife Daw Khin Thet Htay, senior military officers and their wives, ambassadors, chargé d’Affaires ai and military attaches from embassies in Yangon and their wives, and guests.

Secretary-1 of the SPDC Quartermaster-General Lt-Gen Thiha Thura Tin Aung Myint Oo and wife Daw Khin Saw Hnin arrived at Chatrium Hotel at 6.45 pm and they were welcomed by Military Attaché Colonel Alexander V Svintsovskiy of the Russian Federation and responsible persons.

Afterwards, Secretary-1 of the SPDC Quartermaster-General Lt-Gen Thiha Thura Tin Aung Myint Oo and Military Attaché Colonel Alexander V Svintsovskiy cordially greeted the guests.—MNA

Anawrahta Bridge (Chauk) linking Chauk with Seikphyu

The day was cold with flurries of snow. From the briefing hall of Anawrahta Bridge Project in Chauk, Magway Division, I enjoyed a wonderful view of the bridge over the Ayeyawady River with the west Yoma mountain range in the background. Anawrahta Bridge was standing magnificently amid the snow, symbolizing the development of the nation.

Emergence of such large bridges one after another implies the nation’s economic strength, technological development, and the government’s benevolent attitude towards the people.

Despite standing closely, Chauk and Seikphyu in Magway Division were in no position to deal much relationship and trade with each other due to the Ayeyawady River flowing between the two townships. In the past, the vessel was local people’s main means of transport.

(See page 7)