

The NEW LIGHT OF MYANMAR

Volume XI, Number 304

9th Waning of Tabodwe 1365 ME

Saturday, 14 February, 2004

The way in which all the national races will have to march

The State has already declared its seven-point future policy programme clearly and openly. The seven points show exactly the way in which all the national races will have to march towards a discipline-flourishing modern and developed democratic nation without fail. The national races who love the country will have to walk straight on the way with full Union Spirit and the spirit of national unity.

Senior General Than Shwe
Chairman of the State Peace and Development Council
Commander-in-Chief of Defence Services
(From message on the 57th Anniversary Union Day)



Senior General Than Shwe receives Malaysian Prime Minister and party

YANGON, 13 Feb—
Chairman of the State

**57th Anniversary
Union Day
commemorative
special features
on pages 7, 8
and 9.**

INSIDE

Perspectives
**For perpetual
existence of the Union
(Page 2)**

Article
**Let's march to the goal
of the seven-point
future policy
programme
(Page 8+9)**

**Myingyan Degree
College, Government
Technological Institute
(Myingyan) open
(Page 16)**

Circulation

23,188

Peace and Development Council of the Union of Myanmar Senior General Than Shwe received the goodwill delegation led by Prime Minister of Malaysia Dato' Seri Abdullah bin Haji Ahmad Badawi at the Credentials Hall of Pyithu Hluttaw building, here, at 3 pm today.

Also present at the call together with Senior General Than Shwe were Vice-Chairman of the State Peace and Development Council Vice-Senior General Maung Aye, Prime Minister General Khin Nyunt, Member of the State Peace and Development Council General Thura Shwe Mann, Secretary-1

of the State Peace and Development Council Lt-Gen Soe Win, Secretary-2 Lt-Gen Thein Sein, Minister for Foreign Affairs U Win Aung, Deputy Minister U Khin Maung Win, Myanmar Ambassador to Malaysia U Hla Maung, Director-General Lt-Col Pe Nyein of the State Peace and Development Council Office and Director-General Thura U Aung Htet of the Protocol Department.

The visiting Malaysian Prime Minister and party were accompanied by Malaysian Ambassador to Myanmar Dato' Cheah Sam Kip.

MNA

Senior General Than Shwe greets Malaysian Prime Minister Dato' Seri Abdullah bin Haji Ahmad Badawi at Credentials Hall of Pyithu Hluttaw building.—MNA



Senior General Than Shwe and Malaysian Prime Minister Dato' Seri Abdullah bin Haji Ahmad Badawi pose for documentary photo.—MNA

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

PERSPECTIVES

Saturday, 14 February, 2004

For perpetual existence of the Union

All the Myanmar races are the true descendants of the Union, living and increasing in numbers on the Myanmar soil. All the over 100 national races have the same characters — sincerity, kindness, helpfulness, loving kindness, forgiveness, sympathy and peacefulness.

Concerning the fact, Head of State Senior General Than Shwe gave guidance to trainees of primary teachership course No 35 of the University for Development of National Races on 28 January 2003, sayings, "As all the national races are living in various parts of the territory of the Union of Myanmar, each and every region of the Union itself is a mini-Union, home to numerous national races living in unity and togetherness. As the national races are indivisible attaching one another with bonds of love, there must be amity and unity among them."

And since the start of the human civilization and till now, the national races have been living in unity in a family spirit — mutual love and friendship, helpfulness, inter-relationship, forgiveness, and harmonious efforts based on mutual interest — and sharing joys and sorrows together. As they have been living in harmony in the Union of Myanmar, the national races are residing together in all the states and divisions.

Chairman of the Central Committee for Organizing the 57th Anniversary Union Day Prime Minister General Khin Nyunt met Union Day delegates at National Indoor Stadium-1 (Thuwunna) on 10 February and extended greetings. The Prime Minister said that in accord with the guidance of the Head of State, all the national races must stay away from narrow racism, and must live in a family spirit like brothers and sisters residing in togetherness and peace based on common interest, with Union Spirit and unity.

The nation enjoyed strength and glory during the periods when unity is strong, and during the times when national unity was weak, the political, economic, social and security conditions of the Union were in a state of decline and the Union itself faced alien intrusion and transgression.

As Myanmar is a Union, only when there is consolidated solidarity among the national races, will the Union exist forever and sovereignty last. Therefore, the national policy of non-disintegration of the Union, non-disintegration of national solidarity and perpetuation of sovereignty has been laid down and emphasis is also placed on national reconsolidation and propagation of the Union Spirit. For perpetual existence of the Union, all national people are urged to strive for flourishing of Union Spirit.



Alistair Presnell of Australia. — MGF

59th Anniversary Armed Forces Day Objectives

- To strive hand in hand with the people for successful realization of the State's seven-point policy programme.
- To crush internal and external destructive elements hindering the stability and progress of the State through people's militia strategy
- To implement border area development tasks and the five rural development tasks hand in hand with the entire people
- To build up a strong and efficient Tatmadaw to uphold 'Our Three Main National Causes'



Prime Minister General Khin Nyunt formally unveils the Beikman where Yesagyo Sayadaw's statue is kept. MNA

PM attends Pakokku Maha Withutayama Monastery centennial ammemorated

YANGON, 13 Feb — Prime Minister General Khin Nyunt and party attended the opening of the main buildings of Myingyan Degree College and Government Technical Institute in Myingyan, Mandalay Division, on 11 February morning.

Accompanied by Chairman of Mandalay Division Peace and Development Council Commander Maj-Gen Ye Myint, the Prime Minister and party arrived at Pakokku, Magway Division, at 12 noon, where they were welcomed by Sagaing Division Peace and Development Council Chairman North-West Command Commander Maj-Gen Tha Aye, No 101 LID Commander Col Sein Win, Magway Division Peace and Development Council Chairman Col Zaw Min, military and civil officials, students and people.

Pakokku Maha Withutayama Monastery held its centenary celebration in conjunction with the third day session of the 11th Sannipata Ovada Seeking of Pakokku Maha Withutayamika Gana Vacaka Nikaya at the monastery, attended by the Prime Minister. The ceremony was graced by the presence of Secretary of the State Sangha Maha Nayaka Committee Presiding Nayaka of the monastery Sayadaw Abhidhaja Maha Rattha Guru Abhidhaja Agga Maha Saddhamma Jotika, Pakokku Maha Withutayamika Gana Vacaka Nikaya Sambuti Gana Maha Vinayaka Sayadaw Bhaddanta Kumara and members of the Sangha. Gana Vacaka Agga Maha Ganthavacaka Pandita Sayadaw Bhaddanta Sobhana read the resolutions of the meeting.

Next, the Prime Minister supplicated on religious matters. In his supplication, the Prime Minister said that he was greatly pleased with the opportunity to pay reverence to the Sayadaws to the centenary celebration and the meeting. He added that he learnt that Pakokku Maha Withutayama Monastery was founded by First Yesagyo Sayadaw Ganthasara in 1265 ME and at that time the Sayadaw was at the age of 82, vasa 63. As the Sayadaws have studied the learning and teaching methods of the Second Maungthaung Sasana Baing Sayadaw of the King Mindon era. Their

People's Desire

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

lectures on the religious treatises are clear, and they are teaching the Tri-Pitaka in 40 volumes, Athakatha in 52 volumes and Tika in 28 volumes. The teaching method of the Maha Withutayama Kyauktaikgyi is famous all around the nation as the Pakokku method.

Almost all the Sayadaws of Myanmar go to Pakokku to complete their religious studies. Eleven years after founding the Kyauktaikgyi, Ashin Ganthasara passed away after handing over the monastery to his disciple, Sayadaw Bhaddanta Panña. Afterwards, the successive Sayadaws have continued to preserve the teaching method. Since Yadabon era and till now, the Kyauktaikgyi has produced 14 Abhidhaja Maha Rattha Guru Sayadaws, 12 Abhidhaja Agga Maha Saddhamma Jotika Sayadaws, 52 Agga Maha Pandita Sayadaws, two Dhammakathika Sayadaws, four Tipitakadhara Tipitakakovid Sayadaws, and one Secretary Sayadaw of the State Sangha Maha Nayaka Committee, two joint secretary Sayadaws and six member Sayadaws. Other eminent monks also come to the Kyauktaikgyi to pursue their religious studies. It is like a garden producing fruits and flowers of the Pariyatti Sasana. In conclusion, the Prime Minister wished all the Sayadaws present at the ceremony to be able to serve the interest of the Sasana more in the future.

Afterwards, the Prime Minister and party presented offertories to the Sayadaws. The Magway Sayadaw gave Nigamana Saraniya Ovadakatha. Sayadaw Bhaddanta Sobhana read the report of Nikaya Gana Vacaka executive committee of the monastery. The opening of the Beikman in which the statue of Yesagyo Sayadaw Bhaddanta Ganthasara is kept took place at the building.

The Prime Minister pressed the button to unveil the Beikman. After the ceremony, the Prime Minister and party viewed the statue.

MNA

Talks on women's affairs to be held

YANGON, 13 Feb — The team led by President of Myanmar Women's Affairs Federation Dr Daw Khin Win Shwe will give talks on women's affairs for Myanmar women doctors at the Myanmar Medical Association at No 249, Theinbyu Road, Mingalar Taungnyunt Township, here, at 3 pm on 15 February. — MNA

ISD tennis tournament commences

YANGON, 13 Feb — The 41st Inter-State and Division Tennis Tournament for 2004 sponsored by Myanmar Tennis Federation was opened at Theinbyu Tennis Court here this morning. Among the spectators were Patron of MTF Maj-Gen Kyaw Win, General Secretary of Myanmar Olympic Committee Director-General of Sports and Physical Education Department U Thauang Htaik and officials, President of MTF U Zaw Zaw and executives and guests.

First, defending champions Ayeyawady Division's men tennis team and Mandalay Division women's tennis team handed over the championship shields they won last year to Director-General U Thauang Htaik who made a speech on the occasion. Next, tennis events followed. Altogether 13 teams are participating in the tourney which will continue until 18 February. — MNA

Presnell leads Myanmar Open



YANGON, 13 Feb — The second round of Myanmar Open was held at Yangon Golf Club in Danyingon this morning. MPGA & MGF President Maj-Gen Win Hlaing, officials, guests and fans were present. Australian rookie Alistair Presnell grabbed the halfway lead in the US\$ 200,000 Myanmar Open today where he hopes to win the title to honour his late father. On a tough scoring day, the 23-year-old Presnell, playing in his maiden professional tournament in Asia, battled to a one-under-par 71 in the second round at Yangon Golf Club for a one-shot advantage over local hope Aung Win, who carded the day's joint best of 69 and American Andrew Pitts. Former champion Thongchai Jaidee of Thailand, overnight leader Mo Joong-kyung of Korea, Australian duo Unho Park and David Gleeson and Japan's Yoshinobu Tsukuda are lurking a further shot back. — MNA

US troops, allies suffer casualties in Iraq

BAGHDAD, 13 Feb—Two US soldiers were killed and a nine coalition soldiers wounded following a spike in violence targeting mainly Iraqi security forces.

A mortar round also exploded near where Japanese troops are deployed in the southern Iraqi city of Samawa, but there were no casualties, a Japanese officer said Thursday.

A US military statement said "two Task Force 1st Armoured Division soldiers are dead and another is wounded after a roadside bomb attack on 11 February.

"The soldiers were conducting a mounted patrol in western Baghdad at approximately 9:30 pm (1830 GMT) when the attack occurred.

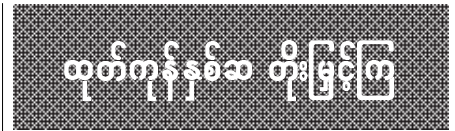
"The soldiers were evacuated to the 31st Combat Support Hospital for treatment where two soldiers succumbed to their wounds. "The incident is under investigation," the statement added, saying the identity of the victims was being withheld until their families are notified.

The latest deaths bring to 257 the number of American soldiers killed in combat in Iraq since US President George W Bush declared major hostilities over on 1 May. In Madrid, the defence ministry said five Spanish soldiers and an Iraqi interpreter were slightly injured on Wednesday by a home-made bomb near their base in the southern province of Diwaniyah.

The troops, part of a 1,300-strong Spanish contingent serving in Iraq, were on a foot patrol and returning to their base when the bomb was hurled from a nearby building.

Late Wednesday, the US military and the Iraqi police said an Iraqi paramilitary was killed and three US soldiers wounded in two attacks in the northern oil region of Kirkuk.

Internet



US accused of promoting Iraq break-up

BAGHDAD, 13 Feb—The United States is pursuing a policy of deliberately destabilising Iraq by showing favouritism towards the Shia and Kurds, according to a new report by an Arab League fact-finding committee.

The report, which comes after an investigation by committee members who visited Iraq in December, accuses US occupation forces of supporting the Shia and Kurds at the expense of Arab Sunnis.

It reveals fears by Arab countries that the policy will split Iraq into several minor statelets along sectarian or ethnic lines.

A federal state based on de-facto ethnic and sectarian divisions in Iraq would represent the first step towards the country's break-up.

Such a turn of events would pose a direct threat to many Arab countries, which contain minorities that might ask for similar deals.

Ethnic divisions Thereport argues that the composition of the Iraqi Governing Council (IGC), corresponding to the country's ethnic make-up, has laid the foundations for sectarianism.

Internet

Top US general survives assassination bid

FALLUJA, 13 Feb—Abizaid is the third senior US official to escape attack in Iraq. The head of US Central Command in the Middle-East, General John Abizaid, has survived an assassination attempt in Falluja.

Abizaid escaped unscathed from an attack with rocket-propelled grenades in the flashpoint Iraqi town on Thursday, a US military official said.

Brigadier-General Mark Kimmitt said the RPGs were launched as Abizaid and Major General Charles Swannack, commander of the 82nd Airborne Division, travelled in a convoy in Falluja, west of the capital.

"Three rocket-propelled grenades were fired at their convoy from the rooftops in the vicinity," Kimmitt, the deputy operations chief for the US-led occupation forces told a press conference in

Baghdad.

Two civilians were killed and an undisclosed number wounded in the shootout, according to Aljazeera.

Following the attack, Abizaid cancelled his tour of Falluja and returned to a nearby US base, our correspondent reported.

Abizaid is the third high-profile US official to escape an attack in Iraq.

The others are US administrator Paul Bremer, whose convoy was attacked in December, and Deputy Defence Secretary Paul Wolfowitz, whose Baghdad hotel was hit by rockets.

Internet



General John Abizaid, commander of all US forces in the Middle East, left, talks to Iraqi Civil Defence officials at a military outpost in Falluja, Iraq Thursday, on 12 Feb, 2004 moments after an explosion nearby. Abizaid and his party escaped injury in the gun battle. —INTERNET

Art Garfunkel pleads guilty to NY marijuana charge

NEW YORK, 13 Feb—Singer Art Garfunkel pleaded guilty to marijuana possession and paid a 100-US-dollar fine in a small New York town after his arrest last month in his speeding limousine, court officials said on Thursday.

Garfunkel's attorney entered the guilty plea on February 4 and Garfunkel paid a 100-US-dollar fine and 100 US dollars in costs in the Hurley Town Court, 90 miles north of New York City, court clerk Leanne Warren said.

Garfunkel, 62, half of the '60s duo Simon and Garfunkel, was charged with unlawful possession of marijuana when his limousine was pulled over for speeding near Hurley on January 17.

The state trooper who stopped the vehicle found a bag of marijuana containing 6 grams (0.2116 ounce) of marijuana in the star's jacket pocket, police said.

The driver of the limousine received a ticket for driving 61mph in a 45-mph zone.

MNA/Reuters

Minister on China's cultural progress

BEIJING, 13 Feb—Chinese Culture Minister Sun Jiazheng said here Thursday that China has made great progress in cultural development.

Sun made the remarks at a Press conference organized by the State Council Information Office.

Since 2002, Sun said, his ministry has organized a project promoting excellent cultural works nationwide.

In recent years, he said, budgetary investment into cultural infrastructure reached a record. Ongoing projects include the

national theatre, the national museum, the national library and the national arts gallery.

While fulfilling promises for cultural market access in line with the World Trade Organization rules, Sun said, his ministry overhauled video game arcades, Internet cafes and entertainment clubs.

Sun also said that the

Chinese Government had signed cultural cooperation agreements with 145 foreign governments.

The government tried all out to well preserve cultural heritage, he said. To date, China has 29 sites inscribed by the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization on the World Heritage list.

MNA/Xinhua

India bullish about coffee export to Russia

Moscow, 13 Feb—India is bullish about export of coffee to Russia, the country which has one of the highest growth rates of coffee consumption in the world.

"After European Union, Russia has emerged as India's second largest coffee market and has 10 per cent growth rate of coffee consumption - one of the highest in the world," Nitin R Gokarn, Secretary of the Coffee Board, here told a seminar organized by the Indian Business Alliance (IBA).

Noting a direct link between the economic growth and coffee consumption, he reminded that Russia was named along with India, China and Brazil as the fastest growing economies at the recent Davos Economic Forum.

"In 1990s India had exported about 36,000 metric tons of coffee annually to the ex-USSR, while today it is already exporting 33,000 metric tons to Russia," he said.

Pointing out that India has emerged as the sixth largest producer of coffee in the world, Gokarn recalled that in the past in some years it had exported up to 55 per cent of produce to the ex-USSR, while today Russia's share is 18-19 per cent in Indian coffee exports, which will further expand with the growth of Russian economy.

Bulk of the Indian coffee export to Russia amounts to the instant coffee imported by Nestle's Russian subsidiary, while only three thousand metric tons are coffee beans and with the expansion of chains of coffee parlours in the country this sector will also grow, India's Coffee Board believes.

Unlike, coffee exports to Russia, the tea sector has to radically change its philosophy, Tea Board's Moscow-based Promotion Director Sumit Jerath said at the seminar.

MNA/PTI



Iraqi Civil Defence Corps members patrol an area of central Baghdad. Two more US soldiers have been killed in Iraq, as a UN team placed itself half-way between Shiites demands for early polls and Washington's insistence that a vote needs to be well prepared. —INTERNET

Two US soldiers killed in latest Iraq attacks

BAGHDAD, 13 Feb— A roadside bomb killed two US soldiers in Baghdad, the US military said on Thursday, as Iraqis began burying dozens of victims of two attacks against locals working with the US-led occupation.

The US Army's 1st Armoured Division said the bomb exploded at 9:30 pm (1830 GMT) on Wednesday as the soldiers were passing by in their vehicles.

The casualties were evacuated to a combat support hospital for treatment where two soldiers later died, it said in a statement.

The attack on the US patrol came hours after a suicide car bomb killed 47 people at an Army recruitment centre in the capital. A similar attack on a police station

south of Baghdad killed 53 people on Tuesday.

Only a few of the bodies from Wednesday's blast had been taken for burial. Doctors said some corpses were difficult to identify due to mutilation or bad burns.

The police and new Army are central to Washington's plan to hand over power to Iraqis by June 30. Most of Wednesday's victims were newly recruited soldiers reporting for duty.

The attacks follow a pattern of targeting Iraqis seen

as collaborating with the US occupation. Twin suicide bombings in northern Iraq against two Kurdish parties allied with the United States killed more than 100 people on February 1.

At least 372 American soldiers have been killed in combat since US-led forces invaded Iraq to topple Saddam Hussein last March.

The violence rages as a UN team, led by veteran diplomat Lakhdar Brahimi, is in the country discussing the possibility of holding elec-

tions ahead of the June 30 handover deadline, as demanded by leaders of the Shiite Muslim majority. US plans are for elections only later.

Brahimi is due to leave by Friday at the latest, a senior US-led administration official said. The rest of the UN team has started touring provinces. UN Secretary-General Kofi Annan is expected to make a decision on the elections on 21 February.

MNA/Reuters

Fresh tremors jolt Indonesia's Papua region

JAKARTA, 13 Feb— The death toll from last week's earthquake in Indonesia's remote Papua region has risen to 37, officials said on Thursday, as a series of fresh tremors rocked the area.

"We suffered a total of five moderate to strong ones on Wednesday, with the highest registering 5.3 on the Richter Scale," said Chris, an official at the Nabire quake centre in Papua, 1,900 miles east of the capital, Jakarta.

Chris, who like many Indonesians uses a single name, said no new casualties were caused by Wednesday's tremors.

The epicentre of last Friday's earthquake was just a few kilometres from Nabire, a regional centre of 26,000 people and most deaths and injuries were caused by falling buildings.

However, with some damage in remote, outlying areas, reports of casualties were trickling in only slowly.—MNA/Reuters

536 US service members killed since beginning of military operations in Iraq

BAGHDAD, 13 Feb— As of Thursday, 12 Feb, 536 US service members have died since the beginning of military operations in Iraq, according to the Department of Defence. Of those, 372 died as a result of hostile action and 164 died of non-hostile causes, the department said.

The British military has reported 57 deaths; Italy, 17; Spain, eight; Bulgaria, five; Thailand, two; Denmark, Ukraine and Poland have reported one each.

Since May 1, when President Bush declared that major combat operations in Iraq had ended, 398

US soldiers have died — 257 as a result of hostile action and 141 of non-hostile causes, according to the military.

Since the start of military operations, 2,621 US service members have been injured as a result of hostile action, according to

the Defence Department.

Non-hostile injured numbered 410. The latest deaths reported by the military: Two Task Force 1st Armoured Division soldiers were killed Wednesday by a roadside bomb in Baghdad.

Internet

India's only aging aircraft carrier under repair

NEW DELHI, 13 Feb— India's only aircraft carrier *INS Viraat*, which is the centre-piece of Indian Navy's western armada, will be unavailable this year because it has been dry-docked for elaborate repairs and a refit at Cochin of south India.

The 1959 vintage, 23,900-ton carrier had undergone a life extension as recently as 2001, which was intended to have given it a fresh 10-year lease of life. But it is out of action again.

According to *Hindustan Times*, a leading English newspaper, while acknowledging the limitations imposed in having an aircraft carrier on an "extended life", the Indian Navy claims that the dry-docking of the *Viraat* is part of its "routine preventive maintenance".

At the same time, it uses the case to press

its demand for having at least two carriers. "*Viraat* is not on this season. This is the reason we want another carrier," a top naval official was quoted as saying.

India will not get its second carrier, *Admiral Gorshkov*, before May 2008. The indigenous air defence ship will take nine years coming. And going by the indications, the aging *Viraat* needs a lot of nursing, putting a question mark over its reliability. A warship is built to last 25 years. The *Viraat* is now pushing 45, the paper says.

MNA/Xinhua

EI Baradei says world may be headed for nuclear destruction

VIENNA, 13 Feb— The head of the UN nuclear watchdog said on Thursday the world could be headed for destruction if it does not stop the spread of atomic weapons technology, which has become widely accessible.

In an opinion piece in the *New York Times*, Mohamed ElBaradei wrote that nuclear technology, once virtually unobtainable, is now obtainable through "a sophisticated worldwide network able to deliver systems for producing material usable in weapons".

Above all ElBaradei echoed US President George W. Bush's call in a speech on Wednesday for states to tighten up the control of their companies' nuclear exports to proliferators.

ElBaradei, the International Atomic Energy

Agency (IAEA) director-general, said the world must act quickly because inaction would create a proliferation disaster.

"The supply network will grow, making it easier to acquire nuclear weapon expertise and materials.

Eventually, inevitably, terrorists will gain access to such materials and technology, if not actual weapons," he wrote.

"If the world does not change course, we risk self-destruction," ElBaradei said.

MNA/Reuters

China's software exports rose 33% in 2003

BEIJING, 13 Feb— China's information and telecommunication industry witnessed rapid growth in 2003 with impressive performances reported from hardware, software and mobile phone sectors, the Ministry of Information Industry said here.

A total of 8,582 software companies with 18,000 registered products created 19.5 billion US dollars of profit, which increased by 45 per cent over 2002.

Exports of software hit a record high of two billion US dollars last year, up 33 per cent.—MNA/PTI

စက်မှုပစ္စည်းအား ခေတ်ကျော်လွှား



A US soldier sits in a crater caused by the car bomb that exploded in Baghdad on 12 Feb, 2004.—INTERNET

Explosion in Iraq town where Japanese troops are stationed

TOKYO, 13 Feb— An explosion caused a small hole in a road in a residential area of Samawa in southern Iraq, where Japanese troops are stationed as part of a mission to help rebuild the country, *Kyodo* news agency said on Thursday.

Kyodo quoted a witness as saying there was a hole about eight inches in diameter in the road, with a cylinder-like metal object stuck in it.

There were no reports of injuries.

A Japanese military spokesman in Tokyo said he had no reports of any injuries to Army personnel or damage to equipment. He had no further details about the incident.

The *Mainichi Shimbun* daily said in its online edition that many windows had been broken in nearby homes and that there were reports that something like a mortar shell had been fired towards the site of the incident.

There is much concern at home about the safety of Japanese military personnel who are being sent to help rebuild Iraq in Japan's riskiest military mission since World War II. Some Japanese believe the dispatch is in contravention of Japan's pacifist Constitution and that soldiers should not be sent.—MNA/Reuters



Iraquis view a bullet-riddled civilian car in this image made from television, which was damaged by gunfire when US troops returned fire after a rocket propelled grenade attack on a convoy carrying US General John Abizaid, the top commander in the Middle East, in Falluja, Iraq, on 12 Feb, 2004.—INTERNET

Three-day conclave on Buddhism to be held in New Delhi

NEW DELHI, 13 Feb — A three-day international conclave on Buddhism, to be inaugurated by President of India A P J Abdul Kalam and addressed by those from other faiths, would begin in the national capital here from February 17.

Announcing this, Tourism Minister Jagmohan told reporters that such a conclave would be the first of its kind in India which would also enable the country to promote its Buddhist heritage and culture, besides the Buddhist tourism circuit to attract pilgrims mainly from South and Southeast Asia.

A large number of monks and spiritual leaders would be attending the conference, which would be followed by a dedication ceremony of the ancient Mahabodhi Temple at the holy town of Bodhgaya in Bihar, where Gautama Buddha is believed to have attained Enlightenment.

MNA/PTI

Ancient antiques found south of Iraq

BAGHDAD, 13 Feb — Quite a number of Iraqi ancient antiques were found recently in southern Iraq, Wisal Naeem Jassim, an official at the Iraqi archaeology body, said on Thursday.

"In a site near Al Rifaa District, southern Iraq, we found a new collection of ancient antiques of the era of dynasties (BC)," said Jassim, quoted by local Press.

Jassim is responsible for classifying and naming the pieces according to the periods they come from.

"Everyday we receive pieces from ruin excavation site or by confiscating them from thieves. We number them and then send them to higher references to be included with collection of the Nasiriyah Museum,"

said Jassim.

She added that the local authorities in Nasiriyah, 350 kilometres south of Baghdad, are waiting for the US-led coalition forces to evacuate from the museum so that it could be opened for the public to see its contents, which represent different epochs of Iraqi civilizations.

Iraqi museums were robbed during the US-led war last March and many Iraqi antiques have been smuggled abroad since then. — MNA/Xinhua



US troops investigate the scene of a vehicle bomb in central Baghdad, on Wednesday, 11 Feb, 2004. A vehicle bomb exploded outside an army recruiting centre in central Baghdad on Wednesday, killing at least 36 people, the second such attack in two days targeting Iraqi working with the US-led coalition. — INTERNET

BA cancels Washington flight again for security reasons

LONDON, 13 Feb — British Airways (BA) announced Thursday a flight from London to Washington is cancelled again for security reasons.

The airline said in a statement that its Flight BA 223 from London's Heathrow Airport to Washington's Dulles Airport would not fly on Sunday and that Monday's Flight 263 from London to Riyadh, Saudi Arabia was also cancelled.

BA said the decision was made following "government advice to cancel those flights for security reasons".

The airline has been forced on several occasions to cancel its flights to Washington after "credible" terror threats were reported since the start of this year.

Disruption to Flight 223 began December 31, when the plane was kept on the tarmac at Dulles Airport for several hours after landing, while US authorities questioned passengers and crew.

MNA/Xinhua

RSCAP conf adopts declaration on advancement of women

ISLAMABAD, 13 Feb — Expressing commitment to the political, economic and social advancement of rural women, a regional conference here on Thursday adopted a declaration calling for elimination of all forms of discrimination and violence against women through a policy of zero tolerance.

The three-day meeting of the 'First Ladies of Regional Steering Committee for Asia-Pacific (RSCAP), hosted by Sehba Musharraf — the wife of Pakistan President Pervez Musharraf, ended on Thursday and unanimously adopted the 'Islamabad Declaration'.

The Declaration called on the governments to focus on the objectives of giving increased representation and participation to rural women in political systems, integrate

them into national and international mainstream, institutionalize gender budgeting, facilitate access to credit and markets and formulate and implement health policies to address the urgent health concerns of women particularly HIV/AIDS and reproductive health.

It urged the member nations to encourage rural women apply their indigenous knowledge for preservation of environment, eliminate all forms of discrimination and violence against women through a policy of zero toler-

ance and prohibit trafficking of women and girls.

Deputy Chairperson of Rajya Sabha Najma Hepttullah attended the meet along with a three member Indian delegation.

Addressing the concluding session of the third RSCAP meeting, Sehba Musharraf, who is also the Chairperson of the regional steering committee, said the meeting provided concrete suggestions to achieve the objective of political and economic empowerment of rural women of Asia Pacific Region. — MNA/PTI

Report says five million Iraqis live under poverty line

BAGHDAD, 13 Feb — About five million Iraqis were living under the poverty line, compared with 143,000 in 1993, according to a report released by the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs, local Azzaman newspaper reported Thursday.

It also said that more than one million Iraqi women aged between 25 and 40 were unmarried while divorce cases reached 2,000 last year from 1,750 cases previously.

The ministry attributed the appearance of the problems in the Iraqi society to the absence of affective measures to prevent the deterioration of the social structure.

It has made plans to deal with these problems by increasing the number of families benefitting from the social care programme from 150,000 to 300,000.

The plan includes increasing salaries, support for production families through social rehabilitation project and opening vocational training centres in Baghdad.

MNA/Xinhua

Iranian FM says Teheran ready to help IAEA verification

ROME, 13 Feb — Iranian Foreign Minister Kamal Kharrazi said on Thursday Teheran was ready to help the IAEA verify its nuclear compliance and insisted on his country's right to a peaceful nuclear programme.

Asked about US and International Atomic Energy

Agency comments earlier in the day expressing concern over Iranian cooperation on the nuclear issue, Kharrazi said: "The burden of proof is on the one who makes the allegations. There may be questions by IAEA inspectors but we are ready to verify those," he told reporters as he entered a religious conference in Rome.

US Undersecretary of State John Bolton accused Iran on Thursday of pursuing efforts to acquire nuclear arms and of failing to comply with a commitment last year to suspend uranium enrichment activities.

"There's no doubt in our mind that Iran continues to pursue a nuclear weapons programme," he said.

But Kharrazi denied the accusation. "Certainly we are not following any programme to produce weapons," he said.

"We have decided to develop all nuclear technology for peaceful purposes. We insist on that as our legitimate right to have nuclear technology for peaceful purposes."

MNA/Reuters

Bush, Kerry both face attacks on Vietnam records

WASHINGTON, 13 Feb — As US President George W Bush struggles to answer questions about his military service during the Vietnam War era, a conservative counterattack has begun to try to impugn Democratic presidential contender John Kerry's war record.

A photograph showing Kerry and actress and anti-war activist Jane Fonda taken at a 1970 anti-war rally in Pennsylvania surfaced on a conservative web site on Monday. It spread across the Internet and showed up on the front page of the Washington Times on Wednesday. TV networks quickly picked up the story.

The newspaper quoted two Republican congressmen, Randy Cunningham of California and Texas' Sam Johnson, both of whom served in the war, as saying the image would diminish

Kerry's appeal to Vietnam veterans. Johnson said it made him sick.

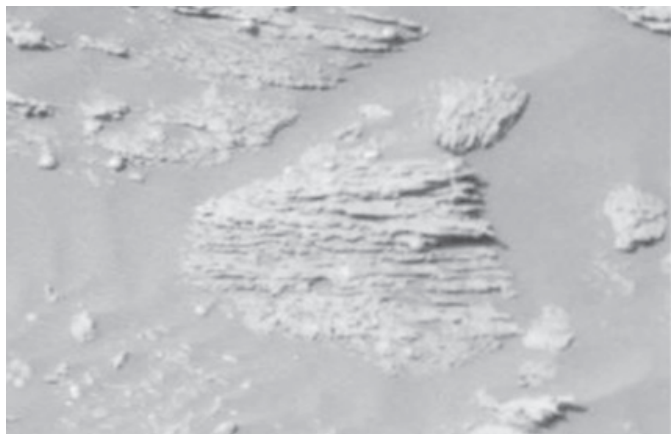
The picture shows Fonda listening intently at the rally. Three rows behind her is a fuzzy but recognizable image of Kerry, who also spoke at the demonstration.

Kerry, a Massachusetts senator and probable presidential challenger to Bush in November, became a leader of the anti-war movement after returning from Vietnam where he was decorated with a Silver Star, a Bronze Star and three Purple Hearts.

He constantly brings up his heroic war service at campaign rallies. Vietnam War veterans who served with him, and one of whose life Kerry saved, have frequently appeared by his side and in his TV ads.

"It's clear what some of Kerry's opponents will try to do. They want to frame him, not as a valiant war hero but as a long-haired war protester who later as a senator voted against defence spending," said American University political scientist Allan Lichtman.

MNA/Reuters



New details of layered rocks in Opportunity Ledge on Mars are pictured in this cropped image taken by the Opportunity Rover's panoramic camera on 9 Feb, 2004, and released by NASA on 11 Feb, 2004. In previous panoramic camera images, geologists saw that some rocks in the outcrop had thin layers, and images sent to Earth on Tuesday now show that the thin layers are not always parallel to each other like lines on notebook paper. — INTERNET

Iraq under US and allies' occupation

American arms and equipment lost and destroyed in Iraq

US and its allies troops invaded Iraq starting from 20 March 2003. The Iraqi guerillas have resisted the intruders and as a result the Americans have lost many arms and equipment in Iraq.



The wreckage of US helicopter which crashed near Fallujah on 9 December, 2003.



A burned-out US military vehicle seen on the outskirts of Baghdad, on 3 Nov, 2003. The vehicle was attacked by a rocket.



A fire destroyed an armoured transport vehicle in Mishada, 30 kilometres (19 miles) north of Baghdad on 5 Dec, 2003. The vehicle was attacked by Iraqi guerillas.



A roadside bomb exploded under an army vehicle on a main street in downtown Mosul on 6 September, 2003.



A burned out military ammunition truck seen after it was attacked in Fallujah, Iraq, on October, 2003, 35 miles (60 kms) west of Baghdad.

American arms and equipment lost and destroyed in Iraq

Lost or destroyed arms and equipment	From the beginning of war up to 1 May 2003	From 2 May to 29 January 2004	Total
Tank	5	1	6
Armoured vehicle	45	-	45
Other vehicle	201	-	201
Aircraft	20	1	21
Helicopter	23	11	34



American's Humvees were destroyed after an explosion in Mosul, Iraq 400 kms (250 miles) north of Baghdad, Iraq, on 25 September, 2003.

In honour of the 57th Anniversary Union Day:

Development images of Mandalay Division in the time of the State Peace and Development Council

Development Sector	1988	2004
Agriculture		
Sown acreage (million)	2.53	3.39
Monsoon/summer paddy sown acreage	575855	820003
Beans & pulses (acre)	1354632	1559964
Tea (acre)	2050	3084
Pepper (acre)	-	32464
Irrigation facility		
Dam & reservoir	20	60
Water pumping station	2	71
Industrial zone	-	3
Transport		
Road (mile)	844	1281
Bridge (above 180 feet)	-	6
Communication		
Microwave station	11	16
Auto-exchange	5	18
Post office	140	149
Telegraph office	37	46



Yeywa Hydropower project, the largest in Myanmar, will generate 3,550 million kilowatt hours of electricity per year.



Mandalay International Airport in TadaU Township in Mandalay Division.



Myanmar Aerospace Engineering University in Meiktila.



Mandalay Central Railway Station.



Newly opened Pansay Bridge on the road to the Mandalay International Airport.



Government Technical Institute (Myingyan) under construction in Myingyan, Mandalay Division seen on 27 January.

Development Sector	1988	2004
Information		
Myanma Alin/Kyemon sub-printing house (Mdy)	-	1
TV retransmission station	1	3
IPRD office	-	33
e-Library	-	1
Library	-	15
Education (basic)		
BEHS	87	114
BEMS	180	230
BEPS	3424	4091
Post primary school	-	444
Education (higher)		
University, college, institute	16	40
Health		
Hospital	69	84

Marching toward Golden Land in unity and amity

Unity is strength

Let's march to the goal of the seven-point future policy programme

At present, the Government has already defined a national task clearly. It is no other than the march to a new discipline-flourishing democratic nation in accord with the seven-point policy programme. And the national races will have to march to the goal with the spirit to love the nation, patriotism and Union Spirit.

In shouldering the national duty, we will have to carry out the nation-building task, based on the objective political, economic and social conditions of the State.

The State Peace and Development Council has been expediting the nation-building tasks in accord with the 12 political, economic and social objectives.

Here, the Government has been materializing the four political objectives phase by phase. Thus, it can be clearly witnessed that never in the history had Myanmar been enjoying greater peace and stability, and the rule of law in the whole country than at present. At the same time, the Government has been able to make peace with the 17 national race armed groups for national reconsolidation. Moreover, the 17 groups have been taking part in the national

development drive in the respective sectors in cooperation with the Government, the Tatmadaw and the people with heart and soul.

Development of a nation always stands on prevalence of peace and stability and the united strength of all the national races of that country. The over 40 years of sufferings the nation had experienced resulting from the internal conflicts and the factional prejudices of the political parties have stood witness to the fact. In the international community also, domestic problems of some countries had led to hampering their progress or destroying them.

The chances of achiev-

ing the national development will be slim without the existence of the peace and stability and national consolidation. In other words, we can say that there is inter-dependence between the factors — peace and stability, the national economic development, and the national solidarity — and perpetuation of the Union.

In the same vein, the national solidarity can ensure peace and stability, lay sound foundations for national economic progress, and accelerate the national economic development.

As the State Peace and Development Council understands and accepts the fact, it has given priority

to the peace and stability, the national reconsolidation, and the rule of law. At the same time, it has been making efforts to actually strengthen national economy for the emergence of a modern and developed nation.

In this way, the Government is carrying out its tasks with the harmonious participation of all the na-

states and divisions for development of industries and generation of job opportunities region-wise. At the same time, 257 large and medium State-owned industries and 2,429 private industries have been set up to increase production and to extend manufacturing of import-substitute goods.

The development of the

Paunglaung hydel power station project capable of generating 280 megawatts of electricity and Yeywa hydel power station project capable of generating 780 megawatts of electricity, are also being implemented. On completion of the 11 projects, another 1,960 megawatts of electricity will be generated.

When it comes to paddy cultivation, the basic economy of the State, high-yield quality strains of paddy are in use with the application of modern cultivation techniques. Moreover, with a shift from the manual to the mechanized farming, farm machinery are also used. As a result, a total of one billion baskets of paddy are obtained at present, up from 630 million baskets in 1988. The completion of over 150 irrigation facilities and 265 river-water pumping projects in water-scarce areas aimed at ensuring a sufficient supply of irrigation water in agriculture resulted in the extension of sown acreage to more than 2 million. At the moment, another 39 irrigation facilities are under way and 84 others under planning stage.

Measures are now being taken to develop border areas and national races by laying down systematic plans as national solidarity has been built after peace was made with 17 armed groups of national races and others.

(See page 9)

In honour of the 57th Anniversary Union Day:



In the industrial sector, the capacity of the State-owned industries have been promoted and the industries have been extended for the introduction of an economy based on advanced production processes. Nineteen industrial zones of private industries have been set up in the

Prime Minister General Khin Nyunt meets officials and representatives of NGOs at the Pyithu Hluttaw in Yangon and explains the future policy programme of the State.

order to increase the power generation, hydel-power plants, steam-propelled power plants, gas-fired power plants and diesel-driven power plants have been extended nation wide. Thus, the capacity of the power generators have reached 1219.81 megawatt at present, from 706.82 megawatt in 1988.

A total of 28 hydel power stations and six gas-powered stations were built to generate more electricity. A total of 11 hydel power station projects, including



Ketu Nilar

tional races, using the national strength as the foundation. Now, the nation is on the right track towards progress, achieving sound foundations of peace and unity. In addition, the economic infrastructures, social infrastructures, and science and technological infrastructures are coming out magnificently in the nation, resulting from the sound foundations of peace.

industries and the increase in their number, and the rise in the living standard of the people have increased the domestic power requirement. In this regard, efforts are being made to fulfill the power requirement of the nation. Thanks to the efforts, the domestic electricity consumption of the nation at present is 5,064.20 million units, up from 2,226.45 million units in 1988. In



Like their brethren of all other states and divisions, the people of Rakhine State have unanimously supported the seven-point future policy programme of the State.



Prime Minister General Khin Nyunt greets Chairman of Kayah State Special Region 1 U Htay Ko and party.

(from page 8)

The development measures for border areas are now being taken in 18 regions covering 68 townships in seven states and two divisions. The project constitutes 83415.34 square miles in area and benefits over 5.3 million of local national people on a broader scale.

The fact is that the development momentum of the State is gaining with the times. Judging by the overall conditions in the country, the emergence of a peaceful, modern, developed and discipline-flourishing democratic nation is not a distant reality.

That is why the Government has resolutely laid down the seven-point policy programme of the State on the ground of peace and national unity already achieved which is the political life and the economic life springing from it. The seven-point roadmap is as follows:

First phase — Re-convening of the National Convention that has been adjourned since 1996

Second phase — After the successful holding of the National Convention, step by step implementation of

the process necessary for the emergence of a genuine and discipline-flourishing democratic system

Third phase — Drafting of a new constitution in accord with basic principles and detailed basic principles laid down by the National Convention

Fourth phase — Adoption of the constitution through national referendum

Fifth phase — Holding of free and fair elections for Pyithu Hluttaws (Legislative bodies) according to the new constitution

Sixth phase — Convening of Hluttaws attended by Hluttaw members in accordance with the new constitution, and

Seventh phase — Building a modern, developed and democratic nation by the state leaders elected by the Hluttaw; and the government and other central organs formed by the Hluttaw

The seven-point policy programme is also a guiding star for the future of the State and its people as well as the path leading to the peaceful, modern and

developed democratic Union, which is also the future goal of Myanmar people. The entire national people will follow that path with firm steps.

In view of the present favourable conditions in the country, the National Convention Convening Commission, the Work Committee for Convening of National Convention and the Management Committee for Convening of National Convention have been reorganized in order to resume the National Convention, which has been suspended temporarily since 1996, in accord with the seven-point policy programme of the State. The seven-point

policy programme has won wholehearted support of the entire national people in respective states and divisions.

In addition, it was also supported unanimously at the Bagan Mass Rally. To sum up, the seven-point roadmap of the State is in fact the road to be followed by the entire national people in unity with strong belief. The entire national people will see the peaceful, modern, developed and discipline-flourishing democratic Union without a shadow of doubt if they walk it with firm determination and resolution.

Translation: TMT+KTY

Poem

Beauty of Ngwetaung Land

*Ngwetaung Dam, clean clear water shimmering
Beautified by cultivation.

Kayah State's Loikaw City

With faint blue hills around.

The Biluchaung and Htuchaung

Two brother waterways

Meet in confluence at Nampuint.

With creeks and rivulets in consonance

Emerge as the vast Biluchaung waterfall

Pouring tremendously in power

Electricity produced in abundance.

*Tagundaing festival is a special treat

In Tagu and Kason

The sound of phasi, gong, flute and oboe

With tremendous attendance to this heritage

In Kayah State, friends and relatives join

In this whole festivity.

In the present day

There is beauty in variety

Citizens, good heroes all

Carry the burden with added gusto

In peace, there progress all round

Let it reverberate from earth to sky.

*To Loikaw Town, would you like to come

Shan, Kayah and other kin

All residing side by side.

All around this land

Kayan or Padaung damsels

Geikho and Geibar

Inntha, Payeh, Yinbaw

Yintaleh, Paku, Kayin and

Our citizens all assembled

Together, there's new beauty

To reminisce the path

If it were to be recalled

To this village on the Thanlwin road

As a way of soothing the heart

Would like to send flowers floating down.

Not to part with beloved land

To the split mountain pagoda

Obeisance, I'd like to pay.

Khun Ye Thwe (Aye Tha Ya) (Trs)



Prime Minister General Khin Nyunt greets Shan national race leader U Khun Mein. — MNA

The seven-point roadmap of the State is in fact the road to be followed by the entire national people in unity with strong belief. The entire national people will see the peaceful, modern, developed and discipline-flourishing democratic Union without a shadow of doubt if they walk it with firm determination and resolution.

PM General Khin Nyunt welcomes Malaysian PM on working visit

YANGON, 13 Feb— At the invitation of Prime Minister of the Union of Myanmar General Khin Nyunt, Malaysian Prime Minister Dato' Seri Abdullah bin Haji Ahmad Badawi arrived here by special aircraft this morning to pay a working visit to the Union of Myanmar.

The Malaysian Prime Minister and party were welcomed at Yangon International Airport by Prime Minister General Khin Nyunt, State Peace and Development Council Secretary-1 Lt-Gen Soe Win, Secretary-2 Lt-Gen Thein Sein, Chairman of Yangon Division Peace and Development Council Commander of Yangon Command Maj-Gen Myint Swe, Minister for Foreign Affairs U Win Aung, Deputy Minister U Khin Maung Win, Myanmar Ambassador to Malaysia U Hla Maung, Director-General Thura U Aung Htet of the Protocol Department, Malaysian Ambassador to Myanmar Dato' Cheah Sam Kip and staff, Dean of the Diplomatic Corps Ambassador of Singapore Mr Simon Tensing de Cruz and ambassadors of ASEAN member countries and staff of the Malaysian Embassy. General Khin Nyunt and party and the Malaysian Prime Minister and party proceeded to the reception hall of the airport where the two Prime Ministers took the salute of the Guard of Honour. Meanwhile, the State Band played national anthems of Malaysia and Myanmar. Next, the two Prime Ministers inspected the Guard of Honour. Afterwards, General Khin Nyunt greeted the delegation members of Malaysia. Similarly, the Malaysian Prime Minister greeted the welcoming party and Malaysian entrepreneurs in Yangon.

At 10 am, the special aircraft carrying the Malaysian Prime Minister and party landed at Yangon International Airport where Director-General Thura U Aung Htet of the Protocol Department and Malaysian Ambassador Dato' Cheah Sam Kip welcomed the Malaysian Prime Minister on board the aircraft. When the Malaysian Prime Minister descended from the aircraft, a girl student from the University of Culture presented a bouquet to him.

Prime Minister General Khin Nyunt greeted the Malaysian Prime Minister. Next, General Khin Nyunt presented his entourage to the Malaysian Prime Minister.

Afterwards, the Malay-



Prime Minister General Khin Nyunt welcomes the Malaysian Prime Minister at the airport.— MNA

sian Prime Minister greeted Dean of the Diplomatic Corps Ambassador of Singapore Mr Simon Tensing de Cruz and ambassadors of ASEAN member countries and staff of the Malaysian Embassy. General Khin Nyunt and party and the Malaysian Prime Minister and party proceeded to the reception hall of the airport where the two Prime Ministers took the salute of the Guard of Honour. Meanwhile, the State Band played national anthems of Malaysia and Myanmar. Next, the two Prime Ministers inspected the Guard of Honour. Afterwards, General Khin Nyunt greeted the delegation members of Malaysia. Similarly, the Malaysian Prime Minister greeted the welcoming party and Malaysian entrepreneurs in Yangon.

Next, the guests together with General Khin Nyunt went to Seinle Kantha State House in a motorcade. At the State House, General Khin Nyunt cordially greeted the Malaysian Prime Minister and party and left there at 10.35 am.

The Malaysian Prime Minister was accompanied by Minister for Foreign Affairs Datuk Seri Syed

Hamid bin Syed Jaafar Albar and senior officers of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. Welcoming the visiting Prime Minister, an archway at the entrance to the airport and Pyay Road at the entrance of the airport were put up with banners "We warmly welcome Malaysian Prime Minister Dato' Seri Abdullah bin Haji Ahmad Badawi" both in Myanmar and English languages. In addition, the archways were put up at the corner of Inyalay, at the junction of Pyay Road and Inya Road and at the entrance to Seinle Kantha State House.

MNA



Prime Minister General Khin Nyunt and Malaysian Prime Minister Dato' Seri Abdullah bin Haji Ahmad Badawi inspect the Guard of Honour.— MNA



Prime Minister General Khin Nyunt hosts a luncheon to Malaysian Prime Minister Dato' Seri Abdullah bin Haji Ahmad Badawi and party.— MNA

Prime Minister General Khin Nyunt hosts luncheon to Malaysian counterpart

YANGON, 13 Feb — Prime Minister of the Union of Myanmar General Khin Nyunt hosted a luncheon to Prime Minister of Malaysia Dato' Seri Abdullah bin Haji Ahmad Badawi and party who arrived here on a working visit to the Union of Myanmar, at Seinle Kantha State House at 12.30 pm today.

Also present at the luncheon were Minister for Foreign Affairs U Win Aung, Deputy Minister U Khin Maung Win, Myanmar Ambassador to Malaysia U Hla Maung and Director-General Thura U Aung Htet of the Protocol Department.

MNA



General Khin Nyunt greets the Malaysian Prime Minister at Seinle Kantha State House.— MNA

Malaysian PM meets entrepreneurs, journalists

YANGON, 13 Feb — Prime Minister of Malaysia Dato' Seri Abdullah bin Haji Ahmad Badawi who arrived here to pay a working visit to the Union of Myanmar at the invitation of Prime Minister General Khin Nyunt met with Malaysian entrepreneurs at Micasa Hotel on Kaba Aye Pagoda Road at 4 pm today. At 5 pm, the Malaysian Prime Minister met with Malaysian journalists at the press conference at the same venue.— MNA



Prime Minister General Khin Nyunt and Prime Minister of Malaysia Dato' Seri Abdullah bin Haji Ahmad Badawi take the salute of the Guard of Honour.— MNA

Prime Minister General Khin Nyunt sees off Malaysian Prime Minister Dato' Seri Abdullah bin Haji Ahmad Badawi

YANGON, 13 Feb — Prime Minister of Malaysia Dato' Seri Abdullah bin Haji Ahmad Badawi left here by special aircraft this evening after paying a working visit to the Union of Myanmar at the invitation of Prime Minister of the Union of Myanmar General Khin Nyunt.

The Malaysian Prime Minister and party were seen off at Yangon International Airport by Prime Minister General Khin Nyunt, Secretary-1 of the State Peace and Development Council Lt-Gen Soe Win, Secretary-2 Lt-Gen Thein Sein, Chairman of Yangon Division Peace and Development Council Commander of Yangon Command Maj-Gen Myint Swe, Minister for Foreign Affairs U Win Aung, Deputy Minister U Khin Maung Win, Myanmar Ambassador to Malaysia U Hla Maung, Director-General Thura U Aung Htet of the Protocol Department, Malaysian Ambassador to Myanmar Dato' Cheah Sam Kip and staff.

Before the guest boarded the special aircraft, Prime Minister General Khin Nyunt greeted Malaysian Prime Minister Dato' Seri Abdullah bin Haji Ahmad Badawi and presented the documentary photo album and video tapes to him.

At 6 pm, Prime Minister General Khin Nyunt and party at VIP lounge bade farewell to Prime Minister of Malaysia Dato' Seri Abdullah bin Haji Ahmad Badawi and party.— MNA



General Khin Nyunt sees off the Malaysian Prime Minister at the airport. — MNA



Prime Minister General Khin Nyunt presents documentary photo album and video tape to Malaysian Prime Minister Dato' Seri Abdullah bin Haji Ahmad Badawi.—MNA



The Malaysian Prime Minister presents a gift to General Khin Nyunt. — MNA

Emergence of institutions...

(from page 16)

entire nation and proportionate development of all the national races and continuous emergence of human resources who will bring progress and advancement to the nation are the basic requirements for development, modernization and perpetuity of the Union.

Infrastructures are being built in various sectors including transport, economic, trade, education, health and social in the whole Union to practically consolidate national unity, develop the regions and raise the living standard of the national races.

The Border Areas and National Races Development Project, The 24-development-zone project, and the rural development tasks are being implemented in a harmonious way for cent per cent development of the whole Union. Moreover, Special projects covering highways, river crossing bridges, hydel power plants and energy facilities are being implemented the length and breadth of the nation.

In addition, education, health and economic infrastructures are being established in the regions in which the development project regions are exclusive but are in strategic location for all regions. As a result, the government

will soon be able to implement the development projects in Mohnyin region, Kachin State and Myingyan region, Mandalay Division.

In building a new modern and developed nation the intellectuals and intelligentsia in the field of science and technology are to be produced. In other words, it is of utmost importance for ensuring development of human resources in both the national level and regional level.

Therefore, steps are being taken for the development of science and technology in the nation and for constantly producing highly qualified human resources and region-wise human resources across the nation.

More universities and colleges were opened throughout the nation. Thus, there were 32 universities and colleges in 1988 and there are now 154 in total.

In the technological sector, there were one technological institute, one university for computer studies and 12 government technical institutes in the past and there are now three technological institutes, two universities for computer studies, one Myanmar Maritime University, one Myanmar Aerospace Engineering University, 26 government technological colleges, 24 government computer colleges and 11 government technical institutes.

In the Myingyan region, the students had to go to

other regions for their pursuit of formal education in the past. Nowadays, they have the opportunities of pursuing education in their region with the emergence of Myingyan Degree College and government technical institute with peace of mind. In the basic education sector, there were 689 basic education schools—647 primary schools, 32 middle schools and 10 high schools—in Myingyan District in the past and there are now 924 basic education schools with an increase of 235. Therefore, the number of students pursuing education has increased from over 130,000 to over 170,000.

At a time when education infrastructures are emerging in their region, the teachers and students are to make integrated and well-coordinated efforts for constantly producing intellectuals and intelligentsia of international level in the region, realizing the objectives of regional development and education sector. The student youths, on their part, are to pursue education with peace of mind with the effective use of the degree college and government technical institute complete with magnificent and splendid buildings and modern teaching and learning aids and try their utmost to become outstanding intellectuals and intelligentsia, realizing the goodwill of the government towards the new generation youths.

At the same time, when they become the qualified intellectuals and intelligentsia they are to try their best to become the ones capable of serving the interest of the State and the people.

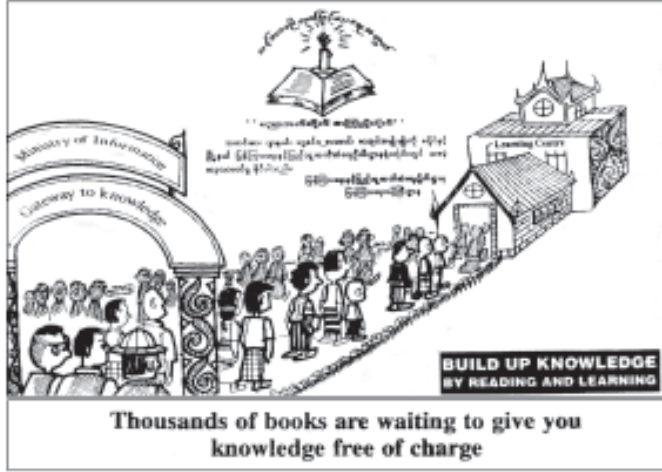
In conclusion, the Prime Minister called on the teachers to strive together with the students for regional development through the education infrastructures, for enabling the nation to keep abreast of the global nations and for constant emergence of highly qualified human resources in accordance with the objectives of the State. Next, Minister for Education made a speech. After that, first year student Ma Thida Linn, on behalf of students of Myingyan degree college, spoke words of thanks. Next, first year student Ma Khin Nwe Nwe Oo, on behalf of students of Myingyan Government Technical Institute, spoke words of thanks. Next, Managing Director of Aden Group Co Ltd U Chit Khine presented a gift to mark the opening of main building to the Prime Minister. Afterwards, Managing Director of Aden Group Co Ltd U Chit Khine presented K 15 million for the degree college and K 15 million for the GTI through the Prime Minister.

After the ceremony, the Prime Minister and party inspected the subject-wise publications on display at the book fair in commemoration of the opening ceremony.

Next, Prime Minister General Khin Nyunt and party and guests viewed round new technologies on computers and modern teaching and learning aids displayed by IT companies.—MNA



The newly opened Myingyan Degree College. — MNA



ADVERTISEMENT

CLAIMS DAY NOTICE MV QING CHUN MEN VOY NO (061)

Consignees of cargo carried on MV QING CHUN MEN VOY NO (061) are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on 15-2-04 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 INETRASIA LINES**

Phone No: 256908/378316/376797

Train kills New York teen retrieving mobile phone

NEW YORK, 13 Feb — A young New York woman was killed by a speeding train after she stepped onto a subway track to retrieve the cell phone she had dropped, police said. The train hit Lina Villegas, 19, on Tuesday as two men tried to pull her back up to the 5 foot-high (1.5 metre) platform, police said in a statement.

The accident occurred at the Grand Avenue station in the borough of Queens.

Newspaper reports on Wednesday said Villegas was an immigrant from Colombia who worked for a perfume company.

MNA/Reuters

Mozambicans living abroad urged to take part in combating poverty

MAPUTO, 13 Feb — Mozambican Foreign Minister Leonardo Simao has called on Mozambicans living abroad to associate themselves with the struggle against absolute poverty in the country, local media reported on Thursday.

Simao was speaking in Lisbon on Tuesday during a meeting with a group of Mozambicans residing in Portugal, where he is on an official visit.

He stressed that the struggle against poverty cannot be successful in Mozambique if

the country does not create endogenous capacities, which place Mozambicans themselves in the front line of development. As for the country's presidential and parliamentary elections, due later this year, Simao said that the government thinks that "Mozambicans living abroad should be allowed to vote, but we do not know whether or not the Mozambican opposition will accept this vote."

Commenting on the electoral calendar, Simao claimed that all is being running ac-

cording to the plan.

On the local elections that took place last November, he acknowledged that a few "small mistakes, that need correction", occurred in some places, as noted by the international observers. He added that some of the aspects that need improvement concern voter registration, because "we have not yet been able to create mechanisms to register all people as they turn 18, so that they are able to vote".

MNA/Xinhua

Comcast proposes buying Disney in \$66b deal

NEW YORK, 13 Feb — Comcast Corp, the largest US cable television operator, on Wednesday launched a stunning proposal to buy Walt Disney Co in a deal Comcast said would value Disney at 66 billion US dollars including debt.

If successful, the deal would vault Comcast into one of the world's largest media companies, combining Disney's film studio, ABC television network, ESPN sports network and theme parks with Comcast's 21 million cable subscribers.

Comcast proposed ex-

changing 0.78 of a Comcast class A share for each Disney share, which represents a 10-per-cent premium over Disney's closing price on Tuesday. Comcast said it was making its unsolicited proposal public after Disney Chief Executive Michael Eisner declined to enter discussions.

Disney shares closed at 24.08 US dollars on Tuesday on the New York Stock Exchange, near a year high of 25.08 US dollars touched last month. Comcast closed at 33.93 US dollars on Tuesday, also on the NYSE.

MNA/Reuters

China develops device to find living people trapped by accidents

CHUNGDU, 13 Feb — China has developed and produced its own set of devices for searching for living people trapped in buildings toppled by earthquakes and landslides.

The devices, made by the Sichuan Provincial Seismological Bureau, recently passed a technical appraisal jointly organized by the Ministry of Science and Technology and the China Seismological Bureau.

The set is made up of an optical instrument, a sound pulsator and an infrared thermal imaging system.

Peng Jinchuan, a senior engineer of the Sichuan Pro-



Four overseas banks approved to offer RMB business to Chinese Cos

BEIJING, 13 Feb — Four overseas-funded banks have become the first overseas financial institutions approved to offer Renminbi (RMB) business to China's domestic non-foreign-invested enterprises. The green light was given by the country's banking regulator early this week.

According to the China Banking Regulatory Commission (CBRC), the New York-based Citibank, Hong Kong's HSBC and Bank of East Asia and Japan's Mizuho Bank will start trial running of RMB business, including issuing RMB loans, to domestic non-overseas-funded enterprises, mainly state-owned enterprises (SOEs) and private enterprises.

Confident of the market prospect, HSBC's Shanghai branch, the first among HSBC branches to submit business applications last year for the approval, has started preparation and is expected to start business within the four-month preparation period given by the CBRC, according to the latest issue of "International Banking News".

Zhang Dandan, HSBC's spokesman for the China region, said "HSBC might not need such a long time" since it has rich experience as one of the first overseas banks to offer RMB business to overseas-funded enterprises since 1997. The spokesman of the East Asia Bank also said the time frame is very "flexible",

adding that some Chinese customers, including both SOEs and private companies, have contacted them about the business.

Although foreign bank's RMB business for domestic non-foreign-invested enterprises will not pose a threat to domestic commercial banks in the short term, experts warned domestic banks must speed up innovation of financial products and improve service efficiency to catch up in the long run.

The four are the first among 11 overseas banks that applied to the CBRC. Foreign banks were only allowed to offer RMB business to foreign-invested enterprises before the approval.

MNA/Xinhua

China adds 26 national scenic spots

BEIJING, 13 Feb — China added 26 scenic spots to its list of national parks Wednesday, increasing the country's state-level scenic spots to 177.

The 26 national parks are in 14 provinces, municipalities and autonomous regions on the Chinese Mainland, such as the Three Mountains (Sanshan) scenic spot in

Jiangsu Province, and Fangyan scenic spot in Zhejiang Province.

Vice-Minister of Construction Qiu Baoxing said at a nameplate awarding meeting the new group of national parks will bring forth more responsibility for the ministry to protect the country's natural resources.

At present, there are 677 scenic parks established and approved by the government, including the 177 national parks, 452 provincial parks and 48 city-level or county-level parks. The total area of the scenic parks is more than 1 per cent of the country's area.

MNA/Reuters

Fire kills family of five in South China

SHANTOU, 13 Feb — A family of five, including three children, died when a fire engulfed their shop in Shantou City, south China's Guangdong Province Tuesday.

The fire hit the family-run electrical appliance maintenance shop on Chendian County, Chaonan District. The Ke family were sleeping in the shop when the fire started.

The mother, father and

their three children — two boys and a girl — the youngest only seven years old, all died.

The windows of the wooden building were barred with iron anti-theft railings, said police.

Firefighters were called early Tuesday morning and took ten minutes to extinguish the fire.

The cause of the blaze is being investigated.

MNA/Xinhua

Zambia orders nationwide market cleanup

LUSAKA, 13 Feb — The Zambian Government has ordered all local authorities to clean up market places within two weeks, in a bid to contain the spread of cholera that has killed over 100 people since last November, independent newspaper *The Post* said Thursday.

Sylvia Masebo, the minister of local government, was quoted as saying Wednesday that the cleanup exercise will last from February 11 to February 25, after which inspectors will be sent to determine whether the markets will be reopened.

The minister said all structures in the market places used for overnight sleeping or beer sales will be demolished, to prevent the market from being used as toilets.

Over 2,000 cholera cases have been reported in Lusaka and several other provinces in Zambia since the beginning of the rainy season. Health authority has blamed poor sanitary conditions for the outbreak. —MNA/Xinhua

DRIVE SAFELY

ပညာရေးဖြင့် ခေတ်မီဖွံ့ဖြိုးတိုးတက်သော နိုင်ငံတော်ကြီး တည်ဆောက်အံ့



WOMAN OF THE YEAR: Actress Sandra Bullock (C) is kissed by male Harvard University student and Hasty Pudding Theatricals Vice President John Blickstead (L), dressed in drag as a woman, and female Hasty Pudding President Clare Putnam (R) as Bullock is paraded through Harvard Square in a convertible by members of the Harvard society in Cambridge, Massachusetts, on 12 Feb, 2004. Bullock was awarded the Hasty Pudding 2004 Woman of the Year Award in ceremonies after the parade. —INTERNET

WHO probes funding for “poor country” diseases

GENEVA, 13 Feb—The World Health Organization (WHO), alarmed at low investment in drugs to tackle Third World killer diseases, launched a long-promised probe on Thursday into how to remedy the situation.

Ninety per cent of the some 14 million deaths a year worldwide from infectious diseases are in poor countries, but few new drugs are being developed to fight them.

The United Nations' health arm named former Swiss minister Ruth Dreifuss as chairperson of its Commission on Intellectual Property Rights, Innovation and Public Health. The nine experts will report back to the WHO's executive board next January.

The launching of the in-

vestigation was approved at the WHO's annual assembly last May, but only after a heated debate between rich and poor states over the role of international patent rights in promoting drugs' research.

Rich states, led by the United States, warned any attempt to ensure better and cheaper access to medicines in poorer countries by curtailing intellectual property rights would backfire because big pharmaceutical companies would have no incentive to develop new

drugs. Part of the job of the commission, which also includes Trevor Jones, director-general of the British Pharmaceutical Industry Association, will be to examine the role played by patents — which ensure that companies earn royalties on their inventions — in the development of medicines.

It will also look into how to increase funding for research and production of new medicines, particularly those most needed by poorer states.

MNA/Reuters

New HIV drugs show promise in early trials

WASHINGTON, 13 Feb—New classes of HIV drugs that prevent the virus from infecting cells are showing promise in early trials, researchers reported on Wednesday.

Schering-Plough Corp's new drug that blocks a cellular doorway called CCR5 is safe and works about as well as older classes of drugs called protease inhibitors and non-nucleotide reverse transcriptase inhibitors, researchers said.

And researchers said Bristol-Myers Squibb's new drug, an attachment inhibitor, also seems to suppress the virus in early, experimental tests in patients.

There are about 20 AIDS drugs on the market now and they can be used in various combinations called highly active antiretroviral therapy. When it works well, HAART can keep the virus at very low levels in patients, in turn keeping them healthy and able to live virtually normal lives.

But eventually the virus develops ways to resist the drugs and, after a while, patients run out of options. Some of the drugs also cause side-effects including heart disease and osteoporosis.

While new AIDS drugs do not offer a cure, they may offer a few more years of healthy life for patients with the always-fatal infection.

Dr Mark Laughlin, a senior Schering-Plough research

executive, told the annual Conference on Retroviruses and Opportunistic Infections in San Francisco tests on the company's experimental drug, called SCH-D, showed it could reduce viral load — how much virus can be detected in a patient's blood — by as much as older HIV drugs. Lower viral load usually translates into fewer symptoms for patients.

The drug is a CCR5 antagonist, which blocks a receptor or cellular doorway called CCR5 that HIV uses to get into cells.

Pfizer Inc and GlaxoSmithKline Plc are also developing CCR5 inhibitors.

The drugs all have the advantage of being pills. The latest HIV drug to hit the market, Roche Holding AG's Fuzeon, must be injected.

Bristol-Myers Squibb also reported on its experimental drug called BMS-488043. It is called an attachment inhibitor and would represent yet another new class of HIV drugs.

An early trial in HIV patients given the drug for two weeks showed it was initially safe and reduced viral load by a measurable amount. —MNA/Reuters

Cellphone sales fall in China, but laptops rise

BEIJING, 13 Feb—Laptop computer and digital television sales are expected to boom in China this year, while sales of cellphones — the highest in the world in 2003 — are forecast to slip, the Ministry of Information Industry has estimated.

In 2004, the laptop computer sales will increase from one million to around eight million, while digital TV receivers will rise from one million to 30 million within two years, according to the ministry.

Over the next five years, China's laptop computer market will keep growing steadily, with sales peaking in 2004, according to China Centre for Information Industry Development (CCID), a consultancy company under the ministry.

However in 2003, China sold 80 million cellphones, just half of its production volume.

Motorola, Nokia and Siemens, the three biggest selling cellphone brands, last year all claimed their actual sales failed to meet expectations.

Experts fear the cellphone's declining market may betray its increasing productivity. —MNA/Xinhua

300 kilos of drugs seized in northern Philippines

MANILA, 13 Feb — Anti-narcotics and Customs agents seized about 300 kilos of methamphetamine hydrochloride, popularly known as “ice”, in a raid in the northern Philippines on Thursday, officials said.

Law enforcers managed to seize the illegal drugs, locally called “shabu”, from a container van in a factory warehouse in Meycauayan Town in the province of Bulacan after a tip-off from China, Philippine Drug Enforcement Agency chief Anselmo Avenido said.

Avenido said the information came after their

Chinese counterparts arrested three suspects in China who reported that the illegal drugs were on their way from Laos.

The container van supposedly originated from China, passed via Laos, Thailand, and Singapore before it ended up in Manila where the shipment, declared as wooden slabs, was delivered straight to a

warehouse owned by Waretex Manufacturing Corp., officials said.

In follow-up operations, a Chinese national, supposedly sent by an international drug syndicate to the country to supervise the arrival of the shipment, was arrested and is now undergoing interrogation, officials said.

MNA/Xinhua

US-born giant panda to return home

BEIJING, 13 Feb — For the first time in her life, Hua Mei will set foot on her Motherland, enjoying the sunshine and bamboo in the place where her parents were born and grew up.

The giant panda born in the United States in 1999 is expected to arrive in Beijing Thursday afternoon by air.

Hua Mei — the first word means China and the second means the United States — was daughter to Shi Shi and Bai Yun, a panda couple leased to the San Diego Zoo in California by China.

Hua Mei is the first overseas-born Chinese giant panda to return.

Altogether 26 giant pandas were given as gifts by China to nine countries in the period from 1957 to 1982.

China decided to no longer present giant pandas as gifts to other countries in 1985. —MNA/Xinhua



This photo released by the San Diego Zoo's shows 4-year-old female giant panda, Hua Mei, enjoying her bamboo breakfast at the SBC Giant Panda Research Station in San Diego on 12 February. —INTERNET

Japanese electronics giants to jointly develop new circuit

TOKYO, 13 Feb—Sony Corp and Toshiba Corp said Thursday they will co-develop advanced 45-nanometer process and design technologies for next-generation system large-scale integrated circuits (LSIs).

The two major Japanese electronics giants expect to see positive results in 2005, building on their successful joint development of a 65-nanometer design process that will soon be applied to sample products, they said.

Through the 20-billion-yen project, Sony and Toshiba hope to become the first to

market with 45-nanometer know-how, they said. Advancing digitization is fuelling demand for the ability to process, save and enjoy rich data sources, driving demand for system LSIs that combine miniaturization with enhanced functionality, faster operating speeds and less power consumption, they said. —MNA/Xinhua

S P O R T S

Liverpool's Biscan gets six-month ban

LONDON, 13 Feb—Croatian midfielder Igor Biscan was given a six-month suspension for internationals after walking out on the squad on the eve of a Euro 2004 qualifier late last year, a sports daily reported Thursday. The 25-year-old Liverpool playmaker was suspended by the Croatian soccer federation until July 7, according to the daily Vjesnik on Thursday.

Biscan was recalled to the national team after a two-year absence for a home match against Bulgaria last October, but Biscan walked out on the eve after learning he had been left out of the starting lineup and gave no reason.

"He was given the highest possible penalty because he failed to respond to our request that he justifies his walkout," said the president of the Croatian FA disciplinary committee, Ante Tomas.

The ban starts on December 8, 2003, the day the national team management reported his behaviour to the FA, and will expire on June 8, 2004, four days before the start of the Euro 2004 tournament in Portugal. Croatia has been drawn into the same group as England, France and Switzerland for this summer's Euro 2004 in Portugal.

Biscan joined Liverpool from Dinamo Zagreb for 3.5 million pounds (6.53 million US dollars) in December 2000. He has appeared in almost all Liverpool's league and cup games this season.

MNA/Xinhua



Puppets of the Euro 2004 mascot Kinas, dressed in the Portuguese jersey, are pictured during the official presentation of licensing products in Lisbon, on 10 Feb, 2004. Two thousand licensed products promoting the Euro 2004 Soccer Championship will go on sale in Portugal, Europe and Asia in kiosks and department stores this week.—INTERNET

Santini names Saha in squad for Belgium friendly

PARIS, 13 Feb—Manchester United striker Louis Saha was named in Jacques Santini's France squad on Thursday for next week's international friendly against Belgium in Brussels.

Santini also called up Olympique Lyon forward Peguy Luyindula for the first time after his run of 10 goals for the Ligue 1 champions this season.

But there was no place for striker Nicolas Anelka, who has been angling for a way back into the squad after snubbing a call-up in November 2002.

Saha, who joined United from Fulham during the January transfer window, has scored three times in his four appearances for the English champions. "We did not wait until he went to Manchester United to have an eye on him," Santini said.

"He and Peguy can seize the opportunity to show they are more than replacement solutions in the squad," he added, warning Saha against over-confidence.

"We have to be careful," he said of Saha. "When a player arrives at a new club, he has an extra motivation and sometimes a bit of luck." Anelka has been overlooked despite his impressive form for Manchester City and Santini seems unlikely to give the former Real Madrid and Arsenal striker a second chance. "As far as I'm concerned, faithful to my principles, I say again that Nicolas Anelka is not eligible for the Belgium friendly," Santini told reporters on Thursday, emphasizing the spirit and solidarity shown by the current squad.

He even added that the debate over Anelka, who said last week he wanted to return to the squad and who received sup-

port from former Arsenal teammate Patrick Vieira and French federation president Claude Simonet, was damaging the squad.

"The French group is caught up in these contradictory opinions, some of them surprising as they come from the inside, and has been weakened before this exciting and crucial competition—Euro 2004," said Santini.

MNA/Reuters

Latvian basketball player dies in Swedish league game

STOCKHOLM, 13 Feb—A Latvian basketball player collapsed on the court during a top division Swedish league game and later was announced dead Tuesday, the Swedish Basketball Federation said. Latvian international Raimonds Jumikis, 23, collapsed during the game playing for Akropolis against Jamtland. He was pronounced dead at Karolinska hospital, the federation said in a statement.

"We are in a state of shock. This is not something you think can happen to an athlete and nothing that you ever can be prepared for," said Kenth Johansson, chairman of the Swedish basketball league.

Jumikis is the second athlete in Sweden to die while playing in the last two weeks. A fourth-division soccer player died after collapsing during a training session on January 27. In January, Hungarian international Miklos Feher died after collapsing on the field during a Portuguese league soccer match.

MNA/Xinhua

Manchester United shareholders jockey for position

DUBLIN, 13 Feb—The stakes are rising in the power-struggle at Manchester United, with two Irish horse racing tycoons and US sports magnate Malcolm Glazer both increasing their holdings in the English soccer champions.

Glazer, owner of American football team the Tampa Bay Buccaneers, raised his shareholding to 16.31 per cent on Thursday, a day after Cubic Expression, a company owned by John Magnier and J.P. McManus, pushed its stake up to 28.89 per cent.

Cubic's move reignited takeover talk around the club, which has been at the centre of an acrimonious dispute between Cubic's owners and Manchester United manager Alex Ferguson, by stopping just short of the 30-per-cent shareholding that would automatically trigger a full-scale bid under market rules.

However, many analysts doubt a takeover is part of the Irish duo's game plan, at least in the short term, and say their latest foray into the market was designed to further ratchet up pressure on the club's board, whom they are challenging over corporate governance and transfer fee issues.

"It's more about jockeying for position, and trying to make sure their interests are protected. They've tightened the screw and increased their influence over the club without going through the 30-per-cent shareholding threshold," said one Dublin-based analyst who asked not to be named.

"Manchester United is one of the better-run clubs in the league but Cubic thinks it can be run even better and generate higher profits and pay bigger dividends," he said.

He added that another element in the Irishmen's latest share purchase may have been simply to keep the stock out of the hands of billionaire rival Glazer.

Much of the media coverage of the Irishmen's involvement has speculated that it is connected to a high-profile legal dispute between bloodstock baron Magnier and club manager Ferguson over stud rights to record-breaking racehorse Rock of Gibraltar.

Although any increase in Cubic's holding can only add to Ferguson's unease, analysts point out that Cubic was building a stake before the row and that McManus, a hard-headed businessman with a 50-per-cent interest in the venture, is not directly involved in the dispute.

"Many commentators have suggested the stake building by Cubic Expression is a tit-for-tat response to Ferguson's legal action against Magnier...I strongly disagree," Bill Gerrard, professor of sports management and finance at Leeds University Business School, wrote in the Irish Independent.

"The central issue always has been the growing disaffection of Magnier and McManus with the way Manchester United is run as a football club and as a business," added Gerrard, who believes a takeover is in the offing.

Magnier and McManus also maintain that better corporate governance at the club

can only enhance their investment and, with their holding now worth nearly 200 million pounds (379 million US dollars), they will insist the board listens to them.

Analysts believe they will move towards face-to-face meetings with United executives and seek places on the board — if not for themselves personally then for their representatives.

Under pressure from Cubic United has already announced an internal financial review and curbed the length of Ferguson's new contract.

Whatever the motives of Magnier and McManus, the field of potential predators has narrowed after the latest share deals.

Dutch media mogul John de Mol sold eight million shares in the club to Cubic and another, smaller, stake to Glazer, saying United's world-famous brand had been damaged by the row between Magnier and Ferguson.

Manchester United shares closed at 267-1/2 pence, valuing the club at around 700 million pounds.

MNA/Reuters

Former Lazio president arrested in Rome

ROME, 13 Feb—Former Lazio president Sergio Cragnotti was arrested by Italian police on Wednesday, judicial sources said.

The former head of insolvent food firm Cirio, which was Lazio's majority owner until last August, defaulted on more than one billion euros (1.27 billion US dollars) of bonds in late 2002.

In an arrest warrant, prosecutors accused Cragnotti of favouring six banks when repaying debts. The financial transfers, made in 2000-02, were worth a total of just under 600 million euros, the warrant said.

The 64-year-old Cragnotti has been investigated for months over suspected fraud, false statements to the stock market and criminal bankruptcy.

Judicial sources said Cragnotti was arrested along with his son-in-law, Filippo Fucile, a former director-general of Cirio Finanziaria, and his son Andrea Cragnotti, who also held a management role at the company. Cragnotti, who bought Cirio in 1994, denies wrongdoing.

MNA/Xinhua



Athletes shoot under foggy conditions during a women's practice session at the Biathlon World Championships in the eastern German town of Oberhof, on 11 Feb, 2004.

INTERNET

Prime Minister inspects preservation of Bagan cultural heritage

YANGON, 13 Feb — Prime Minister General Khin Nyunt inspected preservation of cultural heritage in Bagan region on 11 February. On arrival at Pakokku University on 11 February, the Prime Minister and party were welcomed by Pro-Rector U Soe Myint, faculty members and students. After choosing the site for the main hall

of the university the Prime Minister visited the language lab and computer training centre.

The pro-rector reported to the Prime Minister on the location and the area of the university, academic matters, the number of students, the IT rooms installed with 98 computers, staff strength and organizational set-up and management affairs.

Prime Minister General Khin Nyunt gave instructions on promotion studies on major subjects and the construction of a three-storey building. He also inspected the lecture halls. At the project to rebuild King Anawrahta's Bagan Pyinsapathada Shwenandaw Palace in Bagan, the Prime Minister heard a report on the re-

building of the palace presented by Minister for Culture Maj-Gen Kyi Aung and officials. The Prime Minister gave suggestions.

During the inspection of the excavation site of King Anawrahta's palace, the Prime Minister spoke of the need to preserve the finds for their durability. He then inspected the Nanmyint Tower Project, where Managing Director of Htoo Trading Co Ltd U Teza presented a report on the project. The tower should be a weather- and earthquake-resistant building which must have the essence of Bagan architecture and culture, the Prime Minister pointed out.

At Bagan Airport, he heard a report on the airport terminal extension project presented by Deputy Minister for Transport Col Nyan Tun Aung and officials. The Prime Minister looked into the requirements. — MNA



Prime Minister General Khin Nyunt inspects progress of building Nanmyint Tower in Bagan on 11-2-2004.— MNA



Chief of Armed Forces Training Lt-Gen Kyaw Win inspects the mess for Aung San column.—MNA

Chief of Armed Forces Training inspects hostels of parade columns

YANGON, 13 Feb — Chairman of the Leading Committee for Organizing the 59th Anniversary Armed Forces Day Member of the State Peace and Development Council Chief of Armed Forces Training Lt-Gen Kyaw Win this morning inspected the hostels of Tatmadawmen who will participate in the 59th Anniversary Armed Forces Day parade.

On arrival at the meeting hall of the Resistance Park, the chief of Armed Forces Training was welcomed by Member of the Leading Committee Chairman of the Management Committee for Organizing the 59th Anniversary Armed Forces Day Chairman of Yangon Division Peace and Development Council Commander of Yangon Command Maj-Gen Myint Swe, members of the Leading Committee Vice-Chiefs of Armed Forces Training Maj-Gen Win Myint, Maj-Gen Aung Kyi and Brig-Gen Nyan Win, military region commanders, senior military officers, and members of the Management Committee and the Work Committee.

Major Myo Thant reported on progress of work in decoration of the park with the use of charts. Commander Maj-Gen Myint Swe, Vice-Chiefs of Armed Forces Training Maj-Gen Win Myint, Maj-Gen Aung Kyi and Brig-Gen Nyan Win gave supplementary reports. The chief of Armed Forces Training gave instructions.

Next, the chief of Armed Forces Training inspected decoration tasks at the park and Myoma Sports Ground, and left necessary instructions.

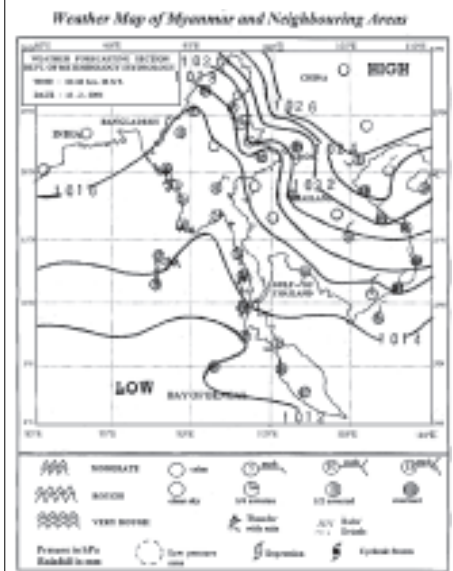
The chief of Armed Forces Training and party proceeded to Yangon Command Headquarters where parade columns are accommodated. Senior military officers reported on accommodation of the columns. The chief of Armed Forces Training looked into the mess and the mess and gave instructions on preparatory measures to be taken for convenience of the columns and cleanliness of the environs. Afterwards, the chief of Armed Forces Training and party inspected hostels and parade grounds in the battalions and regiments in South Okkalapa Township.

They also inspected hostels and the mess at the Defence Services Orthopaedic Hospital (500-bed) and left necessary instructions. They headed for the meeting hall of Mingaladon Station. Col Ye Chit Pe of the station reported on work done. Lt-Gen Kyaw Win inspected hostels and parade ground and gave instructions on ensuring cleanliness of the environs and convenience of the parade columns.

At 11 am, Lt-Gen Kyaw Win arrived at No 1 Transit Centre (Bayintnaung). Commandant Lt-Col Tin Kyaing reported on progress of work. The chief of Armed Forces Training inspected the hostels, the mess and parade ground.

Lt-Gen Kyaw Win and party went to Ayeyawady Naval Region Command, where Commander of the command Commodore Maw Thein reported on tasks carried out. Lt-Gen Kyaw Win gave necessary instructions and attended to the needs.

MNA



WEATHER

Friday, 13 February, 2004

Summary of observations recorded at 09:30 hours MST: During the past 24 hours, weather has been generally fair in the whole country. Night temperatures were (3°C) to (4°C) below normal in Chin and Rakhine States, Sagaing and Mandalay Divisions, (3°C) above normal in Bago Division and about normal in the remaining areas.

Maximum temperature on 12-2-2004 was 36.2°C (97°F). Minimum temperature on 13-2-2004 was 15.5°C (60°F). Relative humidity at 9:30 hrs MST on 13-2-2004 was 67%. Total sunshine hours on 12-2-2004 was (9.4) hours approx. Rainfall on 13-2-2004 was nil at Yangon Airport, Kaba-Aye and central Yangon. Total rainfall since 1-1-2004 was 3 mm (0.12 inch) at Yangon Airport, nil at Kaba-Aye and central Yangon. Maximum wind speed at Yangon (Kaba-Aye) was 10 mph from Southwest at (16:30) hours MST on 12-2-2004.

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

Forecast valid until evening of 14-2-2004: Isolated rain are possible in Kachin State and upper Sagaing Division and weather will be generally fair in the remaining areas. Degree of certainty is (40%).

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

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

Forecast for Yangon and neighbouring area for 14-2-2004: Partly cloudy.

Forecast for Mandalay and neighbouring area for 14-2-2004: Fair weather.

Weather Out Look for Second Weekend of February 2004: During the coming weekend, weather will be generally fair in Yangon and Mandalay Divisions.

ကွယ်လွန်သောနေ့ရက်ခြင်း

ဦးဘောင်သိမ်း (၇၁)နှစ်

စိန်ပျိုးရေဘတ် မန်နေဂျာ(ဦးမိုး) (စစ်တွေမြို့)

စစ်တွေမြို့ ဦးရဲအောင်-ဒေါ်အုန်းကြာဦး၏ သား၊ (ဒေါ်လှမြင့်)၏ ခင်ပွန်း၊ ဦးမြင့်သိန်း-ဒေါ်ယုဦးမေသိန်း၊ ဦးစံသိန်း-ဒေါ်အေးမြင့်မော (ကျောက်ဖြူမြို့)၊ ဦးစံမောင်ညွန့်-(ဒေါ်မြင့်မြင့်သိန်း)၊ ဦးလှသိန်း (ဒု-အုန်းဦးစံ၊ မြတ်မြို့)-ဒေါ်ရီရီအေး၊ (ဦးစံမောင်ဝင်း)-ဒေါ်မြင့်သန်း၊ ဦးပွင့်(ဦးအောင်)၊ ဦးသန်းဇွေ(ကပလု ပမ-ဒဂုံကုန်စည်)-ဒေါ်စိုးစိုး၊ ဦးဖုန်းမြင့်သိန်း-ဒေါ်အိန်စောထွေးတို့၏ ကျေးဇူးရှင်မင်း၊ မြေး ၂၃ယောက်၊ မြစ် ၂ယောက် တို့၏ ဘိုးဘိုးကြီးဦးအောင်သိမ်းသည် ၁၃-၂-၂၀၀၄ ရက်နေ့ ညနေ ၅နာရီတွင် တောင်ဥက္ကလာပမြို့နယ် (၄)ရပ်ကွက် ၂၄၈၊ သီလလမ်းနေအိမ်တွင် ကွယ်လွန်သွားပါ၍ ၁၅-၂-၂၀၀၄ ရက်နေ့နံနက် ၁၁နာရီအချိန်တွင် ရေအေးအေးတိုက်မှ ရေအေးသုဿန်တွင် သင်္ဂြိုဟ် မည်ဖြစ်ကြောင်း ဆွေမျိုးမိတ်သံဝဟတို့အားအကြောင်းကြားအပ်ပါသည်။ (နေအိမ်မှ ၉:၃၀ နာရီတွင် မော်တော်ယာဉ်များ ထွက်ပါမည်။) ကျန်ရစ်သူမိသားစု

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

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



Prime Minister General Khin Nyunt and Malaysian Prime Minister Dato' Seri Abdullah bin Haji Ahmad Badawi hold discussions at Seinle Kantha State House.— MNA

Prime Minister General Khin Nyunt meets Malaysian counterpart

YANGON, 13 Feb— Prime Minister of the Union of Myanmar General Khin Nyunt met Prime Minister of Malaysia Dato' Seri Abdullah bin Haji Ahmad Badawi at Seinle Kantha State House at 11 am today.

Also present at the meeting were Minister for Foreign Affairs U Win Aung, Deputy Minister U Khin Maung Win, Myanmar Ambassador to Malaysia U Hla Maung, Director-General U Soe Tint of the Government Office and Director-General Thura U Aung Htet of the Protocol Department.

The Malaysian Prime Minister was accompanied by Minister of Foreign Affairs Datuk Seri Syed Hamid bin Syed Jaafar Albar, Secretary-General Tan Sri Ahmad Fuzi Hj Abdul Razad of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Malaysian Ambassador to Myanmar Dato' Cheah San Kip and senior officers.

At the meeting, Prime Minister General Khin Nyunt and Malaysian Prime Minister Dato' Seri Abdullah bin Haji Ahmad Badawi posed for the documentary photo.

The two Prime Ministers exchanged views on relations between the two countries, economic cooperation and regional issues.

The discussions were held in an atmosphere of warm friendship, cordiality and mutual respects.

They agreed to enhance the existing bilateral contacts and mutually beneficial cooperation in many areas. In this regard, they agreed to set up a joint Commission for Bilateral Cooperation.

MNA

Emergence of institutions of higher learning one after another reflects Government's equal parental love for people

Myingyan Degree College, Government Technical Institute (Myingyan) open

YANGON, 13 Feb — Chairman of the Myanmar Education Committee Prime Minister General Khin Nyunt attended the ceremony to open the main hall of Myingyan Degree College and the Government Technical Institute (Myingyan).

The ceremony was held at the college in Myingyan, Mandalay Division, on 11 February.

Also present were member of the State Peace and

Development Council Lt-Gen Ye Myint, Chairman of Mandalay Division Peace and Development Council Commander of Central Command Maj-Gen Ye Myint, ministers, deputy ministers, officials of the State Peace and Development Council Office, heads of department, local authorities, departmental personnel, the principal, faculties and students of the degree college and others.

Students formally un-

veiled the signboard and opened the hall. The Prime Minister and party posed for photos together with faculty members and students. They also planted trees to mark the success of the ceremony. The Prime Minister unveiled the stone inscription.

Speaking on the occasion, Prime Minister General Khin Nyunt said the college and the institute are the results of the State's resolve to ensure harmoni-

ous progress in all parts of the Union. The students who are pursuing advanced level studies at the two institutions with peace of mind will understand the power and value of the national unity that is the essence and the symbol of the Union.

Thus, it is sure that they are going to take part in the task to further strengthen the national unity.

Yangon University of Computer Studies in

Yangon Division, Hpa-an University in Kayin State, Mohnyin Degree College and Government Technical Institute (Mohnyin) in Kachin State and Myingyan Degree College and Government Technical Institute (Myingyan) have been opened prior to the 57th Anniversary Union Day. The institutions are equipped with modern teaching aids and equipment.

Emergence of the institutions of higher learning

one after another reflects the Government's parental equal love for the people.

The educational institutions being opened the length and breadth of the Union will produce technicians and academics in every part of the nation.

Thus, they contribute much to the unity and progress of the whole Union.

At present, the Government is building the political, economic and social foundations, that will serve the national interest in the long run, with the concerted efforts of the entire national people for the development and advancement of the nation, enabling it to stand shoulder with the world nations, and to protect and promote the national interest in the process of globalization.

Over 100 national races are living in unity and amity in the Union of Myanmar. Thus, the firm national unity, prevalence of peace and stability in the

(See page 11)



Prime Minister General Khin Nyunt and party pose for documentary photo with teachers and students in front of Myingyan Degree College —MNA