The New Light of Myanmar
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Established 1914

Safeguard national solidarity

The history of the Union of Myanmar has been based upon the unity of the national races of the Union. It has been clearly seen that in the times when national unity was dynamic, the strength of the Union of Myanmar was great and solid and her prestige was high, but in the periods when national unity was weak, political, economic, security and social situations and standards declined.

As the unity of all national people was shown firmly at Panglong Conference, the Union of Myanmar became an independent sovereign nation. For perpetuation of sovereignty that has been acquired, all the national people will have to safeguard national solidarity.

Senior General Than Shwe
Chairman of the State Peace and Development Council
Commander-in-Chief of Defence Services
(From message on the 52nd Anniversary Union Day)

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

Prime Minister looks into development tasks in Mandalay Division

YANGON, 1 Feb—Prime Minister General Khin Nyunt, accompanied by the ministers, the chairman of the Civil Service Selection and Training Board, the deputy ministers, officials from the State Peace and Development Council Office, departmental heads and officials, left here by air on 30 January and arrived at Toungoo airport in Bago Division at 1 pm. Brig-Gen Thura Myint Thein of Toungoo Station, Deputy Commander of Southern Command Brig-Gen Thura Maung Ni, officials and social organization members welcomed the Prime Minister and party. Afterwards, the Prime Minister and party arrived at Lewe Township, Yamethin District in Mandalay District, where Tactical Operations Commander Col Aye Lwin, Yamethin District and Township PDC members, officials and social organization members welcomed them.

Myanmar Education Committee Chairman Prime Minister General Khin Nyunt visited No 1 BEHS in Lewe, where members of the board of trustees of the school, Schoolhead Daw Mya Sein, teachers and students welcomed them. The Prime Minister and party inspected the CD library, computer skills room, computer aided instruction room and language lab. In meeting with the township education officer, the schoolheads and teachers at the hall of the school, the Prime Minister heard the reports of the schoolhead and gave necessary instructions.

Prime Minister General Khin Nyunt visits No 1 BEHS in Lewe Township, Yamethin District in Mandalay District. (See page 10)

Lebanese PM sends felicitations to Prime Minister

YANGON, 31 Jan — The following is the message of felicitations sent by Mr Rafic Hariri, Prime Minister of the Republic of Lebanon, to Prime Minister of the Union of Myanmar General Khin Nyunt on the occasion of the 56th Anniversary Independence Day which falls on 4-1-2004.

“On the occasion of the Anniversary of the Independence of the Union of Myanmar, I have great pleasure to extend to Your Excellency, my sincere congratulations and to your people, my best wishes of continued progress and prosperity. I am fully confident that the existing ties of friendship and cooperation between our two peoples will be further strengthened and developed. Please accept, Excellency, the assurances of my highest consideration.” — MNA

Prime Minister General Khin Nyunt inspects coffee plantations in PyinOoLwin on 31-1-2004. — MNA

The Paunglaung multi-purpose dam project in Pyinmana Township of Mandalay Division seen on 31-1-2004. — MNA

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

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**PERSPECTIVES**

**Monday, 2 February, 2004**

**More roads and bridges for regional development**

With the aim of raising the living standard of the entire national people, the Government is implementing various projects in respective sectors. Infrastructures for development of the transport sector and others are being built to enable the people to enjoy the fruitful results of development. It is necessary to build a strong economic infrastructure in implementing development projects of a nation or a region, and transportation plays a pivotal role in the process.

Better transportation contributes much towards the development of economy, trade and manufacturing sector of a region. And, at the same time, it can help raise the economy, education, health and social standards of local people. The Government, nowadays, is building new roads and bridges with added momentum for regional development.

A ceremony to open Pansya Bridge constructed by bridge construction project special group-14 of Public Works, the Ministry of Construction was held at the bridge in TadaU Township, Mandalay Division on 26 January. Member of the State Peace and Development Council Lt-Gen Ye Myint of the Ministry of Defence attended the ceremony and made a speech.

The bridge is situated on the six-lane highway to Mandalay International Airport from Innwa Bridge of Sagaing. There are two major bridges on the road, one is spanning Dokhawady River and the other Pansya Creek. Dokhawady River crossing bridge was opened in January, 1999.

Air passengers from Sagaing, Monywa and Shwebo can now go to the airport in no time through the bridge.

The reinforced concrete bridge is 200 feet long and 72 feet wide. It has six feet wide walkways on either side. Its clearance is 80 feet wide and 10 feet high. It can bear 60 tons of load.

Emergence of roads and bridges one after another in the country will surely help develop the whole Union and it will also forge unity and amity among national brethren.

At a time when earnest efforts are being made for emergence of a peaceful, modern and developed nation, we firmly believe that more and more roads and bridges that will contribute to regional development will continue to be built in various parts of the nation.

**Yangon Trade Fair 2004 continues**

**Yangon, 1 Feb**—The Yangon Trade Fair 2004 continued for the third day at Yangon Trade Centre on Upper Paukandaung Street here today. Various kinds of local and foreign-made cosmetics, drinks and commodities were put on sale by Dagon Win Co, Dagon Brewery Co, Summit World Industries Co, Owl International Ltd. There were also entertainment programmes presented by Star Entertainment Co, Win Win Co, Dagon Brewery Co, Summit World Industries, drinks and commodities were put on sale by Dagon Win Co, Dagon Brewery Co, Summit World Industries.

**Stimulant tablets seized**

**Yangon, 31 Jan**—A combined team comprising members of local intelligence unit and Hpa-an Anti-drug Squad, acting on a tip-off, on 13 January searched Ma Wa Let Hti in Letpan Village in Hpa-an Township and arrested her together with 1292 stimulant tablets bearing WY letters from her bag.

Similarly, on 24 January members of Mandalay Special Anti-drug Squad searched Aung Myint (a) Aik Myint who was putting up at Nansa Hotel between 28th and 82nd Streets in Chanayethazan Township and arrested him along with 2,310 stimulants tablets bearing WY letters. Further investigation led to the seizure of 490 stimulant tablets bearing WY letters under the bed of Aung Myint (a) Aik Myint at Mann Ayea Hotel on 33rd Street in Mandalay.

In connection with cases, action is being taken against the culprits under the Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances Law. — MNA

**Buddha Pujaaniya of Lawka Chantha Abhaaya Labha Muni to be held**

**Yangon, 31 Jan**—The third Buddha Pujaaniya Festival of the Lawka Chantha Abhaaya Labha Muni Buddha Image kept on Mindhamma Hill in Insein Township will be held on a grand scale from 4 to 6 February.

On 29 January 168 groups of people from all over the country will demonstrate traditional chodun playing and Buddha Pujaaniya will be held from 1 to 3 February. Htamahtine preparation competition will be on 4 February and Wat associations will recite religious verses from 4 to 6 February. On 5 January, soon, offerings and rice will also be offered to monks. — MNA

**MMA women chapter meets**

**Yangon, 31 Jan**—The 2003 annual meeting of the women chapter of Myanmar Medical Association (Yangon) was held at MMA this morning, attended by leading patron Dr Daw Khin Win Shwe, also present were patrons, adviser doctors, Chairman of MMA Dr Myo Myint, executives and woman doctors. Chairman of woman chapter of MMA Dr. Daw Yi Yi Hla spoke on the occasion. General Secretary Dr Daw Khin Mar Aye reported on the 2003 annual report and treasurer Dr Nyunt Nyunt Than on financial statement for approval. Next, eight members of panel of patrons and treasurer Dr Nyunt Nyunt Than on financial statement for approval. Next, eight members of panel of patrons and treasurer Dr Nyunt Nyunt Than on financial statement for approval. Next, eight members of panel of patrons led by leading patron Dr Daw Khin Win Shwe.

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**The 57th Anniversary Union Day objectives**

— for all national races to safeguard the national policy— non-disintegration of the Union, non-disintegration of national solidarity and perpetuation of sovereignty

— to keep the Union Spirit ever alive and dynamic among the national people

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

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

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

**All this needs to be known**

* Do not be frightened whenever intimidated
* Do not be bolstered whenever flattered
* Do not be softened whenever appealed

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**People’s Desire**

* Oppose those relying on external enemy, 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

**Daw Win Win Han and Daw Zin Mi Mi Htwe. UMFFCCI**

**Officers leave to attend training**

**Yangon, 1 Feb**—Assistant Administrative Officers Daw Win Win Han and Daw Zin Mi Mi Htwe of the Union of Myanmar Federation of Chambers of Commerce & Industry left here by air at 10 am today to attend Training on International Multimedia Development in Thailand. They were seen off at the Yangon International Airport by UMFFCCI President U Win Myint, General Secretary U Sein Win Hlaing and officials. — UMFFCCI

**Cash donated to Kaba Aye Youth Training School**

**Yangon, 1 Feb**—A ceremony to donate cash prof- its accrued from Happy Lunar New Year Fair of Blazon Department Store was held at the store here yesterday evening. Blazon Department Store Director Daw Myint Myint Win donated K 100,000 realized from the fair to Kaba Aye Youth Training School. Deputy Director of the Social Welfare Department Major Sein Win accepted the cash donation. Next, Director Daw Myint Myint Win donated K 150,000 to the Myanmar Wushu Federation which presented entertainment programme at the fair. MWF Vice-President Daw Kkyu Kkyu accepted the cash donation and she then handed it over to Major Sein Win for the funds of the Kaba Aye Youth Training School. The Chinese Haiskyan Quanite temple also donated K 50,000 to the youth training school. — (H)

**Salone Traditional Festival 2004**

(Sea Gypsy Festival)

**Ma Kyone Galet Village, Myeik Archipelago, Union of Myanmar**

(14 to 17 February 2004)
Northern Iraq blasts kill three US soldiers

Mosul, 1 Feb—A bomb-laden car plowed through a razor wire fence and exploded outside a police station in the north of the country on Saturday, killing nine Iraqis and injuring 45, including policemen there to pick up their pay.

Iraqi policemen survey the scene of an explosion in front of a local police station in the city of Mosul on 31 Jan, 2004. Guerrillas detonated a car bomb outside a police station in Mosul on Saturday, causing several casualties.

Venezuela says January 2005 FTAA target doomed to fail

Caracas (Venezuela), 1 Feb — Venezuela, the loudest critic of US free-trade plans for the hemisphere, said Friday Washington would not be able to complete the trade pact by January 1, 2005, because it would be “destroyed from the inside.”

Speaking before trade talks in Mexico next week, Venezuelan negotiator Victor Alvarez said President Hugo Chavez’s government was opposed to the Free Trade Area of the Americas proposal in its current form.

“The game is blocked... The conviction is there won’t be any FTAA by 2005,” Alvarez told a news conference in Caracas.

Despite threats by leftist Chavez to pull out of the negotiations, Alvarez said oil-rich Venezuela would stay in the talks to try to force radical changes in the US plan to create a free-trade area from Alaska to Patagonia.

“We might as well go for the fight. The FTAA is going to be defeated from the inside,” he said.

At every summit for three years, Chavez has condemned the Americas free-trade plan as an “imperial” scheme by Washington to extend US commercial power over Latin America.

He has called the FTAA “the road to hell,” dismissed the negotiations as a waste of time and predicted that poor regional economies would be placed at the mercy of voracious US corporations “like throwing a pig to an alligator.”

Alvarez will join negotiators from around the continent for FTAA talks in the Mexican city of Puebla starting Monday.

Lula da Silva and Nestor Kirchner, have also criticized US President George W. Bush’s free-trade crusade.

Alvarez said English-speaking Caribbean nations also backed Venezuela’s position.

Columbia’’ shuttle debris in last resting place

Cape Canaveral (Florida), 1 Feb—NASA allowed reporters to see debris from the space shuttle Columbia in its final resting place on Friday, a space that is part shrine and part laboratory, described by a NASA official as “the Arlington Cemetery for Columbia.”

The shuttle’s pieces are neatly labelled and bar-coded and displayed or crated with a sense of order and composure that contrasts sharply with the violent demise of the United States’ oldest shuttle craft.

Columbia, returning to Earth with a wing damaged during lift-off 16 days earlier, broke apart in the skies over Texas on February 1, 2003, killing all seven astronauts aboard.

Iraq’s Governing Council bans Al-Jazeera from government offices, news conferences

Baghdad, 1 Feb—US-appointed Governing Council has barred the Arab news channel Al-Jazeera from government offices and news conferences for one month, the council said in a statement Saturday.

The ban on one of the most popular television news stations in the Middle East went into effect Wednesday.

The council said in a statement Saturday.

Internet
British protesters seek Iraq inquiry

LONDON, 1 Feb — About 200 protesters gathered outside the Prime Minister’s residence Saturday to demand an inquiry into why Britain went to war in Iraq, while employees of the British Broadcasting Corp placed an ad supporting the BBC’s new executive who resigned over a report on Iraqi weapons.

A majority of people in Britain think Prime Minister Tony Blair’s reputation was hurt, not helped, by a judge’s report that cleared the government of exaggerating evidence of Iraqi weapons of mass destruction, according to a poll published Saturday.

Blair had argued that military action was necessary to remove the threat from Saddam Hussein’s alleged weapons, but coalition forces have so far failed to find evidence of such arms.

Waving posters that read “Blair,” the demonstrators burned a copy of the report by senior judge Lord Hutton, which harshly criticized the BBC for alleging that the government knowingly hyped the threat from Iraq.

“The report is exactly the whitewash and the establish- ment cover-up that we predicted, with a cherry on top,” said Lord Hutton’s findings.

But the BBC has also lost public confidence, according to the poll. It found that 56 percent of people believed Blair’s reputation had deteriorated following the report.

The survey, conducted by the ICM polling agency and released Saturday, found that 14 percent of respondents believed Blair’s reputation had improved as a result of Lord Hutton’s findings.

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Blair urged to admit Iraq mistake

London, 1 Feb—Britain’s Ex-Foreign Secretary Robin Cook has urged Prime Minister Tony Blair to admit that intelligence he presented to Parliament on Iraq was “wildly wrong”, the British Broadcasting Corporation (BBC) reported Friday.

“It’s getting embarrassing to watch our government still trying to deny reality,” said Robin Cook, who resigned from British Cabinet as leader of the House of Commons last week in protest against Blair’s policy supporting a war against Iraq. He said the Prime Ministers should admit that although he believed information on supposed weapons of mass destruction “in all good faith”, it was incorrect.

“Now that Lord Hutton has cleared Tony Blair of lying, he is in a strong position,” he said. “He will never have a better opportunity to say that he believed in all good faith the intelligence he gave to Parliament, but that it has turned out to be wildly wrong.”

Condoleezza Rice, the US’ National Security Adviser has acknowledged possible flaws in pre-war intelligence, following former senior US weapons inspector David Kay’s claims that the US Government was given and he gave to Parliament, but that it has still been trying to deny reality, “It seems that Tony Blair is the only person still certain that weapons of mass destruction will definitely be found. He must explain why he is the odd man out and produce the evidence as to why,” he said.

But the inquiry calls were brushed aside by Blair’s official spokesman, who said the Iraq Survey Group should be allowed to complete its work. “The Prime Minister has said that he did believe the intelligence was right and he did believe there would be an explanation,” he said.

Second Baghdad blast kills one

Baghdad, 1 Feb—A blast ripped through a Baghdad neighbourhood late on Saturday killing at least one person and wounding several others, witnesses said.

The explosion was in the same Baldiyat District of Baghdad where an earlier explosion killed at least five civilians, according to hospital sources.

Relatives said one man died on the way to hospital from shrapnel wounds sustained in the explosion. “We heard the blast and saw that the deceased was missing,” said Ali Muzan. “He died on the way to the hospital.” US troops have warned of the possibility of increased violence ahead of the Muslim Eid al-Adha holiday, given that guerrillas have often struck on significant dates.

Annan says UN election team to go to Iraq within days

Brussels, 1 Feb—UN Secretary-General Kofi Annan said on Friday he would send a team to Iraq within days to explore the feasibility of holding an early election, after he received security assurances from US-led occupation forces.

“The coalition has promised to do (the) maximum to protect the team...so I think in the coming days, the team will travel and start working,” he told journalists on a visit to Brussels.

He also sent security experts to Iraq last weekend to examine whether it was safe for UN international staff to return to Baghdad, where they suffered two deadly bombings last August and September that killed special envoy Sergio Vieira de Mello and many other UN relief workers.—MNA/Reuters

Malaysia prevents bird flu outbreak effectively

Kuala Lumpur, 1 Feb—The measures taken by the government so far had been effective in preventing the outbreak of bird flu in Malaysia, Health Minister Chua Jui Meng said here on Friday.

“Although many countries, including our neighbours, have been affected by the outbreak, we are still safe,” he told a Press conference. Chua said Malaysia was prepared to face the outbreak and had taken initial preventive steps by banning poultry imports from Thailand, besides drawing up specific plans of action if the disease spreads to Malaysia.

He said his ministry had not received any reports of the bird flu or avian influenza virus attacking the poultry bred in the country. Chua said if the outbreak reaches Malaysia, the first step that must be taken was to destroy the chicken and ducks in the farms to ensure that the virus did not infect human beings.

“This step has been taken in Hong Kong, the United States and in the Netherlands. Not long ago, it proved successful to contain the disease,” he said.

Chua also urged live stock breeders to monitor and submit reports to the ministry as soon as possible if they spotted signs of infection in their animals besides carrying out immunization.

The ministry had also ordered hospitals and medical laboratories to be ready to face the possibility of dealing with the virus like conducting early diagnosis of the disease, quarantining or monitoring the affected areas, he said.

He said the Veterinary Services Department had also been asked to monitor bird sanctuaries and other locations to detect if the bird flu virus was carried by migratory birds.

Earlier, Chua attended a meeting in Bangkok and discussed the bird flu outbreak along with agriculture and health ministers from the region, besides officials and experts from the European Union, the United States, the World Health Organization (WHO) and the UN Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO).—MNA/Reuters

Brazil’s President urges battle against “WMD” of hunger

Geneva, 1 Feb—Calling hunger “a weapon of mass destruction”, Brazilian President Luiz Inacio Lula da Silva on Friday joined French President Jacques Chirac and others in demanding new and better funding for the fight against misery.

But the leaders, who also included United Nations Secretary-General Kofi Annan and Chilean President Ricardo Lagos, stopped short of giving immediate backing to Lula’s call for home international transactions, such as the arms trade.

“If we want a safer world, we must fight for a more just and equitable world,” said the burly former union leader. “There can be no peace without economic development and no peace, nor economic development without social justice,” he added.

Lula, who has champions an international campaign against poverty since taking office a year ago, said that hunger was “a weapon of mass destruction...that kills 24,000 people each day and 11 children each minute”.

At the Brazilian’s instigation, the four met in Geneva to urge more international resources to be made available to help meet UN development goals, including a target of halving the number of hungry and undernourished people by 2015.

Chirac said hunger was “increasingly unacceptable” in a world which was also getting richer as trade grew, adding that the 50 billion US dollars a year that some agencies had estimated would be needed to resolve the problem was “a mere drop of water.”

But their 15-point declaration dodged an immediate decision on how this new funding was to be raised.

Instead, Brazilian and French experts would meet to examine new financing mechanisms, which could include such taxes as those proposed by Lula, and report back to their leaders by September.

They would also study whether the best way to channel additional financing to the hungry would be through a special hunger fund, another Lula idea. —MNA/Reuters

Claudia Hein (C), Inka Weickel (L), and Jana Neuhaus (R) pose for photographers after the Miss Germany election in Rust, Germany, on 31 Jan, 2004. Hein from the Nordrhein-Westfalen region won the competition ahead of Inka Weickel from Reinland-Pfalz, and Jana Neuhaus from Schleswig-Holstein. —INTERNET

Iraqi demonstrators in Kafa, Iraq on 30 Jan, 2004. —INTERNET

MNA/Xinhua

MNA/Reuters

MNA/Reuters

MNA/Xinhua

THE NEW LIGHT OF MYANMAR Monday, 2 January, 2004 5
Iraq under US and allies’ occupation
Lost treasures of Iraq in the wake of US invasion

In the days following the US occupation of Baghdad in April 2003, the Iraq Museum was looted. Experts have so far been unable to make any comprehensive damage assessment of location. The full extent of the damage to the museum’s collection may not be known for a long time, but it seems clear that thousands of items were either stolen or destroyed. Irrespective of

Lost treasures of Iraq

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<th>Picture</th>
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<td>Gold helmet of King Meskalamdug</td>
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<td>A statue of worshipper</td>
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<td>A grey stone bowl</td>
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<td>Fluted gold beaker</td>
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<td>Gold dagger</td>
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<td>Seated male figure</td>
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<td>Steatite bowl</td>
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<td>Spouted jar</td>
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<td>Upper part of a statuette</td>
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Several members of the media and a US serviceman have been caught attempting to ship Iraqi paintings, weapons and other war souvenirs to America. At least 15 paintings, gold-plated firearms, ornamental knives, bonds and other items have been seized at airports in Atlanta, Boston, London and Washington on 23 April, 2003.

Troops ‘are letting looters smuggle Iraqi antiquities’

The American military was accused of doing nothing to prevent the mass smuggling of Iraq’s antiquities.

A US soldier looks at a painting as workers at Baghdad’s Archaeological Museum carry in some of the recovered items that had been looted following the US-led invasion to the Iraqi capital city.

A statue is left in a room after a mob of looters ransacked and looted Iraq’s largest archaeological museum in Baghdad.

A statue of former Iraqi President Abdel-Rahman Aref is seen at the Iraqi National Museum in Baghdad, Iraq, on 6 May, 2003, after being recovered. Work has begun on recovering some of civilization’s earliest artifacts, items of incalculable value that disappeared in the orgy of looting that followed the US invasion of Iraq.
Hailing the 57th Anniversary Union Day:  
Development images of Kachin State in the time of the State Peace and Development Council

<table>
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The 2688-foot-long Bala Min Htin Bridge across Ayeyawady River in Myinkina, Kachin State.

The scale model of Myitkyina Government Computer College.

An aerial view of developing Panwa in Kachin State.

Hopin Bridge, 200 feet long and 75 feet wide, plays a vital role in linking Kachin State to Central Myanmar.

The 2688-foot-long Bala Min Htin Bridge across Ayeyawady River in Myinkyina, Kachin State.

The Kandawyan Thikhet Diversion Weir in Waingmaw Township, Kachin State, which benefits 12,000 acres of farmland.

The three-storey main building of Government Technical Institute under construction in Mohnyin Township, Kachin State.
National solidarity consolidated at the Panglong Conference was sharp and effective strength for the independence struggle. The people broke up the imperialists’ colonial yoke with the strength of national solidarity and regained the independence. The British tried to break up the national solidarity of the people many times by sowing discord in national brethren but in vain. In time of emergency, national races who had lived together for thousands of years had lived together for thousands of years who had lived together for thousands of years who had lived together for thousands of years who had lived together for thousands of years who had lived together for thousands of years who had lived together for thousands of years who had lived together for thousands of years who had lived together for thousands of years who had lived together for thousands of years who had lived together for thousands of years who had lived together for thousands of years who had lived together for thousands of years who had lived together for thousands of years who had lived together for thousands of years who lived together in harmony and amity. In the auspicious morning of 4 January 1948, a ceremony to hoist State Flag to mark the Independence Day of the Union of Myanmar was held.

The remnants of KMT No (93) LID seen preparing to leave for home as Myanmar Tatmadaw drive them out of Myanmar.

In the auspicious morning of 4 January 1948, a ceremony to hoist State Flag to mark the Independence Day of the Union of Myanmar was held.

Our national brethren, our own might

Marching toward Golden Land in unity and amity

National solidarity was maintained by the Tatmadaw managed to overcome these crises with national solidarity. And peace was thus restored in the Union.

Meanwhile beginning 1951, KMT nationalist Chinese that intruded into Myanmar became a threat to the country as a decry of the network of the imperialist spy organisation. The Tatmadaw together with national races drove out KMT intruders under Yangyiuang, Bayint-naung, Naganaing and Mekong operations. Through political and diplomatic means, the country lodged a compliant with the United Nations against the plot of the imperialist spy with firm evidence.

The State prevented and warded off the KMT nationalist Chinese intrusion in Myanmar through military and political means and at the same time it had to solve the problem of internal political instability. Inter-national imperialist spies interfered in the internal affairs of others with the help of minions using diplomatic channel, economic assistance, education and propaganda methods. As non-governmental organizations such as Ford Foundation and Asia Foundation they penetrated in political, economic, social, literature and cultural aspects. As such, nation-building tasks could not be undertaken. For example, implementation of the Piyadawtha Plan with the assistance of imperialist spy was not successful and the plan deepened the poverty of the people and the country. There was a conflict within the AFPFL government. In 1958, the AFPFL government split into two — stable and clean. The two vied for power in the Pyithu Hluttaw. The clean won seats in the Pyithu Hluttaw with the alliance of opposition Pa Ma Nya Ta. The clean AFPFL government could not tackle the problem of violence and anarchy that erupted due to internal political unrest. This harmed national solidarity. Political problems threatening the Union arose. On 28 September 1958, it transferred State power to the Tatmadaw government through the Pyithu Hluttaw. The Tatmadaw government was assigned duties to temporarily lead the State after formation of the caretaker government. The Tatmadaw government promptly carried out the tasks on peace and tranquillity and prevalence of law and order and welfare of the people. Armed forces were reorganized in accord with the constitution. Under the supervision of the Tatmadaw government the Pyithu Hluttaw election was held on 6 February 1960. Nationalities Hluttaw election on 29 February in a free and fair manner.

On 4 April, the State power was transferred to the clean AFPFL (Pa Hta Sa) government which won the election. In this way, the Tatmadaw managed to overcome the political difficulties that broke out during the period from 1958 to 1960. It safeguarded the national solidarity and removed the danger of the break-up of the Union. However, there were major conflicts within the government and forming of “U”, “Bo” and “Thakin” groups in the ruling government resulting from the distribution of the ministers portfolios in the government. Conflicts also took place because of the pledges made before the election. These situations created the problem to cause disintegration of national solidarity and misunderstanding among the national races. The ruling government lost political and organizational power and support of the people.

The international colonialist group took advantage of the situation and got in touch with some Sawbwas who did not want to give up their feudal power and privileges and some political parties with racial views. Unable to solve the problem completely, the AFPFL government tried to organize a semi-government between the leaders of the hills regions and the plains from 24 to 28 February in 1962 in order to appease them. All the situations however led to threatening the national solidarity and the perpetuation of the Union.

All the situations however led to threatening the national solidarity and the perpetuation of the Union. The Tatmadaw therefore took over the responsibilities of the State on 2 March 1962 so as to stabilize the country after forming the Revolutionary Council. Later on 11 June 1963, the Revolutionary Council invited armed insurgent groups in a bid to make peace with them through negotiation and to restore stability in the country.

Hailing the 57th Anniversary Union Day:

Our national brethren, our own might
Our national brethren, our own might

The Tatmadaw therefore took over the responsibilities of the State on 2 March 1962 so as to stabilize the country after forming the Revolutionary Council. Later on 11 June 1963, the Revolutionary Council invited armed groups in a bid to make peace with them through negotiations and to restore stability in the country. The White Flag Communist Party (BCP), the Red Flag Communist Party and other six insurgent groups totalling eight groups came to meet with the Revolutionary Council. Of them, only the Karen Revolutionary Council-KRC group led by Saw Hanta Tha Hmwe reached agreement with the Revolutionary Council.

In order to build national solidarity the Revolutionary Council abolished all political parties. In the post-independence period, the AFPFL government and the Pa-hta-sa (Union) government were not able to carry out work effectively for development of national races on account of the danger of internal strifes and the interparty splits. The development measures and road transportation tasks being carried out at border areas did not meet with success either in the time of the Revolutionary Council government because armed insurgent groups were dubious about such measures as they were fooled by the colonialists.

In other words, the lack of tranquillity and stability in the region then disturbed the development opportunity. Therefore, the regional stability is of great importance in developing a region or a country. The restoration of peace and stability in Myanmar today accounts for the unity of national brethren and unshakeable Union Spirit. With the changing situation and rising repulsion in socialist countries in addition to the personal as well as functional weaknesses, the leftist and rightist political parties, external and internal as well as above-ground and under-ground elements created conditions to cause disintegration of the Union. As the Socialist Programme Party government endeavoured to turn the country into a socialist state. There arose political and administrative hardships, followed by anarchic acts along with lootings, cases of arson and torture. For the worst of it, the situation was on the verge of the disintegration of national solidarity. There were also signs of disintegration of the Union. Owing to such situations, anarchic acts loomed large in the country. The international colonialist conspirators assuming themselves to be parliamentarians and diplomats tried to find elements who would follow their dictates. And they also provided their lackeys with financial and political support. At the same time, the BCP group and other groups plotted to seize State Power by trying to take an upper hand politically and militarily.

Owing to those circumstances, the Tatmadaw had to assume the responsibilities of the State on 18 September 1988 as an answer to the call of national duty on the ground of the unity of national people. With the national policy — non-disintegration of the Union, non-disintegration of national solidarity and perpetuation of sovereignty, the Tatmadaw has been making peace with armed groups in order to build national unity since the beginning of 1989. So far, a total of 17 armed groups have returned to the legal fold. They are now actively cooperating with the Government, the Tatmadaw and national people in carrying out the nation-building tasks and taking development measures. There will be no better way than to express that they become united in the time of emergency as they are our brethren and our strength.

In a nutshell, the entire national people living in the Union are now working together energetically with breathing nationalism and patriotism in tandem with unyielding Union Spirit for the emergence of a peaceful, modern, developed and discipline-flourishing democratic state in the future.

Thus, what is important is to be always aware of internal and external destructive elements including the wicked colonialists bent on undermining the unity and Union Spirit of the national brethren.

Translation: NY+KTY

Regional stability is of great importance in developing a region or a country. The restoration of peace and stability in Myanmar today accounts for the unity of national brethren and unshakeable Union Spirit.
Prime Minister receives Chinese guests

YANGON, 1 Feb—Prime Minister General Khin Nyunt received Chinese Export and Credit Insurance Corporation of the People’s Republic of China Mr Tang Ruoxin at Zeyathiri Beikman Hall on Konmyinttha this evening. The Prime Minister and party arrived at Lewe, the home of President Mr Li Jinjun.

They stopped for the night to Myanmar Mr Li Jinjun. Vice-President Mr Liang Zhidong and PRC Ambassador to Myanmar Mr Li Jinjun were welcomed.

After looking around there, the Prime Minister in- formed the requirements for improvement of quality of life of the people.

They were to make field trips to grassroots levels and to fulfil requirements for better transport in the region, success of agricultural, livestock, breeding and other economic enterprises, improvement of education and health standard of rural people, he said.

He said township level departmental officers are fully responsible for rural development. Only when the require- ments of local people are ful- filled can progress be made in the rural regions.

He spoke of the need for them to actively participate in rural development tasks after formation of committees on various sectors under the su- pervision of departments concerned. He called on them to strive for realization of the objectives.

The Prime Minister and party then flew to Paunglaung multi-purpose dam project in PyinOoLwin Township to attend the conclusion ceremony for project and arrangements for growing of coffee plantations covered in the project to extend grow- ing area and production of macadamia, coffee, and other crops. He inspected coffee nursery, rooms and various medicines that help to grow coffee.

Mr Tang Zhengping who of- fered coffee to the Prime Minister and party arrived at Central Institute of Civil Serv- ice (Upper Myanmar) in PyinOoLwin Township to at- tend the conclusion ceremony of Special Refresher Course No 1 for university/college teachers.

On arrival at PyinOoLwin, Minister for Forestry Brig-Gen Thein Aung, PyinOoLwin Station Commander Brig-Gen Min Aung Hlaing and military and civil officers welcomed the Prime Minister and party. At the briefing hall of Cof- fee Research and Development Centre in PyinOoLwin, Minister for Agriculture and Irrigation Maj-Gen Nyunt Tin and officials reported to the Prime Minister on coffee growing and production of states and divisions in Myanmar, land reclamation for coffee plantations covered in the project to extend grow- ing of coffee on 100,000 acres, arrangements for growing of coffee between PyinOoLwin and Naungkio townships in line with the guidance of the Head of State, arrangements to supply water and distribu- tion of coffee saplings.

After giving necessary in- structions, the Prime Minister heard the reports of private entreprenuers and attended to the needs. He then greeted FAO resident representative Mr Tang Zhengping who of- fers help to grow coffee.

The Prime Minister viewed the sample mush- rooms and various medicines produced from mushrooms. He inspected coffee nursery, macadamia plantation, coffee cruncher and lab. At the Medi- cal Research Department (Up- per Myanmar), Director Gen- eral Dr Huy Aung and staff welcomed the Prime Minister and party.

The director-general re- ported on research works for producing medicine from in- digenous medicinal plants for malaria, TB, diabetes, hyper- tension, and diarrhoea, col- lections of 44 medicinal plants from states and divisions and organization of scholars for research works. The Prime Minister gave instructions to systematically set up an indig- enous medicine garden.

After looking around there, the Prime Minister and party proceeded to Mandalay International Airport and ar- rived back here in the evening.

Minister for Information Brig-Gen Kyaw Hsan who accompanied the Prime Min- ister on 30 January night met with the Yamethin District Staff Officer, and staff offic- ers of PyinOoLwin, Lewe, Tatkon and Pyawbwe town- ship Information and Public Relations Department at the IPRD office in PyinOoLwin.

Yamethin District Staff Officer U Maung Ko and township staff officers reported to the Prime Minister on implementation of tasks.

At the briefing hall of HPAO, the Prime Minister heard the reports of private entrepre- neurists and attended to the needs of coffee growers.

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Yamethin District Staff Officer U Maung Ko and township staff officers reported to the Prime Minister on implementation of tasks. PyinOoLwin TV Retransmission Station Head reported on retransmission of TV programmes to three townships. The minister gave necessary instructions.

Prime Minister General Khin Nyunt greets Mr Tang Ruoxin of China Export & Credit Insurance Corporation. — mna
miners are to contact the MGE. — MNA

Minister meets Karate-do team
YANGON, 1 Feb — Myanmar Olympic Committee Chairman Minister for Sports Brig-Gen Thura Aye Myint met with members of Myanmar Karate-do team who are going to participate in the 6th Asia Karate-do Federation Senior Karate-do Championship to be held in the People’s Republic of China form 3 to 9 February, and attend the Karate-do Conference and Asia Level Karate-do Coaching Course at National Sports Stadium-I this afternoon. First, the minister was introduced to each member of the team and he heard reports on arrangements for participating the championship. The team includes eight members led by Vice President of Myanmar Karate-do Federation. — MNA

41st Myamma Gems Emporium from 13 to 21 March
YANGON, 1 Feb — The 41st Myamma Gems Emporium will be held on 13 March, 2004 and the national gems entrepreneurs are to contact the Myamma Gems Enterprise (Head Office) not later than 10 February to ensure the sale of their gems and jewellery at the gems emporium.

As foreign gems merchants are filled with the aspiration to buy quality gems, jade and pearls, the new gems and jewellery at the gems emporium.

The MGE has been coordinating with the departments concerned to enable the gems entrepreneurs to have the right to import fuel, dynamos and other related equipment to be used in gems mining with the export earnings realized from the sale of gems and jewellery at the gems emporium. Thus, the gems entrepreneurs are to contact the MGE for fixing the floor prices of gems and jewellery to be put on sale at the gems emporium as well as other requirements during the fixed days.

Pakokku U Ohn Pe literary award winners announced
YANGON, 1 Feb — With the interest of the literature funds donated by Pakokku U Ohn Pe to the State, literary awards have been presented yearly since 1993. The winners of the 11th Pakokku U Ohn Pe literary award were announced today.

In the poem anthology category, Kaung Nyunt Wai (Yaygyi) won the first prize, Maung Pyi Hline (Thandwe) the second and Shwe Hmira (MU) the third.

In the novel category, Pathein Aung Than Oo won the first prize, Sha (Ingyin) the second and Thwe Hta Nyo (Thakkala) the third. In short story anthology category, Thein Zaw (Shwelkha) the second and Ko Zaw Htay (Culture) the third.

In the thesis category, Ni Nyein (Anytekatho) won the first prize, Kyaw Phone Myint (Chemistry) the second and Shin Htwe Yn (Anthropology) the third.

In the research literary category, Min Shin Aung (Twantay) won the first, U Htaung (Forestry) the second and Shwenaga Tin Win the third. The life-long literary award for 2003 went to Sayamagyai Dwi Yin Yin (Saw Hnin Nyin).

The winners of Pakokku U Ohn Pe scholarship and winners from the University of Culture will be announced. The prize-presentation ceremony for the literary awards will be held in Pakokku on 22 February (Sunday).

Award winners are to contact the Chief Editor, Sarpay Beikman, 529-531, Merchant Street, Yangon, Ph- 252600, 240048 and 381449. — MNA

Don’t smoke
China’s auditors recovered 14.82b yuan last year

BRAZIL, 1 Feb—China’s National Audit Office recovered 14.82 billion yuan (1.79 billion US dollars) last year after auditing more than 130,000 work units across the country, according to the National Audit Office. Li Jihua said Friday at a national conference in Beijing.

Auditors helped to save 1.01 billion yuan (122 million US dollars) in budgetary allocations and subsidies and returned 0.96 billion yuan (115 million US dollars) in allocating bodies. They also forwarded 1,867 cases to prosecution and disciplinary authorities, including 13 major cases involving more than one billion yuan (121 million US dollars) that were directly reported to the State Council.

Li said the financial malpractice fell into three main categories:

— Units and individuals cheating on individual consumption loans, such as housing and car loans, with false documents, and local governments applying for huge city building loans beyond their repayment abilities.
— Enterprises cheating on huge loans by writing false bank acceptance bills without any real trading.
— Bank acceptance bills without any real trading.

Li said the office also organized economic liability audits of leading members of the former state-run National Power Corporation last year, finding that slack management had caused serious state assets losses. Audits of the implementation of central budgets was another focus as uncovering problems in the distribution and management of the budgets and subsidies from the central government for local expenditure was always a priority, Li said. — MNA/Xinhua

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National Bird Flu Prevention Centre opens

HONG KONG, 1 Feb—The Public Health Laboratory Centre of the Hong Kong Health Department opened here Friday, aiming to provide hospitals and the public with services such as anemological tests and neonatal screening.

Yeoh Eng-kiong, secretary for health, welfare and food of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region government, said at the opening ceremony that Hong Kong’s microbiology laboratories played an important role during the severe acute respiratory syndrome (SARS) outbreak. He believed that the centre will become an indispensable unit for the prevention and control of infectious diseases in Hong Kong in the future. As introduced by Yeoh, the Centre’s microbiology laboratories provide public health and microbiology laboratory services to clinics, hospitals and other health care institutions in Hong Kong. The laboratories process patients’ specimens and surveillance samples for the diagnosis and screening of infections.

According to the Health Department, the Government Virus Unit of the Centre is a specialized laboratory for the diagnosis and surveillance of viral, chlamydia and rickettsial infections. It is designated by the World Health Organisation as the National Influenza Centre and National Polio Virus Laboratory for Hong Kong and Macao.

The centre also works on common diseases of neonates. The Neonatal Screening Laboratory is the main local service provider in neonatal screening in Hong Kong that serves both public and private hospitals. The laboratory is equipped with modern analyzers and is run by a team of proficient medical, scientific and technical staff. — MNA/Xinhua

China committed to active participation in regional cooperation

TAGAYTAY, Philippines, 1 Feb—China is committed to active participation in regional cooperation and will, as always, import the anti-terrorism and anti-corruption cooperation with Latin American countries, a senior Chinese official said Friday.

At the plenary session of the Second Foreign Minis- ters’ Meeting of the Forum for East Asia-Latin America (FEALAC) here, Chinese Vice-Foreign Minister Wang Yi said China is committed to opening wider to the outside world and active par-ticipation in regional coop-eration, and stands ready to make its contribution to the sound growth of the forum.

I am very pleased to announce that in the next two years, China will con-tinue to host group visit to China by senior Latin American diplomats and a series of programs for cultural exchanges and coop-eration,” Wang said.

“ ”At the same time, China is considering positively to continue the training course for Senior Civil Servants from Latin American and Caribbean countries,” he added.

Likewise, Wang said for the next 25 years, the Chi-nese economy has been growing rapidly at an aver-age annual rate of 9.4 percent, as a result of its im-por-tance has increased to the Asian and world economies.

Nevertheless, he added, China is still the largest developing country that faces daunting tasks of development and still requires many years of hard work to achieve a comprehensive, coordinated and sustainable development in economic, social and environmental areas. Wang also said China’s economic and social develop-ment is fundamentally aimed at the well-being of its people, with rural popula-tion living below the pov-erty line reduced to 30 mil-lion in 2000 from the origi-nal 250 million in 1978.

The Chinese Govern-ment will vigorously press ahead with poverty- relief through development so that the eradication of poverty as soon as possible and the national economy will grow with a larger scale that is two to three times higher than at a higher plane, he added.

Delegates from 32 mem-ber states, including the representatives of the Latin American and Nicaragua, met in Tagaytay City, south of Manila to give the meeting will and the guiding spirit of the man to the Manila Action Plan, which is expected to be adopted on Sat-urday. — MNA/Xinhua

MyDoonmother sought as Microsoft offers reward

SEATTLE, 1 Feb—Microsoft Corp offered a $250,000 US dollars reward on Thursday for the person responsible for the MyDoom worm, as the reported number of affected computers more than tripled over the weekend.

The world’s largest software maker said it would pay the money for information leading to the arrest and conviction of those responsible for unleashing MyDoom. The worm’s code, called MyDoom.b, is designed to attack Microsoft’s web site in an apparent attempt to shut it down this weekend.

Microsoft’s offer follows a similar $250,000 US dollars reward offered by SCO Group Inc, the small software maker suing International Business Machines Corp. over the use of code for the Linux operating system. The first version of the worm was designed to attack the web site of SCO, which has drawn of ire of Linux advocates.

MyDoom, also known as Novarg or Shimgapi, has infected computers around the globe by enticing users to open an attachment that releases a program that potentially allows other attackers to gain unauthorized access.

Computer security experts got a little closer to finding the perpetrator, who apparently signed the worm with the name “Andy”. “There is a great deal that the author’s real name,” said Craig Schmugar, a virus researcher manager at Network Associates Inc. ‘s McAfee anti-virus unit.

Schmugar said MyDoom also contained a message from the author, “I’m just doing my job, nothing personal, sorry.”

Computers infected by the worm can be turned into zombies for other attacks. Nearly a million computer infected machines more than doubled to 400,000 or 500,000 as of Thursday, up from Wednesday’s estimate of 100,000 to 200,000 machines.

Computer security vendor Symantec Corp has detected thousands of attempts to contact infected computers, sug-gest they could be used to spawn new attacks.

MyDoom, which is designed to encrypt the recipient of an email to open an attachment with an .exe, .scr. .zip or .pif extension, are a form of spam, often with official-looking subject lines and addresses, leading many into believing they are from network administrators. — MNA/Reuters
India wants peaceful relations with neighbours

New Delhi, 1 Feb— Indian Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee Saturday said that India wants to have peaceful, friendship and cooperative relations with its neighbours and resolve all outstanding issues with Pakistan through dialogues.

Addressing the on-going Global Convention on Peace and Non-violence, Vajpayee said that India is alive to the responsibility to contribute to peace, friendship and cooperation both in the region and around the world.

Speaking of the South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC) summit held earlier this month in Islamabad, the Prime Minister said that the summit was a major step forward in regional cooperation. He urged the countries in the region to work collectively to change South Asia’s image and standing in the world.

Addressing a galaxy of dignitaries including diplomats, Gandhians and others, Vajpayee said that the modern world was seeing new threats to peace and terrorism inspired by religious extremism.

The threat of terrorism had to be dealt with firmly — both through the action of individual nations and through international solidarity, he said, expressing the confidence that this was a passing phase and the world’s collective efforts would succeed in dealing with this menace.

The Prime Minister said that certain objective factors like power of democracy and treaties adopted by the international community for peace and disarmament have strengthened the case of peace relative to the forces of violence.

He noted that the importance of these treaties had not been belittled and all countries should act upon these treaties with sincerity and great powers have a greater responsibility than others to act with responsibility and self-restraint.

“Collectively, we must take the world swiftly towards the goal of disarmament and, specifically, elimination of all weapons of mass destruction in the 21st Century,” he said.

Pakistan denies planning of US military operation

ISLAMABAD, 1 Feb— Pakistan’s Foreign Minister Khursheed Mahmood Kasuri Friday denied that the United States will launch a military operation in Pakistan’s territory hunting for Osama bin Laden. The minister, in a state- ment, contradicted news items from Western media regarding mounting of offensive operation by American forces in Pakistan, noting that those items are “ridiculous, senseless and without any foundation.”

He added that the US armed personnel’s mission is limited in neighbouring Afghanistan.

The Foreign Minister said Pakistan has all the resources needed to operate against its terrorists in its own territory and there is no question of allowing any foreign force to operate in Pakistan. Pakistan, sharing a 2,600-kilometre oiled border with Afghanistan, has long been witnessed as a haven of the al-Qaeda and taliban fugitives since the US-led anti-terrorism war ended in 2002.

The Pakistani Government boasted of having deployed some 70,000 troops along the Pakistan-Afghan border to keep terror remnants from sneaking into its territory. In the past two years, around 500 foreign terrorists have been captured in Pakistan.

Sri Lankan PM to visit Thailand next month

COLOSIMO, 1 Feb— Sri Lankan Prime Minister Ranil Wickremesinghe will pay a three-day official visit to Thailand early next month at the invitation of his Thai counterpart Thaksin Shinawatra, the Foreign Ministry said in a statement on Friday.

The invitation was extended by Thai Acting Prime Minister Wuthi Prayut during a meeting between the two leaders.

Thaksin invited Wickremesinghe to pay a return visit to Thailand after he attends the South East Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (ASEAN) Summit in December.

Prime Minister Wickremesinghe is scheduled for February 9-11, in reciprocation of his Thai counterpart Thaksin who visited Sri Lanka in August last year.

Officials claim no reports of bird flu in India so far

New Delhi, 1 Feb— No case of bird flu has been reported in India so far, officials in the Agriculture Ministry said on Friday.

The government is collecting reports from all the states and there are no reports of any outbreak in the country, the officials said.

They said that border states were taking more precautions to avert any illegal import of poultry. Some central government had on Thursday banned import of all poultry products.

Officials said India had negligible import of poultry products but that too had been banned.

Meanwhile, screening of passengers on Samjhauta Express trains from Pakistan to India was on, they said.

Iran says no plans to receive US Congress team

TEHRAN, 1 Feb— Iran’s Foreign Ministry spokesman said on Saturday there were no plans for US congressional aides to visit Tehran next month, in what some US senators had said could be a step towards improving relations.

“A trip is not on our agenda,” Hamid Reza Asefi told the official IRNA news agency.

US Senator Arlen Specter said in Washington on Friday that a group of US congressional aides would visit Iran in February, in a potential step toward renewing official contacts, severed after the 1979 Iranian Revolution.

Specter said the staff delegation “was confirmed to go next month” but he declined to be more specific.

Hu Jintao, Arab League leader meet to boost ties

CAIRO, 1 Feb— Chinese President Hu Jintao met with Arab League Secretary-General Amr Mahmoud Moussa Friday to boost ties and push for more cooperation.

President Hu, who arrived in Cairo Thursday on a four-day state visit, visited the Arab League’s Headquarters in Cairo and met with delegates from its 22 member states.

President Hu said that consolidating and developing friendly cooperation with Arab states is the working guideline of the Chinese Government.

President Hu also proposed to develop a new type of partnership between China and Arab states through promoting political relations based on mutual respect, forging closer trade and economic links to achieve common development, expanding cultural exchanges to draw upon each other’s experience, and strengthening cooperation in international affairs to safeguard world peace and promote common development.

Moussa concurred with President Hu’s suggestion, saying that it would be an important guideline for the development of Sino-Arab ties. President Hu viewed the foundation of the China-Arab states cooperation forum as an important measure to boost ties between two sides in a new international environment.

Hu said it would enrich China’s relationship with Arab states as well as consolidate and develop cooperation on different levels and in different areas.

President Hu said the Chinese people are willing, alongside the Arab people, to build the forum into a new platform for collective dialogue and cooperation between China and Arab countries.

Moussa also praised the announcement by China and Arab League to set up a forum Friday and said he was looking forward to his forthcoming visit to China and signing an agreement on the activities of the forum. President Hu concluded that no matter how the international situation changes, Chinese people are always sincere friends with the Arab people.

Iranians urge to speed up nuclear talks

TEHRAN, 1 Feb— Iran’s Foreign Ministry spokesman, while discussing the nuclear talks with the United States, called on Washington to speed up its efforts.

“Today, we have stressed the importance of the US to expedite its way,” Hamid Reza Asefi told IRNA.

He also said: “Sadaqa” charity, which has no counterpart in the West, will be set up to help Afghan refugees.

“The idea is to help Afghans, who have suffered a lot from their own country and the West,” he said.

A woman builds a pair of snowmen after snow fell overnight in El Ajusco, a mountainous forest region on the southern outskirts of Mexico City, on Jan 31, 2004.  

MNA/Reuters

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MNA/Xinhua

Sri Lankan PM to visit Thailand next month

COLOSIMO, 1 Feb— Sri Lankan Prime Minister Ranil Wickremesinghe will pay a three-day official visit to Thailand early next month at the invitation of his Thai counterpart Thaksin Shinawatra, the Foreign Ministry said in a statement on Friday.

The visit was invited by Sri Lanka in August last year.

Officials said that Wickremesinghe’s delegation will include government officials and businessmen whose mission will be to promote trade relations between the two nations.

The Prime Minister is scheduled to address the Thai business community at a special forum. He will explain to them the investment opportunities Sri Lanka has to offer for the Thai businessmen, officials said.

They said that meetings will be arranged between Sri Lankan and Thai businessmen to enhance bilateral trade relations.

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MNA/Xinhua

A woman builds a pair of snowmen after snow fell overnight in El Ajusco, a mountainous forest region on the southern outskirts of Mexico City, on Jan 31, 2004.
Mbmbo closes in on Cup scoring record

Tunis, 1 Feb — Cameroon striker Patrick Mbmbo is closing in on the record for goals scored at African Nations Cup finals after his hat-trick on Thursday against Zimbabwe.

The Japanese-based forward, who was drafted late in the Cameroon squad after government pressure, has now notched 11 goals in four tournaments — three each in group, 1 from round of 16, 3 from quarterfinals, and 4 from the final.

Mbmbo, 33, is now third on the list of all-time goalscorers behind Pokou and Nigeria's Rashidi Yekini, who managed 13 goals in four successive tournaments between 1998 and 1994.

Pokou scored 14 goals in the 1968 and 1970 finals, including a record five in one match.

Mbmbo already has four goals in two games at the tournament in Tunisia to add to seven goals in his appearances at the preceding three Nations Cup finals.

He failed to score for Cameroon at the Nations Cup finals in Burkina Faso in 1998, where he made just one starting appearance, but was a pivotal figure in their triumph in the 2000 edition with four goals.

At the last tournament in Mali, he managed three goals before missing the semifinal and final through injury. — MNA/Reuters

Parker added to English revolution at Chelsea

London, 1 Feb — Chelsea, the Premier League club owned by an Italian, bought local lad Scott Parker for 10 million pounds ($18.11 million US dollars) on Friday and said the team's future lay in their English backbones.

The club, notorious under previous boss Gianluca Vialli for fielding a team consisting entirely of overseas players, signed the 23-year-old London-born England midfielder on a 4 1/2-year contract from Charlton Athletic.

“This is an indication that the future Chelse-a will be an exciting blend of the very best home players with the very best interna-tional players,” acting chief executive Paul Smith told a news conference on Friday.

Claudio Ranieri, who took over from Vialli in September 2000, has made no se-cret of his admiration for what he describes as the hard-working, committed English style of play. “Parker is ... like Frank Lampard, up and down the pitch, strong, working hard, shooting at goal, defending well — a com-plete player,” Ranieri said.

Ranieri said Parker would make his debut against Blackburn Rovers on Sunday, bol-stering a midfield depleted by injury as the club battle for league, FA Cup and Champi-ons League glory. Juan Sebastian Veron has had surgery for a herniated disc and could be out until May, Emmanuel Petit is making his way back from knee surgery while winger Damien Duff suffered a muscle strain of several weeks out with a dislocated shoul-der. With Geremi away at the African Na-tions Cup with Cameroon, extra pressure has fallen on midfield stalwarts Claude Makelele and Lampard with the latter already having played 35 matches in all com-petitions this season.

“Scott gives me a lot of opportunities. Maybe Frank and Claude can get some rest,” Ranieri said. Ranieri said he had been chas-ing Parker, who has been the driving force behind Charlton's rise to fourth place in the Premier League, for two years. Parker, who first tasted fame as a boy juggling a football in a television commercial, said he under-stood that in a club with a big pool of talent, he would not play every week. “But this is where I want to prove myself,” he said.

After two acrimonious weeks, Charlton eventually caved in to the transfer they made clear they never wanted, turning down two offers and insisting part of the deal involved their keeping Chelsea striker Carlton Cole on loan for another season.

In another indication of the change in direction at Stamford Bridge, one of the reasons Parker offered for his move was that he knew several Chelsea players from his time with England's youth teams.

“I know them well — John Terry, Joe Cole. There are lots of English players and it's helped a lot with my decision,” said the midfielder, who made his full England debut last November in a friendly against Den-mark. — MNA/Reuters

Niang steers Senegal to first victory

Bezerte (Tunisia), 1 Feb — Senegal got their African Nations Cup campaign firmly under orders from coach Guy Stephan to add to seven goals in his appearances at the preceding three Nations Cup finals.

He failed to score for Cameroon at the Nations Cup finals in Burkina Faso in 1998, where he made just one starting appearance, but was a pivotal figure in their triumph in the 2000 edition with four goals.

At the last tournament in Mali, he managed three goals before missing the semifinal and final through injury. — MNA/Reuters

Kanoute scores again as Mali progress

Tunis 1 Feb — Frederic Kanoute got on the scoresheet again at the African Nations Cup finals as Mali became the second team to book a quarterfinal place after a 3-1 win over Burkina Faso on Friday.

The Totten-ham Hotspur striker took his tally in the tournament to three for his new country, opening with a well-taken finish in the 34th minute after a superb through ball from captain Mahamadou Diarra.

The goal brought to life a dull encounter in cold conditions, further enlivened three minutes later when Diarra got a goal of his own. The Lyon midfielder rose high to head home a corner and double the score, stun-ning a Burkina Faso team that had contested three Nations Cup finals.

Their ideal start could eas-ily have gone awry, though, with some better finishing from Kenya strikers Oliech and Mike Okoth, who both failed to exploit some sloppy Senegal defending.

Senegal paid the price in the 19th minute, when a first effort by Henri Camara was cleared off the line from a Dousou corner and Diarra rifled the clearance back through a packed goalmouth.

Niang added his superb second in the 31st minute, working a one-two with Camara on the edge of the area and smashing his shot past Onyso. Senegal were then able to ease off, despite Kenya's probing long balls for Oliech.

Dousou should have added a fourth just after the restart. Diouf fed the ball through for Mbama on the right flank and his low cross left the former African Footballer of the Year with the ball at his mercy. A moment's hesita-tion, though, was enough to allow Onyso to grab the ball at the second attempt.

Oliech fared even worse after an hour, beating one defender and rounding keeper Tony Sylva only to hit the legs of Papa Malick Diop from just a few metres out. — MNA/Reuters

Freund joins Leicester on loan

London, 1 Feb — Former German midfileder Steffen Freund has joined Leices-ter City on loan from Kaiserslautern until the end of the season, the Premier League side said on Friday.

Freund is no stranger to English football after a five-year stint at Tottenham Hotspur, which ended last year after he was not of-fered a new deal by the club's then manager Glenn Hoddle.

The 34-year-old, a member of Germany's 1996 European championship-winning team and the Borussia Dortmund side who won the Champions League in 1997, will have to wait for his debut as he has not joined in time to play against Aston Villa on Saturday.

Leicester are third from bottom in the league, two points from safety. — MNA/Reuters

Real Betis' goalkeeper Toni Prats, left, vies for the ball against Celta de Vigo's Savo Milosevic, from Serbia and Montenegro, during a Spanish league soccer match in Seville, southern Spain, on 31 Jan, 2004. — BPN/Reuters

Answer for yesterday's Crossword Puzzle

Yesterday's crossword puzzle was not provided, please recheck your source.
Lt-Gen Ye Myint tours Thayet

YANGON, 1 Feb—Member of the State Peace and Development Council Lt-Gen Ye Myint, together with Mandalay Division Peace and Development Council Chairman of Central Command Commander Maj-Gen Ye Myint, Magway Division Peace and Development Council Chairman Col Zaw Min and departmental officials, left Aunglan for Magway yesterday morning.

In meeting with the division/district/township level departmental officials at the hall of Thayet District PDC Office, Lt-Gen Ye Myint heard report by Thayet District PDC Chairman Li-Col Maung Maung Sun on growing of monosoon and summer paddy and oil crops, local rice sufficiency, social, education, health and livestock breeding tasks, increase of per capita income. Departmental officials concerned presented supplementary reports.

Lt-Gen Ye Myint made a speech. He said local authorities and people are to actively cooperate in the tasks for regional development. He spoke of the need to grow paddy on virgin and vacant land for local rice sufficiency and other crops suitable to the region. Arrangements have been made for rural development tasks, road transportation, education, health and social sectors. So, departments concerned are to cooperate and local people are to join in the tasks for regional development.

At the briefing hall of the local battalion, he met with officers and other ranks. He spoke of the need to take part in the development tasks in the interest of the public and to engage in agriculture and livestock breeding tasks on a manageable scale and to successfully discharge assigned duties.

Then, Lt-Gen Ye Myint left for Aunglan. At the hall of local battalion, he met with officers and other ranks and made a speech. Lt-Gen Ye Myint left there and arrived back here in the evening.—MNA

WEATHER

Sunday, 1 February, 2004

Summary of observations recorded at 09:30 hours MST: During the past 24 hours, rains have been isolated in Taninthayi Division, weather has been generally fair in the remaining areas.

Night temperatures were (5°C) above normal in Mon State and Taninthayi Division, (3°C) below normal in Kachin, Chin States, Mandalay and Magway Divisions, (4°C) to (5°C) below normal in Rakhine State and about normal in the remaining areas.

Maximum temperature on 31-1-2004 was 36.0°C (97°F). Minimum temperature on 1-2-2004 was 15.0°C (59°F).

Relative humidity at 9:30 hrs MST on 1-2-2004 was 67%.

Total sunshine hours on 31-1-2004 was (9.0) hours approx.

Rainfall on 1-2-2004 was nil at Yangon Airport, Kaba-Aye and central Yangon. Total rainfall since 1-1-2004 was 3 mm at Yangon Airport, nil at Kaba-Aye and central Yangon.

Maximum wind speed at Yangon (Kaba-Aye) was 14 mph from North at (07:30) hours MST on 1-2-2004.

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

Forecast valid until evening of 2-2-2004: Possibility of isolated light rain in Kachin State, upper Sagaing and Taninthayi Divisions and weather will be partly cloudy in the remaining areas. Degree of certainty is (40%).

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

Outlook for subsequent two days: Possibility of isolated rain in extreme Southern Myanmar areas.

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

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

OBITUARY

DAW THEIN MYINT @ MRS. AGNES HO
(B.A) Aged (93) Years
Retired Teacher, Methodist High School
Daw Thein Myint, daughter of U A Lam and Daw Gye May), beloved wife of (K.T.Ho @ U Si), eldest sister of (U Hein Tin @ Harry-Daw Thein Nu @ Lily), (George Lee @ U Nyi Hla-Pauline Lee, (U Mya Thang @ Spencer-Daw Thein Zin @ Margaret), beloved mother of Harry Soe Win (Asean Focus Group-Daw Mu Mu @ Rosebud) and (Diplomatic School, Yangon) beloved aunt of Dr Aung Kyaw-Dr Khin-Thin Tin @ Dolphine, Li-Comd Myint Thane @ Melvin (Retd).-Daw Min Shi Shio, Alan Burrell-Daw Khin Soe Tin @ Suzie, A Uye Maung Maung @ Raymond-Daw Khin Swe Tin @ Candy and beloved grandmother of Win Mu Aye @ Primrose, (Saw Si Soe) and Win Mu Soe @ Elizabeth (Diplomatic School, Yangon) passed away peacefully at her residence, No. 38, Bawdi Yeiktha Rd. (Windermere) Bahan Township at 6.00 pm on 29th January, 2004 and cremated at 10:00 am at Ye Way Cemetery on 30th January, 2004.

Friends and Relatives, Please accept this as the only Intimation.

Bereaved Family.
Prime Minister General Khin Nyunt enjoys performance of the National Symphony Orchestra

YANGON, 1 Feb.—Prime Minister General Khin Nyunt watched performance of the National Symphony Orchestra of the Ministry of Information at the National Theatre on Myoma Kyaung Road this morning.

On arrival at the National Theatre, Prime Minister General Khin Nyunt was welcomed by Chairman of Yangon Division Peace and Development Council Commander of Yangon Division and Maj-Gen Myint Swe, the ministers, the deputy ministers, officials of the State Peace and Development Council Office, heads of departments, members of National Symphony Orchestra Committee, musicians and officials.

At the briefing hall, Deputy Minister for Education U Myo Nyunt reported to the Prime Minister on academic and administrative matters of the university. Minister for Education U Than Aung gave a supplementary report. Next, Managing Director of Wa Wa Win Construction Co U Shwe Hlaing reported to the Prime Minister on progress in construction of archway and lecture halls, future tasks and green work. After giving instructions, the Prime Minister looked into the computer training centre, construction of the theatre, the two-storey lecture hall, the archway of the university.

Next, the Prime Minister and party proceeded to Yangon Institute of Computer Science and Technology U Nyi Hla Kyaw, Minister for Livestock and Fisheries Brig-Gen Maung Maung Thein, who welcomed there by officials. He gave necessary instructions and inspected round the factory. The Hlawga Feedstuff Factory is built to produce 10 tons of feedstuff per hour (100 tons per day). Later, the Prime Minister and party went to Kandawgyi Gardens Central Symbol Zone. At the temporary briefing hall there, Chairman of the Committee for All-round Upgrading of Kandawgyi Gardens Environ and Zoological Gardens Yangon Division Peace and Development Council Chairman Yangon Command Commander Maj-Gen Myint Swe reported matters on providing necessary instructions and inspected round the factory. The Hlawga Feedstuff Factory is built to produce 10 tons of feedstuff per hour (100 tons per day). After giving instructions, the Prime Minister viewed the scale model of the institute, progress in construction of lecture room and lecture halls and three-storey lecture hall under construction.

Prime Minister General Khin Nyunt inspects the booth of Myanmar rare medicinal herbs in Yangon Kandawgyi Garden. — MNA

Prime Minister General Khin Nyunt inspects Yangon (West) University, Institute of Computer Science and Kandawgyi Gardens

YANGON, 1 Feb.—Chairman of Yangon Education Committee Prime Minister General Khin Nyunt inspected construction of Yangon (West) University and Yangon Institute of Computer Science and upgrading of Kandawgyi Gardens this afternoon.

Accompanied by officials of the State Peace and Development Council Office, the Prime Minister arrived at the construction site of Yangon (West) University in Htantabin Township, Yangon North District at 1:30 pm. They were welcomed there by Chairman of Yangon Division Peace and Development Council Commander of Yangon Command Maj-Gen Myint Swe, ministers, the Yangon Mayor, deputy ministers, heads of department, rector of the university and faculty members and officials.

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Prime Minister General Khin Nyunt gives instructions to officials, he left the Kandawgyi Gardens. — MNA