United strength of all national races

Favourable conditions for the development of the State have been emerging, and if efforts are accelerated with the united strength of all the national races, a new, modern and developed nation, to which the national people aspire, can be built in the not-too-distant future.

Senior General Than Shwe
Chairman of the State Peace and Development Council
Commander-in-Chief of Defence Services
(From message on the 54th Anniversary Union Day)

Vice-Senior General Maung Aye inspects Shwebon Yadana Mingala Palace construction project and dams

Vice-Senior General Maung Aye and party arrived in Shwebo by helicopter on 4 February. They were welcomed by Commander of No. 33 LID Brig-Gen Tin Tun Aung and officials.

At the briefing hall, U Than Tun (Shwebo) reported on construction of Shwebon Yadana Palace. Vice-Senior General Maung Aye and party inspected construction of the palace and gave instructions. They also inspected the statue of Alaung Mintayagyi U Aung Zeya who founded the third kingdom of Myanmar.

In the evening, they went to Kanbalu by helicopter. They were welcomed by Chairman of Mandalay Division Peace and Development Council Commander-in-Chief of Defence Services Maj-Gen Ye Myint, Deputy Chief Justice of Supreme Court (Mandalay) U Khin Maung Latt, Tactical Operations Commander Col Hla Newe and officials.

On 5 February, Vice-Senior General Maung Aye and party went to Thaphanseik Dam in Kyunhla Township from Kanbalu by helicopter. Minister for Agriculture and Irrigation Maj-Gen Nyunt Tin reported on storage of water and inflow of water into the dam during the monsoon.

He said paddy, wheat, beans and pulses and sesamum were mainly cultivated with the use of water from the dam. Over 500,000 acres of monsoon and summer paddy were grown as soon as the dam was completed.

Minister for Electric Power Maj-Gen Tin Htut reported on generation of power from Thaphanseik hydro-electric power station.

Chairman of Sagaing Division Peace and Development Council Commander of North-West Command reported on increase of cultivation acreage due to the dam and less inflow of water into the dam in the previous monsoon.

Vice-Senior General Maung Aye inspected the Thaphanseik hydro-electric power station, control room, storage of water and the main spillway. (See page 10)
For the development of all the national races

In building the Union of Myanmar to become a peaceful, modern and developed nation, the State Peace and Development Council is placing emphasis on harmonious development of the regions in the nation. Border areas and national races development projects are being implemented in the remote border areas which lagged behind in development for various reasons. As a result, towns in border areas have developed on a par with that of major cities in the country. Moreover, tasks for education, health and housing development are being carried out in 24 special development regions. The five rural development tasks are also being undertaken in rural areas where 70 per cent of the population of the nation are residing.

Vice-Chairman of the State Peace and Development Council Deputy Commander-in-Chief of Defence Services Commander-in-Chief (Army) Vice-Senior General Maung Aye and party met with departmental officials at the Town Hall of Monywa on 4 February. On the occasion, Vice-Senior General Maung Aye said that the essence of implementation of three major projects for the progress of the entire Union is for the Three Main National Causes—non-disintegration of the Union, non-disintegration of national solidarity and perpetuation of sovereignty.

Over 100 national races have been living in unity and harmony in various parts of the country since time immemorial. There are over 5.7 million people in Sagaing Division. Over 50 national races such as Bamar, Shan, Chin, Naga, Kadu, Kanan and Lushai are living there in unity. So Sagaing Division is like a small union. Like Sagaing Division, other states and divisions are also home to numerous national races living in unity.

It is important to implement the tasks based on the Union Spirit and national solidarity spirit in building the Union of Myanmar formed with 14 states and divisions to be modern and developed.

All states and divisions must be developed for progress of national races and the country. In order to develop states and divisions, it is necessary to make progress in district, township and rural areas. Therefore, officials at different levels are to make field trips to the grassroots levels and carry out tasks for regional development with goodwill.

For the development of all the national races, it would be necessary to lend themselves to nation-building endeavours with goodwill.

Deputy Minister for Information inspects Union Day exhibition booths in Thayandaw

YANGON, 8 Feb—Chairman of 57th Anniversary Union Day Exhibition Sub-committee Deputy Minister for Information Brig-Gen Aung Thein Thun this morning attended the Union Day exhibition booths at Thayandaw sports ground in Thayandaw where the Union Day Flag would rest for a night.

Together with Director-General of the Information and Public Relations Department U Chi Naing, Director-General of MRTV U Khin Maung Hlay, Managing Director of Myanmar Motion Picture Enterprise U Bo Sein and other officials, the Deputy Minister arrived at the sports ground at 10.30 am. They were welcomed by officials concerned.

The Deputy Minister inspected round the exhibition booths of various ministries there. — MNA

Paddy cultivation techniques demonstrated

YANGON, 8 Feb—State Peace and Development Council Member Lt-Gen Aung Hteik together with Shan State Peace and Development Council Chairman Eastern Command Maj-Gen Khin Maung Myint, Deputy Minister for Agriculture & Irrigation Brig-Gen Khin Maung and officials, this morning attended the demonstration on paddy cultivation techniques held at Taryaw agricultural research farm of Myanma Agriculture Servce in Taninngyi Township.

Shan State MAS manager U Saw Jackson explained matters on the farm and nurturing of Shwe Yin Aye high-yield strain efforts for self-sufficiency of rice in the region and distribution of high-yield strains of paddy. General Manager of MAS Dr Min Aung reported matters on production and distribution of paddy seeds of the farm. Deputy Minister Brig-Gen Khin Maung reported matters on pilot cultivation of paddy in highland and the plain and assistance provided by the Ministry of Agriculture & Irrigation.

Commander Maj-Gen Khin Maung Myint made a supplementary report on organizing farmers to use high-yield seeds, distribution of chemical fertilizers, and dis-semination of modern cultivation techniques. In response to the reports, Lt-Gen Aung Hteik said that in endeavouring for bringing about all-round development of the State, the Government is providing necessary assistance for ensuring success of the agriculture sector. All the regions in the country must be self-sufficient in food, he pointed out. He continued to say that roads and bridges are also being built nowadays for better transportation, promoting trade and further strengthening national unity among the people. The Government is also building universities and institutes across the country. In Loileum District, a new university, a computer college and a technological college have been built and opened. Moreover, farm implements and machinery are being distributed in order to turn the conventional farming into mechanized one. As regards supply of electricity, natural gas power plants and hydro-electric power plants are built all over the country, he said. In Shan State, Turban, Kengtung and Shweili hydel power projects are being implemented for supply of sufficient electric power in the region into the industrialized one, he observed. Now, the seven-point policy programme of the State has also been laid down and the national people are to take part in the programme actively and oppose destructive elements.

Afterwards, Lt-Gen Aung Hteik and party viewed round the documentary photos on cultivation of high yield paddy, samples of paddy and maze produced. Then, Lt-Gen Aung Hteik and party had a discussion on modern cultivation techniques of paddy and greeted the local populace cordially. — MNA

Union Flag arrives Thayandaw

YANGON, 8 Feb—in accordance with the objectives of the 57th Anniversary Union Day, the Union Flag which rested for a year in the City Hall here commenced its trip to four districts of Yangon Division this morning.

First, Yangon City Mayor YCDC Chairman Brig-Gen Aung Thein Lin saluted the Flag on the Union Day Flag and took it out from the silver bowl in his sitting room at 6:10 am. Flanked by four officers of Tatmadaw (Army, Navy, Air) and Myanmar Police Force, USDA members and Union nationals, the mayor carried the flag to the designated place in front of the City Hall on Maha Bandoola Street to the accompaniment of Mingala drum troupe. Then, the mayor handed over the Flag to the 57th Anniversary Union Day Observation Management Committee Chairman Yangon Division Peace and Development Council Chairman YCDC Chairman Yangon Division Peace and Development Council Chairman Lt-Col Aung Aung Pyi.

Commander Maj-Gen Myint Swe hands over the Union Flag to Mayor Brig-Gen Aung Thein Lin. — MNA

USDA members, MWVO members, MPF members, MMCWA members, MWAFA members, Red Cross Bridge members, Auxiliary Fire Brigade members, students, nurses and service personnel and the people. At the entrance archway of the Thanlyin, Lt-Col Aung Pyi took out the Flag from the silver bowl on the Union Boat at 7.20 am and handed it over to the flag relay team headed by Yangon South District USDA Secretary U Lwin Oo. The latter conveyed the Flag along Kyaukkaung Pagoda Road and handed it over to Thanlyin Township Peace and Development Council Chairman U Tin Zaw Win. Then, the Flag was relayed by the flag relay teams through the town to the Thayandaw sports ground. Along the route, the Flag was accorded a rousing welcome by over 9,000 people from 9 townships of Yangon South District. On arrival at the entrance archway of the sports ground, a relay team handed over the Flag to Lt-Col Aung Pyi. He planted it in a silver bowl on the dais at 8.30 am. Over 8,100 people saluted the Flag to the strains of the National Anthem played by the military band of Ayeayarwady Naval Region Command.

The sports ground was crowded with visitors who came to salute the Flag. There are also 15 exhibition and sales booths of various departments in the sports ground. In the evening, the Documentary Film of Myanmar Motion Picture Enterprise presented entertainment with movies to the audience. The Shwe Wah Win anyeint group also entertained the public there. — MNA
Iowa soldier killed, another injured after mortar attack in Iraq

NEW YORK, 8 Feb.—Iowa national guard officials have confirmed that an Iowa soldier has been killed in Iraq. Specialist Joshua Knowles of Sheffield was killed Thursday after mortar fire struck his convoy, he was 23. Another Iowa soldier was injured in the attack, he is 32 year old specialist Peter Bieber of Nora Springs. He is being treated for his injuries and is expected to be transported to a hospital in Germany, his condition is unknown at this time.

The two soldiers were members of the 11-33rd transport company out of Mason City.

British Cabinet minister raps government over Iraq

LONDON, 8 Feb.—A British Cabinet minister poured scorn on parts of Prime Minister Tony Blair’s Government on Saturday for failing to accept any blame in the aftermath of the Iraq war.

Culture Secretary Tessa Jowell sharply criticized ministers and officials in a newspaper interview for “testosterone-charged” reactions to an inquiry into an Iraq weapons expert’s suicide that largely absolved Blair’s administration of any blame.

Following the inquiry known as the Hutton Report, an opinion poll on Saturday showed just over half British voters believe Blair lied over the Iraq threat and they want him to quit.

Opposition leaders have also urged the Prime Minister to resign.

With public trust ratings plunging, Blair has called for a new inquiry into British intelligence about banned Iraqi weapons as, nearly 10 months after Saddam Hussein was toppled, none has been found.

In her interview with the Daily Telegraph, Jowell did not accuse any ministers by name, but appeared to single out Blair’s strident former Press chief Alastair Campbell for particular criticism after some newspapers accused the government of “gloating” over the Hutton Report.

“My constituents hated watching ministers and officials berating everyone else and taking no blame for anything,” she said in an interview with the Daily Telegraph newspaper. “You see these testosterone-charged men in the TV and radio stations, showing off how much tougher they are.”

Asked if Campbell had gone too far since Hutton published his report on January 28, Jowell said: “It is hardly surprising he wanted to have his say — and he certainly had that.” — MNA/Reuters

Ex-BBC chief signs book deal to tell story of Kelly affair

LONDON, 8 Feb.—Former BBC director-general Greg Dyke, who resigned after the Hutton Report over the death of arms expert David Kelly sharply criticized the BBC’s editorial system and management, signed Friday a book deal to tell his side of the story.

The book is expected to be critical of the Hutton Report and also to elaborate on Dyke’s opinion of the relationship between the government and the BBC.

Dyke’s tale of his four years at the BBC helm, plus recent events following the May 2003 disputed BBC report claiming Downing Street had “sexed up” its case for war with Iraq, will be “controversial”, his publisher HarperCollins said.

The Hutton Report concluded that the BBC story was “unfounded”. HarperCollins chief executive Victoria Burnsley described the book deal as a “terrific acquisition” for the company.

“I have huge admiration for Greg Dyke who has transformed the BBC over the past four years and his account of this period will undoubtedly be fascinating and controversial,” she said.

Since resigning, Dyke said, the BBC governors forced him to quit and were considering leaving themselves, amid the stinging criticism levelled at them by the report.

Details of the book deal were not revealed. — MNA/Xinhua

Frenchman named as chief UN envoy in Afghanistan

UNITED NATIONS, 8 Feb.—Secretary-General Kofi Annan on Friday named Frenchman Jean Arnault as the chief UN representative for Afghanistan, replacing Lakhdar Brahimi of Algeria. Security Council diplomats said.

Annan sent the appointment of Arnault to Council members, who rarely object to his choice, the envoy said.

Arnault was the deputy representative in the mission, in charge of political affairs, and was running the UN operation since Brahimi resigned in January.

Arnault went to Afghanistan nearly two years after serving as UN envoy in Burundi. Before that he was the chief representative for the UN mission in Guatemala.

Brahimi, 70, a former Algerian foreign minister, just completed a two-year stint in Afghanistan and is now a special adviser to Annan in New York.

The United States wants him to take a major role in Iraq negotiations but he has resisted going to Baghdad.

— MNA/Reuters

Italian police crack international cocaine ring

ROME, 8 Feb.—Italian police have cracked a criminal organization in Perugia, central Italy, that imported huge quantities of cocaine from Colombia to Italy via Spain, Italian media reported Friday.

Reports said police used sniffer dogs and helicopters to round up some 50 people around Italy. Extradition requests were also issued for about a dozen gang members in Colombia and Spain.

The arrested Italians were charged with drug-trafficking, prostitution and criminal association.

It was the police’s second major operation in 10 days. On January 28, police broke up an international cocaine ring run by one of the major Colombian cartels and the biggest clan in the Calabrian Mafia, a notorious criminal group in the southwest of Italy. — MNA/Xinhua

National ID card project may not be very profitable in China

BEIJING, 8 Feb.—One of the chip module makers of the country’s new intelligent ID card project has claimed that not much profit will be made from the card, although some one billion people are expected to use it.

“Generally, it’s not a commercial project in nature, it’s a government controlled one,” said Mr Ye with Qinghua Tongfang Microelectronics Co. Ltd., which is under the elite Qinghua University.

“Our profit margin is set by the government, so we don’t expect to make much from it,” he said, stressing that the profit would quite likely be lower than they would get from totally commercial businesses.

However, if each card costs 20 yuan (2.42 US dollars), the revenue could easily reach 20 billion yuan, according to Thursday’s Economic Daily. But the newspaper did not deliberate where the main 20 billion revenue will go.

“Whatever matters is that we’ll get valuable experience in the design, research and development and production of microelectronic chip. Our benefit is in the future,” said Ye.

The new card contains a module that integrates a special chip containing information on the card holder. The thumb-sized module will make the new card greatly superior as information within the module can be read and processed by computer.

The Ministry of Public Security earlier said that some 900 million Chinese people above 16 must possess the new ID cards and those below 16 across the nation can apply voluntarily.

With one billion citizens estimated to become the new card users, this will bring about the globe’s biggest ID card replacement job.

— MNA/Xinhua
UN election experts arrive Baghdad

UNITED NATIONS, 8 Feb—UN election experts arrived in Baghdad on Saturday for consultations with Iraqi leaders and the US-led coalition on a strategy for quickly restoring Iraqi sovereignty, the United Nations said.

The UN team will make proposals on the country’s transitional to self-rule, which the United States and the Iraqi Governing Council have agreed to achieve by June 30. “I hope the work of this team will help resolve the impasse over the transitional political process leading to the establishment of a provisional government for Iraq,” UN Secretary-General Kofi Annan said in a statement.

The leading Shiite cleric in Iraq threw a wrench into the US plan for transferring sovereignty when he insisted on an election, rather than regional caucuses as Washington wants, to choose a national assembly that would pick a provisional government to rule the country from 1 July onward. Annan has made it clear the UN team would have a relatively free hand in making proposals for the handover, which is complicated by continued violence and political wrangles.

“Firmly believe that the most sustainable way forward is one that comes from the Iraqis themselves,” Annan said. “Consensus amongst all Iraqi constituencies is the best guarantee of a legitimate and credible transitional government arrangement for Iraq.”

The team’s trip to Baghdad was veiled in secrecy on security grounds. The United Nations said it would not disclose the team had been dispatched until after it was on the ground.

Its arrival coincides with a debate in Washington and Baghdad over whether the return of Iraqi sovereignty should be delayed because conditions on the ground are so inauspicious for choosing a provisional government. Annan said on Friday that the June 30 deadline for a transfer of power could be changed if the parties agreed but US Secretary of State Colin Powell said he was adhering to the original plan “right now.” Any delay would carry big risks for US President George W. Bush, increasing the odds Iraq wouldloom larger in US elections in November and opening the United States to charges it was reneging on promises to soon let go of power.

Political experts say it will be extremely difficult in any case to stick to the date because of demands by influential Iraqi Shiite cleric Grand Ayatollah Ali al-Sistani for direct elections before a handover. Neither UN nor US officials believe elections can be organized in such a short time, given the current security conditions.

Arab League decries US actions in Iraq

CAIRO, 8 Feb—The UN-led coalition in Iraq is threatening the Iraqi and regional stability, according to an Arab League report obtained Saturday by The Associated Press.

The report, drawn up by an Arab League delegation that visited Iraq in December, is circulating among the 22 members of the Cairo-based Arab League but has not been made public.

It reflects concerns among Arab countries that changes in the sharing of power in a post-Saddam Hussein government could give too much authority to the Kurdish and Shia Muslim groups, inspiring those minority groups in neighbouring countries to rise up and demand more power.

Arab states are predominantly Sunni, but Sunnis in Iraq have dominated politics—even though the Shias make up 60 percent of the population. The only other places where Shias dominate in population and political power is non-Arab Iraq. The Saudi leadership has long feared unrest among its minority Shia community.

“Iraqis find geographical and ethnic federalism a prelude to division of the country,” said the report, which does not name the country’s Shias but uses the term “sectarianism” to refer to Shiite and Kurdish political aspirations. The Shias are pushing for majority representation in the government. Kurds, who have gained authority in the north of Iraq, seek federal autonomy from the government in Baghdad.

The leader of the Patriotic Union of Kurdistan, Jalal Talabani, rejected the report. The PUK is one of two main Iraqi parties controlling Kurdish northern Iraq.

“They are trying to demonize federalism to scare simple-minded people and poison their minds,” Talabani wrote in an article published Saturday in the pan-Arab newspaper Asharq al-Awsat. The Arab League delegation, led by Assistant Secretary-General Ahmed Bin Heli, spent 10 days in Iraq meeting with members of the US-appointed Governing Council, the Cabinet, religious leaders, tribal chiefs and trade union representatives. Its findings will be formally submitted to a meeting of Arab foreign ministers in March and later to an Arab summit.

China spends 32% more on ads last year

BEIJING, 8 Feb—Latest research on advertising expenditures in China shows that advertising in the country last year increased 32 percent over 2002.

A total of 283.7 billion yuan (34.3 billion US dollars) has been put into TV, newspaper and magazine advertising in the Mainland, Taiwan and Hong Kong last year, compared with 215.4 billion yuan (26 billion US dollars) in 2002, reported the weekend edition of China Daily.

The results were revealed by Beijing-based CVSC-TNS Research Co Ltd., Hong Kong-based admaxGo and Taiwan-based Rainmaker Int Group at a Thursday Press conference. It shows the advertising industry has already recovered from the damage caused by the SARS epidemic last spring, said the paper.

China considers legislation to protect cultural relics

BEIJING, 8 Feb—A new draft regulation posted on the official web site of the Beijing municipal government on protecting the historical and cultural relics in the city, is now soliciting opinions from Beijing citizens.

The draft Beijing Morning Post reported that the draft regulation is included in the lawmakers agenda of the municipal congress. The regulation says that construction activities in protected areas in the old city section must not destroy the original street patterns, the planning and building of major city roads should avoid the protected areas, and new buildings in the old city section are not allowed to exceed prescribed heights. In addition, some organizations or residential buildings may be ordered to move out of areas where historical and cultural sites need protecting.

Anyone who is in breach of the regulation and demolishes protected buildings shall be fined heavily. Government officials who, without approval, change the protected areas or give directions to demolish, reconstruct, expand or move protected buildings shall face punishment according to law, the regulation says.

Comments and opinions from the public shall be taken into full consideration in the processing of making new laws and regulations in this respect, according to the Beijing Morning Post.

China: More than 32% increase in advertising revenue in 2003

BEIJING, 8 Feb—China has spent 32% more on ads last year, according to the latest research on advertising expenditures in China.

A total of 283.7 billion yuan (34.3 billion US dollars) has been put into TV, newspaper and magazine advertising in the Mainland, Taiwan and Hong Kong last year, compared with 215.4 billion yuan (26 billion US dollars) in 2002, reported the weekend edition of China Daily.

The results were revealed by Beijing-based CVSC-TNS Research Co Ltd., Hong Kong-based admaxGo and Taiwan-based Rainmaker Int Group at a Thursday Press conference. It shows the advertising industry has already recovered from the damage caused by the SARS epidemic last spring, said the paper.

While approving the basic framework and major contents of the report, the participants made specific suggestions on amendments in the draft regulation and incorporated them into the government work report.

MNA/Xinhua

China: More than 32% increase in advertising revenue in 2003

BEIJING, 8 Feb—Latest research on advertising expenditures in China shows that advertising in the country last year increased 32 percent over 2002.

A total of 283.7 billion yuan (34.3 billion US dollars) has been put into TV, newspaper and magazine advertising in the Mainland, Taiwan and Hong Kong last year, compared with 215.4 billion yuan (26 billion US dollars) in 2002, reported the weekend edition of China Daily.

The results were revealed by Beijing-based CVSC-TNS Research Co Ltd., Hong Kong-based admaxGo and Taiwan-based Rainmaker Int Group at a Thursday Press conference. It shows the advertising industry has already recovered from the damage caused by the SARS epidemic last spring, said the paper.

While approving the basic framework and major contents of the report, the participants made specific suggestions on amendments in the draft regulation and incorporated them into the government work report.

MNA/Xinhua

Kenya: First Kenyan newborn bongo antelope baby from an American-raised bongo, rests near its mother ‘Mum’ at the Mount Kenya Game ranch, on 5 Feb, 2004.

*INTERNET*
Bush sets up Iraq WMD intelligence panel

WASHINGTON, 7 Feb — Under strong political pressure, President George W. Bush on Friday established a bipartisan commission to investigate failures in intelligence used to justify the Iraq war and gave it until well after the November election to submit its conclusions.

Bush picked as the chairman of the commission former Virginia governor and senator Charles Robb, a Democrat, and appeals court judge Laurence Silberman, a Republican. In a hastily arranged appearance in the White House Press briefing room, Bush said the commission will “look at American intelligence capabilities, especially our intelligence about weapons of mass destruction”.

Bush gave the commission until March 31, 2005, to report back, meaning the results of the investigation would not be known until after the November election. Democrats want the report sooner. Bush’s job approval ratings have been fading due to a number of factors, including the weapons issue and the fact that Democratic presidential candidates have been hammering away at him. He will appear on NBC’s “Meet the Press” for an hour on Sunday in an attempt to fight back.

Bush also announced as members of the group Arizona Republican Senator John McCain; Lloyd Cutler, who was White House counsel for former Democratic presidents Bill Clinton and Jimmy Carter; Yale President Richard Levin; Admiral William Studeman, former deputy director of the CIA, and former appeals court judge Pat Wald.

Two more members are expected to be named.

Mahathir gets honorary doctorate from Indonesian University

JAKARTA, 8 Feb—Former Malaysian prime minister Mahathir Mohammad received on Friday evening an honorary doctorate in development economics from Padjadjaran University (Unpad) in the West Java capital of Bandung.

“This is my first honorary doctorate from a university outside of Malaysia, especially in the development economics field.” Mahathir was quoted as saying in Bandung by the Antara news agency. “Developing Malaysia was not my success alone but also the work of the previous three Malaysian prime ministers.”

Mahathir said his predecessors had laid the foundation for Malaysia’s success over the past 20 years.

Chinese border city vows to play bigger role in N-E Asia

BEIJING, 8 Feb—Suifenhe, a border city in northeast China’s Heilongjiang Province, has pledged to become one of the most attractive trade centres in northeast Asia by 2009.

To achieve the goal, the city will open roads connecting to the Eurasian Continental Bridge, improve port facilities and increase highway transport facilities. It will build a financial system adapting to international practice, approve more foreign financial institutions and absorb more foreign investment.

The trade sector will increase import and export of value-added products and open new markets in Japan, the South Korea, Southeast Asia, Europe and the United States. The city government plans to raise its gross domestic product to three billion yuan (361 million US dollars) by 2009.

Bush, standing next to a border guard, said the commission would ensure that “the American people have the best intelligence”.

Singapore, Philippines to strengthen ties

SINGAPORE, 8 Feb—Singapore Prime Minister Goh Chok Tong on Saturday met with visiting Philippine Secretary of Foreign Affairs Delia Albert and the two discussed issues on bilateral ties and cooperation, said the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MFA).

They also discussed recent developments in Southeast Asia, regional efforts in fighting terrorism, and ways of strengthening the Association of South-East Asian Nations (ASEAN) it said.

Albert also met with her Singaporean counterpart S Jayakumar on Saturday, said the ministry.

During the meeting, the two discussed ways to enhance cooperation between Singapore and the Philippines, including continued cooperation through the Philippine-Singapore Action Plan, which is “a broad-based and comprehensive” framework for bilateral cooperation in areas such as IT (information technology), education, culture, tourism and people-to-people exchanges.

They also discussed cooperation in regional and international issues, including closer counter-terrorism cooperation and agreed that bilateral anti-terrorism cooperation under the framework of the Agreement on Information Exchange and the Establishment of Communication Procedures.

Albert arrived here Friday on a two-day official visit to Singapore. This is her first visit to the city state.

Mars rovers probe soil for clues to life, water

LOS ANGELES, 8 Feb—The Mars rover Spirit used its robotic arm to brush dust off a rock while its twin, Opportunity, tested its wheels on the floor of the crater where it landed last month, NASA scientists said on Friday.

Scientists at NASA’s Jet Propulsion Laboratory in Pasadena had slated a full weekend of activities for the golf cart-sized rovers, which are examining rocks and soil on opposite sides of the Red Planet for signs that its climate was once wetter, warmer and more hospitable to life.

Spirit returned to full-time science on Thursday after the arm jammed and the onboard computers warmed up sufficiently for the team to resume science operations.

Engineers put in place safeguards to prevent the problem from cropping up again in either rover.

“I think I can say with as much certainty as we can say anything about anything that our patient is healed,” Spirit mission manager Jennifer Trosper told reporters on Friday.

Engineers spent Wednesday and Thursday trying to reformatting Spirit’s flash memory — used primarily to store photographs taken by the rover’s onboard cameras — after it became overloaded and the team accidentally corrupted it, Trosper said.

On Thursday, Spirit woke up “Back in the Saddle Again” and successfully executed commands to use a 1/2-inch stainless steel brush on its robotic arm to remove a dust coating from a rock nicknamed Adirondack. The rover then took videos of the visibly darker spot with spectrometers mounted on its arm.

The team planned to use a rock abrasion tool for the first time on Friday to drill into the rock’s surface and take more spectrometer readings, Trosper said.

Over the weekend, Spirit will begin driving northeast across the massive Gusev Crater where it landed on January 3 toward a formation the science team nicknamed the Bonnevile Crater 800 feet away, she said.

On Thursday, engineers put Opportunity through a short drive composed of arcs to test its traction in the small crater where it landed on the Meridiani Plenum

Opportunity mission manager Matt Wallace said.

The rover drove about 3/12 metres and ended up just short of its first science target — a low outcropping of pale bedrock in the crater’s wall. Scientists wanted to examine a feature of the outcrop dubbed “Stout” but ended up about 1/2 metre short, possibly because the rover’s wheel unexpectedly slipped in the fine, loose soil. Wallace said.

MNA/Reuters


INTERNET
US military forces invaded Iraq on 20 March, 2003 and due to the resistance of Iraqi guerillas, the Americans have been suffering many casualties. Up to 5 February, 2004, the death toll of American forces in Iraq has reached 529.

**US military fatalities in Iraq**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>State</th>
<th>Amount</th>
<th>State</th>
<th>Amount</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Alabama</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>North Carolina</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Arizona</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>North Dakota</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Arkansas</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>New Hampshire</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>California</td>
<td>55</td>
<td>New Jersey</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Colorado</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>New Mexico</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Connecticut</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>New York</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Columbia</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>Nebraska</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Delaware</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>Nevada</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Florida</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>Ohio</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Georgia</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>Oklahoma</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hawaii</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>Oregon</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Idaho</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>Pennsylvania</td>
<td>29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Illinois</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>Rhode Island</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Indiana</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>South Carolina</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Iowa</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>South Dakota</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kansas</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>Tennessee</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kentucky</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>Texas</td>
<td>41</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Louisiana</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>Utah</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maine</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>Virginia</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Massachusetts</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>Vermont</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maryland</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>West Virginia</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Michigan</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>Washington</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Minnesota</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>Wisconsin</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mississippi</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>Wyoming</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Missouri</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>American Samoa</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Montana</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>Puerto Rico</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>529</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Hailing the 57th Anniversary Union Day:

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

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Development Sector</th>
<th>1988</th>
<th>2004</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Agriculture</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sown acreage (in million)</td>
<td>4.2</td>
<td>7.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dam project</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dam and reservoir</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Water pumping station</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Transport</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tarred road (mile)</td>
<td>197</td>
<td>432</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gravel road (mile)</td>
<td>180</td>
<td>623</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Earth road (mile)</td>
<td>129</td>
<td>257</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bridge (above 180 feet)</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>39</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bridge (under 180 feet)</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>709</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Communication</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Post office</td>
<td>103</td>
<td>133</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Telegraph office</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>37</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Auto-exchange</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Telephone</td>
<td>8050</td>
<td>16502</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Radio telephone station</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Microwave station</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ground satellite station</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rural auto-exchange</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fax</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>57</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Industrial zone</strong></td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Electric power</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Diesel-fired power plant</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Development Sector 1988 vs 2004**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Information</th>
<th>1988</th>
<th>2004</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>TV retransmission station</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Information &amp; Public Relations Department</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Library</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>29</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Education</th>
<th>1988</th>
<th>2004</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>University</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>College</td>
<td>79</td>
<td>103</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High school</td>
<td>170</td>
<td>268</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Primary school</td>
<td>5200</td>
<td>5626</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Health</th>
<th>1988</th>
<th>2004</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Hospital</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Station hospital</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>44</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rural health care centre</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>156</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rural health centre (branch)</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>72</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Traditional hospital</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Traditional clinic</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Maubin General Hospital in Maubin, Ayeyawady Division.

Pathein Government Technological College in Pathein.

The 3,000 feet long bailey suspension Wakema Bridge on Pantanaw-Shwelaung Wakema Kyonmangle Road.

The 1400 feet long Darka River Bridge on Yangon-Pathein Highway in Kangyidaunt Township, Ayeyawady Division.
Marching toward Golden Land in unity and amity

Hailing the 57th Anniversary Union Day:

Build a new nation with collective efforts of the national races

The national races have been living in the Union of Myanmar in unity and harmony for the period countable by the years in the thousand. The national brethren are descendants of a single stock, living in weal or woe on the same land, area served as the proof of the advanced agricultural level of the Myanmar people since the Bagan era.

Throughout the successive eras under different monarchs, Myanmar founded the First Myanmar Empire, the Second Myanmar Empire and the Third Myanmar Empire. The Myanmar races had lived in unity for a long time till the country was occupied by the colonialists during the late Konboung period.

With Union Spirit, the national races drove out the occupiers and re-established the Union in 1948, after freeing the nation from the alien enslavement.

Unfortunately, the nation faced a lot of hardships and problems due to World War II and the colonialist instigation after the War.

In 1988, the nation faced deterioration in all aspects including the paddy production was 654 million baskets. Since 2000-2001, the paddy production has reached over one billion mark.

The Tatmadaw has taken over the State duties to take control of the national situation. After the assumption of the State duties, the Tatmadaw has given priority to the national consolidation, regional peace and stability and the rule of law.

At the same time, it has rebuilt the economic and social infrastructures of the nation, while constructing roads, major bridges on creeks and rivers, irrigation facilities, institutions of higher learning and hospitals needed for the national progress.

As Myanmar is an agricultural country, priority has been given to the development of the farming sector. The annual paddy output of the nation in 1988 was 654 million baskets. Since 2000-2001, the paddy production has reached over one billion mark.

As the industrial sector plays a vital role in the quality of manufactured goods. Moreover, it has established 18 industrial zones region-wise.

We are not far from reaching the level of an advanced industrial nation, as the zones are manufacturing farm machinery and machine parts and assembling cars.

The Government has also set up 24 development zones in the whole nation for harmonious progress of all regions in building a modern nation. The 24 zones are designated in Myitkyina, Bhamo, Loikaw, Hpa-an, Kalay, Monywa, Dawei, Myeik, Bago, Pyay, Magway, Pakokku, Mandalay, Meiktila, Mawlamyine, Sittway, Yangon, Taunggyi.
economy is gaining momentum, the social standard of the people is on the rise. The State is building a peaceful, modern and developed nation with high hopes. But it has to face and overcome various sanctions and hardships in building the nation.

As all the national races have the duty to collectively strive with Union Spirit for the perpetuation of the nation, the Government has been making energetic efforts for its progress. Moreover, we all must further develop the Union with the united strength of all the national races. (Translation: TMT)

Poem

March forward, Hands held in harmony
* The blue mountain ranges, dew strewn
Variegated flowers, all assembled
In the abode of Shans, that is pleasant
At the haven we call Panglong
We depend on our pride, we love our land
We march in our era, we’ll build a new nation
Hands held harmoniously, in solidarity
Bamar and Mon, Mon and Kayin
Kayin and Shan, Shan and Rakhine
Rakhine and Chin, Chin and Kayah
Kayah and Kachin, with feelings of amity
The Panglong Agreement bears witness.
Union Spirit shall thrive till eternity.

* A new nation, to build and open
The true foundation, the real basis
Our regions is the plains and the hills
Myanmar brethren, true brothers
In amity we assembled and held hands together
With “Panglong Policy” throughout the land
No matter who divide, we shall remain united
We shall be victorious, we shall hear the victory drums
Like flowers variegated, our pride shall shine
A new Myanmar era, new golden land
With Union Spirit as foundation
March forward, Hands Held in Harmony.

Kyaw Khaung Bala (Trs)
(Hailing the 57th Anniversary Union Day)
Daw Mya Mya San attend …

Vice-Senior General Maung Aye wife
Daw Mya Mya San and party offered 'soon' to members of the Sangha. Vice-Senior General Maung Aye and wife Daw Mya Mya San and party offered 'soon' to members of the Sangha. Next, Chairman of Sagaing Division Sangha Nayaka Committee Presiding Sayadaw of Sagaing Hrupayan Shwekyuang Agga Maha Pandita Agga Maha Saddhammajotika Dhaja Bhaddanta Nayaka Sayadaw offered the Five Precepts to members of the Sangha. Next, Vice-Senior General Maung Aye and wife Daw Mya Mya San and party offered 'soon' to members of the Sangha. Bhaddanta Vimalabhivamsa delivered a sermon. This was followed by sharing merits gained. The ceremony ended with the three-time recitation of Buddha Sasamam Ciraṃ Tirthathā.

After the ceremony, Vice-Senior General Maung Aye and wife Daw Mya Mya San and party offered 'soon' to members of the Sangha. Vice-Senior General Maung Aye and wife Daw Mya Mya San and party attended the ceremony to novitiate 118 young men in monkshood held at Sasana Beikman in Maymyo. Next, Vice-Senior General Maung Aye and party paid homage to Maha Shweysigyi Pagoda in Myitkyina. On 5 February, Vice-Senior General Maung Aye and party proceeded to Maha Shweysigyi Pariyatti Sathinjikajtik where they paid homage and presented offerings to President Sayadaw Bhaddanta Achara. — MNA

57th Anniversary Union Day Exhibition commences

Vice-Senior General Maung Aye …

The dam irrigated 8,500 acres of lands. It was opened on 25 December 2003. Storage of water started till 16 February. — MNA

YANGON, 8 Feb — A ceremony to open the 57th Anniversary Union Day: 2004 Exhibition was held at the Tatmadaw Convention Centre on U Wisara Road here this morning.

It was attended by Vice-Chairman of the Central Committee for Observation of the 57th Anniversary Union Day, State Peace and Development Council Secretary-1 Lt-Gen Soe Win and Secretary-2 Lt-Gen Thein Sein. Also present on the occasion were the ministers, Yangon City Development Committee Chairman Mayor, the deputy ministers, members of the Central Committee, Chairman of the Subcommittee for the Exhibition and Deputy Minister for Information Brig-Gen Aung Thein and members of the subcommittee, responsible personnel of the State Peace and Development Council Chairman’s Office, departmental heads, traditional and cultural organizations, teachers, students and guests.

Brig-Gen Aung Thein formally opened the exhibition on the formation of the peace and development council. Next, the Secretary-1, the Secretary-2 and guests viewed round the exhibition. On display at the exhibition are the ‘strengthening of Union Spirit’ cultural booth, ‘the Myanmar, the origin of human beings’ cultural booth, ‘the cultural traditions of national races’ cultural booth, ‘the Pulong Con’ cultural booth, ‘the Pulong Con for national solidarity’ cultural booth, the ‘Head of State’s tour of border areas’ cultural booth, the ‘support the seven-point political programme’ booth, the ‘union nationalities villages’ booth, the ‘traditional and cultural items of national races’ booth, computer booths, and other booths of respective ministries. University of Computer Studies (Yangon), Bagan Cybertech, and Forever Group Co Ltd, also have their booths opened at the exhibition and display the usefulness of Internet commerce, e-commerce, and other information and noteworthy computer-realted applications.

The Sarpey Beikman and the News and Periodicals Enterprise under the Ministry of Information also open bookshops at the exhibition and sell various kinds of books to visitors at fair prices. The exhibition today attracted a total of 6,016 people from all walks of life. The exhibition will be kept open daily free of charge from 9 am to 5 pm till 16 February. — MNA

Secretary-2 attends opening of digital electronic auto exchange in Kanbalu

YANGON, 8 Feb — The opening ceremony of a digital electronic auto exchange of Myanmar Posts and Telecommunications, Ministry of Communications, Posts and Telecommunications in Kanbalu Township was held at the exhibition office on 5 February. Next, the Secretary-2 of the State Peace and Development Council Minister Lt-Gen Thein Sein attended the ceremony and unveiled the signboard. Also present on the occasion were members of the State Peace and Development Council Minister Lt-Gen Thein Sein, Chairman of Mandalay Division Peace and Development Council Commander-in-Chief (Navy) Rear-Admiral Soe Thein, Commander-in-Chief (Air) Maj-Gen Myat Thein, Lt-Gen Ye Myint and General Tha Aye. The ceremony opened the equipment of the auto exchange by cutting a ribbon.

Next, MPT Managing Director U Maung Maung Tin also spoke on the occasion. U Aung Khin Yaw, an elder of the town, spoke words of thanks on behalf of local people. Chairman Maj-Gen Tha Aye, MD U Maung Maung Tin and town elder U Soe Myint formally opened the auto exchange building by cutting a ribbon.

Next, the Commander-in-Chief (Air), the commanders, ministers, deputy ministers, senior military officials, departmental officials and wellwishers presented the eight requisites and offertories to the Sayadaws and members of the Sangha. After that, Bhaddanta Vimalabhivamsa delivered a sermon. This was followed by sharing merits gained. The ceremony ended with the three-time recitation of Buddha Sasamam Ciraṃ Tirthathā.

After the ceremony, Vice-Senior General Maung Aye and wife Daw Mya Mya San and party offered ‘soon’ to members of the Sangha. Vice-Senior General Maung Aye and wife Daw Mya Mya San and party attended the ceremony to novitiate 118 young men in monkshood held at Sasana Beikman in Malha Shweysigyi Pagoda in Maymyo. On 5 February, Vice-Senior General Maung Aye and party proceeded to Maha Shweysigyi Pariyatti Sathinjikajtik where they paid homage and presented offerings to President Sayadaw Bhaddanta Achara. — MNA

It was upgraded to a post primary one. Roads in the village were also upgraded. The gravel road leading to Kanbalu has been built. Prevention of diseases, treatment and educative activities can be carried out after opening of the rural dispensary. Clean drinking water is now available. It is a model village where cultivation of sunflower, beans and pulses and mazire is successful.

On 6 February, Vice-Senior General Maung Aye, wife Daw Mya Mya San and party visited the fourth Buddha Puijan & Festival of Maha Shweysigyi Pagoda and arrived back here by the Tatmadaw flight. — MNA

Next, the Commander-in-Chief (Air), the commanders, ministers, deputy ministers, senior military officials, departmental officials and wellwishers presented the eight requisites and offertories to the Sayadaws and members of the Sangha. After that, Bhaddanta Vimalabhivamsa delivered a sermon. This was followed by sharing merits gained. The ceremony ended with the three-time recitation of Buddha Sasamam Ciraṃ Tirthathā.

After the ceremony, Vice-Senior General Maung Aye and wife Daw Mya Mya San and party offered ‘soon’ to members of the Sangha. Vice-Senior General Maung Aye and wife Daw Mya Mya San and party attended the ceremony to novitiate 118 young men in monkshood held at Sasana Beikman in Malha Shweysigyi Pagoda in Maymyo. On 5 February, Vice-Senior General Maung Aye and party proceeded to Maha Shweysigyi Pariyatti Sathinjikajtik where they paid homage and presented offerings to President Sayadaw Bhaddanta Achara. — MNA

Secretary-2 attends opening of digital electronic auto exchange in Kanbalu

YANGON, 8 Feb — The opening ceremony of a digital electronic auto exchange of Myanmar Posts and Telecommunications, Ministry of Communications, Posts and Telecommunications in Kanbalu Township was held at the exhibition office on 5 February. Next, the Secretary-2 of the State Peace and Development Council Minister Lt-Gen Thein Sein, Chairman of Mandalay Division Peace and Development Council Commander-in-Chief (Navy) Rear-Admiral Soe Thein, Commander-in-Chief (Air) Maj-Gen Myat Thein, Lt-Gen Ye Myint and General Tha Aye. The ceremony opened the equipment of the auto exchange by cutting a ribbon.

Next, the Commander-in-Chief (Air), the commanders, ministers, deputy ministers, senior military officials, departmental officials and wellwishers presented the eight requisites and offertories to the Sayadaws and members of the Sangha. After that, Bhaddanta Vimalabhivamsa delivered a sermon. This was followed by sharing merits gained. The ceremony ended with the three-time recitation of Buddha Sasamam Ciraṃ Tirthathā.

After the ceremony, Vice-Senior General Maung Aye and wife Daw Mya Mya San and party offered ‘soon’ to members of the Sangha. Vice-Senior General Maung Aye and wife Daw Mya Mya San and party attended the ceremony to novitiate 118 young men in monkshood held at Sasana Beikman in Malha Shweysigyi Pagoda in Maymyo. On 5 February, Vice-Senior General Maung Aye and party proceeded to Maha Shweysigyi Pariyatti Sathinjikajtik where they paid homage and presented offerings to President Sayadaw Bhaddanta Achara. — MNA
PM inspects Taunggyi University, meets departmental officials

YANGON, 8 Feb—Prime Minister General Khin Nyunt and the Chairman of Shan State Peace and Development Council Commander of Eastern Command Maj-Gen Khin Maung Maung arrived at Taunggyi in Shan State. They went to a cave there by Rector Dr Maung Kyaw, professors and faculty members. Rector Dr Maung Kyaw reported on background history of the university, under-graduates, post-graduates, honours and masters courses. Research courses, number of students, courses of Human Resources Department, studying and research works, labs, chemical laboratories, arts and science departments, IT centres, organizational set-up, appointment of service personnel and requirements. Minister for Education U Than Aung gave a supplementary report. General Khin Nyunt made arrangements for construction of Lecture Theatre for the university.

Managing Director of Eden Group Co U Chit Khang reported on architectural design of the convention hall and construction. The Prime Minister gave instructions on research of the animal. The Prime Minister and party inspected construction of the convention hall of the university. They went to Montawa Cave and paid homage to the Buddha images there. The Prime Minister then presented souvenirs to the Montawgung Sayadaw. The Prime Minister and party arrived back in Taunggyi. In the evening, the Prime Minister and party visited the city and met with the Shan State Peace and Development Councils and departmental officials at the meeting hall of the Command. In his address, the Prime Minister explained that national development is making efforts for reform of a peaceful modern developed and disciplined, flourishing democratic nation. After taking the State duties, the government is making endeavours for restoration of peace and stability in the country. As a result, national armed groups returned to the legal fold. Peace and tranquillity are agreed in border areas and other regions.

With the implementation of border region development tasks, far-flung areas have developed with greater momentum. There will be considerable progress in 143 townships and divisions, 24 major development regions were designated. Universities, colleges, government technological colleges, computer colleges and hospitals have been turned into a middle school for 17 years from 1986 by the State as a national high school. But, the school had been constructed in far-flung areas in order to see true conditions with wellwishers and the people. Prime Minister General Khin Nyunt views round Buddha images in the Montawa Cave in Taunggyi Township. —MNA

Prime Minister General Khin Nyunt views round Buddha images in the Montawa Cave in Taunggyi Township. —MNA

PM attends opening... (from page 16)

party viewed the traditional performance of students, and inspected classrooms in the building. Next, the ceremony to hand over the school building, and to open the digital auto exchange and gymnasion was held at the hall of the school.

Chairman of the school board of trustees U Tin Tun reported that No 2 BEHS was first established in 1922 as a national school. Since December 1947, it was opened by the State as a national high school. But, the school had been closed for the school year 17 years. In 1998, the school was reopened. At that time, the Prime Minister submitted the approval from the Chairman of MEC. As the school was not able to house a great number of students, a committee was formed to construct a new school building. The government, with the assistance of the energy minister, the construction of the school building was completed. Besides, the hall of BEHS No 2 hanciton and Kungyangon Township-Far Eastern Physical Education Department was upgraded with the expense of K 4.6 million to hold state, division and township level meetings. The Ministry of Education itself donated K 2 million. Later, he expressed thanks to the Prime Minister, Minister Brig-Gen Lun Thi, Minister U Than Aung and wellwishers. Afterwards, the Post and Telecommunications Management Director U Maung Maung Tin reported on purpose of opening of digital auto exchange in Kungyangon and Kawhmu. The Prime Minister, Minister U Than Aung and General Khin Maung Maung arranged for opening of the digital auto exchange can be used as from today. Similar auto exchange will also be opened this afternoon, he said. The new three-storey school building that will contribute to health and fitness of the youths of Kungyangon Township, who will serve the interest of the State in future was opened this morning, he said. The new three-storey school building that will contribute to the students in the township in their pursuit of formal education was handed over to the Ministry of Education. It is found that people in the township felt pleased due to the emergence of the new digital auto exchange, the gymnasium and the new three-storey school building. The Prime Minister and party arrived in Mawlamyine, and gave necessary instructions. Next, the Prime Minister and party arrived at Mawlamyine.

At 1.30 pm, the Prime Minister and party attended the opening ceremony of the new digital auto exchange of Myamna Posts and Telecommunications in Kungyangon. Chairman of Yangon Division Peace and Development Council Commander of Yangon Command Maj-Gen Myint Swe and Minister for Communications, Posts and Telecommunications Brig-Gen Thein Zaw formally opened the communication facility. Next, the Prime Minister unveiled the stone inscription of the facility. After that, the Prime Minister and party viewed round the switching room and made phone calls locally and abroad. Afterwards, the Prime Minister and party arrived at the monastic education orphanage Mingalar Parahita Kyang in Twantay Township. They paid homage to President Sayadow of the Kyang Bhaddanta Canda. Next, the Sayadow explained matters related to the monastery. After upgrading the monastery into the basic education primary school, the Prime Minister made cash donations for the school.

Next, the Prime Minister and party arrived at Dalla Jetty. Then, the Prime Minister and party viewed round Yangon River by boat. The Prime Minister and party arrived back here in the evening.—MNA
Leather industry exports remain first among China’s light industry

Beijing, 8 Feb.—The export volume of China’s leather industry reached 23.2 billion US dollars in 2003, up 19 per cent over the previous year, said an official with the State Development and Reform Commission (SDRC) Friday.

The export volume took up 20.5 per cent of the total export volume of the light industry in 2003, staying at the first place for the third consecutive year, said Niuinto, vice-director of the SDRC economic operation department.

Statistics show that China possesses the most leather resources and produces the most leather products in the world, including half of the world’s leather shoes. So far, there are 16,000 relatively big enterprises engaged in the industry in China. Niuinto also pointed out problems of the industry, including over-investment, lack of internationally famous brands and disorderly competition.

About 58 per cent of leather shoes exported in 2003 were for processing trade, while those “made in China” for general trade only took up 30.9 per cent, he said.

Besides, the unit price of leather products is dropping despite increasing export volume, mainly because many enterprises compete with each other by lowering prices, he said. — MNA/Xinhua

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>(a)</th>
<th>Item Description</th>
<th>Qty</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>(1)</td>
<td>Noritsu QSS-2901 Digital C/W. 135/240 Auto Film Carrier</td>
<td>120 Auto Film Carrier</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Digital ICE Software</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Card/Calendar Creation Software</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Multi Frame Print Creation Software</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Frame Print Creation Software</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Dark Bag (1. Pcs)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Extra Lamp (2. Pcs)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

NZ FM stresses importance of regional coop against terrorism

Wellington, 8 Feb.— New Zealand Minister of Foreign Affairs and Trade Phil Goff has underscored the importance of the Asia-Pacific countries establishing clear channels of cooperation in the fight against terrorism during a regional counter-terrorism meeting ended on Thursday in Bali, Indonesia.

According to a government Press statement released here Friday, Goff told the regional ministerial meeting on counter-terrorism that governments have to respect national boundaries, but terrorists do not. “That’s why we have to build the closest possible cooperation to counter terrorist activities,” he said.

The two-day ministerial meeting, which was co-sponsored by Indonesia and Australia, brought together 26 countries and 20 ministerial-level representatives, including US Deputy-Genera John Ashcroft.

Goff recalled the murderous 2002 bomb attacks in Bali, not far from the conference venue, urging the countries present to take concrete steps to prevent such senseless acts of terrorism.

“We need to look at practical improve-men to remove impediments to cooperation, and ensure a comprehensive and ef-fective framework for counter-terrorism is in place,” he said.

As a minister whose portfolios span both foreign policy and justice, Goff was invited to address how regional legal arrangements could be strengthened to aid the fight against terrorism.

Among the suggestions he put to the meeting was offering technical assistance to help smaller states close jurisdictional gaps that terrorists might exploit.

He also recommended an expert group be established to find ways to facilitate extradition requests and other mutual legal assistance among countries in the Asia-Pacific.

MNA/Xinhua

Large number of rhesus monkeys discovered in east China

NANCHANG, 8 Feb.— Visitors to the Zhuzikeng (bamboo pit) Scenic Zone on Sanbai Mountain in Anyuan County, east China’s Jiangxi Province, will find more fun with the recent appearance of over 200 rhesus monkeys in the area.

A survey carried out in 2000 showed that China had about 5,000 rhesus monkeys, which mainly live in the Emei Mountain area in southwest China’s Sichuan Province.

While visitors have fun with the monkeys, local animal protectors have intensified their efforts to protect the animals. They patrol the mountain area and provide food to the rare “guests” to the Zhuzikeng Scenic Zone.

Sanbai Mountain is a famous scenic zone of China and one of the sources of the Dongjiang River, which provides drinking water for Hong Kong residents. Forest coverage rate there stands at 98 per cent.

MNA/Xinhua
Doctors remove second head from Dominican baby

SANTO DOMINGO (Dominican Republic), 8 Feb — An international team of doctors in the Dominican Republic on Friday successfully removed an undeveloped second head from a baby girl born with one of the world’s rarest birth defects.

“The parasitic (second) head has been removed,” Dominican surgeon Dr Santiago Hazim told reporters after the team of 18 doctors worked for more than 13 hours on Rebeca Martinez.

“The operation has been a real success,” Hazim said. “All the baby’s vital signs remained stable during the operation. The operation went as planned.” The surgery at the CURE International Centre for Orthopedic Specialties in Santo Domingo began in the morning and went on until late in the evening, with a team of surgeons and nurses taking shifts. Martinez was born in mid-December at a hospital in the Dominican capital with the head of an undeveloped twin attached to the top of her skull, facing upward. The infant was otherwise healthy but her brain could not develop normally unless the undeveloped head was removed.

The operation was led by Dr. Jorge Lazareff, director of pediatric neurosurgery at UCLA’s Mattel Children’s Hospital, and Dominican surgeons Hazim and Dr. Benjamin Rivera. Lazareff led the surgical team that successfully separated Guatemalan twin girls conjoined at the head last year. By late in the evening, the surgeons were working to close the space left by the removed head. Hazim said the real success of the operation would be seen when the child began walking. But he added that if she never managed to walk it would be because of a brain defect that was present at birth.

The 100,000-US-dollar operation was free for the parent, Maria Gisela Hiciano and Pablo Martinez, the hospital said. On Friday evening, the parents had been told of the successful operation. The baby girl’s condition, craniopagus parasiticus, is so rare that there have only been eight documented cases in the world, and no known cases where surgery had been attempted to correct it, Hazim told Reuters in an earlier interview.

Conjoined twins form when an embryo begins to split into identical twins and then stops, leaving them fused. Twins conjoined at the head account for about one of every 2.5 million births and about 2 per cent of all conjoined births.

In a statement, Albert said in a statement.

He said both sides were in agreement about the need for meaningful negotiations — aiming to draw up a plan to complete the Free Trade Area of the Americas (FTAA) and to promote free trade and investment in the Western Hemisphere nations.

Negotiators had extended talks for several hours on Friday, “the last of four gruelling days of negotiation — aiming to draw up a plan to complete the Free Trade Area of the Americas pact by next January. While they made progress on procedural questions, they could not bridge divisions over agricultural issues, said Argentine Trade Secretary Martin Redrado told a news conference. South American MERCOSUR trade bloc nations. Meetings are tentatively scheduled to resume the first week in March in Puebla, organizers said.

Niteroi had extended talks for several hours on Friday, “the last of four gruelling days of negotiation — aiming to draw up a plan to complete the Free Trade Area of the Americas pact by next January. While they made progress on procedural questions, they could not bridge divisions over agricultural issues, said Argentine Trade Secretary Martin Redrado told a news conference. South American MERCOSUR trade bloc nations. Meetings are tentatively scheduled to resume the first week in March in Puebla, organizers said.

Niteroi had extended talks for several hours on Friday, “the last of four gruelling days of negotiation — aiming to draw up a plan to complete the Free Trade Area of the Americas pact by next January. While they made progress on procedural questions, they could not bridge divisions over agricultural issues, said Argentine Trade Secretary Martin Redrado told a news conference. South American MERCOSUR trade bloc nations. Meetings are tentatively scheduled to resume the first week in March in Puebla, organizers said.

The Department of Tourism (DOT) said it would “withhold judgment” on whether the January deadline could be reached.

Rebeca was operated on by Dr. Jorge Lazareff, director of pediatric neurosurgery at UCLA’s Mattel Children’s Hospital, and Dominican surgeons Hazim and Dr. Benjamin Rivera. Lazareff led the surgical team that successfully separated Guatemalan twin girls conjoined at the head last year. By late in the evening, the surgeons were working to close the space left by the removed head. Hazim said the real success of the operation would be seen when the child began walking. But he added that if she never managed to walk it would be because of a brain defect that was present at birth.

The 100,000-US-dollar operation was free for the parent, Maria Gisela Hiciano and Pablo Martinez, the hospital said. On Friday evening, the parents had been told of the successful operation. The baby girl’s condition, craniopagus parasiticus, is so rare that there have only been eight documented cases in the world, and no known cases where surgery had been attempted to correct it, Hazim told Reuters in an earlier interview.

Conjoined twins form when an embryo begins to split into identical twins and then stops, leaving them fused. Twins conjoined at the head account for about one of every 2.5 million births and about 2 per cent of all conjoined births.

In a statement, Albert said in a statement.

He said both sides were in agreement about the need for meaningful negotiations — aiming to draw up a plan to complete the Free Trade Area of the Americas (FTAA) and to promote free trade and investment in the Western Hemisphere nations. Meetings are tentatively scheduled to resume the first week in March in Puebla, organizers said.

The Department of Tourism (DOT) said it would “withhold judgment” on whether the January deadline could be reached.

Rebeca was operated on by Dr. Jorge Lazareff, director of pediatric neurosurgery at UCLA’s Mattel Children’s Hospital, and Dominican surgeons Hazim and Dr. Benjamin Rivera. Lazareff led the surgical team that successfully separated Guatemalan twin girls conjoined at the head last year. By late in the evening, the surgeons were working to close the space left by the removed head. Hazim said the real success of the operation would be seen when the child began walking. But he added that if she never managed to walk it would be because of a brain defect that was present at birth.

The 100,000-US-dollar operation was free for the parent, Maria Gisela Hiciano and Pablo Martinez, the hospital said. On Friday evening, the parents had been told of the successful operation. The baby girl’s condition, craniopagus parasiticus, is so rare that there have only been eight documented cases in the world, and no known cases where surgery had been attempted to correct it, Hazim told Reuters in an earlier interview.

Conjoined twins form when an embryo begins to split into identical twins and then stops, leaving them fused. Twins conjoined at the head account for about one of every 2.5 million births and about 2 per cent of all conjoined births.

In a statement, Albert said in a statement.

He said both sides were in agreement about the need for meaningful negotiations — aiming to draw up a plan to complete the Free Trade Area of the Americas (FTAA) and to promote free trade and investment in the Western Hemisphere nations. Meetings are tentatively scheduled to resume the first week in March in Puebla, organizers said.

The Department of Tourism (DOT) said it would “withhold judgment” on whether the January deadline could be reached.

Rebeca was operated on by Dr. Jorge Lazareff, director of pediatric neurosurgery at UCLA’s Mattel Children’s Hospital, and Dominican surgeons Hazim and Dr. Benjamin Rivera. Lazareff led the surgical team that successfully separated Guatemalan twin girls conjoined at the head last year. By late in the evening, the surgeons were working to close the space left by the removed head. Hazim said the real success of the operation would be seen when the child began walking. But he added that if she never managed to walk it would be because of a brain defect that was present at birth.

The 100,000-US-dollar operation was free for the parent, Maria Gisela Hiciano and Pablo Martinez, the hospital said. On Friday evening, the parents had been told of the successful operation. The baby girl’s condition, craniopagus parasiticus, is so rare that there have only been eight documented cases in the world, and no known cases where surgery had been attempted to correct it, Hazim told Reuters in an earlier interview.

Conjoined twins form when an embryo begins to split into identical twins and then stops, leaving them fused. Twins conjoined at the head account for about one of every 2.5 million births and about 2 per cent of all conjoined births.
Last-gasp Van Nistelrooy gives Man Utd 4-3 win

LONDON, 8 Feb.—Van Nistelrooy scored with a last-gasp penalty to give Manchester United a 4-3 victory over West Ham United, leaving the Premier League leaders 12 points clear of their nearest rivals, Arsenal.

The Goodison Park side started the game brightly, with striker Kei Kamara scoring on the 16th minute. However, United hit back, with Gary Neville equalising on the 26th minute. Victory was confirmed by Van Nistelrooy’s goal on the 90th minute, securing United’s fourth straight win.

MNA/Reuters

Petrov inspires Celtic against nine-man Hearts

GLASGOW, 8 Feb.—Stiliyan Petrov scored twice in the first half as Celtic cruised into the Scottish Cup quarter-finals with a 3-0 away win over nine-man Hearts on Saturday.

The Bulgarian international drifted in the opening three minutes before nailing a second 12 minutes before halftime with teammate Henrik Larsson the provider both times.

Hearts were reduced to nine men in the closing minutes after Paul Hartley and Alan Maybury were sent off for late tackles on Neil Lennon. Larsson rounded off the scoring in injury time.

“I thought we played great and took the game to Hearts,” Celtic manager Martin O’Neill told reporters. “Stiliyan has settled us down and the second goal was absolutely delightful.”

O’Neill was unhappy at the handling decision that allowed Hearts’ goal.

“Neil was great today and I’m not sure why he gets the ‘accolades’ he got from the crowd today. I can understand it at Ibrox (home ground of Glasgow rivals Rangers) but not anywhere else.

What I’m saying is that the reaction of the crowd at the end today was pretty poor but we kept our discipline well and that has helped keep us in the cup.”

The unbeaten Premier League leaders were never seriously tested after Petrov, who has netted six times in the last seven games, raced clear to score his first from close range.

Hearts striker Mark de Vries screwed an effort wide midway through the second period, but the league’s third-placed side did not possess enough guile to cut through an assured Celtic, who are aiming to win the trophy for the 32nd time.

The draw for the quarterfinals will be made later on Saturday after other fourth-round ties.

Holders Rangers are away to Kilmarnock on Sunday in the only other all-Premier League tie while League Cup finalists Livingston visit minor league side Spартans.—MNA/Reuters

Impressive away wins for Lecce, Bologna

MILAN, 8 Feb.—Japanese midfielder Hiroshi Nakata led Lecce to an impressive 3-1 win at Udinese in Serie A on Saturday while relegation threatened Lecce also enjoyed an away win with a 3-2 victory against Chievo.

Lecce have been transformed since Nakata joined them on loan from Parma last month and the Japan international showed his value to Carlo Mazzone’s side again with a fine all-round display.

Torres volleyed Lecce ahead in the 22nd minute with a superb individual goal, beating two Udinese defenders before firing home.

Udinese’s Czech midfielder Marek Jankulovski brought the home side level on the stroke of halftime with a powerful left-foot strike from the edge of the area.

Bologna wasted no time in restoring their lead though with Nakata’s low free kick from 25 metres bouncing under the body of unsighted Udinese keeper Morgan De Sanctis in the second minute after the interval.

Udinese should have been back on level terms in the 57th minute when Vincenzo Iaquinta’s volley was ruled offside although television replays showed the linesman was mistaken.

Nakata then created the third goal for Bologna, bursting down the right and picking out teammate Leonardo Colucci who confidently converted home.

In Verona, Uruguayan striker Ernesto Chevanton inspired relegation-threatened Lecce to an impressive win against Chievo.

Chevanton’s powerful free kick struck the back of the net in the 15th minute to make it 1-0 before eventually racking up half a dozen against nine-man Hearts.

Vicente scored with a spectacular chip after 65 minutes and Mista struck again in the 72nd minute.

Vicente’s goal gave them 50 points from 21 games.

Real Madrid, with 49 from 22 games, play at home against Malaga later on Saturday.

Deportivo Coruna, in third with 43 points, are away to Albacete on Sunday.

Atletico stayed fourth on 36 points but the race for the Champions League qualification spot will come under the spotlight on Sunday when fifth-placed Barcellona visit Atletico’s two points back.

Torres turned in arguably their worst performance of the season.

Vicente set up the opening goal for Mista, forging over from the left for the striker to head back across keeper Sergio Aragoneses and in.

Sergio’s second yellow card and Vicente’s classy goal after 65 minutes settled the game. The Spanish international midfielder brought the ball in from the left win, glanced up and swept over Aragoneses and into the top right-hand corner.

Mista’s second followed soon afterwards following a smart cross from Miguel Angel Angulo and Ruben Baraja had a close-range blast ruled out for a marginal offside five minutes later.

MNA/Reuters


day when fifth-placed Barcellona, who have 36 points, also played to a goalless draw with relegation-threatened Osasuna.

Valencia’s comfortable victory made it nine goals in two games, following their 6-1 success against Malaga last weekend.

They might easily have raked up half a dozen again, as an Atletico side missing leading forward Fernando Torres inarguably their worst performance of the season.

Vicente set up the opening goal for Mista, forging over from the left for the striker to head back across keeper Sergio Aragoneses and in.

Sergio’s second yellow card and Vicente’s classy goal after 65 minutes settled the game. The Spanish international midfielder brought the ball in from the left win, glanced up and swept over Aragoneses and into the top right-hand corner.

Mista’s second followed soon afterwards following a smart cross from Miguel Angel Angulo and Ruben Baraja had a close-range blast ruled out for a marginal offside five minutes later.

MNA/Reuters

Valencia’s Vicente Rodriguez, right, is tackled by Atletico de Madrid’s San Mendi during a Spanish league soccer match at the Mestalla stadium in Valencia, Spain, on 7 Feb, 2004. Valencia won the game, 3-0.—INTERNET

Valencia beat Atletico to sneak back on top

MAHON, 8 Feb.—Valencia won 3-0 at home against Atletico Madrid on Saturday to return to the top of Spain’s Primera Liga, at least for a couple of hours.

Mista headed Valencia ahead in the 31st minute and Atletico’s task was complicated further six minutes into the second half when Sergi was sent off.

Vicente scored with a spectacular chip after 65 minutes and Mista struck again in the 72nd minute.

Valencia’s win gave them 50 points from 21 games.

Real Madrid, with 49 from 22 games, play at home against Malaga later on Saturday.

Deportivo Coruna, in third with 43 points, are away to Albacete on Sunday.

Atletico stayed fourth on 36 points but the race for the Champions League qualification slot will come under the spotlight on Sunday when fifth-placed Barcellona visit Atletico’s two points back.

Torres turned in arguably their worst performance of the season.

Vicente set up the opening goal for Mista, forging over from the left for the striker to head back across keeper Sergio Aragoneses and in.

Sergio’s second yellow card and Vicente’s classy goal after 65 minutes settled the game. The Spanish international midfielder brought the ball in from the left win, glanced up and swept over Aragoneses and into the top right-hand corner.

Mista’s second followed soon afterwards following a smart cross from Miguel Angel Angulo and Ruben Baraja had a close-range blast ruled out for a marginal offside five minutes later.

MNA/Reuters
Commander meets Union Day delegates

YANGON, 8 Feb — General of Myanma Police Force Brig-Gen Khin Yi, and Yangon Division Peace and Development Council Chairman Yangon Command Commander Maj-Gen Myint Swe met with Union Day delegates from States and Divisions at No 1 Transit Centre on Bayint Naung Road here at 4.30 pm today. He cordially greeted the delegates and left the centre in the evening.

This morning, the delegates visited the Memorial to the Fallen Heroes in Bahan Township. Next, they visited Shwedagon pagoda and paid homage to the pagoda. — MNA

Tatmadaw and departmental cars checked on Dry Day

YANGON, 8 Feb — Tatmadaw Provost Marshal Maj-Gen Saw Hla, Director-General of Myanma Police Force Brig-Gen Khin Yi, and officials in two groups today supervised the inspection teams which checked the Tatmadaw and departmental cars at the main points in Yangon City. The teams checked the cars on observance of the dry day disciplines—bearing of dry day passes, drivers’ licenses and wheel taxes, wearing of departmental uniforms by drivers and took action against breaking of traffic rules. — MNA

Respects paid to teachers

YANGON, 8 Feb — A ceremony to pay respects to teachers of Mayangyan Township BEHS-I (Thamaing Myanma high school) was held at the school at noon today. Altogether 120 teachers were paid respect by old students. — MNA

WEATHER

Sunday, 8 February, 2004

Summary of observations recorded at 09:30 hours MST. During the past 24 hours, rain has been isolated in Taninthayi Division and weather has been partly cloudy in the remaining areas.

Night temperatures were (3°C) to (4°C) below in Chin and Kayin States, Mandalay, Ayeayawady, upper Sagaing and Yangon Divisions. (4°C) above normal in Rakhine State and Taninthayi Division and about normal in the remaining areas. Significant Night temperature was (1°C) in Hakha.

Maximum temperature on 7-2-2004 was 34.5°C (94°F). Minimum temperature on 8-2-2004 was 14.5°C (58°F). Relative humidity at 9.30 hrs MST on 8-2-2004 was 70%.

Total sunshine hours on 7-2-2004 was (9.3) hours approx. Rainfall on 8-2-2004 was nil at Yangon Airport, Kaba-Aye and central Yangon.

Maximum wind speed at Yangon (Kaba-Aye) was 2 m/s from Northwest at (14:30) hours MST on 7-2-2004.

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

Forecast valid until evening of 9-2-2004: Likelihood of isolated rain in Taninthayi Division, weather will be generally partly cloudy in the remaining areas. Degree of certainty is (60%).

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

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

Forecast for Yangon and neighbouring area for 9-2-2004: Fair weather.

Forecast for Mandalay and neighbouring area for 9-2-2004: Fair weather.

The best time to plant a tree was 20 years ago.

The second best time is now.
Vice-Senior General Maung Aye and wife Daw Mya Mya San offer provisions to a Sayadaw at the fourth Maha Shwesigyi Pagoda Buddha Pujanjya ceremony. — MNA

Vice-Senior General Maung Aye and wife Daw Mya Mya San attend Buddha Pujanjya of Maha Shwesigyi Pagoda in Kanbalu

YANGON, 8 Feb — The fourth Buddha Pujanjya of Maha Shwesigyi Pagoda kept at Maha Kammabala Hill in Kanbalu, Kanbalu Township, Shwebo District, Sagaing Division was held at the pagoda on 6 February morning, attended by Vice-Chairman of the State Peace and Development Council Deputy Commander-in-Chief of Defence Services Commander-in-Chief (Army) Vice-Senior General Maung Aye and wife Daw Mya Mya San.

Also present on the occasion were members of the Sangha led by members of State Sangha Maha Nayaka Committee Presiding Nayaka Sayadaw of Pakkhan Kyaung Maik in Shwebo Agga Maha Pandita Agga Maha Saddhammajotika Dhaja Bhaddanta Čandima, Presiding Nayaka Sayadaw of Myoshe Kyaung in Kanbalu Agga Maha Saddhammajotika Dhaja Bhaddanta Javana, Presiding Sayadaw of Taungkyawngyi Kyaung in Kanbalu Bhaddanta Vimala and Chairman of Sagaing Division Sangha Nayaka Committee Presiding Sayadaw of Sagaing Hupayon Shwekyayag Agga Maha Pandita Agga Maha Saddhammajotika Dhaja Bhaddanta Nanawvamsa, Secretary-2 of the State Peace and Development Council Lt-Gen Thein Sein, member of the State Peace and Development Council Li-Gen Ye Myint and local authorities, departmental officials, members of social organizations and local people.

The Prime Minister and party went to Kungyangon and attended the opening of Kungyangon Basic Education High School No 2 and handed over the school building was held at the school. It was graced by the presence of Prime Minister General Khin Nyunt. The headmaster and the chairman of the school board of trustees formally opened the new school building. Myanmar Education Committee Chairman Prime Minister General Khin Nyunt formally unveiled the stone inscription of the building.

PM attends opening of auto exchanges, gymnasium, BEHS-2 in Kungyangon and Kawhmu

YANGON, 8 Feb — Prime Minister General Khin Nyunt, accompanied by Chairman of Yangon Division Peace and Development Council Commander Maj-Gen Myint Swe, the ministers, members of the State Peace and Development Council, the deputy ministers, departmental heads and officials arrived at Dalla jetty of Inland Water Transport at 7.30 am today. They were welcomed there by local authorities, departmental officials, members of social organizations and local people.

The Prime Minister and party went to Kungyangon and attended the opening of Kungyangon digital auto exchange. First, Commander Maj-Gen Myint Swe and Minister for Communications, Posts and Telegraphs Brig-Gen Lun Thi unveiled the stone inscription of the exchange. Next, the Prime Minister and party attended the opening of Kungyangon gymnasium. Commander Maj-Gen Myint Swe and Chairman of Myanmar Olympic Committee Minister for Sports Brig-Gen Thuara Aye Myint opened the gymnasium by cutting a ribbon. Minister for Energy and Electricity Gen Lwin Thu unveiled the stone inscription of the gymnasium. While the Prime Minister was inspecting the gymnasium, different sports athletes presented their skill demonstrations. A ceremony to open a three-storey building of Kungyangon Basic Education High School No 2 and handing over the school building was held at the school.

Myanmar upsets India with 1-0 victory

YANGON, 8 Feb — The final match of the first U-18 BIMSTEC Cup-2004 took place in Phukhet of Thailand this evening. The selected Myanmar youth team secured the championship with a 1-0 win over the selected Indian youth team in the match.

Aung Win Naing (a) Aung Zaw Myo scored the one and only goal at the 75th minute for the team. The countries taking part in the tournament were host Thailand, Sri Lanka, Bangladesh, Myanmar, India and Bhutan. Myanmar team was in Group-B together with India and Bhutan teams. As the first and foremost match of the tournament on 4 February, Myanmar played with India and held a goalless draw with it. As the second match that took place on 6 February, Myanmar played with Bhutan. The 5-0 victory over Bhutan enabled Myanmar to enter the semifinals.

Myanmar met with Bangladesh in the semifinal held on 7 February and beat it 3-0. In the final match held today, Myanmar met again with India, its group-mate, and beat it 1-0. Myanmar came first in the BIMSTEC Cup-2004 which was held for the first time. The victorious U-18 selected Myanmar youth team is arriving back in Yangon by air at 6.45 pm tomorrow. — MNA

Four political objectives

* Stability of the State, community peace and tranquillity, prevalence of law and order
* National reconsolidation
* Emergence of a new enduring State Constitution
* Building of a new modern developed nation in accordance 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 inspects the People’s Hospital in Kungyangon. — MNA

PM attends opening of auto exchanges, gymnasium, BEHS-2 in Kungyangon and Kawhmu

YANGON, 8 Feb — Prime Minister General Khin Nyunt, accompanied by Chairman of Yangon Division Peace and Development Council Commander Maj-Gen Myint Swe, the ministers, members of the State Peace and Development Council, the deputy ministers, departmental heads and officials arrived at Dalla jetty of Inland Water Transport at 7.30 am today. They were welcomed there by local authorities, departmental officials, members of social organizations and local people.

The Prime Minister and party went to Kungyangon and attended the opening of Kungyangon Basic Education High School No 2 and handed over the school building was held at the school.

It was graced by the presence of Prime Minister General Khin Nyunt. The headmaster and the chairman of the school board of trustees formally opened the new school building. Myanmar Education Committee Chairman Prime Minister General Khin Nyunt formally unveiled the stone inscription of the building.

Next, the Prime Minister and party attended the opening of Kungyangon gymnasium. Commander Maj-Gen Myint Swe and Chairman of Myanmar Olympic Committee Minister for Sports Brig-Gen Thuara Aye Myint opened the gymnasium by cutting a ribbon. Minister for Energy and Electricity Gen Lwin Thu unveiled the stone inscription of the gymnasium. While the Prime Minister was inspecting the gymnasium, different sports athletes presented their skill demonstrations. A ceremony to open a three-storey building of Kungyangon Basic Education High School No 2 and handing over the school building was held at the school.

It was graced by the presence of Prime Minister General Khin Nyunt. The headmaster and the chairman of the school board of trustees formally opened the new school building. Myanmar Education Committee Chairman Prime Minister General Khin Nyunt formally unveiled the stone inscription of the building.

Newly-opened three-storey school building at No 2 BEHS in Kungyangon. — MNA