For perpetual existence of Union

The history of the Union of Myanmar is that of national races. In times of national solidarity, the nation was strong, and commanded a great deal of respect of neighbouring nations. At the time when Union Spirit was ebbing away and national solidarity was on the wane, not only did the political, economic and social status of the Union fall into decline, but the security and sovereignty of the nation were encroached upon as well. Therefore, the flourishing of national unity and Union Spirit is of vital importance for the perpetual existence of the Union.

Senior General Than Shwe
Chairman of the State Peace and Development Council
Commander-in-Chief of Defence Services
(From message on the 55th Anniversary Union Day.)

Senior General Than Shwe and wife Daw Kyaing Kyaing host 57th Anniversary Union Day reception and dinner

YANGON, 12 Feb — Senior General Than Shwe, Chairman of the State Peace and Development Council of the Union of Myanmar, and wife Daw Kyaing Kyaing hosted a reception and dinner to mark the 57th Anniversary Union Day on the lawns of the Presidential Residence on Ahlon Road here this evening.

Senior General Than Shwe and Daw Kyaing Kyaing arrived there at 6.30 pm. They were welcomed by State Peace and Development Council Vice-Chairman Vice-Senior General Maung Aye, Prime Minister of the State General Khin Nyunt, member of the State Peace and Development Council General Thura Shwe Mann, State Peace and Development Council Secretary-1 Lt-Gen Soe Win, Secretary-2 Lt-Gen Thein Sein, Chairman of the Management Committee for Observance of the 57th Anniversary Union Day, Yangon Division Peace and Development Council Chairman and also Yangon Command Commander Maj-Gen Myint Swe, and officials.

On the occasion, Senior General Than Shwe and Daw Kyaing Kyaing cordially greeted leaders of national races, cultural troupes from respective states and Taninthayi Division, Union Day delegates from Union Solidarity and Development Associations of states and divisions, and distinguished guests.

Next, Senior General Than Shwe and Daw Kyaing Kyaing hosted the dinner to those present on the occasion. Present at the dinner were members of the State Peace and Development Council, the Commander-in-Chief (Navy), the Commander-in-Chief (Air), (See page 10)
Ministers enjoy Diplomatic Htamane Festival

YANGON, 12 Feb— In order to enhance friendship and mutual understanding with the diplomatic corps in Yangon, a new harvest Htamane feast was jointly held by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Myanmar ASEAN Women’s Friendship Association at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs on Thamandar Street in Dagon Township today. Minister for Foreign Affairs U Win Aung and wife Daw San Yon, Minister for Home Affairs Col Tin Hlaing and wife Daw Khin Hla Hla, Deputy Ministers for Foreign Affairs and diplomats were present on the occasion.

The month of Tabodwe, which falls in February is the eleventh month of Myanmar lunar calendar. It is also the time when the first crops begin to appear. So, the Htamane Festival can be regarded as sort of a new harvest festival of Myanmar nationals. Htamane is a savoury food prepared with a special recipe of gluttonous rice and other ingredients such as oil, ginger, coconut kernel, sesame seeds, peppers and salt. Htamane making is usually done outdoors collectively, mostly by young men taking turns to stir the sticky food by large wooden ladles in a concave cast-iron pot, resembling a gigantic work. The feast was held for the second time in the first of its kind, Diplomatic Htamane Festival, celebrated in the preceding year. This jolly fete, the New Harvest Htamane Feast, has become the second annual get-together event for the diplomatic corps in Yangon.

Joint Communique for establishment of Myanmar-Ireland diplomatic ties signed

YANGON, 12 Feb—A ceremony to sign the joint communique on establishment of diplomatic relations between the Union of Myanmar and Ireland at the office of the Myanmar Ambassador to Malaysia in Kuala Lumpur at 3 pm on 10 February. Present on the occasion were Myanmar Ambassador to Malaysia U Hla Maung and staff of the embassy, Ambassador of Ireland to Malaysia Mr. Daniel Mulhail and Deputy Minister Counsellor Mr. Michael Smith. Speaking on the occasion, Ambassador U Hla Maung said that it is pleasure for establishment of diplomatic relations between the two countries due to a historic undertaking. He believed that more friendly relations and cooperation would be promoted between governments and peoples of the two countries.

The Ireland Ambassador also made a speech. He said that he was pleased with establishing diplomatic relations between the two countries. He hoped to cooperate economic, trade, culture and other sectors between the two countries.

Korea’s Mo surges into the lead in Myanmar Open

YANGON, 12 Feb—Korea’s Mo Joong-kyung emerged as the surprise leader when he fired a five-under-par 67 in the opening round of the US$200,000 Myanmar Open at Yangon Golf Club today. The 32-year-old Mo, who finished 74th on the money ranking in Asia last season, enjoyed a superb start in his first tournament of the year with six birdies and a lone bogey and leads by one shot over Canadian veteran Rick Gibson, South Africa’s Graeme Gooch and Australias Craig Kamps and Australian rookie Alistair Presten.

Thailands Thongchai Jaidee, Asia’s number one in 2001, and Prayad Marksaeng carded identical 69s for equal the fifth place alongside China’s Lin Wen-ko, Akinori Tani of Japan and American due Andrew Putts and Gary Resnak.

Local favourite Aung Win scored a magical hole-in-one en-route to a 71 as he led the home challenge. Win, who has contended for the Myanmar Open title in the past two years, achieved the feat with an eight iron on his second hole of the day, the 162 yard 11th. The ace sparked Win to make the turn in 32 with birdies on two of the four holes from the gallery that followed; his group then double bogeyed the par five sixth hole and dropped another shot on the seventh. “That was my career’s fifth ace in tournament play. It took one bounce and dropped into the hole”, said Win, who has finished tied third and equal eighth in the last two years.

The Pro-Am of Myanmar Open golf tour was held at Yangon Golf Club in Danyingon on 11 February. Present on the occasion were Chairman of Myanmar Olympic Committee Minister for Sports Brig-Gen Thura Aye Myint, Myanmar Professional Golfers Association and Myanmar Golf Federation President Maj-Gen Win Hlaing. Chairman of Ryothians Myanmar Holdings Pte Ltd Mr Fred Combe, Managing Director Mr Arend Ng and officials of Ryothians of Pall Mall Myanmar Pte Ltd and golf fans.

The evening dinner was hosted to the participants and officials presented prizes to the winners.

The New Harvest Htamane Feast in progress.— MNA

People’s Desire

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

PERSPECTIVES

Let’s uniteedly work for long-term interest of the Union

The Union of Myanmar has existed as a sovereign nation with her own monarchs since the early period of history and her national people have been living there in unity and amity for aeons. However, in the 19th century, the colonialists annexed her using their superior and enormous firepower and ruled her for over 100 years.

It was only in 1948 that the Union of Myanmar won back her independence through the anti-colonialist spirit, Union Spirit and national spirit of her national people. The leaders of various national races showed their Union Spirit and willingness to live together in unity by signing an agreement on 12 February, 1947, at Panglong in Shan State. Thus, the day that the Panglong Agreement was signed went down into the history of our nation as the Union Day.

The Union Day is observed every year with full political essence and Head of State Senior General Than Shwe sends a message to the national brethren of the Union on that day.

In his message to the 57th Anniversary of the Union Day, the Head of State reiterated that the seven-point future policy programme already declared by the State is the only way to a discipline-flourishing, modern and developed democracy. Therefore, he exhorted the national races who love the Union to walk straight along the way towards their cherished goal with full of Union Spirit and national unity.

The Government has succeeded in cementing the national unity through the adoption of the national policy—non-disintegration of the Union, non-disintegration of national solidarity and perpetuation of sovereignty. Realizing the genuine goodwill of the Government, a total of 17 armed groups has returned to the legal fold and has been putting their energies into their respective regional development tasks. The Government has still kept the door open for the remaining armed groups, holding out an olive branch to them.

At a time when the Government is making every endeavour for the emergence of a new Myanmar, we would like to call upon the entire national people to work together unitedly in the long-term interest of the Union as well as in their own.

59th Armed Forces Day Objectives

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

Kite-flying contest in Bagan

YANGON, 12 Feb—Myanmar Traditional Sports Federation of the Ministry of Sports will hold the traditional kite-flying contest in Bagan region in the last week of March. Ministry of Hotels and Tourism will render assistance to the organizer.

President of the federation Daw Mi Mi Khin and executives and kite-flying experts will leave Yangon for Bagan on 13 February to choose sites and make arrangements for the competitions in advance. The experts will disseminate the kite-flying techniques to the participants (under-12 school boys and girls) in accord with the rules prescribed by the federation. — MNA

MNA
Deadly attacks in Iraq since March 20

BAGHDAD, 12 Feb—Some of the deadly bombing attacks in Iraq since the war began March 20, President Bush declared major combat over 1 May.

—Feb 11: A suicide attacker blows up a car packed with explosives in a crowd of Iraqis waiting outside an army recruiting centre in Baghdad, killing 47 people.

—Feb 10: A suicide bomber explodes a truck loaded with explosives outside a police station in Iskandariyah, 30 miles south of Baghdad, killing 53 people.

—Feb 1: Twin suicide bombers kill 109 people in two Kurdish party offices in the northern city of Irbil.

—Jan 31: At least nine killed, 45 wounded by car bomb outside police station in the northern city of Mosul.

—Jan 18: Suicide car bombing near main gate to U.S.-led coalition’s headquarters in Baghdad kills at least 18 people.

—Jan 17: Roadside bomb explodes near Baghdad, killing three US soldiers and two Iraqi civil defence troops.

US death toll reaches 500 with bombing.

—Dec 31, 2003: Car bomb rips through restaurant holding New Year’s Eve party, killing eight Iraqis and wounding 35.

—Dec 14: Suspected suicide bomber detonates explosives in car outside police station in Khadiiyah, killing 17, wounding 33.

—Nov 22: Car bombs hit two police stations northeast of Baghdad, killing at least 12 Iraqis.

—Nov 20: Truck bomb explodes near Kurdish party office in northern Kurdish city of Kirkuk, killing five people, wounding 30.

—Nov 12: Suicide truck bomb attacks headquarters of Italy’s paramilitary police in southern city of Nasiriyah, killing more than 30 people, including 19 Italians.

—Oct 27: Four suicide bombings target international Red Cross headquarters and four Iraqi police stations in Baghdad, killing 40 people, mostly Iraqis.

—Oct 9: Suicide bomber drives Oldmobile into police station in Baghdad’s Saddar City district, killing nine Iraqis.

—Aug 29: Car bomb explodes outside mosque in Shiites holy city of Najaf, killing more than 85 people, including Shiite leader Ayatollah Mohammed Baqir al-Hakim.

—Aug 19: Truck bomb strikes UN headquarters in Baghdad, killing 22, including top UN envoy to Iraq Sergio Vieira de Mello.

—Aug 7: Car bomb explodes outside Jordanian Embassy, killing 19, including two children.

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

BAGHDAD, 12 Feb—As of Wednesday, 11 Feb, 535 US service members have died since the beginning of military operations in Iraq, according to the Department of Defence. Of those, 372 died as a result of hostile action and 163 died of non-hostile causes, the department said.

The British military has reported 57 deaths; Italy, 17; Spain, eight; Bulgaria, five; others, two; Denmark, Ukraine and Poland have reported one each. Since May 1, when President Bush declared that major combat operations in Iraq had ended, 397 US soldiers have died—257 as a result of hostile action and 140 of non-hostile causes, according to the military.

Since the start of military operations, 2,621 US service members have been injured as a result of hostile action, according to the Department of Defence. Non-hostile injured numbered 408.

The latest death reported by the military:

—No new deaths reported. Identifications reported by the military:

—Air Force Master Sgt. Jude C. Mariano, 39, Vallejo, Calif.; died Tuesday in Doha, Qatar, of injuries from a vehicle accident, assigned to the 315th Air Mobility Operations Squadron, Travis Air Force Base, Calif.

—Army Sgt. Thomas D. Robbins, 27, Schenectady, N.Y.; killed Monday in Sinarj, Iraq, when munitions exploded, assigned to Troop A, 1st Squadron, 14th Cavalry Regiment (Stryker), Fort Lewis, Wash.

HK becoming ideal business platform for investors

HONG KONG, 12 Feb—Hong Kong Secretary for Economic Development and Labour Stephen Ip said Tuesday Hong Kong is an ideal business platform for both international and Mainland investors.

Officiating at the 10th Asian International Exhibition of Hospitality Equipment, Supplies and Techno-

logies, Food and Drink (HOFEX 2004) opening ceremony, Stephen Ip said Hong Kong is the ideal stra-

tegic base and testing ground for international suppliers who wish to launch products on the Mainland, ac-

cording to Ip.

He said that Hong Kong will surely provide the best platform for those suppliers who are looking for business opportunities in the Mainland market and those thinking of promoting and selling Chinese products in international markets.

Indonesia to hold trade expo in UAE

JAKARTA, 12 Feb—The National Agency for Export Development (BPEN) will hold a trade exhibition in the United Arab Emirates in a bid to boost the country’s exports to new markets.

The exhibition, to be held from September 13-17 in the city of Sharja, will be the second Indonesian expo in the city.

“We have to be more aggressive in entering non-traditional markets. They have the potential of becoming important trade partners,” chairwoman of BPEN Diah Maulida was quoted Wednesday by The Jakarta Post as saying.

Diah said Indonesia’s traditional markets such as the United States, European Union and Japan had issued trade restrictions that local exporters could not easily comply with.

Chinese State Councillor meets Vanuatu FM

BEIJING, 12 Feb—Chinese State Councillor Tang Jiaxuan said here Tuesday that China will make joint efforts with Vanuatu for greater development of bilateral relations.

Tang made the remarks during a meeting with visiting Foreign Minister of Vanuatu Mouna Carcasos, who is here on an official visit to China at the invitation of Chinese Foreign Minister Li Zhaoxing.

Tang pointed to the rapid growth of bilateral ties with remarkable achievements made since the two countries forged diplomatic ties over two decades ago.

He said China attaches great importance to its relations with Vanuatu and bilateral exchanges in economy, trade, agriculture, culture, education, health work and sports have continuously expanded.

Cultural relics of west China to be exhibited in Japan

XI’AN, 12 Feb—A number of precious cultural relics belonging to Xi’an, capital of northwest China’s Shaanxi Province, will be exhibited in Japan later this year, sources with the Shaanxi Bureau of Cultural Heritage said Tuesday.

The exhibition is co-sponsored by the Shaanxi Bureau of Cultural Heritage, Xi’an Bureau of Gardens and Cultural Heritage and the Japanese city Niigata, 300 kilometres northwest to Tokyo.

The display, to be held at the historical museum and art gallery of Niigata, will last 40 days from September to October, according to an agreement between the two sides.

An Iraqi doctor comforts a crying man after he identified the body of a relative in the parking lot of the over-flowing morgue at a hospital in central Baghdad on 11 Feb, 2004.
BRAZIL (Brazil), 12 Feb — Brazil plans soon to reopen its embassy in Baghdad after a 13-year hiatus to take advantage of commercial opportunities. A Brazilian official said on Wednesday.

Brazil opposed the US-led invasion to oust Saddam Hussein, and the violence in postwar Iraq hit home when the head of the UN mission there, Brazilian Sergio Vieira de Mello, was killed in a bomb attack last August.

The official said the South American nation wanted to take advantage of the decision by the US occupying power to open up contracts to foreign bidders.

No date has been set for the embassy opening and a team will travel to Iraq, still afflicted by daily bloodshed, to assess the security situation.

Brazil closed its embassy in Baghdad after the Gulf War in 1991 and conducted relations through its mission in Jordan.

— MNA/Reuters

Turkey to increase trade with Iraq to $1.5b in 2004

ANKARA, 12 Feb — A Turkish official said Tuesday that Turkey aims to increase trade volume with neighbouring Iraq to 1.5 billion US dollars in 2004 from about 980 million dollars in 2003.

Rifat Hisarciklioglu, the Chairman of Union of Chambers and Commodity Exchanges of Turkey (TOBB), made the remarks at a Press conference after his visit to Iraq on Sunday. Hisarciklioglu listed some of their demands during talks with Iraqi officials, such as ending fee collection in Ibrahim Al Haidi Border Gate in the north of Iraq, starting construction of a second border gate to Iraq in Ovakoy as soon as possible and forming truck parks in four Iraqi cities of Mosul, Baiji, Baghdad and Katak.

The two sides have reached an agreement for Turkish and Iraqi contractors and transporters to meet in Iraq on March 13-14, the TOBB chairman said.

— MNA/Agence

Annan likely to visit Japan in late February

TOKYO, 12 Feb — UN Secretary-General Kofi Annan is likely to visit Japan late this month for talks on United Nations reform and Iraq, a Japanese newspaper said on Wednesday.

Annan is likely to visit Japan sometime after February 20 and meet with Prime Minister Junichiro Koizumi as well as Foreign Minister Yoriko Kawaguchi, the Yomiuri Shimbun daily said, quoting a senior Foreign Ministry official.

Koizumi is likely to seek cooperation for UN reforms that Japan is calling for, such as increasing the number of members in the UN Security Council and reviewing the share each member country pays as dues to the United Nations, Yomiuri said.

Japanese officials will also urge the United Nations to play a suitable role in the planned hand-over of power by the US-led Coalition Provisional Authority to Iraqis, the paper said.

Foreign Ministry officials were not immediately available to comment.

— MNA/Reuters

Second Iraq bombing pushes deaths to 100

BAGHDAD, 12 Feb — A second suicide bombing in as many days killed up to 47 people Wednesday, pushing the toll in the back-to-back attacks to 100. Again, Iraqis were the targets — this time, a crowd of volunteers for Iraq’s new army — in an apparent campaign to wreck US plans to transfer power by summer.

In Wednesday’s attack in Baghdad, an Oldsmobile packed with 300 to 500 pounds of explosives drove up to a crowd of Iraqis waiting outside an army recruitment centre — only a few blocks from the heavily fortified Green Zone, headquartes of the US administration.

The driver detonated the explosives, killing 47 people and wounding 55, the US-led coalition said. The Iraqi Interior Ministry put the toll at 46 dead.

The aim Wednesday was clearly to kill Iraqis working with the US-led coalition, rather than a particular religious group, because the crowd was likely a mix of Sunnis and Shiites.

But the suicide bombing Tuesday targeted a mostly Shi'ite town, Iskandariyah, south of the capital. A truck carrying a similar amount of explosives blew up outside a police station, killing 53 Iraqis, including would-be recruits lined up to apply for jobs.

There was no claim of responsibility for the rare consecutive attacks, but Maj General Charles H Swannack Jr, commander of the 82nd Airborne Divison, said he saw a connection between al-Zarqawi — and his men — and the recent bombings. — Internet

Kumaranthunga appoints council for curbing crime

COLOMBO, 12 Feb — President Chandrika Kumaratunga has appointed a 13-member National Advisory Council for curbing the rising crime rate in the country, the official Daily News said on Wednesday.

The council will advise representatives drawn from the government and the police on formulating anti-crime policies.

The council will establish citizens committees which will seek public cooperation for gathering information on crime and for preventing crime.

Each citizen committee will comprise 15 to 20 representatives.

— MNA/Xinhua

China to allow money supply, credit loans in 2004

BEIJING, 12 Feb — China will allow money supply and credit loans to keep growing at an appropriate pace in 2004, according to central bank governor Zhou Xiaochuan.

Zhou reiterated that China would pursue a “stable and healthy” monetary policy at an annual meeting of the People’s Bank of China on Tuesday.

Both the narrow money M1, including money in circulation and demand deposits in enterprises, and the broad money M2, including money circulation and all deposits, are hoped to increase a year-on-year by 17 per cent in 2004, according to Zhou.

And all financial institutions in China are allowed to grant a combined 313.25 billion-US dollar more loans than this year in 2003.

Zhou vowed to take various measures to make financial macro-control more scientific, targeted and effective and control the aggregate amount of money supply and credit loans with monetary tools. The role of interest rates should be further promoted and efforts should be made to optimize the distribution of loans and mitigate credit risks, he said. — MNA/Xinhua

Pentagon says 3 months in Iraq cost $14b

WASHINGTON, 12 Feb — The ongoing war in Iraq cost about $4 billion in September, spiked to $7 billion in October and hit just under $3 billion in November, the Pentagon said Wednesday in its latest report on how much the military operation costs.

That amounted to roughly $14 billion spent on US military operations in Iraq over the three-month period last year, the latest figures available, said Don Zakheim, the Pentagon’s chief financial official.

He said analysts were trying to determine why the costs spiked in October.

Officials previously had said the operation of Iraq is costing $1 billion a week.

Zakheim also said that by top military chiefs to a congressional committee Tuesday, that the Pentagon would run out of money to finance the efforts.

The Iraq war and occupation, along with the ongoing operations in Afghanistan, are being paid for through supplemental spending bills that are approved by Congress outside of the regular budget process.

Already, Congress has approved $166 billion for those operations. The Pentagon has said it does not expect the Bush administration to seek another spending bill until January 2005, but the chiefs of the Army, Air Force and Marine Corps suggested Tuesday that money will run out by the end of September.

— MNA/Reuters

Car bomb kills up to 25 at new Iraqi army centre

BAGHDAD, 12 Feb — A car bomb exploded at a recruiting centre for the new Iraqi Army in central Baghdad on Wednesday, killing up to 25 people, the US military said.

“It was the second bloody car bomb attack against Iraqis working with US occupation forces in 24 hours. Around 50 people were killed in a similar attack on Tuesday outside a police station north of Baghdad.”

— MNA/Reuters

Iraqi job seekers wait to be picked up to a construction site for a one or two-day job at central market in Samawah, 370 kilometres (230 miles) southeast of Baghdad, Iraq, on 11 Feb, 2004. — Reuters
Five Spanish soldiers on patrol wounded in Iraq

MANS, 12 Feb — Five Spanish soldiers on patrol in Iraq were wounded on Wednesday when an explosive device was thrown at them, Spain’s Defence Ministry said.

The soldiers were returning on foot to their base in Dwaynia, 110 miles south of Baghdad, when the device was lobbed from a building on foot to their base in Baghdad, the ministry said in a statement.

Three of the soldiers suffered sharpnel wounds while two others suffered grazes or hearing damage, it said, adding that all of the inured were in serious condition.

One soldier had already been released from hospital while the others were under observation, the statement said.

An interpreter also suffered hearing damage.

Local police detained two Iraqi suspects, it added.

Spain, which has sent 1,300 soldiers to Iraq following last year’s US-led invasion, has suffered several military casualties.

A Spanish police commander shot in the head while serving in Iraq last month died from his injuries last week.

Seven intelligence agents died in an ambush last November. Another Spanish agent was shot dead outside his Baghdad home in October and a naval captain died in the August bombing of the UN headquarters in the Iraqi capital.

Spain’s Prime Minister Jose Maria Aznar was a firm supporter of the US-led war despite overwhelming public opposition.

He is not standing for re-election in the March 14 general election but recent opinion polls give his centre-right Popular Party a comfortable lead over the Socialists, who opposed the war.

WHO confirms no human-to-human bird flu infection

WASHINGTON, 12 Feb — The World Health Organization confirmed on Wednesday that new genetic tests showed no evidence a deadly bird flu that has killed 14 people was passing from person to person.

It said DNA tests on a 23-year-old Vietnamese woman who died of H5N1 poultry influenza virus showed no evidence she caught it from her sister, who also died. WHO originally reported the results last week but then recalled them, saying they had in fact tested a different woman.

“WHO has today received the results from a study of virus isolated from a 23-year-old woman who is part of a family cluster in Vietnam under investigation as the first possible instance of human-to-human transmission,” WHO said in a statement posted on its Web site at http://www/who.int.

A worker at the newspaper told MNA/Xinhua because the fire took place at the paper storage rooms only,” Xinhua. Meanwhile, Israelis local TV also reported in the morning that a fire broke out in Gaza Strip on Wednesday morning. It caused no injuries or damages, but created a status of fear and horror among Gaza Strip population, they said. —MNA/Xinhua

US-funded construction deals in Iraq still limited

WASHINGTON, 12 Feb — The United States has opened up six billion US dollars in prime contracts in Iraq to all countries but US-funded construction deals are still limited to nations that supported the US war effort, a US Government Web site said on Wednesday.

In a notice on an Iraq procurement Web site (www.rebuilding-iraq.net), companies from all countries were invited to apply for new non-construction contracts, with the exception of a 327 million-US-dollar contract for the Iraqi Army.

“All countries are also eligible to compete as prime and or subcontractors for the six-billion-US-dollar non-construction contracts,” the notice said.

The new contracts, which will be rolled out over the next few months, will range from equipment and training to a range of other services.

At the end of last year, the United States alienated many allies who had opposed Washington’s decision to occupy Iraq without UN approval by announcing that all prime deals to rebuild Iraq would go to countries that supported the effort to topple Saddam Hussein.

Trading partners France, Canada, Germany and Russia, whose companies could bid on only lesser subcontracts, were particularly angered by the decision.

The White House later appeared to row back on the move and said Canada could apply for future prime work.

Bidding closed last week for five billion US dollars’, worth of prime construction contracts in Iraq funded by the 18.6 billion US dollars appropriated for Congress for Iraq’s reconstruction.

Companies from 63 eligible countries were allowed to bid on that work, which will involve 17 major construction contracts and project management deals to oversee the work — MNA/Reuters
Iraq under US and allies’ occupation

Monthly death of US and allies forces in Iraq

US and allies invaded Iraq on 20 March 2003. Following the invasion, armed attacks against US-led coalition forces by Iraqi guerillas increased and the invasion forces have been suffering great casualty.

US and allies military fatalities: By Month:

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Hailing the 57th Anniversary Union Day:

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

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<td>37</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Radio auto-exchange</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cellular telephone station</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CDMA telephone station</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GSM telephone station</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Microwave station</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Myanmar Maritime University.

The Myanmar ICT Park in Hline Township.

Maha Bandool Bridge linking Pazundaung and Dawbon Townships.

The National Poison Control Centre has emerged to prevent the poisoning due to chemical and biological elements and radiation.

Hlinethaya Industrial Zone.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Development Sector</th>
<th>1988</th>
<th>2004</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Industry</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Industrial zone</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Factory &amp; mill</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>59860</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Electric power</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>More megawatt generated</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>398</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Information</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>TV retransmission station</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IPRD office</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>45</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Library</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>45</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Education</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Basic education school</td>
<td>2373</td>
<td>2644</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Multimedia teaching centre</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>165</td>
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<tr>
<td>University, college</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Health</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hospital</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>65</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Traditional hospital</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Regional health centre</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>28</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Marching toward Golden Land in unity and amity

Unity is strength

Towards a modern industrialized nation

Efforts are under way to turn the Union of Myanmar into a modern industrialized nation. In the past, the country had been reduced to ashes on account of the colonialists. In order to counter the invasion of the colonialists Kanaung Minthagy, crown prince, did endeavour to establish the country as an industrialized one in Konbaung Era by constructing more than 50 factories such as coil moulding factories, arms factories, weaving factories, sugarcane mills, rice mills and so on. Taking the upper hand, the colonialists however undermined the Myanmar industrialization efforts.

The ill legacy the colonialists planted had lasted from the feudal era to the 1988 unrest, causing a lot of troubles continuously. To put back on the right track the State’s economy which was brought to a halt owing to the 1988 unrest, the Government has given priority to the infrastructural development.

At that time, what private businessmen undertook was what was called blacksmith and lathe machines. Small-scale industries were scattered all over the country and they were run without much capital and technical know-how. Knowing that the people’s standard of living will improve only when a modern industrialized nation can be built, the Government places emphasis on the development of State-owned as well as private-owned industrial sectors.

In the first place, the Government had scattered industries gathered and industrial zones established in respective states and divisions. As a result, there have emerged 19 industrial zones in the country. At the same time, the Government also established Myanmar industrial development banks to provide capital to industrialists so as to be able to avoid the slowness of industrial growth because of insufficient capital.

Arrangements have been made to disburse loans to them at the fair rate of interest. Apart from these measures, the State gives encouragement to the drive for technological advancement by conducting relevant courses. Necessary assistance is also being provided to these measures by sending trainees to foreign countries to receive advanced technologies in case local technologies are considered insufficient.

As part of efforts being made to keep abreast of the fast-changing science and technology development of the world, the Myanmar Maritime University and the Myanmar Aerospace Engineering University in addition to technological universities, computer universities, government technological colleges, government computer colleges were opened to ensure an easy access to advanced technologies. Only when highly-qualified and well-rounded human resources across the Union can be created will there be success in the establishment of a modern industrialized nation.

With this end in view, the entire national people therefore join hands with the Government to reach that goal. Hydel power projects, both completed ones and those under construction, as well as the wealth of water and land resources are of great importance for building an industrialized nation.

At a time when the Government is striving for all-round development in all sectors, State organizations and private national entrepreneurs are cooperating with the Government with all their hearts. As a result, the industrial sector is now improving.

If the development condition of the industrial sector of the State is studied, 9.0 percent increased in the first five-year short-term plan, 10.7 percent in the second five-year short-term plan, and 15 percent in 2001-2002 of the third five-year short-term plan and of 18 percent in 2002-2003 up to the end of December.

As Myanmar is an agro-based country, it is striving for an increased production of advanced farming equipment to save time and money in producing agricultural goods. In other words, it is transforming from manual to mechanized farming.

(See page 9)
Thus, the transformation from manual to mechanized farming has become a must for the nation. Head of State Senior General Than Shwe has given the following guidelines for the farm mechanization task:

— to manufacture machinery that meets the requirement of the farmers;
— to assemble tractors, harvesters and threshers to reduce time and cost in cultivation business;
— to successfully manufacture harvesters and threshers that are actually useful for the farmers;
— and to enhance cooperation among the departments as it is a must for the national development.

In accord with the guidance, the Agricultural Mechanization Department is carrying out the task to manufacture and distribute farm machinery, to run farm machinery rental services, to reclaim more land and develop the border areas.

Agriculture is the main economy of the country. It is required to develop the agricultural sector in leaps and bounds to further strengthen the national economy.

There is a decrease in the number of rural children and youths pursuing education. Thus, the transformation from manual to mechanized farming will rise together with the development of the agricultural sector. The extended use of advanced machinery plays a key role in developing the sector.

The government has laid down and is implementing the 24-zone-development project, rural development tasks and the 30-year education promotion plan for progress of all the regions of the Union.

Nowadays, the highly-qualified human resources are in the process of development.

**Poem**

**Park of the Union**

- Green and lush
  Every tree is fresh
  Leaves chase together
Under the cool greenery
  In mother’s bosom
We huddle together
  To find happiness
In peace and joy
  Coming from the same womb
Same kith and kin
Sharing love, we are contents

- Kachin, Kayah, Kayin, Chin
  Compete in beauty, Mon, Rakhine
  Under billowing clouds, under these
  Shan State also, in lovable mien
In this park, the pank and birds
  All mingle, birdies and the pank
  In a mixture, red and green
All fluttering, is it the pank or the birdies
  All citizens, born of this Union.

Moe Kyaw Tun (Ayeyawady) (Trs)
(In honour of the village of Union Nationals in Thaketa Township)

The department is carrying out the project to cultivate 10 special high-yield crops including the four major crops — paddy, sugarcane, cotton and edible crops and industrial crops as targeted: to extend opium substitute-crop cultivation; and to develop the sector in leaps and bounds to further strengthen the national economy.

Thus, harmonious efforts are being made to transform from manual to mechanized farming. The industrial zones are manufacturing harvesters, dryers, threshers, power-tillers, seeders, pumps, turbines and other machinery for agricultural development in addition to assembling jeeps, farm trucks, wagons and double cabs.

The nation’s industrial sector is achieving success at present.

**Industrial development of the nation**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Industries</th>
<th>1988</th>
<th>2004</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Established industrial zones</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>State-owned factories</td>
<td>567</td>
<td>723</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cooperatives</td>
<td>139</td>
<td>157</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Private</td>
<td>39159</td>
<td>44749</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Farm industries</td>
<td>153</td>
<td>189</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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Moe Kyaw Tun (Ayeyawady) (Trs)
(In honour of the village of Union Nationals in Thaketa Township)
Senior General Than Shwe...

(from page 1)

YANGON, Comand Commander, ministers, the attorney-general, the chief justice, the auditor-general and their wives, the chairman of the Civil Service Selection and Training Board, chairman of Yangon City Development Committee and wife, members of the central committee and the management committee for observance of the 57th Anniversary Union Day, deputy ministers, deputy attorney-generals, deputy chief justices, deputy auditors-general, members of CSSTB, the vice mayor, senior military officers of the Ministry of Defence (Army, Navy and Air), personnel of the National Convention Convening Commission, the Work Committee for Convening of National Convention, the management committee for Convening of National Convention, the director-general of the State Peace and Development Council Office and departmental officials, rectors and medical superintendents from general hospitals, USDA delegates to Union Day, national cultural troupes from states and divisions, police officers of Myanmar Police Force, local authorities, responsible personnel of News and Periodicals Enterprise, representatives from foreign news agencies, Myanmar Agriculture, Forestry, Livestock and Fisheries Technicians Organization, Myanmar Academicians of Medical Science, Myanmar Historical Commission, Myanmar Language Commission, Myanmar Academy of Technology, Myanmar Academy of Arts and Science, Myanmar War Veterans Organization, Myanmar Red Cross Society, Myanmar Medical Association, Myanmar Veters nations’ Association, Myanmar Dental Association, Myanmar Nursing Association (Central), Myanmar Women’s Affairs Federation, Myanmar Maternal and Child Welfare Association, Child Care Association, Myanmar Health Assistants Association, Union of Myanmar Federation of Chambers of Commerce and Industry, Myanmar Rice Dealers Association, Myanmar Banks Association, Myanmar Women Entrepreneurs Association, Myanmar Construction Entrepreneurs Association, Myanmar Engineering Society, Myanmar Archaeologists Association, Myanmar Computer Federation, Myanmar Computer Scientists Association, Myanmar Computer Industrialists Association, Myanmar Computer Enthusiasts Association, Myanmar Writers and Journalists Association, Myanmar Thabin Asiayon, Myanmar Music Asiayon, Myanmar Motion Pictures Asiayon, Myanmar Floriculturists Association, Myanmar Floriculturalists’ Association, Myanmar Garment Entrepreneurs Association, Myanmar Thai Cultural and Economic Cooperation Association, ASEAN Chamber of Commerce and Industry (ASEAN-CCI), Myanmar Edible Oil Dealers Association, Myanmar Goldsmiths Association, Myanmar Tourism Entrepreneurs Association, Myanmar Hoteliers Association, Myanmar Timber Entrepreneurs Association, Myanmar Fishery Federation, and other social organizations.

Senior General Than Shwe... (from page 16)

Master of ceremonies Secretary of Yangon District Peace and Development Council Lt-Col Myint Kyi read out the agenda of the ceremony. Those present saluted the Flag to the strains of National Anthem played by the State Band. Next, the commander read out the message sent by Chairman of the State Peace and Development Council Senior General Than Shwe. At 7.50 am, the mayor took out the flag from the silver bowl on the dais and carried it. He then handed it over to YCDC Secretary Col Myint Aung.

Marking the 57th Anniversary Union Day, State Flags were hoisted at offices, parks, roads, bridges, markets and schools. — MNA

Myanmar-Bangladesh soccer match to be screened

YANGON, 12 Feb — The Myanma Television will broadcast the first semi-final match of the first U-18 BIMST-EC Soccer Tournament between Myanmar and Bangladesh held on 7 February at Phuket, Thailand, at 1 pm tomorrow. — MNA

Senior General Than Shwe and wife Daw Kyawng Kyawng cordially greet Union Day delegates.— mna.

Senior General Than Shwe and wife Daw Kyawng Kyawng cordially greet Union Day delegates at the dinner. — MNA.

Flanked by Tatmadaw (Army, Navy and Air) and police officers, Union nationals and students, Col Myint Aung conveyed the Flag and planted it in the silver bowl on the Union Boat. Afterwards, the Union Flag, flanked by Tatmadaw (Army, Navy and Air) and police officers, Union nationals and students, was conveyed by the People’s Square to City Hall to stop over one year period through Pyay Road. Phonegyi Road, Maha Bandoola Street and Sule Pagoda Road. The flag was accorded a rousing welcome by local people including local authorities, social organizations, departmental personnel, students, departmental personnel and people waving miniature flags and hoisting flags at officers, shops and houses. In front of the City Hall, Col Myint Aung took out the flag from the silver bowl and handed it over to the mayor. Next, the mayor, flanked by Tatmadaw (Army, Navy and Air) and police officers, Union nationals and USDA members, conveyed the flag and planted it in the silver bowl on the dais in the City Hall where the flag will be kept for one year. Later, they saluted the flag.

Marking the 57th Anniversary Union Day, State Flags were hoisted at offices, parks, roads, bridges, markets and schools. — MNA
Lt-Gen Aung Htwe inspects Heho-Taungleon section of Meiktila-Taunggyi-Kengtung-Tachileik road

**Yangon, 12 Feb** — Ministry of Information, — House and the News and Periodicals Enterprise under the exhibition.

The project is being implemented by Public Works. At the project briefing hall in Taunglin, Lt-Gen Aung Htwe heard a report on progress of work sector-wise presented by engineers and officials.

Chairman of Shan State Peace and Development Council Commander of Eastern Command Maj-Gen Khin Maung Myint explained section-wise implementation of the project, distribution of heavy machinery and priority sectors.

In response to the presentations, Lt-Gen Aung Htwe said in accord with the guidance of the Head of State, the Meiktila-Taunggyi-Kengtung-Tachileik road has been upgraded to a facility on which cars can drive at a minimum speed of 40 miles per hour. Thus, efforts should be made to reinforce its foundation, smoothen and widen its surface and ensures safety of the traffic. The staff of the project are required to carry out their work with goodwill and use the machinery most effectively.

Accompanied by officials, Lt-Gen Aung Htwe inspected tarring and the task to widen the surface at the section between mile post 97 and 98, saying the facility should meet its required standards.

He then inspected the poultry farm of the No 55 Light Infantry Division in Heho. At the briefing hall, officials reported to him on pig breeding, plans to raise chicken, digging of ponds for fish farming and paddy, beans and pulses and seasonal crops cultivation.

Lt-Gen Aung Htwe inspected crop samples of rice, beans and pulses, corn, sunflower at the hall and the poultry farm, speaking of the need to strive for the success of the farm. — MNA

MWAF meets Magway Division Organization for Women's Affairs

**Yangon, 12 Feb** — Myanmar Women's Affairs Federation met with Magway Division Organization for Women's Affairs in Magway on 10 February.

Vice-president of MWAF Dr Daw May May Yi said the federation was founded on 20 December 2003 with the aim of developing the womenfolk, applying the strength of the womenfolk in the nation-building task and ensuring security for women. It is a non-governmental organization, inviting womenfolk to join hands in implementing its task in accord with the slogan — Let's join forces for the development of women.

The vice-president of MWAF Daw Than Than Nwe elaborated on the work of the cultural, young women's and national races affairs working bodies.

Secretary of MWAF Dr Daw San Shwe explained the organizational set-up and the application for membership.

Later, leader of Information Working Group Daw Mya Mya clarified the organizational set-ups and functions of the Central Working Committee of the Sangha and sayadaws of Township Sangha Nayaka Committee and supplicated on religious matters at Myo Khintha Monastery (South) in Gangaw on 9 February morning.

Afterwards, the minister held a meeting with departmental officials, townswinders, members of social organizations, people and students. On the occasion, the minister spoke of the need for the entire people to take part in implementing the State's seven-point policy programme joining hands with the Government for building up a peaceful, modern developed democratic nation.

The minister presented K 200,000 each to Gangaw District and Township Union Solidarity and Development Associations, school textbooks and exercise books to basic education schools, publications to libraries and clothes and soap to the villages in the district.

In the evening, the minister attended the opening of the No 55 Light Infantry Division in Heho. At the briefing hall, officials reported to him on pig breeding, plans to raise chicken, digging of ponds for fish farming and paddy, beans and pulses and seasonal crops cultivation.

Lt-Gen Aung Htwe inspected crop samples of rice, beans and pulses, corn, sunflower at the hall and the poultry farm, speaking of the need to strive for the success of the farm. — MNA

Information Minister tours Magway & Sagaing Divisions

**Yangon, 12 Feb** — Information Minister Brig-Gen Kyaw Hsan presented offertories to member Sayadaws of the Central Working Committee of the Sangha and sayadaws of Township Sangha Nayaka Committee and supplicated on religious matters at Myo Khintha Monastery (South) in Gangaw on 9 February morning.

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Union Day Exhibition continues

**Yangon, 12 Feb** — The 57th Anniversary Union Day commemorative Exhibition went on for the fifth day at the Tatmadaw Convention Hall here from 9 am to 5 pm today.

A total of some 5,000 members of the Sangha, people, students and members of the Union Solidarity and Development Association visited the booths of the exhibition.

There, various kinds of publications are available at fair prices at the shops of Sarpy Beikman Publishing House and the News and Periodicals Enterprise under the Ministry of Information. — MNA

Rural road, water supply commissioned into service

**Yangon, 12 Feb** — The opening of a manual water pump was held at Taloktaw village, Hinthada Township, on 10 February morning.

District Peace and Development Council Chairman Lt-Gen Maung Pyone, Township Chairman U Soe Thein and Executive Deputy Director U Saing Tun Tun formally opened the facility, which was provided by Township Development Affairs Committee. Similarly, the 8,970 feet long and 20 feet wide Wayindok-Ngantzin rural earth road undertaken by Pyay-dwe Township DAC and a two-inch diameter 400 PVC tube-well donated by U Kyaw Thura, Daw Aye Aye Nwe (Fire Services Department) and family were commissioned into service in the Township on 7 February morning. — MNA
Vajpayee stresses country’s interest above everything else

NEW DELHI, 12 Feb — Indian Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee said Tuesday that the central government is important and stressed that “the country’s interest has to be above everything else”.

Laying the foundation stone of a road project in politically crucial Bihar Pradesh, north India, Vajpayee said that politics should not come in the way of development, the Press Trust of India reported. “Country comes above party politics and politics should not come in the way of progress,” he made the remarks while addressing a public meeting that followed the foundation laying ceremony.

He added that it should be borne in mind that the international community did not treat individual states separately and considered the whole of India as a nation of which the parties and people were part and parcel.

Vajpayee urged the parties to forget their differences when it comes to the question of the nation’s progress and development, PTI said. According to the WCF survey based on data from the Department of Health, under the two agreements with the Global Fund, it would release 33 million US dollars over the next two years, the Press Trust of India (PTI) reported. Under the two agreements, in addition to the Global Fund, it would release 32 million US dollars to be released over a period of five years, to help scale up preventive programmes against AIDS, tuberculosis and malaria in the country.

The Fund would release the amount, which is part of a total grant worth 129 million US dollars to be released over a period of five years, to help scale up preventive programmes against AIDS, tuberculosis and malaria in the country. The Fund has subsequently also approved another 15 million US dollar grant for HIV/TB prevention and treatment in its third round of grants extending a commitment to India which now amounts to 153 million US dollars over a period of five years.

India signs agreements to control spread of “AIDS”, TB

NEW DELHI, 12 Feb — India Tuesday signed agreements with an international funding agency to prevent and control the spread of such diseases as AIDS, tuberculosis and malaria.

Under the two agreements with the Global Fund, it would release 33 million US dollars over the next two years, the Press Trust of India (PTI) reported. Under the two agreements, in addition to the Global Fund, it would release 32 million US dollars to be released over a period of five years, to help scale up preventive programmes against AIDS, tuberculosis and malaria in the country. The Fund has subsequently also approved another 15 million US dollar grant for HIV/TB prevention and treatment in its third round of grants extending a commitment to India which now amounts to 153 million US dollars over a period of five years.

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drive safely

JAKARTA, 12 Feb — Elementary school dropouts account for 7 per cent of Indonesia’s 27 million children, the highest among South East Asian member states, the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) reported.

According to UNESCO’s education statistics 2003 report, Indonesia’s enrolment ranked behind Thailand, Myanmar, the Philippines, Vietnam and Cambodia in the percentage of children— aged between seven years and 12 years old — enrolled in elementary school. Quoting UNESCO Institute for Statistics’ report as saying, The Jakarta Post said Wednesday. Indonesia fared better than fellow densely populated Asian countries Bangladesh, Iran, Pakistan, China and India. Indonesia is home to 215 million people, according to the latest national census.

Most of the earlier leaders quit elementary school when they were in their fifth year, the Post said. Indonesia, with 27 million children in the list with 95 per cent after Iran (98 per cent) and Vietnam. Vietnam and Cambodia in the percentage of children— aged between seven years and 12 years old — enrolled in elementary school. Quoting UNESCO Institute for Statistics’ report as saying, The Jakarta Post said Wednesday. Indonesia fared better than fellow densely populated Asian countries Bangladesh, Iran, Pakistan, China and India. Indonesia is home to 215 million people, according to the latest national census. Most of the earlier leaders quit elementary school when they were in their fifth year, the Post said.
Experts weigh possible autism, vaccines link

WASHINGTON, 12 Feb — An independent scientific panel weighing a possible link between autism and the mercury preservative in childhood vaccines heard suggestions on Monday that the source of the heavy metal could be fish.

The Institute of Medicine panel heard the results from more than a dozen studies on thimerosal, the preservative found in some vaccines. When it last met in 2001, it decided there was no evidence that vaccines caused autism but it also noted little research had been done.

“Clearly, there’s far more information addressing this issue,” said panel chair Dr Marie McCormick, a professor of maternal and child health at the Harvard School of Public Health.

Autism is a mysterious disorder whose symptoms range from a lack of social skills to a profound and crippling inability to relate to others.

Because it is usually diagnosed during the toddler years when children receive many of the 18 or so early childhood shots, some advocacy groups believe vaccines are to blame.

Many parents told the panel they were anti-thimerosal, not anti-vaccine.

“Why take the risk when you don’t have to?”

Scientists say it is possible that if it got into the brain, thimerosal could cause autism. Although it is no longer found in childhood vaccines in the United States, it remains in the influence vaccine and in vaccines in other countries.

Several researchers on Monday pointed to recent studies highlighting the harmful levels of mercury found in fish and the potential brain damage caused by eating it.

Last week, an international group of researchers reported in the Journal of Pediatrics that children can suffer irreparable brain damage if their mothers eat seafood high in mercury while pregnant.

And testimony about the chemical analysis of the lead in bullets can confuse jurors and judges alike, the National Research Council panel said. The Federal Bureau of Investigation, which commissioned the report, said it would be a useful guide for improving its methods.

“Recommended changes in the procedures used in bullet lead analysis would provide the FBI with a sound basis for determining whether crime scene bullets ‘match’ a suspect’s bullets, but how these findings are conveyed in court and to a jury remains a critical issue,” Kenneth MacFadden, an independent consultant and member of the committee that wrote the report, said in a statement.

The technique being scrutinized is used when ballistics fail — for instance, if a bullet is squashed so much that it is impossible to tell whether it was shot from a particular gun.

In those cases, about 2,500 in the past 24 years, the FBI has to analyze the actual lead to see which batch of bullets a particular bullet came from.

The committee, part of the independent advisory National Academy of Sciences, said ballistics experts should not try to tell a court that a bullet came from a particular box of ammunition or that it was manufactured on a given date. Chemical analysis techniques are good but not that good, the report said.

“Attorneys, judges, jurors, and even expert witnesses can easily and inadvertently misunderstand and misrepresent the analysis of the evidence and its importance. It is therefore essential to discuss whether and how the evidence can be used,” the report reads.

“Overall this was an excellent report that is only going to improve the techniques that we currently use,” Dwight Adams, FBI director for the laboratory, told reporters in a telephone briefing.

Social welfare research institutes being reformed in China

BEIJING, 12 Feb — A senior official said here Tuesday that 248 state-owned social welfare research institutes around China are undergoing restructuring.

At a conference on the reform, Li Xuyang, Vice-Minister of Science and Technology, said the state will invest more money in the institutes and run them as non-profit organizations.

Another 61, with the main business of developing applied technologies, will be transformed into enterprises while the rest will be merged into universities or science and technology intermediaries, Li said.

The 248 research institutes belong to departments or equivalents in the State Council, or the Chinese Cabinet. They account for 94 per cent of the total in their kind in the country.

In addition to nearly 30 policy documents for re-structuring, Li said, the state invested a total of 750 million yuan (90 million US dollars) in the latest fiscal years covering cost of the reform.

Microsoft warns of critical flaw in Windows

SEATTLE (San Francisco), 12 Feb — Microsoft Corp said on Tuesday a “critical” flaw in most versions of its flagship Windows operating system could allow hackers to break into personal computers and snoop on sensitive data.

Although no computers were reported to have been compromised, the world’s largest software maker warned that Windows NT, Windows 2000, Windows XP and Windows Server 2003 were at risk.

Microsoft announced the flaw in its monthly security bulletin.

The company offered software updates to fix the software flaw, which assigned its most severe rating of “critical.”

“It does affect all (current) versions of Windows,” said Stephen Toulouse, security program manager for Microsoft’s Security Response Centre. “We’re not aware of anyone af- fected by this at this time.”

Marc Muaiffret, co-founder of eEye Digital Security, the company that discovered the flaw, criticized Microsoft for taking more than six months to come up with a patch to fix the problem.

The flaw could allow a hacker to break into a computer running Microsoft’s Win- dows operating system in several ways and then use the compromised machine to run malicious programs and steal or delete key data, Muaiffret and other experts said.

Last year Microsoft adopted a new monthly patch release programme, which the Customers must use security software fixes for security bugs. — MNA/Reuters

FBI’s techniques confound courtrooms

WASHINGTON, 12 Feb — The FBI’s techniques for analyzing crime scene bullets work well but need some tweaking, a panel of scientific experts said on Tuesday.

And testimony about the chemical analysis of the lead in bullets can confuse jurors and judges alike, the National Research Council panel said. The Federal Bureau of Investigation, which commissioned the report, said it would be a useful guide for improving its methods.

“Recommended changes in the procedures used in bullet lead analysis would provide the FBI with a sound basis for determining whether crime scene bullets ‘match’ a suspect’s bullets, but how these findings are conveyed in court and to a jury remains a critical issue,” Kenneth MacFadden, an independent consultant and member of the committee that wrote the report, said in a statement.

The technique being scrutinized is used when ballistics fail — for instance, if a bullet is squashed so much that it is impossible to tell whether it was shot from a particular gun.

In those cases, about 2,500 in the past 24 years, the FBI has to analyze the actual lead to see which batch of bullets a particular bullet came from.

“The committee, part of the independent advisory National Academy of Sciences, said ballistics experts should not try to tell a court that a bullet came from a particular box of ammunition or that it was manufactured on a given date. Chemical analysis techniques are good but not that good, the report said.

“Attorneys, judges, jurors, and even expert witnesses can easily and inadvertently misunderstand and misrepresent the analysis of the evidence and its importance. It is therefore essential to discuss whether and how the evidence can be used,” the report reads.

“Overall this was an excellent report that is only going to improve the techniques that we currently use,” Dwight Adams, FBI director for the laboratory, told reporters in a telephone briefing.

Iron storage in body raises diabetes risk

CHICAGO, 12 Feb — A study has found that storing abnormal amounts of iron in the body can lead to adult onset diabetes in women, raising the possibility that a blood test earlier in life could help identify those at risk, researchers said on Tuesday.

The finding came from a look at thousands of nurses who gave blood samples between 1989 and 1990 as part of a multiyear study. The 698 women developed diabetes over the course of the study even though they were free of it and free of heart disease as well at the start.

When their initial blood samples were compared with others who did not develop diabetes over a 10-year period, it was found that the diabetic group had significantly elevated levels of feritin when the initial blood samples were taken.

Feritin is an iron-protein complex in blood that is a marker for iron storage. Women with higher feritin levels at the start of the study had a nearly threefold increased risk of developing diabetes, the study found, even after taking into account such things as obesity and other risk factors including family history of diabetes, physical activity, alcohol use and diet.

“The results provide the strongest evidence to date that increased iron stores in the body are an independent risk factor for type 2 diabetes,” said Rui Jiang of the Harvard School of Public Health, lead author of the study appearing in this week’s Journal of the American Medical Association.

Frank Hu, a senior author, added: “If we validated these results in other populations, it would provide evidence of further lifestyle or therapeutic interventions that could lower iron stores in the body.”

Social welfare research institutes being reformed in China

BEIJING, 12 Feb — A senior official said here Tuesday that 248 state-owned social welfare research institutes around China are undergoing restructuring.

At a conference on the reform, Li Xuyang, Vice-Minister of Science and Technology, said the state will invest more money in the institutes and run them as non-profit organizations.

Another 61, with the main business of developing applied technologies, will be transformed into enterprises while the rest will be merged into universities or science and technology intermediaries, Li said. The 248 research institutes belong to departments or equivalents in the State Council, or the Chinese Cabinet. They account for 94 per cent of the total in their kind in the country.

In addition to nearly 30 policy documents for re-structuring, Li said, the state invested a total of 750 million yuan (90 million US dollars) in the latest fiscal years covering cost of the reform.

Researchers at those institutes said they favour the competition-oriented new system. They also said that they were more capable of obtaining state investment as well as non-governmental resources.

Statistics showed that the Chinese Academy of Geologi- cal Sciences gained 160 million yuan (19.4 million US dollars) worth of research funds in year 2003, double that of 1999. Four non-profit research institutes affiliated to the Ministry of Water Resources got approximately 800 million yuan (64.6 million US dollars) of contractual funds, three times that of 1998. — MNA/Xinhua

Microsoft warns of critical flaw in Windows

SEATTLE (San Francisco), 12 Feb — Microsoft Corp said on Tuesday a “critical” flaw in most versions of its flagship Windows operating system could allow hackers to break into personal computers and snoop on sensitive data.

Although no computers were reported to have been compromised, the world’s largest software maker warned that Windows NT, Windows 2000, Windows XP and Windows Server 2003 were at risk.

Microsoft announced the flaw in its monthly security bulletin.

The company offered software updates to fix the software flaw, which assigned its most severe rating of “critical.”

“It does affect all (current) versions of Windows,” said Stephen Toulouse, security program manager for Microsoft’s Security Response Centre. “We’re not aware of anyone af- fected by this at this time.”

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The flaw could allow a hacker to break into a computer running Microsoft’s Win- dows operating system in sev- eral ways and then use the compromised machine to run malicious programs and steal or delete key data, Muaiffret and other experts said.

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“Overall this was an excellent report that is only going to improve the techniques that we currently use,” Dwight Adams, FBI director for the laboratory, told reporters in a telephone briefing. — MNA/Reuters
United's title hopes hit by Job winner

London, 12 Feb—Manchester United's title hopes took a severe dent on Wednesday when the Premier League champions lost 3-2 at home to Middlesbrough.

Cameron international Joseph-Desire Job's fine turn and shot won the game for Boro 10 minutes from time. United had battled back after trailing by two first-half goals from Brazilian Juninho. Arsenal, who defeated Southampton 2-0 at home on Tuesday, held a five-point lead over United with both sides having played 25 games. Third-placed Chelsea, who won 2-0 at Portsmouth with goals from Scott Parker and Hernan Crespo, closed to one point behind United while Liverpool moved up to fourth with a 3-1 home victory over Manchester City.

Two headed goals from Juninho silenced Old Trafford and set United on their way to their second home league defeat of the season. The diminutive midfielder pounced to head home from close range after 34 minutes after a shot from distance by Boro defender Franck Queudrue bounced awkwardly in front of United keeper Tim Howard, who could only palm the ball up on to the crossbar.

The Brazilian struck again four minutes later, powerfully heading home a Stewart Downing cross before Ruid Van Nistelroy gave United a lifeline on halftime with his 22nd goal of the season. United upped the pressure after the break and drew level on 63 minutes when van Nistelroy set up Giggs to stab home.

But hopes of completing a storming comeback with a third goal were ended 10 minutes from time after Job span and fired home from 18 metres. United almost rescued a point in stoppage time but substitute Diego Forlan contrived to hit the crossbar from just four metres out.

Lazio's Fabio Liverani, centre, throws his jersey to the stands at the end of the Italy's Cup match between Lazio and Milan at Rome's Olympic Stadium, on 11 Feb, 2004. Liverani scored for his team, Lazio beat Milan 4-0 and qualified for the final. —REUTERS

Zidane off but Real battle through to King's Cup final

Madrid, 12 Feb—Real Madrid scrambled through to the final of the King's Cup with a 2-1 aggregate victory over Sevilla on Wednesday, despite having Zinedine Zidane sent off in the first half of a 1-0 second-leg defeat.

Real, leading 2-0 after last week's first leg at the Bernabeu, were shocked when Sevilla took the lead just 45 seconds into the return with a great finish from Antonio Lopez.

Carlos Queiroz's side were in further trouble in the final minute of the first half when French international Zidane, the 2003 FIFA World Player of the Year, was red-carded for an apparent slap to the face of Sevilla defender Pablo Alfaro.

Sevilla rattled the Real defence at the start of the first half but suffered a setback after 54 minutes when Javi Navarro received his second yellow card, evening up the numbers.

Sevilla continued to press but Real held out to edge into the final. Real Zaragoza and Alaves, level at 1-1 after the first leg, will battle it out for the right to meet Real in their semifinal, second-leg match on Thursday. —MNA/Reuters

Seongnam, Jubilo victorious in Champions League

Tokyo, 12 Feb—South Korea striker Kim Do-hoon scored twice in three minutes to spur Seongnam 1-1a to a 2-1 victory at Pekan Kidul in Indonesia in the Asian Champions League on Wednesday.

The 2003 K-League MVP pounced in the 29th and 31st minutes for the South Korean title holders in their opening Group G match. Japanese champions Yokohama F-Marinos top the group on goal difference following their 3-0 win over Vietnamese side Binh Dinh on Tuesday.

Another J-League club, Jubilo Iwata came from behind to beat South Korea's Chonbuk Motors 2-1 on scentic Cheju Island thanks to a 66th-minute winner from striker Yasaumasa Nishino.

Last year's Champions League runners-up BEC Tero won top of Group E, however, on goal difference, the Thai club thrashing China's Shanghai Shenhua 4-1 in Bangkok.

Elsewhere, Vietnamese champions Hoang Anh were indebted to Thai international Katisuk Senamuang, who scored a hat-trick to help his side crush PSM Makassar of Indonesia 5-1 to go top of Group F. —MNA/Reuters

Celtic march on, but manager O'Neill slams plastic

Glasgow, 12 Feb—Scottish Premier League leaders Celtic extended their winning run to 22 games on Wednesday with Henrik Larsson netting twice in a 4-1 thumping of Dunfermline Athletic.

Celtic fell behind to Noel Hunt's 20th-minute header at East End Park but were level three minutes later when Larsson nodded home Alan Thompson's corner.

The outstanding Thompson was the provider for further headers from Stanislav Varga on 26 minutes and Larsson again on 43 before the English midfielder netted himself on 68 minutes from a deflected free kick.

Celtic manager Martin O'Neill was scathing in his criticism of the home side's plastic pitch despite the victory.

"There were some wonderful goals but this is not football as we know it," O'Neill told reporters. "Dunfermline are a passing side and I'm sure some of their players can't like it.

"It was an ice rink towards the end. I believe some other (Scottish) clubs are thinking about doing it but my viewpoint is they'll get the game done away with."

"The very best players in this country will eventually want to leave because there is nobody who wants to play on it. "If this idea catches on we might as well head for Siberia."

Dunfermline played spiritedly and remained the only SPL side to have taken any thing from Celtic in a 0-0 opening game draw — in their final home match on grass — in August.

Champions Ream remain 11 points behind their Glasgow rivals in second place despite a 2-0 home win over Kilmarnock. Craig Moore scored their opener on 23 minutes before Hamed Namouchi tied up the win with a second 14 minutes from time. League Cup finalist Livoneston, who made seven players redundant this week after going into administration, suffered more misery with a 5-2 loss at bottom club Partick Thistle. —MNA/Reuters

Monaco, Morientes humble Lyon 4-1

Paris, 12 Feb—A brilliant hat-trick by Fernando Morientes sent French champions Olympique Lyon 4-1 and sent Monaco into the French Cup quarterfinals on Wednesday.

Lyon, seeking revenge after going down 3-0 in a Ligue 1 game in the principalcy a month before, had the best start, opening the scoring through Brazilian Elber in the 14th minute.

Morientes, hired by Monaco at the end of last year's transfer window, brought the principalcy team back into the game in the dying seconds of the first half.

Two headers by the former Real Madrid player within three minutes, in the 58th and 61st, sealed victory for Monaco.

Croatia's Dado Prso wrapped up the game with a fourth goal in the 86th minute.

The win was all the more impressive as coach Didier Deschamps, who had threatened to field his reserve team to protest at a tight schedule, had left some of his first-choice players on the bench.

Injured midfielder Ludovic Guly as well as international defenders Patrice Evra and Sebastien Squillaci were among the unused. —MNA/Reuters

Real Madrid's Brazilian player Ronaldo, left, is tackled by Sevilla's Javi Navarro during a King's Cup semi-final, 2nd leg, soccer match in Seville, Spain, on 11 Feb, 2004. Real lost the match 1-0 but qualify for the final 2-1 on aggregate. —INTERNET

Manchester United's Ruud van Nistelroy (L) tries to get the ball from Middlesbrough's Chris Rigott (R) during Premiership clash at Old Trafford in Manchester on 11 Feb, 2004. —INTERNET

Lazio's Fabio Liverani, centre, throws his jersey to the stands at the end of the Italy's Cup match between Lazio and Milan at Rome's Olympic Stadium, on 11 Feb, 2004. Liverani scored for his team, Lazio beat Milan 4-0 and qualified for the final. —INTERNET
Seminar on Introduction to Bangkok Hospital held

YANGON, 12 Feb.—The Seminar on An Introduction to the Bangkok Hospital was launched at Traders Hotel at 4 pm today. Head of Department of Medicine Prof U Saw Naing of Institute of Medicine-1, Yangon, extended greetings.

Next, Managing Director Dr Win Zaw Aung of Sea Lion Co Ltd made a presentation about Introduction of Bangkok Hospital Office, Myanmar; and IMC Marketing Manager of Bangkok Hospital Mr Ralf Krewer, Introduction and Information on the Bangkok Hospital. Finally, the seminar was closed with dinner at the hotel.

Royal Physician Prof Niti Mahanonda, Professor, Associate Director, Bangkok Heart Institute, Bangkok Hospital, together with Dr Kiertjai Bhuripanyo and Dr Sureerat Panyarachun conducted a PTCA demonstration workshop at the Sakura Medical Centre. The same afternoon, the Symposium on Advanced Cardiological and Neuro-Surgical Practices was held at the same hotel. Prof Kiertjai Bhuripanyo provided What’s New and What’s Next about Cardiology, followed by Dr Dittapong Boonampol, Consultant of Neuro-surgery, Bangkok Hospital provided Neuro-surgical Revolution. Dr Sureerat Panyarachun also provided Indication and Benefits of Angioplasty. Also present on the occasion were doctors from Yangon and Mandalay, persons from private clinics, old patients from Bangkok Hospital and guests.

Bangkok Hospital is currently taking care of Thai Royal Family’s health care and also to the public and international patients from around the world. Bangkok Hospital Chain is the biggest private hospital group not only in Thailand but also in ASEAN countries. Those who want overseas medical check-up and treatments can contact Bangkok Hospital Office, Myanmar, at 223, Bo Myat Tun Street, Botataung Township, Tel: 202120 and 295976 and 301, 81st street between 24th and 25th Street, Mandalay, Tel: 02-32981. —MNA

Press conference on Made in India Show held

YANGON, 12 Feb.—The press conference related to Made in India Show was held at Grand Plaza Parkroyal Hotel on Alanya Pagoda Road at noon yesterday. The Show, co-hosted by the Indian Embassy and the Confederation of Indian Industry of India, will be held at Yangon Trade Centre on Upper Pazundaung Road in Mangala Taungnyunt Township from 19 to 22 February.

Present were Indian Ambassador Mr Rajiv Kumar Bhatia and staff, Deputy Director Mr S Sen and officials of Confederation of Indian Industry of India, Director (News) U Hla Tun of News and Periodicals Enterprise, chief editors of dailies, Patron of Myanmar Foreign Correspondents Club U Hla Htwe, President U Sao Ka Hpa and members, journalists and guests.

First, the Indian ambassador made a speech, saying that the Made in India Show will be held in Yangon from 19 to 22 February. India achieves industrial and technological as well as economic development. India is practicing the “look east” policy. In recent years, relationship between India and ASEAN has been renewed and it will be promoted in the long run. It is one of the main objectives to strengthen trade and economic cooperation. Relationship between India and Myanmar is being developed in all sectors, particularly in trade and economic sectors. With the encouragement of the Indian Government, the Made in India Show will be held and a large number of companies will participate in it.

Next, Mr S Sen explained matters related to products and companies, construction equipment, medicines and medical equipment, cosmetics, garments, handworks, leatherwears, health service, farming equipment, ratten and furniture, kitchen items, hospital equipment, electronics and pumps will be displayed at the show between 10 am and 6 pm daily from 19 to 22 February.

Iron and steel products, bicycle and spare parts, construction equipment, medicines and medical equipment, cosmetics, garments, handworks, leatherwears, health service, farming equipment, ratten and furniture, kitchen items, hospital equipment, electronics and pumps will be displayed at the show between 10 am and 6 pm daily from 19 to 22 February.

MNA

WEATHER

Thursday, 12 February, 2004

Summary of observations recorded at 09:30 hours

MST; During the past 24 hours, weather has been generally fair in the whole country. Night temperatures were 3°C above normal in Bago Division, 5°C above normal in Taunggyi Division, 3°C to 4°C below normal in Chin State, Yangon, Ayeyawady and Mandalay Divisions, 5°C below normal in upper Sagon Division and about normal in the remaining areas. Maximum temperature on 11-2-2004 was 34.0°C. Minimum temperature on 12-2-2004 was 14.8°C. Relative humidity at 9:30 hrs MST on 12-2-2004 was 60%. Total sunshine hours on 11-2-2004 was 8.3 hours approx. Rainfall on 12-2-2004 was nil at Yangon Airport, Kaba-Aye and central Yangon. Bay interference: Weather is partly cloudy in the South Bay and generally fair elsewhere in the Bay of Bengal. Forecast valid until evening of 13-2-2004: Possibility of isolated light rain in Mon State and Taunggyi Division, weather will be generally fair in the remaining areas, Degree of certainty is 40%. State of the sea: Seas will be slight to moderate in Myanmar waters. Outlook for subsequent two days: Likelihood of isolated light rain in Southern Myanmar areas; Forecast for Yangon and neighbouring area for 13-2-2004; Partly cloudy. Forecast for Mandalay and neighbouring area for 13-2-2004: Generally fair weather.
Senior General Than Shwe’s message read out at Union Day flag hoisting ceremony

YANGON, 12 Feb— The 57th Anniversary Union Flag hoisting ceremony was held with full political essence in accord with 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; and for all national races to make concerted efforts for successful implementation of the seven-point future policy programme, at People’s Square on Pyay Road this morning.

The Union Flag that stopped over one night each in four Yangon districts arrived at the People’s Square on Pyay Road at 7.20 am on board the Union Boat.

Chairman of Yangon City Development Committee Mayor Brig-Gen Aung Thein Lin accepted the flag from Chairman of Yangon West District Peace and Development Council Chairman of Yangon Command Maj-Gen Myint Swe, Secretary-General of the Union Solidarity and Development Association Maj-Gen Htay Oo, Minister for Home Affairs Col Tin Hlaing, Lt-Gen Be Yan of Kayah State representing the Union Peace and Development Council Commander of Union Day Flag hoisting ceremony Chairman of Yangon City Development Committee Mayor Brig-Gen Aung Thein Lin, departmental heads, officials of departments under the Union, National League for Democracy, National Democratic Unity Party, National Democratic Force, Kachin Independence Organization, Shan State Nationalities Democratic Alliance, Karen National Union, and members of the panel of patrons.

The ceremony was attended by members of the Union (UDSA) who are long-term friends of the Union, senior military officers of the command headquarters, directors-general and managing directors of departments and enterprises, OSDs, members of YCDC and heads of department, rectors, members of NGOs, local and foreign journalists, cultural troupe members of States and Divisions, representatives of State and Division USDA and representatives of peace groups, totalling over 1,200.

With a view to ensuring further national consolidation and strengthening friendly relations among national races in hill and plain regions, members of traditional cultural troupes were positioned at the places together with members of the Union Day Organizing Working Committee, senior military officers, departmental heads, rectors and principals and representatives of NGOs.

Altogether over 10,700 public including 3,000 people from townships in Yangon East District, 5,000 from townships in Yangon West District, 1,000 from townships in Yangon North District, 500 from townships in Yangon South District attended the ceremony.

(See page 10)

Prime Minister inspects Hepatitis-B Vaccine Factory, Mental Health Hospital (Yangon)

YANGON, 12 Feb— Chairman of National Health Committee Prime Minister of the State General Khin Nyunt, accompanied by officials of the State Peace and Development Council Office, arrived at the site of Hepatitis-B Vaccine Factory construction project of Medical Research Department (Lower Myanmar) in Hlegu Township this morning.

The Prime Minister was welcomed there by Chairman of Yangon Division Peace and Development Council Chairman of Yangon Command Maj-Gen Myint Swe, Minister for Health Dr Kyaw Myint, Yangon Mayor Brig-Gen Aung Thein Lin, Deputy Minister for Health Dr Mya Oo, departmental heads, officials of departments under the Ministry of Health, the deputy director-general of MRD (Lower Myanmar) and researchers.

At the briefing, Deputy Director-General Dr Soe Thein of the department in charge of the progress of the project, installation of machines, test-running, production of vaccines, power and telephone installation, water supply and construction of roads, greening tasks at environs of the factory, implementation of works instructed by the Prime Minister. Minister Dr Kyaw Myint and Deputy Minister Dr Mya Oo gave supplementary reports.

Then, Commander Maj-Gen Myint Swe reported on construction of roads and bridges connected with Dagon Myothit (East) Township. Prime Minister General Khin Nyunt fulfilled the requirements.

Next, the Prime Minister inspected the vaccine production department, the vaccine quality control department, and finishing departments where the minister and the deputy minister conducted the Prime Minister round there.

The Prime Minister and party proceeded to Mental Health Hospital (Yangon) in Dagon Myothit (East) Township where they were welcomed by Medical Superintendent Dr Zaw Sein Lwin, doctors and nurses.

At the hall, Dr Zaw Sein Lwin reported on history of the hospital, location and area, treatment, training and rehabilitation tasks, improvement of in-patients and outpatient facilities, in-patients treatment, therapies, training programmes, progress of construction works and requirements.

Afterwards, the General gave instructions on construction of Day Care Centre, buildings, playground and gymnasiums and progress of the Master Plan.

Later, the Prime Minister, together with the commander and the mayor, inspected progress of Myinwe Kyawswa Road and Razzadari Road which connect with No 7 High-way and Pyidaungsu Road in Dagon Myothit (South) Township and Panglong Road in Dagon Myothit (North) by car and gave instruction to the mayor and officials on maintenance of the roads to be carried out.

Curriculum Vitae of Dato’ Seri Abdullah bin Haji Ahmad Badawi, Prime Minister of Malaysia

YANGON, 12 Feb— His Excellency Dato’ Seri Abdullah bin Haji Ahmad Badawi, was born on 6 November 1939. He studied at Bertam Primary School, Kepa Batan, High School Bukit Meriam and Methodist Boys School, Penang. He graduated with a BA in Islamic Studies from University of Malaya in 1964.

After serving in various capacities in Government Services, from 1964 to 1966. His Excellency Dato’ Seri Abdullah bin Haji Ahmad Badawi served as Parliamentary Secretary in the Federal Territory Ministry in 1978. He was then promoted to Deputy Minister in the same Ministry in 1990. His Excellency Dato’ Seri Abdullah bin Haji Ahmad Badawi later held the post of Minister in the Prime Minister’s Department from 1981 to 1984; and Minister of Education from 1984 to 1986; Minister of Defence from 1986 to 1987; and Minister of Foreign Affairs from 1991 to January 1999. From January 1999 to 30 October 2003, His Excellency Dato’ Seri Abdullah bin Haji Ahmad Badawi had served as the Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Home Affairs.

His Excellency Dato’ Seri Abdullah bin Haji Ahmad Badawi assumes the post of premiership and Minister of Finance after the retirement of Dato’ Seri Dr Mahathir bin Mohamad from his premiership on 31 October 2003. He retains his post as Minister of Home Affairs which he held during the previous government. His Excellency Dato’ Seri Abdullah bin Haji Ahmad Badawi is married to Datin Seri Endon Bt Dato’ Mahmood. They have a son and a daughter. — MNA

Union Flag conveyed to People’s Square from Hlinethaya

YANGON, 12 Feb— The Union Flag that stopped over one night each on the silver bowl-shaped grounds in Thanlyin Township on 8 February, in Dagon Myothit (South) Township on 9 February, in Hmawbi Township on 10 February and in Hlinethaya on 11 February was conveyed to the People’s Square on board Union Boat from the sports ground of Hlinethaya Township this morning, and conveyed it again to keep it in the silver bowl on the dasa of the parcour of the City Hall. The ceremony to convey Union Flag to the People’s Square was held in the sports ground in Hlinethaya Township this morning, attended by more than 8,000 local people. First, they together with the Guard of Honour of Yangon Command saluted the flag to the accompaniment of the band of Tatmadaw (Air). At 6.25 am, Chairman of Yangon West District Peace and Development Council Lt-Col Kyaw Tint, flanked by Tatmadaw (Army, Navy and Air) and police officers, took out the flag from the silver bowl on the dasa in the sports ground of Hlinethaya Township and conveyed it. He next handed over the flag to flag relay teams. Later, Lt-Col Kyaw Tint accepted the flag from the relay team and conveyed it onto the Union Boat. He then planted the flag into the silver bowl. Flanked by Tatmadaw (Army, Navy and Air) and police officers, the Union Flag was conveyed on a grand scale from Prince Kanaung Road in Hlinethaya Industrial Zone to the People’s Square through Yangon-Pathein Road, Bayintnaung Bridge, Bayintnaung Road, Sanawtaw Road, Pyay Road. The Flag was accorded a rousing welcome by over 25,000 local people including local authorities, students, departmental personnel and people with dancing troupes. At the People’s Square, Lt-Col Kyaw Tint, flanked by Tatmadaw (Army, Navy and Air) and police officers, conveyed the flag, and handed it over to Yangon Mayor Brig-Gen Aung Thein Lin. — MNA