Prime Minister Khin Nyunt addresses meeting of Leading Committee for Implementation of Myanmar-China Economic Agreements — MNA

Prime Minister attends coordination meeting to hold Fourth World Buddhist Summit

YANGON, 21 Feb — The meeting to coordinate Fourth World Buddhist Summit was held at the Central Hall of International Theravada Buddhist Missionary University in Mayangon Township at 9 am today, attended by Prime Minister General Khin Nyunt. Also present at the meeting were Chairman of Yangon Division Peace and Development Council Commander of Yangon Command Maj-Gen Myint Swe, the ministers, the Yangon mayor, the deputy the ministers, officials of the Yangon Command, Maj-Gen Myint Swe, the ministers, the deputy ministers, members of the State Peace and Development Council Office, departmental heads, the Pro-Rector and officials of the University, members of the Leading Committee, Working Committee and Sub-committees for Organizing the Summit.

At the meeting, Prime Minister General Khin Nyunt delivered an address. He said that the leading committee, the working committee and sub-committees have been formed for holding the Fourth World Buddhist Summit in Myanmar this year and the committees are carrying out the tasks.

(See page 8)

Prime Minister attends meeting of Leading Committee for Implementation of Myanmar-China Economic Agreements

YANGON, 21 Feb — The Leading Committee for Implementation of Myanmar-China Economic Agreements held its meeting at Zeyathiri Beikman on Konmyinttha, here, at 9 am today, with an address by Chairman of the Leading Committee Prime Minister General Khin Nyunt.

Also present on the occasion were Vice-Chairman of the Leading Committee Secretary-2 of the State Peace and Development Council Dr Thinn Sein, the ministers, the deputy ministers, members of the leading committee, officials of the State Peace and Development Council Office, departmental heads and officials.

First, Chairman of the Leading Committee for Implementation of Myanmar-China Economic Agreements Prime Minster General Khin Nyunt delivered an address. He said that agreements on economic cooperation were signed after goodwill visits by the Heads of State between Myanmar and China.

As Myanmar, on its part, has agreed on bilateral economic cooperation among neighbouring countries, committees were set up to promptly implement the agreements. While implementing the agreement on economic cooperation between China and Myanmar laid down by State leaders of both sides during the goodwill visit of Head of State Senior General Than Shwe to the People’s Republic of China and the good-will visit of PRC leaders Mr Zhang Zemin and President Mr Hu Jintao, some agreements have been completed and some are being implemented. It is necessary to systematically carry out matters related to economic cooperation in the future. The Prime Minister invited ministers concerned to report tasks being carried out and to be done for rapid implementation of the bilateral economic cooperation agreements between Myanmar and China.

Next, Secretary of the Leading Committee Minister for Foreign Affairs U Win Aung reported on economic cooperation among Myanmar and China.

As Myanmar, on its part, has agreed on bilateral economic cooperation among neighbouring countries, committees were set up to promptly implement the agreements. While implementing the agreement on economic cooperation between China and Myanmar laid down by State leaders of both sides during the goodwill visit of Head of State Senior General Than Shwe to the People’s Republic of China and the good-will visit of PRC leaders Mr Zhang Zemin and President Mr Hu Jintao, some agreements have been completed and some are being implemented. It is necessary to systematically carry out matters related to economic cooperation in the future. The Prime Minister invited ministers concerned to report tasks being carried out and to be done for rapid implementation of the bilateral economic cooperation agreements between Myanmar and China.

Prime Minister General Khin Nyunt addresses meeting of Leading Committee for Implementation of Myanmar-China Economic Agreements — MNA

Four political objectives
* Stability of the State, community peace and tranquility, prevalence of law and order
* National reconsolidation
* Emergence of a new enduring State Constitution
* Building of a new modern developed nation in accord with the new State Constitution

Four economic objectives
* Development of agriculture as the base and all-round development of other sectors of the economy as well
* Proper evolution of the market-oriented economic system
* Development of the economy inviting participation in terms of technical know-how and investments from sources inside the country and abroad
* The initiative to shape the national economy must be kept in the hands of the State and the national peoples

Four social objectives
* Uplift of the morale and morality of the entire nation
* Uplift of national prestige and integrity and preservation and safeguarding of cultural heritage and national character
* Uplift of dynamism of patriotic spirit
* Uplift of health, fitness and education standards of the entire nation

Welcome to enhancing Myanmar-India bilateral trade

Circulation 23,140
50th Anniversary Armed Forces Day Objectives

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

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

Myanmar Writers and Journalists Association Chairman U Hla Myaing (Ko Hsaung) delivers an address at the centennial ceremony of Daw Dagon Kin Kin Lay. — MNA

Central bank of Daw Dagon Kin Kin Lay observed

Yangon, 21 Feb — A ceremony to observe the centennial of Daw Dagon Kin Kin Lay who was the first woman short story writer and established Bama Khit daily and Yuwaddy Journal was held yesterday morning at the International Business Centre on Pyay Road here.

Present on the occasion were Myanmar Writers and Journalists Association Chairman U Hla Myaing (Ko Hsaung), Vice-Chairmen U Tin Kha (Tekkatho Tin Kha) and U Than Maung (Than Maung), Joint Secretary-U Myint Kywe (Maung Myint Kywe) and Central Executive Committee members, literati, journalists, Yuwaddy families and guests.

First, MWJA Chairman U Hla Myaing (Ko Hsaung) delivered an address. Next, Daw Saw Mon Hnyin’s ratu poem was cited by vocalist Daw Yi Yi Thant. Then, writer Daw Saw Mon Hnyin, Daw Dagon Kin Kin Lay’s niece Daw Tin Tin Ma, theatrical artiste U Ye Sein and writer Yuwaddy Shewwa Sein spoke words of appreciation. Master of ceremonies U Win Nyein read out messages sent to the occasion.

Advisor to the Ministry of Information U Myo Thant (Maung Hsu Shin) spoke words of honour. — MNA

Development works inspected

Yangon, 21 Feb — Director-General of the Development Affairs Department of the Ministry for Progress of Border Areas and National Races and Development Affairs Col Myo Myint, together with officials arrived in Kalay on 19 February and inspected development affairs works. Officers concerned reported to him on the work progresses and he gave necessary instructions. He also inspected the repair to Aungzeya Road and paving of 1,200-foot Padamyu Road there.

Next, the director-general proceeded to Khanpat and Tamu. In Tamu, he also inspected the paving of Nañhampon-Gadoh Road. Later, he went to Kalewa and met with staff of the department. He also inspected the paving of market circular road.

Likewise, Deputy Director-General of the department U Kyaw and officials inspected the construction of Kyangus bridge in Thanapat Township, Bago Division yesterday. — MNA

Wellwishers invited

Yangon, 21 Feb — The Development Affairs Committees under the Ministry for Progress of Border Areas and National Races and Development Affairs are making concerted efforts in sinking tubewells in order to get sufficient fresh water in rural areas in States and Divisions where there is a shortage of water. One 200 feet deep two-inch diameter tubewell costs K 250,000; one 400 feet deep two-inch diameter tubewell costs K 500,000; and one 200 feet deep four-inch diameter tubewell costs K 500,000. — MNA

The best time to plant a tree was 20 years ago. The second best time is now.
US soldier wounded in bombing as troops leave Iraq

BAGHDAD, 21 Feb — A bomb blast wounded at least one US soldier travelling in a convoy with thousands of troops heading home after a tense year in Iraq, a US officer said.

A US military helicopter evacuated the Fourth Infantry Division (4ID) soldier after a roadside explosion hit his convoy just south of Balad, about 75 kilometres (55 miles) north of Baghdad, Major Douglas Babb told AFP.

Troops from the 30,000-strong Task Force Iron Horse, who have spent a year in the so-called Sunni Triangle hunting rebels, were driving through hostile territory along the main north-south highway toward Baghdad. After reaching Baghdad, they are to head to Kuwait, where they will fly back to the United States.

In all, as many as 200,000 troops are coming in or out of the restive Sunni Muslim belt north and west of the capital in the biggest US troop rotation since World War II as Taskforce Iron Horse and other contingents are relieved by fresh troops. Internet

White House admits failure of Iraq caucus plan

WASHINGTON, 21 Feb— The Bush Administration acknowledged on Friday that its ambitious plan to transfer sovereignty directly to a democratically elected government in Iraq was unlikely to succeed, after Iraqis insisted on elections untainted by US influence.

White House spokesman Scott McClellan said the Administration’s initial plan for an interim, democratically elected government through a complicated series of 18 regional caucuses had failed to pass muster with Iraqi leaders.

“There’s wide recognition that the caucus plan is something that has not received much support,” he said. “This is becoming more and more of an Iraqi-driven process.”

Barely four months before the June 30 transfer of sovereignty by the US-led Coalition Provisional Authority, the White House said it was talking to Iraqi leaders about new options for leaving the Muslim country with a “representative, transitional government” while awaiting recommendations from the United Nations.

Details of the UN position on elections will be announced next week, with a time frame for elections to select a permanent government, probably late this year or early in 2005.

The United Nations, which has backed the US position that elections cannot be held before June 30, says it is ready to help Iraqis find a consensus on proposals that diplomats say include expanding the Iraqi Governing Council, a group of 25 Iraqis handpicked by the United States in July, or a national conference of leaders that would select a provisional government.

Washington expects US troops to remain in Iraq long after the transition, although the Bush Administration has yet to come up with an agreement under which the soldiers would stay.

There are currently about 115,000 American troops in the country. Ayatollah Ali al-Sistani, the top Iraqi Shiite religious leader who was first to challenge the Bush caucus plan with a call for direct elections, said in an interview published on Friday that any interim government left behind by the Americans should have limited authority.

MNA/Reuters

Nepal, Malaysia to sign labour accord next month

KAITHMANDU, 21 Feb — Nepal will sign a labour accord with Malaysia in March in a bid to gear up bilateral labour relations with its major labour-importing country, a Nepali Government official said.

“The government has made all necessary arrangements to ink the accord, while Malaysian officials are very positive in this regard and have planned to arrive here for the signing of accord,” The Kathmandu Post newspaper on Friday quoted Naranay Prasad Silwal, secretary of the Ministry of Labour and Transport Management, as saying.

The draft for the labour accord has already been forwarded to the Nepali Ministry of Law and Justice for some legal recommendations, Silwal said.

Nepali labourers would be facilitated with rights to challenge any kind of inequality in salary and working condition in Malaysia after the signing of the accord, he noted, adding, “The inking of such an accord with Malaysia could be a historic to Nepal, as it could be the Himalayan kingdom’s first labour accord with any other country.”

Nepal is one of the top labour-exporting countries to Malaysia, where there are more than 100,000 Nepali workers, each of them earning at least 125 US dollars per month.

NMA/Xinhua

Malaysia to refresh call for south-south cooperation at G-15

KUALA LUMPUR, 21 Feb — Malaysia would be using the 12th G-15 Summit as a platform to refresh call for economic cooperation among developing countries, Foreign Minister Syed Hamid Albar said on Friday.

“It will be a pity if the G-15 cannot move forward from what it was before. With globalization and the failed trade talks in Cancun, there is much to gain among south-south countries,” Syed Hamid said at a Press conference here.

This would be among the points raised by Prime Minister Abdullah Ahmad Badawi at the summit, he said.

As one of the founding members of the group, he said, Malaysia’s presence reflected its continued support for the south-south economic cooperation. The summit, to be held in Caracas, Venezuela, on February 24-28, had been postponed several times.

“I think it is necessary for G-15 to get together the ground again so that it can benefit from greater economic cooperation among countries of the south,” added Syed Hamid.

Now grouping 19 developing countries from Asia, Africa and Latin America, G-15 was set up in September 1989 to foster south-south cooperation and provide input for other international groups, such as the World Trade Organization and the Group of Seven rich industrialized nations.

MNA/Xinhua

US soldier seeks asylum in Canada

OTTAWA, 21 Feb — A US paratrooper is seeking refuge in Canada as a conscientious objector, it is reported here Thursday.

According to a Canadian Television report, Jeremy Hinzman joined the US Army in January 2001, but he soon became horrified by the ethics of military service during basic training marches.

By August 2002, the member of the US 82nd Airborne Division and the practising Buddhist applied to be a conscientious objector which means his personal beliefs prevent him from participating in war. But McClellan said the United Nations had not assumed a presiding role over negotiations in Iraq.

“We have always said the United Nations had a vital role to play. We appreciated their efforts in assessing the feasibility of elections, and we will continue to discuss ways they can continue to be involved,” he said.

Washington expects US troops to remain in Iraq long after the transition, although the Bush Administration has yet to come up with an agreement under which the soldiers would stay.

There are currently about 115,000 American troops in the country. Ayatollah Ali al-Sistani, the top Iraqi Shiite religious leader who was first to challenge the Bush caucus plan with a call for direct elections, said in an interview published on Friday that any interim government left behind by the Americans should have limited authority.

MNA/Reuters

THE NEW LIGHT OF MYANMAR Sunday, 22 February, 2004 3
US troops kill one after attack on Baghdad prison

Baghdad, 21 Feb — Guerrillas launched dozens of mortars and rockets at the main US prison in Baghdad and troops killed one Iraqi as they returned fire on Wednesday evening, the US military said on Thursday.

The attackers fired 33 mortar rounds and five rockets at the Abu Ghraib prison, where US forces hold hundreds of Iraqi detainees, at about 6:30 p.m. (1530 GMT), a US military official said. Coalition forces engaged and killed one enemy as they tried to flee the scene.

US soldiers arrested 55 others at the scene. One US soldier suffered minor wounds, but was treated and returned to duty. MNA/Reuters

Two US soldiers, Iraqi citizen killed in roadside bomb

Baghdad, 21 Feb — Two US soldiers and at least one Iraqi citizen were killed on Thursday in a roadside bomb attack in the Iraqi city of Khalidiyah, 80 kilometres west of Baghdad, the US military said.

"Two US soldiers were killed and one wounded at 10:30 this morning (0730 GMT) in a roadside blast near Khalidiyah," a military spokesman in Iraq said, adding that at least one Iraqi was also killed. It is still not clear if the Iraqi was a civilian or a member of Iraq's security forces, who often patrol alongside US troops.

Thursday's deaths brought to 378 the number of US soldiers killed in hostile action in Iraq since the war erupted last March. During the same period, at least another 163 US soldiers were killed in Iraq in various accidents. MNA/Xinhua

US soldier killed in accident in Iraq

Baghdad, 21 Feb — An American soldier died Friday in a traffic accident close to the central Iraqi town of Balad, the US military command said.

The soldier was from Task Force Ironhorse, a 30,000-strong unit that began leaving Iraq this past week after the US-led occupation of the country, the command said giving no more details. The accident brings to 546 the number of American service members who have died since the US-led war in Iraq began March 20. Most of the deaths have occurred after President Bush declared an end to active combat May 1. — Internet

China attaches great importance to China-India relations

New Delhi, 21 Feb — China attaches great importance to the development of long-standing, stable and healthy relations with India, said He Guoqiang, a member of the Political Bureau of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of China (CPC), while meeting with Bahiron Singh Shekhawat, Vice-President of India, Thursday.

He spoke highly of the stance on Tibetan issue that India will scrupulously abide by the views, saying that India will firmly support China's position on the diplomatic working conference on traditional Chinese medicine. Wu Yi said. She urged all parties and localities concerned to give priority to this issue. — MNA/Xinhua

Dismal six weeks for Bush has supporters edgy

Washington, 21 Feb — Since the beginning of 2004, President George W Bush has suffered one political misfire after another, prompting some Republicans to wonder anxiously when the White House political machine will get in gear.

"This may have been the worst six weeks of Bush’s political career,” said Rick Davis, who managed the 2000 presidential bid by Arizona Republican Senator John McCain which lost to Bush.

In the latest embarrassment to hit the White House, the Administration on Wednesday distanced itself from its own buoyant employment forecast that had predicted 2.6 million new jobs this year. That followed red faces over a statement by Gregory Mankiw, chairman of the White House Council of Economic Advisers, who declared at a news conference last week that the economy had grown by 8.4 per cent and for the fiscal 2003-04 we will go by the Central Statistical Organization’s (CSO) estimate of 8.1 per cent,” he added. Referring to inflation, he said “it has come down and we are firm that it will remain in the range of 4.4-5.4 per cent by March end”.

Strategists say early year jitters may mean little for the election outcome. Many believe Bush, with a big advantage in campaign funds — he has raised almost 150 million US dollars — still has the upper hand going into the battle.

Bush’s State of the Union Address was not well received and neither was his budget. Major policy initiatives on sending humans to Mars and reforming immigration law had a mixed reception at best. An interview with NBC’s Tim Russert, a rare such appearance for Bush, failed to quell the criticism.

The White House allowed a controversy over Bush’s service in the National Guard to grab headlines for two weeks. And the failure to find weapons of mass destruction in Iraq, Bush’s main justification for last year’s war, promises to be a continuing embarrassment.

Indian economy grew 8.9% in third quarter

Mumbai, 21 Feb — Riding high on the performance of manufacturing, services and agriculture sector, Indian economy has recorded an 8.9 per cent growth in the third quarter ended December 31, 2003, even as the government expects inflation to remain in the range of 4.4-5.4 per cent by end of fiscal 2003-04.

As per the quick estimates, Indian economy has posted a growth of 8.9 per cent because the manufacturing, services and agriculture sector have done well and this (growth) is a remarkable achievement", Indian Finance Minister Jaswant Singh said Thursday after presenting the Financial Express-Electrolux awards for women in business here.

"In the second quarter ended September, the economy had grown by 8.4 per cent and for the fiscal 2003-04 we will go by the Central Statistical Organization’s (CSO) estimate of 8.1 per cent”, he added. Referring to inflation, he said “it has come down and we are firm that it will remain in the range of 4.4-5.4 per cent by March end”.

On fluctuations in price index, the minister said, any demonstration of this kind is always a matter of concern for the Finance Ministry but are confident that we will manage inflation”.

Earlier in his speech, Singh said “it is my conviction that India is on a dynamic growth path and there is also a resurgence in the self-confidence”. MNA/PTI
NO LET-UP IN ANTI-OCCUPATION ATTACKS

An Iraqi man pushes a cart piled with his family's belongings salvaged from a bomb site after an explosives-laden trucks were detonated outside a Polish military camp in Hillah, south of Baghdad on Wednesday, Feb 18, 2004.

An armed Iraqi stands guard to protect a crowd of Iraqis marching in a rally in Najaf, southern Iraq on Friday, 20 Feb, 2004.

An unidentified Iraqi father carries his son for treatment at Samawa General Hospital in southeastern Iraq, meet with Iraqi doctors on Thursday 19 Feb, 2004.

A group of Iraqi men survey the damaged house of a local leader in the village of Aamriya, near the anti-American hotbed of Falluja, some 50 km (30 miles) west from the Iraqi capital Baghdad, on 16 February, 2004.
Four US troops wounded, Iraqi translator killed in ambush

BAGHDAD (Reuters) - Four US soldiers were wounded and their Iraqi translator was killed on Saturday when gunmen ambushed their convoy south of Baghdad, the US army said.

Four US soldiers were wounded and their Iraqi translator was killed in a small arms fire ambush 22 km (14 miles) south of Iskandariya (near Baghdad), a US military spokeswoman said.

A guerrilla campaign of bombings and shootings has killed 387 American soldiers since the war that ousted Saddam Hussein began in March.

US convoy attacked close to Baghdad

BAGHDAD, Iraq (AP) 21 Feb — Insurgents opened fire on a US military convoy south of Baghdad on Saturday, apparently causing some US casualties, witnesses said.

Coalition officials in the capital were unaware of the reported attack, which the US military spokeswoman said was a small arms fire ambush 22 km (14 miles) south of Baghdad.

Iraqis opposed to the US occupation make daily attacks against coalition troops in Iraq. Since the war began March 20, 546 American service members have died.

Most of the deaths have occurred after President Bush declared an end to active combat on 1 May.

China willing to conduct cooperation with Iran

BEIJING, 21 Feb — China is willing to carry out mutually-beneficial and friendly cooperation with Iran in various areas, including energy, said a Foreign Ministry spokeswoman here Thursday.

Spokeswoman Zhang Qiyue said the governments of China and Iran had once signed a framework agreement for energy cooperation.

It is natural for the two countries' companies to conduct business activities and mutually-beneficial cooperation within this framework, she said.

Zhang said China encourages Chinese companies to carry out mutually-beneficial cooperation with their counterparts in Iran.

India to launch recoverable satellite in 2005

NEW DELHI, 21 Feb — India will launch a recoverable satellite in 2005, the Press Trust of India (PTI) quoted K. Chattopadhyay, coordinator of the experiment, as saying on Thursday.

The satellite would conduct some micro gravity experiments in space and return to Earth after five days, Chattopadhyay told the National Space Science Symposium being held in Kottayam of Kerala State, far south India.

An orbiting satellite provided the condition for conducting experiments in a virtually zero gravity environment, he said.

In one of the experiments Indian scientists will grow a kind of crystal called quasi crystal of gallium-magnesium-zinc alloy. In another experiment, they will grow a polymer blend used as bone substitute.

Once the experiments were over the capsule will parachute to Earth, he said.

Chattopadhyay said this would be one of the several recoverable satellites to be launched by Indian Space Research Organization (ISRO) this year. The recoverable satellite would complement other micro gravity experiment planned to be conducted in balloon.

Mitsubishi Electric Corporation displays a prototype of what the world's first 'reversible LCD,' capable of displaying imagery on both its front and rear surfaces, as its rear side is reflected in mirrors in Amagasaki, western Japan on 20 Feb, 2004.

HK, Chinese mainland establish world's first China Brain Bank

HONG KONG, 21 Feb — The University of Hong Kong (HKU) and the Central South University signed on Friday an agreement for collaboration on the establishment of the world's first China Brain Bank.

The satellite would conduct some micro gravity experiments in space and return to Earth after five days, Chattopadhyay told the National Space Science Symposium being held in Kottayam of Kerala State, far south India.

The alteration of socialism with Chinese characteristics led by the Communist Party of China will "end Hong Kong’s prosperity and stability", Deng is quoted.

The premise of the principle is "one country", which refers to the PRC, says the commentary, quoting Deng as saying "nothing can be discussed without trust in the PRC and the Chinese Government".

The commentary demands respect for the PRC's resumption of the exercise of sovereignty over Hong Kong and the maintenance of China's unity and territorial integrity, as well as acknowledgment of socialism as the country's main body.

The alteration of socialism with Chinese characteristics led by the Communist Party of China will "end Hong Kong’s prosperity and stability", Deng is quoted.

Deng also put forward the concept of "Hong Kong people govern Hong Kong", saying patriots, the main part of Hong Kong people governing Hong Kong, should respect the nation and sincerely uphold the country's unity and territorial integrity, as well as acknowledgment of socialism as the country's main body.

In June 1984, late Chinese leader Deng Xiaoping made famous remarks on the concept of "one country, two systems", the commentary says, noting it is of great significance to review Deng's remarks before the 100th anniversary of the promulgation of the Basic Law of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region.

The premise of the principle is "one country", which refers to the PRC, says the commentary, quoting Deng as saying "nothing can be discussed without trust in the PRC and the Chinese Government".

The commentary demands respect for the PRC’s resumption of the exercise of sovereignty over Hong Kong and the maintenance of China’s unity and territorial integrity, as well as acknowledgment of socialism as the country’s main body.

HK, Chinese mainland establish world’s first China Brain Bank
For the time being I remained silent, though I have a lot to say. The developments in the entire nation stand witness to Tatmadaw Government’s endeavours. The people, who in the past, were under the colonial rule, are now free. The Tatmadaw Government has already supported the four-point programme of the State that is the policy to practise democracy in Myanmar. However, some of the so-called present-day politicians and the so-called veteran politicians within the nation are criticising it. So, I cannot stay quiet any more.

Instead of blindly saying that there is no progress at all in the nation, those persons (some of them were the ministers, the members of the parliament or the secretaries of the previous governments after the nation regained her independence) should try to compare the extent of progress they had been able to make and that of the positive changes and the developments the Tatmadaw Government has brought to the nation.

It is quite clear. Miles and miles of roads and a large number of bridges have emerged the length and breadth of the nation, an achievement reaching beyond man’s imagination, and facilitating transport and trade in every aspect. Aren’t those the developments of the present era? As the so-called politicians include the persons living in Ayeyawady delta region and Shan State, I would like to ask a question: “Do they dare compare the travelling times between the delta area and Yangon in the past and at present, and also the past and at present that take in travelling from Yangon to Shan State? Even a journalist like me can see the truth. So, I believe that those so-called veteran politicians, who had served in various high level posts in the previous regime, can see it more.

According to my childhood knowledge about Independence, that handheld down to me by the elders, and that I have gained from studying the nation’s political history, I have known that the Aung San-Attlee Agreement, signed by the national leader Bogyoke Aung San and British Prime Minister Attlee, assured independence of Myanmar. However, the Commu-
nist faction of the Burma Communist Party and the Pyuhtu Arbau (the People’s Voice) journal slan-
dered and criticized Bogyoke Aung San, saying that he had made concessions; that he had betrayed the independence struggle; and that he had allied with the colonialists.

The worst is that the national traitor Galon U Saw and cohorts assassinated Bogyoke Aung San and Arzanis. Thus, Vice-chairman of the AFPFL Thakin Nu (U Nu) as also the Prime Ministers, the ministers, the members of the parliament or the secretaries of the previous governments after the nation regained her independence should try to compare the extent of progress they had been able to make and that of the positive changes and the developments the Tatmadaw Government has brought to the nation.

For me, I wish the so-called present-day politicians and the so-called veteran politicians understand that trying to find fault with negative views and hand down the evil legacy have become an outdated idea at present. All in all, I would like to warn them that if they continue to commit evil deeds and to cause disturbances to the people’s march towards a new democratic nation, while placing in the fore the conviction of self-importance, their status will fall and they will surely be like the persons who daren’t show their face in public.

Pauk Sa

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* Use daylight as the main source of light
* Use the least possible amount of electricity only if there is not enough natural light
* Use the least possible amount of electricity required in production and service enterprises
* Preventing waste of electricity benefits the user and others

There are about 500,000 households using electricity in Yangon. Thus, saving a four-foot fluorescent lamp everyday by each household amounts to saving power that is equal to the capacity a 20-megawatt power station can supply.

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**Welcome to enhancing Myanmar-India bilateral trade**

Aung Shwe Oo

International trade has been in practice since time immemorial. Military Mission and Trade were tools in the trade under colonial system. Those days were long gone by. At any cost, trade partners love equality and equity. Real international trade always extends with gains to all.

Nature never favours any country. It is impartial. Each country has its own advantages and disadvantages. Myanmar for example is rich in national resources. Human resources have been up and coming.

Globalization is yet to be defined. So far its dou-
ble faced philosophy has been cautiously received by countries, particularly developing and less developed ones. It has both good and bad sides. Globalization is a necessity. Cultural penetration to taint other countries is one example to be cited. Genuine division and specialization of labour is welcome to any country if international trade is to serve as a catalyst, not as a crutch. No country in the modern world will prosper in isolation.

Myanmar’s active foreign policy interacts inter-
national trade that is objective and productive. Commerce Minister Brig-Gen Pyi Sone in his address at the opening ceremony of the Made in India Show held at Yangon Trade Centre the other day said: India and Myanmar have signed General Trade Agreement in 1970 and Border Trade Agreement in 1994 and volume of trade between two coun-
dies has been increasing in the last 5 years. By 2006, the volume of trade between two countries is expected to reach US$ 1 billion according to the mutual understanding.

Mr R K Bhatia, Ambassador of India to the same inaugural ceremony in his welcoming speech said: Progress is not confined just to one or two bilateral agreements; it encompasses diverse sectors as Information and Technology, Biotech-
nology, Pharmaceuticals, automotive sector, iron and steel engineering products, textiles and leather products. There is thus natural compatibility between India’s capabilities and Myanmar needs. Seven new bilateral agreements had been signed during 2003 alone to further enhance interaction. Bilateral trade was US$ 287.6 million in 1999-2000 to US$ 428 million in 2001-2002, despite exclusion of third country trade and informal trade. Slightly fall by US$ 4 million for the year 2002-2003 is insignifi-
cant. Balance of trade between the two countries is in the ratio of 4:1 in Myanmar’s favour. In its efforts to correct the imbalance India’s export is increased from US$ 69 million in 1998-1999 to an estimated US$ 110 million in 2002-2003.

In 1999-2000, the trade turnover was figured at US$ 287.6 million, in 2000-2001 at US$ 345 million and in 2001-2002 at US$ 428 million. The actual trade turnover is more than trade vis-à-vis third countries, particularly Singa-
apore is taken into account.

Myanmar’s exports to India in 1999-2000, 2000-
2001, 2001-2002 were US$ 215.35 million, US$ 261.99 million and US$ 345.74 million respectively. Myanmar’s imports from India for the same year are US$ 72.26 mil-
lion, US$ 83.16 million and US$ 82.26 million respec-
tively. India is number 7 in terms of the value of exports to Myanmar while Myanmar is second largest supplier of beans & pulses to India next to Australia, accounting for one-third of India’s total requirements of imported pulses. In 2001-2002, pulses & beans accounted for 64 per cent of Myanmar’s export to India. Myanmar contributes to nearly one-fifth of India’s imports of timber; second only to Malaysia. In 2001-2002, timber and wood products accounted for 30 per cent of Myanmar’s exports to India in 2001-2002. India was the second largest market for Myanmar’s exports, according to the research of Mr Rajinder Khanna.

Ambassador Mr Bhatia said India-Myanmar rela-
tions, close and cooperative as they are, rest on the foun-
dations of geography, history and common bonds of cul-
ture, religion, recounting the history of Shwedagon Pa-
goda. Yes, two Myanmar merchants brothers Tapassa and Balika received some strands of hair from Lord Buddha himself at Majjhimadesa middle region during their entourage in India. Some strands of hair were enshrinied in Shwedagon Pagoda who some were enshrined in Hsarawrtha Pagoda in Rakhine State more than 2,500 years ago. As good neighbours also means good trade partners, may one billion dollar trading target realize with despacth!****
Prime Minister attends dinner…

(Yangon, 21 Feb — Vice-President of Myanmar Women’s Affairs Federation Daw Than Than Nwe and party left Yangon for Mawlamyine on 18 February.

They met with CEC member of Mon State Organization for Women’s Affairs at Dawna Hall of South-East Command Head-quarters. Vice-President Daw Than Than Nwe explained the purpose of their field trip. Member of the Secretariat Daw Kyu Kyu clarified organizational set-up and joining to it. Working Group leaders Daw Mya Mya and Daw Yin Yin Lay explained organizing and functions of five working groups out of 16 working groups. Then, they answered the queries.

On 19 February morning, the meeting to explain organizational set-up was held in the town hall in Mawlamyine, attended by the Mon State Peace and Development Council Chairman Commander of South-East Command Commander’s wife Daw Than Than Nwe, members of the panel of patrons of Mon State Organization for Women’s Affairs and members totalling over 960. Vice-President Daw Than Than Nwe gave a speech, saying that officials of the federation went on field trips to States and Divisions for clarification of their tasks. In Mawlamyine, they will explain organizational set-up and functions of the federation. Myanmar National Committee for Women’s Affairs and Working Committee for Women’s Affairs were formed by the

Prime Minister attends co-ord…

Committees concerned should make preparations to systematically hold the summit with essence of Theravada Buddhism is flourishing in Myanmar.

As they have gained experience of the previous summits held in Cambodia and Thailand, it is necessary to systematically host the fourth summit on a grander scale than the previous ones. Later, the work committee and subcommittees are to report progress of tasks, future programs and requirements to the meeting.

Next, Secretary of the Leading Committee for Religious Affairs Brig-Gen Thura Aung Ko reported on progress of work carried out by the committees and future tasks to the Prime Minister.

Secretary of the Working Committee Deputy Minister for Religious Affairs Brig-Gen Thura Aung Ko reported on preparations for holding the summit to Prime Minister General Khin Nyunt.

 Afterwards, Chairmen of the subcommittee Deputy Ministers and directors-general reported on their respective sectors. Minister for Foreign Affairs U Win Aung, Yangon Mayor Brig-Gen Aung Than Lin and participants participated in the discussions.

After hearing the reports, the Prime Minister gave instructions that departmental officials are to coordinate tasks for timely completion.

Then, the Prime Minister inspected the design of the eastern archway of Kaba Aye Maha Pasana Cave and sample of jade to be put on interior and exterior of the main archway. Prime Minister Khin Nyunt and party went to Thirimuningala Kaba Aye Hill and saw over the archway of the cave, greening tasks at the cave’s environs and renovation tasks at interior of the cave and gave necessary instructions to officials.— MNA
National development tasks cannot be carried out and democratic nation cannot be built in the absence of stability of the State, security and prevalence of law and order.

Second and third four-monthly work coordination meeting for 2003 of MPF held

THE NEW LIGHT OF MYANMAR Sunday, 22 February, 2004 9

YANGON, 21 Feb.—Chairman of Myanmar Police Force Management Reform Committee Secretary-2 of the State Peace and Development Council Lt-Gen Thein Sein attended the second and third four-monthly work coordination meeting for 2003 of MPF at the meeting hall of the Ministry of Home Affairs here at 1 pm today and made a speech on the occasion.

Also present on the occasion were Deputy Minister for Home Affairs Brig-Gen Phone Swe, Director-General of MPF Maj-Gen Khin Yi, the MPF deputy director-general, police brigadier-generals, police commanders, commanders of state and divisional MPFs, the principals of police training schools and commanders of police battalions and others.

First, Chairman of Myanmar Police Force Management Reform Committee Secretary-2 of the State Peace and Development Council Lt-Gen Thein Sein made a speech. He said that the aim of the government is making all-out efforts for the emergence of a peaceful and modern one that is prevalent of law and order, to enable the people to earn law and order and to serve the national defence and security duties.

Second and third four-monthly coordination meeting for 2003 of MPF held

Speaking at the second meeting, the chairman said the main tasks and duties of the people are to be one with the people and to help the people and to be capable and modern. To be patriotic, the MPF is to be due to carry out its duties as far as possible for emergence of the police force with patriotism and Union Spirit.

To be capable, the MPF needs to undergo a constant training. To be modern, it needs to constantly learn computer science and modern science and technology. In carrying out the main police tasks of community peace and prevalence of law and order, the police officers are to avoid four partialities and stay away from taking bribes in consideration of their rank and dignity.

In exposing the suspects, the police officers themselves are to be capable due to search the evidences thoroughly and arrest the real suspects with firm evidence to support the case. In doing so, they are to cooperate with the judges, police officers, prosecution members, forensic doctors and laboratory experts. Only then, will they be able to expose the real suspects and give them the deterrent sentence.

Some committed crimes due to greed, anger and ignorance and some did so under unavoidable circumstances. There are also some who have been accused of committing crimes. Therefore, it is required to expose the real culprits patiently and take action against them. Police officers are to quit unfair and unnecessary acts of colonial period.

In discharging the national duty, there have been incidents that some powers are now attempting to bully and influence the small developing nations taking advantage of their superiority in military strength, technology and wealth, and are invading and occupying them with their military forces.

He spoke of the need for Myanmar Police Force to be one with the people in order to ward off powerful enemy. He said he must have ability to organize the people to enhance patriotism of the people. Upholding the interest of the people, efforts are to be made to enable MPF to become the force which people love, he added.

He said police barracks are to preserve the twelve traditions of the police force, building five qualities like the Tatmadaw. In addition to its duties, the police force needs to be trained and ready for any tasks to be assigned by the State, he said.

He said as a national duty, the police force is to carry out the tasks for eradication of narcotic drugs which was left as the evil legacy of the colonialists to be free from Myanmar soil while implementing the two strategies and three tactics practically.

He spoke of the need to build MPF to be systematic one, to be the one loved by the people and to be a reserve force for the national defence.

In discharging the main responsibilities of MPF—to ensure community peace and prevalence of law and order, to enable the people to earn their living with peace of mind under the protection of law and to serve the national defence and security duties in times of emergency—and the tasks are to be carried out dutifully, he stressed.

Furthermore, the MPF must have patriotic spirit and be capable and modern. To be patriotic, the MPF is to quit the ideas of colonial period and unavailing bureaucratic acts, and to be equipped with the spirit to stand by the people, to be one with the people and to help the people and the spirit to cherish the nation and the people and Union Spirit.

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YANGON, 21 Feb—
Yangon Division Supervisory Committee for Ensuring Secure and Smooth Transport meets

Agreement on fishing rights signed

YANGON, 21 Feb—
The agreement signing ceremony on fishing rights between Fisheries Department and Siam Jonathan Co Ltd of Thailand was held at Grand Plaza Parkroyal on Alanya Pagoda Road in Dagon Township on 19 February. Present were Minister for Livestock and Fisheries Brig-Gen Maung Maung, Command Maj-Gen Myint Swe and YCDC Chairman U Hla Lin.

Sanitation tasks inspected in Yangon municipal areas

YANGON, 21 Feb—
Members of the Tatmadaw and Myanmar Police Force, staff of Yangon City Development Committee, those of NGOs and the public today carried out sanitation works in Yangon municipal areas. Chairman of Yangon Division Peace and Development Council Commander of Yangon Command Maj-Gen Myint Swe and YCDC Chairman Mayor Brig-Gen Aung Thein Lin inspected the tasks and gave necessary instructions to officials.

The commander, the mayor and party then inspected dredging of Thamaing creek in Mindhamma Road and Mayangon Township for proper drainage and clearing of rubbish and weeds. Officials reported to them on implementation of dredging works in the creek. After giving necessary instructions to officials, the commander and the mayor proceeded to Shwepyitha Township in Yangon North District and unblocking of ditches and sanitation tasks on Sethmudetha Street between No 4 Highway and Mahogany Street. The commander instructed officials to maintain the durability of flat gates. Afterwards, the commander and the mayor saw over sanitation tasks being carried out along Sitway Street in Hlinethaya Township. The commander and the mayor then gave instructions on construction of box culverts in Yangon municipal areas, measures to be taken for sanitation and dredging works for proper drainage, systematic disposing of garbage and cooperation between local authorities and departmental officials. Similarly, dredging and sanitation tasks were carried out in other townships. — MNA

Chairman of the Supervisory Committee Chairman of Yangon Division Peace and Development Council Commander of Yangon Command Maj-Gen Myint Swe delivers an address at the meeting. — MNA

Made in India
Show goes on

YANGON, 21 Feb—
Made in India Show continued for the third day today at Yangon Trade Centre on Upper Pazundaung Road in Mingalar Taungnyunt Township here from 9 am to 5 pm. It was packed with departmental officials, businessmen and the public. At the show, 100 booths of 71 Indian companies put on display and sell iron and steel wares, electrical goods, industrial machinery, medicines, medical equipment, farm implements, sewing machines, different types of bicycles, personal goods, clothes and cosmetics. It will continue till 22 February. — MNA

Image

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Minister for Agriculture & Irrigation Maj-Gen Nyunt Tin inspects the construction of retaining wall of Kyee-on Kyee-wa Dam in Pwintbyu Township, Mibu District, Magway Division, on 17 February.  

Minister for Cooperatives Maj-Gen Hlay Oo formally opens the Import-substitute Domestic Industrial Products Exhibition on 20 February 2004. (News reported) — MNA

Minister for Culture Maj-Gen Kyi Aung watches the Indian cultural performances and folk dances at National Theatre in Yangon on 20 February 2004 evening. (News reported) — MNA

Dam projects inspected

YANGON, 20 Feb — Minister for Agriculture and Irrigation Maj-Gen Nyunt Tin inspected Kyee-on Kyee-wa Dam Project being undertaken by the Irrigation Department in Pwintbyu, Mibu District, Magway Division, on 17 February.

Director of the Construction-3 U Tun Aung Lwin reported on construction of separation wall of the main embankment. The minister looked into construction of the main embankment.

Next, the minister proceeded to Maday Dam Project near Gyobin Village west of Pathein-Monywa Road in Kanma Township, Magway Division. Director of Construction-2 of the ID U Tin Maung Ohn reported on construction of the main embankment, spillway and conduit and storage capacity of the dam. The minister gave instructions and looked into the project site.

In the evening, the minister inspected Khawa Dam Project near Chinyawgyi in Padang Township, Bago Division. Officials reported on building of the main bridge. The minister gave instructions on ensuring simultaneous completion of the project and irrigation system, extended irrigation of cultivable land, crop patterns and minimizing loss and wastage. Afterwards, the minister inspected the Kunchung-2 Dam Project near Tawkon Village, Kyangin Township, Ayeyawady Division. Officials reported on work progress and future tasks. The minister gave instructions on construction of the main embankment in accordance with the original design, and timely completion of construction tasks.

MNA

Don't smoke
The declaration is the outcome of the 7th Conference of Parties to the Convention on Biodiversity (COP-7) which was held on Wednesday and Thursday here. Delegations from 123 countries, including 78 ministers and deputy ministers as well as representatives of non-governmental organizations attended the conference.

The declaration called for an international regime on access and benefit sharing, which would provide developing countries and indigenous peoples with a fair and equitable share in the ben-

PARKINSONIC
Reg. No. 4431992

Ten million farmers to have adequate drinking water this year

Hehef, 21 Feb—Some 10 million more rural people in China will likely have adequate drinking water this year, thanks to continuous national efforts, said a senior official on Thursday.

“We’ll focus on improving the quality of water including removing harmful contents such as fluorine and arsenic,” said Vice-Minister of Water Resources Chen Lei at a national conference on water resources programming held in Hehei, capital of central China’s Anhui Province.

According to the country’s water shortage easing programme, 10 million rural residents from arid areas are expected to have adequate water to drink this year. Water shortages in most of the cities in north China are expected to be eliminated by 2010 when part of the project to divert water from the Yangtze River is completed, according to Chen.

The central government poured 4.3 billion US dollars in water resources infrastructure construction in 2003, 11.2 percent over the previous year. The total investment was 9.05 billion US dollars, of which 1.76 billion US dollars is for rural water resources infrastructure construction.

ASEAN, Japan officials meet to follow up Tokyo Summit

JAKARTA, 21 Feb—Senior officials of Japan and the ten-member Association of South-East Asian Nations (ASEAN) held a brainstorming session here Thursday to follow up agreements adopted in the Tokyo Summit and to identify priority areas for further cooperation.

“This is the follow up meeting to the ASEAN-Japan Summit last December in Tokyo. Our officials are sitting down to follow up on the issues, what need to be done,” ASEAN Secretary-General Ong Keng Yong told reporters on the sidelines of the meeting. He said the senior officials have narrowed down the agendas into 16 priority areas, with focus on economic cooperation, regional and economic cooperation, which will include free trade area agreement on bilateral basis.

“All the years, Japan has helped ASEAN in many ways to develop our own ca-
pabilities. ASEAN also has been receiving Japanese technical assistance, he said.

And now we have this declaration which our lead-
est, and our leaders expect all officials to implement the projects, which will help strengthen the important re-
lationship between ASEAN and Japan,” he added.

Separately, an Indonesian official said the officials dis-
cussed the breakdown of Japan’s pledge of three billion US dollars in development assistance for ASEAN.

“It has been agreed in Tokyo that 1.5 billion US dollars of the assistance will go to human resource develop-
ment and another 1.5 billion dollars to develop-
ment in the areas along the Mekong River,” said Makaram Wilibose, Director General of the Pacific Affairs Ministry. Established in 1967, ASEAN now comprises Brunei, Cambodia, Indonesia, Laos, Malaysia, Myanmar, Singapore, Thai-
land, the Philippines and Vietnam. — MNA/Xinhua

Swazi King declares disaster over drought. AIDS

MABANE, 21 Feb—Swaziland’s King Mswati, has declared a humanitarian disaster in his impoverished African country ravaged by drought and HIV/AIDS—a move aimed at bringing in more foreign aid.

“The disaster was declared on behalf of His Majesty’s govern-
ment, I appeal to the international commu-
nity to assist and make available whatever resources in order to respond effectively to the challenges the country is facing,” Prime Minister Thembu Dlamini said as he an-
nounced the move at a news conference late Wednesday.

Sub-Saharan Africa’s last absolute monarch, Mswati has been criti-
cized for pushing through expensive royal projects even though a quarter of his one million subjects receive food aid and 40 percent of Swazi adults are believed to be infected with HIV/AIDS. — MNA/Reuters
Brazil, 21 Feb—Two former Italian soldiers launched a legal bid for damages from Germany on Thursday for being forced into slave labour under the Nazis during World War II in a case that could influence thousands of similar claims.

The two men, aged 81 and 82, are each seeking some 7,700 euros (9,788 US dollars) in damages from the German Finance Ministry and the body which oversees payments to former victims of slave labour, the “Remembrance, Responsibility and Future” foundation.

The foundation previously refused their request for redress on the grounds that, as former prisoners of war under German law, they were ineligible for payments.

The result of their law suit, the first from former Italian prisoners of war to reach court, could have an impact on some 4,200 similar claims for compensation.

Germany has faced many Nazi-related claims from Jewish, Roma and Slavic groups but has consistently refused to compensate prisoners of war.

Nazi Germany and Fascist Italy initially fought on the same side in World War II but Italy changed sides in September 1943.

Lawyers representing the plaintiffs said German troops took around 600,000 Italian soldiers captive following the surrender of the retreating forces and all who refused to fight for Hitler into forced labour in Germany, thus denying them the right to sue for compensation of war.

— MNA/Reuters

Austrian court clears accused over ski train blaze

Salzburg (Austria), 21 Feb—An Austrian court acquitted 16 people on Thursday of responsibility for a ski train blaze that killed 155 tourists in November 2000, saying the disaster could not have been foreseen.

Relatives of the dead shouted in protest from the public gallery or walked out as the judge cleared the resort workers, train operators and safety inspectors of negligence in Austria’s deadliest post-war disaster.

“The court did not have an easy time reaching this decision,” Judge Manfred Seiss said in announcing the verdict.

Only 12 people survived the accident at the Alpine ski resort of Kaprun when fire raced through a funicular train, bringing its two crowded carriages to a halt in a tunnel.

Prosecutors said an electric heater not designed for use in vehicles had caused the blaze, that there had been no fire-fighting equipment in the carriages and that the doors had failed to open when the train stopped, trapping the passengers.

But the defendants, who could have been jailed for up to five years, argued that no one could have foreseen the chain of events that led to the deaths. The judge agreed. He said they had had no reason to suspect the heater was not up to standard, and added that the train’s construction had been approved by state inspectors.

— MNA/Reuters

Philippines France jointly hunt for suspect freighter

Manila, 21 Feb—The Philippines and France have launched a joint operation to hunt for a Philippines-flagged freighter suspected of causing a collision that killed five French fishermen, the French Embassy in Manila said Friday.

“We are in contact with the Philippine authorities. They are doing their best. We are very thankful to the Philippine authorities for the spirit of cooperation they are showing,” the embassy said in a statement.

However, no more details were given than the case of the vessel “Seattle Trader”, a freighter blamed for sinking a French fishing boat off southern England last month, leaving the boat’s five crew members dead.

The French Embassy in Manila has not been asked to make formal demands, the embassy said, adding that most of the talks were taking place through the Philippine Embassy in Paris.

French investigators have issued an international warrant to allow French authorities to carry out their inquiry to foreign ports to hunt down those responsible, who may face five years in prison if convicted.

At a Press briefing, Philippine Foreign Affairs Undersecretary Rafael Seguis said Thursday France had been in contact concerning the hunt for the “Seattle Trader”, but declined to reveal details.

— MNA/Xinhua

Spain nabs top Colombian drug money launderer

Madrid, 21 Feb—Spanish police said Thursday they had arrested an alleged member of Colombia’s de-facto Cali cartel wanted by the United States for money laundering.

A police spokesman said Thursday a 63-year-old Colombian named only as Fernando Antonio GC, had been in charge of a financial network that laundered drugs money.

The man was arrested in Barcelona as he was about to board a flight to Bogota, police said.

The notorious Cali cartel has been the subject of fraud at the time to be responsible for about 800,000 dollars of smoking shipped to the United States.

US authorities in December indicted the brothers with new drug traffic- king charges, accusing them of continuing to run the traf- ficking ring from behind bars.

— MNA/Reuters

Africa develops roadmap to reduce maternal, newborn deaths

Harare, 21 Feb—The World Health Organization (WHO) regional official for Africa has launched in a statement here Thursday that the roadmap, which is a regional framework for action, is goal-driven with clear strategies, phases, timelines and benchmarks.

A meeting attended by experts from various international agencies and non-governmental organizations on maternal and neonatal death reduction ended in Harare on Wednesday with the development of a roadmap aimed at accelerat- ing progress to reduce mat- ernal and newborn morbidity and mortality in the Afri- can region.

“It focuses on two areas critical to the reduction of maternal and newborn deaths: provision of skilled attendance at all levels of care, and the strengthening of individual, family and community capacity to im- prove maternal and newborn health,” said Olufola.

The UN agency said ac- tions needed to ensure skilled attendance at all lev- els included ensuring the availability of skilled and competent health workers to provide emergency obstetric care for the benefit of mothers and newborns and identification of essential supplies, equipment, and infrastructure necessary for emergency obstetric and newborn health services delivery.

The actions would also include mobilization of sup- port for their procurement and distribution, and in-ser- vice as well as pre-service training of medical and paramedical workers in emergency obstetric newborn care and family planning.

With regard to the focus on community, the actions recommended in the roadmap include provision of outreach mechanisms from the health facility level to communities and house- holds, support to health min- -sters to strengthen existing links between the formal health system and commu- nities.

Establishment of com- munity emergency commit-tees to be linked to the for- mal health system and the institutionalization of birth preparedness at community level was another action re- commended.

She added that this was the first time partners working in the area of maternal and child health have come together to agree on the conten- ts of their collective sup- port to countries for acceler- ated reduction of maternal and newborn deaths.

She said it was a histori- cal moment witnessing the creation of a regional move- ment to advocate for mater- nal and child health.

— MNA/Xinhua

Chinese State Councillor meets Indian, Japanese guests

Beijing, 21 Feb—Chinese State Councillor Tang Jiaxuan met here Thursday with RI. Bhatia, chairman of the China-India Eminent Persons’ Group, who is here attending the fourth session of the group.

Tang said that developing sino-Indian good-neighborly relations conforms to the fundamental interests of the two peoples, helps promote unity and cooperation among Asian nations, and benefits the stability and prosperity of the region and the world at large.

He said the two countries should main- tain the good momentum of their bilateral ties, and realize the consensus reached by the two heads of state according to the declaration on the principles for relations and comprehensive cooperation between China and India.

Bhatia spoke highly of the relations be- tween India and China, expressing the hope that the group would continue its due role in promoting friendly cooperation between the two countries.

With meeting with Noda Takeshi, chairman of the Japan-China Society, Tang said it was significant for developing non- governmental exchanges between the two countries, and China welcomes Japanese people to visit China, particularly young people.

— MNA/Xinhua

Ex-Italian POWs sue Germany for compensation

Berlin, 21 Feb—Two former Italian soldiers launched a legal bid for dam- ages from Germany on Thursday for being forced into slave labour under the Nazis during World War II in a case that could influence thousands of similar claims.

The two men, aged 81 and 82, are each seeking some 7,700 euros (9,788 US dollars) in damages from the German Finance Ministry and the body which oversees payments to former victims of slave labour, the “Remem- brance, Responsibility and Future” foundation.

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— MNA/Reuters

Philippine investigation

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— MNA/Reuters

Shanghai Port to be enlarged

Beijing, 21 Feb—Another project to enlarge the Shang- hai Port, involving an investment of about 2.8 billion US dollars (some 340 million US dollars), was approved by the government recently, with the Ministry of Communications said here Thursday.

The fifth-phase project of the Waigaoqiao Port, aiming to increase annual throughput by 8.3 million tons including 700,000 containers, will finish construction and go into operation by October 2004, according to sources.

The port of Shanghai, with a total throughput exceeding 300 million tons, including 11.28 million containers in 2003, ranks largest among all Chinese ports and the third in the world.

— MNA/Xinhua

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Zidane extends Real Madrid contract until 2007

MADRID, 21 Feb.—World Player of the Year Zinedine Zidane will remain at Real Madrid for an extra two years after reaching an agreement to extend his contract until June 30, 2007, the Spanish club said on Thursday.

The France playmaker signed a four-year deal with Real in July 2001 after leaving Italian side Juventus for a world record fee of 66 million US dollars. He will be 35 when his Real contract expires.

Zidane helped Real win a record ninth European Cup in his first season, scoring a spectacular volley in the 2-1 victory over Bayer Leverkusen in the final at Hampden Park, Glasgow.

Real won the Spanish championship the following season and Zidane has established himself as one of the club's most influential players both on and off the pitch.

Last month he said he would like to end his career at Real and although the club already had an option to extend his contract until 2006, a two-year extension has now been agreed.

Ignatiev replaces Romantsev at Saturn

MOSCOW, 21 Feb.—Former Russia manager Boris Ignatiev has been named as new coach of Saturn Ramenskoye, the Russian Premier League club said on Wednesday.

The 63-year-old Ignatiev replaces Oleg Romantsev, another former coach of the national team who quit the Moscow-region club on Monday because of poor health.

Ignatiev coached Russia from July 1996, when he took over from over Romantsev following a disappointing showing at Euro 96, until June 1998 when he quit after being unable to guide Russia to the 1998 World Cup finals.

Ignatiev has also coached a number of Russian clubs and he briefly worked with Chinese First Division side Shandun Lunen in 2001. Since last year he has been working as sporting director of Lokomotiv Moscow.

Keane says one more defeat will cost United the title

MANCHESTER (England), 21 Feb.—Manchester United captain Roy Keane believes his side's Premier League title hopes will be over if they lose again this season.

The champions are five points behind leaders Arsenal and Keane cannot see a repeat of what happened last season when Alex Ferguson's team overturned the Gunners in the run-in by going 18 games unbeaten.

"We fell behind last year and put ourselves under a lot of pressure but if I am being honest I can't see Arsenal slipping up like they did last year," Keane told the Manchester Evening News on Thursday.

"Of course I am worried that we have lost five times and Arsenal haven't lost at all," the midfielder added. "If you want to win any championship, the fewer games you lose the better.

"We are just putting ourselves under so much pressure. The gap that is between us now must not get any wider."

Keane feels United, who have conceded 10 goals in their past four games, may be even more vulnerable defensively as they attempt to close the gap.

"Basically, we are putting ourselves under a lot of pressure, especially when we are playing the top teams like Liverpool, Arsenal and Chelsea, we have to be winning these matches," said Keane. "That leaves you vulnerable at the back because you have to go gung-ho in attack.

"We did it last year and, hopefully, it will be the same scenario this season." United's next game is at home to Leeds United on Saturday, when Arsenal travel to third-placed Chelsea.
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WEATHER
Saturday, February 21, 2004

Summary of observations recorded at 09:30 hours MST:
During the past 24 hours, light rain has been isolated in Kachin State and upper Sagaing Division, weather has been partly cloudy in Taninthayi Division and generally fair in the remaining areas. Night temperatures were (3°C to (4°C) above normal in Kachin, Rakhine and Mon States, (3°C to (4°C) below normal in Shan State, Yangon and Ayeyawady Divisions, (5°C below normal in Mandalay Division and above normal in the remaining areas.

Maximum temperature on 20-2-2004 was 34.6°C (94°F). Minimum temperature on 21-2-2004 was 15.0°C (59°F). Relative humidity at 9:30 hrs MST on 21-2-2004 was 60%. Total sunshine hours on 20-2-2004 was (9:00 hrs approx), rainfall on 21-2-2004 was at Yangon Airport, Kaba Aye and central Yangon. Total rainfall since 1-1-2004 was 3 mm (0.12 inch) at Yangon Airport and 3 mm (0.12 inch) at Kaba Aye and central Yangon. Maximum speed at Yangon (Kaba Aye) was 8 mph from West at (11:30) hours MST on 20-2-2004.

Weather for February 22nd: Weather for Tuesday is partly cloudy in the Bay of Bengal. Forecast valid until evening of 22-2-2004: Possibility of isolated light rain in Kachin State and upper Sagaing Division, weather will be partly cloudy in Kayin and Mon States, Ayeyawady Bago, Yangon and Taninthayi Divisions and generally fair in the remaining areas. Degree of certainty (49%).

State of the sea: Seas will be slight to moderate in Myanmar waters. Outlook for subsequent two days: Likelihood isolated rain in Northern Myanmar areas.

Prime Minister receives Member of the House of Representatives of Japan

YANGON, 21 Feb — Prime Minister General Khin Nyunt received Member of the House of Representatives Mr Luo Haocai and party at Zeyathiri Beikman on Kommyninha at 5 pm today. Also present at the call were Minister for Foreign Affairs U Win Aung, Minister for Education U Than Aung, Deputy Minister for Foreign Affairs U Khin Maung Win, Director-General U Soe Tint of the Government Office and Director-General Thura U Aung Htet of the Protocol Department. — MNA

Prime Minister attends dinner hosted in honour of U-18 Myanmar soccer team

YANGON, 21 Feb — A dinner in honour of Myanmar soccer team that brought credit to the nation winning the trophy of the first U-18 BIMST-EC soccer tournament held in Phuket, Thailand, was hosted at the Karaweik Palace in Kandawgyi Gardens here this evening, with an address by Chairman of Myanmar Olympic Council Prime Minister General Khin Nyunt. Also present on the occasion were ministers, MOC members, deputy ministers, members of the Leading Panel of Patrons of Myanmar Women’s Sports Federation, the patron of Myanmar Football Federation and members, officials of the State Peace and Development Council Office, departmental heads, presidents of sports federations and members, members of social organizations, athletes, wellwishers and guests.

Before the ceremony, the Prime Minister viewed documentary photos of the victorious soccer team taken during their training sections and matches.

In his address, the Prime Minister said that it is heartening and worthy of pride not only for the entire people but also for Myanmar youth soccer players who lifted the trophies of ASEAN youth soccer tournament and the first U-18 BIMST-EC soccer tournament at a time when the entire Myanmar people are longing for the victory of Myanmar soccer teams in the international tournaments. Myanmar won the first U-17 ASEAN soccer tourney (2002) and the first U-18 ASEAN soccer tourney (2003) as well as the first U-18 BIMST-EC soccer tournament deservedly, and it means Myanmar youth soccer teams have achieved victories one after another. Now is the time when the entire people are making concerted efforts to enable the nation to catch up with international levels in economic, social...

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