STATE PEACE AND DEVELOPMENT COUNCIL CHAIRMAN
Senior General Than Shwe sends felicitations to Brunei Darussalam

YANGON, 23 Feb — On the occasion of the 20th National Day of Brunei Darussalam which falls on 23 February 2004, Senior General Than Shwe, Chairman of the State Peace and Development Council of the Union of Myanmar, has sent a message of felicitations to His Majesty Sultan Haji Hassanal Bolkiah Muizzaddin Waddaulah, the Sultan and Yang Di-Pertuan of Brunei Darussalam. — MNA

Annual presentation of outstanding awards and scholarship to brilliant students of new generation is effective fulfilment for development of human resources

Prime Minister General Khin Nyunt addresses prize presentation ceremony of Pakokku U Ohn Pe Literary Award, Scholarship and Pakokku Library Book Award for 2003 held

YANGON, 22 Feb — The prize-presentation ceremony for Pakokku U Ohn Pe Literary Award, Scholarship and Pakokku Library Book Award for 2003 was held at Pyithaya Hall in Pakokku, Pakokku District, Magway Division, at 10.30 am today with an address by Prime Minister General Khin Nyunt.

Also present on the occasion were Chairman of Sagaing Division Peace and Development Council Commander of North-West Command Maj-Gen Tha Aye, the ministers, the deputy ministers, Chairman of Magway Division Peace and Development Council Col Zaw Min, Col Sein Win of Pakokku Station and senior military officers, officials of the State Peace and Development Council Office, departmental officials, members of the District and Township Peace and Development Councils, departmental officials, Vice-Chairman of Myanmar Writers and Journalists Association Managing Director of Printing and Publishing Enterprise U Myint Thein (Myint Thein Aung), Secretary Director (News) of News and Periodicals Enterprise U Hla Tun (Hla Tun-Twantay) and CEC members, the rector and principals of Pakokku University, Education College, Computer College and the Government Technological College and faculty members, members of Pakokku U Ohn Pe Literary Award Fund Supervisory Committee, Chairman of Literary Award Scrutinization Committee U Myo Thant (Maung Hsu Shin) and members, members of Scholarship Scrutinization Committee, Literary Award donor U Ohn Pe, members of Union Solidarity and Development Association and social organizations, members of the Township Writers and Journalists Association, teachers, students, scholarship winning students and their families and guests.

First, Prime Minister General Khin Nyunt made a speech. He said that Pakokku U Ohn Pe Literary Award and Scholarship, which were born of the goodwill of U Ohn Pe for development of the national literature and towards the State and the people, are presented yearly and the award presentation ceremony being held today is the 11th time.

The constant emergence of outstanding new generation youths who deserve U Ohn Pe Scholarships and Pakokku Literary Award youths who deserve U Ohn Pe Literary Awards up to 11th anniversary reflects development of the national literature with the national character and national literature with the national prestige and cultural essence is not only the national prestige that Myanmar people can be proud of but also the national force capable of safeguarding the national interests.

At present, the government is making all-out efforts for prosperity of own people and for enabling the nation to stand tall with dignity among the global nations, relying on own national forces.

The emergence of national literature with the national character and national cultural essence is not only the national prestige that Myanmar people can be proud of but also the national force capable of safeguarding the national interests.

The initiative to shape the national economy must be kept in the hands of the State and the national peoples.

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

Four economic objectives
* Development of agriculture as the base and all-round development of other sectors of the economy as well
* Proper evolution of the market-oriented economic system
* Development of the economy inviting participation in terms of technical know-how and investments from sources inside the country and abroad
* Proper evolution of the market-oriented economic system

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

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

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Prime Minister General Khin Nyunt addresses prize presentation ceremony of Pakokku U Ohn Pe Literary Award, Scholarship and Pakokku Library Book Award — MNA

Inside Perspectives
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For emergence of a modern developed nation (Page 7)
Organizational set-up, functions of MWAF explained

YANGON, 22 Feb — Vice-President of Myanmar Women’s Affairs Federation Daw Than Than Nwe gave a speech. She said that personnel of the federation went on field trips to states and divisions to explain functions of the federation. During their tour of Hpa-an, they would clarify organizational set-up and functions of the federation to members of the organization for women’s affairs formed in Kayin State. As there are 50.3 per cent of women out of the country’s population, there are limits to effectively carry out women’s affairs in the entire nation. On 20 December 2003, Myanmar Women’s Affairs Federation was formed as a non-governmental organization. The federation has laid down and is implementing the seven lofty aims for promoting the women’s role. Entire women of the country are to be organized to submit membership applications on their own accord and it should not be compulsory. Realizing lofty aims of the federation for development of the women’s life, participants in the meeting are to the tasks of the federation in accordance with the motto ‘Let’s make efforts for development of women’s life’. Then, the member of Secretariat and leaders of working group explained functions of their working groups. Next, Vice-President Daw Than Than Nwe accepted K 4.2 million from wellwishers of Kayin State and spoke words of thanks.

Next, they met with CEC member of Kayin State Organization for Women’s Affairs at the Yeikha at No 22 LID. Vice-President Daw Than Than Nwe made a speech, saying that they had explained tasks to be carried out and they believed that future tasks will be implemented clearly.

Minister U Win Aung sends felicitations to Brunei Darussalam

YANGON, 23 Feb — On the occasion of the 20th National Day of Brunei Darussalam which falls on 23 February 2004, U Win Aung, Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Union of Myanmar, has sent a message of felicitations to His Royal Highness Prince Haji Mohamed Bolkiah, Minister of Foreign Affairs of Brunei Darussalam. — MNA

Welding skill contest held

YANGON, 22 Feb — With a view to contributing towards the industrial development of the country, the welding skill contest was held under the sponsorship of YSL and TKW Co Ltd at car parking yard of industrial zone (3) of Dagon Myothit (South) from 1 to 5 pm yesterday. Over 300 persons took part in the contest. The first prize winner was presented K 150,000; the second prize winner K 75,000 and the third prize winner K 50,000.

For speedy realization of agreements between Myanmar and Thailand

The Summit Meeting on Economic Cooperation Strategy among Cambodia, Laos, Myanmar and Thailand, was successfully held in Bagan Archaeological Zone on 12 November 2003.

At the meeting, Ayeawady-Chao Phraya-Mekong Economic Cooperation Strategy was approved.

Economic Cooperation Strategy covers trade and investment, cooperation in agriculture and industrial sectors, transport and communication, promoting tourism industry and human resource development.

The meeting has also agreed to promote economic cooperation among the four countries and between the two countries concerned. At the meeting, Myanmar has agreed to extend bilateral economic cooperation with Thailand.

The second work coordination meeting of Ayeawady-Chao Phraya-Mekong Economic Cooperation Strategy Implementation Steering Committee was held at Zeyathiri Beikman on 20 February, attended by Chair of the committee Prime Minister General Khin Nyunt.

On the occasion, Prime Minister General Khin Nyunt said that matters relating to relocation of manufacturing industries of Thailand, transport facilitation between the two countries, further development of border areas and raising of the standard of living, and industrial and infrastructure development were agreed at the meeting and thus, speedy realization of the agreement was required.

On 19 February, a Thai delegation led by Minister for Industry arrived in Yangon, and discussed matters on relocation of manufacturing industries, trade and economic development, tourism promotion, industrial and energy sectors, construction of deep-sea port in Dawei, and speedy implementation of Dawei-Kanchanaburi road.

Respective ministries are urged to actively participate in efforts for speedy realization of agreements that will benefit both Myanmar and Thailand.
UK graduate killed in Iraq explosion

Baghdad, 22 Feb—2nd Lt. Jeffrey Graham was killed Thursday in Iraq as he was turning to warn platoon members that he had spotted a bomb on a guardrail, his family said after receiving information from the army.

The Army gave 2nd Lt. Jeffrey Graham a chance to stay home from Iraq, but he wanted to serve his country—a decision that cost him his life.

Graham, a May 2003 graduate of the University of Kentucky and a former leader of UK’s Pershing Rifles drill team, was killed Thursday when a roadside bomb exploded near Khaldiya, according to his family in Frankfort.

“He never expressed any regret about being there or anything. He repeated over and over that he was there doing what he was meant to be doing,” said his grandmother, Jackie Shroat. “In every e-mail he sent, Jeffrey said, ‘Please remember my platoon in your prayers.’”

Graham, 24, assigned to the 1st Battalion, 34th Armour in the Fort Riley, Kan-based 1st Infantry Division, went to Iraq November, even though his younger brother had committed suicide in June, said Carol Graham, the soldier’s mother. The military gave Graham the choice of staying at home, but he wanted to go, she said. According to information the family received from the Army, Graham was leading a patrol on foot when he spotted a bomb strapped to a guardrail and turned to warn others in his platoon. Carol Graham said.—Internet

Troop suicides in Iraq raise questions, family doubts in US

Lubbock (Texas), 21 Feb—Two-year-old Jada Suell tumbled out of the car and ran in your prayers. —Internet

"Dada," said the little girl.

In the Sunday afternoon quiet of Cedar Grove cemetery, her toddler voice reverberated like a shout.

Suell was deployed to Iraq in April 2003 as an Army petroleum supply specialist out of Fort Sill, Okla. Less than two months later, he was dead.

A report provided to the family at their request says that the 24-year-old died of a drug overdose on Father’s Day, one of 22 suicides reported among troops in Iraq last year.

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Edwards blasts Bush, vows to cut lobbyists’ power

St. Paul (Minnesota), 22 Feb—Democratic presidential hopeful John Edwards on Saturday skewered President George W. Bush for taking money from companies with lucrative contracts in Iraq and then list beside them who they made political contributions to, take a wild guess who’s the biggest recipient: George W. Bush," said Edwards.

An Edwards campaign staffer cited an April 2003 report by the Center for Responsive Politics that found Bush had received $31,000 US dollars during his 2000 election campaign from six companies that later asked to bid for Pentagon contracts.

The money included contributions from individuals associated with those companies.

"Instead of offering forward-looking ideas to face our two main challenges facing our country, Senator Edwards is launching negative attacks," responded Scott Stanzel, spokesman for the Bush-Cheney ‘04 campaign.

A mill worker’s son who became a wealthy trial lawyer, Edwards stresses trade reform and job protection in his stump speeches and promises to overcome decades of race and economic opportunity.

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MNA/Reuters

NASA’s Mars Spirit rover is shown in front of a 3 inch (7 cm) deep trench created when it dragged its left front wheel back and forth on 20 Feb, 2004. Scientists and engineers will soon begin up-close inspection of the soil in this trench.

Internet

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MNA/Reuters
Queens soldier killed in Iraq

NEW YORK, 22 Feb — A 20-year-old soldier from Queens was one of two Americans killed Thursday in a roadside bombing west of Baghdad, the Defence Department said Saturday.

The soldier was identified by the Defence Department as Specialist Roger G Ling, of the Douglaston section of Queens. Ling and 2nd Lt. Jeffrey C Graham, 24, of Elizabethtown, Ky., were killed when the bomb went off near Khalidiyah, about 50 miles west of Baghdad. One US soldier was wounded and one Iraqi killed.

Ling and Graham were both assigned to Company C, 1st Battalion, 34th Armour Regiment, 1st Brigade Combat Team based at Fort Riley, Kan. According to the Fort Riley Web site, Ling was an armour crewman. He joined the Army in November 2001 and had been stationed at Fort Riley since May 2002. Ling was deployed to Iraq in September 2003. — Internet

Anthrax jab side-effects withheld

SYDNEY, 22 Feb — Australia has admitted it vaccinated its Iraq-bound troops against anthrax without disclosing the side-effects on soldiers sent to Afghanistan.

The government has confirmed that most of the 1,500 troops deployed to fight the Taleban in 2001 became ill. But officials have defended the decision not to tell soldiers heading for Iraq in 2003, saying they did not want to cause anxiety.

They also say they thought such problems were unlikely to be repeated.

Senior military doctors have said other factors — such as the temperature in Afghanistan and high physical workloads — could have contributed.

In 2003, troops set to join the invasion of Iraq were not told of the problems.

At the time, Defence Minister Robert Hill insisted qualms about the shots, which were compulsory, were unfounded, and was vacated himself to demonstrate his confidence.

Nevertheless, some Australian servicemen and women were unconvinced. About 40 were sent home from the Gulf for refusing the jabs, though they have not faced disciplinary procedures.

However, no unusual rates of adverse reactions were reported from the Gulf here,” he said. — Internet

Ancient general’s tomb uncovered in north China

TAINAN, 22 Feb — Archaeologists in the northern China Province of Shanxi have located the tomb of a general who lived more than 400 years ago.

A group of construction workers recently unearthed a stone tablet in a downtown area of Jincheng City, where they were building a cold store for a local wholesaler of fruits. They reported the finding to the local cultural heritage department, with the intention it could be valuable.

The tablet was believed by experts to be a gravestone and its inscription suggested it belonged to Shen Qigong, a general of the Ming Dynasty (1368-1644), who died sometime during the reign of Emperor Wan Li, between 1573 and 1620.

The general was 69 years old when he died, his epitaph said. The local public security authority has closed off the site to protect it from intruders while archaeologists have opened the tomb with hopes to excavate the cultural heritage in it. — MNA/Xinhua

Internet

Statue heads at World Heritage Site in S-W China stolen

CHONGQING, 22 Feb — Two statue heads of the Dazu rock carvings, a World Heritage Site in southwest China’s Chongqing municipality, were beheaded by robbers, local cultural heritage authorities and police revealed.

The two statue heads were found stolen on February 11, police authorities said. The latter one was a clay statue carved in the Qing Dynasty (1644-1911) as replacement to its predecessor which was damaged. — MNA/Xinhua

US military Police check a burned out vehicle that was riddled with bullets and torched in Baghdad recently. Tensions remained high in western Iraq one day after guerrillas launched twin raids on Iraqi security bases, sparking blistering battles that killed 27 dead and dozens wounded. — Internet

Tactical Response Group police quit to work in Iraq

SYDNEY, 22 Feb — The crack police Tactical Response Group has been hit by the sudden resignation of officers to work in Iraq.

The officers were recruited on lucrative security contracts in the war-torn country. The losses have made a severe dent in the highly trained unit of about 40 officers.

Three resigned last Friday, another five are about to hand in their papers, and it is understood others are discussing their options with senior officers.

Officers from the state protection unit are also said to be considering 12-month contracts worth up to $300,000.

It is also understood that several soldiers from the Perth-based Special Air Service Regiment have left or are set to resign to take up similar deals.

The officers will be involved in the dangerous work of protecting business premises as Iraq struggles to rebuild its economy. They will also act as bodyguards for wealthy businessmen.

Most of the recruiting has been carried out “word-of-mouth” among the tight-knit security world but a UK-based agency, staffed for a US consortium, is behind the campaign.

A police service spokesman refused to confirm the number of resignations but claimed it would not affect the TRG’s operational ability. “We have a reserve list of officers that can step in,” he said.

“This sort of thing happens. People move on from these areas. They only have a certain life span and there is a natural turnover.”

His main concern was not that the officers were leaving.

“I am concerned about their safety in the job they’re going into,” he said.

He said that the WA service specialist units were not the only specialist officers that had been targeted.

Similar units in other states had also been hit by resignations. “Anyone who is in these areas is being approached,” he said.

“They are all likely candidates.”

But Police Union president Mike Dean said the development had the potential to reduce the TRG’s capability.

A Defence spokesman said he could not comment on the resignations.

“There is no obligation on their part to tell us what they are doing after leaving,” he said.

“Even if they did we could not release details because of privacy and security obli-
gations.” — Internet

Official archives of war-ridden dynasty excavated in central China

CHANGSHA, 22 Feb — Chinese scientists have unearthed some 1,000 bamboo and wooden slips of the Western Jin Dynasty (265-316) in Chenzhou City of central China’s Hunan Province, which they hope will shed more light on the war-ridden ancient dynasty.

“Our studies on the south China politics and culture of that time will get a significant boost by the latest find as these bamboo and wood slips are the sole official archives China has found so far,” said Qin Xijuan, who led an archaeological team to continue the excavation. Qin said the slips were dug out of a bustling construction site in the city and some of them recorded accurately the distance between Chenzhou and Luoyang, capital of the Western Jin Dynasty. They also bear the words “Tai’an” and “Yongkang”, two titles of the reign by the dynasty’s Emperor Jinhui. Though the papermaking technique spread throughout China in the Second Century AD, bamboo slips and wooden slats were still powerful competitors for paper in recording royal decrees and statutes in the country.

Few historical documents about the Western Jin Dynasty were handed down from ancient China since frequent chaos and wars led to the dynasty’s quick termination 25 years after its establishment. Before this new archaeological discovery, China had only 10 original bamboo and wood slips of the dynasty. The city unearthed large amounts of bamboo and wooden slips of the Eastern Han Dynasty (24-220) last year, indicating Chenzhou was once a political and cultural centre of ancient China, according to archeological experts. — Internet

US soldiers run out of their Bradley fighting vehicle at the start of a foot patrol through the streets of Tikrit north of Baghdad. — Internet
Altoona-area soldier seriously wounded in Iraq

Altoona, 22 Feb.—A Blair County soldier was seriously wounded in Iraq when a grenade exploded while he was on patrol duty, his mother said Friday. He'll then be transferred to Walter Reed Army Hospital in Washington, DC.

Army Spc Brandon Adams, of Logan Township, was with three other soldiers when they encountered a blast in Fallujah on Monday and the grenade exploded.

Carol Adams said Army officials told her that two soldiers suffered only minor injuries, while her son and another soldier were seriously hurt.

Adams suffered a severe head injury, as well as wounds to his right arm, right leg and pelvis. Adams is a member of the 10th Mountain Division based in Fort Drum, NY. He has been taken to the University of Manhester Hospital in Germany where he was expected to have surgery, his mother said Friday. He’ll then be transferred to Walter Reed Army Hospital in Washington, DC.

Adams entered the army in August 2000 after graduating from Altoona Area High School. He left for Iraq on Sept. 23.

Death of Britain adviser ruled suicide

London, 22 Feb.—The death of a British weapons inspector was ruled a suicide by a judge who investigated the political storm over intelligence on Iraqi weapons.

But some skeptics are questioning that verdict, arguing that it's unlikely government scientist David Kelly bled to death from a self-inflicted cut to his wrist.

The critics rebuff accusations that they're conspiracy theorists, and few offer any thoughts on how Kelly might have died if not by his own hand. Senior judge Lord Hutton concluded in his January report on Kelly’s death that the scientist killed himself, distressed that he’d been thrust into the crossfire of a battle between the government and the British Broadcasting Corp. over allegations that officials exaggerated evidence on Iraqi weapons to justify war.

Kelly’s body was found in July, leaning against a tree in the woods near his Oxfordshire home, his left wrist slashed and a nearly empty pack of painkillers nearby.

The scientist had been publicly identified days before as the source of a BBC newspaper and on the British Medical Journal's Web site. “The established wisdom is that it's practically impossible to bleed to death” from a wrist artery, he said.

Rousse, an epidemiologist who works in purchasing for the National Health Service in Birmingham, central England, said the artery would automatically constrict and the blood would clot before someone could lose enough to die.

He cited government statistics showing that only a handful of men in Kelly’s age group die by self-inflicted slashing injuries each year. —Internet

French population grows to 61.7 million in 2003

Paris, 22 Feb.—The French population, metropolitan and overseas departments and territories included, has grown to 61.7 million by January 1, 2004, making France the second most populous in Europe, French state statistics bureau INSEE announced Friday.

The French population in 2003, slightly up from 61.4 million in 2002, represents 16 per cent of the 15-nation European Union and 13 per cent of the bloc's 528 million inhabitants.

France has the second largest population in Europe, second only to Germany (82.5 million) and ahead of Britain (59.5 million), said the bureau.

France’s goal, adding that Russia had successfully kind over the past two decades.

Experts said the manoeuvre reflects the resurrection of Russia’s military forces amid the eastward expansion of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization and the changing world situation.

It shows to the world that Russia is not only a big military country but also a huge nuclear power.

MNA/Xinhua
Chinese Premier highlights scientific development concept

BEIJING, 22 Feb — The Premier of the new scientific development concept is a major achievement of the Communist Party of China (CPC) which has made in its efforts to emancipate ideological work, seek truth from facts, keep pace with the changes of the time, and realize ideological innovation, said Premier Wen Jiabao here Saturday.

According to the Premier, the scientific development concept focuses on integrating humanism with overall, coordinated and sustainable economic and social development, while pushing forward the reform and development drive to coordinate development in both urban and rural areas and in different regions, achieve harmonious development between man and nature, coordinate domestic development and open up to the outside world.

Wel, who is a member of the Standing Committee of the CPC Central Committee Political Bureau, made the remarks Saturday at the conclusion of a high-level training course held at the Party School of the CPC Central Committee.

Wel said, Wen urged leading officials at all levels to guide their work in accordance with the scientific development concept, which has been developed on the basis of relevant theories of Mao Zedong, Deng Xiaoping and Jiang Zemin, heads of China’s first, second and third generation leaderships, respectively.

EU reaches agreement on “polluters-pay” law

BRUSSELS, 22 Feb — The EU governments and the European Parliament reached Friday agreement on a draft directive establishing an EU environmental liability regime after the last sticking point, the issue of financial guarantees, was resolved.

The European Commission (EC), the executive arm of the European Union (EU), welcomed the agreement which, as stated by EU Environment Commissioner Margot Wallstrom, was 15 years in the making.

“The idea that the polluter must pay is a cornerstone of EU environmental policy, and with the new directive, we are, for the first time, putting the ’polluter pays principle’ into practice in a comprehensive manner,” she said in a statement.

“The new directive should be a strong incentive to prevent environmental damage from happening at all,” the Commissioner added.

The directive targets several specific sectors: industries that generate large amounts of heavy metal waste, chemical manufacturers, waste disposal and incinerator operators.

Five indicted in Alaska bear-poaching schemes

ANCHORAGE (Alaska), 22 Feb — Five Anchorage men were indicted recently for illegal trade in Asia, said Tim Burgess, US attorney for Alaska.

“Our dealing is with Alaska’s unique natural resources that are accessible to residents of Anchorage and surrounding communities. Black bear gall bladders, reputed in traditional Asian lore to have special medicinal powers, can sell for up to 4,000 US dollars a piece, federal officials said.

“These are the first major cases in Alaska of bears being poached for their activities have occurred in the lower 48 states, officials said.

“The sad news today is that we must announce the existence of systematic and targeted commercial poaching operations in Alaska, where previously nothing of this magnitude had been identified.”

Over 4 million Nepali kids receive polio vaccination

KATHMANDU, 22 Feb — Polio drops are being administered to 4.25 million children below the age of five across Nepal Saturday under the second phase of the eighth National Immunization Day, the Health Ministry said.

Some 5,000 local district health workers and volunteers have been mobilized at 39,328 immunization centres across the country to give polio drops to the kids, the ministry said in a Press release. The immunization day has been observed in Nepal for the last eight years as part of the campaign of eradicating polio from the world called on by the World Health Organization (WHO).

“The first phase of the programme of the eighth National Immunization Day was held on January 3 this year. Nepal is on the threshold of being declared a polio-free country as no single polio case has been reported in the country in the last four years, thanks to the immunization efforts over the last eight years, the Press release added.

According to WHO, provision, a country can be declared polio-free if no case is recorded for three consecutive years. However, Nepal has not declared itself as a polio-free country, because polio is still prevalent in neighbouring India, and there is a possibility of polio victims moving into Nepal.”

Bangladeshi youth team to go on Mt Qomolangma expedition in May

DHAKA, 22 Feb — A four-member team consists of Bangladeshi youngsters will be selected for Mount Qomolangma expedition on Saturday, reported the Daily Star on Friday.

Fifteen teams of the country have already been selected in the primary stage through a competition, and they left the capital Dhaka for northeastern hilly area Srimongal on Friday for final competition.

The winning team will be selected on 23 February on the basis of different tests like walking, running, riding push-bike and trekking.

Only three out of 44 boys and a girl will get the golden chance to go to Mount Qomolangma. A team of five climbers will go on the expedition from the Base Camp of the Mount Qomolangma on the second or third week of May.”

Thailand, Vietnam launch friendship village

BANGKOK, 22 Feb — Thai Prime Minister Thaksin Shinawatra and his Vietnamese counterpart Phan Van Khai on Saturday morning witnessed the opening of a friendship village in northeastern Thailand.

The Thai-Vietnamese Friendship Village in the province of Nakhom Phanom, some 740 kilometres north-east of Bangkok, was home to the late Vietnamese leader Ho Chi Minh in the 1920s when he was on a seven-year exile.

Currently, 129 Vietnamese households still live in the village and Thaksin promised to give them Thai nationalities at the opening ceremony.

“This village reflects the Vietnamese people’s close-ness and deep-connection with Thailand over the past 50 years,” the Thai Prime Minister was quoted by the state-run Thai News Agency as saying.

He noted that the Thai Government had realized and appreciated the historical signif-icance of the community and joined forces with the Vietnamese Government to develop the village into a new historic tourist site.

“The Thai-Vietnamese Friendship Village is also a significant symbol of bilateral cooperation between the Thai and Vietnamese people on the sustainable basis,” he said.

The two governments are holding a joint Cabinet meet-ing from Friday to Sunday in Vietnam.

During the meeting, first of its kind, officials from the two countries discussed bi-lateral cooperation in three separate fields as politics and security, economy, and so-cial-cultural development. Both sides recognized the necessity to strengthen bilat-eral cooperation in the inter-ests of peace and stability in the region.”

Keiko, the killer whale who was the star of the film “Free Willy,” sticks his tongue out after arriving at his new home in Norway’s Tjodnes Bay in this 7 Nov. 2002 file photo.

Keiko died in Norway in December, 2003 but on 20 Feb, 2004 the Oregon Coast Aquarium where he once lived responded to hundreds of e-mails, letters and phone calls by giving those who knew him here a chance for closure.”

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For emergence of a modern developed nation

Aung Moe San

The present duty of the national races born in the Union of Myanmar bestowed by history is to build a consolidated modern developed Union. That was why on the occasion of the 57th Anniversary Union Day the seven-point future programme of the State was laid down. The Union Day is a significant day. Myanmar national leaders (national race delegates) in Panglong signed the document on 12 February 1947 during the independence struggle for perpetuation of the Union, national solidarity and independence. During the colonial rule, the nationals of the Union lived in woe and woe and fought against the colonialists together for independence. After regaining the independence, national races of the Union hand in hand with the Tatmadaw prevented the nation from breaking up.

At the end of the Third Anglo-Myanmar War, Myanmar was enslaved. From that time on, fighting for independence of some national race leaders of the Union was stated in the history of national races’ anti-colonialist struggle as follows:

Kayah and Shan nationals led by Saw Laphaw and Htu Lu fought back against the colonialists in Kayah hills. In Kachin hills, Kachin nationals led by Phokan Dowa, Sama Dowa, Gara Dowa, Thama Dowa and Sadow Dowa, Bamar-Kachin nationals led by Bo Po Saw and Bo Hti and Shan-Bamar-Kachin nationals led by U Kham Hliaung, Saw Yan Paung and U Aung Myat fought against the British and so did Chin nationals led by Showgyebyu Mintha and Kyunbeik and Shan-Bamar nationals led by U Ket and U Pya in Chin Hills and Chindwin River regions. Shan nationals led by Princes Myinsaing and Linpin, Kengtung and Yaksauk Sawbwas and Wa nationals led by Saw Maha and Naw Kham Oo fought against the colonialists in Shan State and Wa regions respectively.

Among the national revolutionary fighters, a few words about Saw Laphaw, Wuntho Sawbwa, Kyunbeik and Kai Htwa will be presented.

Gandarawady Sawbwa Saw Laphaw fought against the British colonialists with his headquarters in Sawlon. Beginning 1886, everyone who surrendered to the British was attacked and crushed. Wuntho Sawbwa U Aung Myat was honest and quiet but had strong and sharp mind. His friends said that he would react against those who hurtled unfounded accusations at him. In 1891 a British stronghold was attacked. Although the British authorities took hold of all properties of Wuntho Sawbwa U Aung Myat, he fought them bravely without surrendering. Finally, he went to Santa in Yunnan Province.

Kyunbeik of Falam in Chin State was a leader of Tarshen Chin nationals. The Chin nationals usually chose wise and brave men as their leaders. In accord with this tradition, he was chosen as a leader. In fighting against a British force in Chin Hills, three Chin patriots were killed and one was wounded seriously. But Chin nationals defeated the British force. Kai Htwa was well known as a hunter and brilliant fighter. He participated in anti-British fighting. His speeches and songs encouraged anti-colonialist revolutionaries. He fought against the British, for three years.

Similarly, national races from the plain and hilly regions attacked the British brilliantly for independence from one generation to another.

In connection with patriotism of the nationals of the Union, Myannya Independence Declaration stated as follows:

We, Shan, Kayah, Kachin, Kayin, Chin, Mon, Bamar and Rakhine nationals born in the same land have existed as united and independent people in this noble land since time immemorial. Our independence has been shining as bright as the sun throughout the Tagaung, Tharyay Khitaya, Bagan, Myinsaing, Sagain, Pinya, Inwa, Konbaung and Mandalay periods.

Therefore, the national brethren fought against the intruders until the independence was regained. In this way, the national races altogether defended and safeguarded the Union. Among the governments that came to power after Myanmar regained the independence, the present Tatmadaw Government places unprecedented emphasis on the tasks for development of national races and border areas constantly upholding three national policies — non-disintegration of the Union, non-disintegration of national solidarity, and perpetuation of sovereignty.

It is because these border areas lagged behind in development in the past due to the internal armed insurgency.

Head of State Senior General Than Shwe gave guidance, saying that the purpose of establishment of the central committee and the work committee for development of border areas and national races is to bridge the development gap among parts of the nation including border areas and to promote the economic, educational, health and social sectors of local people in border areas.

The Tatmadaw Government formed the Central Committee for Development of Border Areas and National Races with five members on 25 May 1989, which was chaired by Head of State Senior General Than Shwe. On 4 February 2003, the committee was reconstituted with 16 members. And the Work Committee for Development of Border Areas and National Races was formed on 31 May 1989, which was chaired by Secretary-1 of the State Peace and Development Council (now Prime Minister General Khin Nyunt). Besides, the Ministry for Progress of Border Areas and National Races and Development Affairs was established on 30 January 1994 so as to effectively carry out the development tasks. Consequently, a total of 17 armed groups returned to the legal fold, and they are joining hands with the Government and the people. It indicates the historic achievement of national reconciliation that the previous governments could not accomplish.

The Progress of Border Areas and National Races Department has been implementing border areas development projects in Kachin State Special Region-1, Kachin State Special Region-2, Kokang region, Wa region, Shan region, Kachin North-East region, Paungau region, Pa-O region, Kayah region, Mawphla region, eastern Kengtung region, Mon region, Kayin region, Tanintharyi region, Rakhine region, Chin region, and Kohaw Valley region and Naga region in Sagain Division.

The estimated area of 18 regions of seven States and two Divisions where border areas development tasks are being carried out is about 83,415.34 square miles. So, border areas and the regions where national races live have developed significantly, and peace has been restored in these places. Thus, remarkable success has been achieved in implementing all-round development projects and anti-narcotic drug projects. Members of diplomatic corps, representatives of the United Nations and international observers have witnessed the development of these regions. Moreover, the Tatmadaw Government is implementing the five rural development tasks to narrow the development gap between urban and rural areas.

Therefore, the entire people are to join hands and to make combined efforts in implementing the State’s seven-step future programmes for building up a modern developed Union in conformity with the social science — in a human society, progress of economic productive forces which are called infrastructure go together with that of politics, administration, law, education, culture, democracy and human rights which are called superstructure.

(Translation: NV + MS)

Myannya Alin, Kyemon: 22-2-2004

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Efficient use of electricity

* 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.

Efficient use of fuel

* Saving one gallon of fuel per car per month will save the nation one US dollar
* Thus, a total of 455,822 cars in Myanmar can save US$ 5.5 million in a year
* The amount, US $ 5.5 million, can build a major bridge across Ayeyawady River

All this needs to be known

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

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

The second best time is now.

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The NEW LIGHT OF MYANMAR Monday, 23 February, 2004
Annual presentation of outstanding …

In addition, efforts are being made to safeguard the national prestige and integrity and sovereignty, braving a series of dissension, pressure, sanctions, obstacles and interferences for enabling the nation to stand shoulder to shoulder with those of the world ensuring as a united, independent and sovereign one and for development of own nation and people to the most possible degree, he noted.

At such a time, only when the tasks of boosting the nationalism and strong national outlook can be carried out relying on the national might while preserving the national literature will the national integrity that is required most today emerge.

The government, valuing the might of national literature and enhancing the national interests, has been making efforts for the emergence of a national literature building capable of national prestige and national integrity and establishing the national identity.

Kyaw Hsan

Prime Minister General Khin Nyunt presents Pakokku U Ohn Pe Life-long Literary Award for Writer Daw Yin Yin (Saw Mon Hnyin) to Editor-in-Chief of Sarpay Beikman U Maung Hlaing (Maung Swe Nge). — MNA

Motto Awards and others. Encouragements such as Literary Awards emerge in addition to National Literary Awards. Pakokku U Ohn Pe Life-long Literary Award to Writer Daw Yin Yin (Saw Mon Hnyin) to Editor-in-Chief of Sarpay Beikman U Maung Hlaing (Maung Swe Nge). — MNA

Prime Minister General Khin Nyunt presents Pakokku U Ohn Pe Life-long Literary Award for Writer Daw Yin Yin (Saw Mon Hnyin) to Editor-in-Chief of Sarpay Beikman.
Prime Minister General Khin Nyunt looks at the completion of the Ayechanphyo school.

Prime Minister General Khin Nyunt inspects... 

(from page 16)

In addition to implementing the border area development projects for improvement of the far-flung areas of the border regions, the Government designated special regions for equitably development of the regions that affect the entire nation. Five rural development tasks - development of education and health and availability of drinking water, development of transportation and rural development tasks - are being implemented for improvement of the rural regions in addition to the border areas.

As management machinery at the Central, State, Division, District and Township levels have been formed systematically, officials are to drive the machinery of management correctly and smoothly. To achieve success in implementing the projects laid down by the State, administration bodies at different levels are concurrently discharging duties with perseverance and goodwill for development of the region as well as upholding the living standard of the local people.

Afterwards, the Prime Minister and party went to Kyatpyae Village in Pakokku Township.

Next, the ceremony to open Ayechoo school building of BEMS (Branch) of Kyatpyae Village and to donate the plot of the school, to erect the plot for construction of the school and to launch the tube-well project, a tube-well opening ceremony was held in Kyatpyae Village. Deputy Minister for Progress of Border Areas and National Races and Development Affairs Brig-Gen Than Tun and Magway Division PDC Chairman Col Zaw Min formally opened the ceremony.

With contributions of K5.5 million including K5.5 million by the State and K 5 million by the public, a new school building (230’x30’) named Ayechoo was opened. The ceremony was opened by Minister for Education U Than Aung and Col Zaw Min. The Prime Minister and party posed for a documentary photo together with teachers, members of the school board of trustees and wellwishers. They then inspected the domestic science room and audio lab.

Afterwards, the Prime Minister and party paid homage to Sagu Taik Aungmingalar Monastery Sayadaw Bhaddanta Panthinda and members of the Sangha, Commander Maj-Gen Tha Aye, the deputy ministers, the Magway Division Chairman, officials of the State Peace and Development Council, local authorities and local people.

A ceremony to erect the post for construction of Kyatpyae Village BEMS (Branch) was held. The Prime Minister and party sprinkled scented water on the post. Next, with the funds of Pakokku Township development Affairs Committee, the posts were erected and the post was given to the head of township health department and health care staff and inquired about rural health care services. They reported on provisions of health care services, educative measures being taken for prevention of common diseases and medical treatments and supply of pure drinking water. Next, the Prime Minister upgraded the 16-bed hospital to 25-bed one and gave necessary instructions.

The Prime Minister and party went to Seikphyu in Pakokku District where they were welcomed by local authorities, departmental staff and members of social organizations. National Health Committee Chairman Prime Minister General Khin Nyunt and party proceeded to Seikphyu People’s Hospital. They were welcomed here by Medical Superintendent Dr Kan Hlaing, doctors and nurses. The Prime Minister then viewed round the wards, medical store and operation theatre. At the hall of the hospital the Prime Minister met with the head of township health department and health care staff and inquired about the water supply tasks for the region where water is scarce.

The Prime Minister and party arrived back here in the evening via Bagan-NyaungU.  — MNA

MFCC holds annual general meeting

Yangon, Feb 22—The 15th Annual General Meeting of Myanmar Foreign Correspondents Club was held at Kandawgyi Palace here at 5 pm today with an address by MFCC Patron U Hla Htoe. MFCC President U Sao Kai Hpa presented the annual report while Secretary U Nyunt Tin presented the financial statement for approval.

Next, the new executives for 2004-2005 were elected. U Hla Htoe (Nihon Keizai Shim bun) was elected as president of MFCC, U Sao Kai Hpa (Mainichi) as president, U Khin Maung Myn (NHK) as vice-president, U Nyunt Tin (Fujii TV) as secretary, U Aung Hla Tun (Reuters) as joint-secretary, U Tin Maung Aye (Asahi) as treasurer and U Min Zaw (Tokyo Shim bun) as auditor. Afterwards, Chief Correspondent of Xinhua News Agency Mr Duan Ting Chang who had completed his tour of duty in Myanmar and his successor Mr Zhang Yenfei were honoured.

After the meeting, a dinner was hosted. Present on the occasion were Brig-Gen Thaw Win, the President of the Office of the Chief of Military Intelligence, Brig-Gen Kyaw Thein, Col Tin Oo, Col Hla Min and senior military officers, Managing Director of News and Periodicals Enterprise Col Soe Win and officials. — MNA

Prime Minister General Khin Nyunt poses for documentary photo together with members of the Sangha, teachers and students at the opening of Ayechoo building of Kyatpyae BEMS (Branch) in Pakokku. — MNA

Secretary-2 Li Gen Then Sein greets Mr Lao Huaic, Vice-Chairman of the Chinese People’s Political Consultative Conference (CPPCC) and Vice-President of the Chinese Association for International Understanding (CAIFU) at the dinner. — MNA

Seimbulaw hoisting ceremony of pagoda No 850 and No 851 in progress in Bagan-NyaungU. — MNA

Prime Minister upgraded one BEHS (Branch) and one BEMS (Branch) into BEHS and BEMS respectively. He then gave necessary instructions, saying that he and his entourage were there to fulfil the needs for the development of Pakokku District, and required assistance had been given, he said. As Anawrahta Bridge across the River Ayeyawady had been constructed in Seikphyu Township, transport was smoother, and socio-economy making full use of good prospects at hand. Committees for respective sectors had been formed, and so officials concerned were to actively participate in the task for speedy development of their regions, he noted. Later, the Prime Minister presented a TV, a VCR and a set of computer for Seikphyu BEHS to the schoolhead. The Prime Minister and party arrived back here in the evening via Bagan-NyaungU Airport. — MNA
Made in India Show concludes

YANGON, 22 Feb — Made in India Show continued for the last day today at Yangon Trade Centre on Upper Pandawdaung Road in Mingala 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 sold iron and steel wares, electrical goods, industrial machinery, medicines, medical equipment, farm implements, sewing machines, different types of bicycles, personal goods, clothes and cosmetics. — MNA

USDA Secretary General meets
Vice-Chairman of Chinese People’s Political Consultative Conference

YANGON, 22 Feb — Secretary General of the Union Solidarity and Development Association and Ministry for Cooperatives Maj-Gen Htay Oo met Vice-Chairman of the Chinese People’s Political Consultative Conference (CPPCC) Mr Luo Haocai and party at the USDA Headquarters at 3.30 pm today.

Also present at the call were USDA CEC members, Prime Minister General Khin Nyunt’s Office U Than Shwe, Minister for Mines Brig-Gen Ohn Myint and Minister for Livestock and Fisheries Brig-Gen Maung Maung Thein and Chinese Ambassador Mr Li Jinjun and officials. During their meeting, they cordially discussed friendship and cooperation between the youths of the two countries. — MNA

Entries invited for Armed Forces Day
commemorative colour photo contest

YANGON, 22 Feb — The 59th Anniversary Armed Forces Day Commemorative Literary and Photo Contests Organizing Committee today announced that it will conduct a colour photo contest.

The two titles for the contests are “Developing and Pleasant Myanmar” and “Preserve Cultural Heritage”. The contestants may send four 10” x 12” print photos for each contest. Those who have won first to third prizes in the previous contests will be categorized into a separate group. If an entry wins a prize, its negative is to be submitted. Data and captions are to be written on a separate sheet. If there is a model, his or her permission is required. An entry is not to have been published before in any publications and it must not be a prize-winning work in any other competition. First to third prizes will be presented in Yangon on 27 March 2004, and consolation prizes at the 59th Anniversary Armied Forces Day Commemorative ceremonies to be held at respective commands.

The entries are to be sent to Secretary of the Committee U Tun Min, Director of the Information and Public Relations Department, No 22-24, Pansodan Street, by 29 February. — MNA

PRC delegation tours
downtown Yangon

YANGON, 22 Feb — A Chinese delegation led by Vice-Chairman of the Chinese People’s Political Consultative Conference (CPPCC) and Vice-President of the Chinese Association for International Understanding (CAIFU) of the People’s Republic of China Mr Luo Haocai, accompanied by Ambassador of the PRC Embassy Mr Li Jinjun and officials, visited the Shwedagon Pagoda this morning.

First, the visiting delegation members paid homage to the pagoda clock-wise and members of the Pagoda Board of Trustees briefed them the history of the pagoda and religious edifices.

Next, the visiting delegation paid homage to the Jade Buddha image kept at Pongnyakthala Bahukara prayer hall and Mr Luo Haocai signed in the visitors’ book and made cash donations at Rakhine prayer hall.

Afterwards, the visiting delegation viewed the bell donated by King Thawrawady and had a documentary photo taken.

At 9.30 am, the visiting delegation proceeded to Yangon-Thanyin Bridge where they were welcomed by Managing Director of Myanmar Railways U Min Swe and officials.

Next, U Min Swe explained about Yangon-Thanyin Bridge to the guests who had a group photo taken there. After that, the visiting delegation arrived at Union national race village near the bridge where they were welcomed by officials and Union national races.

At the briefing hall, Deputy Director-General U Win Aung of Department for Development of Border Areas and National Races explained the salient points of the village.

While viewing round the village, the guests were entertained with dances of the national races. — MNA

Entries invited for colour photo competition

YANGON, 22 Feb — With a view to ensuring development of Myanmar Tourism, Directorate of Hotels and Tourism has already announced that it will hold the colour photo competition under the title of scenic Myanmar.

The size of entry photo must be from 12x12 inch to 12 x 18 inch. The entry must be own creation and must not be prize winning work in any other competition. There is no limitation for the number of the entry photo which is to be taken locally. Name, NRC No, address, brief biography and full caption of the entry are to be provided in a separate sheet of paper which is to be attached to the back of the entry. Handsome prizes will be given alongside consolation prizes.

Entries are to be sent to Secretary of the Committee for Organizing the Colour Photo Competition U Kaug Hutt (Deputy Director) of the Directorate of Hotels and Tourism, No 77/91, Sule Pagoda Road, Yangon, not later than 27 February 2004. — MNA

Secretary-2 Li Gen Thein Sein presents outstanding awards to the winners at the third four-monthly meeting of Myanmar Police Force on 21 February. (News reported). — MNA
Dr Daw Khin Win Shwe explains MWAf functions

YANGON, 22 Feb — President of Myanmar Women’s Affairs Federation Dr Daw Khin Win Shwe and party left Yangon for Myeik on 20 February.

On 21 February morning, Dr Daw Khin Win Shwe and party met with Daw Nu Nu Swe, wife of the Chairman of Taninthayi Division Peace and Development Council Commander, members of the panel of patrons of the Taninthayi Division Organization for Women’s Affairs, CEC members and officials totalling about 480.

At the meeting, President Dr Daw Khin Win Shwe gave a speech, saying that they arrived there to clarify organizational set-up of the federation and functions. The federation was formed with the several lofty aims including uplift of women’s role, protection of the women’s rights, development of social, education, health and economic affairs of women and securing of women’s life. The federation, being a social organization, is expected to widely and effectively carry out the tasks. She said she believed those who were selected to discharge duties of working groups in Taninthayi Division can make efforts for carrying out development tasks of women in the division. Members of the women’s affairs are to focus on full-round development of the State, the people and the entire women. It is necessary to avoid tamishing the image of the federation and to actively and uniformly perform tasks of the federation in accord with the motto ‘Let’s make efforts for development of women’s life’.

Then, officials explained their respective sectors in the working groups. Dr Daw Khin Win Shwe accepted K 8 million donated by wellwishers. President Dr Daw Khin Win Shwe and Leader of International Relations Working Group Prof Daw Yi Yi Myint presented certificates of honour to the wellwishers. At 4 pm, they met with members of Divisional Organization for Women’s Affairs and supporting groups at the Yeiktha of Coastal Region Command Headquarters. At the meeting, officials answered the queries. — MNA

Development tasks inspected in Htantabin

YANGON, 22 Feb — Chairman of Yangon Division Peace and Development Council Commander of Yangon Command Maj-Gen Myint Swe inspected agricultural and regional development tasks in Htantabin Township this afternoon.

Accompanied by No 1 Military Region Commander Col Tun Kyi, authorities and departmental officials, the commander inspected thriving of 1,000 acres of summer paddy fields in the high-yield special zone with the use of natural fertilizer near Hnegitthaik Village, Htantabin Township.

Next, the commander saw over cultivation of summer paddy in the area of Kyunyin river water pumping project and irrigation tasks. On arrival at Lamuden river water pumping project in Bawleykan region opposite side of Kukkowa River in Htantabin Township, the commander inspected cultivation of summer paddy and heard reports on paddy cultivation and maintenance of the canals.

The commander and party proceeded to Kyunyin river water pumping project and looked into pumping of water into summer paddy fields from Kukkowa River. They then went to the construction site of Development Market in Htantabin and inspected progress of the works. The commander gave instructions on construction tasks meeting the set standard. — MNA

Import-substitute Domestic Industrial Products Exhibition to be extended till 24 February

YANGON, 22 Feb — The Import-substitute Domestic Industrial Products Exhibition & Seminar sponsored by the Cottage Industries Department of the Ministry of Cooperatives continued in the compound of the department on Thuhanna Road in North Okkalapa Township here today. Altogether 34 exhibition booths of industrial cooperatives and private industrialists are crowded with visitors. The exhibition will be extended till 24 February. — MNA

New medicine for TB introduced

YANGON, 22 Feb — Lupin Lab Ltd (India) introduced the new medicine FDC (Fixed Dose Combination) Akurti-T-4 to the consumers and held the seminar on Novel Approach to Application of DOTS.

Officials of Lupin Lab Ltd (India) explained latest WHO guideline for TV treatment and introduction of Akurti-T-4 and answered the queries. Mega Products Ltd will distribute Akurti-T-4 to consumers in Myanmar. — MNA

MMCWA President inspects operation of cleft lips and cleft palate patients in Myeik

YANGON, 22 Feb — President of Myanmar Maternal and Child Welfare Association Dr Daw Khin Win Shwe, Patron of Taninthayi Division MMCWA Supervisory Committee Daw Nu Nu Swe and members and officials of MMCWA arrived at General Hospital in Myeik on 20 February.

They were welcomed by Chairman of Taninthayi Division Peace and Development Council Commander of Coastal Region Command Brig-Gen Ohn Myint and members, the medical superintendent and doctors and nurses. Dr Daw Khin Win Shwe and party inspected operation of cleft lip and cleft palate patients and provided cash assistance to each patient.

A ceremony to present cash to cleft lip and cleft palate patients in Taninthayi Division was held at the hospital. Present were President of MMCWA Dr Daw Khin Win Shwe, Commander Brig-Gen Ohn Myint, officials of MMCWA, Patron of Taninthayi Division MMCWA wife of the commander Daw Nu Nu Swe, departmental officials and wellwishers.

Dr Daw Khin Win Shwe spoke on the occasion. Wellwishers presented cash for the patients. Professor Dr Khin Maung Lwin of Department of Plastic, Maxillo-facial and Oral Surgery accepted K 1,177,102 and Chairman of Taninthayi Division MMCWA Supervisory Committee Dr Swi We K 198,000. Thirteen wellwishers presented K 4.1 million for the patients to Dr Daw Khin Win Shwe. Next, Dr Swi We spoke words of thanks. Treatment will be given to 107 cleft lip and cleft palate patients at the Myeik General Hospital. — MNA

Tax-free markets in Yangon City inspected

YANGON, 22 Feb — Chairman of Yangon Division Peace and Development Council Commander of Yangon Command Maj-Gen Myint Swe inspected sales at tax-free markets in Yangon City this morning.

The commander went to Pantaya Tax-free Market on Pantaya Road, Dagon Township, Hanthawady Tax-free Market at the corner of Hanthawady and Kyundaw Roads in Kamayut Township, Konnynthma Tax-free Market and Nawade Tax-free Market in Mayangon Township, Yankin Tax-free Market near the Ministry of Industry-2 and Tamway Tax-free Market on Kyakkasan Road in Tamway Township. The commander inspected the sales at the markets. After his inspection tour, the commander gave necessary instructions to officials. — MNA

MMCWA President inspects operation of cleft lips and cleft palate patients in Myeik

MWAf President Dr Daw Khin Win Shwe accepts cash donations for the MWAf. — MNA

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Text extracted from the images is not available.
Zimbabwe, China sign agreement to strengthen trade relations

HARARE, 22 Feb — Zimbabwe and China here on Friday signed an Economic and Technical Agreement that will see the two countries strengthen their trade relations.

Chinese Assistant Commerce Minister Fu Ziyong signed on behalf of the Chinese Government while Finance and Economic Development Minister Chris Kuruneri signed for the Zimbabwean Government.

Speaking at the signing ceremony, Kuruneri said Zimbabwe and China planned a joint project to improve tobacco production by the southern African country from 80,000 tons to 800,000 tons annually.

“We have the land and manpower and you (China) have the resources. It’s not a one-way street. We expect to mutually benefit,” Kuruneri said.

He also said Zimbabwe had minerals like gold and platinum but needed investors.

Fu said that the government of China would see the agreement as an expression of continued ties with Zimbabwe.

“We really hope for your country’s prosperous development. We hope that our friendship can be strengthened,” said Fu.

The Chinese delegation led by Fu arrived in Zimbabwe on Thursday and winds up a three-day visit to Zimbabwe on Saturday with a visit to the joint-venture Sino-Zimbabwe cement plant in the Midlands city of Gweru.

China also has investment in Zimbabwe’s steel production and ties are being strengthened in mining and tourism.

Meanwhile, the Chinese trade delegation met with President Robert Mugabe at State House and discussed Zimbabwe’s intention to improve relations with the Asian economic powerhouse.

Kuruneri told journalists after the meeting that Zimbabwe wanted to expand areas of cooperation with China and improve the country’s foreign currency position.

He said the two countries wanted to strengthen cooperation in the agricultural sector, particularly in tobacco production.

Fu described the meeting with President Mugabe as “good”. “It went on quite well. It’s apparent that his excellency has been very good,” Fu said.

According to the Finance Ministry, China has so far committed more than 200 million US dollars to projects in Zimbabwe, according to the Finance Ministry.

China plans to turn its bonded zones into free trade areas

BRUNO, 22 Feb — China plans to turn its 15 bonded zones into free trade areas, and the Waigaoqiao bonded zone in Shanghai will be the pilot, China’s commerce minister and vice-chairman of the National People’s Congress Standing Committee, China’s top legislature, said here Friday.

The bonded zones, set up in the 1990s and mainly located in eastern China’s coastal cities such as Shanghai and Qingdao, have a nearly similar function to free ports or free trade areas. Foreign goods can be stocked in the region without import duty if not sold to the domestic market.

The zones will be adjusted to meet the demands of China’s accession to the World Trade Organization, Cheng said.

The Shanghai Waigaoqiao bonded zone should be transformed as a pilot to integrate logistics, trade and intermediates, Cheng said, when meeting with Brad Anderson, vice-chairman and CEO of the US-based Best Buy Co, Inc. — MNA/Xinhua

Germany, S Korea to open consulates in Sichuan Province

CNHANG, 22 Feb — Germany and South Korea are expected to open consulates in Chengdu, capital of southwest China’s Sichuan Province, in the near future.

Sources from the Foreign Affairs Office of the Sichuan Provincial Government said the governments of Germany and China respectively signed a treaty on building a consulate in Chengdu. The Embassy of South Korea in China and China’s Ministry of Foreign Affairs also decided to set up a consulate in Chengdu after exchanging correspondence earlier this year.

Vice-director of the Foreign Affairs Office Cui Zhiwei said setting up the two consulates in Chengdu, one of metropolises in southwest China, will not only strengthen the opening-up image of Sichuan Province, but also help to consolidate and promote the economic links between Sichuan Province and its capital city of Chengdu in the west part of China.

It will also produce a great impact on opening more consulates by other countries in the city, he said.

The United States opened a consulate in Chengdu in 1984. — MNA/Xinhua

China opens first water treatment factory in Sichuan Province

SHANGHAI, 22 Feb—GE’s first China-based water treatment factory went on-stream Thursday in Wuxi City, in eastern China’s Jiangsu Province.

GE Betz Water & Process Chemicals, a unit of Water Technologies, a wholly-funded joint venture with a US$20 million investment, supplied specialty chemicals for water treatment for both local and other Asian countries, according to Steven J Schneider, chief executive officer of GE China.

The newly established company, covering an area of 30,000 square metres, has an annual output of 30,000 tons of reagent used for water and waste-water treatment, including water purification and fluid filtration. — MNA/Xinhua

China to start training college students for rural areas

BEIJING, 22 Feb — China will start training college students specifically for its rural areas through distance education from this July among 100 trial counties, a top education official said here Friday.

The Training One College Student for One Village Project, initiated by the Ministry of Education (MOE), aims at providing professional and skilled managers for the countryside, said Wu Qidi, Deputy Minister of the MOE.

“It is hard for rural students to pass college entrance examinations, while those who have been admitted by colleges usually do not want to return to the countryside after graduation,” Wu said.

In China, it is considered to be an honourable thing for a rural student to enter a college after passing a national examination, and to work in the country without going back to the countryside after graduation.

The project will provide technical education at college level for rural areas by utilizing the educational resources and software of the country’s agricultural colleges and other related colleges through the distance education system of the China Central Radio and TV University (CCTVU) and local distance education institutions across the country.

IT technology, application, management, practical skills like planting, breeding and cultivating, processing for the sale of agricultural goods, and relevant laws and regulations will be included in the training.

Each year, a student with a high-school-level education, especially ex-service-men, will be selected from each village where the programme is being tried out, said Wu.

The CCTVU and local distance education institutions, having input 20 million yuan (US$2.8 million) into 100 counties in western China, plan to enrol a total of 200,000 students over the next 10 years for this project.

Wu said China has 900 million rural people, accounting for nearly two-thirds of the national population, so the central government has to spare no efforts to promote the development of its rural areas.

MNA/Xinhua
China to build population information network

SHANGHAI, 22 Feb — China aims to build an information network by 2006 that pools information about citizens from various sectors, ranging from police to family planning, taxation and educational departments.

“The project is about sharing information about the population gleaned by the public security, labour and social insurance, taxation and other departments,” said a government official attending the Working Conference on Sharing Basic Information on the Population now being held here.

“There’s a need for different sectors to share information. For instance, banks need information from other sources to verify the credit standing of certain people, and individuals need access to police records to ascertain the authenticity of ID cards,” said the official.

The project is jointly sponsored by the State Council Informationization Office, the Ministry of Public Security, the Ministry of Labor and Social Security, the Ministry of Finance and that of Taxation (SAT) and China’s standardization authority.

The official said the project would first be carried out on a trial basis in Shanghai, Hunan Province and Jiangsu Province from March 1 this year. The network will first include population information from the police and then add information from family planning, statistics, civil affairs, social security, taxation and education departments.

MNA/Xinhua

Russia, Japan back delayed space shuttle launch

WASHINGTON, 22 Feb — Russia and Japan, two key partners in the International Space Station, understand the need to delay the US space shuttles’ return to flight until next year, a top NASA official said on Friday.

“They’re not going to push us or rush us in that regard... They are comfortable with where we’re going,” said Michael Kostelnik, the No. 2 official in NASA’s shuttle and space station programme. He pointed out one key reason why: “There is no other vehicle to complete the space station.”

The three-ship shuttle fleet has been grounded since the fatal mid-air disintegration of shuttle Columbia on February 1, 2003. Since then, NASA officials have proposed various launch windows for a return to flight, each one later than the last.

On March 15, NASA announced an expected launch window of March 6, 2005 to April 18, 2005 — about six months later than the previous launch window — meant to give NASA time to test its external fuel tank and develop a camera boom to let shuttle crews examine the outside of the craft while in flight. — MNA/Reuters

Wang Qishan elected as mayor of Beijing

BEIJING, 22 Feb — Wang Qishan was elected on Saturday morning as mayor of Beijing at the second session of the 12th Beijing Municipal People’s Congress that opened on Monday.

Wang was made acting mayor of Beijing on April 22 last year in a decision made by the Standing Committee of the 12th Beijing Municipal People’s Congress.

According to Chinese laws, the Standing Committee of the People’s Congress at the local level is authorized to appoint local officials up to the position of deputy heads. Only the annual plenary session of the People’s Congress is entitled to elect head of the local government.

Wang, born in July 1948, was a native of Tianzhen in Shaxi Province, north China. He joined the Communist Party of China (CPC) in 1963.

In 1997, Wang became a member of the Standing Committee of the CPC Guangdong Provincial Committee, and was elected vice-governor of Guangdong Province in 1998. Wang was made acting mayor of Beijing and deputy secretary of the CPC Beijing Municipal Committee in April 2003.

Wang is chairman of the organizing committee for the Beijing Olympic Games slated for 2008. He is an alternate member of 15th CPC Central Committee and member of 16th CPC Central Committee. — MNA/Xinhua

Dengue hits 19 provinces in Indonesia

JAKARTA, 22 Feb — The dengue fever outbreak has spread to 19 of Indonesia’s 32 provinces, with the death toll from the outbreak approaching 200.

According to the secretary-general of the Directorate-General of Communicable Diseases, Syafii Ahmad, the government had recorded 10,140 dengue cases with 195 deaths, mostly in Central Java, East Java and Jakarta.

Syafii said that despite the escalation of the outbreak, the government had no plans to declare it an epidemic.

“The law requires us to maintain the level of the outbreak as an extraordinary occurrence or national catastrophe because the death toll this year is still around double last year’s figure. It is not that easy to change the status,” Syafii was quoted on Saturday by The Jakarta Post as saying.

An epidemic can be declared only if the casualty rate surges to 10 times higher than the previous year, Syafii said.

Syafii said the Health Ministry had obtained 150 billion rupiah ($10.6 million) in emergency funds to fight the outbreak. Because a national catastrophe has been declared, poor dengue patients are entitled to treatment at no charge. — MNA/Xinhua

3 arrested over drugs in Australia

CANBERRA, 22 Feb — Australian police have arrested three men and seized 33.9 kilogrammes of ecstasy, Australian Justice and Customs Minister Chris Ellison announced Friday.

The police began the investigation when the Customs officers at Port Botany of Sydney identified the drugs made up of 135,600 tablets hidden in a consignment of wine from Greece, said Ellison. The drugs were estimated at a street value of 5.1 million US dollars, he said. This followed a total of 42.5 kilogrammes of ecstasy seized in Melbourne in mid-January and February by police and Customs officers.

MNA/Xinhua

Citiés doivent renoncer à une approche coûteuse des usages de l'appareil végétal

Beijing, 22 Feb — Les autorités du gouvernement central de Chine ont annoncé jeudi avoir conclu un accord avec les spécialistes de l'agriculture pour suspendre la stratégie fondée sur une utilisation massive de pesticides.

Après avoir marqué les agriculteurs de la région de la Chine centrale par des taxes de dengue, les autorités chinoises ont commencé à douter de la faisabilité de leurs stratégies de lutte contre les maladies transmises par les moustiques.

Les autorités chinoises ont annoncé jeudi avoir suspendu les activités de lutte contre les maladies transmises par les moustiques dans 19 provinces du pays, dont l’Indonésie et le Vietnam.

Les autorités chinoises ont également annoncé jeudi avoir arrêté trois individus pour trafic de drogues, dont 33,9 kilogrammes de ecstasy.

MNA/Xinhua

Argentina jet makes safe emergency landing

BUENOS AIRES, 22 Feb — An Argentine Austral Airlines jet landed safely at Ezeiza International Airport Friday after being declared in a state of emergency when it lost a wheel on takeoff, an Air Force spokesman said.

He said that the plane bound for the Iguazu Falls in the north, with 155 passengers and 16 crew on board, took off from the domestic hub Aeroparque de Buenos Aires at 1:15 local time (1615 GMT). The left front tire, which had come off the front end of the jet, dropped just seconds after the flight got under way, and destroyed the fence of the airport. After finding the ordeal, the jet’s pilot reported it immediately to the ground control tower, and decided to fly to Ezeiza International Airport 30 kilometres away. To burn fuel, the plane circled in the air for about an hour. The right tire came off in the landing.

MNA/Xinhua

Asia-Pacific forestry experts to meet in Fiji

WELLINGTON, 22 Feb — The 20th Asia-Pacific Forestry Conference (APFC) will be held in Fiji in April this year, said a government Press release reaching here from Fiji Saturday.

The meeting will be jointly hosted by the UN Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) and Fiji’s Ministry of Fisheries and Forests.

Samisoni Nausia, secretary for the Organizing Committee and Environment Minister, said the Fiji government was committed to ensuring that the forestry experts from 29-member countries who will make recommendations for the continued protection and sustainable use of our forests.

“THERE will also be about 100-150 international forestry officials from the region attending this conference,” Nausia said.

The APFC, created in 1949, is a forum for advising and taking action on key forestry issues pertinent to the Asia-Pacific Region, which is experiencing rapid changes that are characterized by diversity. Nausia said that participants will also review and coordinate the implementation of the policies at the regional level as well as exchange information on suitable practices and technical problems.

The APFC has been held on a biennial basis, and the last meeting was held in Mongolia in 2002. Fiji last hosted the conference in 1981.

MNA/Xinhua

Angus Osborne climbs over a snowbank after making his way from the store in Dartmouth, Nova Scotia, on 21 Feb. 2004. Many people in the province had to venture out on foot as roads remained blocked by the 99 centimeters of snow which fell on Thursday and Friday. — INTERNET
**SPORTS**

**FIFA says financial credibility restored by 2003 profit**

**ZURICH, 22 Feb.—** FIFA made a profit of 141 million Swiss francs (113 million US dollars) in 2003 on revenue of 712 million to restore its financial credibility, world soccer's governing body said on Friday. In a statement FIFA said it could lay claim to equity totalling 94 million and cash funds of 341 million at end-2003.

The collapse of FIFA's marketing partner ISL in 2001 and Germany's Kirch media empire in 2002 hit FIFA's finances hard. In May 2002 it estimated it would lose 134 million in the 1999-2002 period. In April last year, it reported a surplus of 115 million for the four years which culminated in the 2002 World Cup in South Korea and Japan.

The 2003 financial statement was the first to be drawn up in accordance with International Financial Reporting Standards and has been reviewed by external auditors. FIFA made its financial affairs more transparent following allegations of mismanagement which arose in the campaign for the May 2002 presidential election. — MNA/Reuters

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**United fans launch “not for sale” campaign**

**MANCHESTER/England, 22 Feb.—** Manchester United fans have launched a “Not for Sale” campaign in an attempt to ward off a takeover of the English champions.

“We are saying to all the predators out there that the customers don’t want you in charge, no matter who you are,” Houston of United’s fans’ group said on Friday.

Irish tennis player John McCusker and fellow United fan told a news conference on Friday.

“The incentive they’ve got now is being undefeated so they’ll be charged up to make sure they don’t lose a game,” he said at a news conference on Friday.

“That’s a big thing to carry, that’s it’s a big burden to carry. With that five-point lead over us, we hope that they now start dropping points.”

Arsenal had a similar advantage last season before stuttering and allowing United to win the league for the eighth time in 11 years.

Arsenal, who have won 18 and drawn seven of their 25 league matches and have 13 fixtures to complete, visited third-placed Chelsea on Saturday. Arsenal have 61 points to United’s 56 and Chelsea’s 55. United midfielder Paul Scholes also believes it will be hard for Arsenal to maintain their advantage.

He stressed the need for the champions, who host relegation-threatened Leeds on Saturday, and are trying to avoid a third league defeat in nine matches, to improve their form and Arsenal falter. — MNA/Reuters

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**Ferguson believes pressure mounting on unbeaten Arsenal**

**GLASGOW, 22 Feb.—** Scottish manager Bertie Vogts says he will not let pressure and resign in the face of severe criticism following Wednesday’s 4–0 friendly defeat in Wales.

Wales enjoyed their biggest victory over their British rivals at Cardiff’s Millennium Stadium, with striker Robert Earnshaw scoring a hat-trick against a shambling visiting defence. Vogts apologized to Scotland’s fans on Friday but the former German coach also reiterated his commitment to oversee the country’s 2006 World Cup qualifying campaign.

“I would like to apologize to the Tartan Army, who came to Cardiff in such numbers and created a superb atmosphere in the stadium,” Vogts said in a statement on the Scottish Football Association’s web-site.

“They deserve much better and the overall performance was not acceptable.

“My target is still qualification for the World Cup in Germany in 2006 and I am more determined than ever to take Scotland there.

“The Wales match was the first of six or seven friendlies before the World Cup qualifiers begin in September, and the team should be judged on its competitive record.”

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**Spartak withdraw appeal against Titov doping ban**

**NYON (Switzerland), 22 Feb.—** Spartak Moscow have withdrawn their appeal against a one-year ban imposed on Russian international Yerog Titov for a doping offence. UEFA said on Friday.

European soccer’s ruling body last month banned Titov from all competitive matches for 12 months after he tested positive for the banned stimulant bromomont.

The 27-year-old midfielder was tested after the goalless Euro 2004 qualifying playoff first leg against United in Moscow on November 15.

Russia won the second leg in Cardiff 1–0, a week later to qualify for this year’s tournament in Portugal.

Wales have appealed to UEFA against the ruling body’s decision not to award them Russia’s place as the finals as a result of Titov’s failed drug test. The player was also fined 6,400 euros (8,102 US dollars), while Spartak received a 12,800-euro (16,200-US dollar) fine. — MNA/Reuters

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**Beckenbauer calls for sanctions against Lehmann**

**BERLIN, 22 Feb.—** Franz Beckenbauer has stepped into the ring in Germany’s battle of the goalkeeper’s to call for sanctions against Jens Lehmann, who claimed he should replace Oliver Kahn as the national side’s first choice.

Arsenal’s Lehmann has stirred controversy in the soccer-mad country not only by saying he was the best and should be picked but also by criticizing Kahn’s lifestyle.

“Lehmann’s statements are cheeky, uncooperative and in bad taste,” said Beckenbauer, the president of Kahn’s club Bayern Munich. “(Germany coach) Rudi Voeller has to consider this carefully and act accordingly,” the World Cup-winning captain and coach wrote in a column in Friday’s mass-circulation daily.

Beckenbauer was the Germany coach when he had to face a similar situation at the 1996 World Cup finals in Mexico. Harald (Toni) Schumacher was then Germany’s number one and reserve Uli Stein, out of frustration, verbally attacked Beckenbauer, who dropped him from the team and sent him home. Voeller said on Thursday that he would travel to London over the next few weeks to talk to Lehmann but would not be drawn on whether he might take sanctions.

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**Answer for yesterday’s Crossword Puzzle**

- A L I C E
- T O X I C
- S U P R T
- U N D A T E D
- B E D I V E R S
- O R A N G E
- R I G H T
- I N T R O
- U R B A N
- S A I N T
- A Z U R E
- Y P O L E
- R E F U Seq
- I N C H
- E N A G I T E D
- A D A G E N Y S

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**US soccer players Mia Hamm (L) and Abby Wambach practice during a training session in El Cuyo de Aiquilua, on 20 Feb, 2004. The US women’s soccer team is in Costa Rica to prepare for the pre-Olympic qualifying tournament, to be held from 25 February to 3 March.** —MNA/Reuters
23-24 February 2004 (Monday)

Morning Transmission (9:00 - 10:00)

9:00 Signature Tune

9:15 Song of Myanmar Beauty & Scenic Sites “Mingalabar”

9:20 Baung Me: My Village

9:25 National News

9:30 Tour In Myanmar “Taunggyi, Inlay”

9:45 National News

10:00 Song of Myanmar Beauty & Scenic Sites “Come and See Myanmar”

10:15 Evening Transmission (19:30 - 23:30)

19:30 Signature Tune

19:35 Song of Myanmar Beauty & Scenic Sites “Mingalabar”

19:40 Baung Me: My Village

19:45 National News

19:50 Reminiscence in the Glow of Sunset

19:55 Khame Traditional Cultural Dance

20:05 Weaving Industry of Pakokku

20:10 Myanmar Modern Song “Wonderful Country”

20:15 National News

20:20 A Wonderful Trip to Ngwe Haung

20:25 Myanmar Modern Song “You From Next Door”

20:30 National News

20:35 Lobsters Trading

20:40 Myanmar As Told By History

20:45 National News

20:50 SA-LE Monastery Decorated with Handicrafts

20:55 The Stage Male Dance

21:00 Tour In Myanmar “Taunggyi, Inlay”

21:10 Songs on Screen

National News

11:00 Song and dance of national races

11:45 Song of Myanmar Beauty & Scenic Sites “Mingalabar”

12:00 Surf report

12:45 Practice in reading

13:00 Musical Programme

13:30 Radio Myanmar Modern Music Group

14:00 National News

14:15 Songs on Screen

14:30 Lobsters Trading

14:45 National News

14:50 Sa-LE Monastery

15:00 Surf report

15:15 Surf report

15:30 Industrial Achievement

15:45 Musical Programme

16:00 Radio Myanmar Modern Music Group

16:15 National News

16:30 Beach variety

16:45 National News

17:00 Surf report

17:15 Musical Programme

17:30 Radio Myanmar Modern Music Group

17:45 National News

18:00 News

18:15 International News

18:30 Weather

18:45 National News

19:00 Golden Land’s “Kanthyar” News/Newspaper

19:15 News

WEATHER

Sunday, February 22, 2004

Summary of observations recorded at 09:30 hours MST: During the past 24 hours, weather has been generally fair in the whole country. Night temperatures were (3°C) to (4°C) below normal in Kachin, Kayin, Rakhine States, Yangon, Ayeyawady, Tanintharyi Divisions, (5°C) to (6°C) below normal in Chin State, Mon State, and about normal in the remaining areas.

Maximum temperature on 21-22 February was 34.0°C (93°F). Minimum temperature on 22-23 February was 16.2°C (61°F). Relative humidity at 9:30 am MST on 22-23 February was 76%. Total sunshine hours on 21-22 February was 9.2 hours approx. Rainfall on 22-23 February was nil at Yangon Airport, Kaba-Aye and central Yangon. Total rainfall since 1-1-2004 was 3 mm (0.12 inch) at Yangon Airport and nil at Kaba-Aye and central Yangon. Maximum wind speed at Yangon (Kaba-Aye) was 8 mph from Northwest at (14:30) hours MST on 21-22 April.

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

Forecast valid until evening of 23-24 February: Except for the possibility of isolated rain in Kachin State, weather will be cloudy in the whole country. Degree of certainty is (60%).

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

Outlook for subsequent two days: Weather will be cloudy in the whole country.


Earthquake report

(Issued at 14:00 hours M.S.T. on Today)

An earthquake of moderate intensity (6.0) Richter Scale with an epicenter outside of Myanmar about 1300 miles South of Kaba-Aye seismological observatory was recorded at 13:58h (20/20n) (25.23e) M.S.T. on 22nd February 2004.

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Prime Minister General Khin Nyunt inspects development tasks in Pakokku District, Seikphyu

YANGON, 22 Feb — Prime Minister General Khin Nyunt, accompanied by ministers, deputy ministers, officials of the State Peace and Development Council Office, departmental heads and officials, this morning, left by air at לת Bagan-NyaungU Airport, Mandalay Division at 8:30 am.

The Prime Minister and party were welcomed by Brig-Gen Than Tun of Kyaukpaduang Station, Chairman of Magway Division Peace and Development Council Col Zaw Min and officials.

Next, they went to ancient pagoda No 860 and No 861 in Bagam-NyaungU. At 9 am, the Hidaw hoisting ceremony was held at the two pagodas, attended by Prime Minister General Khin Nyunt. Also present on the occasion were Aungmye Bawdi Dhamma Yeiktha and Ngaya Aloasawyy Sayadaw. Now, the Prime Minister and party conveyed to the two pagodas the wishes of the Tatmadaw (Air) Myalayyin Htiyaw and local people.

First, the Prime Minister and party paid homage to Aaloasawyy Sayadaw. Next, the Prime Minister and party went to Seinbudaw atop the two pagodas by the carriage of Tatmadaw (Air) Myalayyin Htiyaw Team.

At the auspicious time, General Khin Nyunt and party hoisted Seinbudaw atop the pagoda No 861. They then sprinkled scented water on it. Similarly, the Prime Minister and party hoisted Seinbudaw atop the pagoda No 860. The General then performed the rituals of golden and silver showers to mark success of the ceremony.

On arrival in Pakokku, Magway Division, the Prime Minister and party were welcomed by Chairman of Sagaing Division Peace and Development Council Commander Col Zaw Min and officials.

This morning, the Prime Minister and party attended the ceremony to present prizes to winners in the Pakokku U Ohn Pe Literary Award, Scholarship and Pakokku Library Book Award in Pakokku. Next, they proceeded to the construction site of the main building of Pakokku University, welcomed by Director-General Dr Thein Myint of Higher Education Department (Upper Myanmar), Pro-Rector U Soe Myint and faculty members.

At the briefing hall, Col Zaw Min reported on location and area of the main building and arrangements for construction tasks. Aden Group Co Ltd Managing Director U Chit Khaung reported on geographical conditions of the construction site, architectural design of the university, arrangements for construction works and rooms of the main building, Minister for Education U Than Aung gave a supplementary report. Then, the Prime Minister attended to their needs. After leaving instructions, the Prime Minister inspected the place for construction of the main building.

At Pyathaya Hall in Pakokku, the Prime Minister met with district and township authorities, departmental officials and social organizations. First, Chairman of Pakokku District Peace and Development Council Lt-Col Hay Oo reported on the location and area of the district, population, land resource, rainfall, water availability, river water pumping tasks, cultivation of the nine crops, target and cultivation of paddy, maize, pulses and beans, edible oil crops and cotton, kitchen crops, local food sufficiency, supply of water for cultivation area and progress of livestock breeding, education and health sectors.

Next, the Prime Minister fulfilled the requirements of local food sufficiency and health and upgrading of Affiliated Basic Education Middle Schools. Afterwards, the Prime Minister delivered an address. He said it is necessary to extend cultivation of paddy, cotton, pulses and beans and edible oil crops for meeting their target according to the reports on progress of Pakokku District presented by the officials. As the plan has been laid down for local food sufficiency in 2005-2006, efforts are to be made for overcoming difficulties in fulfilling food sufficiency in the region. In addition, arrangements are to be made for meeting the target of boosting per-acre yield of 10 kinds of crops—paddy, sesame, groundnut, sunflower, maize, green gram, matpe, pigeon pea, long staple cotton and sugarcane. In this regard, departments concerned are required to provide assistance to the local farmers.

As Pakokku has scanty rainfall and is in the dry region, local authorities are to ensure supply of water for cultivation. As the Head of State has given guidance on development of Pakokku region and Pakokku to become the city of the western bank of Ayeyawady River, requirements are being fulfilled. River water pumping projects, underground water tapping projects and dam projects are being implemented for availability of water so as to develop Pakokku region and upgrade the living standard of the local people. It can be said that natural resources were exploited with the use of human capability.

As regards the education sector, arrangements are being made for opening and upgrading basic education schools wherever necessary in Pakokku region. Similarly, Pakokku Degree College have been upgraded into the university level to enable the students to pursue higher education, and this morning, he made arrangements for construction of the main building of the university. Furthermore, Government Technological College and Government Computer College have been opened.

In the health sector, Pakokku Hospital has been upgraded into the 200-bed specialist hospital. In addition, the Pakokku Textile Factory and the Dyeing Factory are being built for job opportunities for local people. Likewise, railroads and motor roads have been built for better transport.

Secretary-2 Lt-Gen Thein Sein hosts dinner in honour of Vice-Chairman of Chinese People’s Political Consultative Conference

YANGON, 22 Feb — Secretary-2 of the State Peace and Development Council of the Union of Myanmar Lt-Gen Thein Sein received visiting Vice-Chairman of the Chinese People’s Political Consultative Conference (CPPCC) and Vice-President of the Chinese Association for International Understanding (CAIFU) Mr Luo Haocai and party at Zayathiri Beikman on Konmyinttha at 2.30 pm today.

Also present at the call were Minister for Foreign Affairs U Win Aung, Deputy Minister for Foreign Affairs U Khin Maung Win, Director General of the Protocol Department Thura U Aung Htet and Chinese Ambassador to Myanmar Mr Li Jinjun.

At 7 pm, Secretary-2 Lt-Gen Thein Sein hosted a dinner in honour of Vice-Chairman of the Chinese People’s Political Consultative Conference (CPPCC) and Vice-President of the Chinese Association for International Understanding (CAIFU) Mr Luo Haocai and party at Karaweik Palace.

At the briefing hall, Col Zaw Min reported on location and area of the main building and arrangements for construction tasks. Aden Group Co Ltd Managing Director U Chit Khaung reported on geographical conditions of the construction site, architectural design of the university, arrangements for construction works and rooms of the main building, Minister for Education U Than Aung gave a supplementary report. Then, the Prime Minister attended to their needs. After leaving instructions, the Prime Minister inspected the place for construction of the main building.

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