There will definitely be rice sufficiency in Shan State (North) very soon

Vice-Senior General Maung Aye attends Hsinshweli hybrid paddy transplanting ceremony in Lashio

Vice-Senior General Maung Aye inspects farming equipment at Humon Village, Lashio Township — MNA

Vice-Senior General Maung Aye views transplantation of Hsinshweli strain paddy at the field in Humon Village, Lashio Township — MNA

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Established 1914

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

Phonedaw Naing-Ngan

Development of literature—key to national immunity

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Four political objectives

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

Four economic objectives

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

Four social objectives

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

YANGON, 25 Feb — Vice-Chairman of the State Peace and Development Council Deputy Commander-in-Chief of Defence Services Commander-in-Chief (Army) Vice-Senior General Maung Aye attended the Hsinshweli high-yield paddy transplanting ceremony and the presenting of farm implements near Humon Village in Lashio Township, on 22 February morning.

Also present on the occasion were Secretary-1 of the State Peace and Development Council Lt-Gen Soe Win, members of the State Peace and Development Council Lt-Gen Ye Myint, Lt-Gen Aung Htwe, Lt-Gen Thura Tin Aung Myint Oo and Lt-Gen Tin Aye, Commander-in-Chief (Navy) Rear-Admiral Soe Thein, Commander-in-Chief (Air) Maj-Gen Myat Hein, Chairman of Shan State (North) Peace and Development Council Commander of North-East Command Maj-Gen Myint Hlaing, ministers, deputy ministers, senior military officers, officials of the State Peace and Development Council Office, departmental personnel and local residents.

At the ceremony, Commander Maj-Gen Myint Hlaing gave a report, saying that in the previous monsoon paddy season, test cultivation of Hsinshweli high-yield hybrid paddy was conducted on over 100,000 acres in Shan State (North) and per acre yield was about 126 baskets, thereby contributing to over 90 per cent of local rice demands and raising per capita income of local farmers.

Likewise, last monsoon paddy season, pilot cultivation of hybrid paddy was carried out on the two-acre plot on self-reliance in the region, yielding around 6,580 kilos of high-yield strain paddy (FJ) (II).

So, now the experiment has been expanded in this summer paddy season, cultivating paddy on 940 acres.

Based on the success, measures are being taken for extended production of hybrid paddy on 120 acres this summer paddy season as the second step, and the hybrid paddy will be cultivated on over 10,000 acres.

Therefore, efforts will have to be made for cultivation of hybrid paddy on over 1,200 acres in the forthcoming monsoon paddy season to meet local cross-breed paddy demand.

Next, Shan State Myanmar Agriculture Service Manager U Hla Gyi gave an account of the production process of hybrid paddy.

The Secretary-1, on behalf of local farmers, handed over the documents related to three combined harvesters and five threshers to U San San Tun of Humon Village, recipient of the medal for excellent performance in agricultural field. Lt-Gen Aung Htwe also handed over the documents pertaining to Leya-16 power tiller to U Sai Si of Mansu Village. Farmer U Sai Si of Mansu Village expressed words of thanks to the State.

The Secretary-1 spoke on the occasion, saying that Myanmar is rich in land resources, and farmers, the majority of the nation’s population, are engaged in farming.

(See page 8)
PERSPECTIVES

Thursday, 26 February, 2004

Development of literature — key to national immunity

Now is the time when the Government of the Union of Myanmar, relying on the national forces, is making all-out efforts for prosperity of the people and for enabling the nation to stand tall with dignity among the global nations. Moreover, it is essaysing to safeguard the national prestige and integrity and sovereignty, brushing all attempts to cause dissection, put pressure, impose sanctions and interpose obstacles. At the same time, it is endeavoursing for the nation to stand shoulder to shoulder with those of the world as a united, independent and sovereign nation and for developing the nation and the people to the most possible degree.

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

The prize-presentation ceremony for Pakoku U Ohn Pe Literary Award, Scholarship and Pakoku Library Book Award for 2003 was held in Pakokku, Magway Division, on 22 February and Prime Minister General Khin Nyunt attended it and delivered an address on the occasion. The Prime Minister, in his speech, said that 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 boosting the national integrity and establishing the national immunity.

The purpose of presenting Pakoku U Ohn Pe Awards, National Literary Awards, Sarpaybeikman Manuscript Awards and National Motto Awards is to promote the Myanmar literature.

The life-long literary awards are for doyen literati who dovote their whole life to the development of literature and constantly serve the national interests through literature. The presentation of outstanding awards and scholarship to brilliant students of the new generation is for the development of human resources in literary field. Moreover, the Pakoku U Ohn Pe Library Award is to contribute to the emergence of new-generation literati and literary enthusiasts. We would like to urge all those in literary field to inculeate national spirit and national unity in the hearts of the entire people, especially the young.

Deputy Attorney-General inspects law offices

Deputy Attorney-General Dr Tun Shin went to Kamayut, Aholn, Sanyoung and Hline Township Law Offices yesterday afternoon.

He met with district and township Law Officers and gave instructions on legal affairs, management and prosecution matters. He said that law officers are to precisely and correctly perform the cases without partiality and measure, basic taken for efficient use of fuel and electricity and inspected law offices. — MNA

Eye specialists on field tours

SINGGAU, 25 Feb — The eye specialist group led by regional eye specialist Dr U Kyin Hsaing of the Ministry of Health, comprising post-graduate doctors of Institute of Medicine-1 and primary health workers visited Tamoakso villages and Nguinparana Township in Mandalay Division on 22 February and Ohbunbinchao, Pinchar and Tabetswell villages in Singga Township on 10, 11 and 13 February. They carried out medical check-up of 230 persons and performed minor eye operations on 28 patients there. — MNA

59th Anniversary
Armed Forces Day Objectives

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

59th Anniversary
Armed Forces Day

Ambassador U Ohn Thwin presents credentials to President of Republic of South Africa

YANGON, 26 Feb — U Ohn Thwin, Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the Union of Myanmar to the Republic of South Africa, presented his Credentials to His Excellency, President of the Republic of South Africa, on 17 February 2004, in Pretoria. — MNA

Delegation calls on Minister

YANGON, 25 Feb — The 35-member Korean Buddhist delegation headed by Secretary Sayadow of Buddhist Rikbikus of All Ganas of the Republic of Korea Ven Hong Pa and President Sayadow of Hye-Eun Buddhist Temple Ven Mok Tak, called on Minister for Religious Affairs Brig-Gen Thura Myint Maung at the minister’s office at 2 pm today. Deputy Minister for Religious Affairs Brig-Gen Thura Aung Ko and Director-General of Department for Promotion and Propagation of the Sasana U Sann Lwin were also present.

Next, the delegation together with U Sann Lwin paid respects to State Sangha Maha Nayaka Committee Secretary Sayadow Abhijudha Maha Rattha Guru. Abhidajya Maha Saddha mma Jotikadhaba Bhadanta Kumara at 2:30 pm at the Maha Nayaka Monastery on Kaba Aye Hill. The delegation donated computers, medicines and offerings to the Sayadawgys. — MNA

Prizes for outstanding performance in health presented

YANGON, 25 Feb — A ceremony to present prizes to education schools for outstanding performance in health for 2002-2003 and 2003-2004 academic year was held at the auditorium of Myanmar Medical Association on Theinbyu Street this morning.

Present on the occasion were Chairman of Yangon Division Peace and Development Council Com- mander of Yangon Command Maj-Gen Myint Swe and wife Pairom of the Supervisory Committee for Yangon Division Maternal and Child Welfare Association Daw Khin Thein Hlay.

Deputy Minister for Health Dr Mya Oo, Director-General of Health Department Dr Wan Maung, Director-General of Education Planning and Training Department U Bo Win, Com- mander of Military Region No 4 Col Yn Naing Oo, officials, district and town- ship education officers, school heads and social or- ganizations. The comm- ander spoke at length on education promotion program- me at basic education schools for turning out healthy and fit new genera- tion students and establish- ment of schools that carry out school health activities.

Ambassador U Nyunt Maung Shein presents credentials to President of Czech Republic

YANGON, 26 Feb — U Nyunt Maung Shein, Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the Union of Myanmar to the Czech Republic, presented his Credentials to Mr Vaclav Klaus, President of the Czech Republic, on 17 February 2004, in Prague (Praha). — MNA

Commander Maj-Gen Myint Swe presents school health model prize to Headmistress of Kamayut BEPS 2 Daw Kathy Soe Thein.

People’s Desire

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

YANGON, 25 Feb — A ceremony to donated cash to the fund of Myanmar Writers and Journalists As- sociation was held at Sarpay Beikman on Merchant Street this morning. Present were MWJA Chairman U Hla Myaing (Ko Hsaung), Vice-Chairmen U Tin Kha (Tekkatho Tin Kha) and U Than Maung (Than Maung), Secretary U Hla Tun (Hla Tun-Tawtany), joint-secretaries, CEC mem- bers and wellwishers. U Khin Maung Thein-wife Daw Susan Thein (Writer Saging Sin Sein) of US donated K 200,000 for MWJA and K 50,000 for Dagon Township WJA to U Hla Myaing (Ko Hsaung) who presented a certificate of honour to them and spoke words of thanks. — MNA

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Poll shows Americans believe less in the existence of WMDs in Iraq

WASHINGTON, 25 Feb—The number of Americans that believe the Iraqi regime of Saddam Hussein had weapons of mass destruction when US-led forces attacked the country in 2003 is declining, according to a Harris Interactive poll.

However the US former head of weapons inspectors in Iraq, David Kay, recently said that the CIA got it wrong.

Nevertheless 51 percent of those surveyed still believe the US government tried to present the information of mass destruction accurately, a one point increase from 50 percent in December.

Forty-three percent believe the US government “deliberately exaggerated the reports...in order to increase the support for the war,” down slightly from 45 in December.

The poll was carried out among 1,020 US adults between February 9 and 16.

Experts warn poverty still major concern for Asia-Pacific Region

BANGKOK, 25 Feb—Hunger and poverty still posed a serious challenge to the Asia-Pacific Region despite of the area's rapid economic development in recent years, experts warned here on Monday at a related regional meeting.

Out of an estimated 1.2 billion people in the world living under one dollar a day, roughly two-thirds or around 720 million people lived in Asia and the Pacific, said Asian Development Bank’s Vice-President GHPB van der Linden.

“Another 1.2 billion people have barely more than that, making ends meet with less than two US dollars a day,” he said at a regional ministerial roundtable meeting on spearheading sub-regional cooperation for eradicating poverty and food insecurity in the region, which is being held from Monday to Tuesday in Bangkok.

The region is also home to just under two-thirds of the developing countries' undernourished.

The percentage of people hungry in the region had dropped from 20 per cent in 1990 to 16 per cent in 2000, the ratio still meant that one in every six people in the region did not have enough to eat, said Linden.

More than 500 million people, eight times the population of Thailand, still do not get enough food to meet basic nutritional requirements and to allow them to fulfill their economic potential, he said. Linden pointed out that under-investing in infrastructure construction had contained the region’s rapid economic development.

Even before the financial crisis in 1997, only about 4 per cent of the area’s GDP was allocated for infrastructure against a requirement of 6.7 per cent. “Following the crisis, the investment levels have dropped,” he said.

While urging governments to work out their own poverty reduction policy, Linden also called for international efforts to build an open and non-discriminatory trading system that would benefit developing economies and accelerate their progress in reducing poverty.

Subsidies to the agriculture sector in developed countries amount to about 300 billion dollars annually, approximately six times global annual flows of official development assistance, according to him.

The two-day meeting is jointly held by the Asian Development Bank, the United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization and the UN Economic Commission for Asia and the Pacific.

It has brought together technical experts and decision makers from the region to discuss how to achieve the goal of halving extreme poverty and hunger by the year 2015, which was agreed by governments at the World Food Summit of 1996.

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CEPA to boost development of service industry in Mainland, HK

HONG KONG, 25 Feb—Participants from China’s Mainland and Hong Kong gathered here Monday in a seminar to explore the opportunities cropped up with the signing of CEPA, which they agree would provide great impetus to the mutual development of the industry in the two sides.

Guo Li, deputy director of the Liaison Office of the Central People’s Government in the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region (HKSAR) noted that Mainland’s rapid development has provided great room for Hong Kong’s service industry, and CEPA (the Chinese Mainland/Hong Kong Closer Economic Partnership Arrangement) would surely promote the trade and economic cooperation between the two places.

John Tsang, Secretary of Commerce, Industry and Technology with the HKSAR Government, noted that CEPA has enhanced the attractiveness of Hong Kong in luring foreign investment and the opportunities of the Hong Kong service industry in exploring the Mainland market.

Meanwhile, Tsang pointed out, the Mainland, by introducing Hong Kong’s high-quality service and collaborating specialists, would stimulate the long-term growth of its own service industry.

Democrat says CIA did not give UN all Iraq WMD data

WASHINGTON, 25 Feb—A Democratic senator accused CIA Director George Tenet on Monday of making false statements when he said during public hearings that his agency gave the United Nations information about all the top suspected weapons of mass destruction sites in Iraq before the war.

“All such sites were not shared, and Mr Tenet’s representations were false,” Senator Carl Levin of Michigan said in a speech on the Senate floor.

The CIA last month declassified the number of top suspected WMD sites categorized as high and medium priority, and acknowledged that 21 of those 103 sites were not shared with the United Nations before the war, Levin said.

A US intelligence official countered that nine of those 21 sites had been “fre quently” visited by UN inspectors, by UN inspectors it might have re enforced sentiment that UN inspections should be completed before going to war.

“I can only speculate as to Director Tenet’s motive,” said Levin, the senior Democrat on the Senate Armed Services Committee and a member of the intelligence committee.

In other words, honest answers by Director Tenet might have undermined the false sense of urgency for proceeding to war and could have contributed to delay, neither of which fit the administration’s ‘spoil the enemy’ goals,” Levin said.

Prewar intelligence on Iraq has become a key issue in this year’s presidential election campaign, with Democrats suggesting the Republican White House agitated the threat to build its case for war.

We provided the best information that we had and the notion that we held back information that would have been useful is simply wrong,” the US intelligence official said.

The US certainly did not hold back timely actionable intelligence information (from the UN inspectors),” he said—MNA/Reuters

Iran says Rumsfeld knows nothing about Middle East, Iraq

TEHERAN, 25 Feb—Iran denied it was allowing militants to cross its border into Iraq, saying allegations to the contrary US Defence Secretary Donald Rumsfeld only showed he was “incapable of understanding Iraq or the Middle East”.

“Iraq has always worked towards security and stability in Iraq, which is important for security in the region as a whole,” foreign ministry spokesman Hamid Reza Asefi told the official news agency IRNA.

“The Islamic Republic of Iran will not allow any group to use its border to enter Iraq, and we will act against anything illegal,” he added Tuesday.

Asefi said it was “surprising that the American defence minister is so incapable of understanding Iraq or the region.”

During a visit to Baghdad, Rumsfeld reiterated accusations that Iran and Syria were allowing militants to cross into Iraq to carry out attacks.

“Syria and Iran have not been helpful to the people of Iraq,” he told journalists Monday. “Indeed they have been unhelpful”—Internet

Philippine population reaches 84 million level

MANILA, 25 Feb—The Philippine population has reached 84 million and is expected to double in the next 29 years, a Philippine official said Tuesday.

“Our country’s annual growth rate is 2.36 per cent. If in 2000 we had a population of 76.5 million and we grow by at least 1.8 million a year, then by now there should be around 84 million Filipinos,” Population Commission executive director Tomas Osias told reporters.

Earlier, Philippine Socioeconomic Planning Secretary Romulo Neri said the Philippine population growth is beneficial to the official Philippine economy as it boosts private consumption and provides more labourers to be overseas Filipino workers, who remitted 7.6 billion US dollars back home in 2003. Overseas remittances account for about 10.8 per cent of the Philippine gross domestic product and about 15 per cent of current account receipts.

According to the government, there were 7.4 million overseas Filipino workers as of 2001, composed of 2.7 million permanent workers, 3.1 million temporary workers, and 1.6 million irregular workers.—MNA/Xinhua

CIA Director asked by Senate committee to explain extent of Iraq threat

WASHINGTON, 25 Feb—Lawmakers pressed CIA Director George Tenet on recent comments he made about having told the White House that prior to the war Iraq had not posed an imminent threat to the United States.

“If it wasn’t an imminent threat, why did you say it was an issue that the White House should be aware of? How would you have characterized or assessed the threat at that point in time?” asked Republican Senator Olympia Snowe, saying the message sent out had been a “mixed message.”

“I would have characterized it as something that was grave and gathering, something we were quite worried about,” Tenet told the hearing of the Senate Intelligence Committee on the threat to national security.

Snowe noted President George W. Bush’s words in his 17 September, 2002 speech on his national security strategy. “When the threat is imminent, the nation has the right to conduct preemptive operations.”

Refusing to state that Bush launched the Iraq war due to a threat that was less than imminent, Tenet said the CIA “said things quite as seriously in our key judgments that caused the policy maker to have a look at this thing in a way that he or she had to assess risk.”

“Those are just the facts as we know them today,” Tenet said.

“We can go back and, of course, we will look at all of this work. And make judgments about did we work everything carefully, did we have the right context and everything. That’s appropriate. We need to do that as professionals.”

Senator Dianne Feinstein who, like Snowe, voted in October 2002 to authorize Bush to launch the war on Iraq, said that due to apparent errors of judgment it was “a pretty bitter pill to swallow, particularly with a preemptive war.”

“People voted to authorize the use of force based on what we read in these reports,” she said.
Annan says safety needed for return to Iraq

Tokyo, 25 Feb—A “more secure environment” in Iraq is necessary for the United Nations to play a full role in helping set up an interim government and arrange elections, UN Secretary-General Kofi Annan said on Tuesday.

In a speech before the Japanese Parliament, Annan also urged Iraqis and others to recognize the distinct identity of the UN and not confuse it with the country’s various power-brokers.

“A more secure environment is absolutely essential if we are to play our full role,” said Annan, who pulled all non-Iraqi UN workers out of the country last year after devastating suicide bombings at the UN headquarters in Baghdad.

“The last six months or so have taught us what we are: an impartial, independent world body with no other agenda than to help their country in this time of need,” Annan added.

Annan spoke the day after the UN released a report saying Iraq could be ready to hold direct elections for a new government by January 2005 and calling for the establish-
Halliburton arm faces Iraq oil probe

NEW YORK, 25 Feb—Halliburton is fighting off fresh controversy after the Pentagon revealed it is opening a criminal investigation into allegations the oil services company overcharged the military.

The Houston-based business, which was run by US vice-president Dick Cheney between 1995 and 2000, is the target of repeated claims that it wins contracts worth billions of dollars thanks to close ties to the Bush administration.

The latest charge is that subsidiary Kellogg Brown & Root overcharged for fuel delivered from Kuwait into Iraq. A Pentagon official confirmed: “The Defence Criminal Investigative Service is investigating allegations of fraud on the part of Kellogg Brown & Root, including the potential overpricing of fuel delivered to Baghdad.”

The tarnishing of Halliburton has become an election year issue for President Bush, whose reputation was already knocked by the closeness of his ties to Enron.

It is possible that Halliburton may be suspended from future work in Iraq, at least until the furore dies down.

Company spokesman Wendy Hall called the criminal probe, “a step towards resolution of the issue. In the current political climate, it is to be expected.”

After the invasion of Iraq, Halliburton won multi-billion dollar contracts to rebuild the country’s oil industry. It also runs more mundane operations such as providing food and laundry to troops on the ground.

Microsoft confident bounties will nab virus writers

LONDON, 25 Feb—A trio of bounties Microsoft Corp placed on the heads of virus writers has generated a variety of investigative leads, but still no arrests, a top security official from the software giant said on Tuesday.

In November, Microsoft created a 5-million-US-dollar fund to pay ordinary computer users for tips leading to the arrest and prosecution of the creators of computer viruses and worms that use its ubiquitous Windows operating system to wreak havoc online.

Microsoft issued three separate 250,000 US dollar bounties for information on the whereabouts of the SoBig.Blaster.MyDoom virus authors over the past three months.

“I am confident there will be some arrests that will result from at least one of the three bounties we have issued. The odds are in our favour, said David Aucsmith, chief technology officer for Microsoft Corp’s security business and technology unit.

“Our advice to the various law enforcement entities is to track those leads,” he told Reuters on the sidelines of cyber security conference in London. He declined to provide a timeframe for a possible arrest.

Aucsmith added that the investigation involved multiple countries, but declined to say which ones.

Security experts have had difficulty pinpointing the culprits. For example, a data trail led to Russia as the origin of last month’s MyDoom virus outbreak, but security experts disagree on whether the culprit is from the region.

Aucsmith said the company’s own investigation revealed that the culprits were either mid-sized thieves or organized crime gangs.

The first camp use computer viruses to steal users’ personal details from email addresses to bank and credit card details. The second group are looking to break into companies or banks for big pay-offs.

Each group has a goal of sabotaging a computer from which they can steal data or take it over to unleash further digital attacks on new targets, Aucsmith said.

He also said virus writers were able to take a known vulnerability in software code and create a malicious programme in a matter of days and hours. The same thing took weeks and months just two years ago.

Microsoft has taken considerable heat from the business sector for the latest outbreak of viruses and worms, which are costing companies vast sums of money in lost productivity and damaged infrastructure.

China to train community mediators nationwide

BEIJING, 25 Feb—The Chinese Government has adopted a five-year programme to train community mediators with legal knowledge and mediating skills in a campaign to develop methods of solving disputes out of court.

The Ministry of Justice would launch distance education for mediators of the people’s mediation committees this year, said Minister of Justice Zhang Fusen here Tuesday.

In three years the government plans to educate community mediators on civil law and regulations and in five years they would be skilled in mediating in knotty and complicated cases.

Zhang said, “Each Chinese village and community has a people’s mediation committee headed by a community worker and comprising volunteer mediators from the neighbourhood communities.

The organizations have helped settle civil disputes, such as quarrels between neighbours and disputes among family members, for free ever since they were set up in the 1950s. “The people’s mediation committees have proven to be very practical in resolving civil disputes and will play a more effective role in the future,” Zhang said.

Agreements reached after mediation by the committees have been legally bind- ing since the Supreme People’s Court (SPC) issued a judicial interpretation in September 2002 — MNA/Inhulus

Guerillas kill three Iraqis working with US military

MOSUL, Iraq, 25 Feb—Three Iraqis working for the US military were killed by guerillas who opened fire on their escalator, police officials said on Tuesday, in the latest deadly attack on Iraqis cooperating with occupying forces.

The three Iraqis — two translators and a technician — were killed on Monday evening as they drove to work at the US military base at Mosul’s airport. Two other Iraqis in the same vehicle were wounded, hospital officials said.

Guerillas fighting the occupation of Iraq have frequently targeted Iraqi police, security guards and contractors working with the US military. Some Iraqis have been killed this month in suicide car bomb attacks on Iraqi security targets.

Nigeria to help Ghana in national ID card project

AKWAIB, 25 Feb—Nigerian Minister of Internal Affairs Iyorchia Ayu said here on Monday that the Nigerian federal government was willing to assist the Ghanaian Government in the implementation of its national identity card project in terms of information and technical expertise.

Ayu made the remarks when a Ghanaian presidential delegation paid him a courtesy visit in his office in the capital Abuja.

Though there have been some pitfalls in the implementation of the national identity card project in Nigeria since 1999, the minister said that the project was on course smoothly.

According to Ayu, the federal government was willing to assist the project and the national ID card scheme will be successfully completed this year.

Ayu, however, advised the Ghanaian Government to learn from the pitfalls of the Nigerian experience in the implementation of its own scheme.

Meanwhile, the leader of the Ghanaian presidential delegation Professor Kwadwo Appiah-Adu said, the purpose of their visit was to get vital information on Nigeria’s implementation with a view to implementing its own.

China to train community mediators nationwide

BEIJING, 25 Feb—The Chinese Government has adopted a five-year programme to train community mediators with legal knowledge and mediating skills in a campaign to develop methods of solving disputes out of court.

According to Ayu, the federal government was willing to assist the project and the national ID card scheme will be successfully completed this year.

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Phonedaw Naing-Ngan Village

Sein Myint (Tapestry)

The opening ceremony of the dispensary at Phonedaw Naing-Ngan Village in Amarapura Township, Mandalay region, held on 17 January 2004, was attended by officials, local authorities, and the secretary of Division Union Solidarity and Development Association and members. Phonedaw Naing-Ngan is a village that has been in existence since the time of ancient Myanmar kings. It is a large village located at a place lying between the Ayeyawady River in the west and Dohktawady River in the east. Most of the natives of the village, who had about 600 houses, are farmers, and the people who make earthen pots and alms bowls for monks to earn their living. The dispensary is built on a place a little bit higher than other places of the village. I said Sadhu for many times for the donation of the dispensary, as it will ensure better health for the villagers. There are a number of pagodas and zayats built with teak in and around the village.

The donors are U Myint Swe and Daw Tin Tin Myint and family. Their daughter and son-in-law residing abroad also contributed cash for the dispensary. At the ceremony, I was having a good conversation with the family. The daughter told me that her husband was a physician living in Macao. We talked about many things including the Myanmar art, food and nature. A number of people including local authorities and USDA members contributed voluntary labour to make the ceremony a real. There are over 2,000 USDA members in the village. In the afternoon, the donor family visited my house. I have a small-scale tapestry industry at my house. And my house itself is like a museum where a large area of the collections of folk art items, paintings and various kinds of ancient tapestry, I have gathered for many years throughout my life, are displayed. The visiting couple were captivated by my display of art works. They seemed to be interested in painting. The husband told me that he was interested in painting; that he was an executive of the Royal Macao Painting Association; that exhibitions show- ing the works of the artists of Southeast Asian countries, the Republic of Korea, Japan and China were held annually in Macao; and that he would like to buy a painting from me.

The value of preserving the ancient culture is high. I have been to many countries — sometimes on official visits and sometimes at the invitation of the host countries. And during my visits abroad, I usually met with Myanmars residing there. Some Myanmars live in a foreign country on business and some to pursue further studies.

The donor couple, although residing in a foreign country, never forget their native land where their ances- tors lived and died, where they have learned the basic education, and where the Sasana flourishes. They always remember the gratitude they owe to the native land. The degree of gratitude one owns to another never wanes or disappears under any circumstances.

I have been to the United State three times. There may be many differences between a big nation and a small one. In one aspect, the big country may be better than the small country, but in another the small one may be better than the big one. All in all, one should never forget his native land, whether he is living in a desert country, a country located on an archipelago, or a country where glaciers flow.

I met with a couple, who were my friends, in Washington. The husband was a senior official at a bank, and the wife was also a bank officer. The wife was always trying to pursue higher studies. She was a candidate for a doctorate degree. She requested the faculties to send her back to Myanmar for her doctorate study. During research work in Myanmar she donated cash and kind to a number of villages from her savings. She also provided cash for youths to pursue education.

A Myanmar lady I met in Hawaii was sponsoring visits for Myanmar academics and technicians to the re- spective universities abroad. She was an official of an NGO. In most cases the cash for the operations of the NGO came from her purse. At the same time, she re- quested her American friends to visit Myanmar. For many times, she arranged and led package tours for foreigners to visit Myanmar and study her cultural riches. She wished foreigners to see the Myanmar culture with their own eyes.

A friend in Holland is inviting Myanmar puppet- eers, dancers and musicians and making arrangements for them to stage performances in the European nations when- ever she gets the opportunity. In my view, she is arrang- ing the programmes with nationalistic fervour.

One day, I met with a childhood friend of Manda- lay at a hotel. She was together with her daughter about the age of nine or ten or so. It seemed that the mother wanted to make her daughter know her roots. Even during her short visit to Mandalay, she had made arrangements to do so. I have met with children of Myanmar families in London whose grandpas even didn’t know how to read the English alphabets, while the grandchildren didn’t know the Myanmar alphabets. I was much pleased, when I came to know that my friend’s little daughter could say not only the prayers, but could also recite the Metta Sutta. I have met with children of Myanmar families in London whose grandpas even didn’t know how to read the English alphabets, while the grandchildren didn’t know the Myanmar alphabets. I was much pleased, when I came to know that my friend’s little daughter could say not only the prayers, but could also recite the Metta Sutta. I honoured her for she never forgets her native land, religion and traditions and culture. She made donations, did religious deeds and provided assistance for her relatives during her stay in Myanmar.

There are also a Myanmar couple in Los Angeles. They are photographers. Although they are living in a foreign land, they have strong Myanmar spirit. They host and treat all the Myanmar visitors to the US. They also give gifts to the guests. And they are happy to do so. “As we are not able to come back to our native land at present, helping and hosting visitors from Myanmar makes us feel at home. Walking together with Myanmar natives alone is enough for us to relive our homesickness,” he once said.

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I remember his words till today. I have met with many Myanmars living in various parts of the world. Their way of earning their living and situations varied signifi- cantly from one another like the multi-coloured lotus flow- ers in a pond. Even the animals come back to their nest or den to feed their offspring. Doing donations and public welfare services will extend the degree of ones meritori- ous deeds.

The religious edifices stand witness to the glory of

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 enter-
prises
* 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

Bagan as the First Myanmar Empire. Bagan stood with eminence under the glare of the sun and the moon for many years. My mind was travelling beyond the Phonedaw Naing-Ngan Village till reaching the sun and the moon, but I didn’t know why.

(Translation: TMT)
There will definitely...

(from page 1)

That is why the objective "Development of agriculture as the base and all-round development of other sectors of the economy as well" is designated as the first of the four economic objectives, he noted.

The agricultural sector contributes 56 per cent to the turnovers of Shan State. Moreover, a total of 4,300 more acres have been reclaimed, he said.

However, Shan State (North) has not enjoyed rice sufficiency yet. Thanks to the combined efforts of respective departments and local people under the leadership of the commander, it has met over 90 per cent of the local rice demand, he added. It is sure there will be rice sufficiency in the region soon, the Secretary-1 expressed his belief.

Concerning the agricultural sector, there was over 560,000 acres of cultivable land in Shan State (North) in 1988 and the number of cultivable areas has increased to over 900,000 acres now. And yearly cultivation of crops has been extended up to over 1.1 million acres now, up from 600,000 acres in 1988. Furthermore, a total of 4,300 more acres have been reclaimed, he said.

With multiple cropping, it will need more farm machinery and implements and advanced agricultural methods, he said. In conclusion, he said that the ceremony will further enhance development of agricultural sector of the region.

After introducing agricultural methods, paddy cultivation should be extended with the use of the most suitable methods.

In this way, the drive of those in charge of the region will contribute towards local rice sufficiency and economy of local farmers. The Ministry of Agriculture and Irrigation will have to render necessary assistance to local farmers, he noted.

Next, Vice-Senior General Maung Aye and party viewed Hsinshweli hybrid sunflower and paddy plantations.

They also looked into progress in cultivation of Hsinshweli hybrid paddy on the 120-acre plot and other plots.

Vice-Senior General Maung Aye and entourage inspected combined harvesters, paddy threshers and power tillers and the booth of the Ministry of Agriculture and Irrigation.

Vice-Senior General Maung Aye cordially met with departmental officials and local farmers.

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Work Committee for Implementation of ASEAN Economic Agreements meets

Yangon, 25 Feb—The Work Committee for Implementation of ASEAN Economic Agreements held the second meeting at the Ministry of Commerce on Strand Road here at 4 pm today, attended by Chairman of the Work Committee, Deputy Minister for Commerce Brig-Gen Pyi Sone.

Also present were members of the Work Committee for Finance and Revenue Maj-Gen Hla Tun and deputy ministers, the Deputy Attorney-General, the Governor of the Central Bank of Myanmar, the Vice-Chairman of a National Task Force, departmental heads, the General Secretary of the Union of Myanmar Federation of Chambers of Commerce and Industry and departmental officials.

At the meeting, the minister gave an introductory speech. Joint Secretary of the Work Committee Adviser to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs U Maung Maung Yi reported on approval of the minutes and implementation of the resolutions of the first meeting.

Deputy Minister for Foreign Affairs U Kyaw Thu gave an account of progress in implementation of the minutes of the first meeting. Officials partici- pated in the discussions.

Later, the meeting ended with the closing remarks by the minister.

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Secretary-1 Lt-Gen Soe Win presents documents related to three combined harvesters and five threshers to U Sai San Tun of Humon Village, Lashio Township. — MNA

Lt-Gen Aung Htwe presents documents related Leyar to 16 power-tillers to U Sai Si of Manhsu Village. — MNA

Vice-Senior General Maung Aye gives instructions to officials at the ceremony to donate farm machinery and implements in Humon Village, Lashio Township. — MNA

Vice-Senior General Maung Aye hears reports on paddy transplantation Ceremony by Commander Maj-Gen Myint Hlaing in Humon Village, Lashio Township. — MNA

Vice-Senior General Maung Aye presents documents related to three combined harvesters and five threshers to U Sai San Tun of Humon Village, Lashio Township.
National peace and stability...
(from page 16)
and Revenue Maj-Gen Hla Tun on financial matters, tax collection and banking services; and Muse District Peace and Development Council Chairman Lt-Col Soe Win on the national races living in the district, communication, health, education, and regional food sufficiency and regional development projects.

Secretary-1 Lt-Col Soe Win said once there was internal insurgency in the region. But now, due to cooperative efforts of the State, the local people and the Tatmadaw peace and stability and security are prevailing in the region. Thanks to the regional peace and stability, the whole northern Shan State including Muse District is achieving sustainable development. The region is producing more food to meet the local requirement. Likewise, the border trade is also developing. Above all, the progress of the district can be witnessed.

Border trade entrepreneurs should be upright in doing business, instead of concentrating solely on making profits. If they become trusted entrepreneurs, they can serve the interest of both the region and the nation more. The economy of the State is getting stronger as the whole nation is achieving peace and stability and unity. The developments and the success are the result of the united strength of all the national people. Thus, all will have to harmoniously strive for the successful implementation of the future policy programme of the State.

Afterwards, Vice-Senior General Maung Aye delivered an address, saying that when he was discharging duties as the military command commander in the area, there was no regional peace and stability due to BCP insurgents, and the people had to live and earn their living in fear. Unlike in the past, the region has been developing on all fronts within a short span of time as the insurgency has ended and peace and stability is prevailing in it. Among the border towns, Muse is developing with the highest growth rate. The government has been laying down and implementing development projects including the border area development project and rural development project for further progress of the whole nation including Muse region. The regional peace and stability will contribute to effective implementation of the projects. All must accept and understand the fact that peace and stability of the nation is the basic requirement to implement the State’s seven-point future policy programme. As Muse is bordering the People’s Republic of China, all should make concerted efforts to maintain the bilateral friendship between the two countries, while launching the regional development task with might and main. There is friendship and understanding between the leaders and the governments of Myanmar and the PRC. In addition, there is love and friendship between the peoples of the two nations. Thus, all will have to maintain and safeguard the bilateral friendly relations. He then cordially greeted those present at the meeting. The Vice-Senior General and party observed the town development by car.

In Lashio, member of the panel of patrons of USDA Secretary-1 Lt-Gen Soe Win, and Central Executive Committee members of the USDA U Soe Tha, Brig-Gen Pyi Sone, Col Tin Hlaing and Brig-Gen Khin Maung met with secretaries, executives and members of Shan State (North) USDA and district and township associations. — MNA

MWAF members tour Kayah State
YANGON, 25 Feb — A team led by Vice-President of Myanmar Women’s Affairs Federation Prof Daw May May Yi met with officials, and members of Kayah State Organization for Women’s Affairs and support groups in Loikaw on 22 February.

At the meeting held at the town hall the next morning, Prof Daw May May Yi gave a speech, and member of the Secretariat Dr Daw San Shwe explained organizational set-up of MWAF and membership application.

Members of the team also discussed prevention of violence against women and human trafficking and rehabilitation, and cultural, information, law enforcement, financial, management, health, education, economic and environmental sectors.

Prof Daw May May Yi presented K 300,000 for education sector of the Kayah State, and K 400,000 for small-scale enterprises.

Kayah State Peace and Development Council and Kayah State OWA also presented K 200,000 for MWAF.

In the afternoon, the team members met with responsible personnel and sought means to develop sports standard of the state. — MNA

Minister inspects Ngwe Hsang Beach
YANGON, 25 Feb — Minister for Communications, Posts and Telegraphs and Minister for Hotels and Tourism Brig-Gen Thein Zaw inspected Pathein Hotel in Pathein on 23 February.

The minister met with Chairman of Ayeyawady Division Peace and Development Council Commander of South-West Command Maj-Gen Soe Naung and discussed development of the communication sector in the division and Ngwe Hsang Beach Resort.

During his visit to the beach, the minister inspected the situation of the bridge between the beach and Hsimmath village and the motor road and Ngwe Hsang Dam supplying water to the beach. He also inspected the post and telecommunication office and the library in Pantanaw. — MNA

Vice-Senior General Maung Aye meets local authorities, social organizations and local people of Muse, Namkham and Kutkai townships. — MNA

Vice-Senior General Maung Aye cordially converses with departmental personnel and local people of Muse, Namkham and Kutkai townships. — MNA

Vice-Senior General Maung Aye inspects the site for building Yandaingaung MyoU Pagoda in Lashio. — MNA
Offering of ‘soon’ to members of Sangha, religious title recipient Sayadaws coordinated

YANGON, 25 Feb — A coordination meeting on offering of ‘soon’ to members of the Sangha and title recipient Sayadaws who will be attending the religious title presentation ceremony was held at the Tatmadaw Bhumimay near the southern archway of the Shwedagon Pagoda this evening.

Chairman of the State Peace and Development Council Commander-in-Chief of Defence Services Senior General Than Shwe and wife Daw Kyaw Kyaw will offer ‘soon’ to the Sayadaws who will be attending the ceremony.

Present at the meeting were Prime Minister General Khin Nyunt, Secretary-1 of the State Peace and Development Council Li-Gen Soe Win, Secretary-2 Li-Gen Thein Sein, Chairman of Yangon Division Peace and Development Council Commander of Yangon Command Maj-Gen Myint Swe, Minister for Religious Affairs Brig-Gen Thura Myint Maung. Yangon Mayor Brig-Gen Aung Thein Lin, senior military officers of the Ministry of Defence, officials of the State Peace and Development Council Office, heads of departments and officials of sub-committees.

On behalf of the Chairman of Work Committee for Offering ‘soon’, Vice-Quartermaster-General Brig-Gen Khin Maung Tun reported on arrangements on offering ‘soon’.

Minister Brig-Gen Thura Myint Maung reported on matters relating to invitation of the members of the Sayadaws and title recipient Sayadaws.

Next, Chairmen of various sub-committees and officials reported on arrangements.

The Prime Minister gave necessary instructions and the meeting came to a close.— MNA

Vice-Chairman of the Chinese People’s Political Consultative Conference concludes visit

YANGON, 25 Feb — Mr Lao Haocai, Vice-Chairman of the Chinese People’s Political Consultative Conference (CPPCC) and Vice-President of the Chinese Association for International Understanding (CAIFU) and party left here by air this afternoon after paying a five-day goodwill visit to Myanmar beginning 21 February at the invitation of Secretary-2 of the State Peace and Development Council Li-Gen Thein Sein.

The guests were welcomed by Mr Lao Haocai at the Yangon International Airport by Secretary-2 Li-Gen Thein Sein, Chairman of Yangon Division Peace and Development Council Commander of Yangon Command Maj-Gen Myint Swe, Minister for Foreign Affairs U Win Aung, Secretary-General of the Union Solidarity and Development Association Minister for Cooperatives Maj-Gen Htay Oo, Deputy Minister for Foreign Affairs U Khin Maung Win, Director-General Thura U Aung Htet of the Protocol Department, Chinese Ambassador Mr Li Jinjun and embassy staff.— MNA

Don’t smoke

PRC delegation visits Bagan ancient cultural region

YANGON, 25 Feb — At the invitation of Secretary-2 of the State Peace and Development Council Li-Gen Thein Sein, the visiting goodwill delegation led by Mr Lao Haocai, Vice-Chairman of the Chinese People’s Political Consultative Conference (CPPCC) and Vice-President of the Chinese Association for International Understanding (CAIFU), accompanied by Chinese Ambassador Mr Li Jinjun and officials, left here by air and arrived at Bagan-Nayuu-U Airport yesterday morning.

The guests were welcomed there by Chairman of Magway Division Peace and Development Council Chairman of Col Zaw Min, Nayuu-U District Peace and Development Council Lt-Col Teza, Deputy Director-General U Aung Kyaing of Archaeology Department (Upper Myanmar) and officials.

The guests paid homage to the Buddha image at Shweszigon Pagoda and signed in the visitors’ book.

Next, they went to Ananda Temple where they paid homage to the Buddha image and viewed ancient stone sculptures. They signed in the visitors’ book and presented donations to the chairman of the Pagoda Board of Trustees.

On arrival at Lacquerware College, students demonstrated process of making lacquer wares. The guests then visited the Lacquerware Museum.

In the evening, the Chinese guests proceeded to Bagan Archaeological Museum where the curator and officials conducted them round the museum.

At U Ba Nyein Lacquerware Industry, the Chinese guests viewed production process of the lacquerware. They then enjoyed sunset scenes of the Bagan archaeological cultural region. In the evening, Magway Division PDC Chairman Col Zaw Min hosted a dinner in honour of the Chinese delegation at Thiri Pyitsaya Sakura Hotel in Bagan.

This afternoon, the Chinese guests arrived back here from Bagan.

Mr Lao Haocai and party visit Lacquerware College in Bagan. — MNA

Seinle Shwepyi Journal comes out

YANGON, 25 Feb — Seinle Shwepyi Journal Vol 1, No 3 was published today. Features included in the journal were poems, articles, weather forecast and astrology sector written by Ashin Padhajota, Tekkatho Myat Thu, Pyinnmana Maung Ni Thin, Maung Yin Mar (Yoe Byat Taw), Tekkatho Hla Kywe, Dr Khin Swe Win, Aung Soe (Veterinary), Kyi Linn (Hsa) and others. — MNA

Mr Lao Haocai, Vice-Chairman of the Chinese People’s Political Consultative Conference (CPPCC) and Vice-President of the Chinese Association for International Understanding (CAIFU) and party visit Lacquerware College in Bagan. — MNA

Secretary-2 Li-Gen Thein Sein presents documentary photo album to Mr Lao Haocai. — MNA
Commander Maj-Gen Myint Swe inspects the mess of Hsinbyushin column.— MNA

Yangon, 25 Feb— Chairman of Management Committee for Observance of 59th Anniversary Armed Forces Day of Yangon Division Peace and Development Council Commander of Yangon Command Maj-Gen Myint Swe this afternoon inspected the camps of the parade columns which will participate in the 59th Anniversary Armed Forces Day Parade and gave necessary instructions to officials.

At 2.30 pm, the commander arrived at the local unit in Mingaladon Station where Hsinbyushin column is being accommodated. Parade Commander Brig-Gen Min Thein, Deputy Commander of Yangon Command Col Wai Lwin, No 1 Military Region Commander Col Tun Kyi, Hsinbyushin Column Commander Col Oo Kyaw and officials welcomed the commander there.

The commander and party inspected hosted messes, kitchens, ration stores, documentary photos and publications and welfare shops. The commander and party then inspected practising of drills of companies of the column and gave necessary instructions.

At Defence Services Orthopaedic Hospital (500-bed) where Bandoola Column is being put up, Column Commander Col Myint Ko Ko and officials welcomed the commander there.

The commander and party inspected hosted messes, kitchens, ration stores, documentary photos and publications and welfare shops. Then, the commander gave necessary instructions to officials.— MNA

Agreement signed for pulp factory

Yangon, 25 Feb— The Myanmar Paper and Chemical Industries of the Ministry of Industry-1 and the China Industries of the Ministry of Industry-1 and the China Economic Counsellor of the PRC signed an agreement for supplying fuel for 200-ton pulp factory project and construction of a 50-ton advanced paper factory this morning at the meeting hall of the Ministry of Industry-1 here. Minister for Industry-1 U Aung Thaung, Deputy Ministers Brig-Gen Thein Tun and Brig-Gen Kyaw Win, heads of department, Economic Counsellor of the PRC embassy Mr Tang Hsi and embassy staff, MCC President Mr Ma Ye Li and others were present on the occasion.

Managing Director of the Myanmar Paper and Chemical Industries U Than Shwe and Assistant to President of MCC Mr Xu Xiangchun signed the agreement and exchanged documents.— APA

Myanmar Olympic Committee meets

Yangon, 25 Feb— The Myanmar Olympic Committee held the work co-ordination meeting at its office at Thuwanna Youth Training Centre here at 2 pm today. The meeting was attended by Minister for Sports MOC Chairman Brig-Gen Thu Aye Myint, Vice-Chairmen Deputy Minister for Information Brig-Gen Aung Thein and Deputy Minister for Health Dr Mya Aung and on members.

First, MOC Chairman Brig-Gen Thu Aye Myint delivered an address. All-round discussions were then held. The meeting then ended with concluding remarks by the Minister.— APA

Agogo Maha Thiri Thidhamanna Manjotsadada U Khin Shwe presents a Buddha statue made of teak worth US$ 5,000 to officials of Myanmar-ROK Friendship Association.— MNA

Gramophone records, tapes, song books donated to MRTV

Yangon, 25 Feb — A ceremony to donate old gramophone records, tapes and books to Myanmar Radio and Television was held at the meeting hall of MRTV on Pyay Road this afternoon, attended by Deputy Minister for Information Brig-Gen Aung Thein.

Also present were Director-General U Khin Maung Htay of MRTV, Managing Director U Myint Thein of Printing and Publishing Enterprise, Managing Director Col Soe Win of News and Periodicals Enterprise, Managing Director U Bo Kyi of Myanmar Motion Picture Enterprise, Deputy Director-General U Thein Aung of MRTF, directors and wellwishers.

At the ceremony, Deputy Minister Brig-Gen Aung Thein accepted 29 gramophone records and 14 tape reels in English version donated by Maj Khin Hla Thu (Rtd) and family; 50 English gramophone records by U Aye Maung and family of 7th Mile, Mayangon Township; 21 Myanmar gramophone records by U Hti-Daw Htet and family of Letpadan Township; 15 English version gramophone records by U Ba San and family of Salin; 57 English version gramophone records and 158 Myanmar-English song books by Daw Khin Win Kyi of Seikkantha Street; 118 English version gramophone records by Daw Myint Myint Than and family of East Yankin; 55 English version gramophone records by U Khin Maung Aye and family of Kyauktada Township; 50 Myanmar version gramophone records by late Capt Thein Swe-Daw Than Myint and family of Mandalay; nine Myanmar version gramophone records by Daw Htay Htay Win and family of staff quarters of MRTV, on behalf of late U Saw Hlaing. Then, certificates of honour were presented to wellwishers.

Similarly, Bhaddanta Kumara of Myintkyan donated 18 Myanmar version gramophone records and Dr U Oo Maung and family of Mingaladon Township 47 English version gramophone records in absentia. The deputy minister spoke words of thanks. Those wishing to donate gramophone records published between 1922-1945 may contact IRPDS and Director (Broadcast) U Ko Ko Htwe, MRTV, Tel: 536814.— MNA

Deputy Minister Brig-Gen Aung Thein accepts gramophone records and tapes from a wellwisher.— MNA

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

The second best time is now.
Pilot dies in Thai Air Force plane crash

Bangkok, 25 Feb — A pilot of Thai Royal Air Force died Monday morning in Suphanburi Province, 110 kilometres north of Bangkok, when his training plane crashed during exercise, the Thai News Agency reported.

The report said that Ansoon Keusarunkhun's PC-9 plane began experiencing engine difficulties shortly after taking off from the Air Force's Kamphaeng Samet flight training school in the Suphanburi Province.

Ansoon then attempted to make an emergency landing on a road, but the aircraft was caught up by electrical wires, and ended up colliding into a six-wheeled truck running on the road, which in turn crashed into a 10-wheeled truck and a motor cycle.

MNA/Xinhua

CLAIMS DAY NOTICE
MV EASTERN HERO VOY NO (91)

Consignees of cargo carried on MV EASTERN HERO VOY No (91) are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on 26-2-04 and cargo will be discharged into the premises of Myanma Port Authority where it will lie at the consignee's risk and expenses subject to the byelaws and conditions of the Port of Yangon.

Damaged cargo will be surveyed daily from 8 am to 11.20 am and 12 noon to 4 pm up to Claims Day now declared as the third day after final discharge of cargo from the vessel.

No claims against this vessel will be admitted after the Claims Day.

SHIPPING AGENCY DEPARTMENT MYANMA PORT AUTHORITY AGENT FOR: TOKO KAIUN KAISHA LTD JAPAN

China Telecom more than doubles broadband Internet users

Brisbane, 25 Feb — China Telecom signed up another 4.84 million clients to its broadband Internet services in 2003, the company announced Monday.

The China Telecom Group, China's largest fixed-line operator, has 7.35 million clients using its broadband Internet services across the country.

China Telecom has increased its broadband subscriptions tenfold in two years, said an official with the Ministry of Information Industry. —MNA/Xinhua

INVITATION TO TENDER

1. Sealed Tenders are invited by the Myanma Petrochemical Enterprise, the Ministry of Energy for the supply of lubricate base oils and additives (6,000 ± 10% metric tons).
2. Tender documents are available at the Finance Department during office hours commencing (26-2-2004) on payment of one hundred (100) FPC (or) USS per set.
3. Tender will be closed on (11-3-2004) at 12:00 noon.
4. Only bid from tenderer who has purchased tender documents officially from Myanma Petrochemical Enterprise will be accepted for evaluation.

Managing Director,
Myanma Petrochemical Enterprise First Toyota Corolla rolls off production line in China

Brisbane, 25 Feb — The first Toyota Corolla car rolled off the Chinese production line at a factory in Tianjin on Monday.

The Corolla is the second Toyota model to be produced by Tianjin FAW Toyota Motor Co Ltd, a Sino-Japanese joint venture, after the Vios.

MNA/Xinhua
Over 500 killed in powerful Moroccan Quake

Al Hoceima (Morocco), 25 Feb—A powerful earthquake killed at least 564 people in northern Morocco on Tuesday, toppling mud-brick homes and burying residents under tons of rubble.

“The death toll has risen to 564,” Health Minister Mohamed Abdelkhalek told state television 2M.

Hundreds of others were reported injured in and around the Mediterranean port city of Al Hoceima in the earthquake, which measured 6.9 Richter Scale.

In the town of Ait Kamara, 11 miles to the south, many houses were flattened like cardboard boxes. The US Geological Survey said the quake struck at around 2:30 a.m. (0230 GMT) when people were asleep.

Dozens of aftershocks and rain complicated relief efforts in the outlying villages of the eastern part of the Rif mountains in a dominantly Berber area.

“It’s a total disaster, the world needs to help us,” Hassan Hamouch, head of the town council in the village of Im-Zouren, told Reuters Television.

“We don’t have sniffer dogs or any equipment to lift or cut iron bars,” he told 2M state television earlier.

Residents, some digging with their bare hands or shovels in their flattened homes, said heavy equipment was needed.

“They sent the military which basically ordered us to stop digging but they couldn’t do much themselves for lack of equipment,” Abdellahel said.

Morocco’s worst recorded quake was on Feb. 29, 1960. It destroyed the Atlantic City of Agadir, killing 12,000 people.

Many of the injured were being treated in Army barracks, health centres and charity homes. Others were airlifted to the capital, Rabat, Casablanca and Meknes.

Josephine Shields, an official with the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC) in Tunis, said six villages within 10 miles of Al Hoceima had been hit.

“We’ve been told that the entire affected area has flattened like cardboard for patients, as well as debris,” she told state television 2M.

Northern Morocco is an arid region, with very mountainous, so it is a bit difficult to access,” she said. “We saw victims needing blankets, warm clothing, food and water. There is possibly a need for a field hospital as local health facilities are basically saturated,” she added.

Over 500 killed in powerful Moroccan Quake

Doctors die as heart operation plane crashes in Sardina

ROMO, 25 Feb—Four Italian doctors and two pilots died on Tuesday when their plane, carrying a heart for transplant, crashed in mountains on the Mediterranean island of Sardinia, air safety officials said.

“They had removed a heart during the flight and were transporting it for transplant this morning,” a spokesman for air safety agency ANSV said. The two pilots killed in the crash were Austria. Police officials said the Cessna 500 plane had the Sette Fratelli, or Seven Brothers mountain and was spotted on its summit

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Profa’s chief, Jose Luis Luege, said. It was not clear why the animals died, although local coast guard and environmental authorities were investigating a possible link to fishing trawlers’ use of a substance that creates a luminous effect when thrown in the ocean. The substance is believed to attract fish to help locate drug shipments that are dumped at sea to be picked up later.

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Doctors die as heart operation plane crashes in Sardina

The greatest saltwater lake splits into several lakes

NEW DELHI, 25 Feb—For the first time in India, a mitral valve repair procedure of the heart was performed Sunday using a special surgical technique by an American cardiologist, a top Indian heart specialist said.

“This is a significant milestone in endoscopic minimally invasive surgery. We performed a mitral valve repair procedure using the da Vinci surgical system.”

said Naresh Trehan, Executive Director, Escorts Heart Institute and Research Centre here, where the operation took place.

Trehan said “for many surgical procedures, the method of choice across the world has now shifted from traditional open surgery to the less invasive minimally invasive surgery.

“These minimally invasive techniques usually result in less pain in patient, shorter hospital stay and the patient is able to return to normal activity in three to five days,” the doctor said, according to a Press release.

Technically known as Robotic Endoscopic Mitral Valve Surgery, it was performed by Dr. Randolph W. Chiput, director, North Carolina Cardiovascular Disease Institute, a Totally Endoscopic Coronary Artery Bypass Surgery was also performed by Dr. Sivastava of Alliance Hospital, Texas using the special technique.

A live telecast of the surgery was made from the hospital to participants of the 50th Golden Jubilee meeting of Indian Association of Cardio Thoracic Surgeons here. — MNA/PTI

Ethiopia ranks fourth in world neonatal mortality rate

Addis Ababa, 25 Feb—Ethiopia stands fourth in the neonatal mortality and morbidity rate in the world, said the Ethiopian Health Ministry on Monday.

The ministry made the revelation at the opening of a meeting organized under the title “Healthy Newborn Partnership”.

Access to early prevention and management of complications of pregnancy and delivery were still very low due to lack of adequate health services, the ministry was quoted by the Ethiopian News Agency as saying.

Advocacy and mobilization through partnership of pertinent institutions would be essential to meet the Millennium Development Goals.

The ministry said strengthening the primary health care activities by fully involving the community in the health promotion and disease prevention activities helps reduce the problem.

Despite the various efforts, women in the reproductive health age group and their newborns as well as children under five years are facing unacceptable death and illness, according to the ministry.

It noted the Ethiopian Government with partner organizations attempted to identify high-risk areas for tetanus and carried out subsequent supplemental immunization campaigns to boost routine immunization service.

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Fulham settle Marlet transfer debt with Lyon

LYONS (France), 25 Feb — English Premier League club Fulham have paid 4.57 million euros to Olympique Lyon in settlement of the controversial transfer of French international striker Steve Marlet.

Fulham said they had paid the debt to take the Frenchman, who had turned down offers from clubs including Inter Milan, for a further six months.

In January, the Court of Arbitration for Sport ordered Fulham to pay the French champions after rejecting an appeal by chairman Mohammed Al-Fayed’s club.

Marlet moved to Fulham in August 2001 for 18 million euros but the London club refused to pay the last instalment of the transfer fee due in December 2002.

SOUTHAMPTON (England), 25 Feb — Southampton have signed a one-year contract extension with striker Jermain Defoe.

The club said in a statement that Defoe, who has scored 74 goals in 125 appearances for the club, would now stay at St Mary’s until 2007.

Arsenal secure funding for new stadium

LONDON, 25 Feb — Premier League leader Arsenal have secured funding for their new 357-million-pound (£373 million-US dollar) stadium and said on Monday the Ashburton Grove ground would open for the start of the 2006/2007 season.

The 60,000-capacity stadium, a short distance from their 38,500-seat home at Highbury in north London, will allow Arse-
nal to compete on a more even financial footing with the likes of champions Man-
chester United and Real Madrid.

Manager Arsene Wenger called the announcement “very exciting news” and said he hoped still to be in charge when the team played their first game at Ashburton Grove.

“It has been a big target of mine to participate in pushing the club forward and relocating to a new stadium is a necessity as it will enable us to become one of the biggest clubs in the world,” Wenger said in a state-
mement.

“Also, I love the fact that the new site is so close to Highbury, it’s where our heart is,” he said.

Ashburton Grove site covers 372,000 square metres and the project will be one of the biggest regeneration plans in the capital.

Arsenal, unbeaten in the Premier League this season and leading the division by seven points, has been at Highbury since 1913. The move had experienced planning and financing problems which led to a one-year delay.

The club said it had obtained a 260-

million-pound loan facility from a banking group for the new stadium.

Interest on the debt is set at a commercial fixed rate over a 14-year term.

Arsenal is contributing the balance of the costs through funds from TV company Gra-
nada, sponsors Nike and the sale of surplus land attached to the stadium site.

Arsenal chairman Peter Hill-Wood told fans the financing of the Arsenal group was “now complex” and it had two separate ob-
jectives — to fund the stadium and continue investment in Arsenal’s squad.

“Over recent years we have established ourselves as one of the leading clubs in Europe and the stadium, which we can now positively look forward to, will provide us with the opportunity to sustain and build on this position,” Hill-Wood said.

Weir hangs on for narrow Nissan Open victory

LOS ANGELES, 25 Feb — After squandering a seven-stroke lead, Mike Weir made a crucial chip shot on the 18th hole and then tapped in for par to defend his Nissan Open title by one shot over Shigeki Maruyama.

Canada’s Weir, the reigning Masters champion, shot an even-par 71 in rainy conditions to finish on 17-under 267 at the Riviera Country Club, while Japan’s Maruyama fell just short after posting a battling 70.

With the two locked in a tie for the lead on the 72nd hole, the left-handed Weir ex-

ecuted a 47-foot chip superbly off a hill from a wet lie left of the final green to within a foot.

He then holed out for his first victory in 10 months after his playing partner missed a par attempt from above the hole.

Australia’s Mercedes Championships winner Stuart Appleby shot a five-under-

par 66 to finish alone in third on 14-under-

par 266.

John Daly, last week’s surprise Buick Invitational champion, made a birdie on the 18th to finish on 13-under par, while Hank Kuehne missed a birdie putt on the same hole to end the tournament a further stroke adrift.

Kirk Tripplett, the 2002 Nissan champion, fired a three-under 68 to vault up to sixth place on 11-under par.

World number one Tiger Woods, Jay Williamson and J.J. Henry finished in a tie for seventh on 10-under par.

Woods recovered from his poor third round 72 to shoot a seven-under par 65 and move 37 places up the leaderboard.

Mexico’s first woman referee has torrid debut

MEXICO CITY, 25 Feb — The first woman to referee a Mexican First Division soccer match had a torrid debut on Sunday when she sent off two players and gave a penalty to the home side in a game between Irapuato and America.

Virginia Tovar handed red cards to Irapuato’s Costa Rican forward Ronald Gomez for persistent fouling and America’s Jesus Mendoza for spitting in an opponent’s face. Tovar awarded a penalty to Irapuato in the 34th minute which Ecuadorian Edison Mendez converted. Irapuato won 2-1.

Villarreal coach Floro quits

MAHON, 25 Feb — Benito Floro resigned as coach of Villarreal on Monday, a day after a 4-1 defeat at Real Zaragoza saw the club drop out of the European qualification places.

The club confirmed that Floro would give a news conference later on Monday to explain his surprise decision.

Villarreal finished last season in 15th place but after making several big-name signings, including Juan Roman Riquelme and Sonny Anderson, they spent much of the first half of the current campaign challenging for a Champions League slot.

Their form has dipped recently but they remain in eighth place, with 36 points from 25 matches.

— MNA/Reuters

MNA/Reuters

Arsenal’s Robert Pires (R) of France has his goal attempt stopped by Celta Vigo’s goalkeeper Pablo Cavallero (C) during their Champions League first knock-out round soccer match in Vigo, Spain, on 24 Feb, 2004. Arsenal won the match, 3-2. — MNA/Reuters

Arsenal’s Thierry Henry, left, is fouled by Celta Vigo’s Savo Mostovik during their Champions League soccer match in Vigo, Spain, on 24 Feb, 2004. Arsenal won the game 3-2. — MNA/Reuters

By lifting his 21st singles title, Hewitt also booked his passage back into the world’s top 20 as he turns 23 on Tuesday, and a double first half of the current campaign challenging for a Champions League slot.

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— MNA/Reuters
**OBITUARY**

Maha Thray Sithu U Pe Kin, Naing Ngant Gonyi
(First Class), Retired Ambassador. Beloved husband of Daw Me Me Khin, beloved father of U Myint Pe Kin (Mazhar) and U Aye Pe Kin (Zafar) - Theresa.

From HM he came 27 August 1912.
To HM he returned 25 February 2004.

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**WEATHER**

Wednesday, 25 February, 2004

Summary of observations recorded at 09:30 hours MST:

During the past 24 hours, light rain has been isolated in upper Sangan Division and weather has been partly cloudy in the remaining areas. Night temperatures were (3°C) to (4°C) below normal in Rakhine, Chin States, Yangon and Mandalay Divisions, (5°C) to (6°C) below normal in Mon and Kayin States and about normal in the remaining areas.

Maximum temperature on 24-2-2004 was 34.5°C (98°F).
Minimum temperature on 25-2-2004 was 15.5°C (60°F). Relative humidity at 9:30 hrs MST on 25-2-2004 was 83%. Total sunshine hours on 24-2-2004 was 5.2 hours above average. Rainfall on 25-2-2004 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 Southeast at (15:30) hours M.S.T on 24-2-2004.

Bay influence: Weather is cloudy in Southwest Bay and partly cloudy elsewhere in the Bay of Bengal.
Forecast valid until evening of 26-2-2004: Except for the likelihood of isolated rain in Kachin State, weather will be partly 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: Likelihood of isolated rain in Northern Myanmar.


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**THE NEW LIGHT OF MYANMAR**

Thursday, 26 February, 2004

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National peace and stability basic requirement for implementing seven-point future policy programme

Prime Minister General Khin Nyunt receives ICRC official

Prime Minister General Maung Aye inspects development projects in northern Shan State

Secretary-1 inspects Import-substitute Domestic Industrial Products Exhibition

Secretary-1 Li-Gen Soe Win visits Import-substitute Domestic Industrial Products Exhibition.