National strengths that always safeguard the Union

A glance at the long and firm historic events of Myanmar has revealed clearly that nationalistic fervour, Union Spirit and anti-colonialist sentiment that does not allow alien intrusion whatsoever are the national strengths that safeguard our Union so that it will be able to stand tall and grand amid the international community.

Senior General Than Shwe
Chairman of the State Peace and Development Council
Commander-in-Chief of Defence Services
(From the message sent to the 58th Anniversary Union Day)

Senior General Than Shwe and wife host Union Day reception and dinner

YANGON, 12 Feb — Senior General Than Shwe, Chairman of the State Peace and Development Council of the Union of Myanmar, and wife Daw Kyaing Kyaing hosted the 58th Anniversary Union Day Commemorative reception and dinner at the Presidential House on Ahlone Road here this evening.

On arrival at the Presidential House, Senior General Than Shwe and wife Daw Kyaing Kyaing were welcomed by State Peace and Development Council Vice-Chairman Vice-Senior General Maung Aye, Prime Minister Lt-Gen Soe Win, Chairman of the Central Committee for Observance of the 58th Anniversary Union Day Secretary-I of the SPDC Li-Gen Thein Sein, Management Committee Chairman Yangon Division PDC Chairman Yangon Commander Maj-Gen Myint Swe and officials.

First, the Senior General and wife cordially greeted national race leaders, traditional cultural troupes from states and divisions, USDA member Union Day delegates and special guests. Next, the Senior General and wife hosted the dinner to those present.

Also present at the reception and dinner were SPDC members, the Commander-in-Chief (Navy) and the Commander-in-Chief (Air), the ministers, the Chief Justice, the Attorney-General, the Auditor-General, the Chairman of the Civil Service Selection and Training Board, Yangon City Development Committee chairman Yangon mayor and their wives, senior military officers of the Ministry of Defence, members of the panel of chairmen of the National Convention

(See page 6)

Emergence of the State Constitution is the duty of all citizens of Myanmar Naing-Ngan.
Hold on to national solidarity to build discipline-flourishing democracy

The Union of Myanmar is a land where there has lived a people called Myanmar constituting a diversity of ethnic groups. It is therefore necessary for the entire national brethren residing in the Union to cultivate a spirit of fraternity and go hand in hand through weal and woe. Union-born national people inspired with Union spirit and anti-colonialist sentiment that does not allow alien intrusion whatsoever are the national strengths that always safeguard our Union so that it will be able to stand tall and grand amidst the international community”, stated in the message sent by Senior General Than Shwe, Chairman of the State Peace and Development Council of the Union of Myanmar, on the occasion of the 58th Anniversary Union Day.

It is necessary to be always on the alert that the old and new colonials alike bent on occupying and influencing the country are scheming to destroy the national unity, which is the foundation of the Union, and attempted and are still attempting to weaken the national strength. The country was colonized for over 100 years at the collapse of national unity as a result of the discriminatory practices adopted by the colonials. Therefore, all the national people should have vivid memories of Myanmar’s slide into servitude.

Lessons should be drawn from the causes of the outbreak of armed conflicts stemming from dissension and distrust at the collapse of national unity, and from the conditions in which the Union was close to disintegration for three times. After drawing lessons from the history, the State Peace and Development Council laid down the national policy — non-disintegration of the Union, non-disintegration of national solidarity, and perpetuation of sovereignty. In line with this national policy, the government is doing everything it can to ensure the perpetual existence of the Union of Myanmar as a peaceful, modern, and developed nation.

In this context, it is very important for the entire national people not to fall prey to the discriminatory practices and provocative acts of the neo-colonials who are hatching wicked schemes to break up the Union. All the national people are to make combined efforts to deter them. All in all, it is necessary to ward off the interferences of the neo-colonials with the strength of national solidarity, an instrument of the Union, and attempted and are still attempting to weaken the national strength. The country was colonized for over 100 years at the collapse of national unity as a result of the discriminatory practices adopted by the colonials. Therefore, all the national people should have vivid memories of Myanmar’s slide into servitude.

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Minister Maj-Gen Huu Oo addresses coordination meeting to extend growing rubber.

Clarifications given to video/VCD industry

Yangon, 12 Feb — A coordination meeting on extended cultivation of rubber was held at the Ministry of Agriculture and Irrigation yesterday.

Present were Minister for Agriculture and Irrigation Maj-Gen Huu Oo, directors-general and managing directors of departments and enterprises, officials of companies that are engaged in rubber farming in states and divisions, owners of rubber farms and those who have applied for work permit. In his discussions, Minister Maj-Gen Huu Oo said the government is giving encouragement to entrepreneurs for cultivation of marketable crops at home and abroad. The price of rubber is stable and it can be grown in all parts of the country. In the world market, he said, Myanmar rubber is of high quality and it is a perennial plant.

Besides cultivation of rubber, factories that can produce value-added rubber products are to be established, he said.

The ministry will provide assistance on work permit, pedigree and cultivation techniques to rubber growers, he added.

Clarity on transport ministry coordination meeting

Yangon, 12 Feb — The work coordination meeting of the Ministry of Transport was held at the ministry yesterday and this morning.

It was attended by Minister for Transport Maj-Gen Thein Swe, Deputy Ministers U Pe Than and Col Nyan Tun Aung, Officer on Special Duty Brig-Gen Myo Tin, departmental heads, advisers and responsible officials. Minister Maj-Gen Thein Swe made an opening address and the officials reported to the minister on their respective works. Afterwards, the directors-general, the managing directors and rectors reported on progress of the tasks, earning of income and efficient use of the electricity and fuel.

The first-day meeting ended yesterday afternoon.

The second-day meeting took place this morning and Leader of Supervisory and Inspection Group U Cho Than Maung reported on advantages and disadvantages of the tasks.

Regarding the reports, the deputy ministers took part in the discussions. Next, the minister gave instructions on carrying out the tasks in accordance with the motto of the ministry, serving the interest of the passengers, meeting the target, curbing misconduct in financial matters and promoting the GDP.

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

Management Director of Myanmar Perennial Enterprise Col Kyi Win reported on quality of rubber, cultivation of rubber, manufacturing of value-added products and finished timber products.

Next, private rubber growers reported on requirements and the meeting ended with the concluding remarks by the minister.

— MNA

Myanmar delegation leaves for India

Yangon, 12 Feb — A Myanmar delegation led by Deputy Minister for Energy Brig-Gen Than Huu left here by air for India this morning to attend Third Asia Gas Buyers Summit to be held in New Delhi. They were received at Yangon International Airport by Director-General of the Energy Planning Department U Soe Myint, departmental heads, and their family members.

The deputy minister is accompanied by Deputy Director-General of the EPD U Thein Lwin and Director (Production Management) U Soe Aung.

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— MNA

People’s desires

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

Extended cultivation of rubber coordinated

Yangon, 12 Feb — A coordination meeting on extended cultivation of rubber was held at the Ministry of Agriculture and Irrigation yesterday.

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Besides cultivation of rubber, factories that can produce value-added rubber products are to be established, he said.

The ministry will provide assistance on work permit, pedigree and cultivation techniques to rubber growers, he added.

Clarifications given to video/VCD industry

Yangon, 12 Feb — Minister for Home Affairs Maj-Gen Maung Oo yesterday clarified measures to be taken concerning video/VCD industry at a meeting with chairmen of township PDCs in Yangon Division, and chairmen and secretaries of township video boards at Yangon Division Peace and Development Council office.

In his clarifications, the minister said it is learnt that some businessmen are selling, hiring and showing uncensored foreign video tapes and VCDs not suitable for public shows including discs and records that are not in conformity with Myanmar culture. The minister called for doing business in accordance with the existing laws and rules and severe action will be thus taken against those businessmen who fail to abide by the rules and regulations.

Also present on the occasion were Deputy Com- mander of Yangon Command Brig-Gen Wai Lwin, Director-General of the Myanmar Police Force Brig-Gen Khin Yee, Director-General of the General Ad- ministration Department U Myat Kyi, Secretary of Yangon City Development Commit- tee Col Myint Aung and officials.

— MNA

Ministry holds coordination meeting

Yangon, 12 Feb — The work coordination meeting of the Ministry of Transport was held at the ministry yesterday and this morning.

It was attended by Minister for Transport Maj-Gen Thein Swe, Deputy Ministers U Pe Than and Col Nyan Tun Aung, Officer on Special Duty Brig-Gen Myo Tin, departmental heads, advisers and responsible officials. Minister Maj-Gen Thein Swe made an opening address and the officials reported to the minister on their respective works. Afterwards, the directors-general, the managing directors and rectors reported on progress of the tasks, earning of income and efficient use of the electricity and fuel.

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— MNA

Union Day commemorative ceremonies

Yangon, 12 Feb — Thanyin Township in Yangon South District held a 58th Anniversary Union Day commemorative ceremony at Tha Hda sports ground this morning.

On the occasion, Township Peace and Development Council Chairman U Tin Huu read the message sent by SPDC Chairman Commander-in-Chief of Defence Serv- ices Senior General Than Shwe.

A similarly ceremony took place at No 2 Basic Education High School in Hlaingthaya Township this morning.

— MNA
Mercedes, BMW to launch new cars to boost sales in Indonesia

JAKARTA, 11 Feb— Two leading German carmakers — Stuttgart-based DaimlerChrysler through its flagship Mercedes-Benz and Munich-based BMW — are to launch new models this year in a bid to boost sales in Indonesia.

PT DaimlerChrysler Indonesia president Director Friedel Engisch was quoted Thursday by The Jakarta Post as saying that following satisfactory sales last year — in which Mercedes-Benz managed to off-load a total of 2,051 passenger vehicles excluding the 4x4 classification — the company plans to launch three new models of CLS class, the new A class and the new M class.

“With a Gaikindo (the Association of Indonesian Automotive Industries) estimate that the market will grow from last year’s 480,000 units to 520,000 this year, we believe that the premium segment of the market will grow to around 4,800 units from 4,400 last year,” he said.

Meanwhile, PT BMW Indonesia sold a total of 2,053 cars last year, including 178 X Series models.

“The 3 Series model continues to be the market favourite, with 1,319 units sold last year,” the company said in a statement.

BMW launched four models on the local market last year, comprising of 730 Li, 645 Ci coupe, the locally assembled Series and the X5.

The company plans to launch two models — the 1 Series hatchback and the new 3 Series — in the first semester of this year.

“Last year was definitively an exciting year for BMW Indonesia. With these results, we will continue to strengthen our market leadership in the premium segment and we expect further successes in 2005,” BMW Indonesia president Director Josef Honsel said.

Most Shanghai residents satisfied with their lives

SHANGHAI, 12 Feb — According to a recent survey by the Shanghai Statistics Bureau, 80 per cent of the city’s residents are satisfied with their lives in the past five years.

The survey, the largest in recent years, was conducted by the bureau’s urban survey team. The team went door to door to gather basic information such as residents’ living conditions, health and family structures.

Almost 32 per cent of those surveyed said the quality of their lives has improved by a large margin over the past five years. Another 50 per cent said it has remained at the same level.

China finds more oil reserves

BEIJING, 12 Feb— Thanks to intensified exploration efforts, China’s three major oil companies found more oil and natural gas reserves in 2004, state media reported.

According to People’s Daily, China National Petroleum Corp (CNPC) found 520 million tons of new oil reserves and 243.6 billion cubic metres of natural gas reserves in six regions in 2004. Sinopec found 328 million tons of new oil reserves and 177.9 billion cubic metres of natural gas reserves last year.

World leaders hold dialogue with Cambodia on future eco growth

PHNOM PENH, 11 Feb — A televised dialogue on Fair Trade and Growth opened here on Thursday evening with the participation of some world leaders to openly discuss Cambodia’s economic future after the post-quota garment era.

Prime Minister Hun Sen delivered an opening speech, while former US president Bill Clinton gave a speech by video presentation.

There are more than 20 key presenters at the meeting, including Prime Minister Hun Sen, World Bank president James Wolfensohn, Commerce Minister Cham Prasidh, former Trade Commissioner Pascal Lamy, Executive Director of the International Labour Organization (ILO)’s Social Dialogue Sally Paxton, Gap Inc. vice-president for Global Compliance Dan Henkle, and some other Cambodia’s senior officials.

It is part of the two-day meeting titled as Cambodia: Seizing the Global Opportunity—a Growth Strategy in an Era of Free Trade.

The policy conference will take place on Friday with three powerful panels convened to address Cambodia’s market sector, investment climate, and path towards international engagement.

The expiration of the Multi-Fibre Arrangement and the resulting elimination of quotas in the garment sector have dramatically changed the dynamics of global garment production.

These changes could have a profound effect on the Cambodian economy because garments are responsible for 80 per cent of Cambodia’s export revenue, employ 270,000 workers and accounts for around 12 per cent of Cambodia’s gross domestic product.

During the dialogue, leaders urged Cambodia to improve investment climate to enhance investor’s confidence and attract more investment, including to eliminate corruption, protect workers’ rights and further improve labour standards.

1,455 US troops killed since beginning of Iraq war

WASHINGTON, 11 Feb—As of Friday, 11 Feb, 2005, at least 1,455 members of the US military have died since the beginning of the Iraq war in March 2003, according to an Associated Press count. At least 1,111 died as a result of hostile action, the Defence Department said. The figures include four military civilians.

The AP count is five higher than the Defence Department’s tally, last updated at 10 am EST on Thursday.

The British military has reported 86 deaths; Italy, 20; Poland, 16; Ukraine, 18; Spain, 11; Bulgaria, seven; Slovakia, three; Estonia, Thailand and the Netherlands, two each; and Denmark, El Salvador, Hungary, Latvia and Kazakhstan one death each. Since 1 May, 2003, when President Bush declared that major combat operations in Iraq had ended, 1,317 US military members have died, according to AP’s count. That is at least 1,002 deaths resulting from hostile action, according to the military’s numbers.

The latest deaths reported by the military: A soldier was killed Friday when an explosive detonated in western Baghdad. A soldier died Thursday after a non-hostile incident in Baghdad.

US soldiers from the 1st Battalion, 24th Infantry Regiment aim their rifles at someone on a roof, after an Iraqi police station next to a power station received small arms fire from guerrillas, in the Sunni northern city of Mosul, on 11 Feb, 2005.—INTERNET

THE NEW LIGHT OF MYANMAR  Sunday, 13 February, 2005  3
S Korea investors interested in franchised business in China

SHANGHAI, 11 Feb—As China endows more favourable rights to overseas investors, more and more franchised proprietors from South Korea hope to open businesses in China, said an official with South Korea Franchised Business Association.

Cho Dong Min, deputy director of South Korea-based association, told a recent Sino-South Korea franchised business conference held in Shanghai that the implementation of the regulation on franchised operation in China starting on February 1st will bring more opportunities for those overseas investors who are interested in franchised businesses in China.

The new regulation cancelled all limits on overseas investors’ market access. All investors, both from China and overseas, will share the same operation conditions, rights and obligations, information and advertising opportunities in their application for the franchised operation in China.

Cho said most South Korean investors favour joining hands with Chinese partners when running business in China, and many noted local enterprises in Beijing, Shanghai and Shenzhen have been partners with those South Korean investors.

Cho also hopes the cooperation between South Korea and Chinese enterprises will help more Chinese products enter South Korea market.

Franchised businesses appeared in China as early as the 1990s but have become popular only in recent years.

A professor surnamed Wu from a Shanghai-based institute on chain-store operation said there are more than 1,900 franchises in China, and the number is increasing annually by 49 per cent.

According to Wu, by the end of 2004, the number of franchised stores in Shanghai had topped 4,000, about 35 per cent of the city’s total chain stores.

Vehicle accidents kill two US GIs in Iraq

BAGHDAD, 11 Feb — A US Marine and an Army soldier were killed Friday in separate traffic accidents in Iraq, the US military said.

The Marine, assigned to the 1st Marine Expeditionary Force, died in an accident while conducting security operations in Anbar Province west of Baghdad, the command said.

Separately, a US Army soldier assigned to the 1st Marines was killed in an accident during security operations in the northern Babil Province south of the capital.

Names of the victims were withheld pending notification of relatives. — MNA/Xinhua

400,000 watch fireworks display to celebrate Lunar New Year

HONG KONG, 11 Feb—A stunning climax to the Lunar New Year brought by a fireworks display which lightened the sky over Victoria Harbour in Hong Kong on Thursday night.

About 400,000 ecstatic spectators crowded on both sides of the harbour to watch the 23-minute extravaganza started at 8:00 pm in celebration of the new Rooster Year.

The fireworks display was coordinated by the Hong Kong Home Affairs Bureau. A total of 22,888 shell pieces was discharged in the display from four barges consisting of nine scenes. Total sponsorship amounts to 4.8 million Hong Kong dollars.

Traditional and new patterns merged together forming novel and creative designs that gave people lots of surprise. Spectators were impressed by the pattern featuring red Arabic numerals “8” which is a lucky number in Hong Kong culture symbolizing luck and wealth.

A man surnamed Ho occupied a vantage position at Wanchai Golden Bauhinia Square had showed full excitement while enjoying the dazzling fireworks just as the others.

“Hong Kong people has experienced a fruitful year and I feel happy to be here to celebrate the coming of a new year with a big crowd,” said Ho.

Another man surnamed Zhang from Beijing to Hong Kong for vacation gasped in admiration of the splendid fireworks show. “What a gorgeous night! I’ll definitely come again for the fireworks next year,” said Zhang with delight.

While the explosively multi-coloured sparkles fell and faded in the dark sky, laughter and happiness carried on among the crowd forming a harmonious ambiance in the city. — MNA/Xinhua

Indonesia to discuss extradition treaty with Singapore

JAKARTA, 11 Feb—Indonesian President Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono said Thursday he will discuss an extradition treaty with Singapore during his one-day official visit to the country next week.

President Susilo expressed the hope that his meeting with Singapore Prime Minister Lee Hsien Loong could find a solution to the differences of the two countries over the extradition pact, the Detik on-line news reported.

“It is the right time for us to strengthen cooperation with friendly nation to prevent corrupt people going around there without getting punishment,” President Susilo said at his residence.

The leaders of the two countries have vowed to work closely to improve bilateral relations.

The Indonesian Government has long asked the city state to enter into an extradition pact as a number of Indonesian corrupt business tycoons have escaped to Singapore and parked billions of dollars there.

However, Singapore has consistently refused to sign such a treaty. — MNA/Xinhua

Transnational bus to link Guangxi, Vietnam this March

BEIHAI, Guangxi, 12 Feb—A transnational bus linking Beihai in south China’s Guangxi Zhuang Autonomous Region to Ha Long in Vietnam will be started this March, according to an agreement signed by local governments of both cities.

The 400-kilometre route links two famous tourism cities. Called “Sea Garden”, Beihai is the closest port city in China to Southeast Asia, West Asia and Europe. Ha Long is home to Ha Long Bay, recognized as a Natural World Heritage site in 1995 and a Geological World Heritage site in 2000 by the UN Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO).

Guangxi’s Dongxi Port, one of the most convenient ports from China to Vietnam and Southeast China, saw 3.18 million people passing through in 2004; 60 per cent are tourists departing from Beihai to Vietnam.

“It means that the planning tourism route will have a stable passenger source,” said Wen Zhaobing, general manager of the Beihai Company of National Express Group, the China side of the transportation cooperation agreement.

According to Wen, more measures will be taken by the co-partners to provide convenient services for tourists from both countries. — MNA/Xinhua

US soldiers attend to the scene of a suicide bombing in Mosul, Iraq, on 7 Feb, 2005. — Internet
China to build top-grade meteorological observation base

HAKKAO, 12 Feb—China will build a top-grade meteorological observation base in the Xisha Archipelago in the South China Sea, said Qin Dahe, director of the China Meteorological Administration.

Qin made the announcement when he landed on the Yongxing Island, an island of the Xisha Archipelago where the Xisha Meteorological Station, China’s southernmost meteorological station is located.

After extending his gratitude and appreciation to personnel at the station and PLA soldiers stationed on the island, Qin visited the site of the Doppler weather radar station which will break ground soon.

Qin said that advanced scientific and technological knowledge should be used to improve the observation ability of the meteorological station to solve the scarcity of detection material on South China Sea and to improve the efficiency of meteorological information in safeguarding state security. — MNA/Xinhua

Emirates Airline to launch Dubai-Beijing direct flights in 2006

SHANGHAI, 12 Feb—Emirates Airline of the United Arab Emirates plans to open direct flights between Dubai and Beijing in early 2006 to meet the demand for 2008 Beijing Olympics, said Emirates Greater China & Northeast Asia manager Liu Rongzhu.

The first non-stop route to China’s Mainland connected the Dubai with Shanghai beginning last April.

“I believe more foreign international airlines will tap China’s aviation market, along with China’s increasing opening to overseas tourism and businesses,” said Liu. “Emirates will develop more aviation services with China in the future.”

Emirates has been serving China with passenger flights to Hong Kong since 1991. With a young and modern fleet of aircraft, Emirates currently flies to more than 70 destinations worldwide. — MNA/Xinhua

NASA still undecided about techniques for in-flight repair

CAPE CANAVERAL (Florida), 11 Feb—Just three months before launching the first space shuttle mission in two years, NASA is still undecided about which techniques for in-flight repair on the heat shield to test to ensure the Columbia accident is not repeated.

After the 2003 Columbia disaster, which blew up the spacecraft and killed seven astronauts, NASA is putting a high priority on showing it will never be caught again without options to repair a shuttle in orbit. The heat shield repair techniques are a crucial part of the Discovery mission, due to launch on 14 May. NASA engineers are debating three procedures for in-flight repairs of the shuttle’s protective tiles and two methods of patching carbon panels on the leading edges of the wings, both critical to keeping the shuttle intact during its fiery re-entry into Earth.

Mission commander Eileen Collins, who was at the Kennedy Space Centre in Florida with her six crewmates for training, said NASA had not yet decided on which repair techniques to test.

“Normally you’d have to make the decision a lot sooner,” she said. “We’ve been training for over three years — and we have a lot of flexibility in the sense that we’re trained to maybe pick up some tasks late,” Collins said, seemingly good-natured about the problem.

“But it is late, we’re three months from launch.”

Columbia was destroyed after a chunk of insulation fell off the shuttle’s fuel tank during launch and smashed a hole in the orbiter’s left wing. The damage was undetected until after the shuttle attempted to re-enter Earth’s atmosphere on 1 February, 2003, and was torn apart by searing temperatures and high pressure.

NASA’s first priority was to redesign the fuel tank and Discovery will fly with a new one. — MNA/Reuters

India denies slowing of dialogue process with Pakistan

NEW DELHI, 12 Feb—Ahead of his visit to Pakistan next week, India’s External Affairs Minister K Natwar Singh denied Friday that the bilateral Composite Dialogue process to normalize ties had slowed down, the Indo-Asian News Service reported.

“I don’t share your views on the dialogue process,” he told a Pakistani journalist, who asked if his two-day visit to Islamabad from Tuesday — the first bilateral visit by an Indian Foreign Minister to Pakistan since 1989 — would help revive the “stalled” process.

Singh, who took questions from reporters after releasing a book at the Foreign Correspondents Club here, said the process had in fact gathered momentum after the United Progressive Alliance (UPA) government took office last year. — MNA/Xinhua

Most Salvadorans oppose troops deployment in Iraq

MEXICO CITY, 11 Feb—Most Salvadorans are opposed to an extension of the country’s troops deployment in Iraq, an opinion poll showed.

The CID-Gallup poll conducted on 29 January-3 February revealed that 90 per cent of the 1,216 people interviewed nationwide were opposed to the government plan to send in a new contingent to replace its 380 troops whose mandate has expired. Almost one in four (25 per cent) respondents believed the government of President Antonio Saca keeps troops in Iraq “under pressure from the United States”. — MNA/Xinhua

Deadly bomb attack hits Iraqi patrol

BAGHDAD, 11 Feb—Thirteen people were killed and more than 30 wounded when a car bomb targeting an Iraqi army patrol exploded near a Shia mosque northeast of Baghdad, a security source said.

A police official said soldiers were killed in the attack. A car loaded with vegetables exploded when the patrol approached, the official said.

Earlier that day, armed men fired on customers in a bakery in eastern Baghdad, killing nine people, police said. The assailants drove up in two cars and burst into the Happiness Bakery.

Seven of the victims died in the bakery and two others died in hospital, police said. But according to some neighbourhood residents, the death toll from the attack was 11.

A police officer said he thought the attack was caused by a conflict between two factions or tribes.

A police station opposite the store was not damaged.

One witness said the same bakery was attacked a few weeks ago in a similar manner and three people were killed. — Internet

Salespersons most-wanted professionals in China

BEIJING, 12 Feb—Salespersons are the most-wanted professionals in China, while drivers of motorized vehicles are the most uncomfortable in the country, according to a recent survey by the Ministry of Labour and Social Security.

Specialists in machinery processing and dressmakers are also on the most-wanted list, while shop attendants, cashiers and accountants are in low demand, it says.

The survey was conducted in Beijing, Shanghai, Chongqing, Shenyang, Jinan, Nanjing, Wuhan, Xi’an, Fuzhou and Chengdu. — MNA/Xinhua
Commission, National Convention Convening Work Committee and National Convention Convening Management Committee, alternate chairmen of National Convention, the director-general of the SPDC office, heads of departments, rectors, medical superintendents, officers of Myanmar Police Force, chairmen of district PDCs of Yangon Division, officials of News and Periodicals Enterprise, correspondents of foreign news agencies, officials of Myanmar War Veterans Organization, All Myanmar Women’s Affairs Work Committee, Myanmar Women’s Affairs Federation, Myanmar Maternal and Child Welfare Association and Myanmar Red Cross Society, representatives of national race organizations and guests.

Before and during the reception and dinner, national races entertained those present with songs to the accompaniment of Myanmar Athan Modern Music Troupe.

After the dinner, artistes of Fine Arts Department, winners of Myanma Traditional Cultural Performing Arts Competitions and traditional cultural troupes from Chin State, Taninthayi Division, Kayah State, Mon State, Shan State, Rakhine State, Kachin State, Kayin State also entertained those present with songs and variety of dances. — MNA

Kachin delegates to National Convention arrive.

Delegates from Kachin State to attend the National Convention being welcomed at the airport. — MNA

Union Day Exhibition continues

YANGON, 11 Feb — The Union Day Commemorative Exhibition organized by the Subcommittee for Observance of the 58th Anniversary Union Day and Exhibition Subcommittee, continued at the Tatmadaw Convention Hall as the fifth day today. In addition to ministerial booths, the booths on ancient Myanmar, national culture and customs of the national people, emergence of the Union Day and regaining independence, and modern developed country are put on display in the exhibition.

At the exhibition, the basic education high school students took part in the computer quiz in the audio language lab, and Yankin Township BEHS No 2 won the quiz.

The exhibition is kept open free of charge up to 16 February from 9 am to 5 pm daily. — MNA

Students visiting State and Division booths at Union Day Exhibition. — MNA
Over 10,000 people attend …

(From page 16)

First, MC Secretary of Yangon Division Peace and Development Council Lt-Col Myint Kyi announced the agenda of the ceremony. Commander Maj-Gen Myint Swe read out the message to the 58th Anniversary Union Day sent by Chairman of the State peace and Development Council Commander-in-Chief of Defence Services Senior General Than Shwe.

At 7.50 am, Mayor Brig-Gen Aung Thein Lin and party took out the Flag from the silver bowl and carried it again flanked by members of the panel of chairmen of the Observance of the Union Flag Hoisting Organizing Committee, Tatmadaw (Army, Navy and Air) and Police Officers, national people and USDA members.

On Pyay Road, he handed over the Flag to Chairman of the Sub-committee for Conveying the Union Flag, Putting up Billboards and Emblems representing States and Divisions Secretary of YCDC Col Myint Aung.

Col Myint Aung conveyed the Flag and planted it in the silver bowl on the dais on board the Union Boat to carry it to the City Hall where it will be kept the whole year.

The Union Boat carried the flag flanked by Tatmadaw (Army, Navy and Air) and Police Officers and national people from the People’s Square to the City Hall along Pyay Road, Phonegyi Road, Maha Bandoola Road and Sule Pagoda Road.

Local people from Dagon, Lanmadaw, Latha, Pabedan and Kyauktada townships, local authorities and social organizations warmly welcomed the Union Flag by waving miniature flags together with the banners bearing ‘Warm welcome to the Union Flag’ across the roads.

Government offices, shops and houses were decorated with various sizes of Union Flags as a gesture of honouring the 58th Anniversary Union Day.

When the flag arrived in front of the City Hall, YCDC Secretary Col Myint Aung took out the Union Flag from the silver bowl on board the Union Boat and handed it over to the Mayor.

At 8.25 am, the Mayor, flanked by Tatmadaw (Army, Navy and Air) and Police Officers, national people and USDA members carried the Flag and planted it in the silver bowl on the dais in the parlour of the mayor so as to spend the whole year. Next, those present saluted the Union Flag.

State/division delegates attend Union Day ceremony

YANGON, 12 Feb — The Union Day delegates from states and divisions, led by Secretary of the Reception and Accommodation Subcommittee for Observance of the 58th Anniversary Union Day Commandant of No 1 Transit Centre Lt-Col Tin Kyaw, attended the 58th Anniversary Union Day Flag Hoisting Ceremony held at the People’s Square on Pyay Road this morning.

Next, the Union delegations visited the People’s Square and People’s Park. They were conducted by the officials around the park.

Pathein-Mawtinsoon bus line launched

YANGON, 12 Feb — The Ayeyawady Division Supervisory Committee for Ensuring Security and Smooth Transport held the Pathein-Mawtinsoon bus line at the jetty of Ngwehsaung on Strand Road in Pathein on 9 February. Present were Chairman of Ayeyawady Division Peace and Development Council Commander of South-West Command Maj-Gen Soe Naing, Secretary Lt-Col Thein Hlaing, departmental officials, social organization members and local people.

Chairman of Pathein District Peace and Development Council Lt-Col Hla Thwin briefed them on opening of the bus line which will run between Pathein-Mawtinsoon through Hainggyi and Ngayok-kaung.

Officials formally opened the bus line.

Thanks to opening of the bus line, it will contribute towards development of economic, social, education and health of local people of villages along Pathein Mawtinsoon.

In addition, Yangonites can travel to Mawtinsoon by car via Pathein.
Hundred fruits from a common stem—Our Union

As a gesture of honouring the Union Day, the day on which the Union of Myanmar was conceived, the development of the seven divisions and seven states is being presented to the national people living in the motherland.

A tribe that had been in existence for millions of years in myanmar... expanded into over 100 national races such as the Kachin, the Kayah, the Kayin, the Chin, the Bamar, the Mon, the Palaung, Kayin and Chin living in the Union as small Unions. It is an area of dense population and has a population of 7,627,000. The population density is 534 per square mile. In the east there are mountain ranges whose heights are over 6,000 feet. In the south west is Bago Yoma. In the north... diversified into over 100 national races such as the Kachin, the Kayah, the Kayin, the Chin, the Bamar, the Mon, the Palaung, Kayin and Chin living in the Union as small Unions. It is an area of dense population and has a population of 7,627,000. The population density is 534 per square mile. In the east there are mountain ranges whose heights are over 6,000 feet. In the south west is Bago Yoma. In the north... diversified into over 100 national races such as the Kachin, the Kayah, the Kayin, the Chin, the Bamar, the Mon, the Palaung, Kayin and Chin living in the Union as small Unions. It is an area of dense population and has a population of 7,627,000. The population density is 534 per square mile. In the east there are mountain ranges whose heights are over 6,000 feet. In the south west is Bago Yoma. In the north... diversified into over 100 national races such as the Kachin, the Kayah, the Kayin, the Chin, the Bamar, the Mon, the Palaung, Kayin and Chin living in the Union as small Unions. It is an area of dense population and has a population of 7,627,000. The population density is 534 per square mile. In the east there are mountain ranges whose heights are over 6,000 feet. In the south west is Bago Yoma. In the north... diversified into over 100 national races such as the Kachin, the Kayah, the Kayin, the Chin, the Bamar, the Mon, the Palaung, Kayin and Chin living in the Union as small Unions. It is an area of dense population and has a population of 7,627,000. The population density is 534 per square mile. In the east there are mountain ranges whose heights are over 6,000 feet. In the south west is Bago Yoma. In the north... diversified into over 100 national races such as the Kachin, the Kayah, the Kayin, the Chin, the Bamar, the Mon, the Palaung, Kayin and Chin living in the Union as small Unions. It is an area of dense population and has a population of 7,627,000. The population density is 534 per square mile. In the east there are mountain ranges whose heights are over 6,000 feet. In the south west is Bago Yoma. In the north...
Development in Mandalay Division after 1988

Honouring 58th Anniversary Union Day

Yeywa Hydel Power Project underway on Myingge River, southeast Mandalay, Mandalay Division.—MYANMA ALIN

The main building of Myingyan Degree College in Myingyan Township, Mandalay Division. — MYANMA ALIN

Hsinmin-2 Cement Plant in Kyaukse, Mandalay Division. — MYANMA ALIN

Yeywa Hydel Power Project underway on Myingge River, southeast Mandalay, Mandalay Division.—MYANMA ALIN
Mandalay Division...

The Dokhtawady River and its tributary, the Pyawbwe River, join the Ayeyawady River near Inwa.

Agriculture

As the division is in the arid zone, ancient Myanmar kings built many dams and canals for supply of water. Cultivation was made through irrigation in Kyaukse and its environs. The region was renowned as the granary of Myanmar in those days. The cultivation acreage of the whole country was only half a million acres during the annexation of Myanmar by the imperialists.

After over a hundred years, Mandalay Division was a region where rice was insufficient and cultivation of other crops also decreased. There was no cultivation with no rain and no dams.

The Tawmaw government is fulfilling the requirements of the people. The Tawmaw-born of the people never forgets the people’s lives and difficulties of every region. Therefore, after taking up the State duties, it is fulfilling the requirements of the people. At the opening of North Pinle Dam on 13 April 1996, Senior General Than Shwe said that he was born and brought up in those areas. He had realized the hardships of the farmers in the areas since childhood.

They needed no gold but water. If water was available in the areas, it means they possessed gold. That is why water availability and regional development tasks are being implemented after the government had taken up State duties. He spoke of the need to work harder.

There are 42 dams in the division in 16 years. Hsinthe and Kintha dams were built in Tatkon, Thaphangyoung, Hsindewa, Welaung and Kyaukantone dams in Taungtha, Samon and Thettaw dams in Thazi and Chaungkaikun dam in Pyawbwe. Sthah, Seven river water-pumping projects were implemented to irrigate farmlands of the division.

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<tr>
<th>Table G</th>
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The ancestors made a suggestion that the people make a bridge and do not take care of the farmlands of the division. To ensure the greening of the division, power consumption-million megawatt

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Implementing Extension of auto-telephone lines

1. Mandalay (3000 lines)
2. Madaya (5000 lines)
Total 5000 lines

Implementing DECT telephone project
1. Mandalay (3000 lines)
Total 2900 lines

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Regional development and regional self-sufficiency of food, nine river-water pumping projects are being implemented and plans are under way to carry out seven others. In addition, more dams and reservoirs will be built to improve the living standard of farmers in Mandalay Division.

Eight dams have been constructed in the division, seven river water-pumping projects were implemented to irrigate the farmlands of the division. To ensure the greening of the division, Mandalay Division. It has also released a variety of fish species into the Ayeyawady River. Table B shows progress of the region’s livestock breeding sector.

Forest conservation

More than 18 million of people live in Mandalay, Sagaing and Magway Divisions, accounting for one-third of the nation’s population.

These had adverse effects on the agri-cultural works for more cultural works for more regional development and regional self-sufficiency of food, nine river-water pumping projects are being implemented and plans are under way to carry out seven others. In addition, more dams and reservoirs will be built to improve the living standard of farmers in Mandalay Division.

Eight dams have been constructed in the division, seven river water-pumping projects were implemented to irrigate the farmlands of the division.
Mandalay Division

(From page 10)

than 100 years. If the situation remains unchanged for next 50 years, some deserts will appear on the map of Myanmar. Therefore, the government had to construct many irrigation facilities and plant trees to form forests in the region. It has also realized the special regions greening project in the Central Myanmar. Table C and D show progress of the project.

Superficially, Mandalay seemed to be a region enjoying smooth transport because of roads linking one city and another. But, it still has many requirements and needs if compared tasks to be carried out for cementing relations and friendship among the national tribes in the region, national and regional development.

Table J

<table>
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</table>

Road. Altogether seven large bridges have emerged in the region — two 210-foot-long bridges across Zawgyi River on Yangon-Mandalay Highway in Kyaukse Township, 700-foot-long Dokhtawady Bridge across the Ayeyawady River near Inwa Bridge (3,960 feet) in Amarapura Township.

With a lofty aim to make Mandalay into a city developed, the government is making all-out efforts to boost generation of electricity for the people. Now, it is implementing 12 hydropower projects simultaneously. One of the 12 projects is Ye Ywa Hydropower Project, 31 miles south-east of Mandalay. In the time of the Tatmadaw Government, there have emerged (See page 12).
Mandalay Division

(from page 11)

Sedawgyi hydropower plant (25 megawatts), Paunglaung hydropower plant (210 megawatts) and Mogok hydropower plant (4 megawatts) in Mandalay Division, increasing the capacity of electricity generation to 180 megawatts, up from 45 megawatts in 1988.

In his inspection tour of Ye Ywa Hydropower Project on 18 December 2004, Senior General Than Shwe gave guidance to the officials, saying that it is necessary to complete the project as soon as possible to be able to meet the electricity demand of the State. Measures are to be taken to complete the project.

Table I

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<th>Subject</th>
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<td>- completed work</td>
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Rural development

- Rural road
  - tarred road | 5326 | 2745/4 | 221/26 |
  - gravel road | 400 | 173/7 | 133/7 |
  - granite road | 1492 | 642/6 | 493/4 |
  - earthen road | 2424 | 182/1 | upgrading |
  - earthen road | 10/1 | 174/6 | 16/54 |
  - rural bridge | - | 598 | - |
  - Rural bridge | 419 | 507 | 36/1 |
  - completed work | - | 5257 | 5257 |
  - rural housing | - | 283 | 283 |

Table M

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Table L

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The government is making efforts for increasing number of intellectual and intelligentsia in education, health and science and technology sectors. In Mandalay Division, a Nationalities Youth Resource Development Degree College was constructed. The University of Mandalay City of the Upper Myanmar now can be called a city of universities. Ministry of Education has opened Mandalay University of Foreign Languages, Mandalay University of Distance Education, Yadanarbon University, Meikhtila University, Miekhtila University of Economics and Kyaukse University in the division compared to the one in the past, Mandalay University. The number of people, pursuing higher education now has increased to nearly 14000 from only over 2000 in the past.

There are 4467 basic education schools where more than 1 million students are learning. School enrolment rate of kindergarten has come to full percentage. The following Table I shows the educational index of Mandalay Division.

Science and technology

Mandalay Technological University and Computer University has been established in Upper Myanmar to link technological colleges and computer colleges opened in every state and division. Besides, Myanmar Aerospace Engineering University has opened in Mandalay with a view to producing space scientists. The development of the science and technology sector in Mandalay Division is shown in Table J.

The government now is serving the interests of the people according to the policies on education and health in border and rural areas. It is planning to establish cities of coffee, industry, education, business and health under the 24 special region development projects.

In Mandalay Division, station hospitals and hospitals were opened and Mandalay city will become a health centre of Upper Myanmar. There are six health and medical universities, seven specialist hospitals and two teaching hospitals. Health development of the division is shown in Table K.

Urban and rural development

Under the Tatmadaw government urban and rural areas in the division have developed. There are 400 miles of roads including 246 tarred roads. Water supply projects were undertaken in 163 unions out of 26. There were only 500 miles of rural roads. As rural roads link with urban ones, there are now 2,745 miles of rural road. Altogether 5,257 rural water supply projects have been carried out in the division.

Union and human resource development

The government is Culture, Institute of Forestry, Institute of Agriculture, Institute of Veterinary Science, Cooperative College and Lacquerware College produce technicians who will serve the interests of the Union and national races.

Information and Public Relations

There is no more armed conflict in the Union of Myanmar now. Peace and tranquility has been restored in border and rural areas. Political, economic and social developments have also been achieved. National races can now witness regional development and significant changes through TV, radio, newspapers and other publications.

If the people are prosperous, it is said the nation is prosperous. If all the regions develop, the people will develop. The information sector informs the people about the government’s efforts for national interest. Table M shows the data. Like other states and divisions, Mandalay Division is marching towards the united golden land.

(Translation: NW+TTA+MS+ST+KTY)
COPD patients not receiving optimum care in English hospitals

LONDON, 10 Feb— Patients suffering from the serious respiratory disease COPD are not receiving optimum care and more than 1 in 10 who are admitted to hospital die within 90 days, health experts said on Wednesday.

Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease, which includes chronic bronchitis and emphysema, is the fifth most common cause of death in England and Wales.

But doctors say the illness is not given enough priority in the state-funded National Health Service.

“Care received by COPD patients remains a lottery with many not benefitting from the potentially life-saving and life-enhancing care provided by a specialist respiratory team,” said Dr Mike Roberts, of the Royal College of Physicians (RCP).

In the first national audit of the illness by the RCP and the British Thoracic Society, Roberts and his colleagues found that COPD accounts for more than 10 per cent of all acute hospital admissions but more than half of patients are not under the care of a specialist.

Deaths rates, length of stay and readmissions to hospital vary greatly.

Smoking is the leading cause of COPD. A smoker is 10 times more likely to die of the illness than a non-smoker. It begins with a persistent cough and increased mucus. Eventually COPD leads to fatigue, shortness of breath and difficulty breathing as the lungs are destroyed.

MNA/Reuters

US scientists develop world’s fastest oscillating nanomachine

LOS ANGELES, 11 Feb— Scientists at Boston University said on Wednesday that they have developed an antenna-like sliver of silicon one-tenth the width of a human hair that can oscillate at gigahertz speed.

This device, pushing nanotechnology forward into the realm of quantum mechanics, can help further miniaturize wireless communication devices like cell phones, the researchers said.

With two sets of protrusions, much like the teeth from a two-sided comb or the paddles from a rowing shell, the antenna not only exhibits the first known nanomechanical motion but is also the world’s fastest moving nanostructure.

The Boston team led by assistant professor Pritiraj Mohanty developed the device, which is called nanomechanical oscillator.

This device is also the fastest of its kind, oscillating at 1.49 gigahertz, or 1.49 trillion times a second, breaking the previous record of 1.02 gigahertz achieved by a nanomachine produced by another group, according to a paper in the latest issue of journal Physical Review Letters.

More important to the researchers, the oscillations lie at the cusp of classic physics, what people experience everyday, and quantum physics, the behaviour of the molecular world. Comprised of 50 billion atoms, the antenna built by Mohanty’s team is so far the largest structure to display quantum mechanical movements.

According to Alexei Gaidarzhy, the paper’s lead author, during the past several decades engineers have made phenomenal advances in information technology by shrinking electronic circuitry and devices to fit onto semiconductor chips.

Shrinking electronic or mechanical systems further will inevitably require new paradigms involving quantum theory.

For example, these mechanical/quantum mechanical hybrids could be used for quantum computing.

MNA/Xinhua

344 kilograms of narcotics seized in northern Iran

TEHERAN, 10 Feb— Iranian anti-drug police on Wednesday seized 344 kilograms of drugs in the northeastern province of Golestan, the official IRNA news agency reported.

Some of the drugs were nabbed from a passenger car travelling and the rest from a transportation company during a search. IRNA quoted a statement by the provincial police headquarters as saying:

Drug addiction and transportation has been a serious social problem in Iran, a country sitting in the crossroad linking drug producing countries.

MNA/Xinhua

Study shows sudden stress can cause heart failure

WASHINGTON, 11 Feb— Sudden emotional stress can cause heart failure in primarily healthy women, most of them older, according to a study published on Thursday in the latest edition of The New England Journal of Medicine.

According to the report, intense grief, fear, anger or shock can lead to a temporary weakening of heart which affects the heart’s ability to pump blood. Doctors in the research from Johns Hopkins University say the condition, which they call stress cardiomyopathy, is different from a heart attack in that the patients can recover fully without any lasting damage to the heart muscle.

In addition, the stress-induced heart failure, unlike heart attacks, involves no blood clot in a coronary artery that cuts off circulation. However, emotional stress can cause a heart attack in a person who has coronary disease.

The researchers say it is important to distinguish between the “broken heart syndrome” and a heart attack so that patients can get proper treatment and be spared from a possible dependence on heart medicines for the rest of their lives.

The researchers found in women suffering from the above-mentioned condition unusually high levels of stress-related brain chemicals and hormones like adrenaline, which might have temporarily impaired their heart function.

But it remains unclear how the condition exactly occurs and why the victims were mostly women.

MNA/Xinhua

IBM forecasts more virus, worm attacks in 2005

LOS ANGELES, 11 Feb— Viruses and worms are likely to more aggressively attack handheld devices, cell phones and embedded computers in cars, a latest report by IBM forecast on Wednesday.

Email-based worms and viruses, such as Bagle, Netsky and Mydoom, wreaked havoc on corporate networks in 2004, according to the report.

During the latter part of 2004, a growing number of viruses aimed at PDAs and other mobile devices, such as the Cabir worm, were released. It is likely that such worms will be used by copycats and may spur an epidemic of viruses aimed at mobile devices, the report said. — MNA/Xinhua

Smoking is more harmful than beneficial to Alzheimer’s patients

LOS ANGELES, 10 Feb— Contrary to the common belief that nicotine can treat the Alzheimer’s disease, chronic nicotine exposure worsens some Alzheimer’s-related brain abnormalities, US scientists reported on Tuesday.

In the latest online edition of the Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences, the researchers at the University of California, Irvine (UCI), said that chronic nicotine exposure increases neurofibrillary tangles, namely the bundles of fibres that are one of the two neuropathological hallmarks of the disease.

Alzheimer’s disease is marked by the accumulation of two distinct brain lesions, beta-amyloid plaques and neurofibrillary tangles which accumulate in specific brain regions critical to learning and memory.

Previous animal studies had suggested that nicotine reduces the number of amyloid plaques; however, this possible benefit is outweighed by the increase in tangles, according to UCI researchers.

MNA/Xinhua

A female redback spider climbs on a web-covered stick at Taronga Zoo in Sydney, Australia, on 11 Feb, 2005.—INTERET

A model for designer Anna Sui wears a creation from the Anna Sui Fall 2005 Collection during their fashion show in New York, on 9 Feb, 2005. —INTERNET

Robbie Williams, the lead singer of The Take That, is pictured wearing a customised Oscar de la Renta suit, at The Brit Awards, The O2 arena, London, on 11 Feb, 2005. —Associated Press

A female redback spider climbs on a web-covered stick at Taronga Zoo in Sydney, Australia, on 11 Feb, 2005.—INTERET

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Serena pulls out of Paris Open

PARIS, 12 Feb— Australian Open champion Serena Williams pulled out of the Paris Open with gastro-enteritis on Friday and later had to rejacket the advances of an overzealous fan.

The American top seed was to meet Russia’s Dinara Safina in the quarterfinals but was unable to play because of stomach problems.

"I’m not playing today because I’m sick and mentally I’m not well," she told the Parisian crowd in French on court.

"I wanted to play here because it’s the first tournament I won and it’s very important to me. "I love it here, I love the Stade de Courbelet," she added.

Coubertin fans love her too.

One of them managed to sneak into Serena’s Press conference without wearing a badge and started asking odd questions, much to the amazement of the player and journalists.

"I’m a fan and I just wanted a kiss," said the fan before being escorted out of the room by security officers.

Williams won her first WTA Tour title at the Parisian indoor tournament in 1999.—MNA/Reuters

Reyes underlines commitment to Arsenal

LONDON, 12 Feb— Jose Antonio Reyes has underlined his commitment to Arsenal after falling victim to a hoax phone call from a Spanish radio station during which he said he was unhappy in London and would welcome a move to Real Madrid.

"I have seen stories in the media linking me with Real Madrid," the 21-year-old Spanish international told Premier League champions Arsenal’s official website.

"Of course it’s flattering but not only am I under contract at Arsenal, I am happy here and committed to helping the team win more trophies."

An impersonator from the radio station rang Re, pretending to be Real Madrid’s sporting director Emilio Butragueno.

Unaware he was not talking to the real Butragueno, Reyes told the impersonator in a live show that he was keen on a move to Real.

"I am delighted that Real Madrid are interested in me because I have always wanted to play there," Reyes told the radio station.

"God willing, it can happen. The way things are (in London), I’m not happy." Arsenal paid a club record fee of around 17 million pounds (31.62 million US dollars) to Sevilla for Reyes in January 2004.

"When you take a young player, you know you are taking a challenge... there are periods when you are 20 or 21, that things go a little bit less well and players find it a bit more difficult," Wenger told a televised news conference on Friday.

"But it doesn’t take anything away from my desire to keep the player at the club or my belief in the player. I’m ready to take on that challenge."

As for the timing of the hoax call to a striker who has struggled with form and fitness since a promising start to the season, Wenger said: "Young players are sometimes up and down."

"He’s been caught when he has been a little bit disappointed maybe at not playing in some big games."

"But it doesn’t take away from the fact that Reyes and myself have a real challenge in front of us to make him one of the best players in the world."

"He has to overcome periods like that, it’s part of every career." Turning to Reyes’ desire to play for Real, Wenger said: "It is normal for one of your country’s big clubs to be one of your dreams as a youth...But he made his decision to come here because it was a dream for him to play for Arsenal."

Summing up the episode, the Frenchman said: "It’s just a minor, minor, small event in the life of our week...he’s committed to the club, end of story."—MNA/Reuters

Real not considering any exchange deal

MADRID, 12 Feb— Real Madrid have denied reports that they are interested in an exchange deal involving England striker Michael Owen and Arsenal forward Jose Antonio Reyes.

"Real Madrid are not considering any exchange deal involving Michael Owen and Arsenal’s Jose Antonio Reyes," the Primera Liga side said on its website on Friday.

"Real Madrid are delighted and satisfied with the English player’s work. No representative and, of course, no one from Arsenal has made contact with Real Madrid to suggest any such deal."

"The relationship between Real Madrid and the English club has always been characterized by transparency and confidence." Reports of an exchange deal between the two clubs have surfaced in recent weeks, with the speculation reaching fever pitch after Reyes told an impersonator from the Cope radio station in Spain that he was not happy in London and was keen on a move to Real.


Owen has been unable to earn himself a regular place in the Real Madrid starting line-up since his 12-million-euro move from Liverpool, despite the fact that he enjoys one of the best strike rates in the Primera Liga.

The English striker has scored seven league goals and one each in the King’s Cup and Champions League.—MNA/Reuters

Wenger says Reyes needs to overcome disappointments

LONDON, 12 Feb— Manager Arsene Wenger says Jose Antonio Reyes needs to overcome his disappointments at Arsenal after the unhappy Spanish striker was caught out by a hoax offer from Real Madrid.

Believing he was speaking to Real sporting director Emilio Butragueno, the 21-year-old forward said he was unhappy in Arsenal and was keen to join Real during a hoax phone call from a Spanish radio station.

"When you take a young player, you know you are taking a challenge... there are periods when you are 20 or 21, that things go a little bit less well and players find it a bit more difficult," Wenger told a televised news conference on Friday.

"But it doesn’t take anything away from my desire to keep the player at the club or my belief in the player. I’m ready to take on that challenge."

Arsenal paid a club record fee of around 17 million pounds (31.62 million US dollars) to Sevilla for Reyes in January 2004.

"We are coming to the part of the season where you want to have good form," Ferguson told reporters on Friday.

"I don’t think Chelsea have been playing as well as they have been playing and it could make it interesting to the end of the season."

Chelsea face a difficult game at Champions League hopefuls Everton on Saturday, a day before United face a derby game at Manchester City.

"We’ve got to maintain our form and also hope that we get some help with Chelsea dropping points," added Ferguson, whose side still have to play Chelsea at Old Trafford before the end of the season.

"The thing about the Premier League is that it doesn’t matter who you play when you get into the run-in, everyone is a difficult game."

United could be without winger Cristiano Ronaldo, who sustained an Achilles tendon injury following a challenge by Chelsea’s Damien Duff during the friendly between Portugal and Ireland on Wednesday.

"Cristiano Ronaldo had a bad tackle on Wednesday and he is doubtful for Sunday. It was a tackle from young Duff. I was surprised because he’s not that type of player, but things happen in games, you never know," said Ferguson.—MNA/Reuters

Ferguson believes Chelsea no longer at top of Premier League

MANCHESTER (England), 12 Feb— Manchester United manager Alex Ferguson believes Premier League leaders Chelsea are no longer at the top of their game going into another crucial weekend in the title race.

Chelsea’s lead over United was trimmed to nine points after they were held to a goalless draw by Manchester City last Sunday and Ferguson is unconvinced by the form of Jose Mourinho’s team.

"We are coming to the part of the season where you want to have good form," Ferguson told reporters on Friday.

"I don’t think Chelsea have been playing as well as they have been playing and it could make it interesting to the end of the season."

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CROSSWORD PUZZLE

Across

1 Rowing team
4 Beautiful girls
5 Skull
10 Raise objections
11 Neat
12 Generosity
13 Fall sick
14 Network
16 Love foolishly
18 Excessively
20 Hermit
21 Central London area
24 Small cat
25 Layer
26 Pace
27 Medicine

Down

1 Stit emotion
2 Protect
3 Cut shorter
5 Golden land
6 Flickering
7 Emphases
8 Tiny
13 Regulated
15 Get back
17 Spring flower
18 Nervous
19 Pertaining to ants
22 Frequently
23 Court document

Answer: Ferguson believes Chelsea no longer at top of Premier League.
UN scouting for new interhom office

UNITED NATIONS, 12 Feb — The United Nations, fearing New York may reject its plan to build temporary offices in a nearby park during a renovation of its headquarters, is looking about for a new interhom office.

The world body is not yet in a position to decide whether it is looking beyond Manhattan to the less fashionable outer boroughs of Queens or Brooklyn, UN officials said on Thursday.

But the project, which requires approval by the New York state Legislature, has gotten caught up in a wave of anti-US sentiment in the United States.

The United Nations has been looking for a home for five years on a 1.2-billion-US-dollar Capital Master Plan for renovating its aging headquarters, completed in 1975.

Renovations are due to begin in 2007, although financing is not in place.

The UN complex, which draws 800,000 tourists a year, is an architectural landmark jutting out of the New York skyline along the East River. But inside, water drips through the roof, toxic asbestos lines ceilings, heating and cooling systems are erratic and there are no sprinklers in case of fire.

Under the master plan, a new 30-story office tower in Robert Moses Park near UN Headquarters would temporarily house UN staff while the main UN secretariat building was gutted and renovated.

After the renovation was complete, more than a dozen UN agencies, offices and programmes scattered around the city would move from rented space into the new tower.

The New York State Legislature has refused to act on the plan, with lawmakers citing objections ranging from an over UN mismanagement of the oil-for-food programme for Iraq to charges that the United Nations is anti-Semitic in its handling of the conflict between Israelis and Palestinians.

The United Nations acknowledged it had begun looking for possible alternatives for interim offices. But it denied a New York Post report it was looking outside Manhattan.

MNA/Reuters

Russia to bar foreign firms from bidding for lucrative resources

Moscow, 12 Feb — Russia will bar foreign-owned firms from bidding for some of its most lucrative natural resources in 2005, officials said on Thursday, dealing a heavy blow to the already shaky business climate in the country.

The Natural Resources Ministry said companies will have to be at least 51 per cent Russian-owned to take part in tenders for strategic oil and metal deposits.

The tender list includes the giant Sakhalin-3 oil field in Russia’s far east, which US ExxonMobil had planned to develop. It includes the Sukhoi Log gold field — Eurasia’s biggest — and the huge Udokan copper deposit in Siberia.

The decision comes at a time when the Kremlin is seeking to reassert state control over strategically important sectors in a process many analysts say may put a brake on the investment needed to sustain the rapid economic growth of recent years. It also reveals a major change of tack after the Kremlin invited a number of global majors — such as Britain’s BP — to tap some of Russia’s biggest national resource deposits.

Apart from Exxon, many foreign firms have expressed interest in Russia’s mineral riches, including the world’s No 3 gold company Barrick Gold, Britain’s Highland Gold Mining and Kazakhstan’s copper monopoly Kazakhmys.

Interfax news agency quoted a source in the Federal Natural Resources Agency as saying that “the government is interested in letting Russian companies develop strategic resources”.

Separately, Natural Resources Minister Yuri Trutnev told Interfax that the foreign ownership issue will be dealt with according to Russia’s competition law.

He gave no details, suggesting Russia could decide whether to allow foreign companies to bid on a case-by-case basis.

He may say when he appears before Parliament on Friday.

— MNA/Reuters

Australia grants new permits to petroleum companies

CANBERRA, 12 Feb — The Australian Government has granted 11 new permits to petroleum companies to invest 220 million dollars (170 million US dollars) in oil and gas exploration in waters off the states of Western Australia and Tasmania.

The move is part of the Australian Government’s ongoing programme of releasing offshore acreage for petroleum exploration. Announcing the new permits, Australian Industry Minister Ian MacFarlane said “these new exploration permits will advance Australia’s quest for new oil and gas reserves to meet growing demand”.

Eight of the permits are located in the commercially proven Carnarvon Basin, off Western Australia, which hosts world-class reserves of natural gas, as well as significant volumes of oil. The other three permits are adjacent to the Yolla gas field in the Bass Basin off northern Tasmania, close to the major gas markets of south-eastern Australia.

— MNA/Xinhua

Weather Map of Myanmar and Neighbouring Areas

WEATHER

Saturday, 12 February, 2005

Summary of observations recorded at 09:30 hours MST: During the past 24 hours, except for the isolated light rain in Taninthayi Division, weather has been generally fair in the whole country. The note worthy amount of rainfall recorded was Dawai (0.28 inch). Night temperatures were (4°C) below normal in Bago Division, (3°C) to (4°C) above normal in Kachin, Chin Rakhine and Mon States, (6°C) above normal in Taninthayi Division and about normal in the remaining areas. The significant night temperatures were Namsam (3°C) and Lashio (4°C).

Maximum temperature on 11-2025 was 100°F. Minimum temperature on 12-2005 was 60°F. Relative humidity at 9:30 hrs MST on 12-2005 was 66%. Total sunshine hours on 11-2025 was (8.4) hours approx. Rainfalls on 12-2005 were nil at Yangon Airport, Kaba-Aye and central Yangon. Total rainfalls since 1-2005 were nil at Yangon Airport, Kaba-Aye and central Yangon. Maximum wind speed at Yangon (Kaba-Aye) was 5 mph from North at (12:30) hours MST on 11-2025.

Bay influence: Weather is generally fair in the Bay of Bengal. Forecast valid until evening of 13-2005. Weather will be fair in the whole country. State of the sea: Seas will be slight in Myanmar waters.

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

Forecast for Yangon and neighbouring area for 13-2005: Fair weather.

Forecast for Mandalay and neighbouring area for 13-2005: Fair weather.
YANGON, 11 Feb — The 58th Anniversary Union Flag Hoisting Ceremony was held with political essence at the People’s Square on Pyay Road, here, this morning in accord with the objectives of the 58th Anniversary Union Day: For all national races to safeguard the national policies—non-disintegration of the Union, non-disintegration of national solidarity and perpetuation of sovereignty; To keep the Union Spirit ever alive and dynamic among the national people; For all national people to defend and safeguard the Union for its perpetual existence; To prevent, through national solidarity, the danger of internal and external destructive elements undermining peace and stability of the State and national development; and For all national races to make concerted efforts for successful implementation of the seven-point future policy programme.

The flag relay team led by Chairman of Yangon City Development Committee Mayor Brig-Gen Aung Thein Lin accepted the Union Flag from Chairman of Yangon West District Peace and Development Council Lt-Col Kyaw Tint. Flanked by Chairman of Yangon Division Peace and Development Council Commander of Yangon Command Maj-Gen Myint Swe, Secretary-General Maj-Gen Htay Oo of the Union Solidarity and Development Association, Mayor Brig-Gen Aung Thein Lin, Minister for Progress of Border Areas and National Races and Development Affairs Col Thet Nyan, representative of the Union Day delegates U Saw Htar Lon of Kayin State, Tatmadaw (Army, Navy and Air) and Police Officers, Union nationals and USDA members, the Union Flag was conveyed to the People’s Square. The drum troupe of the Fine Arts Department played music to honour the flag. At 7.30 am, the flag was planted in the silver bowl on the dais in front of the national races’ emblems representing States and Divisions. Also present on the occasion were CEC members of USDA, senior military officers of the Ministry of Defence and the military command, heads of the Central Offices, members of the organizing sub-committee, directors-general and managing directors, YCDC members, departmental officials, representatives of 16 NGOs, traditional cultural troupes, representatives of State and Division USDAs and peace groups, totalling 1,057.

Similarly, over 10,557 people from townships in four districts attended the ceremony.

(See page 7)