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

Four economic objectives
* Development of agriculture as the base and all-round development of other sectors of the economy as well
* Proper evolution of the market-oriented economic system
* Development of the economy inviting participation in terms of technical know-how and investments from sources inside the country and abroad
* 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, 2 Feb — A demonstration on production and use of bio-diesel in running watercraft and engines was organized at Gawwein Jetty on Strand Road in Chanayethazan Township, Mandalay, on 16 January, attended by Chairman of Mandalay Division Peace and Development Council Commander of Central Command Maj-Gen Khin Zaw.

Also present on the occasion were Chairman of Mandalay City Development Committee Mandalay Mayor Brig-Gen Phone Zaw Han, departmental officials at division, district and township levels, members of Union Solidarity and Development Association, Women’s Affairs Organization and Maternal and Child Welfare Association, Red Cross and Auxiliary Fire Brigades, entrepreneurs of Mandalay Industrial Zone, watercraft owners and local people, totalling over 5,000.

Mandalay Division Manager of Myanma Agriculture Service U Aung Kyin reported on various species of physic nut, types of soil for physic nut cultivation, agricultural technology and production process of physic nut oil.

The commander explained use of physic nut plant, running of engines with of physic nut oil, and prospects for families in growing physic nuts. The commander urged all to make efforts to put land under physic nut plants to help uplift living standards.

Entrepreneurs of Mandalay Industrial Zone demonstrated production process of physic nut oil to those present. The commander and party viewed running of watercraft with the use of purified physic nut oil.

Furthermore, the commander and party observed physic-nut-oil-driven dredgers and water pumps at work.

At the demonstration, a watercraft installed with 130 hp engine carrying 77 passengers and five tons of cargo could travel up to four miles per one gallon of physic nut oil. Likewise, a 12-hp watercraft, carrying 30 passengers and one ton of cargo, could travel up to five miles per one gallon of physic nut oil. Jima brand pump installed with 18 hp engines can operate continuously four hours with one gallon of physic nut oil.

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Buddha Puja of Minbu-Shwesettaw Pagoda commences

YANGON, 2 Feb — The Buddha Puja of Minbu-Shwesettaw Pagoda commenced this morning.

Chairman of the Pagoda Board of Trustees U Myint Thura and party made arrangements for convenience of pilgrims and devotees. Shops have been allotted at the area of the Puja.

MYANMAR GAZETTE

Wellwishers donate cash to MWJA

YANGON, 2 Feb — Wellwishers donated cash to Myanmar Writers and Journalists Association and U Htin Gyi Digital Library on 29 January.

At a cash donation ceremony held at Karaweik Hall in Kandawgyi, Chairman of MWJA U Hla Myaing (Ko Hsaung) and Member of the Central Executive Committee of MWJA U Myo Thant (Maung Hsu Shin) accepted K 600,000 — K 500,000 to MWJA and K 100,000 to the digital library — presented by wellwishers U Khin Maung Thein and Suzan Thein (Sagaya Sein Sein) of the United States of America.

Also present on the occasion were Vice-Chairmen of MWJA U Tin Kha (Tektitho Tin Kha), U Than Maung (Than Maung) and U Myint Thein (Myint Thun Aung), Secretary U Hla Tun (Hla Tun-Twantasy) and guests. — MNA

WHO expert calls for coordinated action against avian influenza

NICOSA, 2 Feb — An expert of the World Health Organization (WHO) said here on Wednesday that avian influenza is an issue of the European region and it has to be taken seriously.

Guenael Rodier, special adviser for communicable disease to the regional director of the WHO regional office in Europe, made the remarks at a Press conference here after a technical briefing for Cyprus experts on avian influenza organized by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP).

Rodier, who arrived in Cyprus following the confirmed cases of H5N1 in two birds in the Turkish controlled areas, said that “we are all in the same boat” when it comes to dealing with the avian influenza virus, urging for coordinated action.

He told the reporters that avian influenza “is linked to migratory birds that may play a role in introducing the virus, so there is no reason for any country to exempt the risk of avian influenza.”

He added that the UN initiative was to bring together people from different communities to have a common understanding of what the situation is, because “if a crisis occurs, extra information will suddenly be needed.”

WHO is concerned this particular virus, because “each time we give the chance to this particular virus to infect humans, we are giving it a chance to adapt to humans, and we would like to minimize this risk,” mainly for the risk of the pandemic threat, said Rodier. — MNA/Xinhua

On behalf of Daw Le Le Win of No 24, Mauhin Road, Sangyoung Township, her family members donates K 100,000 to Hninzigon Home for the Aged through an official of the home for the aged recently. — II

Bridges for socio-economic development of local people

With a view to serving the long-term interests of the national people, the government is accelerating the momentum of implementation of regional development projects all over the Union. At the same time, the government is trying to improve transport infrastructure, the main factor for socio-economic development of the people. The better the transport infrastructure, the more frequent the contact between the national people and the closer their friendship. Therefore, the government is building rail and road networks and bridges across rivers and creeks.

Chairman of the State Peace and Development Council Commander-in-Chief of Defence Services Senior General Than Shwe, during his tour of Ayeyawady Division, inspected the progress of construction work on the Pammawady Bridge (Myinkaseik) on 30 January and gave guidance to responsible officials. He said that it was necessary to make efforts for speedy completion of the bridge and to build a bridge across the Kyungon creek on the Wakema-Kyungon-Myaungmya road and its upper structure is a reinforced Bailey type. The Pathein-Darka-Myaungmya road and its upper structure is a bridge across the Kyungon creek on the Pammawady-Myinkaseik-Pathein road.

The 540-foot-long Pammawady bridge (Myinkaseik) is situated on the Pathein-Myaungmya road and its upper structure is a reinforced Bailey type. The Pathein-Darka-Myaungmya road is 65 miles long and, on completion of the Pammawady bridge (Myinkaseik), people will be able to use the Pammawady bridge. At present, people are having to use the Wakema-Shwelaung-Kyonkanaung-Pathein road. At present, people are having to use the Pathein-Kyungon-Myinkaseik-Kyungon bridge, people will be able to use the Wakema-Kyungon-Myinkaseik-Pathein road.

The 540-foot-long Pammawady bridge (Myinkaseik) is almost cent-per-cent complete.

In the same way, on completion of the Kyungon bridge, people will be able to use the 544-mile-long Wakema-Myaungmya road. Therefore, people will be able to use the Wakema-Shwelaung-Kyonkanaung-Pathein road, and the distance between Pathein and Myaungmya will be 33 miles shorter. Now and the distance between Pathein and Myinkaseik, people will be able to use the Pammawady bridge on completion of the Pammawady bridge.

Refectory of Thirigovanwai Dhamma Beikman Monastery in No 1 War Veterans Model Village (Ledaunkkan) in Dagon Myohtit (South) Township. MNA (News Reported)
Putin hails Russia-China partnership

MOSCOW, 1 Feb— Russian President Vladimir Putin hailed the cooperation between Russia and China on Tuesday as an important factor in strengthening international strategic stability and he said his country values the strategic partnership with China.

"Russia intends to further develop the strategic partnership with China based on previous accords," Putin told his annual Press conference in the Kremlin, adding that Russia sees the same will from the Chinese side.

The two countries, which had been negotiating a settlement to their border issue for the past four decades, have successfully solved the most complicated issue in bilateral ties based on bilateral agreements, Putin said.

Speaking on bilateral trade, he said the two countries set the goal of bringing trade volume to 20 billion US dollars three years ago, but trade totalled 29 billion dollars last year.

"We are now planning to bring trade to 60 billion dollars by 2010," Putin said. "This is quite attainable."

The Russian President said he will attend the opening ceremony of the Year of Russia in China in spring, which he views as a boost to bilateral ties.

Bulavinovia state-owned Bulavinovia News Agency said on Tuesday.

The disaster has forced the newly-inaugurated Evo Morales government to seek international assistance, the report said.

In many rural areas, roads have been blocked, small bridges wrecked, and tens of thousands of hectares of crops destroyed by bursting rivers and mud slides, according to the report. The National Meteorology and Hydrology Service said January's rains were excessive, and the downpour will get even more intense in the next few days.

The Inter-American Development Bank has pledged 2.5 million US dollars to help with Bolivia's reconstruction and the Andean Development Corporation promised another 400,000 dollars, government officials told the agency.

Putin hails Russia-China partnership

Iran threatens "end to diplomacy" if referred to UNSC

TEHERAN, 1 Feb—A senior Iranian official said on Tuesday that the referral of Iran's nuclear case to the UN Security Council would bring "an end to diplomacy".

"Any report or referral of Iran's nuclear programme to the UN Security Council will mean an end to diplomacy, which is not positive at all," Iran's chief nuclear negotiator Ali Larjani was quoted by the state television as saying.

Earlier, Iran's Atomic Energy Organization chief Gholamreza Aghazadeh said that there was no legal basis to send Iran to the United Nations Security Council over the nuclear case.

But he also voiced confidence that Iran and concerned parties can find a diplomatic solution to settle the issue.

Meanwhile, Javad Vaidi, a top Iranian nuclear negotiator, told the state television that Iran's resumption of nuclear research earlier this month was irreversible.

Iranian officials made the remarks shortly after the five permanent members of the UN Security Council — the United States, France, Britain, Russia and China — and Germany agreed in a London meeting that a coming International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) Board meeting should report its decision on the steps required of Iran over its nuclear case to the Security Council.

Bomb making materials discovered in north of Dhaka

DHAKA, 1 Feb—Bangladeshi Rapid Action Battalion (RAB) discovered huge bomb-making materials from central Gazipur District early Tuesday following the arrest of a leading member of banned militant outfit Jamaatul Mujahideen Bangladesh (JMB), private news agency UNB reported Tuesday.

Acting on a tip-off, members of RAB 3 Monday night arrested Abdull H SI Sohail Al Maroof alias Akash, regional commander of JMB, in Ashulia, about 31 kilometres southwest of Dhaka.

Following statement made by Akash during interrogation, the RAB members in a raid at about 1:30 am Tuesday discovered huge bomb-making materials in Tongi in Gazipur District, about 25 kilometres north of Dhaka.

US troops shoot at Canadian diplomats’ car in Iraq

WASHINGTON, 1 Feb—Canadian diplomats, including the charge d'affaires to Iraq, escaped injury on Tuesday when their vehicle was shot at in Baghdad by US soldiers.

"We are aware of this incident and the American and Canadian authorities are looking into it," said a spokesman at the Canadian Embassy in neighbouring Jordan, who declined to be identified further in line with embassy policy. She said all four, including charge d'affaires Stewart Henderson, were travelling in one vehicle.

The vehicle came under fire after it apparently attempted to pass an American convoy, said US Lt-Col Barry Johnson, spokesman for the multinational force in Iraq.

Johnson said the troops were driving within the heavily fortified Green Zone when they signalled to a convoy of cars approaching them to stop.

"But the convoy continued to approach and failed to stop, and the soldiers fired warning rounds at the front of the vehicles, resulting in no injuries," Johnson said.

"After checking, it was found that the vehicles belonged to the Canadian Embassy."

If vehicles fail to respond to hand signals followed by warning shots, "shots may be fired at the vehicle," he said.

Hong Kong tourists killed in Egypt bus accident

CAIRO, 1 Feb—Fourteen Hong Kong tourists were killed in a bus accident on Tuesday in southeastern Egypt, Egypt’s official MENA news agency reported.

The ill-fated bus was en route from Egypt’s Red Sea resort of Hurghada to the main southern tourist city of Luxor when the accident happened, according to the report.

"High speed was the cause of the accident which occurred at one of the curves on the road," it added.

About 30 people were wounded in the accident, some in critical condition, said MENA, adding that the injured were rushed to hospitals in Hurghada.

But the report did not reveal the nationalities of the wounded.

The Chinese Embassy is now carrying out investigation over the report.
Seventeen killed in heavy snow in northeastern Afghanistan

KABUL, 1 Feb—Seventeen persons were killed in the heavy snow lasting for almost one week in northeastern Afghan province of Badakhshan, local officials said on Tuesday.

“Although we are not mixing politics with the economic decisions on this issue, we are not mixing oil with politics,” Iranian Oil Minister Kazem Vaziri told reporters.

“Iran will not stop exports.”

He was speaking a few hours after the five permanent members of the United Nations Security Council agreed in London on Tuesday that the UN’s nuclear watchdog should report to the Council this week on what Iran must do to cooperate.

Iran says no oil export halt

VIENNA, 1 Feb—Iran will not halt oil exports in an escalating dispute with the West over its atomic programme, its oil Minister said on Tuesday at the start of an OPEC meeting that will keep output near maximum levels.

“We are not mixing politics with the economic decisions on this issue. We are not mixing oil with politics.”

Iranian Oil Minister Kazem Vaziri told reporters.

“Iran will not stop exports.”

He was speaking a few hours after the five permanent members of the United Nations Security Council agreed in London that the UN’s nuclear watchdog should report to the Council this week on what Iran must do to cooperate.

2,500 Colombian paramilitaries hand over weapons

BOGOTA, 1 Feb—Colombia’s Commissioner for peace Luis Carlos Restrepo said in a statement on Tuesday another 2,533 right-wing paramilitaries of the rebel United Self-Defence Forces (AUC) of Colombia, had handed over their weapons.

The disarmament ceremony took place in La Granja, in rural Santa Rosa del Sur, in Bolivar department. It was the largest demobilization ceremony planned as part of the government’s peace process.

The paramilitaries belong to the Southern Bolivar Front and the Central Bolivar Bloc (BCB), which is considered as the largest division of the AUC.

“I think it is a very important thing that the historical structure of the BCB has been demobilized,” said Restrepo. “The disarming of the front is a great contribution to peace in this country,” Restrepo said.

Man faints on road after playing mah-jong for over 30 hours

TIANJIN, 1 Feb—A man in Tianjin, a port city in north China near Beijing, fainted and fell off his bicycle on the street after having played mah-jong, a popular game in the country, for more than 30 hours during the Spring Festival, or the Chinese Lunar New Year holidays.

The man, surnamed Li and in his 30s, told the doctor said Li’s faint was caused by overworking physical strength and a serious lack of sleep.

Mah-jong is a four-person game of Chinese origin, played with tiles resembling dominoes and bearing various designs. The players draw and discard the tiles in turn, until one of them wins with a hand of four combinations of three tiles each and a pair of matching tiles.

China bans playing Mah-jong as a means of gambling, but playing the game with friends and family simply for fun is allowed.
India to study draft resolution before deciding on Iran

New Delhi, 1 Feb — With the Left parties breathing down the government's neck on Iran's controversial nuclear programme, Prime Minister Manmohan Singh on Tuesday said a decision on India's position at Thursday's IAEA meeting would be taken on the basis of the draft resolution being prepared by the permanent five members of the Security Council.

Singh conveyed the stand to leaders of crucial supporting allies Left parties in the midst of indications that India's stance would be "influenced" by the 'new development' wherein Russia and China have for the first time joined the US and Britain to favour that Iran issue be referred to the Security Council.

"The Prime Minister explained to the leaders of the Left parties that the government of India will take its position in the interest of the country, to serve India's national interest and its position will depend on the text of the resolution brought to the IAEA," the Prime Minister's Media Adviser Sanjaya Baru told reporters after the hour-long meeting.

Singh apprised the Left leaders about the "new development" that the Russian President Vladimir Putin and Chinese President Hu Jintao had taken place in the "eventuality of a vote" at the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) two days later.

Left parties have been demanding that India should not oppose Iran at the IAEA.

The government has been informed that the text of the resolution will be along the lines of the statement issued by the permanent five members of the UN Security Council and Germany in London, Baru said.

"We are awaiting the text of the resolution. India's position will be articulated on the basis of that," he said.

Karat said the Left parties would also take into account the new development and formulate a view.

Indonesia plans to produce 160m tons of coal this year

Jakarta, 1 Feb — Indonesia plans to produce 160 million tons of coal this year, on the bases of 113.35 million tons of total export last year which was 82 per cent from the target of 133.5 million tons.

Over 45.90 million tons would be marketed for sale, said Hartoyo in an interview with Xinhua recently.

He also said that Indonesia also targeted to export 113.84 million tons of coal this year, on the bases of 113.35 million tons of total export last year which was 82 per cent from the target of 133.5 million tons.

Over 45.90 million tons would be marketed for domestic market, as it was realigned over 41.01 million tons for domestic need in 2004, which was 103 per cent of the target of 39.93 million tons, said Hartoyo.

Indonesia has 57.9 billion tons of coal resources and seven billion tons of coal reserves.

Venezuela says grenade attack wounds seven people

Caracas (Venezuela), 1 Feb — Seven people were wounded on Tuesday when a grenade exploded in a Venezuelan town near the Colombian border where violence often spills over from the neighbouring country's conflict, officials said.

Two children were among the wounded when the explosive was fired into a crowd during a public event in Maracay municipality in remote Amazonas State, the Venezuelan attorney general's office said in a statement.

"It is still not confirmed whether it was action by Colombian guerrillas or a clash between paramilitaries and guerrillas from the neighbouring country," the statement said.

Venezuela’s frontier region is often plagued by kidnapping, drug smuggling and spillover from Colombia’s four-decade-old war involving leftist rebels and right-wing paramilitaries.

Colombian military commanders have in the past accused Venezuelan President Hugo Chavez, a socialist ally of Cuba, of sympathizing with Colombian guerrillas, who are branded terrorists by Washington.

Iraqi police find 11 corpses in western Baghdad

Baghdad, 1 Feb — Iraqi police found on Tuesday 11 unidentified corpses in western Baghdad, a police source said.

"The police found the bodies of 11 people who were blindingfolded and shot in the head. They were left in a minibus on the highway which passes through the Kadhira District," Captain Ahmed Abdullah told Xinhua. The police headed to the area on information provided by local residents, he said.

Eleven killed in Brazil’s road accident

Rio de Janeiro, 1 Feb — A bus crashed into a cement truck in Brazilian state of Minas Gerais on Tuesday, killing 11 people and wounding 11 others, police said.

The accident occurred on Highway BR-259. Seven people died on the spot. The injured were rushed to hospitals nearby. Police said the causes of the accident were unknown. The bus was heading for a celebration ceremony. It was the third major road accident in the past seven days in Brazil.

Texas man executed for 1994 double murder

Huntsville (Texas), 1 Feb — A Texas man was put to death by lethal injection on Tuesday for the 1994 murders of two men outside a Houston cantina.

Jaime Elizalde Jr, 34, was condemned for shooting Juan Saenz Guajardo, 29, and Marcos Sanchez Vasquez, 33, on 5 November, 1994.

Eyewitnesses testified during Elizalde’s trial that he shot the two men after they came outside in response to a summons by Elizalde’s father. Elizalde protested his innocence throughout his trial and in interviews since being condemned for the murders.

Two German hostages in Iraq again appear on videotape

Baghdad, 1 Feb — Two German hostages in Iraq appeared in a videotape aired by the Qatar-based al-Jazeera television on Tuesday.

According to the report, the brief tape showed the two hostages, both engineers, seated on the floor in front of a group of armed men.

The kidnappers gave the German Government a 72-hour deadline to meet their demands, saying they would kill the hostages if their demands were not met.

The kidnappers have demanded Germany close its Embassy in Baghdad and stop cooperation with the Iraqi Government.

18 killed in second road accident in southern Egypt

Cairo, 1 Feb — Eighteen passengers were killed and 24 others injured on Tuesday when their bus slammed into a truck in the southern Egyptian city of Qena, state media reported.

Egyptian official news agency MENA quoted a local official as saying that the bus’s high speed was to blame for the accident.

The bus collided with the truck and plunged into el-Ramadi canal in a village in Qena, a Nile City 640 kilometres south of Cairo, MENA said. It was the second major road accident on Tuesday.

People walk among the debris of a suicide bomb attack in Baghdad, on 1 Feb, 2006 — INTERNET
Indian PM says relations with Pakistan, China improving

NEW DELHI, 2 Feb — Prime Minister Manmohan Singh on Wednesday said India has made important strides in improving relations with its neighbours, including China and Pakistan, as well as friends of the far in the upshot of its “many new initiatives” in foreign policy and national security.

Singh in a televised Press conference here said his government had also improved the country’s relations with all major powers, especially the US, European Union, Russia and Japan, with whom India had entered into new strategic partnerships.

“I am telling those fake superpowers that the Iranian nation became independent 27 years ago and decides for itself and on the nuclear case it will report Iran to the Council of the UN Security Council on Tuesday,” he told a crowd of thousands of people in the Gulf port city of Bushehr.

Parts of his speech were broadcast live on state television.

Iran insists its nuclear programme is for electricity generation but international suspicions that it harbours secret plans to develop atomic arms prompted the five permanent members of the UN Security Council on Tuesday to say they favoured sending its case to the council.

A decision on whether to report Iran to the Council will be taken by a meeting of the board of governors of the International Atomic Energy Agency here on Thursday in Vienna.

“We insist on building atomic plants in the country to produce 20,000 Megawatts of electricity based on the attempts of our scientists and youth and based on parliament’s approval,” Ahmadinejad said.

“Our nation cannot step back because of the bullying policies of some countries in the world,” he added.

Nepali garment exporters to exploit European market

KATHMANDU, 2 Feb — Nepali ready-made garment exporters have started thinking that “market and product diversification” may revive the country’s already ailing export sector, Garment Association of Nepal (GAN) said here on Wednesday.

After the expiration of multi-fibre agreement (MFA), Nepal’s ready-made garment exports declined sharply in 2005, a statement issued by GAN said.

The export of ready-made garments to the US has been incessantly declining ever since the MFA was scrapped in January 2005.

More than 60 per cent of the garment manufacturing units have been closed down, leading to the layoffs of over 50,000 workers, according to GAN.

The trade balance and economic growth have become weak in 2006 as per various agency’s predictions. In connection with diversifying export market of ready-made garments, a group of exporters including members of GAN left Wednesday for Paris to participate at the Pret A Porter Paris, an internationally recognized ready-made garments fashion’s trade fair.

According to the statement, at a time when United States’ market is discouraging Nepali ready-made garments, exporters are concentrating their export base to European countries to revive the export sector.

Nepali exports of garment, leather and textile to the European market have been continuously ignored by European Union countries.

The trade balance of the country has been in the deficit side since 2003, but the situation has worsened in recent times due to the restrictive measures adopted by the EU.

The country’s啶 exports to EU are about 21 per cent of total exports, while the EU’s imports from Nepal are only 10 per cent of the import from the country.

The usual way out for exporters is to diversify their markets.

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According to the statement, at a time when United States’ market is discouraging Nepali ready-made garments, exporters are concentrating their export base to European countries to revive the export sector.

A French firefighter checks a van after a pile up accident due to the fog on the Lille-Dunkerque motorway near Meteren, northern France on 1 Feb. 2006. — Internet

UN praises Cuba’s anti-malnutrition efforts

HAVANA, 2 Feb — Cuba is the only country in Latin America that has come close to eliminating severe child malnutrition, local media quoted a representative of the United Nations World Food Programme (WFP) as saying on Tuesday.

Two per cent of Cuban children suffer severe malnutrition, a level that the WFP’s Myrta Kaulard described as excellent and far from the dramatic malnutrition levels seen elsewhere in the region.

Kaulard said Cuba had nearly eradicated the problem thanks to the measures adopted by the Cuban Government and the appropriate use of WFP resources.

The official listed Bolivia, Guatemala and Haiti as the nations with the highest malnutrition levels in the Latin America and Caribbean region.

The WFP aims to eradicate malnutrition in the region by 2015. It is now working to ensure better food security among Cuba’s vulnerable groups, in light of the PMA-CUBA 10032 project which provides food for small children and pregnant mothers in five eastern Cuban provinces.

The programme, launched in 2002, supports 630,000 people and costs 5 million US dollars. It complements the efforts of the Cuban Government in the territories isolated by droughts in recent years. The WFP has provided Cuba aid worth 234 million dollars in four emergency operations.

Winter storm pounds Atlantic Canada

OTTAWA, 2 Feb — An intense winter storm is pounding Canada’s Atlantic provinces, battering the region with high winds and storm surges and causing school closures, power outages and flooding, local media reported on Wednesday.

Earlier, Environment Canada issued blizzard and storm surge warnings for Nova Scotia, Prince Edward Island and parts of Newfoundland provinces, saying the combination of high waves and elevated water levels could lead to flooding in places along the shoreline, according to a notice on the agency’s website.

Periods of blustering snow are expected to taper off to flurries over southwestern regions of Nova Scotia by the morning, but will persist into the afternoon for the mainland, and well into the evening for Cape Breton, the notice said.

Schools, business and government offices have been closed in many parts of Nova Scotia while most flights have been delayed or cancelled at Halifax International Airport, reports reaching here said.

The Halifax area has already received about 20 centimetres, but meteorologists are calling for another 10 to 15 centimetres through the day. Northeast Nova Scotia is expected to receive nearly 30 centimetres by day’s end, while southwest regions in the province are expected to receive nearly 15 centimetres.

There were reports of small storm surges affecting a few hundred customers in parts of Shelburne and Guysborough counties.

Minor flooding had
Physic nut oil will shape brighter future of farmers

Kyaw Swa Ngel (NPE)

Preparations being made for a demonstration of operating a power-tiller with the use of bio-diesel.

In meeting with officials from Kachin State, Sagaing, Bago, Mandalay and Mandalay Divisions, Shan State (North) and Shan State (South) on 15 December 2005 in PyinUoLwin, Head of State Senior General Than Shwe gave guidance on putting 500,000 acres under physic nut plants in each state or division in three years, totalling seven million acres across the nation.

Physic nut grows naturally and abundantly in arid zones of Myanmar — Sagaing, Mandalay and Magway Divisions. Previously, the benefit of the crop was not noticed due to lack of a careful study of it. But, it is now very popular as a beneficial crop.

In Myanmar, an agro-based nation, agriculture is a fundamental factor to ensure food sufficiency and economic development of every region, and to raise the standard of living of farmers. It is heartening to see that respective states and divisions, districts and townships are putting enthusiastic efforts into implementation of the guidance of the Head of State in accordance with the projects to meet the targets.

Now, physic nut nursery festivals and ceremonies to collectively grow physic nut grafts are being held on a large scale. As a grower can make a healthy profit in a short time by growing physic nut plants, local farmers have an interest in the business of growing the perennial crop. It is a good news that respective township Agriculture Services are rendering necessary assistance for those wishing to grow the cash crop on a commercial scale.

A two-to-five-year old physic nut plant bears two condensed milk tins of seeds in summer and a small basket of seeds in the rainy season. About 93 baskets of seeds (one and a half tons) can be harvested from physic nut plants on an acre a year. At the age of six years, a physic nut plant produces three condensed milk tins of seeds in summer and 11 condensed milk tins of seeds in the rainy season, accounting for 124 baskets of seeds (two tons) a year from and acre of the crop.

After achieving the target of 500,000 acres of physic nut plants, every state or division can harvest more than 46 million baskets of seeds (750,000 tons) if the plants are all at the age of five years, and 62 million baskets of seeds (1 million tons) if the plants are at the age of six years. If so, the nation can harvest 886 million baskets of seeds.

If the crop is harvested at the age of five years, an acre of physic nut plants can produce 178 viss of oil from which 74 gallons of bio-diesel and 465 viss of propeller cakes can be obtained. Then, every state or division can produce 89 million oil from which 37 million gallons of bio-diesel and more than 232 million viss of propeller cakes can be obtained.

And if the crop is harvested at the age of six years, an acre of physic nut plants can produce 248 viss of oil, from which 100 gallons of bio-diesel plus 655 viss of propeller cakes can be produced. If so, a state or division can obtain 124 million viss of oil or 50 million gallons of bio-diesel plus more than 327 million viss of propeller cakes.

Translation: MS
Ceremony to nurture physic nut plants of Ayeyawady Division Police Force held

YANGON, 2 Feb — The ceremony to nurture physic nut plants and present physic nut seeds of Ayeyawady Division Police Force took place at Division Police Force Commander’s Office in Pathein yesterday morning, attended by Ayeyawady Division Peace and Development Council Chairman South-West Command Commander Maj-Gen Thura Myint Aung, Deputy Commander Brig-Gen Tint Swe and officials.

The commander clarified how useful physic nuts are and gave instructions on growing 500,000 acres of physic nut plants within three years.

After hearing reports on collecting physic nut seeds and plants of Ayeyawady Division Police Force, the commander viewed the growing of the physic nut plants. Later, the commander presented the physic nut seeds to district police commanders.

A total of 204.4 acres of physic nut plants will be grown by Ayeyawady Division Police Force.

In the afternoon, the commander inspected the upgrading tasks of Strand Road in Pathein and gave necessary instructions.

The commander proceeded to the home for the aged in Pathein and inspected the extended construction of the home.

MNA

Commander attends nurturing ceremony of physic nut in Mawlaik

YANGON, 2 Feb — Chairman of Sagaing Division Peace and Development Council Commander of North-West Command Maj-Gen Tha Aye attended a ceremony to plant physic nut on Mawlaik District PDC in Mawlaik on 28 January. The commander made a speech on the occasion and viewed growing of physic nut.

Next, the commander and party observed testing of bio-diesel used generators and Leya-16 power tillers. Commander Maj-Gen Tha Aye and officials inspected nurturing of rubber, pepper and physic nut of Township Cooperatives Department.

Nurturing grafts of physic nut in the Sports ground of Mawlaik Township and computer training centre opened at Pyinya Alin library.

The commander attended the opening ceremony of special clinics of Mawlaik District People’s Hospital. The commander and wellwishers donated K 1.1 million to the hospital.

Commander Maj-Gen Tha Aye also attended opening of a school family hall of the Basic Education High School in Thayetkone Ward, Mawliak and inspected the classrooms of the school.

MNA

Home Affairs Minister tours Tachilek

YANGON, 2 Feb — Minister for Home Affairs Maj-Gen Maung Oo, together with Deputy Commander of Triangle Region Command Brig-Gen Wai Lin, Police Col Thein Kyi of the Central Committee for Drug Abuse Control, and Director (Admin) of the General Administration Department U Khin Maung Than, inspected Tachilek Township Police Station yesterday morning.

The minister and party held a meeting with members of police force and staff of GAD and departments under the ministry and staff families at the office of the commander of District Myanmar Police Force.

The minister paid a visit to Tachilek Shwedagon Pagoda and made a cash donation of K 100,000. Next, they inspected No 1 Friendship Bridge.

In the afternoon, the minister visited Naga Bhaddanta Dhamma Siri and offered alms to Ovadacariya Agga Maha Saddhamma Jotikadhaja Sayadaw Bhaddanta Dhamma Siri.

MNA

Profile of Pakokku U Ohn Pe in circulation


The book, written by writer Tekkatho Sein Tin, is a national literary award winning work featuring the experiences of U Ohn Pe, owner of Thein Tayar Tobacco Works in Pakokku, who donated K 12.6 million to the State for distributing literary awards and scholarship annually.

MNA

Union Day celebration holding sub-committee meets

YANGON, 2 Feb — Accommodation and Reception Sub-committee for organizing the 59th Anniversary Union Day celebration held a meeting today at the transit centre (Bayintnaung) here.

At the meeting, Chairman of the sub-committee Deputy Minister for Rail Transportation Thura U Thaug Lwin discussed with officials of the work committees tasks being carried out for the Union Day celebration. The meeting ended with concluding remarks by Chairman Thura U Thaug Lwin. — MNA

All this needs to be known

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

MNA

Deputy Minister Thura U Thaug Lwin addresses the meeting of Accommodation and Reception Sub-committee for organizing the 59th Anniversary Union Day. — MNA

MNA
Yangon Division WAO holds annual meeting

Yangon 2 Feb — Yangon Division Women Affairs Organization (WAO) Patron Daw Khin Thet Htay presents a gift to a counsellor of Yangon Division WAO. — MNA

Coord meeting on 5th Buddha Pujaniya of Lawka Chantha held

Yangon 2 Feb — The coordination meeting to organize the 5th Buddha Pujaniya of Lawka Chantha Abhaya was held at the meeting hall of the pagoda board of trustees this afternoon. Deputy Minister for Religious Affairs Brig-Gen Thura Aung Ko delivered an opening address. Adviser U Arnt Maung gave a suggestion on the Pujaniya. Chairman of the Pagoda Board of Trustees Maha Saddhamma Jotikadhaja U Shin Aung Bo reported on preparations for the Pujaniya. Departmental officials took part in the discussions. Present on the occasion were Director-General U Myo Kyaw of Religious Affairs Department, Director-General Dr Myo Myint of Department for Promotion and Propagation of the Sasana and officials. — MNA

Pyu harvests nearly 150,000 paddy acres

YANGON 2 Feb — The coordination meeting to organize the 5th Buddha Pujaniya of Lawka Chantha held its annual meeting at Muni Buddha Image in progress. — MNA

Pyu harvests nearly 150,000 paddy acres

Commander Maj-Gen Ohn Myint donates a pair of bear

YANGON 2 Feb — In commemoration of the centennial celebration of Zoological Gardens (Yangon), Chairman of Kachin State Peace and Development Council Commander of Northern Command Maj-Gen Ohn Myint donated a pair of bears to Zoological Gardens (Yangon) on 27 January. At present, the bears are being kept at Zoological Gardens (Yangon). — MNA

MPE holds meeting on full capacity production of factories

YANGON 2 Feb — The coordination meeting on production of oil refineries, fertilizer plants and CNG plants at full capacity was held at the Ministry of Energy yesterday. It was attended by Minister for Energy Brig-Gen Lun Thi, Deputy Minister Brig-Gen Than Htay, the Director-General, and the Deputy Director-General of Energy Planning Department, the Acting Managing Director of Myanmar Petrochemical Enterprise, factory managers and officials.

Officer on Special Duty Lt-Col Pe Thet Nyunt of MPE reported on production capacity of factories, and factory managers on production of respective factories, storage and distribution functions. Acting Managing Director U Thaung Myint gave a supplementary report.

The minister urged officials of the factories to strive for meeting the target production, minimizing loss and wastage and taking systematic security measure.

Later, the minister laid down plans for running of respective factories at full capacity and attended to their needs. — MNA

THE NEW LIGHT OF MYANMAR Friday, 3 February, 2006

Up to now the township Pyu harvests nearly 150,000 paddy acres.

Pyu harvests nearly 150,000 paddy acres
**China pledges 80m RMB in aid to Afghanistan in 2006**

**London, 2 Feb** — Chinese Foreign Minister Li Zhaoxing said here on Tuesday that China will provide 80 million RMB (nearly 10 million US dollars) in aid to Afghanistan in 2006.

China will offer long-term assistance and engage in long-term cooperation with Afghanistan in the win-win spirit of mutual benefit and common development, Li said at the international conference on Afghan reconstruction hosted by British Prime Minister Tony Blair.

Besides the provision of 80 million RMB, China will also levy zero tariff on most Afghan export products in 2006, said the Chinese minister.

China will continue to support the Afghan government’s anti-terror efforts and help train more Afghan defence and police officers, Li said.

China will furthermore work with the international community and other Afghan neighbours to tackle the booming drug production in Afghanistan, which is said to be the source of nearly 90 per cent of the world’s opium and heroin, Li said.

The top Chinese diplomat said Chinese industries have been encouraged to participate in the reconstruction projects in Afghanistan, and also to make investments in such fields as infrastructure, electricity, mineral resources, and transportation.

Li also emphasized that regional cooperation is an effective way for international community and neighbouring countries to help Afghanistan move towards a stable and prosperous country.

He suggested that building a regional transportation network be a priority in cooperation with Afghanistan. China will make full use of the existing regional cooperative mechanism to promote practical cooperation with Afghanistan in the fields of fighting drug-trafficking, anti-terrorism and border management, Li added. Envoys from nearly 70 nations and international bodies, including Afghan President Hamid Karzai and UN Secretary General Kofi Annan, attended the conference and signed a five-year blueprint for helping the war-shattered Central Asian country along the road to peace and self-sufficiency.

**UN troops to stay in south Lebanon through July**

**UNITED NATIONS, 2 Feb** — The Security Council on Tuesday authorized UN peacekeepers to remain another six months in southern Lebanon, where they monitor Beirut’s border with Israel in hopes of easing tensions in the area.

A resolution adopted unanimously by the 15-nation Council allows the UN mission there to operate through 31 July.

Without a vote, the mandate of the 2,000-strong UN Interim Force in Lebanon, known as UNIFIL, would have expired at midnight.

The measure also urged Israel and Lebanon to put an end to violations of their shared border and renewed appeals to Lebanon’s Government to do more to extend its authority across the country’s south, to help prevent attacks on Israel from its side of the border.

Although the UN mission has been in place since March 1978, the resolution stressed its “interim nature” and said the council was “looking forward to the early fulfillment of its mandate.”

The resolution asked UN Secretary-General Kofi Annan to report back within six months on how well its mandate is working.

**Fire guts 12 houses in Hline**

**YANGON, 2 Feb** — Twelve houses went up into flames in a fire that broke out in ward 12, Hline Township, here this evening.

The fire started at about 6 pm when candle fire ignited during the process of filling a generator with fuel at house No 77 on Aungdhamma Yeikha Street in the ward.

Twenty-one families were left homeless by the blaze as the fire fighters put down within 50 minutes. There were no casualties in the fire.

Minister for Social Welfare, Relief and Restitution Maj-Gen Sein Htwa, Deputy Commander of Yangoon Command Brig-Gen Wai Lwin and officials arrived to the scene, helped firefighters, arrived there within a short time by fire engines, extinguish the flames quickly and also made arrangements to take swift relief and security measures.

Personnel concerned have opened relief centres, and are providing accommodation, and health and social care services for the victims. — MNA
**UN set kick-start Kyoto emissions scheme**

**LONDON, 2 Feb —** A United Nations meeting in Germany this week is set to pave the way for hundreds of projects to curb greenhouse gas emissions in Russia and Eastern Europe, industry executives said on Tuesday.

Officials meeting on 2 Feb-3 in Bonn will start mapping out rules for the Joint Implementation (JI) scheme, one of three mechanisms devised under the international Kyoto Protocol to achieve cuts in emissions and help tackle climate change.

The first meeting of the (JI) supervisory board is a huge step forward, it is very important,” said Paul Soffe, associate director of British-based EcoSecurities, a developer of emissions-reduction projects throughout the world.

“We are looking for there to be a timetable set out to allow projects to be registered in the second half of this year,” he told Reuters.

JI is designed to offer rich countries low-cost ways to meet Kyoto emissions-reduction goals by earning credits through investment in climate-friendly projects abroad.

Under JI, investments must be made in countries with emissions reduction goals under Kyoto. Most projects are expected to focus on Russia and Eastern Europe where there is massive scope to cut emissions by improving energy efficiency and industrial processes like power production.

“Russia and Ukraine have the biggest potential but they still have to sort out their (domestic) systems for approving projects,” said Soffe. Projects include green energy plants like windfarms or overhauls of existing industrial sites to cut pollution and energy use.

Eastern Europe is a natural seller of Kyoto credits because the closure of heavy industry since the fall of Communism slashed its emissions and left it well within Kyoto targets.

This week’s meeting on JI comes as a similar Kyoto scheme — Clean Development Mechanism (CDM) — starts to take off after a slow start which critics blamed on excessive red tape. Analysts say JI rules should be based on similar regulations to those used in CDM as any attempt to build an entirely new set of rules for JI could cause delays.

**MNA/Reuters**

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**China develops underwater robot for nuclear reactors**

**BEIJING, 2 Feb —** Chinese scientists have developed the country’s first underwater robot which is used for working surrounding fuel rods inside nuclear reactors.

The robot, developed by the Institute of Optics and Electronics under the Chinese Academy of Sciences, has already been transferred to the Daya Bay Nuclear Power Station in Guangdong Province, south China.

Leading scientists from the Chengdu-based institute said the robot will observe the installation of fuel rods from underwater. It can also be used for salvaging objects falling into the fuel.

The robot is designed to pick up screw-drivers, spanners, bolts and broken glass, with a weight under one kilo, the scientists said.

The China-made robot is much smaller and cheaper than similar foreign products.

At only one eighth of the price of foreign competitors, the Chinese robot is able to climb a slope of 30 degrees at a speed of 0.9 meters per minute.

Chinese automation experts said that this type of underwater robot has laid a solid foundation for further research and development in versatile artificial intelligence technologies.

**MNA/Xinhua**

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**EU approves Glaxo drug Hycamtin for lung cancer**

**LONDON, 2 Feb —** The European Commission has given approval for GlaxoSmithKline Plc’s Hycamtin drug to be used as a treatment for small cell lung cancer, Europe’s biggest drug maker said on Wednesday.

The medicine, which is given by infusion, is already used for ovarian cancer and its extension to lung cancer had been expected, following a positive opinion from an expert panel in November.

The drug will be used in patients with recapsed small cell lung cancer for whom re-treatment with a first-line drug regimen is not considered appropriate. Small cell lung cancer accounts for about one in five of all lung cancer cases diagnosed.

Hycamtin belongs to a class of drugs known as topoisomerase I inhibitors, which induce DNA damage and trigger the death of dividing cells.

It is considered a niche product for Glaxo but its approval is the latest in a string of recent positive news later this year on three potential blockbuster — the cervical cancer vaccine Cervarix, breast cancer pill Tykerb and blood platelet drug eltrombopag.

**MNA/Reuters**

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**Chinese scientists discover 163 functional genes past 5 yrs**

**BEIJING, 2 Feb —** Chinese scientists have discovered 163 functional genes with great application potential and proprietary intellectual property rights over the past five years.

The newly-discovered genes boast prospects of application in medical diagnostics, pharmaceutical innovation and agriculture, Xinhua was told on Wednesday by a national special group for major science and technology subjects.

In the past five years, Chinese scientists also published 15 academic papers on world-class academic magazines including Cell, Nature and Science, and succeeded in applying 202 international patents and 1,021 national patents, Xinhua was told.

**MNA/Xinhua**

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**Over 600,000 face acute food shortage in Tanzania**

**DAR ES SALAAM, 2 Feb —** A total of 613,005 people are now faced with acute food shortage in 10 of Tanzania’s 26 administrative regions, according to a government report available here on Wednesday.

The government has already shipped 21,499 tons of cereals to these regions of Shinyanga, Mwanza, Kili-manjaro, Singida, Tanga, Dodoma, Manyara, Arusha and Morogoro.

Another batch of 18,947 tons of foodstuff will be dispatched to these regions in accordance with requirement, according to the report released by Tanzanian President Jakaya Mrisho Kikwete. The president assured the public that his government had set a price of 50 Tanzanian shillings (4 US cents) for one kilos of maize, the staple food for Tanzanians living in rural areas, to help ease the hunger burden.

The Tanzanian Government has also waived import duties to enable imports of large quantities of cereals and has set aside special funds for transportation and distribution of imported cereals.

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**EU approves Glaxo drug Hycamtin for lung cancer**
Crew rescued after ships collide in English channel

LONDON, 1 Feb—The crew of a chemical tanker was rescued by helicopter and lifeboat on Tuesday after an overnight collision with another vessel in the Channel between France and Britain, a British Coast Guard spokesman said. The 8,131-ton chemical tanker Ece sustained “significant damage” and was leaking its cargo of phosphoric acid after colliding with the bulk carrier General Grot-Rowiecki, the Maritime and Coast Guard Agency said. It said the acid was not a pollution threat and would dissolve in the sea.

The bulk carrier escaped with minor damage. The collision took place shortly before 0200 GMT, halfway between the island of Guernsey and the British coast. — MNA/Reuters

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P.O.Box 109, Ph: 248108/723003 (For: Donmen Songiat & Boonma, Attorneys at Law, Thailand)
Dated. 3 February 2006

TRADE MARK CAUTION NOTICE

MV YANGON STAR VOY NO (397)

Consignees of cargo carried on MV YANGON STAR VOY NO (397) are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on 3.2.2006 and cargo will be discharged into the premises of M.I.T.T where it will lie at the consignee’s risk and expenses and 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 upto 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: MS EAGLE SHIPPING CORPORATION
Phone No: 256908/378316/376797

World’s air freight, passenger traffic growth slows in 2005

GENEVA, 1 Feb — Air freight grew a “disappointingly low” 3.2 per cent in 2005, while passenger traffic expanded by 7.6 per cent, the International Air Transport Association (IATA) said on Tuesday.

Freight growth, a prime indicator of the health of world trade, was 15.8 per cent in 2004, while international passenger traffic expanded by 15.3 per cent, Geneva-based IATA said in a statement.

MNA/Reuters

CLAIMS DAY NOTICE

Don’t smoke
China’s top ten annual public scientific events announced

BEIJING, 1 Feb—Chinese scientists, popular science activists and science journalists have elected China’s top ten public scientific events of 2005.

They included the second manned space mission, the major pollution in the Songhua River and the spreading of bird flu.

The rest of the ten events are: the World’s Physics Year China activities, the country’s first favoured taxation policy for popular scientific promotion in Hebei Province, the new construction plan for the China Science and Technology Museum, the first nation wide Popular Science Day activities, the initiation of state honours for rural popular science activists, the commemoration for the late popular scientist Gao Shuqi and the exhibition one-energy-saving-society.

An official from the China Association for Science and Technology (CAST) said the ten events reflected a comprehensive overview for the popular scientific advancement in 2005 in China. Such events help the Chinese people to improve their scientific awareness.

The Popular Science and Technology News, which is affiliated to CAST, has organized this kind of election for the last four years, in order to popularize science and technology among the people.

India to offer 55 blocks for exploration

NEW DELHI, 1 Feb—India will offer the largest single tranche of 55 exploration blocks, about half of them offshore, in the next round of bids to be invited 14 February, Indo-Asian News Service (IANS) reported here on Tuesday.

They will cover a total area of 300,000 square kilometres. So far, India has awarded 90 blocks for exploration under product sharing since the launch of the New Exploration Licensing Policy (NELP) in 1999. On offer this time are some ultra deep exploration blocks in line with Indian attempts to step up the pace of exploration to boost domestic oil and gas output that has shown a decline.

This has happened despite restructuring some of the ageing producing blocks.

Around half the 55 blocks in the fifth round of NELP are offshore while the others are onshore and shallow water blocks.

A container of vitrified nuclear waste is prepared for loading onto the cargo ship Pacific Sandpiper belonging to the British company PNTL (Pacific Nuclear Transport Limited) at the French port of Cherbourg, on 1 Feb. 2006. This is the 11th of 12 controversial voyages returning processed Japanese nuclear waste to Rokkasho-Mura in Japan.—INTERNET

Masters’ paintings exhibited in China’s Forbidden City

BEIJING, 1 Feb—China’s Palace Museum, also known as the Forbidden City, is staging an exhibition of paintings by renowned Chinese masters, many of which are shown to the public for the first time.

The 28 January - 23 April exhibition shows 89 masterpieces of 42 famous Chinese painters, including Wu Changshou, Qi Baishi, Zhang Daqian and Xu Beihong, depicting natural scenery, figures, flowers and birds.

The venue of the exhibition is the newly-reopened Wuxing Palace, which was destroyed by fire during the Ming and Qing dynasties (1368-1911) and had been renovated for nine times since the Palace Museum was founded in 1925.

With tremendous ideological and social changes in the first half of the 20th century, Chinese painting has become a major carrier to record the great transformation as some painters stick to the traditional way of drawing and others turn to western techniques.

On the sidelines of the exhibition, academic workshops will be held by the ancient book and painting study centre of the Palace Museum.

E China province posts rapid export growth

HANGZHOU, 1 Feb—East China’s Zhejiang Province reported a foreign trade volume of 107.4 billion US dollars last year, representing a growth of 26 percent year on year.

The provincial statistics bureau said the total volume included 30.6 billion US dollars of imports and 76.8 billion US dollars of exports, up 13 percent and 32.1 percent respectively.

The province’s export growth ranked second among the country’s coastal regions, only after the neighbouring Jiangsu Province, and was 3.7 percent points higher than the national average.

The bureau said the export growth was mainly shored up by foreign-funded enterprises and private businesses, which posted an export growth of 38.8 percent and 55.9 percent respectively.

They claimed a share of 35.5 percent and 30.3 percent, respectively, of the province’s total exports, as against the previous year’s share of 33.8 percent and 25.7 percent.

Indian film star Bachchan has more medical tests

MUMBAI, 1 Feb—Indian film star Amitabh Bachchan, recuperating from surgery for a life-threatening stomach ailment, has undergone further medical tests, his doctor said on Tuesday.

Bachchan has not worked since he was discharged from a Mumbai hospital on 17 December and has said his recovery could take up to six months.

The 63-year-old actor underwent a diagnostic test on his abdomen at the Nanavati Hospital late on Monday night.

“He came for a medical check-up but we can’t give details,” one of Bachchan’s doctors said on condition of anonymity.

Bachchan has acted in over 150 films, playing rebels, smugglers and vigilantes in a series of anti-establishment roles.
Man Utd, Arsenal beaten as Chelsea, Liverpool held to draws

LONDON, 2 Feb — Manchester United and Arsenal lost to West Ham and Blackburn respectively at a sensational night of Premiership action on Wednesday when both Chelsea and Liverpool were held to draws.

Blackburn Rovers stunned Manchester United 4-3 after being 4-1 up at one stage with David Bentley netting a hat-trick, his first goals for the club.

Louis Saha had hauled United level but, after Bentley's second, Lucas Neill converted a penalty to give Rovers a healthy 3-1 half-time lead.

After Bentley completed his treble, substitute Rudi van Nistelrooy bagged a quick-fire double to give the visitors hope but they never troubled Brad Friedel after that.

Rio Ferdinand, playing in midfield again, was sent off for two yellow cards in quick succession after earlier being at fault with Bentley's second effort.

Spanish first division soccer club Racing Santander's new signing, Lee Ho-jin of South Korea trains in Santander, Spain on 1 Feb, 2006. — INTERNET

Man Utd goalkeeper Edwin van der Sar celebrates after Silberbauer scored a goal during the final match of the 2006 Carlsberg Cup International Soccer Tournament against South Korea in Hong Kong on 1 Feb, 2006. Denmark won 3-1. — INTERNET

PEOPLE CELEBRATE

Peter Cech to stay at Chelsea until 2010

PRAGUE, 2 Feb — Czech goalkeeper Petr Cech has extended his contract with English premier league side Chelsea until 2010.

Cech, 23, who is a Czech international and who was named the best goalkeeper of the world this year, came to Chelsea in 2004 on a contract until 2008.

His extended contract features considerably better conditions than before.

“Petr will be the best paid Czech soccer player and possibly also the best ever paid Czech athlete,” his agent Pavel Zika said.

According to the Czech daily Sport, Cech should annually earn an equivalent of 200 million crowns (about 8.5 million US dollars) plus bonuses that may climb up to 50-60 million crowns (about 2.1-2.5 million dollars). Up to now, he has reportedly earned less than 60 million (about 2.5 million dollars) per season.

For the time being, the best-paid Czech soccer player is Juventus's Pavel Nedved, who earns about 250 million crowns (about 10.6 million dollars) a year.

Zika said that he negotiated the contract with Chelsea for nearly nine months.

Cech, who will get some 260 million crowns, or 9.15 million euros next season, is also likely to be among the world's ten best-paid soccer players. Last year, the year's top ten players in football were headed by English David Beckham with 25 million euros.

Cech said he is pleased to link his nearest future with Chelsea. “It is an honour for me to be a part of the team that has the highest ambitions and ranks among the best in the best in the world,” he said.

MNA/Xinhua

Lyon overcome tough challenge from AC Ajaccio

PARIS, 2 Feb — French league leaders Olympique Lyon overcame a tough challenge from AC Ajaccio to qualify 2-1 after extra time for the third round of the French Cup on Wednesday.

The little Corsican side were poised to deliver an upset when midfielder Kamel Chafni beat goalkeeper Gregory Coupet from close range to open the scoring in the 93rd minute.

Lyon equalized through defender Cris who headed home a free-kick try by playmaker Juninho in the 108th and striker Sidney Govou dashed Ajaccio's hopes in the dying minutes.

Ajaccio, with one victory from their last 18 league matches, are 18th in the 20-club table and were eliminated from the League Cup in the quarter-finals.

The 2004 Cup winners Paris St. Germain defeated holders AJ Aixerre 1-0 at home thanks to striker Pedro Pauleta. The Portuguese player scored with a 75th-minute lob as PSG avenged their defeat by Aixerre in the 2003 final.

Pauleta, the top scorer this season in Ligue 1 with 14 goals, almost made it 2-0 when a cross shot went wide in the final minutes.

He had been an injury doubt for the match after twisting his right knee in a training session on Sunday. “It was a very tight game,” Pauleta told French television. “It was the kind of match in which the team that scored first was almost certain to win.”

Aixerre's best chance came when striker Luigi Pironi hit the post in the 63rd minute.

Spanish first division soccer club Racing Santander's new signing, Lee Ho-jin of South Korea, trains in Santander, Spain on 1 Feb, 2006. — INTERNET

UEFA calls for tougher action over racism

BARCELONA, 2 Feb — Calls for tougher sanctions and European-wide legislation to tackle racism in soccer topped the agenda at a UEFA conference in Barcelona on Wednesday.

UEFA chief executive Lars-Christer Olsson told the “Unite against Racism” conference that Europe's governing body was using a carrot and stick to encourage clubs and national associations to adopt a more pro-active approach to the problem.

“We haven't fully explored the powers at our disposal at the moment,” Olsson told the conference. “UEFA, FIFA, national associations and clubs need to take tough action, although tougher sanctions alone won't solve the problem.”

“We need to follow a two-stage policy of heightening awareness and then trying to change people's beliefs.”

The conference at Barcelona's Nou Camp stadium aimed to raise awareness about the extent of racism in football across Europe and propose practical solutions to the problem.

Former Chelsea, Celtic and Barca player Paul Elliott said major advances had been made but the time had come for a “zero tolerance” approach.

“As a player, I experienced banana throwing, monkey chanting and threats of violence in the 1970s and 80s,” he said.

“Back in the 70s racism was conventionally swept under the carpet. We've come a long way since then but we've got a long way still to go.”

Elliott and UEFA called on the European Parliament to approve a written declaration committing all those involved in the game to tackle racism in football.

“The crucial step forward now is to insist that no one is above the law,” he said.

“We have a golden chance to score a goal against racism by ensuring that footballers have the right to a racism free environment in their workplace.”

Speakers said recent incidents such as anti-Semitic and pro-fascist banners at Roma's stadium last weekend and abuse suffered by visiting black players during Spain's friendly with England last season highlighted the need for further action.

“The most horrifying thing was that middle class, professional people, families and young people were involved and it felt it was normal.”

Source: UEFA

MNA/Reuters

Fans vote Lampard as England's top player

LONDON, 2 Feb — Chelsea midfielder Frank Lampard has been voted by the fans as England's Player of the Year for the second successive year.

Lampard, who was also second to Barcelona and Brazil playmaker Ronaldinho in the 2005 European and World Footballer of the Year awards, received 29 per cent of the vote in the FA.com poll.

“I think the fans must have had a very hard time choosing because we are lucky enough to have a number of really outstanding individual players,” England coach Sven-Goran Eriksson told the FA's official website on Wednesday.

“But you can't argue with their choice. He (Lampard) is one of the most improved players I have seen in the last few years, he gets better and better all the time.” — MNA/Reuters

Source: MNA

Friedel after that.

Nigel Reo-Coker capitalised on a Sol Campbell slip to open the scoring and ex-Tottenham striker Bobby Zamora curled home to double the advantage.

Robert Pires breathed fresh life into The Gunners' bid to get something from the game but West Ham held out.

Aston Villa pegged back Chelsea with a 1-1 draw at Villa Park.

Luke Moore was the first player to score against the champions this season and he claimed the equaliser from a Mark Delaney centre. — MNA/Xinhua

Source: MNA

English David Beckham with 25 million euros.

Cech said he is pleased to link his nearest future with Chelsea. "It is an honour for me to be a part of the team that has the highest ambitions and ranks among the best in the world," he said. — MNA/Xinhua

Source: MNA

MNA/Reuters

Source: MNA

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"The crucial step forward now is to insist that no one is above the law," he said. "We have a golden chance to score a goal against racism by ensuring that footballers have the right to a racism free environment in their workplace."

Speakers said recent incidents such as anti-Semitic and pro-fascist banners at Roma's stadium last weekend and abuse suffered by visiting black players during Spain's friendly with England last season highlighted the need for further action.

"The most horrifying thing was that middle class, professional people, families and young people were involved and it felt it was normal."
French carmaker to sell cars powered by diesel hybrid in 2010

PARIS, 2 Feb — French carmaker PSA Peugeot Citroën announced on Tuesday that it would sell annually tens of thousands of diesel-hybrid-powered cars from 2010.

A diesel hybrid can offer further fuel savings of about 25 percent over a diesel engine.

At a news conference here, PSA unveiled two models featuring a diesel-electric hybrid powertrain, the Peugeot 307 and the Citroen C4 Hybride HDi, whose fuel consumption is cut to 3.4 litres per 100 kilometres.

At low speeds, such as in towns, the car can drive entirely electrically with low noise and very low pollution, while at higher speeds the diesel engine kicks in.

But even on motorways, when the diesel engine is the main power source, the electric motor can provide an extra boost for acceleration when overtaking another vehicle.

“Our objective is to reduce the cost by a factor 2.5 to 3 so that the difference a consumer has to pay for a diesel hybrid is the same as that between a petrol and a diesel car — because the gain in fuel economies and emission reduction is the same,” PSA’s Chief Executive Jean-Martin Folz told reporters.

The cost difference between the demonstration vehicles and a conventional diesel model is about 8,000 euros (9,704 dollars) now and has to be cut to 1,500-2,000 euros.

PSA’s rivals such as Ford, Daimler Chrysler and Toyota are also developing diesel hybrids but for big cars, such as the Jaguar S-type, Mercedes E, or for trucks, while the Peugeot 307 and Citroen C4, are in the highly competitive compact car segment.

Chinese FM, Afghan President meet in London

LONDON, 2 Feb — Chinese Foreign Minister Li Zhaoxing on Tuesday held talks with Afghan President Hamid Karzai on Afghanistan’s reconstruction.

Li and Karzai, who are in London to attend the two-day international conference on the Central Asian country’s future, agreed the two neighbours should strengthen cooperation on bilateral trade, education and personnel training.

Afghanistan has made tremendous progress in the fields of politics, security and economy, said Li, adding China would make further contribution to Afghanistan’s peace and stability.

Karzai expressed gratitude to China’s important support for Afghanistan in the past four years, emphasizing his country will unwaveringly stick to the one-China policy.

Afghanistan and China are located in the same region and share the common fate. The Afghan side strongly desires to deepen and strengthen the relations with China, said Karzai.

Envoys from nearly 70 nations and international bodies have issued a five-year blueprint to help the war-ravaged nation along the road to peace and self-sufficiency.

The plan, known as the “Afghanistan Compact,” sets out specific targets for boosting economic and social development, bolstering security, improving governance, strengthening the rule of law and improving human rights conditions. On the sidelines of the conference, Li also held talks with his Russian counterpart Sergei Lavrov on bilateral relations. They were pleased with the in-depth development of the Sino-Russian strategic partnership in the past year.

Both ministers agreed to work together to make comprehensive preparations for the mutual visits by their leaders, and also to make the “Russia Year” in China a success.

WEATHER

Thursday, 2 February, 2006

Summary of observations recorded at 09:30 hours MST: During the past 24 hours, light rain has been isolated in Taninthayi Division and weather has been generally fair in the remaining States and Divisions. Night temperatures were (4°C) below normal in Chin State, (3°C) to (4°C) above normal in Mon State, upper Sagaing, Bago and Ayeyawady Divisions, (5°C) above normal in Taninthayi Division and about normal in the remaining areas. The significant night temperatures were Haka (2°C), Pinlaung, Nampham and Lashio (4°C) each. The noteworthy amount of rainfall recorded was Kawthong (0.8) inch.

Maximum temperature on 1-2-2006 was 96.6°F. Minimum temperature on 2-2-2006 was 63.6°F. Relative humidity at 09:30 hrs MST on 2-2-2006 was (76%). Total sunshine hours on 1-2-2006 was (8.4) hours approx.

Rainfalls on 2-2-2006 were nil at Mingaladon, Kaba-Aye and central Yangon. Total rainfalls since 1-1-2006 were nil at Mingaladon, Kaba-Aye and central Yangon. Maximum wind speed at Yangon (Kaba-Aye) was (4) mph from North east at (15:30) hours MST on 1-2-2006.

Bay inference: Weather is generally fair in the Bay of Bengal.

Forecast valid until evening of 3-2-2006: Possibility of isolated light rain in Taninthayi Division and weather will be partly cloudy in Mon and Kayin States and generally fair in the remaining States and Divisions. Degree of certainty is (40%).

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

Outlook for subsequent two days: Generally fair weather in the whole country.

Forecast for Yangon and neighbouring area for 3-2-2006: Fair weather.

Forecast for Mandalay and neighbouring area for 3-2-2006: Fair weather.
Thriving physic nut plantations in North-East Command area inspected

YANGON, 2 Feb — Chairman of Shan State (North) Peace and Development Council Commander of North-East Command Maj-Gen Myint Hlaing, accompanied by Deputy Commander Brig-Gen Hla Myint and officials, arrived at the physic nut farm in the area of No 1 Highland Farmland in Lashio on 31 January.

The commander oversaw mixed-cropping of physic nut plants among Hsinshweli strain sugarcane and pineapple plantations and thriving sugarcane, and gave necessary instructions to officials of the farm.

Afterwards, the commander viewed round thriving 10 acres of Hsinshweli strain summer paddy and physic nut plantation of North-East Command.

The fourth coordination meeting of regiments and units of Lashio Station to grow physic nut plants of regiments was held at the meeting hall of the command headquarters. The commander urged cultivation of physic nut plants to meet the target.

Accommodation and Reception Sub-committee Chairman sees off NC delegates

YANGON, 2 Feb — Delegates to the National Convention returned home from Nyaunghnapin Camp of Hmawby Township as the National Convention was adjourned.

At 6:30 am today, Chairman Col Htein Lin of the Accommodation and Reception Sub-committee of the National Convention and officials bade farewell to the NC delegates on their departure.

Significant night temperatures

- Haka (2°C)
- Pinlaung (4°C)
- Namsam (4°C)
- Lashio (4°C)

INSIDE

- In some rural areas, local people have come to use bio-diesel to light bio-diesel lanterns and stoves, generators can also be run on wider scale.
- Now is the most opportune time to grow physic nut on a large scale.
- It is believed that with massive growing of physic nut everywhere possible, farmers can look forward to a brighter future.