National people to build and safeguard a single motherland

Ours is a Union where various national races reside together everywhere. All national races are living together in the nation made up of 14 States and Divisions. Loving kindness, attachment and truthfulness have grown firmly through age-long existence. Therefore, it is Union Spirit of national people who live in the same land and drinking water from the same source to build and safeguard a single motherland. In other words, Union Spirit is patriotism cultivated by correct national belief.

Senior General Than Shwe
Chairman of the State Peace and Development Council
Commander-in-Chief of Defence Services

(From address at the graduation parade of the 45th Intake of Defence Services Academy)

Senior General Than Shwe and wife
Daw Kyaing Kyaing host Union Day commemorative reception and dinner to Union Day delegates, cultural troupes of States and Divisions

YANGON, 12 Feb — Chairman of the State Peace and Development Council of the Union of Myanmar Senior General Than Shwe and wife Daw Kyaing Kyaing hosted a reception to mark the 59th Anniversary Union Day and the dinner, on the lawns of the President House on Ahlon Road, here, this evening. At 6.30 pm, the Senior General and wife arrived at the reception and dinner.

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

**Strive for further strengthening national solidarity**

The Union of Myanmar is a nation with high culture and national prestige and integrity. Since time immemorial, national brethren such as Kachin, Kayah, Kayin, Chin, Bamar, Mon, Rakhine and Shan have been living in the Union of Myanmar through thick and thin based on family spirit and Union Spirit.

The Union Day (the 12th February) is a day of historical significance, on which Myanmar has been able to free herself from the yoke of colonialists through national solidarity, and become an independent and sovereign nation.

Chairman of the State Peace and Development Council of the Union of Myanmar Senior General Than Shwe sent the message on the occasion of the 59th Anniversary Union Day. In the message of Head of State Senior General Than Shwe, it is stated that the entire national races are to accept that stability, peace, development and existence of the Union of Myanmar encompassing all the national races are to rely on the strength of national solidarity and flourishing of Union Spirit.

Throughout the Myanmar history, the spirit of national unity, Union spirit and anti-colonialist spirit or the spirit of collectively repulsing alien intrusion have always reflected the national vigour that enables the Union to stand tall among the world nations.

Neo-colonialists are making attempts to cause racial dissension for the ruining of national solidarity that is the foundation of the Union and the recurrence of armed conflicts. At present also, some powers eager to dominate and manipulate the Union of Myanmar are attempting to undermine national unity and obstruct national development. They are also imposing economic sanctions on Myanmar and attempting to incite political instigation to hinder the momentum of national development.

Nowadays, efforts are being made under the leadership of the government for the emergence of a peaceful, modern, developed and discipline-flourishing democratic nation. In the process, the National Convention, the first and most important step of the seven-point Road Map, is being held with the participation of the delegates from all walks of life.

An enduring State constitution that will ensure continued flourishing of liberty, justice, equality and the rule of law in the country will soon emerge.

Therefore, the entire national people are to try their best with Union Spirit for further strengthening national solidarity that has existed in successive eras.

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**Production of iodized salt discussed in Ayeyawady Division**

**Yangon,** 12 Feb — Minister for Mines Brig-Gen Ohn Myint and Managing Director of Myanma Salt and Marine Chemicals Enterprise U Win Htain inspected salt fields in Pathein, Ayeyawady Division, on 9 February.

Managing Director U Win Htain reported on production of iodized salt. The minister gave instructions on arrangements for production of salt for industries. The minister observed salt fields and met local authorities, entrepreneurs, members of Union Solidarity and Development Association. They discussed rural development and cultivation of physic nut. The minister inspected Thahmephyu salt industry in Ngaputaw Township.

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**Vehicles of Tatmadaw and departments checked on dry day**

**Yangon,** 12 Feb — Chairman of Dry Day Supervisory Committee Minister for Mines Brig-Gen Ohn Myint, Director-General of Myanmar Police Force Brig-Gen Khin Yi and members of the committee supervised functions of Dry Day inspection teams this morning and evening.

At the main points of Yangon from 7 am to 5 pm, the dry day inspection teams performed their tasks to check dry day pass, driver’s licence, and wheel tax bill of Tatmadaw and departmental vehicles and wearing of respective uniforms and breaking of traffic rules.

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**All this needs to be known**

- Do not be frightened whenever intimidated
- Do not be bolstered whenever flattered
- Do not be softened whenever appeased
S Africa continues to be China’s largest trade partner

BEIJING, 11 Feb — In 2005, the trade volume between China and South Africa grew 23 per cent year-on-year to 7.27 billion US dollars, making South Africa remain China’s largest trade partner in Africa.

China is willing to enhance technology transfer and investment cooperation with South Africa in textile, agriculture, mining and medicine, said Chinese Vice-Minister of Commerce Wei Jianguo, when meeting here Wednesday with Vusi Koloane, Charge d’Affaires of South Africa in China.

China hopes the first round talks on establishment of free trade area between China and the Southern African Customs Union (SACU) will be started as soon as possible, Wei said. Wei also urged South Africa to take substantial measures to protect the life and property of Chinese citizens living in the country.

Three Chinese business people were killed by armed robbers in South Africa within the space of 36 hours last weekend; another one was killed earlier this year. South Africa will further improve its investment environment so as to attract more Chinese business people, said Vusi Koloane. — MNA/Xinhua

Indonesia predicts 660m barrels of oil production in 2006

JAKARTA, 11 Feb — Indonesia predicts to produce about 660 million barrels of oil this year, according to a document obtained by Xinhua on Saturday from the Ministry of Mines and Energy Resources.

The document said that based on the fiscal and business as usual (BAU) scenarios, Indonesia has targeted to export some 280 million barrels of oil and will import about 225 million barrels of oil this year.

The country’s oil production in condition of BAU is predicted to continue to decline to more than 200 million barrels in 2010, and based on the fiscal scenario, the production will reach more than 400 million barrels, it said.

Meanwhile, oil export in 2010 in condition of BAU is predicted to be about 160 million barrels, and based on the fiscal scenario, it will be some 150 million barrels, said the document.

Import in condition of BAU will decline in 2010 to about 500 million barrels and based on fiscal scenario efficiency will be below 500 million barrels, it added.

Indonesia’s oil production declined at 5 per cent rate or more annually.

Indonesia’s state-run oil firm Pertamina sees January oil production consumption at 943,000 barrel per day.

— MNA/Xinhua

US soldier killed in car accident in E Afghanistan

KABUL, 11 Feb — A US soldier was killed on Thursday in a vehicle accident in Afghan eastern province of Nangarhar, US military said on Friday.

“An American service member was killed yesterday when the high-mobility multi-purpose wheeled vehicle he was travelling in was involved in a rollover northwest of Jalalabad in Nangarhar Province,” the US military said in a Press release.

“The vehicle was operating as part of a combat patrol at the time of the accident,” it added.

“The cause of the accident is under investigation. No other people in the vehicle were injured. The name of the service member is being withheld pending notification of next of kin,” it said.

After the collapse of Taliban in late 2001, the US-led Coalition forces stayed in Afghanistan for the further clean-up and anti-terrorism operation.

Till now more than 200 US soldiers have been killed in Afghanistan. The American Government has decided to reduce the troops from 19,000 to about 16,000 in 2006, but promised the presence and commitment in the war-torn country. A couple of days ago, the American Government has announced the cancelling of all the debts in southern Afghanistan.

— MNA/Xinhua

British troops videoed ‘beating Iraqis’

LONDON, 12 Feb — Details emerged last night of a shocking video which appears to show a group of British soldiers brutally beating and kicking defenceless Iraqi teenagers in an army compound.

The footage is said to show eight soldiers pulling four teenagers off the street following a riot and dragging them into their army base, before beating them with batons, as well as punching and kicking them.

An urgent Military Police investigation was under way last night into the events shown in the video.

The Ministry of Defence issued the following statement: “We are aware of these very serious allegations and we confirm that they are the subject of an urgent Royal Military Police investigation. We condemn all acts of abuse and treat any allegation of wrongdoing extremely seriously.”

But the emergence of the footage, given to the News of the World by an anonymous whistle-blower, will spark a huge controversy about the conduct of the army in Iraq.

There are also fears that it could lead to more attacks on the British soldiers currently serving there.

The MoD has repeatedly given assurances that Iraqis who are captured are treated with respect and decency by British troops.

— Internet

US military death toll rises to 2,269

WASHINGTON, 11 Feb — As of Saturday, 11 Feb, 2006, at least 2,269 members of the US military have died since the beginning of the Iraq war in March 2003, according to an Associated Press count. The figure includes six military civilians. At least 1,779 died as a result of hostile action, according to the military’s numbers.

The AP count is one lower than the Defence Department’s tally, last updated Friday at 10 am EST.

Since 1 May, 2003, when President Bush declared that major combat operations in Iraq had ended, 2,130 US military members have died, according to AP’s count. That includes at least 1,670 deaths resulting from hostile action, according to the military’s numbers. — Internet
China welcomes Iran-Russia nuclear talks

BEIJING, 10 Feb — China said on Thursday it welcomed nuclear talks between Iran and Russia planned for next week to defuse a crisis over Teheran’s atomic programme.

“We hope that this Russian invitation to Iran to hold talks on the 16th about participating in an international uranium enrichment centre will help break, or encourage a break, in the current stalemate over the Iranian nuclear issue,” Foreign Ministry spokesman Kong Quan told a regular news conference.

The deputy head of Iran’s National Security Council would lead Teheran’s delegation to the talks in Moscow next week, Russia’s Itar-Tass news agency reported earlier. — MNA/Reuters

A Chinese girl looks at lotus flower-shaped lanterns for the upcoming Lantern Festival in Nanjing, capital of east China’s Jiangsu Province on 10 Feb, 2006. The traditional Chinese festival will fall on 12 Feb.—INTERNET

Tobacco kills 200,000 Brazilians each year

BRASILIA, 11 Feb — Brazil’s National Cancer Institute (INC) said that 200,000 Brazilians die each year due to tobacco-related illnesses, even though fewer Brazilians are smoking than ever before, local Press reported on Thursday.

Vera Colombo, a specialist at the INC’s tobacco division, said that 25 million Brazilians now smoke. The government’s campaign currently targets children attending 8,000 schools across the country.

Colombo also congratulated the organizers of the World Health Organization’s international conference against tobacco related illnesses, taking place this week in Switzerland. Tobacco-related illnesses include asthma, bronchitis, respiratory infections, heart attacks and lung cancer. — MNA/Xinhua

Venezuela hopes to increase oil exports to China

CARACAS, 10 Feb — Venezuela hopes to nearly double its oil exports to China in the near future, Venezuelan Oil and Energy Minister Rafael Ramirez said here on Wednesday.

Ramirez, who is also the head of the state oil company PetroLe Venezuela (PDVSA), told reporters that “we are hoping to sell 300,000 BPD to this market (China) very soon”. According to two contracts signed between PDVSA and the China National Petroleum Corporation last year, Venezuela now sells 100,000 BPD of crude oil and 60,000 BPD of fuel oil to China.

“We will complete the construction of the Jose Complex’s orimulsion module, which belongs to CNPC,” said Ramirez. Orimulsion is an artificial fuel blend, which results from a mixture of water and extra-heavy crude oil found in Venezuela’s Orinoco River basin. Ties between Venezuela and China have been strengthened since late 2004 after President Hugo Chavez visited China and signed a series of agreements on cooperation in petroleum, gas, telecommunications and trade. — MNA/Xinhua

Iraqi soldiers secure a road on a vehicle at a checkpoint in Baghdad on 11 Feb, 2006. —INTERNET

US Govt watchdogs say Iraq needs more money to rebuild

WASHINGTON, 10 Feb — Two US Government watchdogs said Iraq will need more money to rebuild than the 56 billion US dollars forecast by the World Bank and the United Nations in 2003, US media reported on Thursday.

“That number in fact will be much higher,” said Stuart Bowen, the US special inspector-general for Iraq reconstruction, though he did not go into detail. Joseph Christoff, director of international affairs at the US Government Accountability Office (GAO), said guerrilla attacks, looting, and sabotage are increasing war recovery costs while Iraq’s water, sewer, and electricity systems are in worse shape than previously thought. Both of them said that Iraq’s oil refineries and pipelines are also in need of repairs.

The World Bank, the United Nations and the US-led Coalition Provisional Authority estimated in 2003 that Iraq’s reconstruction needs through 2007 would be about 56 billion dollars.

The US authorized 18.4 billion dollars for Iraq rebuilding, with an expectation that other countries and companies would contribute to the total, along with Iraqi oil revenue.

International donors have so far provided only 2.7 billion dollars of the 13.6 billion dollars pledged for Iraq’s reconstruction. Christoff said Iraq’s ability to help pay for its own rebuilding will depend on the new government’s success in boosting revenue from crude oil exports, reducing energy and food subsidies, paying for a growing security force and recycling payments to international creditors and victims of the 1990 invasion of neighbouring Kuwait.

However, he said Iraqi officials are having problems producing and refining oil and protecting refineries and pipelines from attacks, and that the country will need more money to achieve its production goals. — MNA/Xinhua

Thailand ready to host international meeting on bird flu

BANGKOK, 11 Feb — Thailand is willing to host a new international conference on bird flu and to assist neighbouring countries in containing the disease as requested by the World Health Organization (WHO), according to local media report on Saturday.

The report said that Thai Public Health Minister Pinij Jarusombat told journalists Friday after meeting with WHO Director for Asia and the Pacific Dr Samlee Planbangchang and representatives of the Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS (UNAIDS) that he had discussed with the UN officials the planned international conference on bird flu in which ministers concerned from more than 30 countries will take part in.

The international meeting will be hosted by India in April, Pinij said. — MNA/Xinhua

Eight Afghan soldiers killed in two blasts

ASADABAD (Afghanistan), 12 Feb — Roadside bombs killed eight Afghan soldiers on Friday, a provincial governor said, in the latest incidents of violence as NATO members prepare to expand an Afghan peacekeeping force.

Seven soldiers were wounded in two separate blasts in Kunar Province, which is on the border with Pakistan, said the province’s governor, Assadullah Wafa.

“The soldiers were going in convoys when the enemies of Afghanistan set off bombs planted on the roads,” Wafa told Reuters.

Six soldiers were killed in one of the blasts and two were killed in the other, he said.

He did not elaborate on who he thought was responsible but Taloiban and allied militants are known to operate in the province.

US forces mounted a major sweep to clear roads,” Wafa told MNA/Reuters.

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INTERNET
Musharraf likely to brief Chinese leaders about Indo-Pakistani ties

BEIJING, 11 Feb — Pakistani President Pervez Musharraf is expected to brief the Chinese leadership on the latest developments in his country’s relations with India during his 19-23 February visit to the Communist nation.

Besides, he is likely to welcome China’s active role in the South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC), diplomatic sources said.

Musharraf has been invited by his Chinese counterpart Hu Jintao, Foreign Ministry spokesman Kong Quan said on Thursday.

Apart from Hu, also the General Secretary of the ruling Communist Party of China (CPC) and Chairman of Central Military Commission (CMC), Musharraf will meet other Chinese leaders during his visit.

Hu and Musharraf had met in New York on 15 September last on the sidelines of the UN General Assembly session.

“The visit is conducive to the development of the strategic partnership between China and Pakistan, as it will help promote the further deepening of strategic cooperation partnership between our two countries,” he said.

In April, 2005, China and Pakistan had signed the agreement on good-neighborly and friendly cooperation and established their strategic cooperative partnership.

“China and Pakistan are friendly neighbours and we share all-weather friendship and all-dimensional cooperation between us,” Kong commented on the traditionally friendly bilateral ties.

— MNA/PITI

Havana forum condemns US-led Iraq war

HAVANA, 12 Feb — Participants at an international forum held in Havana on Friday condemned the US-led war in Iraq, describing it as "illegal and immoral".

In a resolution adopted at the end of the 8th International Globalization and Development Issues Forum, the participants said they were worried by the war-like policies and diplomatic stance shown by the US Government.

The forum was attended by some 1,500 people from more than 40 countries, including such dignitaries as Cuban President Fidel Castro and former Malaysian prime minister Mahathir bin Mohamad.

The resolution said the strategy adopted by the US Administration put the survival of the planet in peril.

It also criticized Washington for increasing its military spending. The document added that nearly three years after the start of the Iraq war, the world is upset by the disastrous consequences of a conflict it described as "criminal, illegal and immoral".

The participants called for unity among all groups demanding an end to the war. They also demanded an end to the human rights violations committed in Iraq in the name of fighting terrorism.

“The lies and falsehoods” used by the US Government are designed to set off a military escalation and a policy of systematic aggression against governments and their people, the resolution said.

— MNA/Xinhua

Divers recover emblem of Nazi ship off Uruguay

MONTEVIDEO (Uruguay), 11 Feb — Salvage experts recovered a massive bronze eagle emblem on Friday from the wreckage of a Nazi battleship scuttled off the coast of Uruguay at the outset of World War II.

The ship — the Graf Spee — was a symbol of German military strength in the war. It sank nine vessels in the Atlantic Ocean before being badly damaged in December 1939 near the battle of the River Plate, one of the war’s first naval clashes.

After making port in the Uruguayan capital, Montevideo, the ship was sunk with explosives by its captain to prevent it from falling into enemy hands.

Divers have been working on and off since 1998 to recover the ship piece by piece, part of a multimillion-dollar effort by Argentine and German investors to refloat remains of the Nazi fleet and open a museum.

“This is a very unique piece in the world,” said Hector Bado, leader of the recovery effort, adding the bronze eagle weighed up to 880 pounds (400 kilos).

Eagles were often used with swastikas in Nazi symbolism. The recovery was the second major one by the international team of divers. In 2004, the group raised the Graf Spee’s range finder, a component that held the first radar antenna installed on a warship.

— MNA/Xinhua

Earthquake hits central Chile

SANTIAGO (Chile), 11 Feb — A medium-sized earthquake shook central Chile on Friday, rattling buildings, but there were no immediate reports of injuries or damages, officials said.

The quake occurred at around 2:50 pm local time (1750 GMT) and could be felt in offices and buildings in the Chilean capital.

The US Geological Survey said on its website that the earthquake had a magnitude of 4.9 and was centered off Chile’s central coast near the port city of Valparaiso. A 4.9 magnitude earthquake will be felt by most people, and can break windows, but does not damage constructions, according to the USGS website.

— MNA/Reuters

Land mine kills two, injures 28 in Angola

LUANDA, 11 Feb — An anti-tank land mine blew up a passenger-laden truck in Angola’s highland Bié Province, killing two people and injuring 28 others, six seriously.

According to local media on Friday, the incident took place near the town of Andulo Wednesday, when construction workers were returning home at the end of the day.

Angola is considered to be one of the world’s most heavily mined countries.

— MNA/Reuters

Car bomb in Baghdad kills 11

BAGHDAD, 11 Feb — A car bomb exploded in Baghdad on Friday, killing at least 11 people and wounding 38, doctors at al-Yarmuk Hospital told Reuters.

Police said they had reports of eight dead and 28 wounded in the blast in the Doura District of southern Baghdad. The district is one of the most volatile in the capital.

The blast took place as Iraq’s electoral commission announced the final results of December’s parliament-ary elections, which confirmed the dominance of the ruling Shiites Alliance.

Sunni guerrillas fighting to topple the US-backed Kurdish and Shiite-led government have accused the Shiites of cheating their way to victory. Iraqi and US military officials have warned of more guerrilla violence around the announcement of the results.

— MNA/Reuters

A French soldier sprays a chemical to battle a mosquito-borne virus, the Chikungunya, that has infected more than 50,000 people on the French island of La Réunion in the Indian Ocean, in Saint-Denis, La Réunion, on 10 Feb, 2006.

INTERNET

Children suffering from bird flu-like symptoms are seen in a hospital in Sulaimaniyah, 260 kilometres (160 miles) northeast of Baghdad.

— on 9 Feb, 2006. — INTERNET

THE NEW LIGHT OF MYANMAR Monday, 13 February, 2006

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Two Nepalese kidnapped in Afghan capital

KABUL, 12 Feb — Two Nepalese were kidnapped Saturday morning in Afghan capital Kabul, an Afghan official said.

“This morning at about 9:00 am (0430 GMT) two Nepalese were kidnapped in Charah-i-ansari, central area of Kabul,” an official from Interior Ministry told Xinhua.

Afghan Government has sent someone to the area to investigate about the reason and current situation about the kidnapping, Interior Ministry spokesperson Stanizai said.

Charah-i-ansari area is a kind of business centre in Kabul which is always very crowded.

Last year an Italian aid worker was kidnapped one night from her car also in the central area of Kabul, and was finally released after some time’s negotiation between Afghan Government and the kidnappers.

MNA/Xinhua

Iran ready to increase crude oil supply to Philippines

MANILA, 12 Feb — Iran said on Friday it is willing to provide additional crude oil to the Philippines if it is needed.

Iranian ambassador to the Philippines Jalal Kalantari said at a press conference that Iran made assurance to the Philippine Government during bilateral consulations between the two countries.

“We have indicated that in case additional supply is needed, we are ready to negotiate,” he said.

Bilateral trade between Manila and Tehran reached about 800 million US dollars in 2004 because of heavy imports of Iranian oil by the Philippines, which buys from 70,000 to 110,000 barrels of oil a day from Iran.

The Philippines relies by more than 90 per cent on imports of oil products for its energy supply.

Iran, the Philippines’ third largest trade partner in the Middle East, recently invested 100 million US dollars in the Philippine petrochemical sector, which is considered a sign of flourishing ties between the two countries.

MNA/Xinhua

Two killed as hot air balloon crashes in Kenya’s game reserve

NAIROBI, 12 Feb — A Belgian tourist and a Kenyan pilot were killed and 10 others seriously injured when a hot-air balloon carrying safari goers crashed in Kenya’s world famous Masai Mara game reserve early Friday.

Kenyan police spokesman Jaspher Ombari said the deceased — a pilot and a Belgian woman tourist were among the 12 people on board when the hot air balloon, one of the admired tourists activities in the wildlife rich Masai Mara, crashed at around 0330 GMT.

“Two people among them a tourist were killed at around 6:30 am this morning. The two were among the 12 people who were board while viewing animals above the park,” said Ombari by telephone.

MNA/Xinhua

Thunderstorm delays flights at Johannesburg Airport

JOHANNESBURG, 12 Feb — A thunderstorm, accompanied by hail, was delaying outgoing flights at Johannesburg International Airport by between 40 minutes and an hour on Friday afternoon.

Airport spokesman Solomon Magake said the storm hit the airport around 5 pm (1500 GMT).

Incoming flights were allowed to land but outgoing flights were grounded, he said.

Seventeen domestic, one regional and three international flights were affected, he added.

MNA/Xinhua

Two US soldiers killed by roadside bomb in Iraq

BAGHDAD, 12 Feb — Two US Marines were killed on Thursday by a roadside bomb targeting their patrol near the western restive Iraqi city of Fallujah, the US military said in a statement on Friday.

Two Marines, assigned to the 2nd Marines Division, died of wounds sustained from a blast of an improvised explosive device near their vehicle while patrolling an area near Fallujah, some 60 kilometres west of Baghdad, on 9 February, the military said in the statement.

The names of the soldiers are being withheld pending notification of next of kin, the statement added.

The latest deaths have brought the total death toll of US military personnel in Iraq to at least 2,262 since the US-led invasion in March 2003.

Roadside bombs are frequently used by guerrillas fighting the US-led occupation forces in Iraq during the past two years of insurgency in the violence-ravaged country.

MNA/Xinhua

Putin says Russia to join int’l effort to aid poor countries

Moscow, 12 Feb — Russia has decided to take part in financing the programme of the International Monetary Fund (IMF) to aid the poorest countries suffering from external disasters, President Vladimir Putin said on Saturday.

“In the period of 2006 through to 2010, we will make a voluntary contribution amounting to 30 million Special Drawing Rights, or about 43.5 million US dollars for these purposes,” Putin said when receiving G-8 finance ministers in the Kremlin.

The President also indicated that Russia was ready to allocate an additional 587 million dollars to the International Development Association (IDA) as a compensation for the write-off of the poorest countries’ debts.

“The money will be used to eliminate the so-called structural breaks, and the whole set of our proposals will make the IDA financially stable for a period of five to 10 years as a minimum, depending on what plan of action is chosen,” Putin said.

Talking about a programme of early repayment of Russian debts to the Paris Club, Putin said Russia is ready to make a new repayment that will amount to 11.9 billion dollars.

“This proposal will support development of the world’s poorest countries,” he said.

On Saturday, Russia played host to the G-8 financial minister’s meeting for the first time.

Reports said the world’s second-largest oil exporter was eager to highlight its newfound financial muscle and brush off suspicion over its reliability as an energy supplier.

MNA/Xinhua

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MNA/Xinhua

An Iraqi soldier holds a weapon as he secures a road in Baghdad on 11 Feb, 2006. —INTERNET

A woman looks at her mobile phone at a 3G shop in Hong Kong on 11 Feb, 2006. —INTERNET

An Iraqi soldier holds a weapon as he secures a road in Baghdad on 11 Feb, 2006. —INTERNET
Senior General Than Shwe and wife Daw Kyaing Kyaing host Union Day commemorative reception and dinner to Union Day delegates, cultural troupes of States and Divisions

They were welcomed by Vice-Chairman of the State Peace and Development Council Vice-Senior Gen-
Honouring the 59th Anniversary Union Day:

Panglong Region testifies to historic lesson

“Unity is strength”

Kyi Kyi Cho (Taunggyi University)

The 12th of February 2006 is the 59th Anniversary of the Union Day of the Union of Myanmar. A salient characteristic of the Union of Myanmar is that the Union is home to more than one hundred national races. According to the different regions they reside in, their tribes, languages and native regions appear different. However, they are all national brethren residing in the same land, drinking water from the same source and sailing in the same boat. With the national races living in various regions through thick and thin with own cultures, customs, languages and literature, Myanmar stood tall with own monarchs in the world. The national brethren upheld their own faith fostering national prestige and integrity.

Looking back to the history, Myanmar has had fine traditions with cultural civilization from time immemorial. In the soil of Myanmar, anthropoid primates were discovered indicating the origin of human beings, along with cultural evidences in the Stone Age and Iron Age. In some areas of Myanmar, there once emerged city states such as Tagaung, Beikthano, Srikesta, Vesali and Thawunnamabu. Based on national solidarity, the city states were combined into Myanmar empire three times.

In the 11th Century, King Anawrahta founded the First Myanmar Empire with Bagan royal capital in its centre. It existed from the 11th Century to the 13th Century with strong economy, defence forces and flourishing culture and customs based on region owing to the correct leadership. The national unity in the times of Bagan dynasty made the nation strong, so the nation won respect and admiration of neighbours. Taking advantage of disintegration of national solidarity in the late Bagan period, Mongol troops intruded into the nation, resulting in the collapse of the First Myanmar Empire.

In Toungoo Period in the 16th Century, the good organizing abilities of King Tapin Shwehti and King Bayintnaung Kyaw Hnin Nawrawa integrated national people into the Myanmar empire again. However, disparity of national people in the time of King Nanda, son of King Bayintnaung, brought the nation into collapse. In the period between 1752 and 1760, U Aung Zeya (a) King Alaungminnara strove for rebuilding the nation based in Shwebo. In the time of the king, the organization and military power of the nation reached its peak and the nation was thus held in high esteem by neighbouring countries. But, when the national solidarity was in a state of decline, Myanmar came under the aggression of the colonialists. Myanmar lost its independence and became the colony subsequently to the three aggressive wars that took place in 1824, 1852 and 1885. So, it can be deduced that unity is important for the Union at all times.

Buddhist Association and the General Conference of Buddhists Association and launched anti-colonialist struggles to rise against the colonialists. However, the Divide-and-Rule Policy employed by the colonialists caused collapse of the GBA which split into pieces. But, it could not harm the policy of the association, which speeded up its anti-colonialist campaign. Having formed Dobamar Asiyon, national young patriots inculcated the people with patriotic fervour and nationalistic spirit in 1930 for regaining independence. As a result, their encouragement and spur culminated in the 1300 Myanmar Era Uprising, comprising the entire nation.

Despite the conquest over Myanmar, the colonialists could not suppress national fervour and patriotic spirit of Myanmar nationals. Patriotic spirit means the spirit of safeguarding own lineage, cherishing own culture and traditions and the spirit of not yielding to any attempt to harm national prestige and integrity. And Union Spirit is based on patriotic spirit. On 1 January 1886, Myanmar lost its sovereignty. National people who deeply resented the state of being under alien subjugation rose with whatever arms they got against the invaders. Nevertheless, they could not achieve success due to great arm power gap and lack of consolidated forces. Therefore, national people had no opportunity to express their nationalistic spirit and patriotic fervour.

In the early 21st Century, the people formed the Young Men’s League of Myanmar to show the sheer unity of the entire national people. Based on the spirit of national solidarity and Union Spirit conceived in the Panglong Conference, national races exerted greater efforts in their campaigns. Eventually, the nation became an independent and sovereign nation again on 4 January 1948. Panglong Region is therefore a testament to the fact that unity is the strength as well as the lifeblood of the Union.

United Myanmar

* Only when united will the nation prosper…
* How prominent is Our Myanmar saying, Peaceful and modern
* For prosperity of our nation, To build up this rally around
* Our brethren nationals Let’s strive hard.
* Unity means…
* A united strength
* Capable of always smashing destructionists.
* We have lived together on this land
* Many long years.
* Have or have-not
* We have dwelt together
* Our nation, our race
* Loving and cherishing.

Don’t believe what outsiders say
Believe what own blood says.
In any emergency, blood must get together
When it’s urgent, blood gets close.
And clasped hands get stronger.
For the future Myanmar To be prosperous,
Helping hands to be built up
Union national brethren
Let’s strive together.

Soe Moe (Pathaine) (Trs)

Based on the spirit of national solidarity and Union Spirit conceived in the Panglong Conference, national races exerted greater efforts in their campaigns. Eventually, the nation became an independent and sovereign nation again on 4 January 1948. Panglong Region is therefore a testament to the fact that unity is the strength as well as the lifeblood of the Union.

Translation: MS
Rakhine State witnesses sustained progress in the time of the Tatmadaw government

With an area of 14,200 square miles, Rakhine State is located in the western part of the Union of Myanmar and is home to Rakhine, Bamar, Chin, Mro, Thet, Khami, Daingnet, Maramargyi, Kaman, etc. The population of the state is about 3,045,000 and the population density stands at 215 persons per square mile.

Rakhine State is sandwiched between the Bay of Bengal and Rakhine mountain range which is running from north to south. With an altitude of 3000 feet, Rakhine mountain range has more higher peaks in the north than in the south. Rivers namely Naff, Mayyu and Kitsapanadi and creeks such as Ma-ei, Tanlwe, Taungup, Thandwe, Kyientali and Gwa are flowing from north to south. Sittway plain is the largest one in the region and the sea is dotted with Phayonga, Yanbye, Manaung islands and other small islands. The government is trying its best to raise the living standard of the entire national people and national brethren residing in Rakhine State are no exception.

Infrastructures such as roads, bridges, dams, hospitals, clinics, schools, etc. have been built throughout the country and thus Rakhine State is witnessing development like other states and divisions.

The table below provides readers with facts and figures on development of Rakhine State during the period from 1988 to the present.

### Development of Rakhine State

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Subject</th>
<th>1988</th>
<th>2006</th>
<th>Progress</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Agriculture/Livestock breeding</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sown acreage</td>
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<td>Dam</td>
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<td>Sown acreage of monsoon paddy</td>
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<td>Sown acreage of summer paddy</td>
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<td>Sown acreage of edible oil crops</td>
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<tr>
<td>Acres of prawn breeding ponds</td>
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<td>Reseved Forest (square mile)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Area of natural forest (square mile)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Forest plantation (acre)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Motor road (mile)</td>
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<td>Tarred road (mile)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Under 180 feet bridge</td>
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<tr>
<td>Self-reliant village library</td>
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<td>3520</td>
<td>3520</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sub-printing house</td>
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Three-storey main building of Government Technological College (Swittway) in Rakhine State.
Over 10,000 people attend 59th Anniversary...

(From page 16)

the Union Solidarity and Development Association Maj-Gen Hla Htay Win, Mayor Brig-Gen Aung Thein Lin, Minister for Progress of Border Areas and National Races and Development Affairs Col Thein Nyunt, representative of Union Day delegates U Hsan Kyaw of Chin State, Tatmadaw (Army, Navy and Air) and Police Officers, national races and USDA members, to the People’s Square.

Next, the Union Flag was planted in the silver bowl on the dais in front of the national races’ emblems representing States

University of Culture, local and foreign journalists, executives of Division, District and Township USDAs, cultural troupes, USDA members of States and Divisions, representatives of peace groups totalling 1,188.

Over 10,688 people from four districts attended the ceremony.

At 4.30 am, Secretary of Yangon Division PDC Lt-Col Myint Kyi read out the agenda of the ceremony. While those present saluted the Union Flag, the State Military Band played the national anthem.

Commander Brig-Gen Hla Htay Win read out the message sent by Chairman of the State Peace and Development Council Commander-in-Chief of Defence Services Senior General Than Shwe. Afterwards, Mayor Brig-Gen Aung Thein Lin handed it over to Chairman of the Union Day Flag Convoying and Billboard Erecting Sub-committee Chairman Secretary of YCDC U Tin Soe.

U Tin Soe carried the Union Flag again and planted it in the silver bowl on board the Union Boat.

The Union Boat convoyed the Union Flag, flanked by members of the panel of chairmen, Tatmadaw (Army, Navy and Air) and Police Officers, national race girls, to the City Hall where the Union Flag will be kept the whole year. Along the route, local people in Dagon, Lanmadaw, Latha, Pabedan and Kyauktada Townships welcomed the Union Flag by waving miniature flags together with the banners bearing “Warm welcome to the Union Flag” across the roads.

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

Flanked by members of the panel of chairmen, Tatmadaw (Army, Navy and Air) and Police Officers, and national races, the Mayor carried the Union Flag and planted it in the silver bowl on the dais in the drawing-room of the mayor so as to spend the whole year. Next, those present saluted the Union Flag.

Afterwards, Mayor Brig-Gen Aung Thein Lin and flag relay team took out the Union Flag from the silver bowl and carried it flanked by members of the panel of chairmen, Tatmadaw (Army, Navy and Air) and Police Officers, national races and officials of the military command, departmental heads, YCDC members, rector, principals, medical superintendents, departmental officials, representatives of 16 NGOs, national races and District and Township USDAs, cultural troupes, USDA members of States and Divisions, representatives of peace groups totalling 1,188.

Government offices, shops and houses, parks, roads, bridges, markets and schools were decorated with various sizes of Union Flags as a gesture of honouring the 59th Anniversary Union Day. — MNA

Union Flag conveyed to People’s Square for Union Day ceremony

YANGON, 12 Feb — A ceremony took place this morning to convey the Union Flag that rested a night on Salin sports ground in Kyimyindine township to the People’s Square on Pyay Road here where the 59th Anniversary Union Day ceremony would be held. Officials, local authorities, social organizations, teachers and students and the public attended the ceremony.

The Union Flag was conveyed to the Public Square through the route covering Panbingyi Street, Kyimyindine Strand Road, Nanattaw overpass, Nanattaw Street, Pyay Road in Kyimyindine, Kamayut, Sangyoung and Dagon townships. Along the route, the public including service personnel, factory workers and social organization members gave rousing welcome to the Union Flag.

Later, the Union Flag arrived at the designated place. — MNA

Mayor Brig-Gen Aung Thein Lin plants the Union Flag in the silver bowl on the dais at People’s Square. — MNA

Members of the panel of chairmen at 59th Anniversary Union Day Ceremony. — MNA
Myanmar produces bio-diesel from physic nut

Extend physic nut as national duty

Myanmar has cultivable lands and vacuum lands in abundance. Myanmar has an area of 261,228 square miles, and forest coverage stands at more than half the total land area. Myanmar’s cultivable land area is about 45 million acres. The Tatmadaw Government’s drive for extended cultivation of crops has increased the number of sown acreages to over 43 million. So, there remain only 20 million acres of cultivable land in the nation.

Extend sown acreage

About 16 million acres of virgin and vacuum land still remain in Myanmar, accounting for more than 18 million acres to be cultivated. In a bid to raise the agriculture sector, Myanmar is taking steps for boosting per-acre yields of ten major crops and speeding up the growing of physic nut that is nationwide popular and can be used as a multi-purpose crop.

Now, the target has been set to put seven to seven million acres under physic nut across the nation. But, the total sown acreage is to be extended as much as possible yearly in the interests of the nation if it shows a great benefit. Of 60 districts in Myanmar, the ones in the arid zone will meet the target of growing more than 100,000 acres each.

Nurture physic nut saplings systematically

Physic nut is easy to be planted. If physic nut plants are grown extensively in systematic way, it will make considerable contribution to the interest of the nation. By sowing seeds or planting grafts, physic nut can grow well. There are many conventional methods of growing physic nut. To achieve fine growth rate of plants with high yield of fruits, physic nut is to be grown in accordance with the agricultural methods set by the Myanmar Agriculture Service. Seek better ways for boosting per acre yield

Seeds can be sowed directly or saplings-planting if it is to grow physic nut with the use of seeds. And grafts can be planted directly or nurtured first in small plastic bags to be planted. If physic nut plants are grown at six-foot intervals, the first yield of the plants reaches its peak at the age between 13 and 14 months. In general, a plant grown from a graft starts to bear fruits at the age of six months and a plant grown from a seed at the age of eight months.

Egypt win record fifth African National Cup title

CAIRO, 11 Feb — Egypt won a record fifth African Cup title Friday, beating Ivory Coast 4-2 on penalties after goalless draw in the regular and extra time.

Mohamed Aboutirka converted the clinching penalty for the Pharaohs after Egyptian keeper Essam El Hadari saved attempts by Didier Drogba and Bakary Kone, sending a crowd of more than 74,000, including Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak, in Cairo International Stadium into a frenzy. The victory gave Egypt its first title since 1998 and one more than Ghana and Cameroon. It was the second time Egypt has beaten the Ivory Coast in two weeks. Egypt won their Group A’s round encounter 3-1. Penalties were required after 120 minutes of goalless soccer, including a disputed extra-time penalty, which Egyptian captain Ahmed Hassan put off the post. The Ivory Coast, which was seeking only its second continental title and first since 1992, had its best chance in the 77th minute but Drogba shot high over an empty net. "This tournament belongs to the Egyptian fans. It was not one single player who won this. It was a joint effort," veteran Egyptian striker Hossam Hassan said.

Ahmed Hassan, Mohamed Abdulwahab, Amr Zaki and Abutraika converted their penalty attempts for Egypt, while Abdulrahim Ali missed. For Ivory Coast, Kolo Toure and Emmanuel Eboue scored.

British lottery winner jailed for brawl

LONDON, 12 Feb — A British man who won nearly 10 million pounds (17.5 million US dollars) in the National Lottery was jailed for nine months on Friday after admitting affray, accost official said.

Michael Carroll, 22, dubbed the "Lotto Lout" by newspapers after a string of drugs and disorderly offences, had burst into a church disco in Norfolk, eastern England, with two friends wielding baseball bats in May 2004. He had admitted the offence at an earlier hearing and returned to Norwich Crown Court for sentencing on Friday.

Uzbekistan suspends US NGO activities

ALMA ATA, 12 Feb — Uzbekistan has ordered the US non-governmental organization (NGO) Freedom House to suspend its activities in the country for six months, a spokesman for the Supreme Court of Uzbekistan said Friday in Tashkent.

The Uzbek Justice Ministry said that the organization had had meetings with representatives of other NGOs in the country without official permission, and that quite a number of the NGOs had not registered with the justice department, the spokesman said.

The spokesman said the organization had violated the regulations of the country’s civil non-profit organizations law.

In addition, Freedom House had not spent the money funded by the British Embassy to Uzbekistan, which amounts to 17,000 US dollars, on declared activities, the spokesman added.

The spokesman said that Freedom House was also involved in other illegal activities, including providing Internet access without permission.

Seek better ways for boosting per acre yield

British lottery winner jailed for brawl

Sharon at no immediate risk after surgery

JERUSALEM, 12 Feb — Comatose Israeli Prime Minister Ariel Sharon’s life was not in immediate danger after emergency surgery on Saturday, but the operation would not improve his chances of recovery, the hospital said.

Hasadassah hospital director Shlomo Mor-Yosef told a news conference that one third of Sharon’s large intestine was removed to avoid the danger of infection and that there were no complications during the operation. Sharon has been in a coma since suffering a massive stroke on 4 Jan. Mor-Yosef said that after the operation on Saturday, he was in a critical but stable condition. “I don’t see any problem with the outcome of this specific operation, but again the main problem is not this operation, but recovering from his stroke.”

The announcement was made by Li Yong’an, general manager of China Yangtze River Three Gorges Project Development Corporation.

The Three Gorges Power Plant, where turbo-generators with a combined installed capacity of 9.8 million kilowatts are now operational, along with the Gezhouba Power Plant downstream of the Three Gorges project, are capable of generating between 240 million kilowatts per hour and 250 million kilowatts per hour of electricity daily, equivalent to 5 per cent of the country’s actual daily power consumption, according to Li. Launched in 1993, the Three Gorges Project, including a 185-metre-high dam and 26 generators, is being built in three stages on the middle reaches of China’s longest river, the Yangtze.

The gigantic, multi-functional Three Gorges Project is estimated to cost 180 billion yuan (approximately 21.7 billion US dollars) and will have a combined generating capacity of 18.2 million kilowatts.
Huge explosives seized in Bangladesh

DHAKA, 11 Feb — Bangladesh Rifles (BDR) troops seized huge explosive and hand bombs in Sunamganj District, about 400 kilometres north-east of Dhaka early Friday, private news agency UNI reported.

The haul included nine powerful hand bombs, four power gels weighing 125 grammes, another two power gels weighing 110 grammes and nine novel power gels weighing 125 grammes. According to the BDR news release, several miscreants, walking into Bangladesh from India along with the explosive materials, left those behind sensing the presence of a patrol team of the BDR at about 3 am.

The paramilitary troops recovered the hand bombs and explosives and handed those over to the local department concerned. MNA/Xinhua

British, Dutch aid workers freed in Colombia

BOGOTA (Colombia), 11 Feb — Two workers with the international aid group Doctors Without Borders were released on Thursday after being held for five days by an armed group in the jungles far as 40 kilometres away, the international aid group Doctors Without Borders said.

The hostages, one British and one Dutch, were seized in North Santander Province near Venezuela on Saturday while trying to bring health services to communities hit by the country’s guerrilla war.

“They have been released without conditions,” a Doctors Without Borders spokesperson told Reuters. “They are in good health and good spirits.”

The spokesperson declined to name the two men or say what their job was in North Santander, one of 10 Colombian provinces where Doctors Without Borders operates.

Local newspaper Vanguardia Liberal reported the two were kidnapped by the leftist National Liberation Army, or ELN, which is demanding that the government hand over the body of one of its leaders, Wildemar Castro, who was killed in a recent battle with the Army, in return for the hostages. MNA/Reuters

Death toll reaches 31 in Pakistan blast

ISLAMABAD, 11 Feb — The death toll from a blast in a remote town in Pakistan’s North-West Frontier Province (NWFP) has reached 31 with dozens of others injured, according to a Geo TV report on Friday.

Two explosions hit the mourners procession commemorating Youm-i-Ashur on Thursday morning in the main market of Hangu, some 200 kilometres northwest of Islamabad.

In another incident in Syud Banda area near Hangu, unknown persons opened fire at a passenger coach killing four people including a woman and wounding two others. MNA/Xinhua

Japanese man held over bomb joke at Manila Airport

MANILA, 11 Feb — Philippine police detained a 71-year-old Japanese man at Manila’s International Airport on Friday after he said he was carrying two bombs, “He is being held for a bad joke,” said Rolando Estabillo, a spokesperson for Philippine Airlines. “I am not sure whether police will set him free or file charges against him for some security violations.”

Signs at Manila’s International and domestic airports warn passengers not to make jokes about carrying explosives.

Airline and security officials said Yason Ishii was being frisked by guards when he was overheard saying he had two bombs. His luggage was searched but police found no explosives.

Estabillo said the Philippine Airlines flights left on time for Tokyo’s Narita Airport on Friday afternoon without the man. “We don’t tolerate any jokes,” said airport police officer Fely Parariza. MNA/Reuters

Two killed in boat overturn in eastern Thailand

BANGKOK, 11 Feb — Two people were killed in Thailand’s eastern Trat Province on Friday morning as a ferry boat carrying some 30 passengers capsized in the sea.

The incident took place during the boat’s journey from Ban Dan Kao in the province’s Muang District to Koh Crud.

A local rescue team rushing to the scene has so far rescued nearly 20 lives, however, two passengers were found dead from drowning. They have not yet been identified.

The rest of the passengers on boat were still unaccounted for, reported the Thai News Agency.

Initial investigation found that the ferry’s overload was the cause of the tragedy. MNA/Xinhua

Foreign investors select China as R&D base

BEIJING, 11 Feb — Foreign investors are setting up an increasing number of research and development facilities in China, according to the Chinese Ministry of Commerce.

There are about 750 of these centres in China, mainly distributed in Shanghai, Beijing and Shenzhen where foreign investment is concentrated.

In response to China’s hunger for advanced overseas technologies, many multinationals have re-deployed their global strategy and have made China one of their priority locations for R&D centres.

The ministry said the centres mainly focus on high-tech industries such as electronic and telecommunications equipment, manufacturing of transport equipment, pharmaceuticals and chemical materials.

Multinationals such as Microsoft, IBM, Motorola, Nokia and Toyota have all established R&D centres in China.

With the expansion of the China market, many multinationals have kept increasing investment in their China R&D centres.

Statistics show that the investment of companies like General Motors, Philips, Motorola and Siemens to their Chinese R&Ds have all exceeded 10 million US dollars. These foreign R&Ds have all exceeded 10 million US dollars.

Many centres have combined with Chinese scientific institutions to work on new products and technologies, with both sides reaping the rewards.

Economic observers said by attracting more and more localized foreign R&D centres, China can climb the hierarchy within the global economy and the technological innovation of Chinese companies can be improved. MNA/Xinhua

Canadian village evacuated as grass fire rages

OTTAWA, 11 Feb — A village of about 660 residents in Canada’s Alberta Province was evacuated Thursday after it was threatened by a massive grass fire.

Smoke filled the sky in the vicinity of Cerseland Village, about 40 kilometres southeast of the province’s industrial centre Calgary.

The fire was visible as far as 40 kilometres away, Canadian Television reported.

Japanese PM to visit Vietnam next week

HANOI, 11 Feb — Russian Prime Minister Mikhail Fradkov will pay an official visit to Vietnam from 16-17 February in a move to bolster cooperative ties, a Vietnamese Foreign Ministry spokesman said on Thursday.

During the two-day visit, Fradkov will hold talks with his Vietnamese counterpart Pham Van Khach and meet with other Vietnamese top officials, discussing measures to step up friendly and cooperative relations and the strategic partnership between the two countries, including the ties in economy, trade, investment and anti-narcotics, spokesman Le Dung told a regular Press briefing.

An ethnic Tibetan woman watches a Cham dance performance at the Labrang Monastery in Xiahe, western China’s Gansu Province, on 11 Feb, 2006, during the Monlam or Great Prayer ceremony. —INTERNET
French car maker Renault to launch 26 new models by 2009

PARIS, 10 Feb — French car maker Renault announced on Thursday that it would launch 26 new models by 2009 in order to become the most profitable European auto manufacturer.

The company would also enter new segments of the market, including the sports utility vehicle (SUV) and four-wheel-drive cars, Renault CEO Carlos Ghosn said.

“Renault is not in crisis but remains fragile. This fragility can lead to a dangerous situation and is therefore unacceptable,” Ghosn told a Press conference.

He said a key element of his three-year strategic plan was to launch new models to refresh the Renault range of cars, in a bid to make Renault “the most profitable car maker in Europe.”

Ghosn, currently head of both Renault and Japanese Nissan car makers, has a reputation as an expert at revitalizing companies.

He took over as chief executive of Nissan in 1999 and turned the company into a world leader in four years.

Nissan is 44.4-per-cent owned by Renault.

“We cannot be satisfied with an operating margin of 3.2 per cent,” he said, adding that it was “inferior to the average margin of other world car makers which is 3.6 per cent”. Earlier, Renault posted its net profit in 2005 at 3.367 billion euros (4.03 billion dollars), a rise of 18.7-per-cent compared with 2004 and the best record in the company’s history. — MNA/Xinhua

Over 3,000-year-old tombs unearthed in Henan Province

ZHENGZHOU, 11 Feb — Archaeologists in the central China Province of Henan have excavated 336 tombs dating back more than 3,000 years.

Arranged in U-shape, the tombs were unearthed near Hebi City at the Lazuizhuang ruins of the Shang Dynasty (1600-1046 BC). Funeral objects were discovered in 208 of the 336 tombs, including tomahawks, strings of turquoise stone beads, ancient cooking vessels and basins.

The most noticeable among these tombs contained a stone coffin, which was formed by 13 stones. Archaeologists also discovered that in some of the tombs, stones were put beside the head or feet of the tomb owner.

Judging from the few funeral objects in each tomb and the shape and structure of the tombs, archaeologists said that the tombs belonged to a clan of middle to lower class of their day.

This is the first time that such a great number of Shang tombs have been unearthed in Henan Province and the discovery provides valuable evidence for studying the funeral rituals, social structure, and culture of the Shang Dynasty, said Zhao Xiping, a research fellow with the Henan Provincial Cultural Heritage and Archaeological Research Institute. — MNA/Xinhua

“Reuters” photo of child famine victim wins top award

AMSTERDAM, 11 Feb — A Reuters picture of a mother and child at an emergency feeding centre in Niger during the recent famine there won the coveted 2005 World Press Photo of the Year Award, organizers said on Friday.

The picture, taken by Canadian photographer Finbarr O’Reilly in Tahoua, northernwestern Niger, on 1 August, 2005 shows the emaciated fingers of a one-year-old child pressed against the lips of his mother.

A swarm of locusts and the worst drought in decades left millions of people short of food in the West African state. "The picture has haunted me ever since I first saw it two weeks ago," said James Colton, chairman of the World Press jury. "It has stayed in my head, even after seeing all the thousands of others during the competition. This image has everything — beauty, horror and despair."

The picture was chosen from 83,044 images entered by 4,448 professional photographers — 182 more than in 2004 — from 122 countries. The beauty of the picture is that there is a little ambiguity in it... To me it showed compassion between mother and child. But some people may look at it as being helplessness and despair," Colton said in an interview.

O’Reilly will receive a cash prize of 10,000 euros (12,000 US dollars) for the award. — MNA/Reuters

No sign of Mt Fuji to erupt, but Japan makes plan

TOKYO, 11 Feb — Japan’s Government is expected to announce this month measures to deal with a possible eruption of its famed Mount Fuji, officials said, but they added there were no signs that the long-dormant volcano had become active.

The 3,776-metre (12,390 feet) Mount Fuji has not erupted for nearly three centuries, but signs of increased seismic activity five years ago prompted the government to create a panel to begin work on an evacuation plan.

The panel has already outlined ways to evacuate people near Mount Fuji, the best locations for shelters, and envisaged flow routes of lava, ash, gas and rocks.

The reports to date have also stressed the need to ensure efficient communications between the central and local governments and residents in the area by using the Internet, television and radio.

The panel has also called for the government to provide training on evacuation to local governments, hotels and travel agencies and for volunteer systems to be set up.

“After all, there are no signs that an eruption of Mount Fuji is imminent,” said a Cabinet Office official. “But it is important for us to sort out what the government can do.”

The government will put together the panel’s recommendations into an official plan. — MNA/Reuters

Don’t smoke

Blind persons trained online as psychoanalysts

BEIJING, 10 Feb — The first batch of 156 blind people from across the country have completed an online training programme and passed final tests that qualify them as psychoanalysts.

At least 50 others are continuing with the training, the first of its kind which started in October 2004 and drew more than 200 blind students from 20 provinces and municipalities, said Wang Jianjun, an official with the employment service for handicapped people under China Disabled Persons’ Federation.

They studied basic psychology, social psychology, development psychology, mental health and handicaps as well as professional ethics and diagnostic skills of psychoanalysts, said Wang.

The students were provided with multimedia talking books which enabled them to follow the courses and interact with their teachers through assignments and quizzes on a computer at home and work units or a training centre for the handicapped in their communities. — MNA/Xinhua
Bordeaux cut Lyon's lead to 7 points

PARIS, 12 Feb— Girondins Bordeaux cut Olympique Lyon's lead to seven points when they beat Stade Rennes 2-0 at home while the champions salvaged a 1-1 draw at Racing Lens.

The injury-hit Ligue 1 leaders were about to suffer over their second league defeat this season when France forward Sylvain Wiltord struck from outside the box in the 92nd minute.

Lens striker Jussie had curled home a superb shot from 18 metres to put the hosts in front 10 minutes into the second half but they ran out of steam in the closing minutes.

Bordeaux, who have yet to lose this year, sealed their sixth victory from seven outings against Rennes thanks to goals by Fernando in the 39th minute and Vladimir Smicer in the 67th.

Lyon have a game in hand of another coming back through Fabio Rochemback before Stewart Downing added a second on halftime. Aiyegebi Yakubu added a third after the break.

Second-placed Manchester United can cut Chelsea's lead to 12 points when they play at Portsmouth in Saturday's late game.

Borussia Dortmund on Sunday, lead by 12 points when they play at Portsmouth in a third after the break.

Fourth-placed Schalke also regained their Champions League hopes after an extraordinary 7-4 win at home to Bayer Leverkusen gave them 39 points.

Goals from Soren Larsen, Mladen Krstajic and Zlatan Bajramovic put the side who demolished Real Madrid 6-1 in the table, a point ahead of Real Madrid on 47 matches, 25 points behind leaders Chelsea who are in action later at Middlesbrough.

Champions League hopes against the run of play just added to the table with 51 points, followed by Hamburg on 44 and Bremen on 43.

Kaiserslautern's victory took them up to a place to 7th with 17 points from 21 games. Cologne will overtake them again if they win at home to Borussia Dortmund on Sunday.

Bremen dominated the game but failed to take their chances and second-half goals from Boubacar Sanogo and Ervin Skela earned the visitors a surprise win.

Hamburg won 1-0 at home to Mainz with a goal from Mehdi Mahdavikia.

Hamburg go second after shock Bremen defeat

FRANKFURT, 12 Feb— Werder Bremen suffered a costly 2-0 defeat at home to bottom club Kaiserslautern on Saturday, handing second spot to Hamburg SV and giving Bayern Munich a chance to move up 10 points clear at the top on Sunday.

Bremen dominated the game but failed to take their chances and second-half goals from Boubacar Sanogo and Ervin Skela earned the visitors a surprise win.

Hamburg won 1-0 at home to Mainz with a goal from Mehdi Mahdavikia.

Champions Bayern, who are at home to Nu- remberg on Sunday, lead by 12 points when they play at Portsmouth in a third after the break.

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Organ-donation information proposal mooted in HK

HONG KONG, 12 Feb — Hong Kong’s Health, Welfare and Food Bureau said Friday it will study a proposal to use Smart ID cards to carry or access organ-donation information.

In a Legislative Council paper, the bureau said the Smart ID card could be used as an alternative and convenient means for organ donors to indicate their wish through electronic channels.

The proposal could supplement the current organ-donation card system, it said.

However, the bureau stressed that, given current social values, even if the proposal is adopted, the existing practice of seeking the consent of the deceased’s next-of-kin for organ donation should continue and the next-of-kin’s decision should be respected. Under the existing provisions, information about a person’s willingness to become an organ donor is not a pre-scribed particular that is required to be furnished for the purpose of the registration and issue of an ID card. Should the proposal to incorporate organ-donation details in the Smart ID card be adopted, a legislative amendment will be required to enable the Director of Immigration to include the data in the ID card.

The bureau will study whether there is sufficient spare capacity in the Smart ID card to store all the organ-donation details.

It will also explore how it can provide for the donor to amend the record in the Smart ID Card anytime he/she wishes to do so, and to allow authorized persons to access the organ-donation details in case the donor is unconscious or dead.

MNA/Xinhua
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

Stability of the State, community peace and tranquillity, prevalence of law and order
- National reconsolidation
- Emergence of a new enduring State Constitution
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Over 10,000 people attend 59th Anniversary Union Flag Hoisting Ceremony

**YANGON, 12 Feb —**
The 59th Anniversary Union Day Flag Hoisting Ceremony was held at the People’s Square on Pyay Road, here, this morning, in accord with the objectives of the 59th Anniversary Union Day: For all national races to safeguard the national policy — 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-step future policy programme of the State.

The Union Flag that spent one night each in four districts of Yangon Division arrived at the People’s Square on Pyay Road by the Union Boat at 7.20 am.

Chairman of Yangon City Development Committee Mayor Brig-Gen Aung Thein Lin and flag relay team accepted the Union Flag from Chairman of Yangon West District Peace and Development Council Lt-Col Kyaw Tint. The flag relay team carried the Union Flag flanked by members of the panel of chairmen of the 59th Anniversary Union Day Flag Hoisting Ceremony Chairman of Yangon Division Peace and Development Council Commander of Yangon Command Brig-Gen Hla Htay Win, Secretary-General of (See page 10)

Mayor Brig-Gen Aung Thein Lin and those present at the 59th Anniversary Union Day Ceremony salute the Union Flag. — MNA

Commander Brig-Gen Hla Htay Win reads out the message sent to 59th Anniversary Union Day Ceremony by Chairman of the State Peace and Development Council Senior General Than Shwe. — MNA

- The colonialists resorted to all possible evil means to extend their rule over Myanmar. Administration of the plains and hilly regions separately since they guaranteed Di-Archy Rule of the nation in 1923 bore witness to their scheme to undermine the cohesion among the national races. Braving all the frustration caused by the colonialists, leaders of national races held the Panglong Conference in Panglong, Shan State (South), from 3 to 12 February 1947 for the people of the plains and the hilly regions to enjoy the independence together.

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