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Wednesday, 17 December, 2003

State encouraging traditional medicine in all sectors for its systematic progress and standardization normal efforts are not enough for firmness and perpetuation of delicate art of traditional medicines

Chairman of the State Peace and Development Council Senior General Than Shwe sent a message to the Fourth Myanmar Traditional Medicine Practitioners Conference.

The message is as follows:

It is now the Fourth Myanmar Traditional Medicine Practitioners Conference that has been held annually with the lofty aims: to develop traditional medicine in accord with the required standard; and to promote the traditional medicine sector to better benefit public health care services.

Here it is to be emphasized that the State honours and praises the traditional medicine practitioners for successfully holding the annual conference, where they can discuss in unity further raising of the standard, qualification and dignity of their profession in accord with the noble aims.

With the conviction that giving encouragement and protection for perpetual development of the Myanmar traditional medicine amounts to preserving and promoting it as a cultural heritage, and in addition to extending the scope of public health care with the use of traditional medicine, the State Peace and Development Council is encouraging and safeguarding

the field on all fronts.

Throughout the course of history of Myanmar civilization countable by the years in the thousand, the traditional medicine has been developing and flourishing stage by stage in accord with the geographical condition, culture and customs and traditional art of thinking of the nation, and besides, it has been a genuine traditional heritage helping keep Myanmar healthy and fit and possessing physical and intellectual ability.

Moreover, the traditional medicine is a much delicate and profound branch of studies having a large collection of detailed treatises, potent medicines and effective therapies discovered and invented by the Myanmar traditional medicine practitioners of the successive eras.

Normal efforts are not enough for the firmness and perpetuation of the delicate art of traditional medicine whose range is unlimited, and which is in the golden age as it is being encouraged by the State and its potency winning the trust and reliance of the majority. In this regard, I would like to urge all the traditional medicine practitioners to make endeavours in harmony and unison to preserve and promote the field.

(See page 2)

Union Spirit

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)

Chairman of the State Peace and Development Council Senior General Than Shwe sends message of felicitations to Bhutan

YANGON, 17 Dec — On the occasion of the National Day of Bhutan which falls on 17 December 2003, Senior General Than Shwe, Chairman of the State Peace and Development Council of the Union of Myanmar, has sent a message of felicitations to His Majesty Jigme Singye Wangchuck, King of Bhutan.

MNA

Independence Day commemorative features on Pages 6, 7 and 11.

Nurses Sports Festival commences

YANGON, 16 Dec — The 48th Nurses Sports Festival (Yangon) was opened this morning at Aung San Stadium, with an address delivered by Chairman of Yangon Division Peace and Development Council Commander of Yangon Command Maj-Gen Myint Swe.

Athletes marched past the commander. The commander explained the aims of the festival in his address.

The championship shield was handed over to Vice-President of the Myanmar Nurses Association Daw Khin May Win, who formally opened the festival.

Over 300 nurses are taking part in the festival, sponsored by the MNA, which continues till 19 December.

Also present were Director-General of Sports and Physical Education Department U Thang Htaik, No 4 Military Region Commander Col Yan Naing Oo, officials, guests, nurses and athletes. — MNA

Vice-Senior General Maung Aye receives Malaysian Military Attaches

YANGON, 16 Dec — Vice-Chairman of the State Peace and Development Council of the Union of Myanmar Deputy Commander-in-

Chief of Defence Services Commander-in-Chief (Army) Vice-Senior General Maung Aye received Malaysian Military Attaché

Col Hj Harun Bin Hitam, who has completed his tour of duty, and new Military Attaché Col Hj Abbas Bin Hj Mat at Zeyathiri Beikman

Hall on Konmyinthta at 10 am today.

Also present at the call were Military Adviser to the Chairman of the State Peace

and Development Council General Khin Nyunt and Chief of Staff (Navy) Rear Admiral Soe Thein. —

MNA



Vice-Senior General Maung Aye receives Malaysian Military Attache Col Hj Harun Bin Hitam and his successor Col Hj Abbas Bin Hj Mat. — MNA

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

PERSPECTIVES

Wednesday, 17 December, 2003

Readying ourselves for keeping abreast with international community

Nowadays, science and technology have been experiencing such rapid development that they have overshadowed all other sectors. At a time like this, it is our national duty to prevent our Union, a developing nation, from falling into the influence of others. Therefore, the government has been striving for the emergence of patriotic and highly qualified human resources to increase the national wealth and enhance the development of science and technology.

A ceremony to honour those who had succeeded in gaining their doctorates from universities under the Ministry of Education, the Ministry of Health and the Ministry of Science and Technology was held at the Golden Jubilee Hall on the morning of 15 December and it was attended by Chairman of Myanmar Education Committee Prime Minister General Khin Nyunt.

In his address on the occasion, the Prime Minister said that the Union of Myanmar can take pride in the fact that its universities are constantly turning out doctorate degree holders who can bring development to it. For the education sector to be able to develop advanced technologies and to produce highly qualified human resources, new universities and colleges are being opened region-wise and subject-wise.

As a result, there is a total of 154 universities and colleges all over the nation and there are more than 2,600 candidates attending the 31 doctorate courses conducted by Yangon University, Mandalay University, Yangon Institute of Economics and Yangon Institute of Education under the Ministry of Education. Similarly, nearly 180 candidates are working for Ph.D and Dr.Med.Sc at the universities under the Ministry of Health. Meanwhile, at the universities under the Ministry of Science and Technology, about 470 trainees are doing doctorate courses on engineering, architect and information and communication. Up to December, 2003, the universities under the Ministry of Education have produced 119 doctorate degree holders, the Ministry of Health 71 and the Ministry of Science and Technology 173.

We would like to urge all the doctorate degree holders to apply their skills and knowledge in such a way as to develop the nation and a knowledge-based society. Only then will our Union be able to keep abreast with other nations of the world.

UMFCCI President receives guest

YANGON, 16 Dec — Executive Vice-President of Korea International Trade Association (KITA) Mr Lee Suk-Young, accompanied by Commercial Attache of the Embassy of the Republic of Korea Mr Choi Yong-Tae, called on Union of Myanmar Federation of Chambers of Commerce & Industry President U Win Myint, Vice-President U Zaw Min Win, U Aung Lwin and Joint Secretary-2 Dr Maung Maung Lay yesterday morning at the head office of the UMFCCI here. They discussed matters relating to investment and trade promotion and development of small and medium enterprises. —MNA



UMFCCI President U Win Myint receives Korean guests. — MNA



Vice-Senior General Maung Aye greets Malaysian Military Attache Col Hj Harun Bin Hitam and his successor Col Hj Abbas Bin Hj Mat. (News on page 1) — MNA

MAI launches Yangon-HK direct flights

YANGON, 16 Dec — Myanmar International Airways (MAI) has announced the launch of a new service to Hong Kong from Yangon, Myanmar. Commencing 12 December 2003, MAI will operate a twice-weekly service using a combination of Boeing 737-800 and Boeing MD 82 aircraft.

Flight 8M 237 will depart Yangon every Monday and Friday at 7.45 am and arrive in Hong Kong at 12.45 am. Conversely, flight 8M 238 will depart Hong Kong at 13.45 pm every Monday and Friday and arrive in Yangon at 3.45 pm. This was disclosed by Gerard de Vaz, Managing Director for MAI. —NLM

Malaysian delegation concludes visit

YANGON, 16 Dec — The Malaysian delegation led by Under Secretary Dr Hj Ismail bin Hj Ahmad of the Policy Division of Malaysian Armed Forces visited Defence Services Medical Academy in Yangon this morning.

The delegation members were welcomed by Rector of DSMA Brig-Gen Min Thein and faculty members. Brig-Gen Min Thein extended greetings, and explained the background history of the academy with the help of audio-visual aids. Brig-Gen Min Thein and Dr Hj Ismail bin Hj Ahmad exchanged

souvenirs.

Officials conducted the Malaysian guests round the institution.

The Malaysian guests left here by air in the evening after completion of their visit to Myanmar.

They were seen off at the airport by Deputy Commandant of National Defence College Brig-Gen Than Maung, senior military officers, Military Attaché of the Malaysian Embassy Col Hj Abbas Hj Mat and officials.

MNA

People's Desire

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

The State is encouraging...

(from page 1)

At the same time, the State is also encouraging the traditional medicine in all sectors for its systematic progress and standardization. For the systematic development of the field, the State is conducting traditional medicine diploma courses and traditional medicine practitioner courses, and also founded an international level University of Traditional Medicine which can confer degrees on the graduates.

Advanced traditional medicine hospitals, dispensaries and clinics have been opened the length and breadth of the nation as a means to extend the public health care services of the traditional medicine sector.

Furthermore, the Traditional Medicine Law has been enacted for ensuring standardization and safety of the Myanmar medicines. Modern traditional medicine factories are emerging in the nation, as the State has been giving encouragement for the advancement of the industry. For scientific progress of the traditional medicine, the State has been making arrangements to discover, to conduct research on and to record the potency and standards of the traditional drugs, to conduct research for production of effective drugs for common diseases, to set up herbal gardens for herbal plant conservation, to discover and promote the potent drugs and therapies for the diseases that cannot be cured by the western medical science, and to find methods for combination of the western medicine and traditional medicine in treating patients.

Thanks to the Government's well-rounded efforts to encourage the traditional medicine, it is developing with greater momentum, and seeing a lot of good results in many areas, as the art of teaching traditional medicine reaching the international level, the traditional medicine itself winning greater confidence and reliance of the people, a large number of traditional medicines manufactured through advanced techniques coming out, and the research work achieving success after success.

At a time when the traditional medicine is in the golden age, the Myanmar Traditional Medicine Practitioners Association has emerged, and the foundations of cooperation among the persons of the profession laid. At this juncture, I would like to express my firm belief that with their united strength, all the traditional medicine practitioners will make utmost efforts for further development and flourishing of the traditional medicine and to extend the effective health care services of the sector for the entire national people.

I wish the Conference to be successful in every aspect in accord with the lofty aims, and the practitioners collectively and energetically striving for the development of the traditional medicine, which is the national heritage and the dignity, reaching the world countries.

MNA

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Under Secretary Dr Hj Asmail bin Hj Ahmad and members being seen off at the airport. — MNA

Shanghai seeks jewellery appraisers

SHANGHAI, 16 Dec—China's commercial hub Shanghai has sped up training of jewellery appraisers to meet the growing demands for senior professionals from its jewellery stores, pawnshops, auctioneers and insurance companies.

The eastern China metropolis has more than 300 jewellery stores, 50 pawnshops and over 70 auctioneers, but only five qualified jewellery appraisers, according to Zhou Yi, general manager of a leading jewellery company in downtown Shanghai.

Zhou is one of the first 16 trainees to attend courses at the city's vocational training centre to become qualified jewellery appraisers.

They have received intensive training over the past six months under the international Anna Miller certification system and are expected to become China's first generation of internationally certified appraisers after they pass tests at the end of the programme.

Zhou's classmates include bosses from time-honoured jewellery stores in Shanghai, professors from the elite Jiaotong and Tongji universities and appraisers from local appraisal organizations. They will be involved in formulating a set of professional standards to guide future jewellery appraisers in the city.

It used to be difficult for Shanghai's jewellery merchants to tell the true value of a piece of jewellery.

"It all depends on the experience, or rather, the feeling, of the evaluator himself," said Tang Yuanjun, head of the Shanghai Zhongbao Jewellery Appraisal Centre.

MNA/Xinhua

455 US soldiers killed since start of military operations in Iraq

BAGHDAD, 16 Dec — As of Monday, 15 Dec, 455 US soldiers have died since the beginning of military operations in Iraq, according to the Department of Defence. Of those, 313 died as a result of hostile action and 142 died of non-hostile causes, the department said.

The British military has reported 52 deaths; Italy, 17; Spain, eight; Denmark, Ukraine and Poland have reported one each.

On or since May 1, when President Bush declared that major combat operations in Iraq had ended, 317 US soldiers have died — 198 as a result of hostile action and 119 of non-hostile causes, according to the Defence Department's figures.

Since the start of military operations, 2,249 US service members have been injured as a result of hostile action, according to the Defence Department's figures as of Monday. Non-hostile injured numbered 361.

The latest deaths reported by the military: A Coalition Joint Task Force soldier died Monday from a non-hostile gunshot wound in Baghdad. —Internet



Iraqi policemen stand beside the remains of a car bomb, after a suicide attack outside a police station on the outskirts of Baghdad, on 15 December, 2003. —INTERNET

Vajpayee urges farmers to tap global market

NEW DELHI, 16 Dec — Indian Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee said on Saturday that India should put in place world standard trading exchanges to tap the 600-billion-dollar global commodities market while protecting the interests of the domestic farmers from sharp price fluctuations.

"For achieving this goal, we have to equip ourselves with the appropriate markets instruments and institutions", Vajpayee said in New Delhi while inaugurating futures trading in wheat and rice. "I am told that by building a commodity trading exchange of global standards, India has an opportunity to chase a 600-billion-US-dollar market opportunity," he said.

Vajpayee said farmers are often worried over the uncertainty of the price they will get for their produce. Introduction of futures and derivative contracts in various commodities is an effective instrument to manage the uncertainty in a free market regime and to mitigate risks, he added.

MNA/Xinhua

India, Iran sign MoU for cooperation

DUBAI, 16 Dec — In a bid to boost their bilateral economic and trade ties, India and Iran on Saturday signed a memorandum of understanding (MoU) to enhance their cooperation in various sectors including petroleum, railways, power and communications.

The MoU was signed by External Affairs Minister Yashwant Sinha and his Iranian counterpart Kamal Kharrazi in Teheran, at the 13th Joint Commission meeting during which the two sides reviewed bilateral relations and stressed the need for sharper thrust to realize the full potential in two-way trade.

The MoU also covered shipping, textiles, small and medium enterprises, cement, pharmaceuticals and biotechnology, and resolved to work together to enhance the pace

of transfer of technology, investment and joint ventures. Officials told PTI.

Senior Indian officials were in Teheran two days prior to the minister's visit to fine-tune and finalize the terms of the MoU.

The automobile sector was particularly in focus as India was keen to set up joint ventures in Iran. Tatas and Mahindras had made a strong pitch at an India Fair in Teheran in this regard early this month.

MNA/PTI

Afro-Arab trade fair records \$167m transactions

DAR-ES-SALAAM, 16 Dec — Business transactions worth 167.3 million US dollars have been recorded during the just ended sixth Afro-Arab Trade Fair, local newspaper *The African* reported on Monday.

Chairman of the fair Ahanda Ngemera was quoted as saying that the figure includes enquiries and orders for both export and imports trade.

Ngemera, also the permanent secretary in the Tanzanian Ministry of Industries

and Trade, said that the figure confirms the success of the fair.

He mentioned some products which exporters have shown interest in as textiles and garments, electrical appliance, cashew nuts, hides and skins, car batter-

ies, beer, spirits, honey and spices.

It is reported that three countries have shown their interest to host the 7th Afro-Arab Trade Fair to be held in 2005, namely the United Arab Emirates, Bahrain and Sudan. —MNA/Xinhua

China, Jordan sign economic cooperation protocols

AMMAN, 16 Dec — China and Jordan on Monday signed four economic cooperation protocols in a bid to further promote bilateral relations.

The executive programme of cultural and scientific cooperation between the two countries over years of 2003 till 2006 was inked by visiting Deputy Chinese Cultural Minister Chang Keren and Jordanian Planning and International Cooperation Minister Basem Awadallah.

The agreement provisions cooperations in education, culture, archaeology, health and media between China and Jordan.

Chinese Ambassador to Jordan Luo Xingwu and Awadallah signed another tech-

nical and economic cooperation agreement, under which the Chinese Government will supply Jordan with 3.6-million-US-dollar interest-free loans to help the country overcome economic crisis.

According to the other two documents, the Chinese Government will provide funds for Jordan to conduct infrastructure projects in the country's southern city of Ma'an, and provide 1,000 tons of rice and some medical equipment for Jordan.

MNA/Xinhua



An unidentified gunner operates a machinegun on a US Army's helicopter patrolling the area of Adwar, some 10 miles of Saddam Hussein hometown of Tikrit, Iraq on Monday, 15 Dec, 2003. — INTERNET

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Suicide bomber kills eight policemen in Iraq

BAGHDAD, 16 Dec — A suicide bomber driving a four-wheel drive taxi killed eight Iraqi policemen in an attack Monday on a station in the capital's northern outskirts, their commander said.

Lt Col Ali Amer said 10 officers were injured in the blast in the northern Husainiyah district. Residents said at least five civilians, including a five-year-old girl, were also wounded by flying glass and debris.

Earlier Monday, seven officers were wounded when another car bomb exploded in the western Ameriyah neighbourhood just after 8 am.

That attack was partially foiled by Iraqi police and US Military Police who fired on a second explosives-packed vehicle and prevented it from ramming the police station and detonating, said US Army Brig Gen Mark Hertling, of the 1st Armoured Division.

A would-be suicide bomber in the second ran off, abandoning the vehicle without detonating it, Hertling said. The man was later captured, said US Army Capt Brad Loudon. The car's 250 kilograms (550 pounds) of plastic explosives, with a powerful limpet mine attached as a detonator, was defused, Hertling said.

Later in the day, several large explosions reverberated in central Baghdad. The cause was not immediately clear.

Hertling said US troops found yet another explosives-packed vehicle parked in east Baghdad on Sunday that appeared to have been abandoned, possibly because of mechanical trouble.

"Right now, we don't know what the target was," Hertling said. "It goes with the intelligence we had yesterday, that there would be several (car bombs). We dodged a couple of bullets in Baghdad." —Internet

Security Council to consider Iraq's future

BAGHDAD, 16 Dec—With the long manhunt for Saddam Hussein finally over, the UN Security Council will meet Tuesday to discuss the still uncertain political future of Iraq.

Iraq's interim foreign minister Hoshiyar Zebari is expected to face a grilling by the 15-nation council, whose bitter divisions over the Iraq war again risk bubbling to the surface.

The United States hopes the dramatic weekend capture of Saddam will unite the council behind its plan for rebuilding of Iraq and the delicate steps needed to establish an interim Iraqi government in the next few months.

"Affirmations of support for the political, economic and security development of Iraq would be most welcome indeed, and most appropriate under the circumstances," US ambassador John Negroponte said on Monday.

Zebari, faces aggrivating the UN but an especially terse statement from Security Council president Stefan Tafrov of Bulgaria on Saddam's capture reflected the reluctance of other nations to throw their full support behind US plans in Baghdad. "Council members welcomed the capture of Saddam Hussein on December 13," he said.

Large UN role

France, Germany and Russia, the council nations that led opposition to the war, want a large role for the United Nations in the political transition and reconstruction of Iraq.—Internet

Arab League to visit Iraq on fact-finding mission

CAIRO, 16 Dec — A delegation of the Arab League (AL) will visit Iraq within days on a fact-finding mission, AL spokesman Hosam Zaki said here on Monday.

"The delegation will be led by AL Assistant Secretary-General Ahmad bin Helli, who will meet with representatives of various political powers in Iraq, including members of the Interim Governing Council (IGC)," Zaki was quoted by Egypt's official MENA news agency as saying.

He said such meetings would focus on seeking the best means to quicken the transfer of power from United States troops to the Iraqis, and on the AL's contribution to developing political life in the war-torn country.

The delegation will also visit some Iraqi cities to get acquainted with conditions on the ground and discuss

problems Iraqis are facing.

The delegation's visit to Iraq comes on the heels of former Iraqi President Saddam Hussein's arrest, which was made near his hometown of Tikrit on Saturday evening.

On Sunday, Arab League chief Amr Moussa remained cautious about Saddam's capture, and said the Iraqis should determine his fate.

"One must let the Iraqi people have their word on this important event," Moussa told reporters. He said the 22-member pan-Arab forum will make contact with the US-picked IGC to learn about its requirements.

Internet

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UN hopes for Iraq reconciliation

BAGHDAD, 16 Dec—The head of the United Nations hopes that the capture of Saddam Hussein will accelerate reconciliation in Iraq.

Secretary General Kofi Annan called for a fair and open trial for Saddam Hussein, and said that the UN remained opposed to the death penalty.

US President George W Bush has refused to be drawn on whether he favours the death penalty for Saddam Hussein. But he said the US would work with the people of Iraq to ensure the trial stands international scrutiny.

However, a senior US official has made it clear the former Iraqi leader is not likely to be handed over for trial in the near future.

He is now being held for interrogation at an undisclosed location, but the International Committee of the Red Cross says it hopes the US military will allow a visit so that it can check on his conditions.

The US says that Saddam Hussein is being treated according to the Geneva Convention, but has not yet confirmed that he is considered a prisoner of war.—Internet

Forum ushers in new era in China-Africa cooperation

ADDIS ABABA, 16 Dec — The establishment of the China-Africa Cooperation Forum three years ago has ushered in a new era of cooperation between China and African nations, Chinese Premier Wen Jiabao said here Monday.

"The past three years since then have witnessed steady growth and remarkable achievements of cooperation between China and Africa on all fronts. Our friendship and mutual trust are stronger and deeper. Our cooperation on international affairs has been constructive and fruitful. Our trade and economic cooperation are growing with a more robust momentum," the premier said at the opening ceremony of the Second Ministerial Conference of the forum.

Wen said China has taken further measures to increase its imports from African countries, and that trade volume between China and Africa has been increasing at an annual rate of more than 20 per cent.

Over the last three years, China has also invested 117 new enterprises in Africa.

Sino-African cooperation in energy development and hi-tech industries is getting off the ground, he said.

Sino-African cooperation in human resources development is on the upswing. China has sponsored a variety of training programmes and trained nearly 7,000 African personnel of a wide range of professions, the Chinese Premier said.

"The Chinese Government has fulfilled ahead of schedule its debt exemption commitments and cancelled 31 African countries' debts totalling 10.5 billion RMB yuan," Wen said.

MNA/Xinhua



Demonstrators shout anti-war slogans during a protest against the government's decision to send its troops to Iraq, in Tokyo, December 15, 2003.

INTERNET

Megawati arrives in Islamabad for visit

ISLAMABAD, 16 Dec — Indonesian President Megawati Soekarnoputri Sunday arrived here for a three-day official visit, the first trip by an Indonesian leader in the past three years.

During her stay, Megawati will hold separate meetings with President Pervez Musharraf and Prime Minister Zafarullah Jamali and exchange views with them on cementing bilateral ties through increased economic cooperation, according to the official *Associated Press of Pakistan*.

She will also discuss with the Pakistani leaders the situation in South Asia, Afghanistan and Iraq. It is reported that the visit will see the world's two largest Muslim nations, both battling Islamic extremism, to forge pacts against terrorism and drug-trafficking. — MNA/Xinhua

India offers defence technology, training to Sudan

BANGALORE, 16 Dec — India has offered military training and defence equipment technology to Sudan for its ambitious 20-year plan to revive and develop its Army, Sudanese Defence Minister Major-General Bakri Hassan Salih said on Sunday.

"We have an ambitious 20-year plan for the revival and development of Sudanese Army. India has demonstrated its political will and determination in this process," Salih told reporters after his visit to the Bharat Earth Movers Ltd factory, a defence undertaking, here. He said the training would encompass the Navy, Army and the Air Force, besides technical institutions in Sudan. — MNA/PTI

African states to become destinations for Chinese tourists

ADDIS ABABA, 16 Dec — The Chinese Government will grant eight more African countries the status of approved destination for outbound Chinese tourists, Chinese Premier Wen Jiabao said here Monday.

Wen made the announcement at the opening ceremony of the Second Ministerial Conference of the China-Africa Cooperation Forum.

The eight African countries are Tanzania, Ethiopia, Kenya, Tunisia, Seychelles, Zambia, Zimbabwe and Mauritius.

"To step up our tour-

ism cooperation with Africa, China will grant eight more African countries the status of approved destination for outbound Chinese tourists," Wen announced.

In 2002, the Chinese Government granted Egypt, South Africa and Morocco the status of approved destination for outbound Chinese tourists.

Once African countries acquired the status of "approved destination for outbound Chinese tourists," Chinese tourists can travel to these countries at their own expenses under the organization of Chinese travel agencies, according to officials from the Chinese Foreign Ministry.

MNA/Xinhua



Actor Jeremy Sumpter portrays Peter Pan and actress Rachel Hurd-Wood plays Wendy Darling in a scene from the live-action film adaptation of the beloved literary classic, 'Peter Pan.' The film opens on 25 December in the United States. — INTERNET

Thai, Laos to build bridge across Heuang River

BANGKOK, 16 Dec — Thailand and Laos have started to build a bridge across the Heuang River between Thailand's Loei Province and Laos' Sayaboury Province to facilitate trade and tourism between the two countries, *The Nation* newspaper reported Monday.

Thai Foreign Minister Surakiart Sathirathai and his Laotian counterpart Somsavat Lengsavad presided over the groundbreaking ceremony Sunday at Ban Na Kaseng in Loei Province, 550 kilometres northeast of Bangkok.

Surakiart said that the bridge, scheduled to be finished in six months, would facilitate transport of agricultural products from Laos to Thailand and the movement of tourists from Thailand to Laos.

MNA/Xinhua

Palestinians burn US flags over Saddam's capture

GAZA, 16 Dec— About 200 diehard Palestinian supporters of Saddam Hussein burnt US flags on Monday to protest against his capture by US troops while their leader Yasser Arafat kept silent.

Most Palestinians were no champions of Saddam's brutal leadership but all saw him as the only consistent Arab patron of their independence struggle against Israel and many were in shock after his meek surrender.

Activists of the pro-Saddam Arab Liberation Front and the al Aqsa Martyrs Brigades, a spin-off of Arafat's Fatah faction, marched in Gaza's Khan Younis refugee camp, firing assault rifles into the air and setting US and Israeli flags alight.

They held up old posters of a sleek, imperious Saddam contrasting with the grubby unkempt fugitive found hiding in a hole in the ground by US troops, and waved Iraqi flags.

"The Americans may have captured you but you cap-

tured our hearts," organizer said through loudspeakers.

"We will sacrifice our blood and souls for Saddam," shouted marchers in a chant heard over and over in Iraq through Saddam's three decades of rule.

Like many Palestinians, Adli Sadek, columnist in the official Palestinian Authority daily *al-Hayat al-Jadida*, wrote that Saddam should have died resisting capture rather than submit without a shot fired, despite a pistol by his side.

"Maybe they fired a smoke bomb that neutralized him. Maybe he was asleep and was betrayed by traitors," Sadek mused. "We wish he had resisted as did his sons," he added. Uday and Qusay Hussein died in a shootout with US troops in July.

MNA/Reuters

Police fire at fleeing bag-snatchers near EU summit

BRUSSELS, 16 Dec— Brussels police opened fire on two suspected thieves fleeing in a car outside the European Union summit venue on Saturday after the pair tried to snatch the bag of a passer-by, police said.

The early morning incident was not related to the summit of leaders from the 25 current and future member states of the EU in Brussels' Justus Lipsius building about 100 metres away.

A policeman guarding the security perimeter outside the summit centre fired two shots at the vehicle as it careered towards the crash barriers.

A blood-stained car was discovered abandoned not far from the incident and police later detained two suspects in a nearby hospital, one with a gunshot wound in the arm and the other with cuts from broken glass.

MNA/Reuters



General view of the site of a suicide car bomb attack outside a police station on the outskirts of Baghdad, on 15 December, 2003. —INTERNET

"Free Willy" killer whale star Keiko dies at 27

OSLO, 16 Dec— Keiko the killer whale, star of the "Free Willy" movies, has died at 27 of pneumonia in a Norwegian fjord, ending campaigners' hopes of returning the people-loving mammal to life in the wild.

The world's most famous orca, a magnet for tourists who spent most of his life in captivity, died about 15 months after turning up in Norwegian waters, officials said on Saturday.

Millions of dollars was spent on preparing the 10-metre animal for the wild after the 1993 movie "Free Willy" prompted a campaign for his release, but Keiko never rejoined killer whale company.

Margrete Seter, mayor of Halså municipality in western Norway which has been Keiko's home since he surprisingly turned up there in September last year, said the giant mammal had been found floating on the surface

of the sea late on Friday.

"It's terribly sad," Seter told Reuters. "We had been hoping to have him around for many more years." Killer whales can live to around 35.

The Hollywood star, a big tourist draw in Halså, had shown signs of lethargy and lack of appetite just before he died, said the Free Willy Keiko Foundation, which has headed the campaign to free Keiko.

MNA/Reuters

Shanghai-Melbourne direct flights start

SHANGHAI, 16 Dec — An Airbus 340-600 jetliner took off at Pudong International Airport in Shanghai for Melbourne, Australia, on Monday, marking the start of direct air service between the two cities.

China Eastern Airlines sent a delegation aboard the first flight to the Victoria State, Australia, to participate in a ceremony for the launch of the direct air route.

Under an agreement between the airlines and the government of Victoria State, the Shanghai-based airlines will offer the direct air service every Monday and Thursday.

Before the new service, the airlines ran flights between Shanghai and Sydney five times a week.

Australia has become one of the hottest tourist destinations for Chinese citizens with growing government and non-governmental exchanges between the two countries in recent years.

China Eastern Airlines alone reported a 7-per-cent increase in income from services to Sydney so far this year, despite the outbreak of severe acute respiratory syndrome earlier in the year.

MNA/Xinhua

Donate blood

သားငယ်မြို့ ပြည်အစိုး

Halliburton gets more business in Iraq

WASHINGTON, 16 Dec — The US military said on Monday Vice-President Dick Cheney's former company Halliburton was allocated 222 million US dollars more last week for work in Iraq, at the same time as a Pentagon audit found the firm may have overbilled for some services there.

Halliburton subsidiary Kellogg Brown and Root has now clocked up 2.26 billion US dollars under its March no-bid contract with the US Army Corps of Engineers to rebuild Iraq's oil sector.

Army Corps of Engineers spokesman Bob Faletti said a new task order was made for KBR last week worth up to 222 million US dollars for the "restoration of essential infrastructure".

Faletti said this work order would be paid for by money from the Development Fund for Iraq and not from 18.6 billion US dollars in new funds to rebuild Iraq appropriated by Congress.

He said Congress had specified new funding for Iraq should not be used for contracts that were not competitively bid, such as the deal with KBR.

"To make sure that we avoided any perception of wrongdoing, we are not co-mingling appropriated and non-appropriated funds (from Congress)," said Faletti. —MNA/Reuters

Annan says Saddam trial must be fair, no death penalty

UNITED NATIONS, 16 Dec—UN Secretary-General Kofi Annan said on Monday he does not support the death penalty for Saddam Hussein and emphasized any tribunal would have to meet international norms and standards.

Annan, who offered UN help in the judicial process, said he was encouraged by Bush Administration comments that Saddam would be treated humanely "even though this is a treatment he in the past did not accord those who fell into his hands". But he said the world body has not supported the death penalty in any court it set up previously.

"So as Secretary-General ... I am not going to now turn around and support a death penalty," he said.

The president of Iraq's Governing Council, Abdelaziz al-Hakim, said in Paris that Saddam could face execution. He also said he recognized the need for an international role in the proceedings but gave no details.

Annan said it was essential that Saddam's prosecution should be conducted under due process of law.

"It is essential and it is absolutely vital that all those responsible for these crimes should be brought to account," he said. "I believe this should be done through open trials in properly established courts of law which will respect basic international norms and standards, including respect for international humanitarian law."

Annan said the former Iraqi leader had "cast a rather long shadow" over the country as it moves toward self-rule.

"With his capture, that shadow has been removed and I hope this will help us move ahead with the transition period and also accelerate the process of reconciliation and attempts to establish a provisional Iraqi Government that is inclusive and transparent," he told reporters. —MNA/Reuters

Iran to upgrade medium-range missiles

TEHRAN, 16 Dec — Iran will upgrade its medium-range Shahab-3 missiles that analysts say can hit Israel and US bases in the Gulf rather than develop a new, longer range weapon, a senior official was quoted as saying on Monday.

Acting Defence Minister Hossein Dehghan denied reports Iran intended to build a new missile, Shahab-4, with a 2,000-kilometre (1,250-mile) range, but said the Shahab-3 would be improved. —MNA/Reuters



Keiko, whale of Free Willy fame, dies but debate continues on return to wild. —INTERNET

Hailing the 56th Anniversary Independence Day:

National races, let's join hands firmly

The Union of Myanmar, home to various national races, had existed in glory under her own rulers since so many years ago.

The golden ages — the First Myanmar Empire, the Second Myanmar Empire and the Third Myanmar Empire — did exist in Myanmar history as prominent periods. Why are these periods prominent in Myanmar history? The answer is that during the periods religion and civilization flourished, and unity among national races was strong in the entire nation.

The First Myanmar Empire was founded by King Anawrahta, who ascended the throne in 1044 AD, and the nation during the time enjoyed an abundant array of food supplies from her own sources. The water supply from the many dams and reservoirs was more than enough. Because of the King's prowess and intellectual ability, he was able to build an Empire so large that its borders reached Pareik-khaya State in the west, Gandalariz in the north, Sathitha State which was also called Pinka State in the east, and Jon State in the south-east.

The King after ruling the nation for 16 years, built 34 towns at the same time where the national races could live together in unity. It was one of his efforts to forge national solidarity.

In addition, many military heroes emerged during the reign of the King. Of them, Kyansittha, Nga Htweyu, Nga Lon Laphe and

Nyaung Oo Phee were famous. It was said that the combined might of the four heroes was equal to the total strength of 400,000 soldiers. They were the commanders of the Bagan Army, leading Myanmar soldiers to ward off and drive away, with courage and energy, all the enemies trying to attack the State.

We have firm historical evidence and records that the King had made great effort to build irrigation works to ensure an adequate amount of water for cultivation. Concerning the King's dam building endeavours, the Glass Palace Chronicle states as follows:

"In addition, the King built a large number of dams and reservoirs on natural watercourses in the entire Myanmar.

When the King climbed up the Tha-hlyang Hill and studied the area, he came to realize that if a cluster of dams would be built to store water from the Kayuttaung Hill watershed area, they would benefit the people for many many years. Thus, he built four dams — the Kinda Dam, Nga Naing-the Dam, Pyaungpya Dam, and Gume Dam — on the Pantaung River, with the labour of his million-strong Army."

The history book also said that the King built seven dams including Nwatet Dam, Konhse Dam, and Gudaw Dam on Mekkhaya River and reclaimed over 1.4 million acres of land.

The edifices built by the King as religious and



King Anawrahta, the founder of the First Myanmar Empire. His intellectual and physical power led to consolidating the unity of all the national races and building a single State or in other words "the Union of Myanmar".

Myint Wai Hlaing



The Government is excavating the Bagan Palace built by King Anawrahta who ascended the throne in 1044 AD as a means to raise the national pride and character.

cultural heritage stand in Bagan region till today. They include Shwezigon Pagoda, Lawka Nanda Pagoda, Tanti-ki-taung Pagoda, and Tu-ywin-taung pagoda in Bagan region. It is said that the tooth relics of the Buddha were enshrined in the pagodas.

The historical records indicate that the religion and civilization thrived, the economy developed, and the national unity getting stronger in the Bagan State or the First Myanmar Empire. The Second Myanmar Empire or the Toungoo period.

Although Toungoo was the cradle of the Second Myanmar Empire, Bago thrived as the royal seat of the Empire.

King Bayintnaung who ascended the throne in 1551 built the Kanbawzathadi Palace in 1553 and the Hanthawady royal city in 1566.

At the time of King Bayintnaung, organizational network could be spread over Assam-Manipur in the northwest, Hotha, Latha and Sanna in the northeast and Linzin, Ayodaya, Chiangmai and Thokkate in the east and southeast. At that time, King Bayintnaung was a king possessing most powerful military and organizational skills.

In AD 1581, when King Bayintnaung passed away, his son King Nanda succeeded him. But, national unity became weak because of King Nanda's lack of organizational skill. It was at this time that the alien enemies overran Hanthawady and Portuguese mercenaries set fire to Kanbawzathadi Palace of Hanthawady, as the saying "United we stand, divided we fall" goes.

The study of the fall of Hanthawady and the destruction of the Kanbawzathadi Palace show that it was due to weaknesses in patriotic spirit, nationalistic fervour and national unity.

The first Myanmar Empire founded by King Anawrahta stood tall in the world because of Union Spirit. So did the second Myanmar Empire founded by King Bayintnaung.

According to historical records, King Alaung-phaya U Aung Zeya who ascended the throne in 1752 AD founded the third Myanmar Empire with the same spirit of

national unity.

Myanmar historian Dr Khin Maung Nyunt, in his paper on culture of national races, wrote that the founders of the second and the third Myanmar Empire encouraged the culture of the national races. They succeeded in achieving national solidarity through mutual understanding among national races.

King Alaungmin-taya, the founder of the third Myanmar Empire, used national unity as a weapon in reuniting the deteriorating Myanmar as well as in crashing the enemies within and without.

In the paper, Dr Khin Maung Nyunt mentioned the national races' united fight against foreign invasions:

At the time of King Hsinphyushin (1763 - 1776 AD), the wars were defensive ones. Mons, Barmars, Rakhines and Shans joined forces in those wars. Similarly, at the times of King Bodawphaya (1782 - 1819 AD) and King Bagyidaw (1819 - 1837 AD), Chins and Rakhines were included in the military columns to resist the aggressive wars along the western border of Myanmar. It is sure that a comrade of one national race in these columns came to understand the culture of the other. As national races joined forces in their fight against British in 1824, 1852, and 1885 and thus their cultures became mingled.

British imperialists tried, through various ways and means, to jeopardize the national unity, but in vain. National brethren continued to live in unity and amity through thick and thin. Their unity and Union Spirit became stronger and stronger.

To put it in a nutshell, the national races were always united in times of emergency, irrespective of where they live, on the hills or on the plains. It was because of their union spirit, they were able to win Myanmar independence back.

At any time, the nation can stand tall in the world if its nationals are patriotic and united. Otherwise, that nation will collapse. Therefore, let's join hands firmly for peace, prosperity and development of the State and for warding off the danger of imperialists.

(Translation: TMT+NN)

Hailing the 56th Anniversary Independence Day:

Images of Myanma history



The Statue of King Alaungphaya, founder of the Third Myanmar Empire, who used the national solidarity as a weapon in reconstructing disunited Myanmar and crushing the external and internal enemies.

King Bayintnaung, a man of great valour

The Statue of King Bayintnaung, a man of great valour and founder of the Second Myanmar Empire, who is widely known as a king whose military might and organizational power spread every corner of Southeast Asia.



King Alaungphaya, founder of the Third Myanmar Empire of Konbaung Dynasty, established Third Myanmar Empire and constructed the Shwebon Yadana Palace. The photo shows the newly-reconstructed Shwebon Yadana Palace.

*Kanbawzathady
Golden Palace*

The photo shows King Bayintnaung's Kambawzathady Golden Palace, which has been reconstructed maintaining the traditional handicraft.



The Government is giving...

(from page 16)

"The Myanmar traditional medical practitioners conference is the one that gave birth to the first Myanmar Traditional Medical Practitioners Association which deserves to be archived in the history of Myanmar traditional medicines. Therefore, I am very delighted to meet Myanmar traditional physicians in person. I would like to cite that the holding of such conference grandly like this without fail promises a bright and new era of Myanmar traditional medicines owing to the united strength of Myanmar traditional physicians.

"While meeting on such a rare occasion the traditional physicians coming from various parts of the country to gather at this conference which is filled with sound potentials and great opportunities, I also would like to urge the traditional physicians to make harmonious efforts with firm determination to realize the objective — the promotion and propagation of Myanmar traditional medicines as national heritage and as national prestige.

"Since the prehistoric

studies, difficult and profound medical treatises, efficient and effective therapies, and potent medicines and has stood to this day as a medical practice of high quality and potency thanks to the perseverance of traditional physicians of successive eras.

"For this reason, the Government keeps placing unusual emphasis on the advent of a new era of international-standard Myanmar traditional medicines that are priceless national heritage as well as being a shot in the arm of the drive to promote public health care services.

"As is known to all traditional physicians, Head of State Senior General Than Shwe, keeping an eye on Myanmar traditional medical advances, never fails to give guidance on Myanmar traditional medicines to meet international standard and to be on a par with western medical profession in terms of medical development.

"It is encouraging to witness a series of significant achievements in the Myanmar traditional medical sector. It is due to the guidance of the Head of State himself gave emphatically, the



Prime Minister General Khin Nyunt cordially greets traditional medicine practitioners at the opening of the Fourth Myanmar Traditional Medicine Practitioners Conference. — MNA

learners can have access to a variety of traditional medical professions covering the four Nayas of Myanmar traditional medical practice which are taught in accord with the curriculums collectively written by senior traditional physicians to include every essence of medical studies.

"Moreover, Government departments, to ensure the growth of Myanmar traditional medical practices as a world-grade medical profession, are offering broader assistance to doing researches on traditional medicines and therapies with the use of modern technologies and equipment for keeping records of their efficiency and of Myanmar traditional medicines capable of curing uncommon diseases the western medicines have no cure, and integrating Myanmar traditional medical practices into the western medical practices with modern hospital equipment.

"The Myanmar traditional medical science is broad and delicate and so it is essential that harmonious measures are to be taken to preserve and boost effectiveness and potency of Myanmar traditional medicines and to scientifically improve the standard of the medicines in order to penetrate deep into international markets.

"Respective Myanmar traditional medicine practitioners separately handed over their traditional medical science to only their disciples or family members. Consequently, Myanmar traditional medical science and therapies may diminish gradually, and invaluable traditional medical treatises and palm-leaf manuscripts may get damaged in the long run.

"In this regard, I would like to state that the entire people including traditional medicine practitioners are responsible for preserving these traditional medical

heritages and preventing against possible threats of extinction.

"Although Myanmar traditional medical science was under the threat of being vanished and extinction due to the oppression under the servitude of the colonialist for more than one hundred years and penetration and influence of the western medical science, it is still in existence thanks to preservation of successive Myanmar traditional medicine practitioners fully equipped with patriotism and nationalistic spirit and constant consumption and support of rural people who have trust in and rely on traditional medicines.

"Therefore, emulating the fine traditions of previous Myanmar traditional medicine practitioners, the present generations are to exert endeavours in systematically doing research and recording priceless medical palm-leaf manuscripts, traditional medical treatises, delicate Myanmar traditional medical science, effective therapies, and potent traditional medicines and herbal plants. I would like to call on the entire traditional practitioners based on patriotism and nationalistic spirit to collectively carry out these tasks.

"In fact, Myanmar traditional medical science is so vast and delicate that it can make use of every plant of different sizes for medical purpose. Myanmar traditional medicines are naturally compounded from the ingredients without causing any chemical reaction to the consumers and practically all the diseases can be cured through the traditional medical science.

"Collective efforts of national traditional medicine practitioners combining their arts of giving medical treatment and invaluable experiences play a fundamental role in upgrading Myanmar traditional medical science that does not

damage original potency of herbs in a bid to keep abreast with the international standard pharmaceuticals.

"Today, the public have again given priority to traditional medicines naturally compounded from tubers and bulbs of herbal plants instead of modern drugs because of high prices and side effects of the latter. It can be vividly seen that the traditional medicines and medical sciences of some eastern nations become popular in the world, deeply penetrating international community.

"It is opportune time to systematically upgrade the arts of Myanmar massage that can cure different types of paralysis considering that Myanmar arts which is on a par with Chinese acupuncture being popular among the nations of the world. Likewise, it is time to elevate the role of blood tonic, a kind of Myanmar traditional medicine, compounded from tubers and bulbs of plants similar to ginseng of the Republic of Korea to internationally well-known one.

"And now is an opportune time to carry out scientific research on Myanmar traditional medicines that can cure hypertension, diabetes, tuberculosis, hepatitis and cancer, major diseases threatening to the entire humankind.

"Thanks to the encouragement and assistance of the Government and sustainable efforts of national traditional practitioners, now Myanmar can produce a broad range of international standard traditional medicines through modern manufacturing process and advanced machines. Therefore, I would like to urge you to gradually expand the scope of production of international level traditional medicines, speeding up the already-achieved development momentum.

"I would also like to call

on all traditional medicine practitioners to polish up the reputation of the Myanmar traditional medical sphere by exchanging traditional medical science, experiences and views at the conference in order to upgrade and scientifically promote the standard of the Myanmar traditional medical science.

"The Government has been endeavouring to improve the health standard of rural people by accelerating the health care services across the nation including far-flung and rural areas. At the same time, it is taking systematic measures for ensuring effective use of traditional medicines on which the majority of rural people place reliance.

"So, I would like to urge the traditional medicine practitioners to raise the national health standard trying your utmost to effectively employ the Myanmar traditional medical science for ensuring health and fitness of the entire people in accordance with its fine traditions.

"At such a most opportune time when the Head of State has given guidance from time to time, the government provides great encouragement and assistance and the people place much reliance on traditional medicines, Myanmar traditional medicine practitioners under the flag of the association are urged to cooperate in making efforts to elevate the role of Myanmar traditional medical science, to produce more international standard traditional medicines and to bring about highly-skilled traditional medicine practitioners.

In conclusion, I would like to call on all of you: - to make sustained efforts to further improve and raise Myanmar traditional medical science, to enhance the good qualities of traditional medicine practitioners and to fully provide

(See page 9)



Minister Dr Kyaw Myint reads the message sent by Senior General Than Shwe. — MNA

period of Myanmar culture throughout the course of Myanmar history countable by years in the thousand, Myanmar traditional medicines have been standing as a medical practice, national and traditional, that has always taken care of Myanmar people to be healthy, strong and considerate people. Moreover, it is also a true traditional medical practice that has flourished in Myanmar society along with the Myanmar geographical condition, the Myanmar traditional and cultural custom and tradition, the philosophy of Theravada Buddhism Myanmar people believe in.

"The Myanmar traditional medical practice that sprang from the combination of four Nayas (methods) — Desana Naya, Bhesajja Naya, Nakkhatta Naya and Vajjadhara Naya — which came into existence in accordance with Myanmar traditional phenomenon, is a living proof that the Myanmar traditional medical practice is full of broad and delicate medical

efforts the Government exerted to implement them, the active participation of all traditional physicians in this drive under the leadership of the Government, and the growing confidence and reliance of national people in Myanmar traditional medicines.

"The Government is giving encouragement to the effort to develop the traditional medical practice systematically and create highly-qualified human resources in the traditional medical profession sector. Previously, there were only ordinary courses and diploma courses for traditional medical practitioners. But now, there has emerged an international-standard University of Traditional Medicines that can offer traditional medical degree.

"That signifies an overt shift in traditional medical studies from the system in which traditional medical associations and traditional physicians handed down their medical knowledge to those who studied under them, to the one in which

The Government giving encouragement to develop traditional medical practice systematically and...

(from page 8)

health care services with the people;

- to unitedly and collectively participate in doing scientific research on herbs for manufacturing more effective and potent traditional medicines that can deeply penetrate international markets; and

- to make strenuous endeavours to collect the essence of delicate Myanmar traditional medical sciences, therapies, priceless

traditional medical treatises and potent herbs so as to upgrade Myanmar traditional medical science to a science of the national heritage."

After the opening ceremony, Prime Minister General Khin Nyunt and party together with members of the Traditional Medicine Council and practitioners attending the conference posed for documentary photos.

MNA

Dinner hosted in honour of delegates to 4th SOM on rural development and poverty eradication

YANGON, 16 Dec — Minister for Progress of Border Areas and National Races and Development Affairs Col Thein Nyunt hosted a dinner in honour of the representatives of ASEAN nations who attended the 4th Senior Officials Meeting on Rural Development and Poverty Eradication at the Sedona Hotel this evening.

Present at the dinner were Deputy Ministers Brig-Gen Than Tun and Col Tin Ngwe, representatives of ASEAN nations and officials of the ASEAN Secretariat.

The 4th Senior Officials Meeting on Rural Development and Poverty Eradication continued for the second day at the hotel this morning.

It was attended by senior officials and members of ASEAN nations, observers, distinguished guests, officials and departmental heads of the ministry.

Director-General of the Department for Progress of Border Areas and National Races U Than Swe chaired the meeting together with Deputy Director-General of the National Anti-poverty Commission of the Philippines Mrs Veronic Fenix Villavicencio.

On the occasion, the representatives discussed reports on the meeting and ap-

proved them.

The chairman delivered concluding remarks.

In the afternoon, the representatives visited Myanmar Gems Emporium on Kaba Aye Pagoda Road, the Women Development Centre under the Social Affairs Department on Thanlwin Street in Bahan Township and the Union National Races Village near Yangon-Thanyin Bridge in Thakayta Township.

MNA

ASEAN environment ministers arrive

YANGON, 16 Dec — Delegates to the 9th ASEAN Ministerial Meeting on the Environment and the 2nd ASEAN+3 Environment Ministers Meeting arrived here by air today. The delegates—ministers and deputy ministers of Cambodia, Singapore, Laos, the Philippines, Indonesia, Thailand and Malaysia and Secretary General of the ASEAN Mr Ong Keng Yong—were welcomed at Yangon International Airport by Director-General of the Protocol Department Thura U Aung Htet and officials, ambassadors and diplomats. — MNA



Prime Minister General Khin Nyunt attends the new year dinner hosted by the Tuesday Club and Chairman of the club Mr Martin Pun extends greetings. (News on page 16)—MNA

Minister for Rail Transportation inspects upgrading of railroads

YANGON, 16 Dec — Minister for Rail Transportation Maj-Gen Aung Min, together with Deputy Minister U Pe Than, inspected maintenance works along the Pyin Oo Lwin and Mandalay railroad section on 14 December.

First, the minister and party looked into maintenance tasks at Zibingyi and Hsedawunthogya railroad section and presented cash awards to the workers.

On arrival at the gravel production site of Myanmar Railways, the minister gave necessary instructions to officials and attended to the needs.

Yesterday, Minister for Rail Transportation Maj-Gen Aung Min and party inspected the durability of Tagondine Bridge and conditions of approach roads to the bridge between Tagondine and Myintnge stations. He also oversaw changing of concrete sleepers, paving with gravel and other maintenance works between Singaing and Belin stations.

Minister Maj-Gen Aung Min next inspected upgrading works at Mile Post 344 between Myitha Station and Minsu Station and Samon Bridge between Thabyaytaung Station and Samon Station and the site chosen for construction of retaining wall.

The minister and party proceeded to the site for upgrading of Yangon-Mandalay Railroad in Thedaw. At the briefing hall, officials reported on tasks being carried out for upgrading of railroad and requirements of construction materials. The minister gave necessary instructions and fulfilled the needs.

MNA

Senior officials meet for 9th ASEAN

YANGON, 16 Dec — The ASEAN senior officials meeting for the 9th ASEAN Ministerial Meeting on the Environment took place at the Sedona Hotel this morning.

Present on the occasion were senior officials from Brunei, Cambodia, Indonesia, Laos, Malaysia, the Philippines, Singapore, Thailand and Vietnam, senior officials of the ASEAN Secretariat and senior officials of Myanmar.

Leader of Myanmar delegation Secretary of the National Commission for Environmental Affairs U Thaung Tun chaired the meeting together with Under-Secretary for Planning Policy Department of Environment and Natural Resources of the Philippines Mr Demetrio L. Ignacio. The chairman extended greetings.

The delegates discussed matters on transboundary haze pollution, natural conservation and biodiversity, coastal and marine environment, integrated water resources

ဆောင်ရွက်သည့်မြန်မာ့တစ်သောကူးစက်ရောဂါများ ကာကွယ်နှိမ်နင်းရေးနည်းစံချက်

၁။ ဆောင်ရွက်သည့် အဆင့်မြှင့်တင်ရေး နည်းစံချက်၊ ဦးနှောက် အမြှေးရောင်ရောဂါ၊ ဝက်သက်ရောဂါ၊ ဆွဲဆိုးနာရောဂါ၊ ကြွက်ညှာ ရောဂါ၊ ဆိုးရောဂါ၊ ရေကျောက်ရောဂါ၊ နမီးနီးယား အဆုတ်ရောင် ရောဂါနှင့်မျက်စိနာရောဂါစသည့်ကူးစက်ရောဂါများအဖြစ်များတတ်ပါသည်။

၂။ ၎င်းရောဂါများကိုကြိုတင်ကာကွယ်ရန်အတွက်

- * ပွဲလမ်းသဘင်လှူထုတ်သောနေရာနှင့် ဖုတ်ထုတ်သောနေရာများကို တတ်နိုင်သမျှ ရှောင်ကြဉ်ပါ။
- * နာစေးရောင်ဆိုးလျှင် ရောဂါမြန်ပွားစေရန် လက်ကိုင်ပုဝါကို အသုံးပြုပါ။
- * တစ်ဦးအသုံးပြုထားသော အသုံးအဆောင်နှင့်အဝတ်အထည်များကို အခြားတစ်ဦးမှအသုံးပြုခြင်းကို ရှောင်ကြဉ်ပါ။
- * ၅-နှစ်အောက် ကလေးများအား ပုံမှန်ကာကွယ်ဆေးထိုးပြီး ကာကွယ်၍ရသောရောဂါများဖြစ်သည့် ဆွဲဆိုးနာရောဂါ၊ ကြွက်ညှာ ရောဂါ၊ ဆိုးရောင်၊ ဝက်သက်ရောဂါ ကာကွယ်ဆေးများထိုးနှံပါ။
- * တစ်ကိုယ်ရေ သန့်ရှင်းရေးကို အလေးထားဆောင်ရွက်ပါ။
- * အာဟာရပြည့်ဝသော အစားအစာများကိုစားသုံးပါ။
- * လုံလောက်စွာအနားယူပါ။

၃။ ရောဂါလက္ခဏာများရှိလျှင် အသက်ဆုံးရှုံးမှုနှင့် ရောဂါပြန့်ပွားမှု များကာကွယ်နိုင်ရန် နီးရာကျန်းမာရေးဌာနတွင် ဆေးလျှင်စွာ ဆေးကုသမှုခံယူပါ။

ကျန်းမာရေးဝန်ကြီးဌာန

Ministerial Meeting on Environment

management, multilateral environmental agreements and environmentally sustainable cities and others.

They also discussed implementation of the Hanoi Plan of Action, resolutions passed at the World Summit on Sustainable Development, participation in measures for environmental conservation of ASEAN + 3 environment ministers, sustainable development (Yangon declaration), and holding ASEAN ministerial meeting on the environment and ASEAN ministerial meeting on haze pollution and informal discussions. They approved the reports of the meeting.

In the evening, Chairman of the NCEA Minister for Foreign Affairs U Win Aung hosted a dinner to the ASEAN secretary-general and ASEAN senior officials at the Sedona Hotel this evening.

The secretary of the NCEA also hosted a dinner to senior officials of ASEAN nations and ASEAN Secretariat at the Inya Lake Hotel yesterday evening. — MNA



The senior officials meeting for the 9th ASEAN Ministerial Meeting on the Environment in progress. — MNA

Agricultural work and regional development tasks inspected in Hlegu and Dagon Myothit (East)

YANGON, 16 Dec — Chairman of Yangon Division Peace and Development Council and Commander of Yangon Commander Maj-Gen Myint Swe went to townships in Dagon Myothit (East), Yangon East District, and Hlegu Township, Yangon North District, this morning and inspected agricultural tasks and regional development tasks.

At 10.30 am, the commander inspected measures being taken for cultivation of summer paddy near Hsinphon village by Khayepin Road in Hlegu

Township and met with local farmers. Next, the commander gave instructions, saying that assistance has been provided to ensure the availability of water resources and agricultural techniques, and at the same time measures are being taken for cultivation of summer and monsoon paddy, beans and pulses, edible crops and vegetables on a commercial scale in the vicinity of the Yangon International Airport by designating five agricultural zones. He also urged the farmers to make the effective

use of irrigation facilities provided by the Government.

Next, a local authority reported to the commander on progress of land preparation work for cultivation of various crops on a commercial scale in the township and arrangements for future agricultural plans.

Local farmers also reported to the commander on the requirements to be fulfilled for cultivation of crops all the year round on a commercial scale and for education, health and transport sectors for regional development. Later, Lt-Col Kyaw Tint, Secretary of Yangon Division Peace and Development Council, spoke of the need for local farmers to cooperate with departments concerned in agricultural tasks by using irrigation facilities provided by the Government.

After hearing the reports, the commander coordinated with departmental officials concerned and attended to

the needs. Afterwards, the commander and party inspected the sales of fertilizers by the Myanmar Agriculture Service to local farmers, the demonstration of the nursing of paddy strain, and the display of farm equipment by the Agricultural Mechanization Department, and gave instructions.

The commander and party also inspected the tasks being taken with the use of heavy machinery for construction of sluice gates at the Ngamoyeik Dam in Hlegu Township.

On completion, the dam will irrigate 5,000 acres of land for cultivation of summer paddy in Hlegu and Dagon Myothit Townships.

At the temporary briefing hall at the construction site, the commander heard reports presented by officials and called for collective efforts of local officials and farmers to make systematic arrangements for boosting agriculture in the region.

MNA

ASEAN Senior Officials Meeting on Rural Development and Poverty Eradication concludes

YANGON, 16 Dec — The Fourth ASEAN Senior Officials Meeting on Rural Development and Poverty Eradication, hosted by Myanmar, continued this morning at Sedona Hotel here.

Director-General of the Progress of Border Areas and National Races Department U Than Swe presided over the meeting together with the leader of the Philippines delegation Deputy Director General Mrs Veronic Fenix Villavicencio of the National Anti-poverty Commission of the President's Office of the Philippines. At the meeting, those present discussed the report of the meeting and approved it. The meeting came to an end with concluding remarks by U

Than Swe.

In the afternoon, senior officials from ASEAN countries visited the Myanmar Gem Emporium on KabaAye Pagoda Road, the women development centre of the Ministry of Social Welfare, Relief and Resettlement in Bahan Township and National Races Village in Thaketa Township.

Minister for Progress of Border Areas and National Races and Development Affairs Col Thein Nyunt this evening hosted a dinner in honour of the delegates from ASEAN countries at Sedona Hotel.

Deputy Ministers of the PBANRDA Brig-Gen Than Tun and Col Tin Ngwe also attended the dinner. — MNA

Fourth Myanmar Traditional...

(from page 16)

Next, the master of ceremonies announced that altogether 439 delegates attended the conference.

In his address, Deputy Minister Dr Mya Oo said in the course of history Myanmar people valued and preserved Myanmar traditional medicine, the heritage of ancestors, in different eras. They have been relying on the traditional medical science. Reputation of the traditional medical science has spread in the country due to the potent medicine.

He said traditional medical science provides health and fitness of Myanmar people and promotes patriotism. He said Head of State Senior General Than Shwe gave guidance on promotion of potency of Myanmar traditional medicine and properties and systematic development of Myanmar traditional medical science.

He urged the traditional medicine practitioners to try to become those who can promote health standard.

Next, U Tun Kyaing of Magway Township tabled a motion calling for participation in rural health development project and taking care of the people through traditional medicine. Daw Than Than Soe of Sittway seconded the motion.

U Myo Myint of Maha Aungmye Township tabled a motion calling for continuous implementation of training and educative tasks for enhancing the skill of traditional medicine practitioners. Daw Lay Lay Thant of Mogaung Township seconded the motion.

U Khun Than Htaik of Taunggyi Township tabled a motion calling for collection of standard therapies to be used as the manual of the traditional medicine practitioners. Daw Khin Thein Win of Myaungmya Township seconded the motion. The afternoon session was presided over by Deputy Minister Dr Mya Oo. Chairman of Traditional Medicine Council Director-General Dr Thein Swe, member U Nyan Tun and delegates U Hla Htay and U Tha Maung acted as members of the Panel of Chairmen.

Deputy Director U Soe Win acted as master of ceremonies. U Thein Naing of Myeik Township tabled a motion calling for conducting courses on systematic research methods for traditional medicine practitioners in order to prove that the potency of Myanmar traditional medicine meets the international standard. U Hla Pe of Paungde Township seconded the motion.

U Saw Hlaing of Sagaing Township tabled a motion calling for conservation of herbal plants and organizing the people to grow herbs on a manageable scale for local sufficiency of raw materials. Daw Tin Nwe Oo of Pabedan Township seconded the motion.

Next, the message sent to the conference by Chairman of

the State Peace and Development Council Senior General Than Shwe was put on record. Decision was made that the guidance in the message would be regarded as work guidelines. The opening address delivered by Prime Minister General Khin Nyunt was also put on record. Decision was made that the directives included in the address would be regarded as work guidelines.

Similarly, decision was made that five motions tabled and seconded at the conference were regarded as work guidelines for development of future traditional medicine and uplift of medical field. The chairman of the conference reported on the motions for approval. The delegates approved them and three resolutions were passed.

The conference came to a close after concluding remark by Deputy Minister Dr Mya Oo.

The paper reading session will continue at Pyidaungsu Hall on 17 and 18 December. Altogether 25 papers will be submitted to the conference. — MNA

Myanmar hosts ASEAN CCI EC Meeting

YANGON, 16 Dec — Myanmar hosted the fourth Executive Committee Meeting of the ASEAN Chamber

of Commerce and Industry Executive Committee Meeting of the ASEAN Chamber



Those present at the meeting No 4/2003 of the ASEAN Chambers of Commerce and Industry Executive Committee pose for a documentary photo. — MNA

of Commerce and Industry at Sedona Hotel in Yangon today.

Minister at the Prime Minister's Office Maj-Gen Thein Swe, President of Union of Myanmar Federation of Chambers of Commerce and Industry U Win Myint, Executive Committee Chairman of the ASEAN CCI U Pyone Maung Maung made speeches.

The meeting discussed financial matters, and as-

It also approved the future programmes: holding of an ASEAN trade fair in Brunei in 2004, a trade fair of the Greater Mekong Subregion Business Forum in Hanoi, Vietnam, an investment summit in Laos, a tripartite cooperation meeting, the 16th ASEAN CCI Conference in Yangon, the 61st Council meeting, the 1/2004 EC meeting, and ASEAN+China meeting.

MNA



Deputy Minister Dr Mya Oo delivers an address at the opening of the 4th Myanmar Traditional Medicine Practitioners Conference. — MNA

Hailing the 56th Anniversary Independence Day:

Endeavours made to develop human resources

With the accelerating national development, the national duty in the education sector is to create human resources for bringing these fruitful results in hand to the future and promoting them.



Panglong University, located in Loilem District, Shan State, was constructed under the charge of the Ministry of Education.

Developing trend of education in the time of the State Peace and Development Council

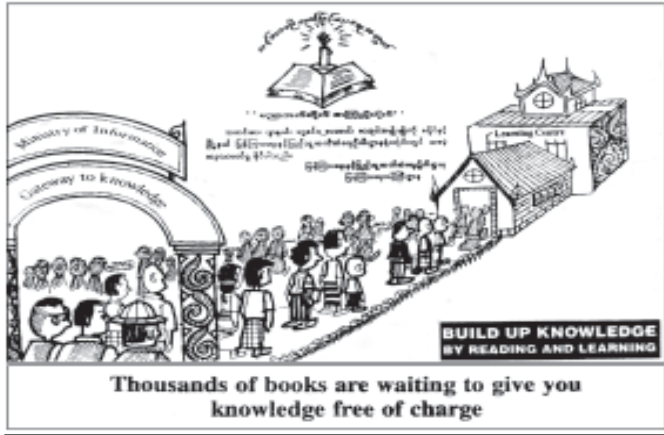
Subject	1988	2003
No. of basic education students	5,239,878	7,550,896
No. of basic education teachers	173,000	222,000
No. of university teachers	6,500	16,600
No. of degrees	Masters Degree Only	313 degrees inclusive of masters degrees and doctoral ones
No. of master degree holders	266	9,474
No. of Ph.D degree holders	—	206
No. of basic education schools	33,747	40,049
No. of universities and colleges	32	154
No. of university and college students	130,000	890,000
No. of technological universities	—	4
No. of computer universities	—	2
No. of aerospace and engineering universities	—	1
No. of maritime universities	—	1
No. of technological colleges	—	26
No. of computer colleges	—	24



Maubin University in Maubin Township, Ayeyawady Division, was constructed under the charge of the Ministry of Education.



The photo shows the e-learning centre at the Magway Institute of Medicine.



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Deputy General Manager

Supply Department, Myanma Railways, Botataung, Yangon.

WTO chief sees trade talk progress but not enough

GENEVA, 16 Dec — The head of the World Trade Organization (WTO) said on Monday states had made progress towards a full re-launch of free trade negotiations, but were not there yet.

The 146 WTO member countries were meeting in Geneva to assess the chances of getting the Doha Round back on track after it was all but derailed by the collapse of ministerial talks in Cancun, Mexico, in September.

Mediators had already ruled out any possibility of an immediate fullscale resumption of the negotiations, which were launched in the Qatari capital in late 2001, and the meeting was largely aimed at setting a new timetable.

"Our collective aim for today, as instructed by ministers at Cancun, was to arrive at a point where the negotiations can resume full momentum," WTO Director-General Supachai Panitchpakdi told trade envoys.

"We are not yet at this point but we should not be disheartened," he added.

Both Supachai, who has held a series of meetings with trade ministers, and the president of the WTO's executive General Council, ambassador Carlos Perez del Castillo of Uruguay, who has been acting as mediator in Geneva, said there were some signs that the Cancun deadlock could be broken.

The talks in the Mexican resort broke down mainly over how much and how quickly rich powers should cut the billions of dollars they spend on farm subsidies each year and on whether the negotiations should be widened to include new issues — the so-called Singapore issues — demanded by the European Union.

They said all member countries appeared willing to resume discussions on the basis of a compromise text put forward in Cancun by Mexican Foreign Minister Luis Ernesto Derbez and which had been spurned at the time by developing countries.

"We are not talking about breakthroughs, but the mood has improved," said WTO spokesman Keith Rockwell.

On the all important question of agriculture, which most observers say holds the key to a successful round, Perez del Castillo said he felt that the big powers must commit themselves to ending all forms of export subsidy.

"Commitment to the elimination of all forms of export subsidies is a must for these negotiations to be successful," he said.

MNA/Reuters

Multinational genome project launched in US

WASHINGTON, 16 Dec — A 53-million-dollar multinational project that seeks to identify the functions of cattle genes has been launched, aiming at benefitting both human health and agriculture.

"Sequencing the bovine genome is a vital first step that will lay the groundwork for breakthroughs that will benefit both human health and agriculture. Eliminating hunger, improving nutrition and reducing agriculture's impact on the environment are all potential outcomes of this research," US Agriculture Secretary Ann M Veneman said while launching the project on Friday.

The bovine genome is similar in size to the genomes of humans and other mammals, with an estimated size of three billion base pairs. Besides its potential for improving dairy and meat products and enhancing food safety, adding the genomic sequence of the cow (*Bos taurus*) to the growing list of sequenced animal genomes will help researchers learn more about the human genome.—MNA/PTI

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၁။ ပြန်ကြားရေးဝန်ကြီးဌာန၊ ပုံနှိပ်ရေးနှင့်စာအုပ်ထုတ်ဝေရေး လုပ်ငန်းတွင် လစ်လပ်လျက်ရှိသော အောက်ဖော်ပြပါရာထူးအတွက် လျှောက်လွှာများ အလိုရှိပါသည်-

ရာထူး: ပညာရေးအထူးဆောင်
ဌာနခွဲမှူး: စက်မှုအင်ဂျင်နီယာ (သို့မဟုတ်) လစ်လပ်
(စက်မှု) အီလက်ထရွန်းနစ်အင်ဂျင်နီယာ ၁ နေရာ

၂။ လျှောက်ထားသူသည်-
(က) ပြည်ထောင်စုမြန်မာနိုင်ငံသားဖြစ်ရမည်။
(ခ) ၅-၁-၂၀၀၄ နေ့တွင် အသက် ၃၅ နှစ် (ဝန်ထမ်းဖြစ်ပါက အသက် ၄၀ နှစ်) ထက် မကျော်လွန်သူဖြစ်ရမည်။
(ဂ) လုပ်ငန်းသဘာဝအရ အမျိုးသားဖြစ်ရမည်။

၃။ လျှောက်လွှာကို ဝန်ထမ်းရွေးချယ်ရေးကော်မရှင်ရုံးသို့ ၅-၁-၂၀၀၄ နေ့အရောက် ပေးပို့ရမည်။

၄။ လျှောက်လွှာတွင် ဖော်ပြရမည့်အချက်များ: ပူးတွဲပါရှိရမည့်စာရွက် စာတမ်းများ၊ ဝင်ကြေးငွေ ၅၆/-ပေးသွင်းရမည့်လမ်း၊ ရေဖြေ၊ နှုတ်ဖြေ စစ်ဆေးမှု အတွက်လေ့လာရန် လိုအပ်ချက်များနှင့်စပ်လျဉ်း၍ ဤအဖွဲ့ကကြေညာချက်အမှတ် ၁/၉၁ ဖြင့် ထုတ်ပြန်ထားသော ဝန်ထမ်းရွေးချယ်ရေးကော်မရှင်၏ ကြော်ငြာစာအမှတ် ၄၇/၂၀၀၃ နေ့တွင် လျှောက်လွှာတင်သွင်းသူများအတွက် လမ်းညွှန်စာစောင်ပါ သတ်မှတ်ချက်များနှင့်အညီ လိုက်နာဆောင်ရွက်ရန်ဖြစ်သည်။

၅။ ရန်ကုန်မြို့နှင့် မန္တလေးမြို့များတွင် ရေဖြေစာမေးပွဲစာစစ်ဌာနများ ထားရှိမည်။ မိမိမြေဆိုလိုသောစာစစ်ဌာနကို လျှောက်လွှာတွင် ရင်းလင်းတိကျစွာ ဖော်ပြရမည်။

၆။ ဝန်ထမ်းများသည် မူရင်းလျှောက်လွှာတစ်စောင်ကို မိမိတာဝန်ထမ်းဆောင်သည့် ဌာနအကြီးအကဲမှတစ်ဆင့် ဝန်ကြီးဌာန၏ နှစ်မြို့ရပ်လျှောက်လွှာဖြင့် ဝန်ထမ်းရွေးချယ်ရေးကော်မရှင်ရုံးသို့ ၅-၁-၂၀၀၄ နေ့အရောက်ပေးပို့ရမည်။ လျှောက်လွှာတစ်စောင်ကို ဓာတ်ပုံနှင့်အတူ ဤအဖွဲ့ရုံးသို့ တိုက်ရိုက်ပေးပို့ရမည်။

၇။ ၂၄-၁-၂၀၀၄ နေ့နှင့် ၂၅-၁-၂၀၀၄ နေ့များတွင် အရည်အချင်းစစ်ရေးဖြေ စာမေးပွဲကျင်းပမည်။ ၂၂-၁-၂၀၀၄ နေ့မှစ၍ မန္တလေးတိုင်းအေးချမ်းသာယာရေးနှင့် ဖွံ့ဖြိုးရေးကောင်စီရုံးများနှင့် ဤအဖွဲ့ရုံးတို့တွင် ဖြေဆိုခွင့်ကတ်ပြားများကိုထုတ်ပေးမည်။

၈။ စုစမ်းမေးမြန်းလိုပါက ပြည်နယ်/တိုင်း၊ ခရိုင်နှင့် မြို့နယ်အေးချမ်းသာယာရေးနှင့် ဖွံ့ဖြိုးရေးကောင်စီရုံးများ၊ ပြည်နယ်/တိုင်း၊ မြို့နယ်အလုပ်သမားညွှန်ကြားရေးဦးစီးဌာနရုံးများတွင်ဖြစ်စေ၊ ဤအဖွဲ့ရုံးသို့ လူကုန်တိုင်းဖြစ်စေ တယ်လီဖုန်း အမှတ် (၃၇၈၆၃၃)သို့ဖြစ်စေ ဆက်သွယ်နိုင်ပါသည်။

(၇) (၈) (၉) (၁၀) စာသင်သားများအတွက်
သင်ရိုးညွှန်းတမ်းနှင့်အညီ အင်္ဂလိပ်စာ သင်ခန်းစာများပါရှိပါသည်။

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Malaysian PM urges private sector to be engine for eco growth

KUALA LUMPUR, 16 Dec—Malaysian Prime Minister Abdullah Ahmad Badawi on Monday urged the private sector to resume its role as the country's engine of economic growth.

When the country was faced with the financial crisis, the government had to resort to the public sector for economic recovery because the crisis incapacitated the private sector, Abdullah, who is also the Finance Minister, said at the Finance Ministry's monthly gathering in Putrajaya, the administrative capital of Malaysia.

The Prime Minister said the measures taken by the government succeeded in stabilizing the Malaysian currency of ringgit and bringing improvements to the economy which saw a 5.1-per-cent growth in the third quarter of this year.

The economic growth in the third quarter was mainly driven by the private sector and the private consumption grew strongly by 5.4 per cent during the quarter, according to the central bank's statistics.

"With such success, in my view, the time has come for the private sector to return to its role as the engine of economic growth," said Abdullah, adding that the private sector was able to take such an important duty.

Meanwhile, the Premier said the Finance Ministry and related agencies such as the central bank, Bank Negara and the Economic Planning Unit should focus their attention on achieving a balanced budget.

"It means we will have to ensure that our deficit is reduced and this will have to be achieved in the shortest possible time. This is what we will strive for," he said.

The Malaysian Government projected a budget deficit of 5.4 per cent of the country's gross domestic product (GDP) for 2003.

MNA/Xinhua

Northeast Asia countries join hands fighting sandstorms

BEIJING, 16 Dec—Almost every year from March to May since the late 1990s, strong cold winds from Siberia blow up huge volume of yellow dust from the Gobi Desert in Kazakhstan, Mongolia and north China, sending it all the way to the Korean Peninsula and Japan.

"Dust and sandstorm (DSS) has become a severe environmental problem facing the Northeast Asia. We need collaboration," Zhu Guangyao, vice-director of China's State Environmental Protection Administration (SEPA), said here on a high-level meeting on Northeast Asia's DSS held in Beijing.

For the first time, environment officials from China, Mongolia, Japan, South Korea and North Korea gathered here to find effective solutions of DSS troubling their countries.

A monitoring and forecasting system is on the top of the agenda, according to the participants. "We should share the information to build a network covering the whole Northeast Asia," said Zhu.

A joint research by Japan and China has identified DSS transportation, impact and development, said Kojima Toshiro, an official from Japan's Ministry of Environment.

Besides, a monitoring and forecasting system shared by China and South Korea is undergoing construction, accord-

ing to Park Young Woo, of South Korea Ministry of Environment.

"Only the research on DSS cause, transportation, and the monitoring technology is not enough. We need to transform the deserts in source countries," said Zhu Guangyao.

SEPA statistics show that DSS in Northeast Asia has frequented in recent years due to continuous droughts in northwest China and Mongolia. In 2000, DSS happened 12 times.

MNA/Xinhua

Chinese Defence Minister leaves for Russia

BEIJING, 16 Dec—Chinese Minister of National Defence Cao Gangchuan left Beijing Monday for an official goodwill visit to the Russian Federation.

Cao, also vice-chairman of the Central Military Commission (CMC) and a state councillor, is paying the visit at the invitation of Russian Minister of Defence Sergei Ivanov. Cao's entourage includes Li Jinai, a CMC member and director-general of the General Armament Department and Qian Shugen, deputy chief of the General Staff of Chinese People's Liberation Army, among others.

MNA/Xinhua

An ivory merchant displays his goods in his shop in Abidjan on 15 December, 2003. The West African states of Nigeria, Ivory Coast and Senegal are turning a blind eye to illegal ivory sales that are fuelling poaching in surrounding countries, wildlife monitors said.—INTERNET



Cancer vaccine in the pipeline in India

NEW DELHI, 16 Dec—In a major breakthrough in the fight against cancer, a vaccine has been found to be effective against cervical cancer and it would be tested in India under a WHO programme.

"Though the vaccine has been made in US, we will also test it in the country and once the clinical trials are over we will negotiate with WHO so that it is manufactured in India," Indian Council of Medical Research (ICMR) Director-General Professor N K Ganguly said.

This is the only vaccine that has shown 100-per-cent protection in animal studies against the Human Papilloma virus that causes cervical cancer, he said.

Data to start trials was being collected by Institute of

Cytology and Preventive Oncology, in the Indian capital state of Delhi, Tata Memorial Hospital, western Indian city of Mumbai and Cancer Institute in southern Indian metropolis of Chennai, he said.

There were many issues to be resolved before the clinical trials begin in the country. Earlier it was thought that it should be tested in girls 12 years of age, but due to cultural restrictions, it has now been decided that the vaccine would be tested in 18-year-old females without clinical examination. — MNA/PTI

French town evacuated over WW II bomb

LILLE, 16 Dec—More than 1,000 people evacuated their homes in an area of the northern French city of Lille on Sunday while bomb experts defused a recently unearthed British bomb left over from World War II.

About 500 police sealed off the area during the five-hour operation, which also disrupted some train services.

"Dismantling the detonator was more difficult than expected. The fuse was rusted and the detonator very twisted," a police official said.

The 250-kilo bomb had been discovered on Wednesday at a construction site for a new hotel in an area previously used to host trade fairs.

Bombs from both world wars are sporadically unearthed across the former battlefields of northern France. — MNA/Reuters

Thai eyes use of LNG for generating stations

BANGKOK, 16 Dec—The Electricity Generating Authority of Thailand (EGAT) is scrambling to search for new sources of fuel to power its generating stations in the future.

Fears grow that fuel oil use could soar to three billion litres and that generating costs could reach as high as 10 billion baht (250 million US dollars) over the next two years, reported the Thai News Agency on Monday.

The national electricity demand looks set to skyrocket over the next couple of years, and this in turn would increase fuel use, EGAT Governor Sithiporn Rattanaphat was quoted by the Thai News Agency as saying Monday.

This could raise fuel oil usage way above the present rate of 200-300 million litres, he said.

He noted that higher fuel oil consumption is likely to push up generating costs.

Electricity generated from oil costs 1.75 baht (0.43 cent) per unit, compared to 1.60-1.80 baht (0.4 cent - 0.45 cent) per unit from coal, and 1.70 baht (0.42 cent) per unit from natural gas.

He said that the EGAT is considering use of LNG gas in new generating stations, noting that several sources of LNG have been discovered in countries, including China and Malaysia.

Revealing that the EGAT is now conducting feasibility studies on the use of LNG, he said that generating costs using LNG are 30 per cent cheaper than electricity generation using natural gas. — MNA/Xinhua

Indonesian motorcycle maker sees no major investment

JAKARTA, 16 Dec—Local demand for motorcycles is expected to continue rising next year, but local manufacturers have more than enough capacity to fulfil the rise in demand, an executive has said.

Gunadi Sindhuwinata, vice-chairman of the Indonesian Motorcycle Industry Association (AISI), has predicted no additional investment planned by local motorcycle manufacturers in machinery to expand their production capacity next year, Jakarta Post reported on Monday.

He said the country's motorcycle industry was now running at between 80 and 85 per cent of its capacity. At full capacity, the industry can produce up to 3.5 million units annually.

"Prior to the economic crisis in 1997, the industry and its suppliers — which include local components manufacturers — engaged in major reinvestment to double their capacities following predictions that local production would rise," he said.

However, sales fell sharply after the economic crisis and could only recover to near pre-crisis level in 2001, four years

after the economic crisis. That year, a total of 1.64 million motorcycles were sold in the country, against 1.85 million in 1997.

While all manufacturers who have excess capacity will withhold investment plans to increase capacity next year, some of them are expected to invest to alter their production lines to produce new models.

Gunadi said that with rising per capita income and the consequent increase in demand, motorcycle manufacturers, who possess excess capacity, may also invest in extending distribution and after-sales networks. This includes opening new showrooms and workshops.

Additionally, local component suppliers are expected to reinvest to support new motorcycle models, the rise in output and the demand from spare-part shops.

MNA/Xinhua

SPORTS

Bergkamp puts Arsenal back on top

LONDON, 16 Dec — Arsenal knocked Manchester United off the top of the Premier League on Sunday after Dennis Bergkamp guided them to a 1-0 victory over Blackburn Rovers at Highbury.

The Dutch forward coolly steered home a cutback by Ivory Coast defender Kolo Toure in the 11th minute of a game which Arsenal dominated for long periods and should have won by a bigger margin.

But English football's only unbeaten club still secured a win which put them top with 38 points. United, who beat City 3-1 in Saturday's Manchester derby, are a point further back on 37 with Chelsea third on 36.

Arsenal, who hit the post through Robert Pires, squandered a number of scoring chances against a battling Blackburn side who won this fixture last season and were left to rue a disallowed goal in the second half for German midfielder Markus Babel.

Henry, who missed several chances to score on Sunday, is competing with Real's Zinedine Zidane and Ronaldo for FIFA's World Player of the Year award on Monday.

Earlier, Aston Villa left the relegation zone after two goals from Colombian striker Juan Pablo Angel steered them to a 3-2 victory over Wolverhampton Wanderers in the Midlands derby.

MNA/Reuters

Boca claim shoot-out glory in World Club Cup

YOKOHAMA (Japan), 16 Dec — Boca Juniors edged out AC Milan 3-1 in a penalty shoot-out following an absorbing 1-1 draw after extra time to win the World Club Cup on Sunday.

Midfielder Raul Cascini blasted in the decisive penalty after Andrea Pirlo, Clarence Seedorf and Alessandro Costacurra had missed for Milan in front of a boisterous section of blue and yellow-clad Boca fans among a crowd of 66,000.

"It was a game between the champions of South America and Europe, so logically it turned out to be a battle," said Boca coach Carlos Bianchi who became the first coach to win the annual match three times.

"Towards the end of extra time I felt the Milan players were hanging on for penalties," he added. "I'm very proud of the way we kept attacking. We were even more aggressive with our penalties." It was a disappointing end for Milan, who had dominated for long periods in their bid to become the first team to win the World Club Cup four times.

Milan coach Carlo Ancelotti paid tribute to his players after a valiant attempt to even the record between Europe and South America, who now lead the series 22-20. "You have to give credit to Boca. Their defenders closed us down very quickly and the goalkeeper made some terrific saves," he said.

"We are usually so reliable at penalties but today, for some reason, we just couldn't complete the job."

Striker Jon Dahl Tomasson put Milan ahead in the 24th minute, calmly sliding the ball under goalkeeper Roberto

Abbondanzieri from eight metres following a superb through ball by Pirlo.

But Boca were back on level terms five minutes later when man of the match Matias Donnet hooked in the loose ball after Milan goalkeeper Dida had blocked a flicked attempt from the dangerous larley.

Almost straight from the

knock-down, only for Abbondanzieri to produce a brilliant point-blank save.

However, Boca substitute Carlos Tevez almost snatched a dramatic injury-time winner when his left-foot shot dipped just over the bar after a neat layoff from larley.

Milan, who beat Juventus 4-2 in a penalty shoot-out to



Boca Juniors midfielder Matias Abel Donnet holds a key to a Toyota car as his prize after winning the most valuable player award, after his Argentine team defeated Italy's AC Milan in the World Club Cup soccer championship in Yokohama, on 14 Dec, 2003. Boca won the match 3-1 on penalties. — INTERNET

restart, Brazilian Kaka hit the post with a curling right-foot shot from the edge of the box as Milan quickly sought to reassert themselves.

Milan captain Paolo Maldini nearly capped a record fifth appearance in this fixture with a goal in the 61st minute when he latched on to an Andriy Shevchenko

win last season's Champions League final, converted just one spot kick this time, handing Boca their third World Club Cup title. The Argentine champions won in 1977 when they beat German club Borussia Moenchengladbach and lifted the trophy in 2000 also under Bianchi.

MNA/Reuters

Van der Vaart goal puts Ajax back on top

AMSTERDAM, 16 Dec — Ajax Amsterdam bounced back from their midweek Champions League elimination to regain top spot in the Dutch First Division with a 1-0 win over Utrecht on Sunday.

The only goal came on 76 minutes from skipper Rafael van der Vaart following an assist from Maxwell.

Ajax have 37 points and a game in hand on PSV Eindhoven, who beat RKC Waalwijk 3-1 on Saturday but have dropped

back to second on 36.

AZ Alkmaar stayed third on 32 points after thrashing lowly Volendam 6-0. Strikers Ali Elkhatabi and Kenneth Perez scored two apiece after the break following earlier efforts from Stijn Huysegems and Michael Buskermolen.

Bottom side Zwolle drew 1-1 at home to Groningen while NEC Nijmegen beat fellow strugglers Vitesse Arnhem 2-0.

MNA/Reuters

French midfield star Zinedine Zidane is FIFA World Player of the Year

BASEL (Switzerland), 16 Dec — French midfield maestro Zinedine Zidane has won the FIFA Player of the Year award for a third time, beating countryman Thierry Henry and Real Madrid teammate Ronaldo.

Zidane, who also won in 1998 and 2000, topped a poll of 142 national soccer coaches from around the world. He had 264 points in voting released Monday. Henry, Arsenal's star striker, had 186 and Ronaldo, last year's winner, received 176. "The more often you get it the better. I don't think you ever get tired of winning it," Zidane said.

one second-place vote and two third-place votes.

Canadian striker Christine Sinclair was 17th with one first-place vote (Mozambique).

Juventus midfielder Pavel Nedved finished fourth in the men's voting, with Real Madrid's Roberto Carlos fifth, van Nistelrooy sixth and England captain David Beckham seventh.

portant trophies in 2003, Zidane says his overall game has improved considerably.

"I've learned a lot how to play more with my left foot and I've become a more complete two-footed player because of that," he said.

Ronaldo's third place meant he missed out on an unprecedented fourth World Player of the Year award. He won the award in 1996, 1997 and 2002.

"It's a pleasure to be recognized as one of the best three in the world," Ronaldo told reporters.

Henry said that "to be here for the first time is great but to be here with Zinedine and Ronaldo is extraordinary."

Prinz, who was voted player of the tournament at the World Cup, has been approached by the president of Perugia, Luciano Gaucci, to become the first female player in Serie A.

"I have spoken to the president. I met him once," Prinz told reporters. "But I haven't made any decision yet."

World men's champion Brazil retained its Team of the Year award.

The FIFA Fair Play Award was given to the fans of Glasgow Celtic for their behaviour at last season's UEFA Cup final.

Some 70,000 to 80,000 supporters descended on the Spanish town of Seville, where the match was held. Only 30,000 of them had tickets. Celtic lost the match but there was no trouble and the fans parted peacefully.

Internet



Zinedine Zidane, of France, and Birgit Prinz, of Germany, hold their Player of the Year awards at the FIFA World Player Gala 2003 in Basel, Switzerland, on Monday. — INTERNET

Zidane received 35 first-choice votes, 27 second-place and eight third-place ballots.

Canada's vote was cast by assistant coach Colin Miller, who chose Zidane ahead of Manchester United's Ruud van Nistelrooy and Paul Scholes. The ballot came out after Canadian head coach Holger Osieck stepped down.

Birgit Prinz clinched the women's award with 268 points. She helped Germany win the recent women's World Cup over Sweden.

Last year's winner, American Mia Hamm, was second with 133 points and Sweden's Hannah Ljungberg third on 84 points. The women's involved 100 national coaches.

Canadian coach Even Pellerud voted for Prinz ahead of German Maren Meinert and Sweden's Victoria Svensson. Coaches are not allowed to vote for their own players.

Canadian captain Charmaine Hooper finished 13th with one first-place vote (Trinidad and Tobago),

Zidane's previous awards followed on from winning major international tournaments - the 1998 World Cup and the European Championship in 2000.

This year, the 31-year-old Zidane helped Real Madrid win the Spanish league and reach the semifinals of the Champions League - eventually losing to Juventus.

Although he won less im-



Third placed Ronaldo of Brazil (L) and second placed Thierry Henry of France share a light moment during the 2003 FIFA World Player of the Year award ceremony in Basel, Switzerland, on 15 December, 2003. Coaches from around the world voted French midfielder Zinedine Zidane the World Player of the Year for the third time in his career. INTERNET

Valencia edge out Betis to keep pressure on Real Madrid

MADRID, 16 Dec — Valencia clinched a 1-0 win at Real Betis on Sunday to take provisional top spot in the Primera Liga and keep the pressure on Real Madrid.

Valencia were a long way short of their best but an own goal from Juanito after 18 minutes was enough to give them victory.

The result took them top of the table with

34 points from 16 games and left Real Madrid needing to beat Deportivo Coruna in a later match at the Bernabeu to reclaim the league leadership. Real have 33 points from 15 games, with Deportivo in third on 30.

Osasuna drew 0-0 away to Racing Santander to move a point clear of Atletico Madrid in fourth place.

MNA/Reuters

MRTV-3
**17-12-2003 (Wednesday)
(Programme Schedule)
Morning Transmission
(9:00 - 10:00)**

9:00	Signature Tune
	Greetings
9:02	Song of Myanmar Beauty & Scenic Sights "Mingalabar"
9:06	Mythun (Counterpart of Cattle)
9:10	Headline News
9:12	Easily Cooked Tasty Dishes (Head of River Catfish and Indian Leek Sour Soup)
9:15	National News
9:20	Sri-Kestra Museum (Pyi Cultural Site)
9:25	The Royal Page Dance
9:28	Plaster Toys
9:30	National News
9:35	To Combine Forces of Agriculture and Industrial Sectors
9:40	Song "Saying with the Eyes"
9:42	Clothes decorated with Sequin-like Colourful Plastics
9:45	National News
9:50	The Oldest Anthropoid Primates of Pondaung in Myanmar (Part-II)
9:58	Song of Myanmar Beauty & Scenic Sights "Come and See Myanmar"

**17-12-2003 (Wednesday)
Regular Programmes for
Viewers from Abroad
Evening Transmission
(15:30 - 17:30)**

15:30	Signature Tune
	Greetings
15:32	Song of Myanmar Beauty & Scenic Sights "Mingalabar"
15:36	Mythun (Counterpart of Cattle)
15:40	Headline News
15:42	Easily Cooked Tasty Dishes (Head of River Catfish and Indian Leek Sour Soup)
15:45	National News
15:50	Sri-Kestra Museum (Pyi Cultural Site)
15:55	The Royal Page Dance
15:58	Plaster Toys
16:00	National News
16:05	To Combine Forces of Agriculture and Industrial Sectors
16:10	Song "Saying with the Eyes"
16:12	Clothes decorated with Sequin-like Colourful Plastics
16:15	National News

16:20	The Oldest Anthropoid Primates of Pondaung in Myanmar (Part-II)
16:25	Song of Myanmar Beauty & Scenic Sights "Myanma Panorama & Myanma Sentiment"
16:30	National News
16:35	The Beauty of the 2nd Defile of The River Ayeayawady
16:40	Easily Cooked Tasty Dishes (Pork Curry mixed with Vegetable Sour Soup)
16:45	National News
16:50	Greening of the Hills and Ranges, in order to achieve Climate Change (Taung Thar Hill) (Magway Division)
16:55	Kachin Dance
17:00	National News
17:05	Progressing Cultivation in Northern Shan State
17:10	Song "No right to love, yet"
17:12	The Unique Pindaya Shan Paper
17:15	National News
17:20	Ah Mae Ywa Literature Nursery
17:25	Song of Myanmar Beauty & Scenic Sights "Come and See Myanmar"

**Evening Transmission
(19:30 - 23:30)**

19:30	Signature Tune
	Greetings
19:32	Song of Myanmar Beauty & Scenic Sights "Myanma Panorama & Myanma Sentiment"
19:36	Kachin hand-woven material
19:40	Headline News
19:42	Easily Cooked Tasty Dishes (Catfish Curry)
19:45	National News
19:50	The Oldest Anthropoid Primates of Pondaung in Myanmar (Part-I)
19:55	The Pindaya Natural Cave
20:00	National News
20:05	The Ancient City Thirikhittaya
20:10	Song "We'll Be Waiting For You"
20:15	National News
20:20	Equal Wishes that come from the heart
20:25	Myanmar Modern Song "Welcome to Kachin State"
20:30	National News
20:35	Reclamation & Cultivation in the Uplands
20:40	Easily Cooked Tasty Dishes (Hot and Sour Fresh-water Prawn Soup)
20:45	National News
20:50	The Beauty of the 1st Defile of The River Ayeayawady
20:55	Lon Yui Festival Dance
21:00	National News
21:05	Colourful Garden City of Yangon

21:10	Song "Sagawa Flowers Land"
21:15	National News
21:20	Ship Building of Myanmar
21:25	Song of Myanmar Beauty & Scenic Sights "Mingalabar"
21:35	Mythun (Counterpart of Cattle)
21:40	Headline News
21:42	Easily Cooked Tasty Dishes (Head of River Catfish and Indian Leek Sour Soup)
21:45	National News
21:50	Sri-Kestra Museum (Pyi Cultural Site)
21:55	The Royal Page Dance
21:58	Plaster Toys
22:00	National News
22:05	To Combine Forces of Agriculture and Industrial Sectors
22:10	Song "Saying with the Eyes"
22:12	Clothes decorated with Sequin-like Colourful Plastics
22:15	National News
22:20	The Oldest Anthropoid Primates of Pondaung in Myanmar (Part-II)
22:25	Song "Horse Cart"
22:30	National News
22:35	The Beauty of the 2nd Defile of The River Ayeayawady
22:40	Easily Cooked Tasty Dishes (Pork Curry mixed with Vegetable Sour Soup)
22:45	National News
22:50	Greening of the Hills and Ranges, in order to achieve Climate Change (Taung Thar Hill) (Magway Division)
22:55	Kachin Dance
23:00	National News
23:05	Progressing Cultivation in Northern Shan State
23:10	Song "No right to love, yet"
23:12	The Unique Pindaya Shan Paper
23:15	National News
23:20	Ah Mae Ywa Literature Nursery
23:25	Song of Myanmar Beauty & Scenic Sights "Come and See Myanmar"

**17-12-2003 (Wednesday) &
18-12-2003 (Thursday)
Evening & Morning
Transmission
(23:30 - 1:30)**

23:30	Signature Tune
	Greetings
23:32	Song of Myanmar Beauty & Scenic Sights "Mingalabar"
23:36	Mythun (Counterpart of Cattle)
23:40	Headline News
23:42	Easily Cooked Tasty Dishes (Head of River Catfish and Indian Leek Sour Soup)

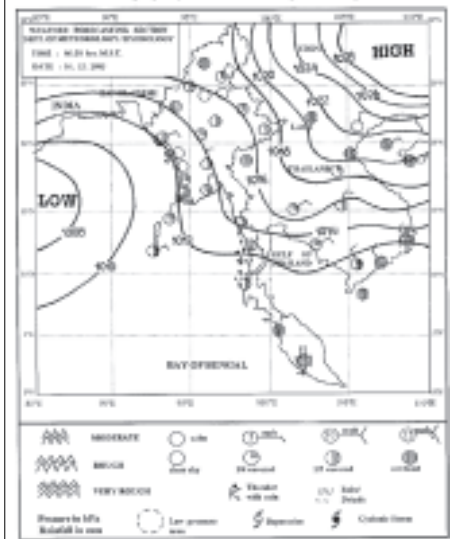
23:45	National News
23:50	Sri-Kestra Museum (Pyi Cultural Site)
23:55	The Royal Page Dance
23:58	Plaster Toys
24:00	National News
00:05	To Combine Forces of Agriculture and Industrial Sectors
00:10	Song "Saying with the Eyes"
00:12	Clothes decorated with Sequin-like Colourful Plastics
00:15	National News
00:20	The Oldest Anthropoid Primates of Pondaung in Myanmar (Part-II)
00:25	Song of Myanmar Beauty & Scenic Sights "Myanma Panorama & Myanma Sentiment"
00:30	National News
00:35	The Beauty of the 2nd Defile of The River Ayeayawady
00:40	Easily Cooked Tasty Dishes (Pork Curry mixed with Vegetable Sour Soup)
00:45	National News
00:50	Greening of the Hills and Ranges, in order to achieve Climate Change (Taung Thar Hill) (Magway Division)
00:55	Kachin Dance
01:00	National News
01:05	Progressing Cultivation in Northern Shan State
01:10	Song "No right to love, yet"
01:12	The Unique Pindaya Shan Paper
01:15	National News
01:20	Ah Mae Ywa Literature Nursery
01:25	Song of Myanmar Beauty & Scenic Sights "Come and See Myanmar"

**18-12-2003 (Thursday)
Morning Transmission
(03:30 - 07:30)**

03:30	Signature Tune
	Greetings
03:32	Song of Myanmar Beauty & Scenic Sights "Myanma Panorama & Myanma Sentiment"
03:36	Kachin hand-woven material
03:40	Headline News
03:42	Easily Cooked Tasty Dishes (Catfish Curry)
03:45	National News
03:50	The Oldest Anthropoid Primates of Pondaung in Myanmar (Part-I)
03:55	The Pindaya Natural Cave
04:00	National News
04:05	The Ancient City Thirikhittaya
04:10	Song "We'll Be Waiting For You"
04:15	National News
04:20	Equal Wishes that come from the heart
04:25	Myanmar Modern Song "Welcome to

04:30	National News
04:35	Reclamation & Cultivation in the Uplands
04:40	Easily Cooked Tasty Dishes (Hot and Sour Fresh-water Prawn Soup)
04:45	National News
04:50	The Beauty of the 1st Defile of The River Ayeayawady
04:55	Lon Yui Festival Dance
05:00	National News
05:05	Colourful Garden City of Yangon
05:10	Song "Sagawa Flowers Land"
05:15	National News
05:20	Ship Building of Myanmar
05:25	Song of Myanmar Beauty & Scenic Sights "Mingalabar"
05:35	Mythun (Counterpart of Cattle)
05:40	Headline News
05:42	Easily Cooked Tasty Dishes (Head of River Catfish and Indian Leek Sour Soup)
05:45	National News
05:50	Sri-Kestra Museum (Pyi Cultural Site)
05:55	The Royal Page Dance
05:58	Plaster Toys
06:00	National News
06:05	To Combine Forces of Agriculture and Industrial Sectors

06:10	Song "Saying with the Eyes"
06:12	Clothes decorated with Sequin-like Colourful Plastics
06:15	National News
06:20	The Oldest Anthropoid Primates of Pondaung in Myanmar (Part-II)
06:25	Song "Horse Cart"
06:30	National News
06:35	The Beauty of the 2nd Defile of The River Ayeayawady
06:40	Easily Cooked Tasty Dishes (Pork Curry mixed with Vegetable Sour Soup)
06:45	National News
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07:12	The Unique Pindaya Shan Paper
07:15	National News
07:20	Ah Mae Ywa Literature Nursery
23:25	Song of Myanmar Beauty & Scenic Sights "Come and See Myanmar"

Weather Map of Myanmar and Neighbouring Areas

WEATHER
Tuesday, 16 December, 2003

Summary of observations recorded at 09:30 hours MST: During the past 24 hours, weather has been partly cloudy in the whole country. Night temperatures were (3°C) to (4°C) below normal in Chin State, Yangon, Mandalay and Taninthayi Divisions, (5°C) to (6°C) below normal in Rakhine State, upper Sagaing and Bago Divisions, (7°C) to (8°C) below normal in Shan State, lower Sagaing and Ayeayawady Divisions and about normal in the remaining areas. The significant night temperature was (1°C) in Hakha.

Maximum temperature on 15-12-2003 was 33.0°C (91°F). Minimum temperature on 16-12-2003 was 15.3°C (60°F). Relative humidity at 9:30 hrs MST on 16-12-2003 was 71%. Total sunshine hours on 15-12-2003 was (8.6) hours approx. Rainfall on 16-12-2003 was nil at Yangon Airport, Kaba-Aye and central Yangon. Total rainfall since 1-1-2003 was 2211 mm (87.05 inches) at Yangon Airport, 2315 mm (91.14 inches) at Kaba-Aye and 2394 mm (94.25 inches) at central Yangon. Maximum wind speed at Yangon (Kaba-Aye) was 12 mph from Northeast at (13:10) hours MST on 15-12-2003.

Bay inference: According to the observations at (09:30) hrs MST today, the depression over West Central Bay has further intensified into a cyclonic storm and crossed Andhra Coast, (230)miles north of Chennai, India. Weather is partly cloudy in the West and South Bay and generally fair elsewhere in the Bay of Bengal.

Forecast valid until evening of 17-12-2003: Rain or thunder-showers are likely to be isolated in Chin, Kachin, Rakhine, Northern Shan States and upper Sagaing Division and weather will be partly cloudy in the remaining areas. Degree of certainty is (60%). **State of the sea:** At times strong easterly wind with (35)mph and rough seas are likely off and along Mon and Taninthayi Coast. Seas will be moderate elsewhere in Myanmar waters.

Outlook for subsequent two days: Likelihood of isolated rain or thunder-showers in Taninthayi Division.

Forecast for Yangon and neighbouring area for 17-12-2003: Partly cloudy. **Forecast for Mandalay and neighbouring area for 17-12-2003:** Partly cloudy.

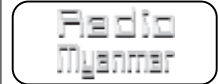
"STORM NEWS"
(Issued at 10:30 hour M.S.T on 16th December, 2003)

According to the observations at (09:30)hrs M.S. today, the depression over West Central Bay has further intensified into a cyclonic storm and crossed Andhra Coast, (230)miles north of Chennai, India.


Wednesday, December 17
View today:

7:00 am	1. ရွှေဘိုမြစ်ဝကျွန်းပတ်ဒေသဆရာတော်ဘုရား၊ နိုင်ငံတော်သမ္မတမြန်မာနိုင်ငံတော်အစိုးရအဖွဲ့အစည်းတော်ဆောင်ရွက်ချက်၊ အဘိဓမ္မာမဟာဓမ္မဝရုဒါအဘိဓမ္မာမဟာသဒ္ဒမ္မဇာတ်တော်စီမံကိန်းအစွဲအနက်အရ ဆရာတော်ဘုရား၏ ဝန်ခံချက်များ
7:25 am	2. To be healthy exercise
7:30 am	3. Morning news
7:40 am	4. Nice and sweet song
7:50 am	5. မြန်မာ့ပြည်သူ့စာပေအဖွဲ့အစည်း
8:05 am	6. ဘေးသရုပ်ဖော်အစဉ်
8:15 am	7. ပညာရေးတံတား
8:30 am	8. International news
8:45 am	9. Learning English the easy and happy way for children and beginners
4:00 pm	1. Martial song
4:15 pm	2. Song to uphold National Spirit
4:30 pm	3. Demonstration exercise for correct pronunciation
4:45 pm	4. Musical programme
5:00 pm	5. အခင်းသတ်တော်မူသည့်အခါမှစ၍ မြန်မာ့ပြည်သူ့စာပေအဖွဲ့အစည်း၏ အစိုးရအဖွဲ့အစည်းတော်ဆောင်ရွက်ချက် (အထူးပြုအားလုံး) (ပြန်မူစာပေ)
5:15 pm	6. Songs of national races
5:30 pm	7. Classical song
5:45 pm	8. နိုင်ငံအစိုးရသစ်တော်စီမံကိန်းလမ်းညွှန်

6:00 pm	9. ရွှေဘိုမြစ်ဝကျွန်းပတ်ဒေသဆရာတော်ဘုရား၊ နိုင်ငံတော်သမ္မတမြန်မာနိုင်ငံတော်အစိုးရအဖွဲ့အစည်းတော်ဆောင်ရွက်ချက်၊ အဘိဓမ္မာမဟာဓမ္မဝရုဒါအဘိဓမ္မာမဟာသဒ္ဒမ္မဇာတ်တော်စီမံကိန်းအစွဲအနက်အရ ဆရာတော်ဘုရား၏ ဝန်ခံချက်များ
6:15 pm	10. Discovery
6:30 pm	11. Evening news
7:00 pm	12. Weather report
7:05 pm	13. Milo success in soccer
7:10 pm	14. ဝန်ခံချက်များ
7:25 pm	15. Musical programme
7:35 pm	16. အချက်အလက်အရ ဆရာတော်ဘုရား၏ ဝန်ခံချက်များ (အထူးပြုအားလုံး) (ပြန်မူစာပေ)
8:00 pm	17. "News"
8:15 pm	18. International news
8:30 pm	19. Weather report
8:45 pm	20. နိုင်ငံခြားတော်သမ္မတဘုရား၏ ဝန်ခံချက်များ (အထူးပြုအားလုံး) (ပြန်မူစာပေ)
9:00 pm	21. The next day's programme


Wednesday, December 17
Tune in today:

8.30 am	Brief news
8.35 am	Music
8.40 am	Perspectives
8.45 am	Music
8.50 am	National news/Slogan
9.00 am	Music
9.05 am	International news
9.10 am	Music
9.15 am	News/Slogan
9.20 am	Lunch time music - Do I have to cry (Nik Carter)
9.25 am	-Whole again (Atomic Kitten)
9.30 am	Variations on a tune "Silver bells" -Presley
9.35 am	-Jim Reeves
9.40 am	Article/Music
9.45 am	Music at your request -Heaven for someone(Queen)
9.50 am	-This ain't love song (Bon Jovi)
9.55 am	News/Slogan
10.00 pm	PEL

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



Prime Minister General Khin Nyunt addresses the opening of the Fourth Myanmar Traditional Medicine Practitioners Conference. — MNA

The Government giving encouragement to develop traditional medical practice systematically and create highly-qualified human resources

Unusual emphasis placed on advent of new era of international-standard Myanmar traditional medicines that are priceless national heritage

Senior General Than Shwe sends message to Fourth Myanmar Traditional Medicine Practitioners Conference, Prime Minister General Khin Nyunt addresses the conference

YANGON, 16 Dec — The opening of the Fourth Myanmar Traditional Medicine Practitioners Conference was held at Pyidaungsu Hall in Kyaikkasan Grounds, here, at 8 am today.

Chairman of the State Peace and Development Council Senior General Than Shwe sent a message to the conference and Prime Minister General Khin Nyunt delivered an address on the occasion.

Also present at the con-

ference were Yangon Division Peace and Development Council Chairman Yangon Command Commander Maj-Gen Myint Swe, the ministers, the Chief Justice, the Attorney-General, the Yangon Mayor, members of the National Health Committee, the deputy ministers, officials from the SPDC Office, departmental heads, ambassadors of foreign missions in Yangon, resident representatives of UN agencies, directors-general from the

ministry, members of the Traditional Medicine Council, members of the Traditional Medicine Inspection Central Committee, officials from Myanmar Maternal and Child Welfare Association, Myanmar Red Cross Society, Myanmar Medical Association, Myanmar Nurses Association, Myanmar Dental Association and Myanmar Health Assistants Association and invited guests.

On the occasion, Minister for Health Dr Kyaw Myint

read the message of Chairman of the State Peace and Development Council Senior General Than Shwe.

Afterwards, National Health Committee Chairman Prime Minister General Khin Nyunt delivered an address. He said:

"I would like to first of all extend my greetings to responsible personnel of the State, members of the National Health Committee, specially invited guests, diplomats and resident representa-

tives of UN agencies, the chairman of the Myanmar Traditional Medicine Practitioners Association and officials, and Myanmar traditional physicians.

And I also would like to express my best wishes to all of you to be in peace of mind and body and to establish yourselves into ones capable of developing and proliferating Myanmar traditional medicines.

To start with, the fact that Myanmar traditional medicine practitioners conferences can be held successfully on a grand scale without missing a single year reflects the concerted efforts Myanmar traditional physicians have made to reach the goals of preserving and promoting the standard of

Myanmar traditional medicines: the development of Myanmar traditional medicines that meet the set standard, the lasting existence of Myanmar traditional medicines in a prominent position deserving, and the provision of public health care effectively with Myanmar traditional medicines.

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National races: let's join hands firmly page 6

Prime Minister attends New Year dinner

YANGON, 16 Dec — Prime Minister General Khin Nyunt attended a New Year dinner hosted by Tuesday Club at the Traders' Hotel on Sule Pagoda Road here at 6.30 pm today.

Also present on the occasion were the ministers, the deputy ministers, officials of the State Peace and Development Council Office, heads of departments, foreign businessmen and their wives, Chairman of Tuesday Club Mr Martin Pun and members and guests.

Before the dinner, Chairman of Tuesday Club Mr Martin Pun made a speech and explained work programmes of Tuesday Club and measures taken during a year.

Next, Minister for Labour U Tin Winn spoke words of thanks.

Afterwards, Chairman of Tuesday Club Mr Martin Pun presented a gift to Prime Minister General Khin Nyunt. — MNA



Prime Minister General Khin Nyunt greeting members of Tuesday Club at the New Year dinner. — MNA

Fourth Myanmar Traditional Medicine Practitioners Conference held

YANGON, 16 Dec — The Fourth Myanmar Traditional Medicine Practitioners Conference began at the Kyaikkasan Grounds this morning.

Present were Deputy Minister for Health Dr Mya Oo, Director-General of Traditional Medicine Department Dr Thein Swe, the deputy director-general and directors, members of Myanmar Traditional Medicine Council, Traditional Medicine Practitioners of Myanmar Traditional Medicine Practitioners Association, members of Leading Committee of the Fourth

Myanmar Traditional Medicine Practitioners Conference, delegates from states and divisions and guests.

The morning session was presided over by Deputy Minister Dr Mya Oo. Chairman of Traditional Medicine Council Director-General Dr Thein Swe, member U Nyan Lwin and delegates U Tan Kay and U Than Nyunt acted as members of the Panel of Chairmen.

Deputy Director-General Dr Myat Myat Ohn Khin acted as master of ceremonies.

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