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Prime Minister General Khin Nyunt presents New Year's gift to a national race leader at Phonkanrazi Hall, Putao, Kachin State on 29-12-2003. — YANGON COMMAND

Located in far north of nation, having pristine nature, decorated with snow-capped mountains, Putao has high potentials for eco-tourism development

General Khin Nyunt looks into regional development works in Putao Region in Putao District

YANGON, 30 Dec — Prime Minister General Khin Nyunt, accompanied by member of the State Peace and Development Council Lt-Gen Ye Myint, ministers, the Chief of Staff (Navy), deputy ministers, officials of the SPDC Office, departmental heads and officials left here by air on 28 December morning and arrived at Myintkyina Airport in Kachin State.

The Prime Minister and party were welcomed there by Kachin State PDC Chairman Northern Command Commander Maj-Gen Maung Maung Swe, Commander of Myintkyina Air Base Brig-Gen Bo Kyi, Deputy Commander Brig-Gen San Tun, military officers, peace negotiator Dr Hse Bwe John and officials, national race leader of Kachin State Special Region-1 U Za Khan Ting Ring and members, national race leader of the Special Region-2 U La Mon Tu Gyaing and members, traditional cultural troupe members and local nationals.

At the lounge of the airport Director U Win Oo of the Department of Civil Aviation reported to the Prime Minister on upgrading of Myintkyina Airport, extended construction of airport building and arrangements for keeping the rooms in proper order at the airport for the convenience of passengers. Superintending Engineer U Than Nyunt Win of Public Works reported on tarring of road between the airport

runway and apron and upgrading of the runway with the length of 6000 feet and width of 150 feet. The Prime Minister gave necessary instructions.

The Prime Minister and party went to Putao Airport where they were welcomed by Tactical Operation Commander Col Khaing Soe, local authorities, departmental staff, traditional cultural troupe members and local national people. On arrival at Dohtan Basic Education School in Putao, the Prime Minister heard reports by Headmaster U Dain Khan Da Wi on progress in construction of the two-storey school building measuring 170-foot by 30-foot by academic and staff affairs. The Prime Minister attended to needs for the rapid completion of the building soonest. Next, the Prime Minister inspected the construction tasks.

The Prime Minister and party proceeded to Nagmon in Putao District by helicopter where local authorities and local nationals welcomed them.

The Prime Minister met with Township PDC members, departmental employees and townsenders at the hall of Nagmon. Township PDC Chairman U Tun Mya reported on implementation of the guidelines given by the Prime Minister on education, health, construction of retransmission station and hydel power station, high yield of paddy and

(See page 8)



Prime Minister General Khin Nyunt meets with local authorities, departmental officials, members of social organizations and townsenders at Banru Hall, Sumprabum, Kachin State on 29-12-2003. — MNA

Protect all the interests of the State

Our Tatmadaw will have to protect all the interests of the State. Throughout the successive eras of history, the Tatmadaw has safeguarded the national politics. Only if we preserve this tradition, will the nation continue to develop and prosper on the right track despite the changes that may occur in different periods.

Senior General Than Shwe,
State Peace and Development Council Chairman,
Defence Services Commander-in-Chief
(From address at the graduation parade of the
46th Intake of Defence Services Academy)

Motion Picture Awards presentation ceremony to be aired live on TV

YANGON, 30 Dec — The Myanmar Motion Picture Enterprise under the Ministry of Information will hold Motion Picture Awards presentation ceremony for 2002 at the National Indoor Stadium 1 in Thuwunna at 5 pm tomorrow.

The ceremony will be telecast live on TV Myanmar.
MNA

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

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23,587

PERSPECTIVES

Wednesday, 31 December, 2003

For eradication of narcotic drugs and border area development

The danger of narcotic drugs threatens the mankind. It creates many social problems. Problems related to narcotic drugs are not to be solved by only a region or a country but all the countries of the world.

In its drive for eradication of narcotic drugs, the State is encouraging cultivation of poppy-substitute crops, establishing livestock breeding and other businesses in addition to drug control measures.

Under the programme of Myanmar-Thai narcotic drugs eradication and all-round development of border areas, the ceremony to open 16-bed hospital which is one of the Yaungkha Village Project in Monghsat District, Shan State (East), was held at the venue on 26 December. Chairman of Shan State (East) Peace and Development Council Commander of Triangle Region Command Maj-Gen Khin Zaw and Commander of 3rd Army Area of Thailand formally opened the hospital.

Yaungkha Village Project is being implemented under the programme of Myanmar-Thai narcotic drugs eradication and all-round development of border areas after the meeting between the prime ministers of the two countries in 2001.

The project benefits not only Yaungkha Village but also local people who are residing in Yaungkha Village-tract formed with 13 villages and its environs.

The project started in January 2003. In implementing the education sector of the all-round development project, Basic Education Primary School that can accommodate 500 school children was built in May 2003. Starting from June 2003, 10 teachers appointed by the Ministry of Education have been teaching 222 school children at the school.

In the health sector, construction of the 16-bed hospital was completed in September 2003. One doctor and four nurses appointed by the Ministry of Health are providing health care service to local national races.

As regards the agriculture sector, the plan has been drawn to cultivate opium-substitute crops. Nowadays, 1,300 acres of high-land area and 900 acres of farmland, totalling over 2,200 have been put under paddy, and arrangements have been made for building small-scale dams with a view to ensuring cultivation of double cropping. Now, six small-scale dams together with a 20-kilometre-long canal have been built in cooperation with local people for supplying water to over 840 acres of farmland all the year round. So, over 2,000 tons of surplus rice is achieved this year.

Fish, poultry and pig are being bred in the region in the livestock breeding sector. Work is under way to enable households of the villages to engage in livestock breeding.

At a time when efforts are being made for eradication of narcotic drugs, the entire national people are urged to participate in border area development endeavours.



School Family Day

(27 December 2003 to 3 January 2004)

The 57th Anniversary Union Day objectives

- for all national races to safeguard the national policy— non-disintegration of the Union, non-disintegration of national solidarity and perpetuation of sovereignty
- to keep the Union Spirit ever alive and dynamic among the national people
- for all national people to defend and safeguard the Union for its perpetual existence
- to prevent, through national solidarity, the danger of internal and external destructive elements undermining peace and stability of the State and national development, and
- for all national races to make concerted efforts for successful implementation of the seven-point future policy programme.



Minister Maj-Gen Sein Htwa and wife present offertories to a Sayadaw. — IMMIGRATION

"Soon" offered to members of Sangha

YANGON, 30 Dec —The Ministry of Immigration and Population offered 'soon' and presented offertories to members of the Sangha at Mogok refectory of the State Pariyatti Sasana University (Yangon) on Kaba Aye Hill here this morning. It was attended by Minister for Immigration and Population Maj-Gen Sein Htwa and wife, Deputy Minister U Maung Aung and wife, officials and staff families. The minister presented K 100,000 for offering 'soon' to members of the Sangha to Deputy Director-General of the Department for Promotion and Propagation of the Sasana U Tun Mya Aung, who then presented a certificate of honour to him. — MNA

Measures for production of spare parts of diesel locomotives & signals coordinated

YANGON, 30 Dec —The Ministry of Rail Transportation held its fifth coordination meeting for production of spare parts of diesel locomotives and civil engineering signals for Myanmar Railways at the Locomotive Shed in Insein Township this morning.

It was attended by Minister for Rail Transportation Maj-Gen Aung Min, Deputy Minister Thura U Thauing Lwin, departmental heads, officials, entrepreneurs, experts and guests. In the occasion, the minister delivered an address, saying that Myanmar Railways contributes 42 per cent towards passenger transportation and 14 per cent towards goods transportation. As nation's development is gaining momentum, the MR is making arrangements for further fulfilling of transport requirements, he added. In his inspection tours of Myitnge Carriage and Wagon Workshop and Ywahtaung Diesel Locomotive Shed in April and Insein Locomotive Shed in May 2003, Head of State Senior General Than Shwe gave guidance on promoting efficiency of MR. The purpose of holding the meeting is to translate the guid-

ance into action, he noted. The previous meeting held on 6 June 2003 decided to invent 33 kinds of electrical spare parts of locomotives. Among them, altogether 13 items have been successfully invented, saving foreign exchange of US 212,389. Continued efforts for producing of the remaining items are expected to meet success soon. Plans are under way to invent some items of signals. Out of 2,941 parts of diesel locomotives, 340 items have been invented successfully in the nation.

Next, officials reported on requirements for production of spare parts. The minister presented certificates of honour to 30 entrepreneurs and experts who invented the spare parts of locomotives. It was followed by a general round of discussions. The minister and the deputy minister also took part in the discussion. After the meeting, the minister and the deputy minister, departmental heads and officials viewed the exhibition of invented locomotive spare parts. The exhibition will be kept open until 8 January 2004.

MNA



Minister for Rail Transportation Maj-Gen Aung Min speaks at the coordination meeting. — 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

Efficient use of electricity

- * Use daylight as the main source of light
- * Use the least possible amount of electricity only if there is not enough natural light
- * Use the least possible amount of electricity required in production and service enterprises
- * Preventing waste of electricity benefits the user and others

There are about 500,000 households using electricity in Yangon. Thus, saving a four-foot fluorescent lamp every day by each household amounts to saving power that is equal to the capacity a 20-megawatt power station can supply.

All this needs to be known

- * Do not be frightened whenever intimidated
- * Do not be bolstered whenever flattered
- * Do not be softened whenever appeased

478 US service members killed since start of military operation in Iraq

BAGHDAD, 30 Dec—As of Monday, 29 December, 478 US service members have died since the beginning of military operations in Iraq, according to the Department of Defence. Of those, 327 died as a result of hostile action and 151 died of non-hostile causes, the department said.

The British military has reported 52 deaths; Italy, 17; Spain, eight; Bulgaria, five; Thailand, two; Denmark, Ukraine and Poland have reported one each. On or since 1 May, when President Bush declared that major combat operations in Iraq had ended, 340 US soldiers have died — 212 as a result of hostile action and 128 of non-hostile causes, according to the Defence Department's figures.

Since the start of military operations, 2,368 US service members have been injured as a result of hostile action,

according to the Defence Department's figures. Non-hostile injured numbered 372. The latest deaths reported by the military:

— A 1st Armoured Division soldier was killed Sunday by an explosive in Baghdad.

— A Task Force Ironhorse soldier died of an "undetermined illness" on Sunday at a logistical support base near Beiji, north of Baghdad.

The latest identifications reported by the Department of Defence and the

Michigan Army National Guard:

—Army Pvt Rey D Cuervo, 24, Laguna Vista, Texas; killed Sunday by an explosive in Baghdad; assigned to 1st Squadron, 2nd Armoured Cavalry Regiment; Fort Polk, La.

—Army Sgt Curt E Jordan Jr, 25, Greenacres, Wash; died Sunday of non-combat injuries near Bayji; assigned to the 14th Combat Engineer Battalion (Corps) (Wheeled), 555th Combat Engineer Group; Fort Lewis, Wash.

Internet

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Tinley Park soldier killed in Iraq

TINLEY PARK, 30 Dec — A soldier from the Chicago suburb of Tinley Park was killed in Iraq while trying to defuse a homemade bomb.

Military officials said Staff Sgt Michael Sutter was a 1993 graduate of Andrew High School. He was killed Friday near the Iraqi town of Baqouba.

His mother, Judy Sutter, said her 28-year-old son was a team leader, who earned the trust of his fellow soldiers.

Internet



Iraqi children stand next to a US soldier of 1st Battalion, 22nd Regiment, (1-22) of the 4th Infantry Division, carrying his machine gun during a foot patrol in Tikrit, Iraq, on Saturday, 27 December 2003.—INTERNET

Troops using faulty helmets in Iraq, says supplier

BAGHDAD, 30 Dec—The organization that equips and clothes Australian soldiers has been accused of supplying faulty equipment that could endanger the safety of the nation's troops, including those serving in Iraq.

A Defence Force contractor has told the ABC that faulty helmets have been given to Australia's most exposed troops, those who are on patrol in Baghdad, because they have not been properly maintained.

The Defence Materiel Organization (DMO), which equips the Defence Force, has also been accused of designing raincoats that actually make a soldier more visible to the enemy when viewed with night-vision goggles.

The ABC has also uncovered apparent conflicts of interest involving DMO staff and million dollar contracts.

The Defence Force insists there are no significant problems with equipment supplied by the DMO.

Some troops are so dissatisfied with the organization that a group of infantry soldiers has set up a website to express their concerns.

About one piece of clothing, the website run by aggrieved troops says: "We don't know who designed this stuff or who signed the order ... either they don't know their job or they just don't care what the soldiers need."

According to some insiders, the website only scratches the surface.

A private supplier to the DMO, Peter Marshall, says about 8,000 helmets he sold in 1995 have not been properly maintained and are now defective.

Internet

Children's education biggest cost for China's rural families

BEIJING, 30 Dec— More than 40 per cent of rural families in China will spend most of their net income on their children's education in the next three years, according to a survey by the China Consumers Association on Thursday.

The report on rural consumption shows that apart daily necessities, education was a major burden. About 19 per cent said agricultural production materials are the biggest expense. Housing was the main expense for 16 per cent of those surveyed. Only 0.9 per cent of rural families choose to spend their net income on travel, which indicated that most rural families are still struggling for better standards of living.

The survey also showed that insurance had become a new expense for rural people. About 58.7 per cent of rural families have at least one insurance policy. Life, endowment and medical insurance were three main policies.

More than three quarters of those surveyed were satisfied with health services and 77 per cent said they were satisfied with the quality of education in local schools.

MNA/Xinhua

Private enterprises contribute to east China's foreign trade

JINAN, 30 Dec — Private enterprises of east China's Shandong Province played an important role in provincial foreign trade this year, said Wang Renyuan, vice governor of Shandong Province.

According to statistics released by Qingdao Customs office, the gross import and export turnover of Shandong private enterprises from January to November this year amounted to 2.3 billion US dollars, 190 per cent higher than last year.

Speaking at the provincial economy and foreign trade conference, Wang said that in 2003, Shandong had sped up the reform of state-owned enterprises' economic systems, and the provincial government had taken a series of measures to remove policy obstacles so that more private enterprises could participate in foreign trade. — MNA/Xinhua

Indian President suggests strategy to make education attractive

NEW DELHI, 30 Dec—Indian President A P J Abdul Kalam Sunday suggested a multi-pronged strategy to make education more attractive and simultaneously create employment potential.

"Our employment generation system is not in a position to absorb the graduates passing out from the universities, leading to increase in educated unemployed year after year," Kalam said at the Golden Jubilee Celebrations of University Grants Commission (UGC) here.

There has been substantial growth in the higher educational system and the country was generating over 3 million graduates every year,

he pointed out.

"The educational system should highlight the importance of entrepreneurship and prepare the students right from the college education to get oriented towards setting up of enterprises which will provide them creativity, freedom and ability to generate wealth," Kalam told an audience which included Indian Human Resource Development Minister Murli Manohar Joshi, several State Govern-

nors and eminent academics.

Proposing an 11-point initiative to make the educational sector "vibrant" and meet the challenges of providing vital human resource for national development, the President suggested that a simple, easy to implement "educational loan scheme" to be evolved by UGC in collaboration with banks to enable meritorious students to pursue higher education without disruption.

MNA/Xinhua

Vietnam maintains anti-SARS measures

HANOI, 30 Dec—Vietnam has been taking all necessary measures to prevent the Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome (SARS), following a suspected case of SARS was reported in China.

At all air, sea and road frontier passes, those coming in an out of Vietnam are subject to temperature examination, and those having a body temperature above 38 Celsius degrees and symptoms of flu will be quarantined, deputy head of the country's Central Steering Committee on SARS Prevention Hoang Thuy Long was quoted by the local newspaper liberation Saigon on Sunday.

Operations of international quarantine centres at frontier passes in the northern provinces of Quang Ninh and Lao Cai and other localities have been maintained regularly, he said.

Recently, the Vietnamese Government has asked ministries and localities nationwide to coordinate with the Ministry of Health in taking preventive measures against SARS and other infectious diseases.

MNA/Xinhua



An Iraqi woman lies next her injured boy at a hospital in the city of Karbala, some 110 km south of Baghdad, on 27 December, 2003. At least six foreign soldiers were killed and 27 injured in a string of attacks on US-allied forces and Iraqi targets in Karbala, military officials said. Hospital officials in Karbala said at least seven Iraqi civilians and police were also killed and another 80 were wounded.—INTERNET

Blair rocked by new flood of criticism over Iraq war

LONDON, 30 Dec—Tony Blair yesterday received his strongest criticism so far over his support for the war in Iraq, as senior politicians turned on him.

The outbursts will mark a low point at the end of a bad year for the Prime Minister who faces a daunting challenge to win back support from many Labour MPs who opposed the war.

Robin Cook, the former foreign secretary, who resigned on the eve of the conflict, levelled the harshest criticism at Mr Blair over his belief that weapons of mass destruction will be found in Iraq.

He said he accepted that Mr Blair had genuinely believed Saddam Hussein was developing and did have weapons of mass destruction when he took Britain to war.

"He believed it, but he believed it, because he needed to believe it because he had an evangelical commitment to the case for invading Iraq and for toppling Saddam Hussein," Mr Cook told the BBC yesterday.

However, he said the Prime Minister must now accept he was wrong in order to salvage his

political credibility.

He said: "He needs, frankly, to do it for his own good because his own credibility is always going to be undermined if he persists in insisting he was right when everybody now can see he is wrong."

"Even the Americans will not back him up."

The criticisms were provoked by an interview given by Paul Bremer, when the United States official appeared to reject Mr Blair's claim that evidence of Saddam's weapons laboratories had been unearthed.

Mr Bremer, the head of the Coalition Provisional Authority running Iraq, said the claim sounded like a red herring put about by someone opposed to military action to undermine the coalition. He only rowed back on his words when it was pointed out that Mr Blair, Washington's staunchest ally, had made the claim.

Mr Blair's woes were further in-

creased when Clare Short unleashed her most stinging attack on him.

The former international development secretary yesterday said he should quit and accused him of deceit.

Mr Cook also spelled out a warning to Mr Blair in a newspaper article, in which he said the Prime Minister may never win back public trust.

He urged Mr Blair to make a New Year resolution to admit he was wrong about Saddam's weapons of mass destruction. "Once lost, trust is difficult to regain and its absence has infected the credibility of the government," he said.

And Mr Blair should abandon his "unhealthy" denial of the mounting evidence that Saddam did not have WMD, he added. "It is undignified for the Prime Minister, and worrying for his nation, to go on believing a threat which everybody else can see was a fantasy." —*Internet*

ဝတ်မှုမ်းအား ခေတ်ကျော်လွှား

Hu Jintao vows to continue efforts on Iraqi reconstruction

BEIJING, 30 Dec — Chinese President Hu Jintao vowed Monday that China would continue, with the international community, to help reconstruction and the restoration of peace and stability in Iraq as soon as possible.

Hu told visiting US President special envoy James Baker, who also served as US secretary of state from 1989 to 1992, that the prompt restoration of peace and stability and reconstruction was the common expectation of the international community.

Hu said China and the US should maintain frequent exchanges and close communication and consultation on international and regional issues to foster the development of a constructive partnership and world peace and stability.

Baker said the two countries cooperated well on issues such as Iraq and the Korean nuclear issue.

Baker said the reconstruction process would benefit the Iraqi people and help achieve regional peace, which would also serve the common interests of the US and China.

He hoped that China would join with the US to solve the Iraq debt issue. — *MNA/Xinhua*



Ghoufran Ali, 14, stands next to her mother Fatima's bed at al-Husseiniyah hospital in Karbala, Iraq, on 28 December, 2003. — *INTERNET*

Violence in Iraq shows no letup

BAGHDAD, 29 Dec—A bomb blast killed a US soldier and two Iraqi children in Baghdad yesterday, a day after a rebel assault left 12 Iraqis and seven coalition soldiers dead and scores wounded in the Shiite holy city of Karbala.

A top Kurdish security official was also wounded in an ambush that killed three bodyguards in a continuing upsurge in violence, coinciding with reports that the United States has scaled down ambitious plans to build a new Iraq.

Two Iraqi children were killed, along with a US soldier, in the bomb blast in the capital yesterday morning, a US military spokesman told *AFP*. Five soldiers, one Iraqi interpreter and eight Iraqi Civil Defence Corps members were also wounded.

The Washington Post reported yesterday that attacks on the US-led occupation have prompted the United States to scale down its ambitious agenda to rebuild the country. US officials had in the past few months dropped plans to privatize state-owned businesses and backed off efforts to disarm militias under the control of ethnic and political factions. — *Internet*

Large amount of drugs seized in HK

HONG KONG, 30 Dec—The Narcotics Bureau (NB) of Hong Kong Police seized 3.2 million Hong Kong dollars (412,903 US dollars) worth of dangerous drugs and arrested four persons in two anti-drugs operations on Saturday.

Acting on information, NB officers laid an ambush at a hotel in Tsim Sha Tsui and intercepted three men at the lobby of the hotel at about 1:00 pm Saturday, according to a government Press release.

Eight kilos of suspected "ice" drug was found in their possession. The drugs were concealed inside the packages of some Chinese tea containing inside a shopping bag.

— *MNA/Xinhua*

Vietnam to focus on improving investment environment

HANOI, 30 Dec — The Vietnamese Government will, next year, focus on improving its investment environment and facilitating the world's economic integration process, local newspaper *Pioneer* reported Monday.

At a two-day government conference which concluded in Ho Chi Minh City on Sunday, Prime Minister Phan Van Khai asked ministries and local authorities to remove business obstacles in such sectors as Customs, taxation and market management, and to create a more equal playing-field for all businesses, especially small- and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs).

He urged relevant state agencies, especially the Finance Ministry to rapidly issue concrete regulations on the implementation of new laws, and policies to further support SMEs, which are the key source of job creation.

Regarding the international economic integration, the Prime Minister said, "Raising quality and competitiveness of each product, goods category, enterprise and the whole economy is the foundation for negotiations towards the World Trade Organization's entry." — *MNA/Xinhua*

Visitor arrivals in Singapore grow 7.9% in November

SINGAPORE, 30 Dec — Visitor arrivals in Singapore increased by 7.9 per cent in November 2003 compared with the same month last year, which is the first positive year-on-year growth since March this year, official statistics said here on Monday.

Figures released by the Singapore Tourism Board (STB) said that visitor arrivals amounted to 635,213 in November 2003, with Indonesia, China and Malaysia remaining Singapore's top visitor-generating markets, accounting for 44 per cent of total visitors.

— *MNA/Xinhua*

Chinese Premier urges to carry out taxation strictly

BELING, 30 Dec— Chinese Premier Wen Jiabao has urged the country's taxation authorities at all levels to carry out taxation work strictly in accordance with the law to ensure steady growth in tax revenue.

In his written comments on the work to a national taxation conference, Wen said all taxation departments should manage taxation, reinforce tax legislation and standardize the enforcement of tax laws.

He also called for efforts to promote reforms of the taxation system in a planned and step-by-step way.

China has made a historical breakthrough in tax revenue, which totalled 1,984.3 billion yuan (239.7 billion US dollars), excluding Customs tariffs and agricultural taxes, up to December 20 this year, increasing by 20.9 per cent on a yearly basis and overfulfilling this year's set target.

— *MNA/Xinhua*



German Formula One driver Michael Schumacher races alongside a Eurofighter on the track of a military airport in Italy. Schumacher endured the most testing season of his Formula One career and came through in record-breaking fashion with an unprecedented sixth world title. — *INTERNET*

China to monitor scenic spots with satellites

FUZHOU, 30 Dec — China has begun trial operation of a satellite system to monitor activities at key scenic areas. The Ministry of Construction said the satellite camera system will monitor implementation of state or local plans to ensure environment protection and sustainable development.

Trial operation of the system is currently underway at 19 scenic spots nationwide and the system is expected to cover all the country's 151 key scenic areas by late next year. — *MNA/Xinhua*

CONTINUING RESISTANCE AGAINST US TROOPS



Daud Salim holds his injured one-year-old son Benin, at al-Husseiniyah hospital in Karbala, Iraq, on Sunday, 28 December, 2003. —INTERNET



US soldiers of the 418 CA guard a group of Iraqis during a weapons search raid in the village of Ruad near Baghdad on Monday, 29 December, 2003.—INTERNET



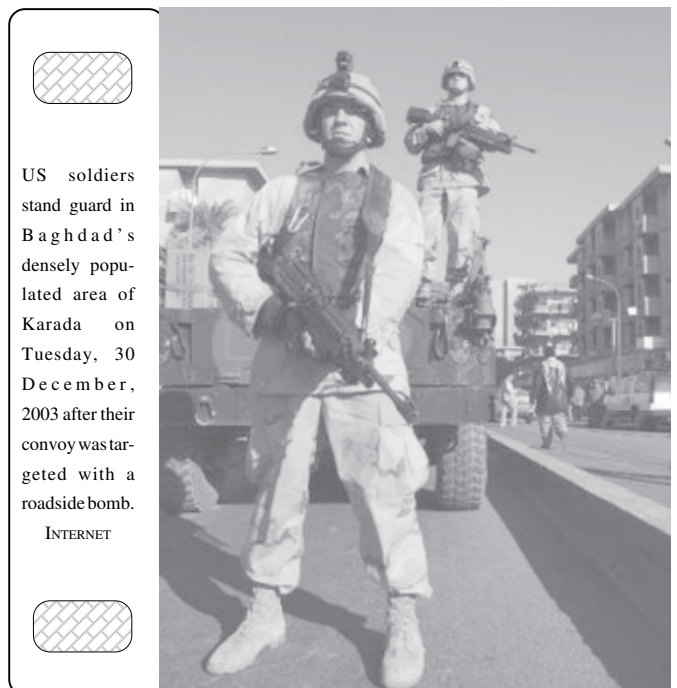
A Bulgarian soldier stands guard in front of a bombed out base in Karbala, Iraq, on Sunday, 28 December, 2003, after the biggest guerilla attack since 13 Dec, 2003, capture of Saddam Hussein.
INTERNET



A US military vehicle drives past pieces of vehicle debris following a car bomb outside Karbala's city hall on 28 December, 2003.
INTERNET



Bulgarian and US ambulances drive towards Karbala following an attack on foreign troops by guerillas on 27 December, 2003.
INTERNET



US soldiers stand guard in Baghdad's densely populated area of Karada on Tuesday, 30 December, 2003 after their convoy was targeted with a roadside bomb.
INTERNET

Hailing the 56th Anniversary Independence Day:

Energy resources for higher living standard of Myanmar society

Energy plays a key role in the drive to develop the country, boost the economy and raise the living standards. Energy is essential for everyone and every factory.

This being so, all strive to exploit energy, underground and underwater resources of the world. Myanmar soil is blessed with valuable resources. Myanmar possesses valuable water and land resources in abundance. The Tatmadaw Government explores and exploits these precious resources and uses them in the interest of the State and the people.

When it comes to Myanmar petroleum, it is necessary to trace back the course of history. Petroleum and natural gas can be obtained in the central Myanmar, Tanithayi coastal region, Rakhine coastal region, and delta region. Petroleum has been exploited in Yenangaung region since 906, over 1,000 years ago.

Oil-wells were in the possession of Myanmar kings. After the second Anglo-Myanmar War, the colonialists monopolized all of Myanmar oil-wells and petroleum industries.

The colonialists made a lot of profits from those resources. When the World War II broke out, the colonialists blew up the oil-wells and destroyed them. They employed the scorched earth policy. During the war time, the Japanese repaired some oil-wells and put them into use.

In the post-war period, the BOC company together with the colonialist government took a foothold on Myanmar soil. It was only on 17 January 1963, when the company was nationalized, that the curtain was brought down on the colonialist's BOC company

that had sucked the blood of Myanmar for one hundred years.

Foreign currency was obtained from the export of Myanmar petroleum. However, oil-wells were destroyed in the war by the colonialists with wicked schemes and there was the growth in fuel consumption in industrial and transportation sectors. So, the demand of petroleum was on the rise.

Although there are many favourable conditions in Myanmar to exploit petroleum, it has been impossible to produce adequate petroleum. Therefore, the Tatmadaw Government is making efforts to overcome the failure to produce an adequate amount of petroleum. Relentless efforts are being made to discover new oil fields, both underground and underwater.

After assuming the responsibilities of the State, the Tatmadaw Government places emphasis on the prevalence of peace and stability in the country.

It is working day on, day out in order to build the country into a modern and developed one, the ultimate aim of the State. Steps are also taken for the country to keep abreast of the world nations.

Energy is of vital importance when it comes to building a modern nation. The demand for energy is on the increase day by day for satisfying the public consumption of electricity and fuel oil. The Ministry of Energy and the Ministry of Electric Power are doing everything in their capacity to fulfil the requirements.

In 1988, the consumption of electricity amounted to (2226.45) million units. However, due to the systematic implementation of electricity projects, people are now using up to

(5064.20) million units of electricity. In other words, electricity consumption has increased 2.27 times.

To increase the generation of electricity, the government has built hydroelectric plants, steam turbine plants, natural gas plants, as well as power generation plants using diesel oil. As a result, the installed capacity increased nearly (2) times to (1219.81) megawatts as compared to (706.82) megawatts in 1988.

This increase in production of electricity is made possible because the government constructed (28) Hydropower Projects and (6) natural gas plants.

Eleven new Electric Power Projects including Paunglaung Hydroelectric Project that would produce (280) megawatts and Yeywa Hydroelectric Project that would produce (780) megawatts are also under construction. When these (11) projects are completed, additional (1960) megawatts of electricity will become avail-



Golden Asia Award For Excellence (New Millennium Award), which was presented to MOGE at the award ceremony held in China in 2002.

let), 207 by Kyunchaung plant and 600 by Kyawswa plant.

As for liquefied gas plants, Minbu plant produces 30,000 metric tons; Thanpayakan plant, 14,500 metric tons; Thanlyin plant, 6,900 metric tons, totalling 51,400 every year. Hseiktha methanol plant is capable of producing 450 metric tons per day.

On 25 December 2002, Myanmar Oil and Gas

Enterprise under the Ministry of Energy and Myanmar Foodstuff Industries under the Ministry of Industry-1 each received High Efficiency Golden Asia Awards (New Millennium Award). The achievement is the milestone in the energy sector.

Myanmar Oil and Gas Enterprise succeeded in the endeavour to secure US\$ 2.5 billion as foreign investment in the past ten years.

MOGE was honoured because it could exploit crude oil and natural gas abundantly in the offshore oil and gas fields and put them on sale.

These are the endeavours to make the good use of land and water resources in the interest of the State and the people. Myanmar natural resources, although once destroyed by the colonialists, can now look forward to a bright future owing to the relentless efforts of the Government and the people.

In fact, the endeavours being made today are endeavours to create a new era of energy that will promise the food, clothing and shelter needs and higher standard of living of the people.

Translation: KTY

Maung Maung Kyaw

Hydel power stations under construction

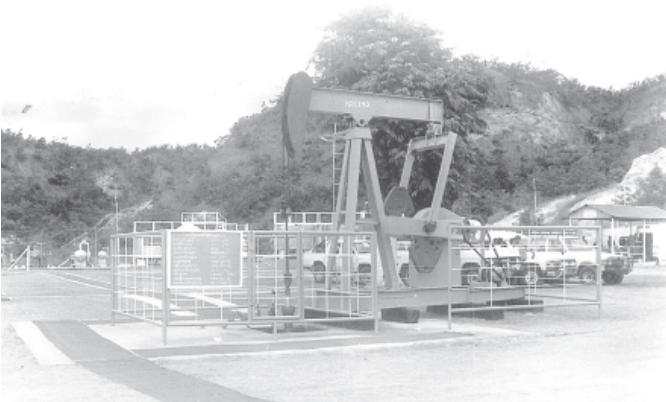
Sr.No	Project Names	Location	Capacity Megawatts	Targeted year
1.	Paunglaung	Pyinmana, Mandalay Division	2 x 70 = 140	2003-2004
2.	Mone	Setottaya, Magway Division	2 x 70 = 140	2004-2005
3.	Kyaingtaung	Mongnai, Shan State (South)	3 x 25 = 75	2003-2004
4.	Yeywa	Kyaukse, Mandalay Division	54	2005-2006
5.	Shweli	Nankham, Shan State (North)	195 x 4 = 780	2006-2007
6.	Khapaung	Toungoo, Bago Division	200 x 2 = 400	2006-2007
7.	Pyu Creek	Pyu, Bago Division	2 x 15 = 30	2004-2005
8.	Kun Creek	Pyu, Bago Division	3 x 21.7 = 65	2005-2006
9.	Shwekyin	Shwekyin, Bago Division	3 x 20 = 60	2006-2007
10.	Yenwe	Kyauktaga, Bago Division	4 x 18.75 = 75	2006-2007
11.	Tikyit	Kyauktaga, Bago Division	2 x 12.5 = 25	2004-2005
		Pinlaung, Shan State (South)	2 x 60 = 120	2003-2004
Total megawatts			1,964	



Shweli hydel power station, which is designed to 3,042 million units of electricity on annual basis, is located in Namhkan Township, Shan State (North).

Hailing the 56th Anniversary Independence Day:

Endeavours to fulfil the energy needs



Oil Field No-1 of Myanma Oil and Gas Enterprise in Thagyitaung Oil Field in Pauk Township, Pakokku District, Magway Division.



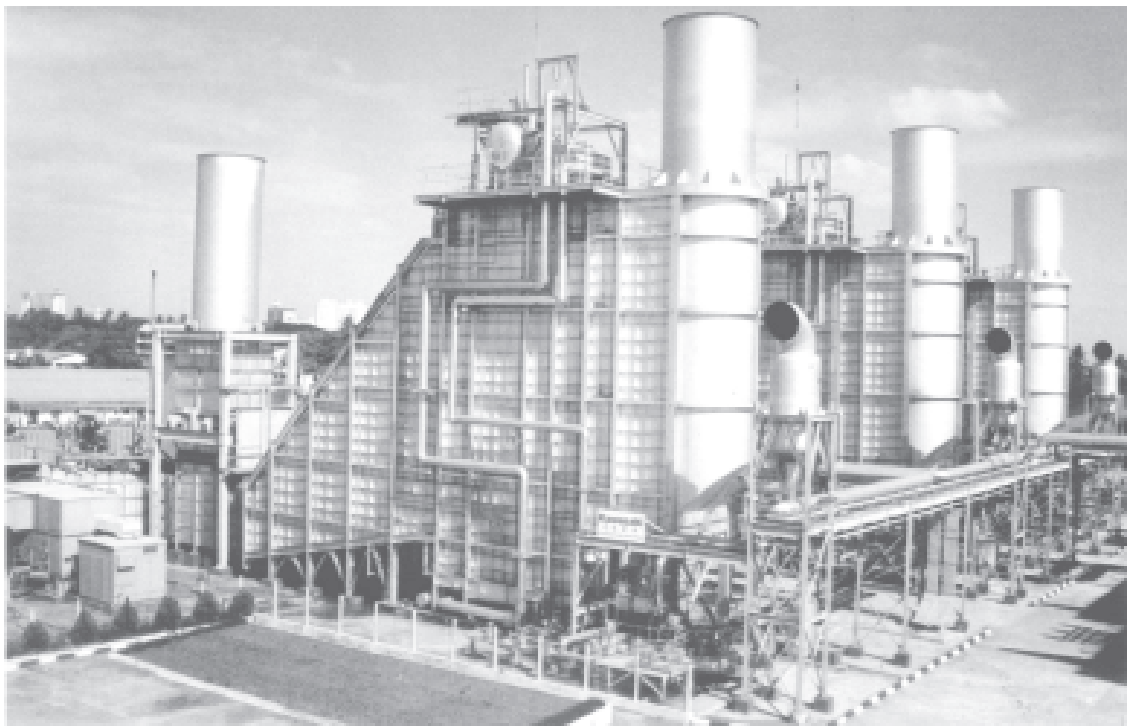
Tanks of Myanma Oil and Gas Enterprise in Thanlyin Township.



The entrance to Kyaukkhwet-Letpanto Oil and Gas field under Myanma Oil and Gas Enterprise in Myaing Township, Magway Division.

Myanma Oil and Gas Fields

Oil field	Township	Division
Ayadaw Oil Field	Pakokku	Magway
Chauk Oil Field	Chauk	Magway
Yaynangyaung Oil Field	Yaynangyaung	Magway
Mann Oil Field	Minbu-Sagu	Magway
Htaukshabin/Kanni Oil Field	Minbu-Sagu	Magway
Petpai Oil Field	Minhla	Magway
Yaynanma Oil Field	Minhla	Magway
Pyay Oil Field	Shwedaung	Bago
Myanaung/Shwpyitha Oil Field	Myanaung	Ayeyawady
Aphyauk Oil Field	Taikkyi	Yangon
Nyaungdon Oil Field	Nyaungdon	Ayeyawady
Kyaukkhwet Oil Field	Myaing	Magway
Letpanto Oil Field	Pauk	Magway
Thagyitaung Oil Field	Pauk	Magway
Sabaitaung Oil Field	Pakokku	Magway



Power Station built in Ahlon Township, Yangon Division, to fulfil the electricity needs.

Located in far north of...

(from page 1)
construction of roads and bridges during his visit to Nagmon on 26 April 2003. He also reported on arrangements for regional development and requirements.

After hearing the reports, Prime Minister General Khin Nyunt gave instructions. He said:

It is necessary to extend the sown acreage of crops to ensure sufficient local consumption. Officials are

Areas and National Races through ward and village representatives.

Later, Prime Minister General Khin Nyunt and party visited Nagmon Theravada Buddha Missionary School, where he paid homage to Sayadaw Bhaddanta Indakañana and Sayadaw Bhaddanta Ottara and presented cash donations and provisions to them.

On arrival at Pannandin town in Nagmon township,

Maung Maung Swe, ministers and deputy ministers also presented television, TV receiver, sewing machines, medicines, clothes, sweaters, blankets, and salt to departmental staff and local national people. Later, Prime Minister General Khin Nyunt and party posed for a group photo together with departmental staff and local national people.

The Prime Minister and party arrived back Putao by



Prime Minister General Khin Nyunt being welcomed by a national race leader at Myitkyina Airport on 28-12-2003. — MNA

to organize the local people into growing tea on a commercial basis as the crop is the most suitable for the region. Moreover, agricultural techniques should be provided and strains of crops disbursed.

Departmental heads are to make all-out efforts to ensure regional development, economic boost, and higher living standard of the local people, he said.

Next, Prime Minister General Khin Nyunt presented a set of computer, a set of television and an inverter donated to the Nagmon basic education high school through township education officer U Yan Aye, and clothes donated to local people through an official of the township.

Minister for Progress of Border Areas and National Races and Development Affairs Col Thein Nyunt presented TVs donated by the Work Committee for development of Border

Prime Minister General Khin Nyunt and party were welcomed by the administrative officer of the town, departmental staff, national cultural dance troupes and locals.

The Prime Minister met with departmental staff and townsmen at the assembly hall in the town. At the meeting, officials reported to the Prime Minister on office buildings, measures for education, health, agriculture, transportation and electricity, and regional development activities.

After hearing the reports, the Prime Minister attended to the requirements for education, health, transportation and local rice sufficiency. The Prime Minister also presented a set of computer, a television, a video cassette player, and an inverter donated to the Pannandin basic education high school through the headmaster.

Lt-Gen Ye Myint, Commander Maj-Gen

helicopter in the evening. Next, Prime Minister General Khin Nyunt and party went to 100-bed Putao People's Hospital, where they were welcomed by hospital officials.

Prime Minister General Khin Nyunt looked into the newly-constructed operation theatre, modern surgical equipment, and the repair of the hospital. He later chose a plot to build more hospital buildings on and gave instructions to officials.

Prime Minister General Khin Nyunt and party arrived at Khakaborazy National Park in Putao constructed by the Ministry of Forestry, where he inspected samples of orchids, species of butterflies and birds, and posters, photos and papers on natural environment conservation and wildlife protection activities at the educational booth for natural environment conservation.

The Prime Minister and



Prime Minister General Khin Nyunt presents offertories to a Sayadaw at Dhamma Rakkhita Monastery in Myitkyina, Kachin State on 29-12-2003. — MNA

party also visited the development training school for nationalities youth of border areas. The Prime Minister and party inspected the altar and hostel at the school. At the training hall, the Prime Minister and party were entertained with songs. Next, the schoolmaster reported on the goal of the school and activities being carried out. After hearing the reports, the Prime Minister urged school officials to realize the objectives of the school to the full. Prime Minister General Khin Nyunt and party presented exercise books and uniforms for 74 students.

Afterwards, Prime Minister General Khin Nyunt and party arrived at Khakaborazy Yeiktha in Putao. On 29 December, the Prime Minister met with local authorities, departmental personnel, social organizations, national races leaders and local

Maung Maung Swe gave a supplementary report.

Prime Minister General Khin Nyunt looked into the development of multi sectors, saying that he led a team of high level officials to look into the regional development undertakings. Despite the transport difficulties, the team went to Nagmon and Pannandin yesterday, attending to the needs of the brethren living in the remote border areas.

Officials of the State are visiting less developed regions lying in the far corners of the nation, and trying to develop the regions and the social status of the local people, with parental love and family spirit.

Myanmar is a Union in which over 100 national races are residing in harmony.

In the past, the national unity deteriorated and armed opposition broke out, and areas which lacked

and weakness in the departments concerned in implementing the transport facilitation projects arranged by the central, Putao still is a place difficult to reach. Putao has high potentials for eco-tourism development as it is located in the far north of the nation, and having the pristine nature decorated with snow-capped mountain ranges. The State has been making arrangements to build necessary infra-structures as success in the tourist industry may drive the region towards rapid progress.

In this regard, the local people will have to make efforts for development of their economies and region.

As the region's soil is fertile, the local people are required to grow more rice till ensuring regional food sufficiency, while putting land under tea, and fruits including macadamia and walnut, cultivating mushroom species and vegeta-



Prime Minister General Khin Nyunt inspects the environmental conservation booth of Khakaborazy National Park in Putao, Kachin State, on 28-12-2003. — MNA

elders in Putao.

Chairman of Putao District Peace and Development Council Lt-Col Maung Myo explained the location, area, climate, land use, monsoon paddy cultivation, per acre yield and food sufficiency of the Putao District.

He also briefed the Prime Minister on cultivation of various crops including oil crop, beans and pulses, industrial crops and perennial crops, farming, education, health and infrastructure development. Commander Maj-Gen

peace and stability lagged behind in development. Because of poor transport and officials' failure to give close supervision, some regions lacked progress.

Whatever reason might be behind the lack of development in the past, the State has been launching the national development drive covering the entire nation, holding the opinion that it is time the whole Union enjoys harmonious development, without seeing any gaps.

Due to the poor condition of the existing roads

bles for hotel use, extending livestock breeding works, and growing edible oil crops. Moreover, the local people are urged to harmoniously strive for regional peace and stability and development and further strengthening of the Union, while keeping in mind the spirit of unity and Union Spirit. Likewise, the departmental personnel will have to organize the people to develop the regions they are assigned to and to raise the social standard of the locals.

(See page 9)



Prime Minister General Khin Nyunt cordially greets teachers of Doktan Basic Education High School in Putao, Kachin State, on 28-12-2003. — MNA



Prime Minister General Khin Nyunt holds a meeting with local authorities, departmental personnel, members of social organizations, national race leaders and townselders at Phonkanrazi Hall in Putao, Kachin State on 29-12-2003. — MNA

Located in far north of ...

(from page 8)

Committees, with the participation of the departments concerned, will be formed to harmoniously implement the task, with collective leadership and responsibility, while all keeping in mind the sense of responsibility.

Chairman of Myanmar Education Committee Prime Minister General Khin Nyunt presented a computer set, a TV set and accessories to Putao BEHS, a TV set and accessories to Doktan BEHS in Putao, a computer set and exercise books to Namhok BEMS Branch in Putao through respective principals.

Next, the General presented gifts to mark the new year to Rawan national race leader U Phone Yah Pe Ram, Lisu national race leader U John Aung and Hkamti Shan national race leader U Saw Win Khun. Commander Maj-Gen Maung Maung Swe presented a TV set and accessories to Putao Mamhok BEMS to the headmaster.

After the ceremony, the General and party proceeded to Putao BEHS, where they were welcomed by Headmaster U Chit Hlaing, teachers and students. The General and party viewed the two-storey building constructed with the cash assistance of the State and the people. They inspected the domestic science room, language lab, computer centre and learning centre.

The Prime Minister and party visited Theravada Buddhist Central Missionary Monastery in Putao and paid reverence and presented offertories and cash donations to Sayadaw Agga Maha Saddhamma Jotikadhaja Bhaddanta Indacara and members of the Sangha.

The Prime Minister inspected the feasibility for construction of a hotel on Razi Hill in Kaungkataung Ward, Putao.

In the afternoon, they flew to Sumprabum, where they were welcomed by local authorities, departmental person-

nel and local people.

The Prime Minister met with local authorities, service personnel, members of social organizations and townselders at Banru Hall in the town. At the meeting, Township Chairman U Khin Zaw reported on location, area, climate condition, the number of village-tracts and population of the region, cultivation of paddy, edible oil crops and beans and pulses, condition of food sufficiency and requirements. Departmental personnel also presented requirements sector wise.

The Prime Minister attended to the requirements on education, health, agriculture and road transportation for regional development.

Despite bad weather, the Prime Minister said, he and the ministers came to Sumprabum to fulfil the needs for development. Sumprabum is a beautiful famous hill town in Myanmar. But the town lagged behind in development due to poor transport. Therefore, assistance will be provided for ensuring better transport in the region.

He spoke on arrangements for upgrading Myitkyina-Sumprabum-Putao Road in two years, for upgrading affiliated high school to high school, opening of two primary schools for children in the region, constructing new building for the high school and for supply of medicine and hospital equipment to 50-bed Sumprabum Hospital.

He spoke of the need for service personnel serving in the region to observe codes of conduct of service personnel and regulations and to discharge their respective duties.

He said superior organizations at different levels are to fulfil the needs for service personnel serving in the region of poor transport and to make arrangements for welfare and transfer. Discharging their respective duties conscientiously for the interest of the people contributes towards the security of life of the people, uplift of their living standard and further consolidation of national solidarity.

He urged the departmental personnel to make efforts for

regional development after organizing and leading the people in unity.

Next, Chairman of Myanmar Education Committee Prime Minister General Khin Nyunt presented a computer, TV set and a VCR for Sumprabum affiliated high school to the headmaster and blankets and clothes donated by Work Committee for Development of Border Areas and National Races for local people to the Chairman of Township Peace and Development Council.

Member of the State Peace and Development Council Lt-Gen Ye Myint presented salt and food for local people to the Chairman of Township Peace and Development Council.

Chairman of Kachin State Peace and Development Council Commander Maj-Gen Maung Maung Swe presented a cassette recorder, a microphone and a loud speaker to the headmaster. The Prime Minister and party inspected the original building of the affiliated high school in Sumprabum. The Prime Minister gave instructions on upgrading the school to high school level.

The Prime Minister and party inspected construction of new building for 50-bed hospital. In the evening they arrived in Myitkyina.

The Prime Minister and party went to Dhamma Rekkhita Wuntho Kyaungtaik there and paid respects to Sayadaws led by Vice-Chairman of the State Sangha Maha Nayaka Committee Agga Maha Pandita Agga Maha Saddhammajotikadhaja Bhaddanta Silavamsa and presented offertories to the Sayadaws.

The Prime Minister and party proceeded to Myitkyina University where they were welcomed by Rector U Thin Hlaing and faculty members.

Rector U Thin Hlaing reported on academic matters and Deputy Minister for Education U Myo Nyunt gave a supplementary report. The Prime Minister gave instructions on construction of the university and civil service affairs. The Prime Minister and party arrived at Malikhya Yeiktha. MNA



Secretary-1 Lt-Gen Soe Win formally unveils the signboard of power tiller engine workshop, foundry plant and ball bearings workshop of Indagaw Industrial Zone. — MNA

Opening of advanced...

(from page 16)

The opening ceremony of the foundry plant was held in front of the plant. Managing Director of Myanmar Automobile and Diesel Engine Industries U Soe Thein and Vice-President of Angelique International Ltd Mr M.P Gupta formally opened the plant. The Secretary-1 formally unveiled the signboard of the plant.

The Secretary-1 and party inspected the foundry plant.

Similarly, Managing Director U Soe Thein and Vice-President Mr M.P Gupta formally opened the ball bearing

plant.

The Secretary-1 formally unveiled the signboard of the plant.

The Secretary-1 inspected samples of ball bearing, parts and production.

The Secretary-1 and party inspected construction of aluminium conductor steel reinforced cable factory and installation of machines.

Factories and plants are being constructed in 400-acre Indagaw Industrial Zone established by the Ministry of Industry-2.

MNA

Universities' Hospital celebrates diamond jubilee

YANGON, 30 Dec — A ceremony to mark the diamond jubilee of the Universities' Hospital took place on the lawns of the hospital in Kamayut Township here yesterday morning. Present on the occasion were Minister for Education U Than Aung, Minister for Health Dr Kyaw Myint and Deputy Minister Col Aung Myo Min, Commander of No 2 Military Region Brig-Gen Myo Myint, departmental personnel and officials. Brig-Gen Myo Myint unveiled the stone plaque marking the diamond jubilee of the hospital. After the ceremony, ministers and guests inspected the hospital. Later, they viewed round the commemorative booths displayed at the hospital. Afterwards, they posed for a documentary photo together with hospital officials. — MNA

Commander attends opening of new tarred streets in Yankin and North Okkalapa Townships

YANGON, 30 Dec — Hailing the 56th Anniversary Independence Day, new tarred roads built on self-reliant basis in Yankin township and North Okkalapa Township, Yangon East District, were opened this morning, attended by Chairman of Yangon Division Peace and Development Council Commander of Yangon Command Maj-Gen Myint Swe and Chairman of Yangon City Development Committee Mayor Brig-Gen Aung Thein Linn.

First, new tarred Myananda lane in Ward 13, Yankin Township was opened in front of the archway of the road at 7 am. Commander Maj-Gen Myint Swe, Mayor Brig-Gen Aung Thein Linn and Chairman of the Road Repaving Committee Daw Aye Myint formally opened the lane. The new tarred lane is 960 feet long and 12 feet wide.

Next, new tarred Saikpyoye Padaytha road in Ward 11, Yankin Township was opened in front of the archway of the road. Commander Maj-Gen Myint Swe, Mayor Brig-Gen Aung Thein Linn and Chairman of the Road Repaving Committee U Thaung Myint formally opened the road.

Next, the commander and the mayor sprinkled scented water on the stone inscription of the new road and inspected it. The new tarred road is 1,020 feet long and 15 feet wide.

The ceremony to open new tarred Sabei road built on self-reliant basis in Htawunbe Ward, North

Okkalapa Township was held in front of the archway of the road. Commander Maj-Gen Myint Swe, Mayor Brig-Gen Aung Thein Linn and Chairman of the Road Repaving Committee U Kan Tun formally opened the road. The new tarred road is 1,420 feet long and 10 feet wide.

Afterwards, new tarred Hninsi road in Htawunbe Ward, North Okkalapa Township was opened in front of the archway of the road. Commander Maj-Gen Myint Swe, Mayor Brig-Gen Aung Thein Linn and Chairman of the Road Repaving Committee U Aung Myint formally opened the road.

The new tarred road is 1,350 feet long and 10 feet wide.

Next, Khemakyaung road in Htawunbe Ward, North Okkalapa Township was opened.

Secretary of Yangon City Development Committee Col Myint Aung, Chairman of Yangon East District Peace and Development Council Lt-Col Aung Pyi and Chairman of the Road Repaving Committee U Maung Aye formally opened the road.

The new tarred road is 2,150 feet long and 12 feet wide. Likewise, 1st Hninsi street, 2nd Hninsi street, 3rd Hninsi street, 4th Hninsi street, Padamya (middle) street, Padamya (lower) street and Thabye street in Htawunbe Ward, North Okkalapa Township were opened at the same time.

A ceremony to mark the opening of two streets in

Yankin Township and of ten streets in North Okkalapa Township was held at the Dhammayon in Htawunbe Ward, North Okkalapa Township.

First, Commander Maj-Gen Myint Swe made a speech.

Next, the chairman of Yankin Township Peace and Development Council and the chairman of North Okkalapa Township Peace and Development Council reported on measures taken for opening of the streets and arrangements for opening of more streets.

Afterwards, Commander Maj-Gen Myint Swe and Mayor Brig-Gen Aung Thein Linn presented certificates of honour to the wellwishers who contributed to the funds for building new streets.

Next, Commander Maj-Gen Myint Swe, Mayor Brig-Gen Aung Thein Linn and party arrived at the Aungmingalar Highway Bus Terminal. At the supervisory office, In-Charge of the bus terminal U Saw Lin reported on the salient points of the bus terminal.

Next, Commander Maj-Gen Myint Swe, Mayor Brig-Gen Aung Thein Linn and party inspected construction of buildings in the compound of the terminal, paving of concrete roads and land preparations for construction of buildings.

Next, the commander and mayor urged officials at different levels to make strenuous efforts to enable the bus terminal to possess the characteristics of a terminal of international level and left the terminal.

MNA



Commander Maj-Gen Myint Swe and Mayor Brig-Gen Aung Thein Linn formally open the newly-constructed Myananda tarred lane in Ward 13, Yankin Township.

YANGON COMMAND

Ancient pagodas consecrated

YANGON, 30 Dec — Shwehsandaw Pagoda in Pyay Township, Shwebontha Muni Pagoda in Padaung Township and

Shwenattaung Pagoda in Shwedaung Township were consecrated and alms, lights, water and sweets

offered on 26 and 27 December.

"Soon" was also offered to Sayadaws and members of the Sangha. — MNA

Observance of Seventh National Environmental Sanitation Week coordinated

YANGON, 30 Dec — A coordination meeting of the central work leading committee for the observance of seventh National Environmental Sanitation Week took place at the Health Department on Theinbyu Road here this afternoon, with an address by Chairman of the committee Minister for Health Dr Kyaw Myint.

Present on the occasion were committee members directors-general of the departments of the ministries concerned, deputy directors-general, departmental officials, members of Yangon City Development Committee and Mandalay City Development Committee and NGOs.

Addressing the meeting

Minister Dr Kyaw Myint said it was the seventh time ever since the National Environmental Sanitation Week had been launched first in 1988.

The Ministry of Health in cooperation with the Ministry for Progress of Border Areas and National Races and Development Affairs was to make arrangements for building fly-proof latrines in all townships and villages of the country in accord with the ninth resolution passed during the 20th meeting of the National Health Committee held on 30 October 1995.

Therefore, he said, officials of the ministries concerned as well as those of NGOs were to actively

participate in the environmental sanitation week as they took part in the previous years' activities.

Next, Dr San Shwe Win, Director (Public Health) of the Health Department, reported on the tasks carried out for the sanitation week and future tasks.

Deputy Director (Central Health Education Department) of the Health Planning Department Dr Khin Maung Lwin also reported on arrangements to be made for the seventh national environmental sanitation week. Then, those present took part in the discussions.

Later, the minister fulfilled the needs and gave concluding remarks. — MNA

Hole-in-one

YANGON, 30 Dec — U Myint Win while playing together with U Than Tun Aung, U Than Htay and U Myint Soe at the Myanmar Golf Club on 27 December

2003 scored hole-in-one at No 5 hole. He drove from 128 yards away with EV(03) ball and Callaway (96) wood (3).

MNA

Heroin seized in Mongphyat

YANGON, 30 Dec — A combined force of members of local intelligence unit, Myanmar Police Force and

special anti-drug squad, acting on a tip-off, searched Nyinat (a) Aik Shan of Lawsiton village-tract, Tangyan, and Nyikar of Mongwa village-tract, Tangyan, on 13 December at the toll gate in Mongphyat.

Altogether 110 heroin blocks weighing 36.63 kilos hidden in the body of their white Toyota Hilux from Nyinam were seized.

Nyikar managed to escape but was nabbed in Sutpalaung village of Kengtung the next day. Action is being taken against them under the Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances Law.

MNA



MWJA Chairman U Hla Myaing (Ko Hsaung) addressing the central executive committee meeting No 12/2003 of Myanmar Writers and Journalists Association. — MNA

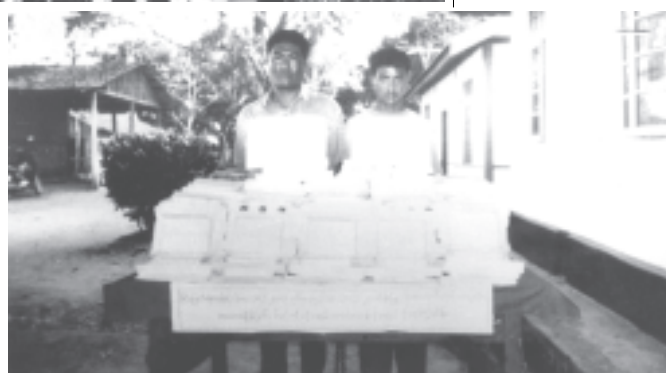
MWJA meets

YANGON, 30 Dec — The CEC meeting (12/2003) of Myanmar Writers and Journalists Association was held at the Sarpay Beikman Building on Merchant Street this afternoon. It was attended by MWJA Chairman U Hla Myaing (Ko Hsaung), CEC members, Secretary U Hla Tun (Hla Tun-Twantay), Joint Secre-

tary U Khin Swe (Shwe Sunnyo) and officials.

At the meeting, leaders of the subcommittees explained their respective tasks, and discussed matters on successful holding of the third conference central body meeting to be held in June 2004.

MNA



Nyinat (a) Aik Shan and Nyikar with seized heroin. — MNA

Hailing the 56th Anniversary Independence Day:

Progress in the rail transportation sector in the time of the State Peace and Development Council



Better transport is vital for development of the nation. With prevalence of peace throughout the country after 1988, there have emerged new railroads. More passengers and goods have been transported from one place to another in the country.

Subject	Railroad section	
	1988	2003
Railroad (mile)	2793.86	3897.29
Distance (mile)	1976.35	2989.12
Station	487	768
Bridge (large/small)	5650	9056

Railroads under construction - 154.21 miles
Railroads to be constructed - 515.05 miles

Subject	Engines and coaches	
	1988	2003
Steam engine	79	39
Diesel engine	150	196
Local train	26	60

Subject	Passengers and goods (in million)	
	1988-1989	2002-2003
Passenger	36.689	61.763
Passenger per mile	1870.125	2926.436
Goods	1.269	3.442
Goods per mile	196.579	723.098

Bagan-Kyaukpadaung railroad

Bagan-Kyaukpadaung railroad section was opened on 11 February 1997 at Bagan station in Bagan, Mandalay Division. The photo shows the train starting its journey from Bagan to Kyaukpadaung.

New station in Mandalay

For the convenience of the passengers, new station was built in Mandalay.

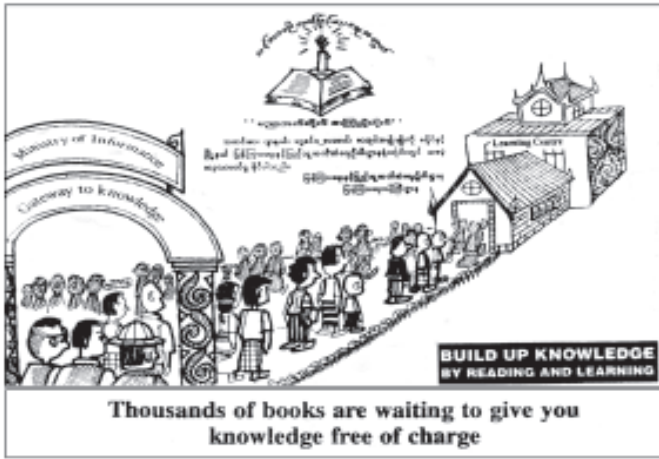


Tatmadawmen taking part in building Shwenyaung-Namhsan railroad in Shan State.



In the rail transportation sector, Shwenyaung-Yaksauk, Aungban-Pinlaung-Loikaw, Namhsan-Mongnai and Shwenyaung-Namhsan railroads in Shan State, ChaungU-Pakokku-Gangaw-Kalay railroad and Yoma circular railroad were built.

As a result, there have emerged nearly 3000 miles of railroad in the country, up 1012 miles from 1976 miles in 1988.



ADVERTISEMENTS

China sets up large organ transplant centre

TIANJIN, 30 Dec — A large organ transplant institution opened recently in north China's Tianjin Municipality.

Tianjin Oriental Transplant Centre is the largest of its kind in China, covering an area of 3,000 square metres, said Shen Zhongyang, director of the centre.

It will carry out liver and kidney transplants and develop techniques to transplant other organs including the pancreas, bones and skin, Shen said.

Over one million people die of liver cancer in the world each year, half of which are from China. Liver transplanting is an effective way to save cancer patients, Shen said. The centre is affiliated to Tianjin No. 1 Centre Hospital, which has successfully transplanted over 1,000 livers. —MNA/Xinhua

Angolan dies in Zimbabwe, tests under way for Ebola

HARARE, 30 Dec — Zimbabwean health officials are testing for the deadly Ebola virus after an Angolan man died in Zimbabwe's prime tourist town of Victoria Falls, Health Minister David Parirenyatwa said on Sunday.

He confirmed a report in the official *Sunday Mail* that the patient, a cross-border trader, died on Christmas Day after being admitted to hospital with symptoms consistent with the highly contagious virus.

"It could be haemorrhagic fever...but we still have to rule out Ebola," Parirenyatwa told *Reuters*, saying no other similar illnesses had been reported in Victoria Falls, a town close to the Zambian border and the hub of Zimbabwe's ailing tourism industry.

"The person did not get into contact with anyone, he went straight into hospital," he said. —MNA/Reuters

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Indian cold kills another 29, toll passes 50

LUCKNOW (India), 30 Dec — A cold spell gripping northern India killed 29 people in the 24 hours to midday on Monday, officials said, as authorities set up shelters, handed out blankets and lit bonfires to help the homeless.

The cold has killed 53 people since it began three days ago, while thick fog accompanying the chill has grounded flights and delayed trains across the region, stranding thousands of travellers.

Temperatures dipped to six degrees Celsius (43 degrees Fahrenheit) in some parts of Uttar Pradesh State, India's most populous state, early on Monday, and 26 people died there late on Sunday and early on Monday because of the cold, officials said.

In Bihar, Uttar Pradesh's eastern neighbour, three people had died since Sunday, authorities said.

State schools in Bihar had been opened up at night as

shelters for the homeless while in Lucknow, the Uttar Pradesh capital, authorities lit bonfires for thousands of people living on the streets.

"We are also distributing blankets to the poor, especially labourers who live on pavements," said state official Navneet Sehgal.

MNA/Reuters

ပြည်တွင်းပြန်ကိုအားပေးပါ

မြန်မာ့ရေနံနှင့်သဘာဝဓာတ်ငွေ့လုပ်ငန်း
ရှားခင်းပေးသွင်းရန်ချိပ်ပိတ်တင်ဒါခေါ်ယူခြင်း

တင်ဒါအမှတ် ၁/၂၀၀၄

- ၁။ ပေးသွင်းရမည့်ပစ္စည်း - ရှားခင်း
၂။ ပေးသွင်းရမည့်အရေအတွက် - ပီယာချီနီ (သုံးသောင်း)
၃။ တင်ဒါပေးသွင်းရမည့်နေရာ - မြေညီတပ်အမှတ်(၆၀၄) ကုန်သည်လမ်း၊ မြန်မာ့ရေနံနှင့်သဘာဝဓာတ်ငွေ့လုပ်ငန်း၊ ရန်ကုန်မြို့။
- ၄။ တင်ဒါပိတ်ရက်/အချိန် - ၂၀-၁-၂၀၀၄ (၁၂-၀၁)နာရီတိတိ
တင်ဒါခေါ်ယူမှုအတွက် ဘဏ္ဍာရေးဌာန၊ အမှတ်(၆၀၄) ကုန်သည်လမ်း၊ မြန်မာ့ရေနံနှင့်သဘာဝဓာတ်ငွေ့လုပ်ငန်းတွင် မြေညီတပ်အမှတ်(၆၀၄)မှစ၍ တစ်စုလျှင် (၅၀၀/-) နှုန်းဖြင့် ဝယ်ယူနိုင်ပြီး အသေးစိတ်အချက်အလက်များကို ပစ္စည်းစီမံဌာန၊ အမှတ်(၆၀၄) ကုန်သည်လမ်း၊ မြန်မာ့ရေနံနှင့်သဘာဝဓာတ်ငွေ့လုပ်ငန်းတွင် အေးမြနူးစမ်းနိုင်ပါသည်။
- တင်ဒါခေါ်ယူရေးအဖွဲ့
မြန်မာ့ရေနံနှင့်သဘာဝဓာတ်ငွေ့လုပ်ငန်း
ရန်ကုန်မြို့

Veteran British actor Alan Bates dies

LONDON, 30 Dec — British star of stage and screen Alan Bates has died after battling cancer, his agent said on Sunday.

"He has passed away," agent Rosalind Chatto told *Reuters*. "He had a long battle with cancer."

Bates, who was 69, died in a London clinic on Saturday. He came to fame as one of a new breed of gritty actors as Britain threw off its postwar shackles — the "Angry Young Man" era — and was knighted earlier this year, after a career spanning six decades.

His big break came with John Osborne's play "Look Back in Anger" in 1956. But Bates went on to play classical leads on the stage in "Hamlet", "Richard III" and "Antony and Cleopatra".

On the big screen, he starred in films such as "Zorba the Greek", "Far From The Madding Crowd" and "Women in Love". More recently, in 2001, he featured in Robert Altman's period drama "Gosford Park". — MNA/Reuters

ARRIVAL/CLAIMS DAY NOTICE MV "MANDALAY" VOY NO 115/N

Consignees of cargo carried on MV "MANDALAY" Voy No 115/N are hereby notified that the vessel arrives at Yangon port on 31-12-03 and will be berthing on about 1-1-2004 and cargoes will be discharged into the premises of Myanmar Port Authority where it will lie at the consignee's risk and expenses and subject to the byelaws and conditions of the Port of Yangon.

Damaged cargo will be surveyed daily between 8 am to 11.30 am and 12 noon to 4 pm up to Claims Day now declared as the third day after final discharge of cargo from the vessel.

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

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WHO expert in China to help diagnose SARS suspect

BEIJING, 30 Dec — A World Health Organization expert arrived in Beijing on Monday to help China try to find out whether the country's first suspected SARS patient in half a year has the killer virus.

Another joint team of WHO and Health Ministry experts was to head to the southern province of Guangdong within 24 to 48 hours to aid testing on the 32-year-old television producer, whose temperature was normal and who appeared to be doing well, Beijing-based WHO spokesman Roy Wadia said.

But a Ministry of Health official said it would take "several days" to arrive at a diagnosis. "Confirmation will depend on clinical indicators," he told *Reuters*.

CCTV, quoting experts, said a diagnosis would take five to seven days.

None of the 42 people quarantined for having been in contact with the patient has developed a fever or shown other symptoms of the deadly virus, officials said.

"Up till now, we haven't found any new suspected SARS patients, including those who had close contact with the suspected SARS patient," one Guangdong health official said.

SARS emerged in Guangdong in late 2002 before it was spread by travellers to nearly 30 countries where some 8,000 infections were logged, spurring mass panic and forcing people to cancel trips and stay away

from crowded spots.

The news of China's suspected SARS case comes just weeks before the Chinese Lunar New Year holiday when millions of people in China and across East and South-east Asia travel to visit relatives.

Despite a battery of tests, Chinese doctors and laboratory workers have yet to make a final diagnosis on the man, who was first diagnosed with pneumonia in his right lower lung on December 16.

"The tests have been so confusing," said Wadia. "There's been some positives, some negatives and the positives come from a sort of test group that has a high number of false positives."

"That's why it's important that we get the samples tested independently as well, because the more testing that is done by different sources, the less the statistical margin of error."

But it was not yet clear when the WHO specialist would travel to Guangdong, Wadia said. The expert had been invited by the Chinese Government to sift through data collected so far on the suspected patient and observe ongoing testing.

MNA/Reuters

Over 13,000 road accidents recorded in Uganda in 11 months

KAMPALA, 30 Dec — A total of 13,051 road accidents have been reported in Uganda between January and November this year which caused 1,304 deaths and 8,099 injuries, a report from the Ministry of Works, Transport and Communications has said.

The report noted that many depressing and terrific road accidents are usually caused by speeding, saying that the speeding accidents now rival with HIV/AIDS and malaria in killing thousands of Ugandans a year, according to local media on Monday.

The report listed some horrific speeding accidents occurred in April, August and September this year. For example, the September accident caused the unforgettable

tragedies of the Katuna bus accident that claimed the lives of 54 passengers.

Meanwhile, regional traffic office in Kampala reported that between 1988 and 2001, an average of 1,650 people died in speeding road accidents each year.

In 2002, some 2,017 people died in road accidents in the country which caused about 150 million US dollars loss.

MNA/Xinhua

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US Iraq envoy contradicts Blair on WMD

LONDON, 30 Dec— Paul Bremer, the top US man in Iraq, contradicted Britain's Tony Blair on Sunday when he rejected reports that inspectors had found a network of laboratories that could be used to produce banned weapons.

In a pre-Christmas broadcast on the British Forces Broadcasting Service, the British Prime Minister said the Iraq Survey Group had already found "massive evidence of a huge system of clandestine laboratories".

Asked on ITV's Dimpleby programme about those words, the US administrator for Iraq, apparently unaware they came from Blair, was dismissive.

"It sounds like a bit of a red herring to me. It sounds like somebody who doesn't agree with the policy, sets up a red herring and then knocks it down," he said.

When it was pointed out that it was Blair who had publicized those claims, Bremer appeared to row back a little. "There is a lot of evidence that has been made public," he said.

A spokeswoman in Blair's Downing Street office said the Prime Minister had been referring to material published in the weapons inspection group's interim report

earlier this year.

The existence, or otherwise, of chemical and biological weapons in Iraq remains a huge issue for Blair despite Saddam Hussein's capture earlier this month.

Blair told sceptical Britons war on Iraq was necessary because of the threat posed by its banned weapons. Nine months after Saddam was toppled, not one of the weapons he claimed the Iraqi leader had primed for use has been found.

In the meantime, his public trust ratings have plunged and anti-war members of his ruling Labour Party are aghast. Many are now prepared to oppose their leader on all sorts of issues, posing a real threat to Blair's authority.

A survey released on Sunday labelled Blair Britain's least trustworthy politician.

Labour members of Parliament are queuing up to oppose him, threatening his first defeat on a major policy issue.

MNA/Reuters

Report says US Army stops soldiers from quitting

WASHINGTON, 30 Dec— Thousands of US soldiers have been forbidden to leave the military service under the Army's "stop-loss" orders on the expiration date of their service, *The Washington Post* reported Monday.

The Army alone has blocked the possible retirement and departures of more than 40,000 soldiers, about 16,000 of them National Guard and reserve members who were eligible to leave the service this year.

The Air Force, Navy and Marines have also blocked hundreds from retiring or departing the military this year, through a series of stop-loss orders, which were intended to halt of the depletion of troops through retirement and discharge from the military stretched thin by burgeoning overseas missions.

"It reflects the fact that

the military is too small, which nobody wants to admit," Charles Moskos of Northwestern University, a leading military sociologist, was quoted as saying.

The US Congress approved the authority for what became known as stop-loss orders after the Vietnam War, but the authority was not used until the build-up to the Persian Gulf War in 1990.

A flurry of stop-loss orders was issued after the September 11, 2001, terrorist attacks, intensifying as the country prepared for war in Iraq early this year.

To many soldiers whose retirements and departures are on ice, stop-loss is an inconvenience, a hardship, and in some cases, a personal disaster. Some are resigned to fulfilling their

duty, while others are livid, insisting they have fallen victim to a policy that amounts to an unannounced, unheralded draft, the report said.

By prohibiting soldiers and officers from leaving the service at retirement or the expiration of their contracts, according to the report, the military has breached the Army's manpower limit of 480,000 troops, a ceiling set by the Congress.

At a congressional testimony last month, Army Chief of Staff Peter Schoomaker disclosed that the number of US active-duty soldiers has exceeded the congressionally authorized maximum by 20,000 and now registered 500,000 as a result of stop-loss orders.

MNA/Xinhua

"Return of the King" leads US holiday box office

LOS ANGELES, 30 Dec— Brisk business for reigning box office champion "The Lord of the Rings: The Return of the King" and several new releases helped drive ticket sales to a record high for the Christmas weekend in North America, according to studio estimates issued on Monday.

The third installment in the lucrative "Rings" trilogy earned 51.2 million US dollars for the three days beginning on 26 December, driving its 12-day total to 223.7 million US dollars — 12 percent higher than where its predecessor, "The Two Towers" was at the same time last year. Additionally, the new film has already grossed 268.4 million US dollars in 38 foreign countries. The "Lord of the Rings" films were released by New Line Cinema, a unit of Time Warner Inc.—MNA/Reuters



Pedestrians walk past a giant poster for the movie 'Lord of the Rings: The Return of the King' which continued to rule the North American box office raking in 50.5 million dollars and leading a record-setting holiday weekend.—INTERNET

Iran says quake death toll could reach 30,000

BAM (Iran), 30 Dec— Rescuers said Monday was probably the last hope of finding more survivors from Iran's devastating earthquake as officials said the death toll could reach 30,000 and warned disease was now a threat.

The stench of death filled the flattened ancient Silk Road city of Bam as the world united in relief efforts.

As searches went into a

fourth day, rescuers said they were no longer finding survivors — only the mangled remains of people killed when the world's most lethal earthquake in at least 10 years levelled the ancient Silk Road city of Bam. "(Rescue operations) will continue at least for one more day (until midnight on Monday) when an assessment will be made to continue or not," Alain Pasche of a UN rescue coordination team told Reuters. "After five days the chances of finding anyone alive are very slim."

Round-the-clock relief efforts were complicated by piles of bodies in the streets, overflowing cemeteries, bitterly cold nights, rain, repeated aftershocks, confusion and some looting.

"I believe the (death) toll

will reach 30,000," said a government official in Kerman Province, where the quake struck before dawn on Friday while most people were still sleeping and destroyed about 70 per cent of Bam's mostly mud-brick buildings. "Some outlying villages are even more badly damaged than Bam. They are 100 per cent destroyed," the official said.

Interior Minister Abdolvahed Mousavi-Lari said on state television some 20,000 bodies had been recovered, but the death toll was likely to be much higher. Warning disease was a threat, he said: "We have instructed various bodies to immediately start cleaning up. If we don't bring hygiene back to the city we will have major problems."

MNA/Reuters

Iranian baby found alive in arms of dead mother under quake debris

TEHERAN, 30 Dec— A six-month-old Iranian baby in arms of her dead mother under quake debris in the southeastern city of Bam was rescued by rescue teams early Monday, the official IRNA news agency reported.

The baby named only Naseem was found in the arms of her young mother who was dead for at least one day after three days under the debris, the report said.

She is in good health, doctors said after a health check for the baby girl.

A strong earthquake with a magnitude of 6.3 on the open-ended Richter scale rocked the city of Bam in Iran's southeastern province of Kerman at 5.28 am (0158 GMT) early Friday.

More than 30,000 people were feared dead in the earthquake, which has also levelled 70 per cent of the mud-brick buildings of the ancient city of Bam.— MNA/Xinhua



A South Korean protester in a cow outfit and his colleague hold a banner during the arrival of a US delegation at Incheon international airport, west of Seoul, on 30 December, 2003. A US delegation, led by David Hegwood, special adviser to Agriculture Secretary Ann Veneman, arrived in Seoul on Tuesday to meet South Korean officials to discuss the mad cow disease in the United States.

INTERNET

Overseas Chinese Chamber of Commerce branches established

SHANGHAI, 30 Dec— The Overseas Chinese Chamber of Commerce branches have been set up in half of China's 31 provinces, municipalities and autonomous regions, said an official here recently.

Li Haifeng, deputy director of the Overseas Chinese Affairs Office under the State Council, said in a speech that the chambers play important roles in the relationship between overseas Chinese commercial enterprises and the government. The chambers also help promote cooperation and exchange between the enterprises and safeguard their legitimate rights and interests, Li said.

Li made his speech at the ceremony for the establishment of the Shanghai Overseas Chinese Chamber of Commerce, a non-profit social community made up of the commercial enterprises invested by overseas Chinese and compatriots of Hong Kong and Macao.—MNA/Xinhua

SPORTS

Croatia sets up Euro 2004 warm-up matches

ZAGREB, 30 Dec—Croatia have set dates for five warm-up games ahead of Euro 2004, including friendlies against Germany and Turkey, the national football association said on Monday.

Croatia will host 2002 World Cup runners-up Germany in Split on February 18 and then face Turkey, semi-finalists at the World Cup but who failed to qualify for the European Championship finals, in Zagreb on 31 March.

"I think we have made a good choice of strong opponents. I have a pretty clear picture of which players to call up for the final tournament (in Portugal) and I only hope there will be no trouble with injuries," Croatia coach Otto Baric told reporters.

The venues for games against Bosnia on 28 April, Romania and Slovakia on May 29 and June 5, are yet to be decided.

Croatia have been grouped with England, France and Switzerland at the finals in Portugal next June and July.

MNA/Reuters

Arsenal keep in touch with 1-0 win

LONDON, 30 Dec—Arsenal moved back to within a point of Premier League leaders Manchester United on Monday after a first half Robert Pires goal earned them victory over Southampton.

Arsenal dominated the match and it was no surprise when, in the 36th minute, Pires broke free on the left to receive a perfect pass from France teammate Thierry Henry and slot home left-footed under the diving body of goalkeeper Antti Niemi.

Southampton looked more like the away team as they tried to contain the north London side, who enjoyed more than 60 per cent of the possession. Dennis Bergkamp missed a sitter and Henry and Freddie Ljungberg forced spectacular saves from Niemi.

It was only some desperate defending that kept the scoreline in check.

"It was a deserved victory and a well done job," Arsenal manager Arsene Wenger said, adding his side might have scored more had Niemi not been in such good form. "In the second half we dropped physically and they got a bit more aggressive," he said.

Southampton won the fixture 3-2 last season with a sizzling performance from James Beattie but on Monday the striker was squeezed out of the game. Arsenal, unbeaten in the league this season, are now on 45 points from 19 games, three ahead of third-placed Chelsea and 15 in front of the rest of the Premier League pack.

Southampton remain in eighth on 26 points. Manager Gordon Strachan said it was the first time he had watched his side

playing as though they were frightened of the opposition.

"They must remember that smell of fear," Strachan said of his players' first half performance. "We must remember how we embarrassed ourselves."—MNA/Reuters



Robert Pires' seventh goal in six meetings with Southampton was enough to see Arsenal maintain their unbeaten record in the Premiership this season as they came out 1-0 winners.—INTERNET

Club boss says Parma will survive Parmalat crisis

MILAN, 30 Dec—Parma will survive the bankruptcy crisis of its owner, food group Parmalat, the Serie A club's managing director said on Monday.

"I am convinced that Parma can be saved," Patrick Nebiolo told local newspaper Gazzetta di Parma in an interview.

Parma, currently sixth in Serie A, were one of Italy's leading teams of the 1990s, winning two UEFA Cups, thanks in part to the deep pockets of Parmalat, which is based near the city of Parma.

But the global dairy and food group has been forced to file for bankruptcy protection after revelations of a multibillion-euro hole in its accounts.

That has left Parma struggling to find the funds to cover losses of 77 million euros (96 million US dollars) in its financial year ending in June in order to avoid liquidation.

"Let's not put Parma in the same bracket as Fiorentina. Parma is not at risk of disappearing," Nebiolo said.

Twice Italian champions Fiorentina went bankrupt in 2002 after they were relegated from the top flight. A new club, Fiorentina Viola was formed but was forced to begin life in the regionalized Serie C2. They won promotion back to Serie B this season.

Rome-based Lazio were also pushed deep into financial crisis this year by the collapse of another Italian food group, Cirio, which was controlled by Lazio's top shareholder, entrepreneur Sergio Cragnotti.

MNA/Reuters

Veron three more weeks out of Chelsea

LONDON, 30 Dec—High-flying Chelsea will be without Argentina midfielder Juan Sebastian Veron for another three weeks while he recovers from a back injury, coach Claudio Ranieri said on Sunday. "He has started training but will need another 20 days," Ranieri said after his side's 3-0 home win over Portsmouth.

Veron has not played since returning from international duty six weeks ago. His compatriot, striker Hernan Crespo, has also missed the last two Chelsea games through illness.

Ranieri, heartily relieved at Sunday's win after losing two Premier League matches this month, added that winger Damien Duff should return in two weeks after dislocating his shoulder against Fulham a week ago.

MNA/Reuters



Former World Player of the Year Roberto Baggio, 36, says he plans to retire at the end of the current season. He has had a number of knee operations and a back problem has limited his appearances for his Serie A side Brescia this season. Baggio (R) is tackled by Milan's Andrea Pirlo during their Serie A soccer match in Milan, Italy, on 22 December, 2002.—INTERNET

Baggio sets to retire at end of season

ROME, 30 Dec—Former World Player of the Year Roberto Baggio says he plans to retire at the end of the current season.

"That's my idea right now and unless there's some incredible U-turn I don't believe I'm going to change my mind," Baggio, 36, told television programme Teletutto on Monday.

The former Italy striker, known as The Divine Ponytail due to his hairstyle and Buddhist beliefs, has had a career blighted by injury.

He has had a number of knee operations and a back problem has limited his appearances for his Serie A side Brescia this season.

"They've plagued me and given me a rough ride over the years," he said. "These days, at my age, it gets rougher and rougher."

Asked what he hoped to do after hanging up his boots, Baggio said: "It's too soon to say. I've still got to get used to the idea of not being out there on the pitch, running."

The hugely popular Baggio started as a professional in 1982 at Third Division side Vicenza and made his Serie A debut with Fiorentina three years later before embarking on a career at Juventus, AC Milan, Bologna, Inter Milan and Brescia.

He won the UEFA Cup with Juventus in

1993 and was named both FIFA's World Player of the Year and UEFA's European Footballer of the Year that year before going on to win two Serie A titles, with Juve in 1995 and AC Milan in 1996.

He made his international debut against the Netherlands in 1988 and won 55 caps for Italy, scoring 27 goals.

Baggio helped Italy reach the final of the 1994 World Cup in the United States with inspired last-minute goals against Nigeria and Spain.

He played in the final against Brazil despite a hamstring injury but his missed penalty in the shoot-out lost Italy the World Cup. He was subsequently dropped by then coach Arrigo Sacchi.

From that day on his appearances in the famous blue shirt became increasingly rare.

Coach Giovanni Trapattoni's refusal to take him to last year's World Cup in Japan, despite vociferous public and media campaigns, effectively ended any remaining hope he had of playing for his country.

Providing he is fit, Baggio's last official match for Brescia will be against his old club AC Milan on May 16.—MNA/Reuters

UEFA's Aigner bemoans role of money in European football

BERLIN, 30 Dec—The power of money and the scramble among the top clubs for the best talent threaten the future of European soccer, retiring UEFA chief executive Gerhard Aigner told a German newspaper on Sunday.

"We have a dangerous situation, because it should not be that success is only possible with money. If that... remains the case, then football will lose its credibility and fascination," Aigner told Welt am Sonntag.

"Sport needs competition, interesting opponents, otherwise boredom sets in and no one wants to come to the games any more," said Aigner, who steps down from his post at European football's governing body at the end of the year.

Aigner said the 1995 Bosman ruling, allowing players to move freely within the European Union, was tying the hands of football authorities.

"It is the most decisive factor why things are devel-



Retiring UEFA chief executive Gerhard Aigner

oping negatively, at least among the top clubs," he said.

Aigner said the lesser clubs' chances of success were steadily declining as the top clubs snapped up their best players but added the elite sides were still spending too much on their squads.

"It is not sustainable that some clubs spend 80 per cent

or more of their budgets on salaries. That is a fight with death that you cannot win," Aigner said.

Aigner wants clubs to develop their own youth talent and to be obliged to field a minimum number of domestic players, even though European Union laws do not allow such restrictions. "Perhaps it is a romantic idea, but if we don't return to this then football will just suffer more damage and lose its public," he said. He also said he wished low-spending VfB Stuttgart success in the Champions League. The German side, with a pool of players bred locally or bought in cheaply, face Chelsea in the last 16 of the competition after qualifying from the group phase.

MNA/Reuters

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



Secretary-1 Lt-Gen Soe Win presses the button to unveil the signboard of the foundry plant under the Ministry of Industry-2 in Indagaw Industrial Zone. — MNA

Opening of advanced industries given extra impetus to nation's industrial sector development

Power tiller engine factory, foundry plant and ball bearing plant open in Indagaw Industrial Zone

YANGON, 30 Dec—The opening ceremonies of the power tiller engine factory, foundry plant and ball bearing plant of the Ministry of Industry-2 were held in Indagaw Industrial Zone in Bago Township this morning, attended by Chairman of Industrial Development Committee Secretary-1 of the State Peace and Development Council Lt-Gen Soe Win.

Also present were Chairman of Bago Division Peace and Development Council Commander of Southern Command Brig-Gen Ko Ko, Minister for Industry-2 Maj-Gen Saw Lwin, Minister for Energy Brig-Gen Lun Thi, Minister for Electric Power Maj-Gen Tin Htut, the deputy ministers, Commander of No 77 LID, officials of the State Peace and Development Council Office, heads of departments of the Ministry of Industry-2, local authorities and guests.

At the radiator plant, Minister Maj-Gen Saw Lwin reported on construction of farm machinery factories, vehicular machinery factories, aluminium conductor steel reinforced cable factory and ball bearing plants, installation of machines, production of parts, future projects, strength of personnel and measures taken for greening of the industrial zone.

The Secretary-1 said the ministry's opening of advanced industries has given extra impetus to the nation's industrial sector development. The Government has been giving priority not only to development of the State-owned sector, but also the private sector. Under a special programme of the State, the industrialists are systematically studying the State-owned industries at present.

After the end of the programme, workshops will follow to find means to further develop the industrial sector, and to extend cooperation between the State-owned sector and the industrial zones, based on common interest, hoping to achieve meaningful results.

In addition to the efforts of the ministers and the deputy ministers, who are the heads of the respective industrial zones, for zone-wise development, the committees at different levels of the zones concerned will have to make harmonious and greater efforts to contribute towards the progress of the industrial sector.

As the key player in building an industrialized nation, the Ministry of Industry-2 has the duty to lead the private industrial sector development drive.

The Government now has already built the necessary infrastructures in all sectors almost to the full, and the industrial sector needs rapid development.

Officials as well as industrialists will have to make collective and energetic efforts, while keeping in mind the conviction that 2004-2005 is the period during which the industrial sector sees development in leaps and bounds.

Next, the Secretary-1 formally unveiled the inscriptions of power tiller engine factory, foundry plant and ball bearing plant.

Director-General of Directorate of Myanma Industrial Planning U Khin Maung and Resident Representative of China National Complete Plant Export and Import Corporation Group (COMPLANT) Mr Liu Xiao Nan formally opened the plants.

The Secretary-1 formally unveiled the signboard of the plant.

The Secretary-1 and party inspected the samples of power tiller engines and spare parts, Eya-1 power tillers and mini-tractors. They also inspected production of spare parts, functions of machining centre room and engine assembly line.

The Secretary-1 and party inspected test run of the power tiller engines. They were conducted round by Minister Maj-Gen Saw Lwin and officials.

They inspected functions of the heat treatment shop. The power tiller engine factory will manufacture 3,000 18 hp power tiller engines and power tillers each year.

(See page 9)

Minister inspects runway extension projects

YANGON, 30 Dec—Minister for Transport Maj-Gen Hla Myint Swe inspected extension of the runway at Heho Airport yesterday.

Accompanied by officials, the minister observed the runway measuring 8,500-foot by 100-foot, where Boeing 737-200 aircraft can land and take off.

In Kengtung Airport, Chairman of Shan State

(East) Peace and Development Council Commander of Triangle Region Command Maj-Gen Khin Zaw and the minister heard a report on progress in extending the runway. They gave suggestions. The new runway is 7,800 feet long and 75 feet wide. The old one was 4,700-foot by 70-foot.

The minister inspected stockpile of gravel.—MNA

Fifth annual meeting of Myanmar Fisheries Federation held

YANGON, 30 Dec—The fifth annual meeting of Myanmar Fisheries Federation was held at Yuzana Garden Hotel on Alanpya Phaya Road in Dagon Township this morning.

Minister for Livestock and Fisheries Brig-Gen Maung Maung Thein spoke on development of fisheries in five years after formation of the federation.

Minister Brig-Gen Maung Maung Thein accepted K 11.7 million for fisheries research development fund of the federation.

Next, Director-General of Fisheries Department U

Than Tun delivered an opening speech. Chairman of the federation U Htay Myint extended greetings.

Secretary of the federation U Kyee Ngwe reported on the annual report and financial statement for approval. Officials of the State, Division and District fisheries federation discussed the tasks.

In the evening, a workshop on development of fisheries was held. Officials of the federation and Fisheries Department submitted five papers and participants took part in the discussions.

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Secretary-1 Lt-Gen Soe Win inspects the power tiller factory of the Ministry of Industry-2 in Indagaw Industrial Zone. — MNA