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

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

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

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

With the conviction that giving encouragement and protection for perpetual development of the Myanmar traditional medicine amounts to preserving and promoting it as a cultural heritage, and in addition to extending the scope of public health care with the use of traditional medicine, the State Peace and Development Council is encouraging and safeguarding the field on all fronts. Throughout the course of history of Myanmar civilization countable by the years in the thousand, the traditional medicine has been developing and flourishing stage by stage in accord with the geographical condition, culture and customs and traditional art of thinking of the nation, and besides, it has been a genuine traditional heritage helping keep Myanmar healthy and fit and possessing physical and intellectual ability.

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

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

(See page 2)

Union Spirit

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

Senior General Than Shwe
Chairman of the State Peace and Development Council
Commander-in-Chief of Defence Services
(From address at the graduation parade of the 45th Intake of Defence Services Academy)

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

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

Nurses Sports Festival commences

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

Athletes marched past the commander. The commander explained the aims of the festival in his address. The championship shield was handed over to Vice-President of the Myanmar Nurses Association Daw Khin May Wit, who formally opened the festival.

Over 300 nurses are taking part in the festival, sponsored by the MNA, which continues till 19 December. Also present were Director-General of Sports and Physical Education Department U Thaung Htaik, No 4 Military Region Commander Col Yan Naing Oo, officials, guests, nurses and athletes. — MNA

Vice-Senior General Maung Aye receives Malaysian Military Attachés

Vice-Senior General Maung Aye received Malaysian Military Attachés Col Hj Harun Bin Hitam, who has completed his tour of duty, and new Military Attaché Col Hj Abbas Bin Hj Mat at Zeyathiri Beikman Hall on Komminthta at 10 am today.

Also present at the call were Military Adviser to the Chairman of the State Peace and Development Council General Khin Nyunt and Chief of Staff (Navy) Rear Admiral Soe Thein. — MNA

Emergence of the State Constitution is the duty of all citizens of Myanmar Naing-Ngan.
MAI launches Yangon-HK direct flights

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

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

Malaysian delegation concludes visit

YANGON, 16 Dec — The Malaysian delegation led by Under Secretary Dr Hj Ismail bin Hj Ahmad of the Policy Division of Malaysian Armed Forces Visited Defence Services Medical Academy in Yangon this morning. The delegation members were welcomed by Rector of DSMA Brig-Gen Min Thein and faculty members. Brig-Gen Min Thein extended greetings, and explained the background history of the academy with the help of audio-visual aids. Brig-Gen Min Thein and Dr Hj Ismail bin Hj Ahmad exchanged souvenirs. Officials conducted the Malaysian guests round the institution. The Malaysian guests left here by air in the evening after completion of their visit to Myanmar. They were seen off at the airport by Deputy Commandant of National Defence College Brig-Gen Than Maung, senior military officers, Military Attaché of the Malaysian Embassy Col Hj Abbass Hj Mat and officials. — NLM

UMFCCI President receives guest

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

People’s Desire

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

The State is encouraging…

(from page 1)

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

Moreover, the State is also encouraging the traditional medicine hospitals, dispensaries and clinics to encourage the traditional medicine, it is developing with greater momentum, and seeing a lot of good results in many areas, as the art of teaching traditional medicine reaching the international level, the traditional medicine itself winning greater confidence and reliance of the people, a large number of traditional medicines manufactured through advanced techniques coming out, and the research work achieving success after success.

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

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

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

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

The MoU also covered shipping, textiles and garments, cement, pharmaceuticals and biotechnology, and resolved to work together to enhance the pace of transfer of technology, investment and joint ventures. Officials told PTI.

Senior Indian officials were in Teheran two days prior to the minister’s visit to finalise and formalise the terms of the MoU.

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

MNA/PTI

Afro-Arab trade fair records $167m transactions

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

Chairman of the fair, Ahamda Ngema was quoted as saying that the figure includes enquiries and orders for export and imports trade.

Ngema, also the permanent secretary in the Tanzania Ministry of Industries and technical cooperation, said three products which exporters have shown interest in are textiles and garments, electrical appliances, cashew nuts, hides and skins, car batteries, beer, spirits, honey and spices.

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

MNA/Xinhua

China, Jordan sign economic cooperation protocols

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

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

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

MNA/Xinhua

Suicide bomber kills eight policemen in Iraq

BAHDAD, 16 Dec — A suicide bomber driving a fourwheel drive taxi killed eight Iraqi policemen in an attack Monday on a station in the capital’s northern outskirts, their commander said.

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

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

That attack was partially foiled by Iraqi police and US Military Police who fired on a second explosives-packed vehicle and prevented it from ramming the police station and detonating, said US Army Brig Gen Mark Hertling, of the 3rd Armoured Division.

A would-be suicide bomber in the second ran off, abandoning the vehicle without detonating it, Hertling said.

The man was later captured, said US Army Capt Brad Loudon. The car’s 250 kilograms (550 pounds) of plastic explosives, with a powerful limpet mine attached as a detonator, was defused, Hertling said.

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

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

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

MNA/Xinhua

Vajpayee urges farmers to tap global market

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

“Using the initiative, of building a commodities trading exchange of global standards, India has an opportunity to chase a 600-billion-US-dollar market opportunity,” he said.

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

MNA/Xinhua

455 US soldiers killed since start of military operations in Iraq

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

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

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

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

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

MNA/Xinhua

Shanghai seeks jewellery appraisers

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

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

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

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

Zhou’s classmates include bosses from time-honoured jewellery stores in Shanghai, professors from the elite Jiaotong and Tongji universities and appraisers from local appraisal organisations. They will be inducted in the city’s appraisal association.

“We have received intensive training over the past six months under the international Anna Miller certification system,” said Zhou. “We expect to become China’s first generation of internationally certified appraisers after passing the tests at the end of the programme.”

MNA/Xinhua

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

THE NEW LIGHT OF MYANMAR Wednesday, 17 December, 2003 3
Security Council to consider
Iraq’s future
BAGHDAD, 16 Dec—With the long manhunt for Saddam Hussein finally over, the UN Security Council will meet Tuesday to discuss the still uncertain political future of Iraq.

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

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

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

Zafarullah Jamali and exchange views with them on cease-fire and mutual trust in Africa on all fronts. Our cooperation on international issues, the Chinese Premier said, has fulfilled ahead of schedule.

In 2002, the Chinese government has taken further measures to increase its imports from African countries, and that trade volume between China and Africa has been increasing at an annual rate of more than 20 per cent.

Over the last three years, China has also invested 117 new enterprises in Africa. Sino-African cooperation in energy development and hi-tech industries is getting off the ground, he said.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

The delegation will also visit some Iraqi cities to get acquainted with conditions on the ground and discuss problems Iraqis are facing. The delegation’s visit to Iraq comes on the heels of former Iraqi President Saddam Hussein’s arrest, which was made near his hometown of Tikrit on Saturday evening.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

“To step up our tourism cooperation with Africa, China will grant eight more African countries the status of approved destination for outbound Chinese tourists,” Wen announced.

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

Once African countries acquired the status of “approved destination for outbound Chinese tourists,” Chinese tourists can travel to these countries at their own expense under the organization of Chinese travel agencies, according to officials from the Chinese Foreign Ministry. — MNA/Xinhua

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

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

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

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

Poster ushers in new era in China-Africa cooperation
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By helping the Chinese government on preparing the next edition of the TV series of Travel China, I hope that the programme will show the tremendous changes that China has undergone in the last few years. — MNA/Xinhua

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

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destinations for Chinese tourists
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Internet
**Palestinians burn US flags over Saddam’s capture**

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

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

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

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

“The Americans may have captured you but you captivated our hearts,” organizer said through loudspeakers.

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

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

“Maybe they fired a smoke bomb that neutralized him. Maybe he was asleep and was betrayed by traitors,” Sadek mused. “We wish he had resisted as did his sons,” he added.

Uday and Qusay Hussein died in a shootout with US troops in July.

**Police fire at fleeing bag-snatchers near EU summit**

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

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

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

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

**“Free Willy” killer whale star Keiko dies at 27**

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

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

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

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

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

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

**Shanghai-Melbourne direct flights start**

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

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

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

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

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

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

**Iran to upgrade medium-range missiles**

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

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

**Donate blood**

**Halliburton gets more business in Iraq**

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

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

Army Corps of Engineers spokesman Bob Faletti said a new task order was made for KBR last week worth up to 200 million US dollars for the “restoration of essential infrastructure”.

Faletti said this work order would be paid for by money from the Development Fund for Iraq and not from 16.8 billion US dollars in new funds to rebuild Iraq appropriated by Congress.

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

“To make sure that we avoided any perception of wrong-doing, we are not co-mingling appropriated and non-approved funds (from Congress),” said Faletti.—MENA/Reuters

**Annan says Saddam trial must be fair, no death penalty**

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

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

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

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

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

“It is essential and it is absolutely vital that all those responsible for these crimes should be brought to account”, he said.

“I believe this should be done through open trials in properly established courts of law which will respect basic international norms and standards, including respect for international humanitarian law.”

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

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

**Donate blood**

**“Free Willy” killer whale star Keiko dies at 27**

Keiko, whale of Free Willy fame, dies but debate continues on return to wild. —INTERCEPT
The Union of Myanmar, home to various national races, had existed in glory under her own rulers since so many years ago.

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

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

The King after ruling the nation for 16 years, built 34 towns at the same time where the national races could live together in unity. It was one of his efforts to forge national solidarity. In addition, many military heroes emerged during the reign of the King. Of them, Kyansittha, Nga Hwewy, Nga Lon Laphe and Nyang Oo Phe were famous. It was said that the combined might of the four heroes was equal to the total strength of 400,000 soldiers. They were the commanders of the Bagan Army, leading Myanmar soldiers to ward off and drive away, with courage and energy, all the enemies trying to attack the State.

We have firm historical evidence and records that the King had made great effort to build irrigation works to ensure an adequate amount of water for cultivation. Concerning the King’s dam building endeavours, the Glass Palace Chronicle states as follows: “In addition, the King built a large number of dams and reservoirs on natural watercourses in the entire Myanmar.

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

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

The edifices built by the King as religious and cultural heritage stand in Bagan region till today. They include Stowezigon, Payaung-thaung Pagoda, Tantkyi-taung Pagoda, and Tuwmin-taung Pagoda in Bagan region. It is said that the tooth relic of the Buddha was enshrined in the pagodas.

The historical records indicate that the religion and civilization thrived, and the economy developed, and the national unity getting stronger in the Bagan State of the First Myanmar Empire. The Second Myanmar Empire or the Toungoo Kingdom. Although Toungoo was the cradle of the Second Myanmar Empire, Bago thrives in the royal seat of the Empire.

When the King Anawrahta, who ascended the throne in 1553 built the Kanbawzathadi Palace in 1553 and the Hanthawady royal city in 1566. At the time of King Bayinnaung, organizational network could be spread over Assam-Manipur in the northwest, Saka and Sanna in the northeast and Linzin, Ayodya, Chiangmai and Thokhate in the east and southeast. At that time, King Bayinnaung was a king possessing almost all power, military and organizational skills.

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

The study of the fall of Hanthawaddy and the destruction of the Kanbawzathadi Palace show that it was due to weaknesses in patriotic spirit, nationalistic fervour and national unity. The first Myanmar Empire founded by King Anawrahta stood tall in the world because of Union Spirit. So did the second Myanmar Empire founded by King Bayinnaung.

According to historical records, King Alaungphaya U Aung Zeya who ascended the throne in 1752 AD founded the third Myanmar Empire with the same spirit of national unity.

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

National races, let’s join hands firmly

Myint Wai Hlaing

The Government is excavating the Bagan Palace built by King Anawrahta who ascended the throne in 1044 AD as a means to raise the national pride and character.
Hailing the 56th Anniversary Independence Day:

Images of Myanma history

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

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

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

The photo shows King Bayintnaung’s Kambawzathady Golden Palace, which has been reconstructed maintaining the traditional handicraft.
The Government is giving…

(from page 16)

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

Myanmar traditional practitioners, Head of State Senior General Than Shwe, keeping an eye on Myanmar traditional medical advances, never fails to give guidance on Myanmar traditional medicine to meet international standards. He also played a part in western medical profession in terms of medical development. He is considered to witness a series of significant achievements in the Myanmar traditional medical sector. It is due to the guidance the Head of State himself gave emphatically, the learners can have access to a variety of traditional medical professions covering the four Nayas of Myanmar traditional medical practice which are taught in accord with the curriculums collectively written by senior traditional physicians to include more than a century of medical studies.

Merely, Department, to guarantee the development of traditional medical practices as a world-grade medical profession, are offering broader assistance to do researches on traditional medicines and therapies with the use of modern technologies and equipment for keeping records of their efficiency and of Myanmar traditional medicines capable of curing uncommon diseases the western medicines have no cure, and in integrating Myanmar traditional medical practices into the western medical practices with modern hospital equipment.

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

Respective Myanmar traditional medical practitioners separately handled their own traditional medical science to their disciples or family members. Consequently, Myanmar traditional medical science is naturally compounded from the ancestors without causing any chemical reaction to the consumers and practically all the diseases can be cured through in the traditional medical science.

Collective efforts of national traditional medicine practitioners combining their arts of giving medical treatment and invaluable experience in the role in upgrading Myanmar traditional medical science that does not damage original potency of herbs in a bid to keep abreast with the international standard pharmacologically.

Today, the public have again given priority to traditional medicines naturally compounded from rubbers of herbs, instead of modern drugs because of high prices and side effects of the latter. It shows that traditional medicines and medical sciences of some eastern nations become popular in the world, deeply penetrating international community.

In a fortunate time to systematically upgrade the arts of Myanmar massage that can cure different types of paralysis considering that Myanmar arts which is on a par with Chinese acupuncture being popular among the nations of the world.

It is also a true traditional medical practice that has flourished in Myanmar society along with the Myanmar geographical condition, the Myanmar traditional and cultural custom and tradition, the philosophy of Theravada Buddhism Myanmar people believe in.

“The Myanmar traditional medical practice that sprang from the combina- tion of herbs, minerals, and living organisms” — Desna Naya, Bhasajja Naya, Nakkhattra Naya and Vajjhata Naya — which leads into exist- ence in accordance with Myanmar traditional phenomena, is a living proof that the Myanmar traditional medical practice is full of broad and delicate medical studies, difficult and profound medical treatises, efficacious and effective thera- pies, and potent medicines and has stood to this day as a medical practice of high quality and potency thanks to the perseverance of trad- itional physicians of successive eras.

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

“As is known to all traditional physicians, Head of State Senior General Than Shwe, keeping an eye on Myanmar traditional medical advances, never fails to give guidance on Myanmar traditional medicines to meet international standards also to be on a par with western medical profession in terms of medical development. It is essential that harmonious measures are to be taken to preserve and boost effectively and potency of Myanmar traditional medicines capable of curing uncommon diseases the western medicines have no cure, and in integrating Myanmar traditional medical practices into the western medical practices with modern hospital equipment. The Myanmar traditional medical science is broad and delicate and so it is essential that harmonious measures are to be taken to preserve and boost effectively and potency of Myanmar traditional medicines in order to penetrate deep into international markets. Respective Myanmar traditional medical practitioners separately handled their own traditional medical science to their disciples or family members. Consequently, Myanmar traditional medical science is naturally compounded from the ancestors without causing any chemical reaction to the consumers and practically all the diseases can be cured through in the traditional medical science. Collective efforts of national traditional medicine practitioners combining their arts of giving medical treatment and invaluable experience in the role in upgrading Myanmar traditional medical science that does not damage original potency of herbs in a bid to keep abreast with the international standard pharmacologically.

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

“That signifies an overt shift in traditional medical studies from the system which traditional medical associations and traditional physicians handed down their medical knowledge to those who studied under them, to the one in which
The Government giving encouragement to develop traditional medical practice systematically and…

(from page 8)

health care services with the people;
- to unmitely and collectively participate in doing scientific research on herbs for manufacturing more effective and potent traditional medicines that can deeply penetrate international markets; and
- to make strenuous endeavours to preserve the essence of delicate Myanmar traditional medical sciences, therapies, priceess traditional medical treatises and potent herbs so as to upgrade Myanmar traditional medical science to a science of the national heritage.

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

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

YANGON, 16 Dec — Miniser for Progress of Border Areas and National Races Development Affairs Col Thein Nyunt hosted a dinner in honour of the representatives of ASEAN nations and officials of the ASEAN Secretariat.

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

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

Director-General of the Department for Progress of Border Areas and National Races U Than Sw permitted the meeting together with Deputy Director-General of the National Anti-Poverty Commission of the Presidential Office of the Philippines Mrs Veronica Fenz Villarvicencio.

On the occasion, the representatives discussed reports on the meeting and approved them.

The chairman delivered concluding remarks.

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

ASEAN environment ministers arrive

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

Minister for Rail Transportation inspects upgrading of railroads

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

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

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

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

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

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

Senior officials meet for 9th ASEAN Ministerial Meeting on Environment management, multilateral environmental agreements and environmentally sustainable cities and others.

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

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

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

The senior officials meeting for the 9th ASEAN Ministerial Meeting on the Environment in progress. — MNA
Fourth Myanmar Traditional... (from page 16)
Next, the master of ceremonies announced that altogether 439 delegates attended the conference.
In his opening remarks, Deputy Minister Dr Mya Oo said in the course of history Myanmar people valued and preserved Myanmar traditional medicine, the heritage of ancestors, in different eras. They have been relying on the traditional medical science. The traditional medical science has spread in the country due to the potent medicine. He said traditional medical science provides health and fitness of Myanmar people and promotes patriotism. He said Head of State Senior General Than Shwe gave guidance on promotion of potency of Myanmar traditional medicine and properties and systematic development of Myanmar traditional medical science.
He urged the traditional medicine practitioners to try to become those who can promote health standard.
Next, U Tun Kyaing of Magway Township tabled a motion calling for participation in rural health development project and taking care of the people through traditional medicine. Daw Than Soe of Sittwe seconded the motion.
U Mio Myint of Maha Aungmye Township tabled a motion calling for continuous implementation of training and educative tasks for enhancing the skill of traditional medicine practitioners. Daw Lay Thant of Mogaung Township seconded the motion.
U Khin Thet Hlaik of Taunggyi Township tabled a motion calling for collection of standard theory to be used as the manual of the traditional medicine practitioners. Daw Khin Thet of Mogaung Township seconded the motion.
The afternoon session was presided over by Deputy Minister Dr Mya Oo, Chairman of Traditional Medicine Council. Secretary-General Dr Thein Sve, member U Nyan and delegates U Hla Hla and U Tha Maung acted as members of the Panel of Chairmen.
Deputy Director U Soe Win acted as master of ceremonies. U Thet Naing of Myik Township tabled a motion calling for conducting courses on systematic research methods for traditional medicine practitioners in order to prove that the potency of Myanmar traditional medicine meets the international standard. U Hla Pe of Paungyi Township seconded the motion.
U Saw Hlaing of Sagaing Township tabled a motion calling for conservation of herbal plants and organizing the people to grow herbs on an manageable scale for local sufficiency of raw materials. Daw Tin Nwe Oo of Pabedan Township seconded the motion.
Next, the message sent to the conference by Chairman of the State Peace and Development Council Senior General Than Shwe was put on record. Decision was made that the guidance in the message would be regarded as work guidelines. The opening address delivered by Prime Minister Khin Nyunt was also put on record.
U Pyone Maung Maung, President of Union of Myanmar Federation of Commerce and Industry U Win Myint, Executive Committee Chairman of the ASEAN CCI U Pyone Maung Maung made speeches.
The meeting discussed financial matters, and assessed the accomplishments of the Food, Agriculture and Forestry committees and others.

ASEAN Senior Officials Meeting on Rural Development and Poverty Eradication concludes
Minister for Border Areas and National Races and Development Affairs Col Thein Nyunt this evening hosted a dinner in honour of the delegates from ASEAN countries at Sedona Hotel.
Deputy Ministers of the PBANRDA Brig-Gen Than Tun and Col Tin Ngwe also attended the dinner. — MNA

Myanmar hosts ASEAN CCI EC Meeting
Minister at the Prime Minister’s Office Maj-Gen Thein Sve, President of Union of Myanmar Federation of Chambers of Commerce and Industry U Win Myint, Executive Committee Chairman of the ASEAN CCI U Pyone Maung Maung made speeches.
The meeting discussed financial matters, and assessed the accomplishments of the Food, Agriculture and Forestry committees and others.

Agricultural work and regional development tasks inspected in Hlegu and Dagon Myothit (East)
YANGON, 16 Dec — Chairman of Yangon Division Peace and Development Council and Commander of Yangon Commander Maj-Gen Myint Swe went to townships in Dagon Myothit (East), Yangon East District, and Hlegu Township, Yangon North District, this morning and inspected agricultural and development tasks.
At 10.30 am, the commander inspected measures being taken for cultivation of summer paddy near Hsinpyin village by Khayepin Road in Hlegu Township and met with local farmers. Next, the commander gave instructions, saying that assistance has been provided to ensure the availability of water resources and agricultural techniques, and at the same time measures are being taken for cultivation of summer and monsoon paddy, beans and pulses, edible crops and vegetables on a commercial scale in the vicinity of the Yangon International Airport by designating five agricultural zones. He also urged the farmers to make effective use of irrigation facilities provided by the Government.
Next, a local authority reported to the commander on progress of land preparation work for cultivation of various crops on a commercial scale in the township and arrangements for future agricultural plans.
Local farmers also reported to the commander on the requirements to be fulfilled for cultivation of crops all the year round on a commercial scale and for education, health and transport sectors for regional development. Later, Li-Col Kyaw Tun, Secretary of Yangon Division Peace and Development Council, spoke of the need for local farmers to cooperate with departments concerned in agricultural tasks by using irrigation facilities provided by the Government.
After hearing the reports, the commander coordinated with departmental officials concerned and attended to the needs. Afterwards, the commander and party inspected the sales of fertilizers by the Myanmar Agriculture Service to local farmers, the demonstration of the nursing of paddy strain, and the display of farm equipment by the Agricultural Mechanization Department, and gave instructions.
The commander and party also inspected the tasks being taken with the use of heavy machinery for construction of sluice gates at the Ngamoyeik Dam in Hlegu Township.
On completion, the dam will irrigate 5,000 acres of land for cultivation of summer paddy in Hlegu and Dagon Myothit Townships.
At the temporary briefing hall at the construction site, the commander heard reports presented by officials and called for collective efforts of local officials and farmers to make systematic arrangements for boosting agriculture in the region. — MNA

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

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

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

The new light of Myanmar Wednesday, 17 December, 2003
Hailing the 56th Anniversary Independence Day:
Endeavours made to develop human resources

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

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

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

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

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

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WTO chief sees trade talk progress but not enough

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

MNA/Reuter

Multinational genome project launched in US

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

“Sequencing the bovine genome is a vital first step that will lay the groundwork for breakthroughs that will benefit both human health and agriculture,” said Michael Goodman, chief of the US National Human Genome Research Institute.

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

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UNION OF MYANMAR MINISTRY OF RAIL TRANSPORTATION MYANMAR RAILWAYS INVITATION TO SEALLED TENDER

1. Sealed Tenders are invited by Myanmar Railways, for supply of the following Spare parts for D.E.L. & D.H.L. which are purchased in US Dollar and Myanmar Kyats.

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Closing Date: 29-1-2004 (Thursday) (12.00) Hours

Tender documents are available at the office of the Deputy General Manager (Supply), Myanmar Railways, corner of 51st Street and Merchant Street, Botataung, Yangon, starting from 17-12-2003 until the office hours.

For further details please call: 291892, 201555 Ext: 602, 605, 612.

Deputy General Manager
Supply Department, Myanmar Railways, Botataung, Yangon.

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Win Mu Tin, M.A., H.G.P., D.B.L. for Elsafe International AS.
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The New Light of Myanmar

Read Junior Leader to improve your English.
**Northeast Asia countries join hands fighting sandstorms**

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

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

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

A monitoring and forecasting system is on the top of the agenda, according to the Pakistani Ministry of Science and Technology. "We should work together to transform the deserts in source countries," said Zhu Guangyao.

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

**Cancer vaccine in the pipeline in India**

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

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

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

Data to start trials was being collected by Institute of Cytology and Preventive Oncology, in the Indian capital state of Delhi, Tata Memorial Hospital, western Indian city of Mumbai and Cancer Institute in southern Indian metropolis of Chennai, he said.

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

**Indonesian motorcycle maker sees no major investment**

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

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

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

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

However, sales fell sharply after the economic crisis and could only recover to near pre-crisis level in 2001, four years after the economic crisis. That year, a total of 1.64 million motorcycles were sold in the country, against 1.85 million in 1997.

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

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

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

**French town evacuated over WW II bomb**

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

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

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

The 250-kilo bomb was first discovered on Wednesday when it was found in a new hotel in an area previ-ously used to host trade fairs.

Bombs from both world wars are sporadically un-earthed across the former battlefields of northern France. **MNA/Reuters**

**Thai eyes use of LNG for generating stations**

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

"It means we will have to ensure that our local production would rise," he said.**MNA/Xinhua**

**Chinese Defence Minister leaves for Russia**

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

Cao, also vice-chairman of the Central Military Commission (CMC) and a state councillor, is paying the visit at the invitation of Russian Minister of Defence Sergei Ivanov. Cao’s entourage in-clude Li Jinai, a CMC mem-ber and director-general of the General Armament Department and Qian Shugen, deputy chief of the General Staff of Chinese People’s Lib-eration Army, among others. **MNA/Xinhua**

**Malaysian PM urges private sector to be engine for eco growth**

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

When the country was faced with the financial crisis, the government had to re-sort to the public sector for economic recov-ery because the crisis incapacitated the pri-vate sector, Abdullah, who is also the Elec-tricity Minister, said at the Finance Minis-try’s monthly gathering in Putrajaya, the administrative capital of Malaysia.

The economic growth in the third quar-ter was mainly driven by the private sector and the private consumption grew strongly by 5.4 per cent during the quarter, accord-ing to the central bank’s statistics.

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

"Meanwhile, the Premier said the Finance Ministry and related agencies such as the central bank, Bank Negara and the Eco-nomic Planning Unit should focus their at-tention on achieving a balanced budget.

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

The Malaysian Government projected a budget deficit of 5.4 per cent of the country’s gross domestic product (GDP) for 2003. **MNA/Xinhua**
34 points from 16 games and left Real Madrid needing to beat Deportivo Coruna in a later match at the Bernabeu to reclaim the league leadership. Real have 33 points from 16 games, while Atletico have 32 points from 15 games.

Ronaldo's goal was his 18th of the season, and he also assisted on the opening goal by assistant coach Colin Bell. Ronaldo has 12 goals and 14 assists in 32 appearances for Real Madrid this season.

Valencia's next match is against Deportivo Coruna on Sunday, while Real Madrid's next match is against Atletico Madrid on Wednesday.

MNA/Reuters

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

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

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

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

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

Birgit Prinz clinched the women's award with 268 points. She helped Germany win the women's World Cup over Sweden in 2003.

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

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

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

Van der Vaart goal puts Ajax back on top

AMSTERDAM, 16 Dec—Ajax Amsterdam, who have earned the nickname of 'the Ajax of the midweek', won 1-0 in a 1-0 win over Utrecht on Sunday. The only goal came on 76 minutes from skipper Rafael van der Vaart following an assist from Maxwell. Ajax have 37 points and a game in hand on PSV Eindhoven, who beat RKC Waalwijk 3-1 on Saturday but have dropped back to second on 36.

AZ Alkmaar stayed third on 32 points after thrashing lowly Volendam 6-0. Striker Mikel Gonzalez and Kenneth Perez scored two apiece after the break following earlier efforts from Stijn Huysegems and Michael Busskermolen.

Boca claim shoot-out glory in World Club Cup

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

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

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

"Towards the end of extra time I felt the Milan players were hanging on for penalties," he added. "I'm very proud of the way we kept attacking. We were even more aggressive with our pitiful in the 11th minute of a game which Arsenal dominated for long periods and should have won by a bigger margin.

Van der Vaart goal puts Ajax back on top

Amsterdam, 16 Dec—Ajax Amsterdam bounced back from their midweek Champions League elimination to regain top spot in the Dutch First Division with a 1-0 win over Utrecht on Sunday. The only goal came on 76 minutes from skipper Rafael van der Vaart following an assist from Maxwell.

Ajax have 37 points and a game in hand on PSV Eindhoven, who beat RKC Waalwijk 3-1 on Saturday but have dropped back to second on 36.

AZ Alkmaar stayed third on 32 points after thrashing lowly Volendam 6-0. Striker Mikel Gonzalez and Kenneth Perez scored two apiece after the break following earlier efforts from Stijn Huysegems and Michael Busskermolen.

Bottom side Zwolle drew 1-1 at home to Groningen while NEC Nijmegen beat feisty Twente 1-0. Bottom side Zwolle drew 1-1 at home to Groningen while NEC Nijmegen beat feisty Twente 1-0.
12:15 Song "Sagaw Flowers Land"
12:15 National News
12:20 Ship building of the 2nd Defile of the River Ayawady
12:25 Song "Saying with the Eyes"
12:25 Dresses decorated with Sequin-like Colourful Soup
12:25 National News
12:25 Song "Mingalabar"
12:25 Beauty & Scenic Sights "Come and See and Myanmar"

Wednesday, December 17

View today:
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7:30 am     8:45 am
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WEATHER

Tuesday, December 16, 2003

Summary of observations recorded at 09:00 hours MST: During the past 24 hours, weather has been partly cloudy in the whole country. Night temperature was (5°C) to (6°C) below normal in Chin State, Yangon, Mandalay and Tantibuyu Divisions, (5°C) to (6°C) below normal in Rakhaing State, upper Sagon and Bago Divisions, (7°C) to (8°C) below normal in Shan State, lower Sagon and Ayawady divisions and about normal in the remaining areas. The significant night temperature was (1°C) in Kachin.

Maximum temperature on 15-12-2003 was 33.0°C (91°F). Minimum temperature on 16-12-2003 was 15.3°C (59°F). Relative humidity at 9:00 hrs MST on 16-12-2003 was 71%. Total sunshine hours on 15-12-2003 was 96.6 hours approx. Rainfall on 16-12-2003 was observed at Yangon Airport, Kaba-Aye and central Yangon. Total rainfall since 1-12-2003 was 221.1 mm (8.70 inches) at Yangon Airport, 2135 mm (84.1 inches) at Kaba-Aye and 2394 mm (94.2 inches) at central Yangon. Maximum wind speed at Yangon (Kaba-Aye) was 12 m/sec (39 knots) from South at 1:15 hours MST on 15-12-2003.

Bay area: According to the observations at 09 (30) hrs MST between 16-12-2003, the weather situation over the Bay of Bengal has further intensified a cyclonic storm and crossed Andhra Coast, (230 miles north of Chennai, India). Weather is partly cloudy to the west and South Bay and general shower elsewhere in the Bay of Bengal.

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

Outlook for subsequent two days: Likelihood of isolated rain or thunder showers in the whole country.

Forecast for Yangon and neighbouring area for 16-12-03 to 17-12-03: Partly cloudy to mostly clear.
### Four political objectives
- Stability of the State, community peace and tranquillity, prevalence of law and order
- National reconciliation
- 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 outside 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

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

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

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

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**Prime Minister attends New Year dinner**

YANGON, 16 Dec — Prime Minister General Khin Nyunt attended a New Year dinner hosted by Tuesday Club at the Traders’ Hotel on Sule Pagoda Road here at 6.30 pm today. Also present on the occasion were the ministers, the deputy ministers, officials of the State Peace and Development Council Office, heads of departments, foreign businessmen and their wives. Chairman of Tuesday Club Mr Martin Pun and members were present.

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**Prime Minister General Khin Nyunt:**

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

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

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