Senior General Than Shwe and wife Daw Kyaing Kyaing attend graduation dinner of 46th Intake of DSA

YANGON, 20 Dec — The graduation dinner of the 46th Intake of Defence Services Academy was held at the parade ground at DSA in PyinOoLwin, Mandalay Division, at 6pm yesterday, attended by Chairman of the State Peace and Development Council Commander-in-Chief of Defence Services Senior General Than Shwe and wife Daw Kyaing Kyaing.

Also present at the dinner were Member of the State Peace and Development Council General Thura Shwe Mann, Secretary-1 of the State Peace and Development Council Lt-Gen Soe Win, Secretary-2 Lt-Gen Thein Sein, members of the State Peace and Development Council Lt-Gen Ye Myint, Lt-Gen Tha Thura Tin Aung Myint Oo, Lt-Gen Kyaw Win and Lt-Gen Tin Aye, Commander-in-Chief (Navy) Vice-Admiral Kyi Min, Commander-in-Chief (Air) Maj-Gen Myat Hein, Chairman of Mandalay Division Peace and Development Council Commander of Central Command Maj-Gen Ye Myint, Chairman of Sagaing Division Peace and Development Council Commander of North-West Command Maj-Gen Tha Aye, Chairman of Yangon Division Peace and Development Council Commander of Yangon Command Maj-Gen Myint Swe, the ministers, senior military officers of the Ministry of Defence, the Mandalay Mayor, the Commander of PyinOoLwin Station, Commandant of DSA, senior military officers of PyinOoLwin Station, departmental heads, faculty members of DSA, graduate officers and their parents and relatives.

Senior General Than Shwe gives guidance on Zeebingyi training centres in PyinOoLwin

YANGON, 20 Dec — Chairman of the State Peace and Development Council Commander-in-Chief of Defence Services Senior General Than Shwe gave guidance on training centres of Zeebingyi on 17 Dec afternoon at the Central Fire Services Training School in Zeebingyi, PyinOoLwin Township, Mandalay Division.

At the training school, Minister for Home Affairs Col Tin Hlaing reported to the Senior General and party on progress in implementing the guidance given by the Senior General at the training school in 2001, training of Myanmar Police Force members to become ones equipped with Union Spirit and firm belief and to become reserve force for defending the nation, and agriculture and livestock breeding, and military activities for carrying out national defence duties, sending outstanding ones abroad for further studies, training them to possess full sense of Union Spirit and patriotism and agriculture and livestock breeding work, the director-general of the FSD, on training schedules, and Chairman of the Civil Service Selection and Training Board Dr Than Nyun, on training of the staff to become ones capable of serving the interest of the people, courses conducted in the Central Institute of Civil Service (Upper Myanmar) and strength of the trainees, agriculture and livestock breeding, and staff welfare services.

In response to the reports, the Senior General gave guidance, saying that continuing efforts are to be exerted systematically and (See page 8)

Emergence of the State Constitution is the duty of all citizens of Myanmar Naing-Ngan.
Building modern, developed nation while safeguarding the State with full sense of Union Spirit

The Union of Myanmar is home to over 100 national races, residing together in weal and woe. If we study the history of Myanmar, we will see that the country lost her independence and sovereignty because of the deterioration of national solidarity and lack of a Tatmadaw capable of repulsing the colonialists. Therefore, it is required for the entire national races to safeguard, hand in hand with the strong Tatmadaw, independence and sovereignty.

Commander-in-Chief of Defence Services Senior General Than Shwe gave guidance concerning peace and prosperity of the independent and sovereign State at the graduation parade of the 46th Intake of Defence Services Academy in PyinOoLwin on 19 December 2003 as follows:

“The fact that the backwardness of the nation is the result of the internal conflicts, which broke out soon after regaining of independence, is an unforgettable lesson for all of us. As we have restored national consolidation, and the whole Union is working in harmony, there emerge favourable foundations in our nation. In line with the Pali saying which goes “Samaagaman Tapo Sukho, meaning unity contributes to prosperity, all our people will be free from dangers and enjoy peace and safety only if the national solidarity is consolidated.”

To ensure security and peace of the State, the Tatmadaw has placed greater emphasis on development of border areas and national races since its assumption of the State duties. Thanks to these efforts, amazing developments can be seen in the border areas.

At the same time, rural development tasks or projects for the progress of the entire nation were undertaken for the equitable development of the State. These tasks have been and are being undertaken to see that each and every region is not left unattended.

Being able to undertake such essential tasks must be attributed to the concerted efforts of the State and the people prompted by the desire to bring about development of the Union.

So, we would like to urge the entire national people to strive for the continued development of the State while the Tatmadaw is discharging duties at risk of lives to ensure peace and tranquillity, rule of law and internal stability of the State.

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.

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

Prime Minister of the Union of Myanmar General Khin Nyunt receives Most Venerable Dr Kori Yoshihiko, Chief High Priest of Nenbutsu Sect of Japan and Vice-President of Buddhist Summit at Zeyathiri Beikman.— mna.

ASEAN and +3 Environmental Ministers go sightseeing in Bagan-NyaungU

YANGON, 20 Dec — Environmenal Ministers and Deputy Minister and delegation members of ASEAN countries, Deputy Ministers and delegation members of ASEAN dialogue partner countries which are the People’s Republic of China and Japan, the ASEAN Secretary-General and officials led by Chairman of National Committee for Environmental Affairs Minister for Foreign Affairs U Win Aung left here by air this morning.

They were welcomed there by Chairman of NyaungU District Peace and Development Council Lt-Col Khin Maung Oo and officials. Next, the guests visited Bagan Archaeological Museum in Bagan Archaeological zone where Minister U Win Aung conducted them round the museum. Afterwards, they viewed beautiful scenes of pagodas and stupas there. The guests then signed in the visitors’ book. On arrival at Ananda Temple, they do¬nated flowers to the Buddha image. Similarly, they of¬fered flowers to the Buddha image at the eastern prayer hall at Shwezigon Pagoda.

Afterwards, they viewed successes of the arid zone greening project at Popa Park in Kyaukpadaw Township. While in the park, Minister U Win Aung hosted lunch in their honour at Popa Mountain Resort.

Officials then explained matters related to the park and extension of Nine-District Greening Project to 13-district one. Minister U Win Aung then explained accomplishments of the arid zone greening project.

At the office of Myanmar-Japan Friendship Forest Reforestation Project in NyaungU Township, officials reported on reforesta¬tion tasks being carried out at Kyubikywe reserve forest.

The guests inspected five-year old perennial trees. They proceeded to Bagan Lacquerware College and viewed production proc¬ess of lacquerware. Next, they visited Lacquerware Museum. They arrived back here by air this evening.— mna.

General Khin Nyunt meets Japanese Chief High Priest of Nenbutsu Sect, Vice-President of Buddhist Summit

YANGON, 20 Dec — Prime Minister of the Union of Myanmar General Khin Nyunt met Most Venerable Dr Kori Yoshihiko, Chief High Priest of Nenbutsu Sect of Japan and Vice-President of Buddhist Summit, and party at Zeyathiri Beikman on Konmyintha at 10 am today.

The Japanese guests arrived here to coordinate the tasks of the Fourth World Buddhist Summit.

At the call, Most Venerable Dr Kori Yoshihiko presented a Buddha image to Prime Minister General Khin Nyunt who also gave away a Buddha image to the Japanese priest.

Also present on the occasion were Minister for Religious Affairs Brig-Gen Thura Myint Maung, Deputy Minister for Foreign Affairs U Khin Maung Win, Deputy Minister for Religious Affairs Brig-Gen Thura Aung Ko, Director-General of the State Peace and Development Council Office Lt-Col Pe Nyein, Director-General U Soe Tin of the Government’s Office, Director-General of the Protocol Department Thura U Aung Htet, Adviser to the State Peace and Develop¬ment Council Office U Amin Maung, Director-General of Religious Affairs Department Dr Myo Myint, Direct¬or-General of the Department for Promotion and Propa¬gation of the Sasana U Sann Lwin and Pro-Rector (Admin) Dr Hla Pe of the International Theravada Buddhist Missionary University.

YANGON, 20 Dec — Prime Minister of Myanmar Khin Nyunt receives Most Venerable Dr Kori Yoshihiko, Chief High Priest of Nenbutsu Sect of Japan and Vice-President of Buddhist Summit at Zeyathiri Beikman.— mna.

ASEAN and +3 Environmental Ministers go sightseeing in Bagan-NyaungU

YANGON, 20 Dec — Environmental Ministers and Deputy Minister and delegation members of ASEAN Ministe...
**Truck blast wounds two US soldiers in Iraq**

**Baghdad, 19 Dec** — A roadside bomb exploded near a US military truck outside Baghdad on Friday, wounding two US soldiers, the military said, while an Iraqi woman died as another blast hit the office of a major Shi'ite party.

Capt Tammy Galloway of the US Army's 82nd Airborne Division said a homemade explosive device exploded on the roadside as a military truck was passing. Iraq witnesses said earlier that it was an oil tanker and that two soldiers were killed in the blast.

The predawn attack on the Supreme Council for the Islamic Revolution Party office, which also wounded five others, came a day after Shi'ites buried a senior politician assassinated Wednesday as he left his home in Baghdad.

Officials of the Supreme Council for the Islamic Revolution party blamed both attacks on loyalists of Saddam Hussein, who was captured by US forces on Saturday.

Rahim Jabar, who lives in the building in western Baghdad, said his sister was killed and five other residents were wounded in the explosion, which brought down half of a one-story residential building that also housed a party branch office. Supreme Council members were rushing to the scene.

The tanker truck blew up about 7.50 am and television footage showed clouds of black smoke rising from the tanker near Abu Ghraib, about 20 miles west of Baghdad.

One witness, 19-year-old Jassim Mohammed, said he saw the bodies of two Iraqis in a civilian car that was damaged in the blast.

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**US calls for action to prevent millions of unnecessary deaths**

**United Nations, 20 Dec** — Millions of people could be saved from premature death and years of disability through a combination of financial aid and targeted improvements in health services, a UN health agency said in a report released Thursday.

Of the 86 arrested, 12 were on the targets believed to conduct anti-coalition activities, Sergeant Robert Cargie, spokesman for the 4th Infantry Division told reporters.

Two hundred AK-47 rifles and explosive equipments were among other confiscated weapons in the operation, code-named Ivy Blizzard, which started Wednesday.

One man shooting at the troops and another acting suspiciously were shot dead.

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**Arab lawyers to form defence team for Saddam**

**Manama, 20 Dec** — A Bahraini lawyer said on Thursday he was teaming up with other Arab attorneys to defend former Iraqi president Saddam Hussein when he goes on trial.

"I am discussing with lawyers from Egypt, Jordan and other countries to form a defence committee for Saddam," said Mohammed Redha Abu Hussein, who specializes in international law. "We know Saddam has committed some mistakes. Our goal is not just to defend Saddam but also to expose the United States for its wrong foreign policy in our region," he told Reuters.

Abu Hussein criticized the United States for supporting the ousted Iraqi leader during Iraq's 1980-1988 war with Iran.

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**UN agencies call for urgent investment**

**Rome, 20 Dec** — Both the Italian Government and most Italian people are opposed to sentencing former Iraqi president Saddam Hussein to death, Italian Defence Minister Antonio Martino has said.

Martino said the most important thing is to give Saddam a fair trial, Italian media reported Thursday.

"The trial must not be a 'revenge,'" the minister said.

Saddam should be tried in an Iraqi court and the trial should be chaired by judges of the International Court of Justice and open to the Iraqi people and other Arab countries to ensure its 'fairness,' Martino said.

The governments of Kuwait and Iran should act as plaintiffs in Saddam's trial, the minister said, adding that the Italian Government would also be a plaintiff if there is concrete evidence that Saddam was involved in a November blast that killed 19 Italians in the southern Iraqi town of Nassiriya.

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**Foreign banks line up to operate in Iraq**

**Baghdad, 20 Dec** — HSBC, Standard Chartered and Arab Bank are among at least 15 foreign banks that have applied to operate in Iraq, a senior Iraqi Central Bank official said on Thursday.

"Competition is tight. The banks in the process of applying are all leading international names. They will be short-listed in the next few weeks," the official, who declined to be identified, told Reuters.

The central bank has invited international banks to bid for six five-year licences. Each foreign bank making a bid has to pledge to have minimum capital in Iraq of 25 million US dollars. Standard Chartered has been expanding in the Middle East, opening branches in Jordan and Lebanon in recent years and focusing on retail.

HSBC, the world's second-largest bank by market value, has also expanded its global network. HSBC already has operations in 12 Middle East countries.

Thirteen years of UN sanctions and over-regulations have damaged Iraq's banking system, which badly lags behind the world, including in settlements, retail banking and credit. — MNA/Reuters
**War in Iraq voted top story of 2003**

By an overwhelming margin, the US-led invasion and occupation was voted the top story of 2003 in The Associated Press' annual survey of American editors and news directors. Even with voting ending the day before Saddam Hussein's capture, the Iraq story received first-place votes from 280 of the 287 AP newspaper and broadcast media who cast ballots.

The clear runner-up, with five first-place votes and most of the second-place votes, was the Columbia space shuttle disaster, the explosion that killed seven astronauts during their descent on 1 Feb.

Another top story was SARS: The first unsettling reports emerged from Asia in February of a new, unnamed disease. Within a few weeks, SARS was a household name.

Cases of severe acute respiratory syndrome spread to more than 25 countries in North America, South America, Europe and Asia. About 8,000 people were infected; roughly 780 died, though health experts generally were pleased with efforts to control the outbreak.

One of the top stories was Northeast Blackout: A computer malfunctioned at an Ohio utility on Aug. 14, and North America's worst-ever blackout swiftly spread through eight states and part of Canada. Millions of people lost power, including all of New York City, Cleveland and Denver.

It marked the second straight year that Iraq was judged the dominant story — the threat of war and demands for disarmament directed at Saddam ranked No 1 in the poll for 2002.

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**Bremer says he was ambushed in Iraq**

**Baghdad, 20 Dec** — Iraq's US administrator said Friday he escaped an ambush on his convoy earlier this month, as a blast in Baghdad underlined the political violence hindering efforts to rebuild the country.

Paul Bremer came under guerrilla attack on 6 December when his convoy was attacked on the same day Defence Secretary Donald Rumsfeld was visiting.

"Yes, this is true, but thankfully I am still alive and here I am in front of you."

Bremer told reporters on a visit to the southern city of Basra, when asked about reports of the ambush.

Rumsfeld, who was making his third visit to Iraq since Saddam Hussein's fall in April, was not in the convoy.

Dan Senor, a spokesman for Bremer's Coalition Provisional Authority (CPA), told a news conference it was too early to draw conclusions but "we have good reason to believe it was a random opportunistic attack not necessarily targeting him."

The party was traveling from an impromptu meeting, that was not scheduled," he said.

US television network NBC said Bremer's convoy had been hit an explosive device and came under small arms fire as it drove from Baghdad airport. The convoy was able to speed away.

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**460 US service members killed since beginning of military operations in Iraq**

**Baghdad, 20 Dec** — 460 US service members have died since the beginning of military operations in Iraq, according to the Department of Defence. Of those, 315 died as a result of hostile action and 145 died of non-hostile causes, the department said.

The British military has reported 52 deaths; Italy, 17; Spain, eight; Denmark, Ukraine and Poland have reported one each. On or since 1 May, when President Bush declared that major combat operations in Iraq had ended, 322 US soldiers have died — 200 as a result of hostile action and 122 of non-hostile causes, according to the Defence Department's figures.

Since the start of military operations, 2,293 US service members have been injured as a result of hostile action, according to the Defence Department's figures. Non-hostile injured numbered 364.

The latest death reported by the military:

— A Task Force Ironhorse soldier was killed Friday morning in a vehicle accident north of Balad, Iraq.

The latest identification reported by the military:

— Army Spc Christopher J Holland, 26, Brunswick, Ga; killed Wednesday in an ambush in Baghdad, assigned to Battery A, 4th Battalion, 27th Field Artillery Regiment, 1st Armored Division, Smith Barracks, Germany.

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**French seek clarity on Iraqi sovereignty**

**Paris, 20 Dec** — France is ready to help rebuild Iraq but wants greater clarity on how the United States plans to hand back sovereignty to the Iraqis, Foreign Minister Dominique de Villepin said here.

The United States and France announced this week they had agreed to put aside their differences over the Iraq war and promote international efforts to rebuild the country.

"In a spirit of international unity, we (the French) are extending our hand. But the road ahead must be clarified and extended by the US," de Villepin said.

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**SARS spreads to 25 countries**

**Jakarta, 20 Dec** — Three Indonesian warships on Thursday began their visit to Brunei, the Philippines and Papua New Guinea to enhance friendship and cooperation, said fleet command Agus Suharjoto.

The warships are expected to go as far as 6,642.5 miles in 44 days, he was quoted by state news agency Antara as saying, adding that the trip is also aimed at promoting Indonesian tourism and culture to foreign countries.

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**Chinese State Councillor meets Thai guests**

**Beijing, 20 Dec** — Chinese State Councillor Tang Jiaxuan said here Thursday that China is willing to promote peace, stability and development in Asia together with the countries in the Association of South-East Asian Nations (ASEAN).

He made the remark while meeting with Senate Speaker Manoonkrit Roopkachorn of the National Assembly of Thailand and his delegation.

China and Thailand have been maintaining friendly cooperation for a long period of time, Tang said. Frequent high-level visits have enhanced mutual friendship and cooperation, and economic trade and cultural exchanges have become more active in the past year.

Roopkachorn said the visit enabled him and his delegation to have a better understanding of China. The Thai National Assembly is willing to contribute more to bilateral cooperation.

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**Internet**

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CONTINUING RESISTANCE AGAINST US TROOPS

Supporters of Saddam Hussein chant anti-US slogans in Mosul, Iraq, on Wednesday, 17 Dec, 2003. — INTERNET

US Army soldiers from the 1st battalion 8th Regiment of the 4th Infantry Division secure a street in Samarra, 100 kilometers (60 miles) north of Baghdad on Friday, 19 Dec, 2003. — INTERNET

Residents of Baghdad gather around the wreckage of a small bus at the scene of an explosion in Baghdad, on Wednesday, 17 Dec, 2003. A truck loaded with explosives rammed into the bus and exploded near a police station, killing at least 10 people. — INTERNET

Iraqis stand next to a Toyota Land Cruiser that a suicide bomber detonated next to the gate of a police station in Baghdad's northern Husainiyah district, on Monday, 15 Dec, 2003. Eight policemen were killed in the attack. — INTERNET

Mourners chant anti-American slogans during the funeral procession for Iraqi Shamil Nafe, 30, along the streets of Baghdad’s Adhamiya area, on Tuesday, 16 Dec, 2003. Nafe was killed by the US forces the previous day when a demonstration supporting former captured Iraqi President Saddam Hussein took place in Adhamiya and ended with clashes with the US forces. — INTERNET

An Iraqi gunman brandishes his weapon while others celebrate around the wreckage of a burning tanker truck near Abu Ghraib, west of Baghdad, on Friday 19 Dec, 2003. A homemade explosive device exploded on the roadside as the military truck was passing, wounding two US soldiers. — INTERNET

An Iraqi gunman brandishes his weapon while others celebrate around the wreckage of a burning tanker truck near Abu Ghraib, west of Baghdad, on Friday 19 Dec, 2003. A homemade explosive device exploded on the roadside as the military truck was passing, wounding two US soldiers. — INTERNET
Hailing the 56th Anniversary Independence Day:

Inherent patriotism in the hearts of national brethren

Chit Naing (Psychology)

"Traditions and customs cannot be changed and destroyed. Only the artists who possess the conviction to preserve traditions and customs as long as the world exists are honourable ones."

I love cartoons. So, I always read them first whenever I get a journal or magazine. They always make me laugh and happy. As for the short stories, poems and paintings, they may include humour. But some cartoons are not humorous. It is not easy to crack a joke or create a humour.

Humour is a difficult branch of art. It is an art that makes people laugh and feel happy by presenting things in a sarcastic way. But sincerity is important in creating a cartoon. If the work includes instigation, it will not be humorous, instead, it will be a blunder in the eyes of literary critics. Then, it will not be a humour.

Humour or comedy is a difficult branch of art. But what about the portraying of grief?

It is difficult to make people feel sad or cry. But it was a wonder for me that Myanmar dramatic art could make the audience’s eyes soak with tears within five minutes.

I was the secretary to organize the Exhibition ’98 — To Revitalize and Foster Patriotic Spirit. I was happy to see the ardent participation of all the people of the literati, musicians, artists and film artists.

However, I got into trouble at a meeting when U Sein Aung Min of the Thabin (Theatrical) Asiayon suggested that he would like to present a 15-minute play about King Thibaw being taken away by the colonialists to India at the Exhibition. He even recited verses of the play at the meeting. I was not sure whether the Yangonites would like such a play. I was thinking that some of the youths might be under the influence of the international performing arts instead.

The urbanites were trying to adapt themselves to the process of globalization. Besides, I didn’t believe that a 15-minute act would help vitalize patriotism of the people. But the patrons of the Exhibition permitted U Sein Aung Min to present his act, but not on the stage, just on the floor of the Exhibition hall. I understood that the Exhibition could help vitalize patriotism through the paintings and photos and the performance of film artists, musicians and vocalists. But I did not believe that the participation of the dramatic artists could do the job, or in other words, I was not able to see or understand the power of their profession.

It was so amazing that when the exhibition was opened, the 15-minute act was able to capture the hearts of the audience. Their eyes were soaked with tears, and their mind understanding to love and cherish the race and the nation. Other shows were also good, and the performance of the artists of other art associations were excellent. Originally, the Exhibition was to be opened for ten days. But due to the popular demand, it was opened for ten more days.

The most popular programme that helped vitalize patriotism of the audience to the greatest degree was the 15-minute act of the Thabin Asiayon. The artists managed to make the viewers hate the colonialists. The act was very artistic.

I thought that octogenarian U Sein Aung Min’s act would not win the hearts of the audience or interest of the people. But I was totally wrong. In the act U Sein Aung Min sang a song describing the scene of the King taken away to exile by the enemy troops.

His voice and the words of the song were so breathtaking. I also was captivated by his act and song. Characters in the programme also did very well.

There cannot be anything more bitter and heart-rending for us than to see the nation under exploitation and manipulation of the aliens. Throughout the Exhibition, the dramatic artists had reminded the people that all must be aware of the danger of losing independence; that there was no balance of power in the world, the colonialist power was at its height, reaching the most dangerous level; that all should rise up and have unity to safeguard the nation and the people to be free from all dangers. I honour them with admiration.

Now, let me conclude my article. Making people cry or laugh is no easy job. But the artists and the performing artists have the ability to make people laugh and cry.

The power of art is really great. The brief act has proved that there is hidden patriotism in the hearts of national brethren. Thanks to the artists we have come to realize that patriotism is there in our hearts.

(Translation: TMT)
Hailing the 56th Anniversary Independence Day:

Images vitalizing patriotism

The power of art is really great. The brief act has proved that there is hidden patriotism in the hearts of national brethren. Thanks to the artistes we have come to realize that patriotism is there in our hearts.

Scene demonstrating the sorrow of the people when the King and Queen were taken away by the colonialists at the Exhibition ‘98—To Revitalize and Foster Patriotic Spirit opened from 1 to 30 November 1998 moves the feeling of visitors.

Cartoons showed at the Exhibition ‘98—To Revitalize and Foster Patriotic Spirit opened from 1 to 30 November 1998 inspire nationalistic spirit.

Scene demonstrating the King and Queen taken away by the colonialists at the Exhibition ‘98—To Revitalize and Foster Patriotic Spirit opened from 1 to 30 November 1998 provoked antipathy of visitors against the colonialists.
Senior General Than Shwe gives guidance…

firmly not only to enhance the work proficiency of the trainers from States and Divisions attending the courses at the three training schools in Zeebingyi but also to combine the curricula and training schedules with national defence tasks in training them to possess correct belief and concept for the State and the people.

The Senior General called on the officials to carry out the duties after laying down correct objectives for development of the nation, surfacing of Union Spirit and perpetuation of the State.

Next, the Senior General and party viewed plantations of vegetables, crops and perennial crops and progress in construction of buildings at the Central Fire Services training School, MPF Central Training Centre and the CISC (Upper Myanmar).

Myanmar Women’s Affairs…

safeguard women’s rights, to develop economic, health and education sectors of women and to safeguard their social security, to nurture women to cherish and value the traditional culture and customs of the national races, to systematically implement the tasks, as a national duty, for prevention of violence against women and rehabilitation, to launch campaign on eradication of human trafficking of women and children, and to cooperate with international, regional, internal and external organizations in carrying out matters on women’s rights in accord with the traditional culture and customs of the national races. Myanmar women fully enjoyed the equal rights as men did from the earliest times and they were outstanding in economic, education and health sectors. Moreover, Myanmar women enjoyed social security rights in Myanmar society, he said.

He said in efforts to develop the women sector there are some matters to be carried out in relation with the activities of international women sector. Some successful aims on formation of the MWAF are to be implemented in coordination with international communities. He said the majority of Myanmar women preserve and safeguard traditional culture, traditions and customs.

But it is required to preserve and promote Myanmar traditional culture with added momentum as there are some young women who still think highly of alien culture, drifting down the modern current. Likewise, systematic measures are to be taken to inculcate young men as well as young women with the spirit to preserve own culture and traditions.

Therefore, it is needed to preserve the essence of Myanmar family life which is deeply rooted in the Myanmar society from deterioration. Myanmar family life is full of essence since it is made up of parents and offspring as well as ancestors and grandchildren. With this end in view, it is necessary to preserve the fine tradition of the set-up of Myanmar family life.

Similarly, all are to safeguard and defend the Union that exists in the form of a family with family spirit, the spirit of national unity and Union Spirit for its perpetuation.

Hence, Myanmar Women’s Affairs Federation will have to make relentless efforts to successfully implement the fine and noble objectives. To enable Myanmar Women’s Affairs Federation to be in line with rules and regulations, rules and basic principles of the federation have already been laid down.

To be able to widely carry out the tasks on women sector Myanmar Women’s Affairs Federation at different levels are to be formed from central level to ward and village level. At the same time, to be able to effectively carry out tasks for development of the women sector across the nation officials who are to lead the women affairs committees at different levels are to take steps in serving the interest of the Myanmar women sector as well as the State and the people. In addition, strenuous efforts are to be made for development of the women sector and their welfare and social security.

The Government has laid down projects for development of border areas and national races, the five rural development tasks and the 24 special development zones and is implementing them to bring about equitable and harmonious development of the nation across the breadth of the nation. Only when there is harmonious development across the nation will the whole Union make significant progress.

That is why all women are to lend themselves to the three national development projects.

Accordingly, the women sector is also to actively take part in successful realization of the seven-point future work programmes of the State by doing their bit with nationalistic spirit and Union Spirit for the emergence of a modern developed democratic nation.

In conclusion, the Prime Minister urged all the women mass to make concerted and collective efforts for successful implementation of the fine objectives of Myanmar Women’s Affairs Federation and for the emergence of a modern developed democratic nation under the flag of MWAF emerged with new outlook. After the ceremony, Prime Minister General Khin Nyunt greeted those present on the occasion.

YANGON, 20 Dec — A combined team comprising members of local intelligence unit and Tachilek Special Anti-drug Squad, acting on information, searched the house of Zaw Myint of No 124, Thirmingalar Street, Kalayani Ward, Bago, on 12 April 2003 and arrested him together with one kilo of marijuana packed in a polythene bag in the compound of the house.

In connection with the case, Bago No 1 Police Station filed a lawsuit against Zaw Myint, son of U Ngwe Khing, under section 15/19 (A) of the Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances Law. And Bago District Court sentenced him to 20 years’ imprisonment under section 19 (A) on 26 November.

Similarly, a combined team comprising members of local intelligence unit and Tachilek Special Anti-drug Squad, acting on a tip-off, searched the house of Daw Nam Am of Wanlon Village, Honsulek Village, Taichile Township, on 29 July 2003 and arrested her along with 2,000 stimulant pills bearing WY letters under a bed in the house.

In connection with the case, Tachilek Police Station opened a case against Daw Nam Am, daughter of U Aik Shel, under section 15/19 (A) of the Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances Law. And Tachilek District Court sentenced her to 17 years’ imprisonment under section 19 (A) on 6 November.

Drug dealers sentenced

Prime Minister General Khin Nyunt gives instructions on formation of Myanmar Women’s Affairs Federation.— MNA

The Senior General and party visited Maha Kanthoo Kantha Pagoda and offered 100 oranges, fruits, lights, flowers and water to Maha Kanthoo Kantha Hsautamgyi Buddha Image yesterday morning.

The Senior General donated cash to the pagoda funds and signed in the visitors’ book.

The Senior General and party viewed the greening of the surrounding areas of the pagoda. They also viewed progress of Padetha Myothit in PyinOoLwin.
Ministry of Defence team crowned champion in State Peace and Development……

(from page 16)

In the tournament, the Ministry of Defence team secured the first prize with 500 strokes, the Ministry of Finance and Revenue team the second with 550 and the Ministry of Home Affairs team third with 599 in the team handicap event.

In the team scratch event, the Ministry of Defence team bagged the first prize with 644 strokes, the Ministry of Finance and Revenue the second with 694 and the Ministry of Home Affairs team 695.

Present on the occasion were member of Odavacaraya for holding the summit Thitagu Sayadaw Agga Maha Pandita Agga Maha Saddhamma Jotikadhuja Maha Dhamma Kahiuka Bahujana Hitadhara Dr Ashin Nanissara, Chief High Priest of Nenbuttsuha Sect, Vice President of Buddhist Summit Most Ven. Dr Kori Yoshihiko and Secretary Ven Fujikura Hiroshi, the secretary of the work committee for holding the summit, chairmen of respective subcommittees and secretaries, officials, members of the Japanese delegation and guests. Secretary of the work committee Deputy Minister for Religious Affairs Brig-Gen Thura Aung Ko made a speech.

Next, Chairman of decoration subcommittee Deputy Minister for Construction U Tin Swe, Deputy Director-General U Soe Win Hlaing of the Forest Department under the Ministry of Forestry from the greening subcommittee, Chairman of the invitation and accommodation subcommittee Director-General U Sann Lwin of the Department for Promotion and Propagation of the Dhamma, Chairman of the reception subcommittee Deputy Minister for Transport Col Nyan Tun Aung, Chairman of the subcommittee for holding meetings Dr Myint Myint of the Religious Affairs Department, Secretary of the information subcommittee Director-General of Myanma Radio and Television U Khin Maung Huy and Chairman of the financial subcommittee Deputy Minister for Finance and Revenue Col Hla Thaem Swe reported on work carried out subcommittee-wise.

Afterwards, the Thidagu Sayadaw gave an Ovada Katha.

Director of the Japanese Organizing Committee for Fourth World Buddhist Summit explained work to be carried out and invited guests to respond to the queries raised by those present. — MNA

Lt-Gen Maung Aye and General Khin Nyunt arrive at opening ceremony of State Peace and Development Council Chairman’s Trophy Golf Tournament. — mna

Lt-Gen Maung Bo attends launch of coast liner-27 in Myeik

YANGON, 20 Dec — The subcommittees and Japanese Buddhist delegation held a coordination meeting for organizing the 4th World Buddhist Summit to be held in Myanmar at the International Theravada Buddhist Missionary University on Dhamma Pala Hill in Mayangon Township this afternoon.

In the tournament, the Ministry of Defence team secured the first prize with 522 strokes, the Ministry of Finance and Revenue team the second with 550 and the Ministry of Home Affairs team third with 599 in the team handicap event.

In the team scratch event, the Ministry of Defence team bagged the first prize with 644 strokes, the Ministry of Finance and Revenue the second with 694 and the Ministry of Home Affairs team 695.

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Director of the Japanese Organizing Committee for Fourth World Buddhist Summit explained work to be carried out and invited guests to respond to the queries raised by those present. — MNA

Lt-Gen Maung Bo attends launch of coast liner-27 in Myeik

YANGON, 20 Dec — Member of the State Peace and Development Council Lt-Gen Maung Bo of the Ministry of Defence, together with Chairman of Taninthayi Division Peace and Development Council Commander of Coastal Region Command Brig-Gen Ohn Myint, attended the launching of coast liner-27 at Seiknge Jetty in Myeik this morning.

First, Lt-Gen Maung Bo and the commander formally opened the launching ceremony and inspected the ship. The ship with the seating capacity for 250 can run 31 nautical miles per hour. It will run along Dawei-Myeik route.

Lt-Gen Maung Bo and party next went to Kyaukka Village in Palaw Township where they were welcomed by local authorities and people. Lt-Gen Maung Bo and the commander paid homage and presented offerings to the Sayadaws and members of the Sangha at Village Thandithika Dharmayon.

Lt-Gen Maung Bo, the commander and party visited Kyaukka Village basic education middle school, gave necessary instructions to the headmaster and teachers and fulfilled construction materials for the construction of the new school building. Lt-Gen Maung Bo comforted the patients at Kyaukka Station Hospital and presented cash assistance.

Later, Lt-Gen Maung Bo met with the chairman of the Village PDC and members, departmental staff, social organizations and town elders at the village primary school and said that as Kyaukka Village was an island village, the leaders of the State were unable to visit there only a few times in the past. Now, the State Peace and Development Council has been working hard for the equitability of the development of all sectors including education, health, social, economy and transport. And they arrived there to fulfill regional requirements, he said.

MNA

Minister inspects Myingyan Degree College, basic education schools

YANGON, 20 Dec — U Than Aung, Minister for Education, visited Myingyan Degree College on 18 December and met with students and planted trees together with them. The minister was accompanied by Director-General of the Higher Education Department (Upper Myanmar) Dr Thein Myint, Director-General of NO 2 Basic Education Department Lt-Col Win Htein and rectors of Monywa University, Yadanabon University, Myitkyina University, Pakokku University and Kyaukse University.

Next, the minister and party inspected learning of the students, the e-Education Learning Centre, Electronic Resource Centre, Computer Training Centre and Language Lab. Accompanied by Myingyan District Peace and Development Council Chairman Lt-Col Win Myint and education staff, Minister U Than Aung proceeded to Nabua Village Basic Education Middle School in Myingyan Township. School Head U Kyaw Sein reported on the history of school and education and management matters. The minister presented books to students, inspected the classrooms and chose a site for construction of extended school building. The minister and party also visited Ngazun Township Ngazun Basic Education High School, and urged the headmaster and teachers to make efforts for improvement of the pass rate of matriculation examination. He then donated books to the students and inspected the e-Education Learning Centre.
Myanmar Livestock Breeding Federation holds fourth annual meeting

YANGON, 20 Dec — The Myanmar Livestock Breeding Federation held the fourth annual meeting at International Business Centre on Pyay Road this morning.

Present were Patrons of the federation, Minister for Livestock and Fisheries Brig-Gen Maung Maung Thein, and Deputy Minister U Aung Thein, departmental heads and company executives.

First, Minister Brig-Gen Maung Maung Thein delivered an address. Then, he explained sufficiency of meat, increase of consuming meat and promotion to manufacture vaccines and food-staple materials in accordance with the guidance of the Head of State.

Next, Director-General U Maung Nyunt of Livestock Breeding and Veterinary Department reported on production of meat and plans to be set for breeding farms, slaughter houses and labs. Afterwards, President of the federation Dr. Mya Han gave a speech. General Secretary Dr. Zaw Win Myat submitted the annual report and the financial statement.

Prize presentation at Tatmadaw Volleyball Tournament for the disabled held

YANGON, 20 Dec — The final match of the 9th Defence Services Commander-in-Chief Shield Volleyball Tournament (2003) for the disabled and prize presentation ceremony took place at the sport ground of Commanding (Mingaladon) this morning.

No 66 LID team beat Eastern Command team in the final match.

On behalf of the Defence Services Commander-in-Chief, Deputy Director Co-Myint Maung of the Directorate of Medical Services and officials presented the championship shield and other prizes to the winner.

MNA

Traditional Medicine and Medical Equipment Exhibition goes on

YANGON, 20 Dec — The fourth Traditional Medicine and Medical Equipment Exhibition, organized by the Traditional Medicine Department and the Yangon Command, continued for the fourth day at the Tatmadaw Convention Centre on U Wisara Road here today.

Members of Traditional Medicine Council physicians U Nyun Tun and U Htun Myint visited the exhibition where various kinds of traditional medicines were being displayed and sold.

As today being Saturday, a holiday, more visitors amounting to over 30,000 studied the exhibition.

MNA

Ukraine not ready to join efforts in rebuilding Iraq

KYIV, 20 Dec — Ukraine will not take part in efforts in the reconstruction of Iraq until the war-ravaged country regains stability, Foreign Minister Kostyantyn Gryshchenko said recently.

Gryshchenko was quoted by the newspaper День as saying the Ukrainian Government and companies were not ready to dispatch personnel to take part in rebuilding efforts in Iraq as the situation there was not satisfactory.

All the working staff would be informed of Iraq’s security situation in advance and make their own judgments on whether the situation was acceptable or not, he said.

He expressed hope that Iraq will see a significant improvement in its situation following the capture of ousted president Saddam Hussein.

Ukraine would send experts to the country under acceptable security conditions, Gryshchenko added, pointing out that Iraq had yet to meet the security requirements.

Last week, United States authorities made public a memo listing 26 large-scale Postwar projects worth 18.6 billion US dollars in the reconstruction of Iraq, but barred nations that had opposed the coalition actions in Iraq from bidding for contracts.

As Ukraine sent anti-ballistic missiles to the war-torn country to protect airports and ports, its companies also gained the right of bidding in Iraq.

Ukraine is the fourth largest contributor of troops to the US-led stabilization effort in Iraq, with more than 1,600 soldiers on the ground.

We have learned by experience. Screening at our international airports continues,” she said.

Arroyo noted that the Philippine Department of Health has been strengthening health facilities for months and preparing SARS isolation rooms meeting international standards.

Likewise, the department has pursued the training of its health workers to deal not only with SARS but also all kinds of infectious diseases.

Arroyo said.

A Taiwanese researcher was infected with SARS after returning from a seminar in Singapore early this month, according to reports.

Public health officials in Taiwan later said the Army researcher was infected with SARS during his work in a laboratory, and has quarantined himself since then.

In Singapore, authorities have quarantined at least 75 people having contacted with the Taiwanese researcher as a precaution, but have said that there have been no signs of the recurrence of SARS in the island so far.

MNA/Xinhua

Philippines braces for potential resurgence of SARS

MANILA, 20 Dec — Philippine President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo said Friday the government is on alert against the potential resurgence of the severe acute respiratory syndrome (SARS).

“As far as a potential resurgence of the SARS is concerned, we are on top of the situation,” Arroyo said in a statement, adding “the system is in place. We have never let our guard down.”

MNA/Xinhua

Toyota expects record high output in 2004

Tokyo, 20 Dec — Toyota Motor Corp. said Thursday it expects its global production to top 7 million units in 2004, up 17 per cent over the estimated output for this year.

Toyota plans to manufacture 4.27 million units domestically, with its overseas factories assembling a total of 3.01 million units, up 16 per cent, as a result of increased output in China and Mexico.

The top Japanese automaker said it aims to realize worldwide group sales of 7.08 million vehicles, including 6.33 million units under Toyota brand, in 2004, up 7 per cent over the estimated output for this year.

MNA/Xinhua

Flights of “Hawk” suspended after air crash

KUALA LUMPUR, 20 Dec — All training flights by the Royal Malaysian Air Force (RMAF) using Hawk-104 jet fighters have been suspended with immediate effect until the cause of the air crash in Pahang waters on Thursday.

RMAF Chief General Abdullah Ahmad said a board of inquiry had been set up to investigate the crash which occurred about one nautical mile from Sepal Village near Kuantan, capital of Pahang State.

The chief told reporters in Kuantan when visiting the remains of the two pilots who were both captains. However, he declined to disclose their names until their relatives had been informed.

“The aircraft was on a training flight at 11.30 a.m. with two pilots in their 30s, with the rank of captain. The last communication received from them was at 12:08 p.m. before we lost contact with the aircraft,” he said.

The chief said the jet fighter was supposed to return to base at 12:30 p.m. The Armed Forces later received a call from the public informing that a jet fighter had crashed in the sea.

MNA/Xinhua

Citibank sets up fifth branch in China

TIANJIN, 20 Dec — Citibank has opened its fifth branch in the northern Chinese municipality of Tianjin.

The US banking giant’s four previous branches are in Beijing, Shanghai, Guangzhou and Shenzhen.

Stephen H Long, a senior bank official, said Tianjin was a Chinese economic centre with active foreign investment and booming financial services, and it had the potential to become a key city of finance. Dai Xianglong, mayor and former president of China’s central bank, the People’s Bank of China, said “Citibank and other leading international financial enterprises have expanded their business in Tianjin. It is good news for local commerce and the economy”.

MNA/Xinhua

Vice-Senior General Maung Aye tees off at the opening of State Peace and Development Council Chairman’s Trophy Golf Tournament. (News on page 16) — MNA

Lt-Gen Aung Htwe and Lt-Gen Khin Maung Than pose for documentary photo with golfers. (News on page 16) — MNA
Hailing the 56th Anniversary Independence Day:

Endeavours for ensuring water supply to the rural area in the time of the State Peace and Development Council

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Division</th>
<th>Villages where water is scarce</th>
<th>Villages where water is insufficient</th>
<th>Villages where potable water is scarce</th>
<th>Villages to which sufficient potable water will be supplied</th>
<th>Villages to which potable water have been supplied</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Sagaing Division</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>837</td>
<td>1599</td>
<td>2454</td>
<td>3006</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Magway Division</td>
<td>220</td>
<td>740</td>
<td>509</td>
<td>1469</td>
<td>3323</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mandalay Division</td>
<td>297</td>
<td>2100</td>
<td>1722</td>
<td>4119</td>
<td>1431</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>535</td>
<td>3677</td>
<td>3830</td>
<td>8042</td>
<td>7760</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Supplying water for drinking and agricultural purpose includes in the five rural development tasks laid down for enhancing of socio-economic life of rural people under the guidance of Head of State Senior General Than Shwe.

The ten-year project from 2000-2001 to 2009-2010 has been laid down and is being implemented for availability of drinking water in Sagaing, Magway and Mandalay Divisions, the arid regions of upper Myanmar. The above table shows measures taken for availability of drinking water in villages of the three divisions.

The following are sums of money already spent out of the funds contributed by the State:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Fiscal year</th>
<th>Kyats</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2001-2002</td>
<td>321.61 million</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2002-2003</td>
<td>537.47 million</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

By using drilling machines, water is being tapped from underground in Kantha Village in Budalin Township, Sagaing Division. The project was implemented by Development Affairs Department.

Tanaunggon Village in NyaungU Township is not left in the efforts for obtaining potable water.

Village girls with traditional hairdo style filling their pots with clean water at Kaungbinxi Village tube-well in Taungzin Village-tract of NyaungU.
Marriage
Marriage is announced between Ma Hsu Mon Kyi B.E (Electronic) Senior Field Engineer-Schlumberger, daughter of U Khin Mg Kyi (Retd. Director-MEPE) & Daw Malar Shwe (Retd S.A.T) and Mg Aung Aung B.E (Electronic) MCSE, CCNA. son of (Major Tin Hla) & Dr Daw Tin Aye, with consent of parents of both sides, at Dekalb County Probate Court, Atlanta GA USA.

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ARRIVAL/CLAIMS DAY NOTICE
MV "BAGO" VOY NO BG 758/N

Consignees of cargo carried on MV "BAGO" Voy No. BG 758/N are hereby notified that the vessel has arrived at Yangon port on 23-12-2003 and will be berthing on about 24-12-2003 and cargo 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 by-laws and conditions of the port of Yangon.

Damaged cargo will be surveyed daily from 8 am to 11.30 and 12 noon to 4 pm into Claims Day now declared as the third day after final discharge of cargo from vessel. No claims against this vessel will be admitted after the Claims Day.

CONTAINER FEEDER SERVICE
MYANMA FIVE STAR LINE
Phone: 29147.296007.295754

Maternity insurance covers 36.17 million Chinese women
BEIJING, Dec 20 — About 36.17 million female employees in China were covered by maternity insurance by October this year, the China Women and Children Rights Protection Network founded in the 1950s during the planned economy.

However, since women workers cost employers more, many companies refuse to hire women, causing a major stumbling block to women's employment.

The maternity insurance system in China has been operating for nearly four years in jail. "We are satisfied with the verdict," chief prosecutor Jozica Boljte Brus, told Slovenian radio. "We expected such an outcome as we found our evidence to be good. However, we will file an appeal as the sentences are lower than we had demanded."

The prosecution argued that Lencaric's gang was one of the largest groups organizing the transport of illegal immigrants out of post-Communist central and eastern Europe.

Lanjic's lawyer was pleased with the outcome. — MNA/Reuters

China's tax revenue to exceed two trillion yuan this year
BEIJING, Dec 20 — China's fiscal revenue is estimated to exceed two trillion yuan (about 244 billion US dollars) this year thanks to fast economic growth and improved corporate returns, the country's chief tax collector said Thursday.

Xie Xuren, director of the State Administration of Taxation, said the figure represented an increase of more than 300 billion yuan (some 36.5 billion US dollars), or 17.6 percent, over last year's 1.7 trillion yuan (205 billion US dollars).

The figures compared with the year-on-year tax revenue growth of 12.1 percent in 2002, or a net increase of 183.2 billion yuan (22.3 billion US dollars) over 2001. The government had collected 1.867 trillion yuan (227.69 billion US dollars) in revenue during the first 11 months, up 20.3 percent, or 315.3 billion yuan (38.4 billion US dollars), over the same period last year, Xie said.

Xie attributed the drastic rise to the country's fast economic growth and improved corporate returns.

A rapid increase in customs tariff revenues and improvements in taxation administration were also contributing factors, said Xie.

MNA/Xinhua

Cold weather hits most areas in Turkey
ANKARA, Dec 20 — Cold weather is affecting most of Turkey and causing havoc around the country, local media reported late Thursday.

Roads to 748 villages are blocked due to snow and cold weather.

No electricity can be given to 113 areas and telephone lines have been cut to 61 townships in Bolu Province of northwestern Turkey.

Bolu Governor Mehmet Ali Turker said that many village roads were blocked and clearing work was continuing around the clock.

Traffic on the Ankara-Istanbul highway is proceeding slowly around the Bolu area.

Roads to 101 villages are also blocked in Samsun and Sinop on the Black Sea coast.

Ninety-five village roads have been blocked in eastern Anatolia and 552 personnel from village services are working around the clock to open the roads.

MNA/Xinhua

BANK HOLIDAYS
All Banks will be closed on 23rd December (Tuesday) and 25th December (Thursday) in 2003, being Public Holidays under the Negotiable Instruments Act.

Central Bank of Myanmar

Slovenian court sentences human trafficking gang
LJUBLJANA, Dec 20 — A district court in Ljubljana on Thursday found 12 people guilty of human trafficking and racketeering over the transport of illegal immigrants out of Europe's former Communist eastern states.

Josip Loncaric, the group's ringleader, is also wanted in neighbouring Croatia and Italy, where he has already been sentenced in absentia to six years in prison. The Ljubljana court sentenced him to 22 months in prison.

The other defendants received sentences ranging from eight months suspended to nearly four years in jail.

"We are satisfied with the verdict," chief prosecutor Jozica Boljte Brus, told Slovenian radio. "We expected such an outcome as we found our evidence to be good. However, we will file an appeal as the sentences are lower than we had demanded."

The prosecution argued that Lencaric's gang was one of the largest groups organizing the transport of illegal immigrants out of post-Communist central and eastern Europe.

The ringleader's lawyer was pleased with the outcome. — MNA/Reuters
Saddam’s daughter calls for international trial

WASHINGTON, Dec—Saddam Hussein’s eldest daughter called on Thursday for an internationally supervised trial for her father, saying he would not receive a fair trial under the US-appointed Iraqi Governing Council.

Raghad Hussein, 35, spoke to CNN in an exclusive interview conducted in Jordan, where she and her younger sister and their children were granted asylum after the US-led invasion of Iraq in April.

“Of course I don’t think he would receive a fair trial,” under the current regime, she said. “The interim government is not recognized by anyone in the Arab world. I want a fair trial under international supervision. This is a legitimate right of any human being,” she said.

Asked about video images of a dazed and haggard-looking Saddam released after he was flushed from a hole beneath a shack in a farm near his home town of Tikrit on Saturday, Raghad said she was convinced her father was drugged.

“I was a pain for sight for each and every Arab because of the aim of releasing those images was to break the spirit of each and every Arab,” Raghad told CNN.

“As conditions in her country since the US-led coalition toppled her father’s regime, ‘from what I see on TV, a daily basis the situation is bad and getting worse every day,”’ she said.

Saddam was being held by US forces at an undisclosed location inside Iraq.

Iraq has entered a “crucial and delicate” phase, which requires the understanding and help from other Arab countries to overcome the “temporary crisis” now facing Iraq, al-Zibari said during a joint conference with Moroccan Foreign Minister Mohamed Benaissa.

Al-Zibari stressed that Iraq will become a “biggest construction site,” not only in the Middle East but also in the world as a whole. That is why the new Iraq will help from all Arab countries, he said.

Al-Zibari arrived in Marrakech on Thursday night for a visit to Morocco and to attend the High-Level Conference on South-South Cooperation which opened on December 16 in the famous central Moroccan city.

“The new Iraq will abide by all international rules and peacefully coexist with all Arab countries,” al-Zibari said. At the same time, Iraq would actively take part in the South-South dialogue because “all problems encountered by the South countries in their development are closely connected with Iraq”.

Benaissa reiterated that Morocco would actively take part in the reconstruction of Iraq and support all international advice conducive to restoring security, stability and reconstruction in Iraq.

He emphasized that resolutions adopted by the UN Security Council and the League of Arab States (LAS) were a guarantee for Iraq in restoring national sovereignty, legislating a new Constitution and establishing a new democratic government. These were also crucial in leading the Iraqi people in a correct direction.

Iraqi FM welcomes Arab countries to participate in reconstruction

MARRAKECH (Morocco), Dec—The Foreign Minister of the Iraqi Governing Council, Hoshyar al-Zibari, said here Thursday night that Iraq welcomes Morocco and other Arab countries to participate in Iraq’s reconstruction.

Influenza widespread in 36 US states

WASHINGTON, Dec—Influenza is now widespread in 36 US states and has been found in all 50, but the outbreak is not yet an epidemic, the US Centers for Disease Control and Prevention said here.

People may be filling hospital emergency rooms thinking they have flu, but only about a third of suspect cases actually are influenza, the CDC said in its weekly report on death and disease.

“All 50 states have reported laboratory-confirmed influenza this season,” the report reads. This is typical of the flu season.

Public health laboratories tested 3,814 specimens for influenza viruses and found 1,365, or just under 36 per cent, were positive for influenza.

This year’s flu season is worrying many because it started about two months earlier than usual, and began with some highly publicized deaths, including those of apparently healthy children.

Some of the worst cases of disease are being caused by a mutated flu strain called Fujian A, which the influenza vaccine only partially protects against. Some areas have reported shortages of the vaccine this season, but the US Government is working to redistribute supplies.

Health officials say it is not yet clear if the season may end early because it started early, or whether it will be a bad year for flu. In an average year 114,000 people are hospitalized with influenza in the United States and 36,000 die.

“The flu season is always notoriously difficult to predict,” the CDC’s Stephen Ostroff told reporters this week. “I would anticipate that we are in for a fair amount of activity in the coming weeks.”

Dean defends his opposition to Iraq war

MANCHESTER, Dec—Presidential hopeful Howard Dean on Thursday defended his claim that the United States is no safer with Saddam Hussein in custody, contending that the “capture of one bad man” doesn’t allow President Bush or Democrats to declare victory in the war on terrorism.

Dean, whose foreign policy statement Monday garnered widespread criticism from Democratic rivals, said those in his party who supported the war “backed away from what was right.”

“I think the Democratic Party has to offer a clear alternative to the American people. The capture of one bad man doesn’t mean the president and Washington Democrats can declare victory in the war on terrorism,” he said. “The question is what is right, not what is popular.”

Real dangers ranging from stateless ter-

ators to North Korea’s capacity to make nuclear weapons remain, he said, and must be confronted.

“The truth is, Americans are no safer from these serious threats than they were the day before Saddam Hussein was captured,” he said. “We are no safer today than the day the planes struck the World Trade Center.”

UNSG says New Year should be “year of kept promises”

UNITED NATIONS, Dec — UN Secretary-General Koﬁ Annan said here that 2004 should be the “year of kept promises” to fight against global ills like poverty, hunger, disease and illiteracy.

An Iraqi man walks by a building destroyed in an explosion on 19 Dec, 2003, in Baghdad. — Internet

Dean Annan told an end of year Press confer-

ence at the UN headquarters in New York that a lack of progress in tackling the many serious problems currently facing the world have afflicted the lives of billions.

While recognizing the critical need to stabilize Iraq and halt the spread of deadly weapons and ﬁght terrorism, the UN chief called on world leaders to renew their determination to focus on the challenging issues of poverty, hunger, disease and illiteracy.

“Leaders, politicians, diplomats and jour-

nalists... simply haven’t paid enough atten-

tion to the many other pressing challenges that are facing us,” he stressed. He urged efforts to reach the Millennium Develop-

ment Goals, a set of time-bound targets adopted at a UN summit in 2000.

“Without action,” he warned, “those aims would not be fulﬁlled, particularly in the poorest countries of sub-Saharan Africa, the Andes and Central Asia.”— MNA/Xinhua

China to boost health, biotechnology cooperation with Cuba

HAVANA, Dec—China and Cuba will widen cooperation in health, biotechnology and the exchange of professionals, a senior Chinese ofﬁcial said on Thursday.

Chinese Vice-Health Minister Zhu Qinsheng, who concluded a four-day visit to the Caribbean nation, said both sides have agreed to extend, through new and deep exchanges, the memorandum signed by health ministers of the two countries in 1999.

“We have a very productive dialogue and foresee a promising future,” Zhu said after meetings with local ofﬁcials and visiting research centers in Havana.

He expressed great interest in research by Cuban scientists, and promised to boost cooperation in this ﬁeld.

The Chinese minister also invited the Cuban Health Minister, Damodor Pena, to visit Beijing.

MNA/Xinhua

Influenza widespread in 36 US states

WASHINGTON, Dec—Influenza is now widespread in 36 US states and has been found in all 50, but the outbreak is not yet an epidemic, the US Centers for Disease Control and Prevention said here.

People may be filling hospital emergency rooms thinking they have flu, but only about a third of suspect cases actually are influenza, the CDC said in its weekly report on death and disease.

“All 50 states have reported laboratory-confirmed influenza this season,” the report reads. This is typical of the flu season.

Public health laboratories tested 3,814 specimens for influenza viruses and found 1,365, or just under 36 per cent, were positive for influenza.

This year’s flu season is worrying many because it started about two months earlier than usual, and began with some highly publicized deaths, including those of apparently healthy children.

Some of the worst cases of disease are being caused by a mutated flu strain called Fujian A, which the influenza vaccine only partially protects against. Some areas have reported shortages of the vaccine this season, but the US Government is working to redistribute supplies.

Health officials say it is not yet clear if the season may end early because it started early, or whether it will be a bad year for flu. In an average year 114,000 people are hospitalized with influenza in the United States and 36,000 die.

“The flu season is always notoriously difficult to predict,” the CDC’s Stephen Ostroff told reporters this week. “I would anticipate that we are in for a fair amount of activity in the coming weeks.”

MNA/Reuters

Dean defends his opposition to Iraq war

MANCHESTER, Dec—Presidential hopeful Howard Dean on Thursday defended his claim that the United States is no safer with Saddam Hussein in custody, contending that the “capture of one bad man” doesn’t allow President Bush or Democrats to declare victory in the war on terrorism.

Dean, whose foreign policy statement Monday garnered widespread criticism from Democratic rivals, said those in his party who supported the war “backed away from what was right.”

“I think the Democratic Party has to offer a clear alternative to the American people. The capture of one bad man doesn’t mean the president and Washington Democrats can declare victory in the war on terrorism,” he said. “The question is what is right, not what is popular.”

Real dangers ranging from stateless ter-

ators to North Korea’s capacity to make nuclear weapons remain, he said, and must be confronted.

“The truth is, Americans are no safer from these serious threats than they were the day before Saddam Hussein was captured,” he said. “We are no safer today than the day the planes struck the World Trade Center.”

Dean Annan told an end of year Press confer-

ence at the UN headquarters in New York that a lack of progress in tackling the many serious problems currently facing the world have afflicted the lives of billions.

While recognizing the critical need to stabilize Iraq and halt the spread of deadly weapons and ﬁght terrorism, the UN chief called on world leaders to renew their determination to focus on the challenging issues of poverty, hunger, disease and illiteracy.

“Leaders, politicians, diplomats and jour-

nalists... simply haven’t paid enough atten-

tion to the many other pressing challenges that are facing us,” he stressed. He urged efforts to reach the Millennium Develop-

ment Goals, a set of time-bound targets adopted at a UN summit in 2000.

“Without action,” he warned, “those aims would not be fulﬁlled, particularly in the poorest countries of sub-Saharan Africa, the Andes and Central Asia.”— MNA/Xinhua
Brazilian midfielders Juninho and Dudu (R) raise the trophy after beating Spain at the FIFA world youth soccer championships final match in Abu Dhabi, on 19 Dec, 2003. Brazil won 1-0 with a second half goal scored by Fernandinho. — MNA/Reuters

Brazil won 1-0 with a second half goal scored by Fernandinho. — Internet

Brazilian midfielders Juninho and Dudu (R) raise the trophy after beating Spain at the FIFA world youth soccer championships final match in Abu Dhabi, on 19 Dec, 2003.

ACROSS
1. Portable light
2. Mistakes
3. Sheep’s coat
4. Palisade
5. Mistakes
6. Sheep’s coat
7. Tobacco pipe
8. Crack
9. Last possible
10. Part of an egg
11. Row
12. Tedium
13. An extremity
14. British spa
16. Mountain goat
18. Marschland
20. Shoot out
21. Cain’s victim
24. Heath genius
25. Crack
26. Lay bare
27. Boxer’s prize money

DOWN
1. Love-apple
2. Scope
3. Abode
4. Public
5. Spat
6. Late
7. Grave
8. Sphere
9. Hand-outs (anag.)
10. 15. Public sale
16. Italian public
17. Traditional story
18. Palisade
19. Sheep’s coat
22. Tobacco pipe
23. Assist

Newcastle eye double transfer swoop

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Newcastle United manager Bobby Robson is planning to strengthen the club’s bid to return to the Premier League by signing two players in next month’s transfer window. Newcastle finished third in the English Premier League last season, during which they splashed out 9 million pounds on defender Jonathan Woodgate, but the only arrival since was midfielder Lee Bowyer on a free transfer. “If it was humanly possible, or financially possible, we could do with two more players and the chairman (Freddy Shepherd) is aware of that,” Robson told reporters on Friday.

Newcastle (England), 20 Dec — Newcastle United manager Bobby Robson is planning to strengthen the club’s bid to return to the Premier League by signing two players in next month’s transfer window. Newcastle finished third in the English Premier League last season, during which they splashed out 9 million pounds on defender Jonathan Woodgate, but the only arrival since was midfielder Lee Bowyer on a free transfer. “If it was humanly possible, or financially possible, we could do with two more players and the chairman (Freddy Shepherd) is aware of that,” Robson told reporters on Friday.

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Students of ESE4 demonstrate proficiency in English language. — (H)

English proficiency demonstrated

A ceremony to demonstrate proficiency in English language by students of the proficiency course conducted by MRTV-Language and Training Centre was held in conjunction with the Parent's Day at the school this morning.

ESE4 will open summer English courses beginning March 2004. Those wishing to attend the courses may contact Tel: 662970 and 663820 for further information.—H

WEATHER

Saturday, December 20, 2003

Summary of observations recorded at 09:30 hours MST:

During the past 24 hours, light rain has been scattered in Chin State and Sagaing Division, isolated in Kachin and northern Shan States, Mandalay and Tanintharyi Divisions and weather has been partly cloudy in north Rakhine State, Magway and Yangon Divisions and generally fair in the remaining areas. Night temperature was (3°C) to (4°C) below normal in Rakhine State and Yangon Division (7°C) to (8°C) below normal in Mandalay Division, northern Shan and Chin States and above normal in the remaining areas.

Maximum temperature on 19-12-2003 was 35.5°C (95°F). Minimum temperature on 20-12-2003 was 15.2°C (59°F). Relative humidity at 9:30 hr MST on 20-12-2003 was 34%. Total sunshine hours on 19-12-2003 was 8.5 hours approx. Rainfall on 19-12-2003 was nil at Yangon Airport, Kaba-Aye and central Yangon. Total rainfall since 1-1-2003 was 2211 mm (87.05 inches) at Yangon Airport, 2115 mm (83.14 inches) at Kaba-Aye and 2394 mm (94.25 inches) at central Yangon. Maximum wind speed at Yangon (Kaba-Aye) was 13 mph from Northeast at 14:05 hr MST on 19-12-2003.

Bar rain: Weather is partly cloudy in the Andaman Sea and South Bay and fair elsewhere in the Bay of Bengal. Forecast valid until evening of 21-12-2003: Likelihood of isolated to scattered light rain in Kachin, Chin and northern Shan States, Mandalay and Tanintharyi Divisions and weather will be partly cloudy in Yangon, Rangoon and Ayeyawady Divisions and generally fair in the remaining areas. Degree of certainty is (60%). State of the sea: At times strongly easterly winds with (53)mph and moderate to rough seas are likely off and along Delta, Gulf of Mottama, Mun-Tanintharyi Coast. Seas will be moderate elsewhere in Myanmar waters.

Outlook for subsequent two days: Continuation of likelihood of isolated rain in the Northern Myanmar area (less than 5 mm).


Day at the school this morning. ESE4 will open summer English courses beginning March 2004. Those wishing to attend the courses may contact Tel: 662970 and 663820 for further information.—H

THE NEW LIGHT OF MYANMAR, Sunday, 21 December, 2003

15
Ministry of Defence team crowned champion in State Peace and Development Council Chairman’s Trophy Golf Tournament

YANGON, 20 Dec—The 2003 State Peace and Development Council Chairman’s Trophy Golf Tournament was opened at Okkalapa Golf Resort in South Okkalapa Township yesterday morning, attended by Vice-Chairman of the State Peace and Development Council, Deputy Commander-in-Chief of Defence Services, Commander-in-Chief (Army) Vice-Senior General Maung Aye, Lt-Gen Aung Htwe, Minister for Social Welfare, Relief and Resettlement, Maj-Gen Sein Htwa and Minister for Finance and Revenue Maj-Gen Hla Tun, the team comprising Minister at the Prime Minister’s Office U Ko Lay, Auditor-General Maj-Gen Lun Maung, Minister for Labour U Tin Winn and Minister for Religious Affairs Brig-Gen Thura Aye Myint, that of Minister for Commerce Brig-Gen Pyi Soe, Minister at the Prime Minister’s Office Maj-Gen Thein Swe and Minister for Co-operatives Maj-Gen Huay Oo participated in the tournament. Similarly, 33 teams took part in the first round of the golf tournament. This morning, the second and final round of the golf tournament followed. Lt-Gen Aung Htwe and Lt-Gen Khin Maung Than, ministers and deputy ministers as well as 33 ministry teams participated in the golf tournament. The ceremony to present prizes to winners in the golf tournament was held at the club house of Okkalapa Golf Resort at 6 pm today, attended by Vice-Senior General Maung Aye and General Khin Nyunt. Before the ceremony, vocalists to the accompaniment of Myanmar Ahshan modern music troupe presented songs. Also present on the occasion were members of the State Peace and Development Council, the chairman of Yangon Division Peace and Development Council Commander of Yangon Command, ministers, the chief justice, the attorney-general, the auditor-general, the chairman of the Civil Service Selection and Training Board, the mayor, deputy ministers, officials and golfers.

First, Vice-Senior General Maung Aye and General Khin Nyunt cordially greeted the players. Next, Minister Brig-Gen Thura Aye Myint gave a speech. Afterwards, Lt-Gen Aung Htwe presented first, second and third prizes to teams from the Ministry of Defence, the Ministry of Finance and Revenue and the Ministry of Home Affairs respectively in the team handicap event and in the team scratch event and gifts for markers to the administrator of Yangon Golf Resort.

Lt-Gen Khin Maung Than presented prizes to team leaders for best losers in the team handicap and scratch events, most birdie, most par, longest drive and nearest pin awards to respective winners, first, second and third prizes to Maj Tin Ko Ko (Defence), Maj Khin Zaw Win (Defence) and Maj Moe Aung (Defence) in the individual handicap and scratch events and prizes to winners in the best scorer teams. Lt-Gen Kyaw Win also gave away prizes to the players from best scorer teams individually.

Minister for Sports Brig-Gen Thura Aye Myint also presented prizes to winners at fourth to 20th positions in the individual handicap event.

On behalf of the State Peace and Development Council Chairman Senior General Than Shwe, Prime Minister General Khin Nyunt presented the championship trophy to the leaders of the Ministry of Defence team which won first prizes in the team handicap and scratch events.

After the ceremony, Lt-Gen Aung Htwe and Lt-Gen Khin Maung Than posed for documentary photos together with the Ministry of Defence team.

Myanmar Women’s Affairs Federation formed in order to promote wider and greater functions of Myanmar women sector

Prime Minister discusses formation of MWAFF

YANGON, 20 Dec—Prime Minister General Khin Nyunt met officials of women’s affairs sector at the National Theatre on Myoma Kyaung Street this afternoon and gave instructions on formation of Myanmar Women’s Affairs Federation. Present were Chairman of Yangon Division Peace and Development Council Commander of Yangon Command Maj-Gen Myint Swe, the ministers, the chief justice, the attorney-general, the Yangon mayor, the deputy ministers, the vice-mayor, officials of women’s affairs sector, officials of the State Peace and Development Council Office, heads of departments and officials.

Prime Minister General Khin Nyunt delivered an address. He said he would discuss formation of a women organization that would take charge of Myanmar women sector widely. He said over half of the population in Myanmar are women. The functions of the women sector are becoming wider and greater. He said Myanmar is participating in activities of the world women sector. The Myanmar National Committee for Women’s Affairs was formed in accord with guidance on international women’s affairs sector laid down at the fourth world women’s conference held in Beijing and tasks for development of Myanmar women sector were carried out. As a committee for women affairs, MNCAWA including majority of the government service personnel has limits to undertake the matters of the entire Myanmar women sector. Moreover, international activities for the care and development of the women sector are growing, he said. Relations with UN agencies and international social organizations have to be extended.

He said Head of State Senior General Than Shwe had given guidance on formation of a wider organization from a committee in order to promote the measures of Myanmar women sector. Therefore, he said, Myanmar Women’s Affairs Federation is being formed to be able to take measures for Myanmar women sector effectively, to ensure participation of Myanmar women and to enable the federation to stand as an organization responsible for women sector.

He said Myanmar Women’s Affairs Federation is to be formed to promote the women sector.

He said Myanmar Women’s Affairs Federation will be established with the following lofty aims—to promote the role of women in building a peaceful modern developed nation, to...

(See page 9)

On behalf of Senior General Than Shwe, General Khin Nyunt presents championship trophy to Ministry of Defence team in team handicap and scratch events of State Peace and Development Council Chairman’s Trophy Golf Tournament. (See page 8)

* Building of a new modern developed nation in accord with the new State Constitution
* 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 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

* 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

Four social objectives

* Four economic objectives

* Four political objectives