Senior General Than Shwe sends message of sympathy to Chinese President

YANGON, 26 Dec—Senior General Than Shwe, Chairman of the State Peace and Development Council of the Union of Myanmar, has sent a message of sympathy to His Excellency Mr Hu Jintao, President of the People’s Republic of China for the heavy loss of life and property caused by a blow-out at the natural gas field in Chongqing, southwestern part of the People’s Republic of China. — MNA

Prime Minister General Khin Nyunt receives All China Women’s Federation Vice-President

YANGON, 26 Dec—Prime Minister of the Union of Myanmar General Khin Nyunt received All China Women’s Federation-ACWF Vice-President Mme Chen Xiurong and party of the People’s Republic of China at Zeyathiri Beikman on Konnnyntha at 2 pm today. Also present at the call were Minister for Foreign Affairs U Win Aung, Deputy Minister U Khin Maung Win, President of Myanmar Women’s Affairs Federation Dr Daw Khin Win Shwe, Vice-President Prof Dr Daw May May Yi and Director-General Thura U Aung Htet of the Protocol Department. The guests were accompanied by Chinese Ambassador to Myanmar Mr Li Jinjun. — MNA

Industrialists visit No 1 Automobile Factory

YANGON, 26 Dec — The industrialists from respective industrial zones who are on the study tours and attending workshops organized by Myanmar Industrial Development Committee visited No 1 Automobile Factory of Myanma Automobile and Diesel Engine Industries under the Ministry of Industry. 2 here this morning. Chairman of the Myanmar Industrial Development Work Committee Minister for Industry-2 Maj-Gen Saw Lwin briefed the industrialists on functions of the ministry, factories and products and assistance rendered for industrial development. General Manager of the factory U Hlaing Thein presented assembling of TE trucks and buses. Minister Maj-Gen Saw Lwin, Deputy Minister Lt-Col Khin Maung Kyaw and officials conducted the visitors around the factory. — MNA

4th TMME exhibition concludes

YANGON, 26 Dec —The Fourth Traditional Medicines and Medical Equipment Exhibition, organized by the Traditional Medicine Department of the Ministry of Health, continued for the tenth and last day at the Tatmadaw Convention Centre on U Wisara Road today. Deputy Commander of Yangon Command Col Wai Lwin and officials visited the exhibition. At the exhibition, the Ministry of Health, the Ministry of Industry-1, the Ministry of Agriculture and Irrigation and the Ministry of Forestry, and private traditional medicine producers displayed their products and equipment in a workshop and put them on sales at reasonable prices. — MNA

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

A historic duty

It is a historic duty of all Myanmar national races to eliminate incorrect and ill attitude such as suspicions, hatred and disunity, the evil legacy of the divide-and-rule policy of colonialists, among the national brethren with Union Spirit.

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

(From guidance given to trainees of the No 35 Primary Teachershiep Course of University for Development of National Races)
**PERSPECTIVES**

**Saturday, 27 December, 2003**

Myanmar Geosciences Society — one of the national forces

In building the Union of Myanmar to keep abreast with nations of the world, the State Peace and Development Council is nurturing national forces in various sectors. With the combined strength of these national forces, strong and stable political, economic and social foundations have been built in the country.

Now, endeavours are being made to serve the national interest through the combined strength of the existing national resources of the State and technicians in the respective fields.

By doing so, it is very important to turn out brilliant intellectuals and intelligentsia in the respective fields. It is also necessary to organize them into consolidated national forces in the respective fields.

A ceremony to form Myanmar Geosciences Society was held at Myanmar Information and Communication Technology Park on 21 December, with an address by Chairman of Myanmar Education Committee Prime Minister General Khin Nyunt. In his address the Prime Minister said that it is not the time for the government alone to make efforts for development of the nation and the people; that all the national people are responsible for the task; and that with this concept, the entire people are to make endeavours in the interests of the nation and the people in their respective fields.

Geosciences play an important role in national development as well as improvement of national economic life. Geosciences contribute towards the development of various sectors by finding of valuable geo-resources such as minerals, gems, petroleum and natural gas for national interests.

Assistance rendered by the geosciences plays a crucial role in construction of infrastructures such as major roads, bridges, dams and reservoirs, workshops and factories, and in urban development undertakings.

Out of the endeavours made by geoscientists, the significant ones are achievements in drawing of Myanmar’s geological map in 1977, the finding of Pontaung Primate fossils in 1977 and presentation of anthropoid primates excavated in Myanmar. They are significant achievements not only for the geoscientists but also for the entire national people.

The government has acknowledged the role of geosciences and is making systematic arrangements for development of this field, turning out brilliant highly-developed scholars and enabling them to take part in nation-building tasks.

We firmly believe that the geoscientists under the flag of Myanmar Geosciences Society will become the ones who will serve the interests of the State and its people.

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**Objectives of the 56th Anniversary of Independence Day**

— All the national people to collectively safeguard the national independence and ensure perpetuation of sovereignty

— All the national people to be united to ensure non-disintegration of national solidarity

— All the national people to strive for the emergence of enduring State Constitution and for the building of a new, modern and developed nation

— All the national people to participate with full sense of Union Spirit and Patriotism in the successful implementation of the seven-point roadmap of the State.

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**Minister U Win Aung sends message of sympathy to His Excellency Mr Li Zhaoxiong, Minister of Foreign Affairs of the People’s Republic of China**

YANGON, 26 DEC — U Win Aung, Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Union of Myanmar, has sent a message of sympathy to His Excellency Mr Li Zhaoxiong, Minister of Foreign Affairs of the People’s Republic of China for the heavy loss of life and property caused by a blow-out at the natural gas field in Chongqing, southwestern part of the People’s Republic of China. — MNA

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**Minister U Win Aung sends message of congratulations to Foreign Minister of PRC**

YANGON, 26 DEC — U Win Aung, Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Union of Myanmar, has sent a message of congratulations to His Excellency Mr Li Zhaoxiong, Minister of Foreign Affairs of the People’s Republic of China for the heavy loss of life and property caused by a blow-out at the natural gas field in Chongqing, southwestern part of the People’s Republic of China. — MNA

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**Efficient use of electricity**

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

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

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**Efficient use of fuel**

* Saving one gallon of fuel per car per month will save the nation one US dollar
* Thus, a total of 455,822 cars in Myanmar can save US$ 5.5 million in a year
* The amount, US $ 5.5 million, can build a major bridge across Ayeyawady River

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**All this needs to be known**

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

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**MPBSMA holds annual meeting**

YANGON, 26 Dec — The 11th annual general meeting of the Myanmar Pulses, Beans and Sesamum Merchants Association was held at the Traders Hotel here on 24 December with addresses by UMFFCCI President U Win Myint and MPBSMA President U Tun Aung.

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**School Family Day**

(27 December 2003 to 3 January 2004)
Eight killed as blasts, gunfire rock Iraq

Baghdad, 26 Dec — Militants fired a missile that hit a heavily guarded Baghdad hotel used by Westerners late yesterday after deadly attacks earlier on Christmas Eve.

The hotel attack caused no casualties, but three US soldiers died in a bomb blast north of Baghdad and a suicide car bomber killed himself and four other people in northern Iraq.

A US military official said it was unclear if the blast was part of a planned insurgency that involved overnight bombings and shellings on different targets in the capital.

The Sheraton Hotel and the Iraqi Embassy in central Baghdad were among the most prominent targets, with Iraqi civilian residence also compromised in the Christmas attacks.

Many foreign contractors and journalists stay at the two hotels, which are surrounded by concrete blast walls and guarded by US troops in tanks and armoured vehicles.

US-led occupation officials had warned that insurgents would launch new attacks during the holiday season.

In the northern Kurdish city of Arbil, a car bomb blew up outside the local Interior Ministry, killing the bomber, two police guards, a passerby and a 13-year-old girl. An Iraqi official said more than 100 people were wounded.

The official blamed “extremists who came from outside Iraq,” an apparent reference to Iranian militants.

The blast shredded the road, damaged the Interior Ministry building used by the pro-American Kurdish administration in the north, and destroyed several cars.

British Guardsman, 26 Dec — US aircraft and artillery pounded suspected guerrilla hideouts in north central Iraq yesterday.

Blasts and heavy machinegun fire echoed across the city as Operation Iron Grip to flush guerrillas from the capital went into a second night.

Simultaneous mortar attacks on Tuesday targeted fields around the western outskirts of Baghdad. Many of the attacks involved overnight bombings.

Mortar attacks in and around the Iraqi capital, Baghdad, have increased since the US-led occupation forces pushed out Saddam Hussein from power.

Mortar attacks have raised the number of US soldiers killed in Iraq.

The deaths brought to 205 the number of US soldiers killed since Washington declared major combat over on 1 May.

The guerrilla attack on the hotel slightly damaged the roof, but the managed to keep it open yesterday.

“An mortar round hit the top of the Sheraton,” a US soldier said outside the 17-storey building in central Baghdad. “We’ve been informed that two Iraqi individuals in two cars fired a mortar round at the hotel. Security guards fired at them as they fled,” said another soldier, Private Michael Williams.

A Reuters correspondent said he had seen insurgents fire a rocket at the hotel from a car. He said two cars sped along a dirt road beside the nearby Tigres river after the attack, as security guards and US troops opened fire.

The projectile struck just above a top-floor restaurant neatly decorated with Christmas lights. Tables were set for dinner, but the room was empty at the time of the blast.

“I heard a very big explosion,” said Ameena Al Jabouri, a British lawyer staying at the hotel. “Really we can’t do anything because if we move to a different hotel that will be hit too.”

Guerrillas fired rockets at the Sheraton and the adjacent Palestine hotel from donkey carts on 21 November, wounding two people. They used the same method to hit the Old Ministry the same day.

The longest lived newspaper collection exhibition

Taixian, 26 Dec — A Chinese farmer who is also an avid newspaper collector is helping his fellow farmers learn about the world with an exhibition of over 1 million newspapers he has collected since his youth.

More than 1.1 million copies of 60,000 Chinese and foreign newspapers are shown in 11 sections of pre-New China, minorities, culture, revolution, overseas and Hong Kong-Macao-China (Taipei).

The exhibition was organized by 48-year-old farmer Miao Shiming, who has been collecting newspapers for 30 years, in the ancient city of Pingyao, north China’s Shanxi Province.

The earliest newspaper was Shanghai-published Shenshao in 1872. The shortest lived newspaper featured is Xibao which was the first and final publication.

The newspaper collection includes newspapers from all over the world, with a history of 101 years. The rarest was a silk newspaper marking the return of Hong Kong to China in 1997.

An Iraqi girl makes her way through a hole made by a rocket in a building close to the German Embassy in Baghdad on 25 Dec, 2003, after guerrillas hit central Baghdad with more than a dozen grenades, rockets and mortar shells on Christmas Day. — MNA/Xinhua

Billionaire Soros, independent groups target Bush

Washington, 26 Dec — US President George W. Bush’s most-feared political opponents for now may not be any Democratic presidential candidate, but a billionaire financier and anti-Bush advocacy groups with big-spending plans.

“Liberal special interests, led by billionaire currency trader George Soros, are raising millions in soft, unregulated money to defeat President Bush,” the Bush campaign says in an Internet posting.

Bush has already raised more than 110 million US dollars for his primary campaign, in which he has no challenger, far outstripping any Democratic rival.

Campaign spokesman Scott Stanzel said anti-Bush groups threaten to spend as much as 400 million US dollars, justifying the Bush’s primary-season goal of raising a record 170 million US dollars, largely through a network of major supporters who funnel donations to the cause.

But campaign finance experts say there is little chance of Bush being outspent. “The Bush campaign is raising money hand-over-fist. He has the aura of the incumbency and the power of the presidency. He’s in the catbird seat,” said Celia Wexler, research director of the Common Cause good-government group. Along with Soros, the Hungarian-born financier who has pledged 12.5 million US dollars to ensure we can write off the Bush doctrine as a temporary aberration, “and incontestable losses for the Republicans in independent political groups such as the Internet-based MoveOn.org.”

China gas field blast kills at least 191

Beijing, 26 Dec — An explosion at a natural gas field in China’s southwestern municipality of Chongqing has killed at least 191 people on Christmas Day.

An explosion shook the capital’s Sheraton Hotel on Wednesday night, but much confusion surrounded the origin of the blast.

The blast happened on Tuesday morning at the Chuanqongbei gas field in Kaixian County of Chongqing.

A man said the blast was part of a military operation code named “Iron Grip” to flush guerrillas from the capital.

The military also announced that a US soldier was killed on Wednesday night, but much confusion surrounded his death.

The US military and employees of the Sheraton Hotel were heard after 07:00, but much confusion surrounded the origin of the blast.

A man said the blast was part of a military operation code named “Iron Grip” to flush guerrillas from the capital.

The military also announced that a US soldier was killed on Wednesday night, but much confusion surrounded his death.
**US compound in Baghdad under fire as troops celebrate Christmas**

** Bahamas, 26 Dec — The US compound in the Iraqi capital came under rocket fire as American troops marked Christmas while stepping up offensive operations against guerrillas.**

Two rockets exploded in the vicinity of the US headquarters in Baghdad late Thursday, a US military officer told AFP.

He said two rockets hit the area around the Green Zone, but refused to say if they landed inside the fortress-like former palace of deposed Iraqi president Saddam Hussein.

Four rockets landed inside the complex early Thursday but caused no casualties.

The attacks followed a decision by Baghdad’s churches to cancel Christmas Eve midnight mass, citing fears of violence in the capital. Insurgents went on to launch a series of Christmas Day rocket and bomb attacks.

On Wednesday night, a US police officer was killed and another injured when a car bomb exploded near the US embassy in the capital.

Meanwhile, the US military was conducting Operation Iron Grip for a third night. In it, the US First Armoured Division rounded up loyalists of the former dictator and pounded suspected insurgent locations with artillery and aircraft cannon fire.

A coalition military spokeswoman reported “a large amount of activity” in the city Thursday night.

Offensive operations conducted by coalition forces include ground and air assets in cooperation with Iraqi authorities,” she said.

About four hours of sporadic loud fire reverberated across the city. Some of the firing came from artillery, which the US-led coalition uses to back up attacks on smaller groups.

An airplane droned over Baghdad late Thursday as it did two nights earlier when troops called in air support.

On Wednesday night, a US soldier was electrocuted repairing a communications tower on Christmas Eve in the northern oil centre of Kirkuk, a military official said.

Christmas Day ended the way it began — with explosions.

A rocket struck the Turkish ambassador’s residence, with minor damage only and no casualties.

Other projectiles pummelled the Sheraton hotel Wednesday night and again Thursday morning.

The hotel’s eighth floor was scarred by the impact of a hit. The lobby and various floors of the hotel were strewn with broken glass.

Thursday’s rebel offensive came amid predictions by the US-led coalition administering Iraq that guerrillas would wage a spectacular offensive to embarrass the US military during the Christmas period. — Internet

**Occupation forces bomb Baghdad for third night**

** Bahamas, 26 Dec — US-led occupation forces have bombed Baghdad for the third consecutive night as resistance fighters have lobbed at least three mortar bombs into the vicinity of the US-led occupying administration headquarters.**

US forces attacked what they say is a suspected resistance hideout in the outskirts of Baghdad on Thursday night. Military officials said they launched “offensive operations” involving ground and air units. It was part of Operation Iron Grip, aimed at stamping out resistance fighters in the capital.

The resistance in Baghdad is the widest in scale since the 13 December capture of ousted leader Saddam Hussein.

Meanwhile, there was no immediate word of casualties after bombs struck the US headquarters in central Baghdad.

Warning sirens blared in the huge facility shortly after the attack.

The night attack came 17 hours after resistance fighters fired more than a dozen rockets and mortar bombs in central Baghdad, hitting the vicinity of the US headquarters, two hotels occupied by Westerners, two embassies and an apartment bloc.

Rockets struck the outer wall of the Iranian embassy, the Turkish embassy and a residential building next to the German embassy. Two Sheraton and Burj al-Hayat hotels, used by Westerners, and an Iraqi apartment block nearby were also targeted.

A rocket missed the Interior Ministry and landed in a nearby street, said witnesses. Police said US troops defused a rocket aimed at the finance ministry in another neighbourhood.

One woman was wounded in the attacks, which took place around sunrise.

Near Baghoub two Iraqi Civil Defence Corps (IDC) members were wounded in a drive-by shooting, said police. Several bullets hit Lieutenant Naim Ijbara in the stomach and he was taken to hospital in Baghdad.

His colleague, Hajdar Abd al-Kazem, was hit in the right hand and cut by shards of glass when assailants pulled up alongside their car and riddled it with bullets. — Internet

**HK Chief praises police for effective operation**

** Hong Kong, 26 Dec — The Chief Executive of Hong Kong Special Administrative Region (HK SAR) Tung Chee-hwa Wednesday afternoon praised Hong Kong police for its latest operation as it just smashed an armed syndicate and arrested two suspects.**

Speaking at the police headquarters in Wanchai, Tung said the operation was outstanding and effective, and stressed that a high quality police force was crucial to Hong Kong’s prosperity and stability.

MNA/Xinhua

**Spain arrests 62 illegal immigrants, 2 traffickers**

** Madrid, 26 Dec — Over the past two days, Spanish police have captured two traffickers and 62 illegal immigrants, mostly from Sub-Saharan Africa, authorities said Wednesday.**

The 62 illegal immigrants who belonged to three groups were captured in the Canary Islands coast. The first group was spotted on Tuesday afternoon aboard a boat some eight kilometres from Pozo Negro, in Antigua municipality. The vessel, carrying 29 people from Sub-Saharan Africa and two traffickers of Moroccan origin, was intercepted by a patrol boat of the Civil Guard and was taken to the port of Gran Tarajal.

The second group, comprising 35 people from Sub-Saharan Africa, was intercepted by a patrol boat during the night. The third group, consisting of 19 Sub-Saharan immigrants, was spotted on Tuesday afternoon aboard a boat some 300 metres from the island of Cotillo, in Antigua municipality.

The various groups, who had been seeking a passage to Europe, were returned to the port of Las Palmas de Gran Canaria, where they were handed over to the immigration service. — MNA/Xinhua

**Bolivia declares emergency due to heavy downpour**

** La Paz, 26 Dec — Bolivia’s authorities on Wednesday declared a state of emergency after heavy downpour hit the centre of the country, leaving one bridge collapsed, 19 people dead and 50 missing, reports reaching here said.**

Rescue crews retrieved 19 bodies on Wednesday from Chapare River in the Cochabamba region of central Bolivia.

A bridge over the river collapsed, plunging into the torrent several vehicles, including a police car and a bus full of passengers. The bodies of 16 bus passengers and three policemen were recovered. Six were rescued.

The bridge, 20 metres tall and 350 metres long, has served as an important connection between Cochabamba and three other states, Santa Cruz, San Luis de Potosi and La Paz. Weather forecasts said that more heavy rains were expected in the region. — MNA/Xinhua

**Chile seizes 5,220 doses of Ecstasy**

** Santiago, 26 Dec — Chilean police seized 5,220 doses of Ecstasy in a recent operation, according to reports of the local Press on Thursday.**

The drug was found in a parcel inside audio equipment sent by a Dutchman named Diego Rialis. The addressee was identified as Jose Saatara, of Chilean origin.

‘It has been police intelligence work that has taken some time,’ Vice-Interior Minister Jorge Correa said, adding that the operation took place on Tuesday and Wednesday.

This is the largest amount of such drug ever seized in the South American country. — MNA/Xinhua

**Iran earthquake ‘kills thousands’**

** Tehran, 26 Dec — Thousands of people are feared dead after a powerful earthquake hit the city of Bam in south-eastern Iran.**

The ancient city’s historic quarter—apopular tourist destination—was badly damaged, and telephone and water links were disrupted by the quake on Friday. Rescuers have rushed to the area, but there are reports local hospitals were damaged, slowing relief efforts.

Iran suffers frequent earthquakes, with small tremors happening almost daily and 35,000 dying in one 1990 quake. Iranian officials say at least 2,000 people were killed in Friday’s quake. “So far we can only confirm 2,000 dead but the number is sure to rise,” an unnamed official told Reuters by telephone.

The French news agency AFP reports that 500 people have already been buried. Iranian state television reported that 60% of the houses in Bam had been destroyed. — Internet

The quake was the most powerful in the region since 1998.
IRAQ UNDER US OCCUPATION

A wounded Iraqi woman looks at the hole caused when a rocket tore into her family's apartment in central Baghdad. — Internet

A private security guard points his gun from the roof of a Sheraton hotel terrace in Baghdad, on 25 December, 2003, after the hotel came under rocket propelled grenade attack. — Internet

An Iraqi vendor stands inside his damaged store along a commercial street in central Baghdad on 25 Dec. 2003. A roadside bomb exploded on a busy Baghdad street, blowing off the hand of a policeman and seriously wounding two other officers. — Internet

Iraqi police officers stand in front of a broken window after a rocket hit a wall of the Iranian Embassy in Baghdad on 25 December, 2003. Just outside the green zone, a half dozen rockets were fired at the Iranian Embassy and one hit the wall of the building, Iraqi police said. — Internet

Bahzar Ramadan, advisor to the Iraqi Minister of Construction and Housing, lies in hospital emergency unit after he was severely wounded by unknown assailants in Baghdad on 25 December, 2003. — Internet

A wounded Iraqi girl sits in her bedroom in front of a hole caused when a rocket tore into her family's apartment in central Baghdad. — Internet
Hailing the 56th Anniversary Independence Day:

Towards a new nation of new era

Realizing that the planning economic system the Burmese Socialist Programme Party had practised could not guarantee the economic growth of the State in the light of objective conditions of the country, the Tatmadaw introduced the market economic system and adopted the ‘open door’ policy to attract international investments in trade. To make the market economic system and the ‘open door’ policy successful, the Tatmadaw annulled economic laws, orders and declarations released in the time of the BSPP and replaced them with new ones capable of propping up the market economic system and the ‘open door’ policy. The Tatmadaw Government endeavoured to the best of its ability to boost the local and foreign investments in terms of business transactions. Moreover, the Tatmadaw Government fulfilled the requirements for the promotion of private sector and the cooperatives. On 30 November 1988, the Tatmadaw Government enacted the ‘Union of Myanmar Investment Law’ under the Notification No 10/89. Besides, continuous steps were also taken to enable the respective ministries to serve the interest of the country and the people to the full through the changes in the organization set-up, the enacting of laws, and supervision and inspection to be able to work in accordance with the economic policies of the State. As a result, all the administrative machinery of the State gained momentum. Priority was given to the development of national races residing in border areas that lagged far behind in development owing to the flame of internal strife that lasted for over four decades since regaining independence. The Tatmadaw has firmly believed that the national solidarity is the key to the progress of border areas and national races.

It is safe to assume that failure of successive governments to work for the development of border areas and national races was due to lack of stability and tranquillity in those areas. Therefore, the Tatmadaw Government laid down our Three Main National Causes: Disintegration of the Union, Non-disintegration of national solidarity and Perpetuation of sovereignty, as national guiding policy. Further, the Tatmadaw Government gave encouragement to the cultivation of poppy-substitute crops in border areas, where poppy was grown previously, with the aim of putting an end to poppy production once and for all. With these objectives, the Tatmadaw Government implemented the project of border areas and national races development.

In order to systematally carry out the development tasks for border areas and national races, the Tatmadaw Government formed the Central Committee for Development of Border Areas and National Races under the Notification No 23/89 dated 25 May 1989 and the Work Committee under the Notification No 24/09 dated 31 May 1989. Consequently, nine work subcommittees were also formed on 31 May 1989 to speed up the development measures. The nine work subcommittees are as follows:

1. The subcommittee for agriculture and forestry.
2. The subcommittee for livestock breeding.
3. The subcommittee for road transport.
4. The subcommittee for trade and cooperatives.
5. The subcommittee for housing estates.
6. The subcommittee for energy.
7. The subcommittee for health and education.
8. The subcommittee for public relations.
9. The subcommittee for management and finance.

To make more effective the accelerated measures for development of border areas and national races, the Tatmadaw Government enacted the ‘Law for Development of Border Areas and National Races’ on 13 August 1993, and formed the Ministry of Progress of Border Areas and National Races and Development Affairs on 30 January 1994. Since the assumption of State responsibilities, the Tatmadaw Government has taken steps phase by phase to turn the country into a new democratic. In doing so, the Tatmadaw laid down our three main national causes as the national guiding policy and at the same time implemented the four immediate tasks successfully. Moreover, the 12 political, economic and social objectives of the State have also been put into action to ensure the emergence of a discipline-flourishing peaceful and developed democratic nation in the future. These 12 objectives are:

1. Political objectives: Stability of the State, community peace and tranquillity, prevalence of law and order.
2. National reconsolidation
3. Emergence of a new economy inviting participation of both national and foreign investors.
4. The initiative to shape the national economy must be kept in the hands of the State and the national peoples.

Four economic objectives:

1. Development of agriculture and forestry.
2. Development of the public sectors of the State.
3. Development of the market-oriented economic system.
4. Development of the economy inviting participation of both national and foreign investors.

Four social objectives:

1. Uplift of the morale and integrity and national character.
2. Uplift of dynamism of national peoples.
3. Uplift of the morale and integrity and national character.
4. Uplift of patriotism and patriotic spirit.
5. Uplift of health, fitness and education standards of the entire nation.
6. Uplift of national prestige in cultural heritage and national character.
7. Uplift of dynamism of patriotic spirit.
8. Uplift of health, fitness and education standards of the entire nation.

These objectives have been achieved on the basis of the strength of national unity. Therefore, success has been achieved on the political, economic and social fronts in so short a time.

Translation: KTY
Hailing the 56th Anniversary Independence Day:

Endeavours for development of national brethren

The Tatmadaw made efforts to repair and build roads and bridges for secure and smooth transportation and establish new satellite towns in Yangon down to all parts of the country in implementing the construction tasks all over the country with the dedicated service of the public. The Tatmadaw also rendered assistance as necessary to the drive ensuring the swift flow of commodities for the convenient living of the people.

The Tatmadaw Government endeavoured to the best of its ability to boost the local and foreign investments in terms of business transactions. Moreover, the Tatmadaw Government fulfilled the requirements for the promotion of private sector and the cooperatives. On 30 November 1988, the Tatmadaw Government enacted the ‘Union of Myanmar Investment Law’ under the Notification No 10/88. Besides, continuous steps were also taken to enable the respective ministries to serve the interest of the country and the people to the full through the changes in the organization set-up, the enacting of laws, and supervision and inspection to be able to work in accord with the political and economic policies of the State. As a result, all the administrative machinery of the State gained momentum. Priority was given to the development of national races residing in border areas that lagged far behind in development owing to the flame of internal strife that lasted for over four decades since regaining independence. The Tatmadaw has firmly believed that the national solidarity is the key to progress of border areas and national races.
Chinese guests visit Kyauktan Township MCWA (Branch)

YANGON, 26 Dec — The visiting Chinese guests led by Vice-President of the All China Women’s Federation Mme. Chen Xiurong paid a visit to Kyauktan Township Maternal and Child Welfare Association (Branch) in Yangon South District this morning.

Together with Myanmar Women’s Affairs Federation Vice-President Professor Dr Daw Khin Aye Win, Myanmar Maternal and Child Welfare Association Vice-President Dr Daw Tin Lin Myint, Secretary Dr Daw Wai Wai Tha, Joint-Secretary Dr Daw Nwe Oo and officials, the Chinese guests arrived at Myangthaya Model Village in Kyauktan Township, where they were welcomed by Patron of Yangon Division Maternal and Child Welfare Association Daw Khin Thet Htay and members.

The guests viewed the courses on tailoring, silver smiths, lace knitting, flower arrangement and fruits arrangement conducted by Yangon Division MCWA Supervisory Committee. Mme. Chen Xiurong and Daw Khin Thet Htay exchanged gifts.

The guests also visited Lunge Yeikmon and Alindan Thuta Yeikmon day nurseries.

MMCWA President Dr Daw Khin Win Shwe hosted a luncheon to the guests at the Sedona Hotel. In the afternoon, Mme. Chen Xiurong and party visited the Gems Mart of the Ministry of Mines on Kaba Aye Pagoda Road. — MNA

Dr Daw Khin Win Shwe meets with ACWF Vice-President

YANGON, 26 Dec—President of Myanmar Women’s Affairs Federation Dr Daw Khin Win Shwe met with All China Women’s Federation-ACWF Vice-President Mme Chen Xiurong and party of the People’s Republic of China at the multi-purpose building of MMCWA at the corner of Thanhuma and Parami Roads in South Okkalapa Township this morning.

Also present at the meeting were Vice-Presidents of MMCWA Dr Kyi Soe and Dr Daw Tin Lin Myint, Vice-President of Myanmar Women’s Affairs Federation Dr Daw May May Yi, Secretary of MMCWA Dr Daw Wai Wai Tha and CEC members, General Secretary of MWAFC Prof Dr Daw Khin Aye Win, Counsellor of the Chinese Embassy Mr Yu Boren and officials.

First, Dr Daw Khin Win Shwe extended greetings, Secretary of MMCWA Dr Daw Wai Wai Tha explained matters related to MMCWA. Dr Daw Khin Win Shwe and Dr Kyi Soe answered queries raised by the guests.

Next, Dr Daw Khin Win Shwe and Dr Daw Tin Lin Myint presented gifts to the guests.

Afterwards, the Vice-president of the ACWF signed in the visitors’ book and posed for documentary photo with those present.

Later, the guests visited Earlier Childhood Development Centre, Feminine Disease Diagnosis Centre and Domestic Science Training School. — MNA

Industrialists urged to gradually...

(From page 16)

At the same time, infrastructures in the electricity energy, human resources and transport sectors have been developed.

Concerning the electricity sector, mass production of the hydel-run generators is needed in supplying electricity to villages in cooperation with the local people. The whole nation now has over 100,000 industries, up from only over 39,600 in the past. Over 6,800 industries have been relocated at the 18 industrial zones. And the industrial sector is enjoying not only the quantitative advantage, but also the qualitative development.

For development of the industrial zones, the ministers concerned are giving close supervision for the development of industrial zones as heads of the zones. The Industrial Development Committee has been formed. Impetus is given to develop cottage industries into ones which apply advanced technology and machines by combining State-owned and private-owned industries harmoniously.

A new policy has already been introduced to the rice trade in accord with the market-oriented economic system. The new policy permits free rice milling, trading and transport and to export the surplus.

The industrialists are required to upgrade their rice mills to produce quality rice to be able to compete with that from other countries. Machine parts used in rice mills will be displayed as import-substitute goods at the exhibition to upgrade the rice mills that will begin on 8 January 2004.

The industrialists are urged to study the use of advanced machinery and rubber processing methods at the State-owned factories to invent goods that may be actually useful for the nation. The industrial zones will have to strive for wider distribution of 10-ton rice mills so that the nation will be able to produce and consume more quality rice. The industrialists are going to visit the Nyamyet Cheltawkyo factory, where they will have to study the production of computer-controlled CNC lathe machines and lathes using digital read-out system. In this regard, they will have to consider the use of the new generation machines for manufacturing products of superior quality.

The industrial zones play a key role in developing the industrial sector of the State. Thus, the entrepreneurs will have to gradually develop their industries from manual control system to mechanical control system, and then to computer-controlled system.

Similarly, the industrialists will get an opportunity to study casting and forging technologies at the factories in Sindy and Httonbo and modern technologies on cutting and shaping at Myangudga and Kyaungkhweko steel mills. So, it will contribute substantially towards assembling of small automobiles including jeeps as well as 60-passenger buses and 10-ton and above trucks in their industrial zones.

A total of 474 small automobiles were assembled in 11 industrial zones last year. And this year, 861 out of 1,038 targeted automobiles have been assembled. The government and respective ministries will provide necessary assistance and set standards in connection with the work programme presented by the industrial zones for smooth manufacturing of 60-passenger buses and 10 tons and above trucks needed for better transportation of the nation.

At a time when the government places great emphasis on development of industrial zones and private industries, harmonious efforts are to be made to speed up the development momentum of agro-based industries, and to ensure development of the industrial zones that can manufacture import-substitute products and emergence of high-technology-based industries. Moreover, the excursion tour will enhance skills of the industrialists and contribute much towards progress of their industries.

Employing the knowledge gained from the study tour, the industrialists are to endeavour in taking innovative measures to manufacture new items and import-substitute goods. The industrial zones must be upgraded to the ones that can produce quality products with the use of advanced machines. Only then, can they conveniently manufacture quality items in a short time, the Secretary-1 said.

(See page 9)
Pathan Desana recitation ceremony held at Shwedagon Pagoda

YANGON, 26 Dec — The 2003-2004 academic year School Family Day Pathan Desana recitation ceremony was held at Rahu corner (north-west corner) of the Shwedagon Pagoda platform this morning, attended by Chairman of Yangon Division Peace and Development Council Commander of Yangon Command Maj-Gen Myint Swe.

Also present on the occasion were Chairman of the Leading Committee for Holding 2003-2004 School Family Day Minister for Education U Than Aung, Chairman of the Work Committee-1 for Holding the School Family Day Deputy Minister Lt-Col Aung Myo Min, Chairman of the Work Committee-2 Deputy Minister U Myo Nyo, officials, principals, teachers and students.

Those present kept the Five Precepts. Next, flowers, water and lights were offered to the pagoda.

The students collectively recited Pathan Desana, followed by sharing of merits gained. — MNA

Co-ord Meeting held for holding Fourth World Buddhist Summit

YANGON, 26 Dec — The Fourth World Buddhist Summit will be held in Myanmar soon. So, the coordination meeting concerning the summit was held at the lecture hall of International Theravada Buddhist Missionary University this morning. At the meeting, Minister for Religious Affairs Brig-Gen Thura Myint Maung, Chairman of Work Committee for Organizing the Summit, spoke on the occasion. Before the address of the minister, those present recited Namo Tassa three times. Then, Deputy Minister Brig-Gen Thura Aung Ko and Director-General Dr Myo Myint of the Religious Affairs Department reported on matters related to the summit.

Those leading the sub-committees submitted sector-wise reports to the meeting. The participants of the meeting took part in the discussions before the concluding remarks of the minister. Also present on the occasion were deputy ministers, Vice-Chairman of Yangon City Development Committee Vice-Mayor Col Maung Pa, Adviser to the State Peace and Development Council Office U Aung Maung and departmental heads. — MNA

Yangon Division Smooth & Secure Transport Supervisory Committee meets

YANGON, 26 Dec — A coordination meeting of the Yangon Division Smooth and Secure Transport Supervisory Committee was held at the meeting hall of Yangon Command this afternoon.

It was attended by Chairman of Yangon Division Peace and Development Council Chairman Yangon Command Maj-Gen Myint Swe, Deputy Command Col Wai Lwin, military region commanders, responsible personnel, officials, those of the all bus lines control committees in Yangon Division and guests.

First, Commander Maj-Gen Myint Swe explained the tasks to be carried out by the committee members for smooth and secure transport and for the convenience of travellers and commuters in Yangon Division. Next, committee members reported on tasks being carried out at bus terminals, railway stations, jetties and airports for the convenience of those travelling around and measures to prevent car accidents. Chairman of bus line committees

Minister for Religious Affairs Brig-Gen Thura Myint Maung addresses the coordination meeting for holding the Fourth World Buddhist Summit. — MNA

POEM:

If it takes the form of water of volume

* If a drop of rainwater is negligible
When many raindrops gather
Sizeable ponds, lakes and weirs appear
They take the form of creeks and rivers
And wide expanses seas and oceans
Taken together they form collections
Which can be discerned massively.

* Those expanses of water in collection
Exist as ponds, lakes, creeks and rivers
And oceans are for humans
Source of sustenance, water for drinking and use
For human existence
Pleasant and plentiful
For humanitarian and economic
Use all round and beneficial.

* Raindrops gather, and mass of water
Afloat the human abode this much
Of benefits
Humans collectively, in masses
Like water take clean and clear form
And work unimited, that human mass
In the collective national abode.
The pleasant peace path to progress
Will constantly be straight.

Po Wa (Trs)

Industrialists urged to gradually...

(from page 8)

Arrangements had been made to hold workshops enabling private entrepreneurs to exchange opinions and experiences gained from the study tours of the State-owned factories, the Secretary-1 said. With the aim of providing modern technologies to the entrepreneurs, technicians from the ministries concerned had been invited to the workshops to disseminate technologies for production of farm implement and machinery, automobiles, rubber, machines and machine tools, and import-substitute items.

Only with the united efforts of private entrepreneurs under the guidance and encouragement of the State, will the industrial sector of private entrepreneurs develop. And only with the cooperation of industries of the State sector, cooperative sector and private sector, will modern and developed industrialized nation emerge, and the heavy, medium and light industries develop harmoniously.

In conclusion, the Secretary-1 urged the entrepreneurs to exert efforts together with innovation, perseverance and goodwill towards the State for the continued success of their factories at such a good time when the State is rendering assistance and encouragement.

Next, Secretary of Industrial Development Committee Chairman of Myanmar Industrial Development Committee Minister for Industry-1 U Aung Thaung, Chairman of Myanmar Industrial Development Work Committee Minister for Industry-2 Maj-Gen Saw Lwin reported on arrangements for conducting study tours and holding workshops for private industrialists. Afterwards, Chairman of the Work Committee for Conducting Study Tours of factories and Holding Workshops Secretary of Myanmar Industrial Development Committee Deputy Minister for Industry-1 Brig-Gen Kyaw Win, Chairman of the Subcommittee for Holding Workshops Deputy Minister for Science and Technology Dr Chan Nyen reported on arrangements for conducting study tours and holding workshops. Next, Minister for Commerce Brig-Gen Pyi Sone, Minister for Transport Maj-Gen Hla Myint Swe, Minister for Cooperatives Maj-Gen Huy Oo and deputy ministers gave supplementary reports. Afterwards, the Secretary-1 made concluding remarks. — MNA

Chinese guests visit Mandalay

YANGON, 26 Dec — The visiting Chinese delegation of five, led by Mme Chen Xiurong, Vice President of All China Women’s Federation (ACWF), accompanied by First Secretary of Chinese Embassy to Myanmar Mrs Deng Qinghua and General Secretary Prof Daw Khin Aye Win of Myanmar Women’s Affairs Federation, paid a visit to Mandalay by air yesterday morning. On their arrival they were accorded welcome by Patron of Mandalay Division Women’s Affairs Committee Daw Myat Ngwe, Commissioner of the Division Administration Department U Kyin Lin, Consul-General Mr Li Xuelin of Consulate-General in Mandalay and officials. The guests and officials first visited Myanansankyaw Golden Palace, where officials explained to them the history of the palace.

Next, they went to the Sutaungpyae Pagoda on Mandalay Hill and made cash donations. The delegation then studied embroidery works in Aungmyethazan Township and arrived back here this afternoon. — MNA
72 fires break out in November

YANGON, 26 Dec — A total of 72 fires broke out across Myanmar in November, causing a loss of K 22.01 million.

Fires broke out in the country due to negligence in 60 cases, eight electric shocks and arson in four cases. Local authorities at respective state and division fire services departments are reminded to take fire prevention measures.

29 insurgents exchange arms for peace in October, November

YANGON, 26 Dec — The State Peace and Development Council, upholding Our Three Main Causes, is striving to forge national reconciliation and making concerted efforts for development of the regions throughout the country. Understanding the endeavours and goodwill of the government, armed groups which realised that their destructive acts did not benefit the country at all have been exchanging arms for peace in groups and individually at respective military camps in October and November 2003.

Pvt Saw Don Ni, Saw Bo Nar and Nei Kyaw of No 1 Company, No 1 Battalion, No 1 Brigade of KNUI armed group, village commander Hti Mei (a) U Maung Pan of No 2 Battalion, Pvt Moe Lut of No 1 Company of No 2 Battalion of KNUI armed group, bringing together with them one M-22, one magazine and 24 rounds of ammunition.

Hpa-an Township Administrative Committee member Saw Tint Te (a) Pha The Khee with one M-16, six magazines and 120 rounds of ammunition, Pvt Win Naing of No 7 Battalion of ABSDF armed group, section leader Myo Lwin of splited Mon armed group with one AK-47, two magazines and 40 rounds of ammunition exchanged arm for peace in South-East Command area.

Pvt In Shin of SURA armed group in Coastal Region Command area; Pvt Sai Lu and Hla Aung of No 1 Company of No 11 Battalion of KNU armed group, section leader Bo Gyie (a) Bo Gyi of KNPP armed group in Eastern Command area; Cpl Saw Mar Lay Htoo of No 5 Battalion of No 2 Brigade of KNU armed group bringing together with one M-16, one magazine and 27 rounds of ammunition and Pvt Saw Ei Ke (a) Myint Thein of No 1 Company of No 8 Battalion of No 3 Brigade in Southern Command area; Cdr Maung Zaw (a) Saw Me Too of No 3 Company of No 11 Battalion of KNU armed group with one AK-47, one magazine and 20 rounds of ammunition, Cpl Saw Gaw Phe of Combat Company of No 4 Brigade, 2nd-Lt Ye Hla, Sgt Pwe Pwe and Pado Chit Aung (a) Hla Baw with one pistol, two AK-47, one M-79 launcher, four assorted magazines, 35 assorted rounds of ammunition, five shells, one grenade and three mines, Pvt Tar Paw Kwar, Pvt Saw Yae and Saw Pa Leik of No 3 Company of No 11 Battalion with one revolver and two rounds of ammunition, Pado Saw Ga Lee Ya of Khawthaka Administration in Coastal Region Command area.

Present on the occasions were Deputy Minister Brig-Gen Tun, Director-General of Directorate of Trade and Arson in four cases. Local authorities and respective state and division fire services departments are reminded to take fire prevention measures.

— MNA

56th Anniversary Independence Day Exhibition

Date — 3rd to 11th January 2004

Time — 9 am to 5 pm

Place — Tatmadaw Hall on U Wisara Road, Yangon.

(Entry fee)
Hailing the 56th Anniversary Independence Day:

Seven Ayeyawady river crossing bridges constructed by the Ministry of Construction in the time of the State Peace and Development Council

The Ministry of Construction has constructed a total of 165 bridges of 180 feet and above, including seven bridges across Ayeyawady river, the artery of Myanmar. Although there existed only Ayeyawady river crossing Sagaing Bridge in the past, now the State opened Bala Min Htin Bridge in Kachin State, Anawrahta Bridge in Magway Division, Ayeyawady Bridge (Magway) in Magway Division, Nawaday Bridge in Bago Division, and Bo Myat Htun Bridge, Maubin Bridge and Dedaye Bridge in Ayeyawady Division. Ayeyawady river crossing Yadanabon Bridge is under construction.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No</th>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Length</th>
<th>Cost</th>
<th>Date of completion</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Nawaday Bridge</td>
<td>Pyay Township, Bago Division</td>
<td>4183 feet</td>
<td>K 833.17 million, FE 8.685 million</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Bala Min Htin Bridge</td>
<td>Myitkyina, Kachin State</td>
<td>2688 feet</td>
<td>K 1077.3 million, FE 5.9 million</td>
<td>14-11-1998</td>
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<td>3</td>
<td>Bo Myat Tun Bridge</td>
<td>Nyaungdon, Ayeyawady Division</td>
<td>8544 feet</td>
<td>K5565.45 million, FE 8.6 million</td>
<td>15-11-1999</td>
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<td>Anawrahta Bridge</td>
<td>Chauk, Magway Division</td>
<td>5192 feet</td>
<td>K 3284 million, FE 5.05 million</td>
<td>4-4-2001</td>
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<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Maubin Bridge</td>
<td>Maubin, Ayeyawady Division</td>
<td>2362 feet</td>
<td>K680 million, FE 2.21 million</td>
<td>10-2-1998</td>
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<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Ayeyawady Bridge</td>
<td>Magway, Magway Division</td>
<td>8989 feet</td>
<td>K 7951 million, FE 8.58 million</td>
<td>24-11-2002</td>
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<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Dedaye Bridge</td>
<td>Dedaye, Ayeyawady Division</td>
<td>4088 feet</td>
<td>K 3550 million, FE 1.6 million</td>
<td>23-3-2003</td>
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Small plane crash kills 5 in southern California

Los Angeles, 26 Dec — A two-engine small plane crashed Wednesday in the mountains near an airport in southern California, killing all five people aboard, US authorities said.

The plane, which left Long Beach at 9:54 am local time, crashed about 26 minutes after takeoff in a rugged mountain terrain near the Catalina Island Airport, said Federal Aviation Administration spokesman Donn Walker.

Santa Catalina Island is 26 miles southwest of Los Angeles.

Walker said the seven-seat Piper Seneca was attempting to execute a “missed approach”, and was turning around to head back to the airport when it crashed.

“The visibility was poor,” Walker said. “The cloud ceiling was only 100 feet.” US National Transportation and Safety Board officials are investigating the crash.

VETERAN ARTISTS RESIDE IN GRAY HETHER

Beijing, 26 Dec — “As an artist, I have been lucky to have lived in this decade,” Pan He, a 78-year-old sculptor, said here Wednesday, when he accepted an award for his lifetime’s work from China’s Ministry of Culture.

The annual awards were conferred on 10 prominent artists who are considered to have contributed greatly to China’s art heritage. The other nine specialists in performance and fine arts, who accepted the awards average over 75 years of age.

The awards committee said, “With works reflecting China’s long history and our cultural heritage, Chinese artists are considered to have contributed greatly to China’s art heritage. The other nine specialists in performance and fine arts, who accepted the awards average over 75 years of age.”

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China’s oldest traditional artists, these 10 artists typify a generation of art pioneers who explored the possibilities of modernizing China’s traditional arts, sometimes by converging with Western practices.

Yuan Xuefen spent over 60 years perfecting one of China’s oldest traditional dramatic arts. Wu Guanzhong, who graduated from a fine art school in Paris, has dedicated his life to bringing China’s ink painting and Western painting together.

“China’s cultural heritage is the result of the efforts of the People’s Republic of China in 1949. They pursued their artistic careers in the 1930s and 1940s, and witnessed the establishment of the People’s Republic of China in 1949.”

They won back their reputations along with the opportunity to pursue their careers after China’s introduction of the opening-up and reform policies in the late 1970s.

“My biggest ambition is to record in my works the history I have experienced, so that our children can understand what happened.”

Pan, whose 105 sculptures are scattered in 63 cities, said, “China has a long history, and is a civilization that has been preserved.”

Son of the sea

The province has enjoyed an 18.3 million US dollars-worth of business with Russia since they eluded a consensus, it was referred to the two-day SAARC summit of heads of state and government to be held here on 31 December and 1 January.

Since they eluded a consensus, it was referred to the two-day SAARC summit of heads of state and government to be held here on 31 December and 1 January. Later it was referred to the meeting of Foreign Ministers to be held on January two and three and if they managed to reach an agreement, it would be referred to SAARC summit of heads of state and government to be held here from January four to six. — MNA/PTI

Heilongjiang’s foreign trade soars

Harbin, 26 Dec — Foreign trade of northeast China’s Heilongjiang Province boomed this year, and the gross turnover is expected to reach more than 5 billion US dollars, according to an official with the provincial department of foreign trade and economic cooperation.

Statistics from the department covering January to November showed that the total turnover of Heilongjiang Province amounted to 4.7 billion US dollars, an 18.4 per cent increase over the corresponding period of last year.

The official attributed the increase to more foreign investment in Heilongjiang Province. The province did 2.6 billion US dollars-worth of business with Russia, a 25.2 per cent growth, including the startup of a number of resources exploitation projects, the official said.

The official said Heilongjiang’s export turnover would be 2.6 billion US dollars-worth this year, and the province has enjoyed an overall favourable trade balance for the first time in recent years. — MNA/Xinhua

2 killed, 7 injured in road accident in Mexico

Mexico City, 26 Dec — A detached trailer loaded with gas hit two vehicles and exploded, killing two people and injuring seven in the state of Campeche in southeast Mexico Wednesday.

Campeche judicial authorities said the accident occurred in the province’s Escarcega and blamed the accident on a failed attachment of the trailer. A passenger bus and another cargo truck with a trailer caught fire in the explosion of the gas tanks.

The authorities said the victims have not yet been identified and that the rescuers have moved the injured to hospitals nearby. — MNA/Xinhua

TRADE MARK

CAMUS LA GRANDE MARK QUE, a company incorporated in France, of 29, rue Marguerite de Navarre, 16100 COGNAC, France, is the Owner of the following Trade Mark:-

Reg. No. 3155/2003 in respect of “International Class 33: alcoholic beverages (except beers)”.

Fraudulent imitation or unauthorised use of the said Trade Mark will be deemed to be an infringement of the respective Trade Mark in accordance with the laws and conditions of the Port of Yangon.

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

CLAIMS DAY NOTICE

MV SEA MERCHANT VOY NO (487)

Consignors of cargo carried on MV SEA MERCHANT VOY No (487) are here by notified that the vessel will be arriving on 28-12-03 and cargo will be discharged into the premises of A.W.P.P where it will lie at the consignee’s risk and expenses and subject to the byelaws and conditions of the Port of Yangon.

Damaged cargo will be surveyed daily from 8 am to 11:20 am and 12 noon to 4 pm to Claims Day now declared the third day after final discharge of cargo from the vessel.

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

SHIPPING AGENCY DEPARTMENT

MYANMA PORT AUTHORITY AGENT FOR: MS ADVANCE CONTAINER LINE

P.O. Box 60, Yangon:

Dated: 27 December, 2003

Southern China province strengthens anti-drug efforts

Guangzhou, 26 Dec — Police in this capital city of south China’s Guangdong Province are making greater efforts to help local drug addicts kick out their habits, said a police official Wednesday here.

Wang Xing, vice director of Guangzhou City Public Security Bureau, said some 650 million yuan ($71.5 million US dollars) were used to build drug rehabilitation centres with a total of 16,000 beds to accommodate drug addicts for treatment. This is an increase in the current capacity of 5,500 beds.

Statistics released on Wednesday showed that the number of drug-related crimes from January to November showed that the total turnover of Heilongjiang Province amounted to 4.7 billion US dollars, an 18.4 per cent increase over the corresponding period of last year.

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SAARC commerce

secretaries meet fails to clinch agreement on SAFTA

Islamabad, 26 Dec — The two-day special meeting of Commerce Secretaries of the SAARC countries ended here on Wednesday without clinching an agreement to finalize the draft of the South Asian Free Trade Agreement (SAFTA).

It has now been decided that the contentious issues would be forwarded to the SAARC (South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation) Foreign Ministers meeting which would be held here on 2 January ahead of the regional summit, official sources said.

The Commerce Secretaries made “reasonable progress” on the draft agreement of SAFTA but failed to clinch agreement on it, they said.

The Indian delegation at the conference was headed by Commerce Secretary Dipak Chatterjee.

“There are still many differences among the member states in the way of evolving consensus on the Free Trade Agreement among the member states”, state run ANI newsagency quoted officials as saying.

The meeting failed to finalize the deal as Bangladesh, which categorized itself as the Least Developed Country, (LDC) opposed many issues pertaining to anti dumping, quota safeguards, concessions and the time frame in the draft agreement.

Prior to this, six meetings of the Committee of Experts at the level of Joint Secretaries were held in Kathmandu.

Since they eluded a consensus, it was referred to the two-day SAARC commerce secretaries meeting which too did not reach any agreement.

The issues would now be referred to the Standing Committee of the SAARC to be attended by the Foreign Secretaries of all the seven SAARC countries to be held here on 31 December and 1 January.

Later it was referred to the meeting of Foreign Ministers to be held on January two and three and if they managed to reach an agreement, it would be referred to SAARC summit of heads of state and government to be held here from January four to six. — MNA/PTI

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Three policemen wounded in bomb blast in Baghdad

Baghdad, 26 Dec—A roadside bomb exploded on a busy Baghdad street on Thursday, blowing off the hand of a policeman and seriously wounding two other officers, fellow policemen said.

Some civilians were also hurt in the blast, one of around a half dozen attacks in Baghdad on Christmas morning, officers said, but they had no concrete information on the number of wounded.

The policeman who lost his hand had approached the bomb, hidden in a black bag, on Palestine Street, a busy commercial boulevard in the city’s centre.

It blew up just as he stepped forward, said Colonel Ahmed Hussein.

“She went toward the bomb. When he just moved

Jordan asks Saddam daughters to stay out of politics

Amman, 26 Dec — Jordan has indirectly asked Saddam Hussein’s two daughters to stay out of politics after US forces captured the former Iraqi President earlier this month.

Government spokeswoman Asma Khader told Reuters on Wednesday that Saddam Hussein’s two daughters, Raghd and Rana, had taken refuge in Amman in August, should not use Jordan as a platform to make political statements after US forces captured the former Iraqi President earlier this month.

“We are not asking them

Jordan suspends beef imports from US

Amman, 26 Dec — Jordan has temporarily suspended the imports of US beef and its byproducts after a suspected case of bovine spongiform encephalopathy (BSE) was found in the United States, the Jordan Times reported on Thursday.

“It is a precautionary measure, which was taken after there was a suspected case of BSE,” Awni Taamah, secretary-general of the Jordanian Planning and International Cooperation Ministry, was quoted by the paper as saying.

He said Jordan would observe the latest situation and update its data about the

The best time to plant a tree is 20 years ago.
Second best time is now.
Beckham's transfer voted top World Sports story of 2003

The England captain's $43 million transfer from Manchester United to Real Madrid was voted the top sports story of the year in a worldwide poll of Associated Press subscribers.

"If I have become a better player it's because these players around me have made me step up to another level," Beckham said. "I would say coming to Real Madrid was one of the best decisions I have ever made." A series of high-profile drug cases finished second in the AP voting with 13 first-place votes and 297 points.

Beckham's transfer was fourth in the poll by 225 points. The Texan matched Eddy Merckx, Miguel Indurain, Bernard Hinault and Jacques Anquetil with his fifth Tour de France victory.

England's first World Cup rugby championship, an overtime victory against Australia in Sydney - fifth with 196 points.

Roman Abramovich's transformation of Chelsea's soccer team was sixth followed by the death of Cameroon soccer star Marc Vivien Foé at the FIFA Confederations Cup.

Kobe Bryant's arrest on sexual assault charges was eighth with 75 points.

FA deny Rio Ferdinand two year ban report

London, 26 Dec — The English Football Association has flatly denied suggestions that it wanted to serve Rio Ferdinand with a two-year ban for missing his drugs test.

The Manchester United defender was suspended for eight months on Friday for skipping the control at United's training ground on September 23.

But a FA spokesman issued a point blank denial, saying: "Stories implying that the Football Association were seeking a two-year ban for Rio Ferdinand are totally without foundation."

United have requested written clarification from the FA spelling out the reasons for the verdict pending a possible appeal. Ferdinand, who played in United's 2-1 win over Tottenham on Sunday 48 hours after the hearing in Bolton, is due to begin his ban on January 12.

The player, who joined Old Trafford from Leeds for a British record 30 million pounds in July 2002, was also fined 50,000 pounds after being found guilty of misconduct.

Top 10 athletes in World Sports in 2003

... b. 26 Dec — Following is the list of top 10 athletes in the world for the year 2003, selected by Xinhua News Agency.

1. Michael Schumacher, claimed a record sixth Formula One title on October 12, overtaking late Argentine Juan Manuel Fangio's 500s haul of five championships. The German also helped Ferrari take the constructors' title for a record fifth year in a row while Williams settled for second and McLaren, third.

2. Michael Phelps, made a series record-breaking performance at the Barcelona swimming World Championships in July as he became the swimmer setting most world records at a single swim meet. The 18-year-old American renewed five world standards in the men's 400m individual medley, the 100m and 200m butterfly as well as 200m individual medly (twice) and won three gold medals. The unstoppable teenager from nearby Baltimore broke his own world mark in the 200m individual medley at the U.S. Swim Championships in early August.

3. Lance Armstrong, the American cyclist who survived the onslaught of cancer, raced to his fifth consecutive victory on the Tour de France on July 27, becoming the second rider to win the cycling race five times in a row.

4. Tim Duncan, captured the NBA Finals Most Valuable Player honors for the second time after 1999 and in addition to his record-setting sea- son MVP awards the past two seasons as the 7-foot power forward helped San Antonio Spurs to the NBA championship. He was the first man in a decade to have an NBA Finals "triple-dub" — scoring 21 points, pulling down 20 rebounds and passing out 10 assists in Game Six as his team won the finals 4-2 over the New Jersey Nets.

5. Yao Ming, a 23-year-old from Shanghai, clinched the NBA's Top Rookie of the Year award after he threw a bottle back into the crowd during Leeds' League Cup clash with Manchester United at Elland Road on October 28.

6. Li Xiaojiao, won the team's men's, women's and mixed doubles titles at the World Championships in September at the World Gymnastics Championships in Anaheim, the United States, in August, pulling up a total of 13 world and Olym- pic titles to his name. His aim is to overtake Li Ning who holds 14 world and Oly- mpic titles as a Chinese record.

7. Roger Federer, is on his way to be the new king of the tennis world. The 22-year-old Swiss parted with his coach, his father, to have an ATP, best for the year, and the Wimbledon and Masters Cup champion also added the ATP match wins table for 2003 with a 78-17 win-loss record.

8. Hicham El Guerrouj, the Moroccan middle distance running romped to his fourth, 1500m world title at the Paris athletics World Champion- ships in August and was named World Athlete of the Year by the International Association of Athletic Federations for the third year running.

9. Birdy Prinz, played a key role in Germany's first ever triumph at the women's soccer World Cup where the 25-year-old forward scored seven goals, receiving both the World Cup MVP and top scorer awards. Her stunning performance also earned her the FIFA Female Player of the Year title.

10. Zinedine Zidane, French soccer star and the Real Madrid playmaker, won the 2003 FIFA World Player of the Year award for the third time following his 1998 and 2000 successes. Enditem

Beckham says little talking between Ferguson and him

London, 26 Dec — England captain David Beckham has hardly spoken to Manchester United manager Alex Ferguson since he left the team for Real Madrid, he said in a television documentary broadcast Wednesday.

"He hasn't spoken to me still," the Englandcaptain said in The Real Beckhams, shown on Britain's ITV. "We spoke for five minutes at a function to try and make me... I just expected a bit more respect at the end of the career when I had been at the club for that many years."

Tensions between player and manager were widely reported before Manchester United sold Beckham to Madrid.

Beckham said he was surprised by the team's decision to sell him and its public announcement of the fee it was getting, which he said came before Manchester United informed him of the amount.

MNA/Xinhua

Beckham's transfer voted top World Sports story of 2003

London 26 Dec — David Beckham, the most recognizable face in the world's most popular game, was the biggest newcomer in international sports in 2003.

The hearing will now be held on January 6 instead of January 7. An FA spokes- man said: "We can now confirm that Alan Smith's hearing will take place on Tuesday, January 6 after consultation with his club." He was selected by Eng- land manager Steve Graham for the friendly with Denmark but was then dropped from the squad after it emerged he had been arrested by police for the bottle-throwing inci- dent. — MNA/Xinhua

Leeds striker Smith hearing date brought forward

London, 26 Dec — England's Football Association has brought forward Alan Smith's disciplinary hearing one day ahead of schedule because the original date clash with Leeds Premier League clash with Newcastle United on January 7.

The striker has admitted a charge of improper conduct after he threw a bottle back into the crowd during Leeds' League Cup clash with Man-chester United at Elland Road on October 28.
**Four political objectives**
- Stability of the State, community peace and tranquillity, prevalence of law and order
- National reconsolidation
- Emergence of a new enduring State Constitution
- Building of a new modern developed nation in accord with the new State Constitution

**Four economic objectives**
- Development of agriculture as the base and all-round development of other sectors of the economy as well
- Proper evolution of the market-oriented economic system
- Development of the economy inviting participation in terms of technical know-how and investments from sources inside the country and abroad
- The initiative to shape the national economy must be kept in the hands of the State and the national peoples

**Four social objectives**
- Uplift of the morale and morality of the entire nation
- Uplift of national prestige and integrity and preservation and safeguarding of cultural heritage and national character
- Uplift of dynamism of patriotic spirit
- Uplift of health, fitness and education standards of the entire nation

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**Industrialists urged to gradually develop industries from manual control system to mechanical control, and to computer control**

**Secretary-1 Lt-Gen Soe Win meets industrialists**

Yangon, 26 Dec — Secretary-1 of the State Peace and Development Council Lt-Gen Soe Win met with industrialists at the Ministry of Industry-2 here this morning.

Also present were ministers, who are the in-charge of the industrial zones, chairmen of the zones and officials. The Secretary-1 said arrangements are under way for the officials of the industrial zones and industrialists to collectively study the advanced production processes of the State-owned industries and research programmes and experimental production of goods, with the aim of developing the private industries with greater momentum. The study programme will help combine the capacity of the State-owned factories and the productivity of the industrial zones, leading to large-scale manufacturing of a new generation of products and value-added products as import-substitute goods, installation of proper linkages between the state-owned and private industries and implementation of a cooperation programme enabling the State-owned sector and the private sector to support one another.

The Head of State has given guidance to strive for gradual development of the entire industrial sector, with agro-based industries as the starting point. As Myanmar also is an agro-based nation, the agricultural sector’s contribution to the gross domestic product is 48 per cent, while the industrial sector’s participation is less than ten per cent.

Thus, the government has been building more and more irrigation facilities, and up to now it has built 155 dams and 265 water pumping stations. The annual sown acreage of the nation has reached over 40 million acres at present.

Thanks to the rise in paddy production, the nation is now enjoying an abundant supply of food for her people. The growing population of the nation in the future has been calculated in developing the agricultural sector. Both the State-owned as well as the private sectors are manufacturing and using various kinds of farm machinery on an extensive scale in transforming from conventional farming to mechanized farming. Efforts are being made for wider use of threshers.

In the first phase towards industrialization, manufacturing and use of farm machinery have been extended. (See page 8)

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**Leading Committee for Observance of 59th Anniversary Armed Forces Day holds second coord meeting**

Yangon, 26 Dec — The Leading Committee for Observance of 59th Anniversary Armed Forces Day held the second coordination meeting at the hall of Yangon Command at 3 pm today, with an address by Member of the State Peace and Development Council Chief of Armed Forces Training Lt-Gen Kyaw Win.

Also present on the occasion were Chairman of the Management Committee for Observance of the 59th Anniversary Armed Forces Day Chairman of Yangon Division Peace and Development Council Commander of Yangon Command Maj-Gen Myint Swe, Minister for Social Welfare, Relief and Resettlement Maj-Gen Sein Htaw, Minister for Labour U Tin Win, Chief of Staff (Navy) Rear-Admiral Soe Thein, Vice-Chiefs of Armed Forces Training Maj-Gen Win Myint and Brig-Gen Nyan Win, Vice-Adjutant-General Brig-Gen Hla Shwe, Deputy Minister for Culture Brig-Gen Soe Win Maung, officials of the Management Committee, the Work Committee and sub-committees, senior military officers, the Director-General of Myanmar Police Force, departmental heads, officials of MPF, Fire Services Department and Myanmar Red Cross Society.

In his address, Lt-Gen Kyaw Win said that he was satisfied with the work committee and sub-committees for their undertakings in the respective sectors. He said he believed that more success will be achieved than previous year if officials perform their duties with goodwill. He urged those present to systematically make preparations for the parade grounds and accommodation of parade columns. At present, he added, the programmes for organizing the Armed Forces Day are daily presented in newspapers and broadcast in the television programmes. So, all the committees are to continue their tasks with momentum. Next, he invited the reports on requirements.

Next, Secretary of the Leading Committee Deputy Adjutant-General Col Khin Soe read out the minutes of the first meeting.

Afterwards, Commander Maj-Gen Myint Swe reported on preparations for the ceremony, progress of work and future tasks. Similarly, officials reported on their respective sectors.

Officials of MPF, FSD and MRCS submitted reports on participation of members of MPF, Fire Brigade and Red Cross Society in the 59th Anniversary Armed Forces Day parade.

The participants gave suggestions concerning the Armed Forces Day ceremony.

Later, Lt-Gen Kyaw Win attended to their needs and gave a concluding remarks. — MNA