New train introduced to circular rail system

YANGON, 29 Dec — Myanmar Railways of the Ministry of Rail Transporta
tion commissioned a new
train into service of circular
rail system. The ceremony
was held on the platform-1
at Yangon Station here this
morning.

Maj-Gen Myint Swe,
Chairman of Yangon Divi-
sion Peace and Development
Council and Commander of
Yangon Command, attended
the ceremony.

Also present on the oc-
casion were Minister for RT
Maj-Gen Aung Min, Minis-
ter at the Prime Minister’s
Office Maj-Gen Thein Swe,
Chairman of Yangon City
Development Committee
and Mayor Brig-Gen Aung
Thein Lin, Deputy Minis-
ters for RT, departmental
heads and officials.

Maj-Gen Aung Min ex-
plained matters related to the
use of the new train. He said
that the Head of State gave
guidance on improving the
rail service and the replace-
ment of imported engines
and carriages with those
renovated at home; that MR
is making efforts to translate
the guidance into reality; that
success has been made in the
removal of DMU car-
riages as the first step and
four out of them are now in
use; and that rail buses had
also been produced success-
fully as the second step.

He added that the newly-
launched train has two en-
gines and four carriages. The
two engines were donated
by System Chubu Co Ltd of
Japan and Doj Pyi Tha En-
terprises Ltd through the
Prime Minister of the State.
The four carriages were de-
signed and built at MR’s
Mystinge Carriage Factory.

The minister expressed
his thanks to the leaders of
the State, departments,
wellwishers and staff of MR
for their assistance rendered
his thanks to the leaders of
the State, departments,
wellwishers and staff of MR
for their assistance rendered
the promotion of the
Myanmar rail sector and to
the drive for more conven-
ient service for the travelling
public.

Next, the commander,
the ministers, the mayor and
officials inspected the new
train. They also oversaw the
circular railroad on board the
new train. The engines and
carriages currently in use in the
circular rail system are
French-made engines
and Germany-made China-
made carriages. The new
train has a seating capacity
of 664. — MNA

Concert to mark School Family Day opened

YANGON, 29 Dec — The
concert to mark School
Family Day for 2003-2004
academic year was opened
at the National Theatre
on Myoma Kyaung Street
here at 2.30 pm today, attended
by Chairman of Leading
Committee-1 for Organiz-
ing the School Family Day
Deputy Minister for Education Col
Aung Myo Min, members of
the Leading Committee
directors-general and
chairmen of departments
and boards and officials, the
Township Education Offi-
cers, the schoolheads of
basic education schools,
teachers, students and
guests.

First, Chairman of Work
Committee-1 for Organiz-
ing the School Family Day
Deputy Minister for Educa-
tion Col Aung Myo Min for-
mal opened the concert.

Next, the medalist stu-
dents of basic education
schools sang a song titled
Myanma School with the
accompaniment of the band
troupe of No 1 Basic Educa-
tion High School of Dagon
Township.

Next, music concert and
variety dances followed.
No 1 BEHS of Dagon
Township, No 2 BEHS of
Sangyoung Township,
No 2 BEHS of Dagon Town-
ship, No 5 BEHS of
Botahtaung Township, No
2 BEHS of Kamayut Town-
ship, No 3 Pre-primary
School of Social Welfare
Department, No 2 BEHS of
(See page 9)

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

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

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

All this needs to be known
* Do not be frightened whenever intimidated
* Do not be bolstered whenever flattened
* Do not be softened whenever appeased

Prizes presented for basic education school level band contest
YANGON, 29 Dec — Marking the School Family Day (2003-2004) of the Ministry of Education, the fourth basic education school level band contest continued today. Also present were the chairmen of the work committee of the School Family Day Deputy Minister for Education Col Aung Myo Min, director-general of the departments under the ministry and officials.

MIFA moved to new address
YANGON, 29 Dec — Myanmar International Freight Forwarders association is reported to have moved to Room No 10, 5th Floor, United Condo Tower (1), No.39, Ashalapya Pagoda Road, Dagon Township, Yangon (Ph 380407, Fax 380043 and e-mail miffa@myanmar.com.mm.). NLM
British spies ‘misled’ media on Iraq

LONDON, 29 Dec—Britain’s intelligence services ran a publicity campaign to gain support for sanctions and the use of military force in Iraq, it has emerged.

The Government confirmed at the weekend that MI6 had organised Opération Mass Appeal, a campaign to plant stories in the media about Saddam Hussein’s weapons of mass destruction.

The operation was an embarrassing episode for Tony Blair in the run-up to the publication of the report by Lord Hutton into the circumstances surrounding the death of government weapons expert David Kelly. A senior official admitted that MI6 had been at the heart of a campaign launched in the late 1990s to spread misinformation about Saddam’s development of nerve agents and other weapons, but denied that it had planted misinformation. “There were things about Saddam’s regime and his weapons that the public needed to know,” the official said.

The admission followed claims by Scott Ritter, a former US Marine who led 14 inspection missions in Iraq, that the US could not have found weapons of mass destruction.

Mr Ritter said he had not been able to find any evidence of any such weapons, but added that he had not had the time to check the US claims. “We have a choice with respect to Scott Ritter,” Mr Butler said. “Either he was misleading me when he worked for me or he’s chosen to mislead the public subsequently.”

Mr Ritter said last week that there was evidence MI6 continued to use propaganda tactics up to the invasion of Iraq earlier this year. “Stories ran in the media about secret underground facilities in Iraq and ongoing programmes (to produce weapons of mass destruction),” he said. “They were sourced to Western intelligence and all of them were garbage.”

An Iraqi family injured in yesterday’s attack sits on a bed at al-Husseiniyah hospital in Karbala, Iraq on 28 Dec, 2003. Suicide bombers and assailants with mortars and grenade launchers blasted two coalition military bases and the governor’s office in Karbala on Saturday killing six coalition soldiers, six Iraqi police officers and a civilian and wounding at least 172 people. —Internet

San Jose man killed in Iraq vehicle accident

San Jose, Calif—A 18-year-old San Francisco Bay area man has died in a non-combat vehicle accident in Baghdad, the Defence Department said Sunday.

Army Spc. Michael G Mihalakis was crushed Friday when his Humvee flipped over at Baghdad Airport. Mihalakis was a military policeman who went to Iraq with the Army National Guard. The Pentagon identified him as being from San Jose, where his family now lives, though he graduated from Milpitas High School.

He was reportedly scheduled to return to the United States in two weeks. KPIX television spoke Sunday with his father, who said Mihalakis visited home three months ago after his sister was hit by a car and went into a coma.

When she began to recover, Mihalakis returned to Iraq. A sympathetic captain assigned him to the airport. Mihalakis’ father said, instead of his prior job patrolling Baghdad’s streets, —Internet

Over four million cross Mainland-HK boundary during X’mas

HONG KONG, 29 Dec—About 4.1 million people crossed the land boundary checkpoints to and from the Chinese Mainland during the Christmas holiday, an increase of 5.8 per cent over the same period last year, statistics from the Immigration Department of Hong Kong showed Sunday.

During the period from December 19 to December 26, the number of departing passengers reached a peak of 342,000 on December 25, while the peak of arrivals was on December 26, with 290,000 people returning to Hong Kong. The highest daily flow reached 560,000 on December 19.

The department said the increase was mainly contributed to the rise of Mainland visitors with the introduction of the Mainland Individual Visit Scheme in July. It said about 86,000 Mainland visitors under the scheme crossed the boundary to Hong Kong during the holiday. —MNA/Xinhua

South Korean President names three new Cabinet ministers

SEOUL, 29 Dec—South Korean President Roh Moo-hyun appointed three new Cabinet ministers on Sunday in a bid to curb criticism of his administration ahead of a parliamentary election in April.

The shake-up follows the replacement of the education and commerce chiefs earlier this month and comes amid a political funding scandal involving several of Roh’s aides.

“President Roh expects these changes to help his Cabinet to pave the way for his administration to proceed better with key policies in the New Year,” Roh’s adviser for personnel affairs said in a televised briefing.

Roh named a member of the central bank monetary policy board, Kim Byung-il, 58, to replace Budget Minister Park Bong-heun. Park was named as the new director-general for policy planning in the President’s Office.—MNA/Reuters

Development of China’s rural, urban areas to be more balanced

BEIJING, 29 Dec—A prestigious Chinese economist expressed his belief here Saturday that the balanced development of China’s rural and urban areas is expected to be speeded up.

Li Yining, president of Beijing University’s Guanghua School of Management, said that the Third Plenary Session of the 16th CPC Central Committee has provided guidelines for the amelioration of the rural-urban and industrial-agricultural gaps that have long existed in China.

Promoting a coordinated development of the rural and urban areas will help raise farmers’ income and push forward all-round social progress, he noted.

China’s rural areas, which are home to the majority of its population, have long lagged behind the urban areas in terms of social and economic development.—MNA/Xinhua

Mexico appears to be most dynamic state in world trade

MEXICO CITY, 29 Dec—Mexico has become the most dynamic country in world trade as a result of its free trade agreements with other countries, the Economy Ministry said on Saturday.

The ministry that said over the past 10 years, the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA) had boosted Mexico’s commercial position.

The NAFTA was put into effect on January 1, 1994. After a decade of efforts, Mexico is ranked now the No. 7 exporter in the world and the first in Latin America as 46 per cent of the region’s imports come from Mexico, said the ministry.

The goal of the country is to boost export since 2004 through its new strategy to apply “the full capacity” of every free trade agreement.

Mexico’s agreements with 53 countries have made it the country with the larg- est number of free trade agreements. —MNA/Xinhua

Iraq bomb blows two US soldiers

BAGHDAD, 29 Dec—Guerrillas detonated a powerful bomb in a busy Baghdad shopping district on Sunday, killing a US soldier and two Iraqi children, and another US soldier died in an attack on a convoy west of the capital.

The ambushes came a day after coordinated suicide bomb, mortar and machinegun attacks in the holy city of Karbala killed 19 people—five Bulgarian and two Thai soldiers and 12 Iraqis—the deadliest strike on foreign troops since the capture of Saddam Hussein.

The Baghdad attack, which targeted US vehicles driving through the Karada shopping area, wounded five American soldiers, eight members of the Iraqi Civil Defence Corps and an Iraqi translator.

“A soldier from the 2nd Armoured Cavalry Regiment and two Iraqi children standing nearby were killed when the IED (improvised explosive device) detonated as a convoy was passing,” military spokesman Captain Jason Beck said. “At this stage we don’t know how serious the injuries are.”

Beck said the explosion occurred around 10:15 am (2:15 am EST) when the streets of Karada, a bustling area of shops and stalls, would have been crammed with people.

Northeast of the flashpoint town of Falluja, another bomb attack on a convoy killed one soldier from the 82nd Airborne Division and wounded three, the US Army said. The attacks raised to 212 the number of US soldiers killed in action since Washington declared major combat over on 1 May. Attacks appear to be continuing at a consistent pace despite the capture of former dictator Saddam Hussein on December 13.—Internet

An Iraqi peeks out onto the street at a US Army soldier of 1st Battalion takes his position during a patrol in Tikrit, Iraq on 27 Dec, 2003.—INTERNET
President candidate Edwards defends vote against $87b for Iraq

WASHINGTON, 29 Dec—Senator John Edwards said Sunday that his vote against President Bush’s request for an additional $87 billion to support U.S. troops in Iraq and rebuilding the country was not just for show.

Edwards, a Democratic candidate for President, told “Fox News Sunday,” his vote was meant to tell the Bush administration that its policy of going it alone in Iraq was not working and needed to be changed.

And he says he would have voted that way even if the measure’s passage depended on him. Such a scenario, he said, would have brought administration officials back to Congress with a more detailed plan for Iraq’s future. He also said the Senate could have then forced them to involve other nations in a broader international effort.

“This was not a show vote,” said Edwards, who represents North Carolina. “I did what I believed needed to be done to change this administration’s policy in Iraq. And it did then, and still does now, need to be changed.

Pressed on whether he would have cast the equivalent of a vote of “no confidence” in the president and sent that message around the world in the middle of the war, Edwards said he would have.

“The policy this administration was pursuing in Iraq was not working,” he said. “It needed to be changed. And I wanted to say absolutely clearly that it needed to be changed.”

Without naming anyone, Edwards said some of his rivals for the Democratic nomination were happy to go on merely criticizing the administration’s policy, but that he wanted to make a stand.

“This was our chance to step up and say with this vote what our position was,” he said. “And I thought all of that criticism was just words, if I weren’t willing to vote to support it, which is what I did.”

Congress passed the $87 billion bill in October, and Bush signed it on 6 November.

Among other candidates for the Democratic nomination, Senator John Kerry of Massachusetts and Representative Dennis Kucinich of Ohio voted against Bush’s spending request.


Kentucky MP injured in Iraq car bombing

PARADISE, 29 Dec—The family of a western Kentucky soldier says Army Specialist D J Bennett was among those injured in a series of suicide bombings this weekend in Iraq.

Sonya Fields says she received a call from her son yesterday morning as he lay in a Baghdad hospital bed waiting to go into surgery.

Suicide bombers and assailants with mortars and grenade launchers blasted two coalition military bases and the U.S. ambassador’s office in the Shiite Muslim holy city of Karbala yesterday. It was the biggest rebel attack since Saddam Hussein was captured December 13th, killing 19 and wounding nearly 200.

The 23-year-old Bennett suffered shrapnel wounds to his right leg, left arm and head. He is a member of the 194th Military Police Company, 101st Airborne Division based at Fort Campbell.—INTERNET

Iraqi officials targeted in Arbil

BAGHDAD, 29 Dec—In the Kurdish city of Arbil in northern Iraq, gunmen killed three bodyguards of Jawamer Atia, deputy director-general of security at the local interior ministry, during a bid to assassinate him on Sunday, the city’s police said.

Five people, including Atia, were wounded in the attack.

Near Mahmoudiya, south of Baghdad, gunmen opened fire on a car carrying foreign contractors working with the Ministry of Electricity, killing two Iraqi security guards, police said. A British official said a British contractor was shot in the leg in the attack and was recovering in hospital.

Officials cooperating with occupying forces have been frequently targeted by guerrillas. On 24 December a car bomb at the Arbil interior ministry building killed four people.

A prominent lawyer working with coalition officials was shot dead outside his home in the northern city of Mosul on Friday.

Chinese legislators lectured on foreign trade law

BEIJING, 29 Dec—Members of the Standing Committee of the National People’s Congress (NPC), China’s top legislature, attended a lecture Saturday to learn about issues concerning foreign trade legislation.

Wu Banggao, chairman of the NPC Standing Committee, presided over the lecture.

Wu told the legislators that the draft of the amendment to the Foreign Trade Law will be handed to the NPC Standing Committee for discussion. He said that he hoped the lecture could help them better understand legislation concerning foreign trade.

Dr Shen Sibao, the lecturer, from the Foreign Trade and Economic Cooperation University, spoke on a number of main aspects of the Foreign Trade Law.

China to amend solid waste pollution prevention law

BEIJING, 29 Dec —The sixth session of the Standing Committee of the 10th National People’s Congress (NPC) Saturday approved a proposal submitted by the NPC’s Environment and Resources Protection Committee on amending the Solid Waste Pollution Prevention Law.

The NPC’s Environment and Resources Protection Committee holds the view that electronic waste pollution has turned out to be a serious problem in China, along with the country’s high-gear economic development and the more frequent use of electronic products.

The committee predicts that a total of 14 million TV sets, computers, washing machines and refrigerators, as well as other kinds of household appliances, will be discarded annually in the coming years nationwide.

Household electrical appliances often contain environmentally unfriendly materials. If abandoned household appliances are directly buried or burned, the air, soil or water may be severely polluted.

Yet another Bulgarian soldier dies in Iraq

SOFIA, 29 Dec—One more soldier from the Bulgarian battalion in Iraq has died. This was announced by Deputy Defence Minister Ilko Dimitrov.

The man was identified as Lieutenant Nikolay Anguelov, 28, from the 5th battalion of the 11th infantry regiment of the Second mechanized division. Anguelov was killed in an attack on a special checkpoint near Mosul on Friday.

Dozens of other soldiers from the coalition forces in Iraq were killed and wounded in the last week.

A woman walks past the engine block of a car on 28 December, 2001 that landed in a street near a police station hit by a bomb on 27 December. Saturday’s attacks in the holy city of Kerbala wounded 37 soldiers, including five Americans, and at least 80 Iraqis.

A prominent lawyer working with coalition officials was shot dead outside his home in the northern city of Mosul on Friday.
CONTINUING RESISTANCE AGAINST US TROOPS

Iraqi boys check out a car that was overrun by a US tank in the town of Samarra, Iraq, Sunday, on 28 Dec, 2003.—INTERNET

Bulgarian soldiers stand guard in front of their bombed out base in Kerbala, Iraq, Sunday, on 28 Dec, 2003. Suicide bombers and assailants with mortars and grenade launchers blasted two coalition military bases and the governor's office on Saturday killing six coalition soldiers, six Iraqi police officers and a civilian and wounding at least 172 people. —INTERNET

A member of US special forces stands guard at a police station hit by a bomb yesterday in the Iraqi city of Kerbala on 28 December, 2003. Saturday’s attacks in the holy city of Kerbala killed six foreign coalition troops, wounded 37 soldiers, including five Americans, and at least 80 Iraqis.—INTERNET

Iraqi police and US Army troops look at the burned remains of a car in which four people were killed in the northern city of Mosul, on 27 December, 2003.—INTERNET

A US Army Apache helicopter flies over a Humvee vehicle while searching an area in the wake of a fatal bomb attack in the Iraqi capital of Baghdad on 28 December, 2003. Guerillas detonated a powerful bomb in a busy Baghdad shopping district on Sunday, killing a US soldier. —INTERNET

An Iraqi sifts for his belongings through the debris of his house in Kerbala on 27 December.—INTERNET
Hailing the 56th Anniversary Independence Day:

Irrigation facilities to boost crop yield

Myint Wai Hlaing

Myanmar is a country rich in water resources. The magnitude of water flowing in Ayeyawady, Chindwin, Sittaung and Thanlwin rivers plus other small rivers and creeks in Myanmar are over 870 million acre feet. As the availability of underground water and rain water is great, water can be supplied sufficiently for agricultural purposes.

Throughout the time of kings, the people of Myanmar had knowledge about irrigation and water storage techniques with the use of dams and reservoirs. In the time of King Anawrahta in Bagan Era in the AD 11th century, irrigation facilities were constructed in nine districts.

It can be studied in Myanma history that under the reign of King Anawrahta, Kinta dam, Ngaingthin dam, Paunggya dam and Gume dam were constructed near Paunlang river; and Nwet dam, Kunshae dam and Gudaw dam near Makkhaya river. Thintwe dam, Hstwaw dam and Ngakyi dam were also constructed in Bagan Era. Myankantha dam, constructed in the time of King Kyanzittha, can now be seen near Mount Tuywin in Bagan-Nyauk-U till today.

In constructing irrigation facilities from the time of Myanma kings, a total of 69 facilities had been built in Myanmar up to 1962 and the benefited acreage amounted at 0.48 million. Another 69 irrigation facilities were also constructed during the period from 1962 to 1988, with benefited acreage of 0.48 million.

The number of irrigation facilities completed during the period from 1988 to this date in the time of the Tatmadaw Government reached 155.

These facilities are now supplying water to 2,110,219 acres of farmland. The Government built these 155 irrigation facilities at a cost of K7681.15 million.

The extended reclamation of cultivable land and the sufficient supply of irrigation water are inter-related. Therefore, measures are being taken systematically for their implementation. In addition to irrigation facilities, river water pumping projects and underground water tapping projects were also implemented.

The number of completed irrigation facilities in respective states and divisions after 1988 are: two in Kayah State, one in Kayin State, one in Chin State, 15 in Sagaing Division, one in Taninthayi Division, 38 in Bago Division, 26 in Magway Division, 39 in Mandalay Division, 6 in Mon State, 4 in Rakhine State, 13 in Yangon Division, two in Shan State, and seven in Ayeyawady Division.

Irrigation facilities completed during the period from 1988 to this date in the time of the Tatmadaw Government reached 155.

These facilities are now supplying water to 2,110,219 acres of farmland. The Government built these 155 irrigation facilities at a cost of K7681.15 million.

The extended reclamation of cultivable land and the sufficient supply of irrigation water are inter-related. Therefore, measures are being taken systematically for their implementation. In addition to irrigation facilities, river water pumping projects and underground water tapping projects were also implemented.

The number of completed irrigation facilities in respective states and divisions after 1988 are: two in Kayah State, one in Kayin State, one in Sagaing Division, 20 in Bago Division, 16 in Magway Division, 16 in Mandalay Division, seven in Yangon Division, and 13 in Ayeyawady Division. As for underground water tapping projects, a total of 4,616 tube-wells and 2,862 hand-pumped wells were completed and both are now benefiting 90,302 acres of farmland.

Achievements have been made in a short time in the construction of irrigation facilities as well as in the implementation of river water pumping projects owing to the concerted efforts of the Government, the people and departmental staff.

As a result, Myanmar received Outstanding Engineering Award 2002 for irrigation projects presented by the ASEAN Engineering Federation. That award was presented at the 20th ASEAN Federation Meeting held in Cambodia from 2 to 4 September. There are 45 million acres of cultivable land in Myanmar. Of them, just over 22 million acres are in use. Therefore, efforts are underway to reclaim the remaining 23 million acres so as to ensure local population and economy boost.

(See page 7)
The Government is giving encouragement to cultivation of pepper, oil palm, Thitseint, rubber, and tea plants. Businessmen on their part come to expand their farm work more and more.

Everyone who has a house compound and farm should grow pepper. Myanma Agricultural Service sells pepper saplings at fair prices and also provides agricultural techniques.

Although pepper grows well in humid and rainy zones, they can also be grown in arid zones if there is sufficient water. Pepper is grown in Yangon Division, Ayeyawady Division, Mon State, Thaninthari Division, Kayin State, Rakhine State, Chin State and Bago Division. They are also grown in the remaining states and divisions on a commercial scale.

The crop that has become popular today is oil palm. With the growing population of consumers and increasing demand in the world market, cultivation of oil palm has become widespread in Myanmar. Edible oil is produced from oil palm. Over 600 viss of edible oil can be obtained from one acre of oil palm.

Now, Kachin State, Kayin State, Mon State and Ayeyawady Division grow oil palm on a commercial scale. Oil palm, a perennial tree, thrives in Myanmar especially in areas which get an average annual rainfall of 80 inches. The Thitseint tree (belleric myrobalan) can be grown in Myanmar on a commercial scale.

Thitseint trees on an acre produces around 300 viss of edible oil a year. Plans are well under way to annually plant 4.9 million Thitseint trees from 2002 until 2006 under the five-year plan in Magway Division and Sagaing Division annually. Since consuming Thitseint oil can cure some 20 diseases, a large number of Thitseint trees should be planted in the nation.

Efforts are being made for boosting per acre yield of jute reaching up to 700 viss. The most suitable jute strains are BC 99 and BO 23. The planting of rubber, a perennial tree, is being extended. Measures are being taken to meet 1,000 pounds of rubber as per acre yield.

Now, the planting of tea becomes popular in the agricultural sector. Tea is mainly planted in Kayin State, Chin State, Sagaing Division and Shan State. Among them, Chin State is blessed with favourable conditions to plant tea and thus systematic measures are being taken to make Chin State the tea garden of the nation.

The ten major crops — paddy, cotton, sugarcane, maize, groundnut, sesame, sunflower, black pulse, pigeon pea, green gram and pigeon pea — are being cultivated in Myanmar.

These crops thrive well in the nation and contribute much towards food sufficiency. Besides, per acre yield of these crops can be boosted remarkably.

The targeted per acre yield of paddy is 100 baskets. So, many monsoon paddy strains as Manaw-thukha, Hsineheingi, Ayeyamin, Emahatlaswe, Shwe-dweyn, Theehtatyn, MR-9 and Yayhsin Lonthwe Ematha are to be cultivated on the irrigated areas.

Shwethweyin, Theehtatyn, Emahatlaswe, Thitseint, Yayhsin Lonthwe, Hsinshwekya 2 strains are suitable for the regions that get more than 1,000 pounds of water annually. The sesamum per acre yield is 50 baskets.

The target of groundnut is 50 baskets, for the plains.

The targeted per acre yield of pedisein is 25 baskets.

And, Htaytin, Shwethweyin, MYR 9 and Yayhsin hybrid 3 and 5 maize strains are grown in rain-fed areas.

The targeted per acre yield of maize is 80 baskets. The Seeds Committee has recommended Ekari, MR-9 and Yayhsin hybrid 5 maize breeds for highlands and Shwe-wah 1, Suwan 3, Yayhsin hybrid 2, 3, 4 and 5 for the plains.

The target of groundnut per acre yield is 50 baskets.

The most suitable groundnut strains are Hsundaya 5, 6 and 7. The sesame per acre yield is 400 viss, and the farmers are to choose LRA 5166, NCU (9), NCU (4) strains.

Water resources are abundant in Myanmar and they are therefore systematically exploited for greater success in the agricultural sector.

During the time of the State Peace and Development Council, dam construction projects, river water pumping projects and underground water tapping projects are being implemented systematically. Consequently, now even arid zones can get sufficient water. Now, irrigation facilities provide adequate water to the farmlands.

These are fruitful results gained thanks to the combined and united endeavours of the State and the people.

(Translation: KTY + MS + ST)}
**Quality control of cement plants coordinated**

YANGON, 29 Dec — The Myanmar Ceramics Industries of the Ministry of Industry-I organized a coordination meeting to discuss matters related to the quality control of cement plants. The meeting took place at the meeting hall of high-quality fire brick factory operated by MCI in Insein Township here this morning, with an address by U Aung Thaung, Minister for Industry-I.

Present at the meeting were Deputy Minister Brig-Gen Kyaw Win, directors-general and managing directors of departments and industries, engineers and officials. After addressing the meeting, the minister heard reports on the purpose of holding the coordination meeting. Later, the minister inspected the cement samples of Thayet, Kyangin, Hpa-an, Hsinmin, AAA and Tiger Head cement plants.

**Information and Culture Minister receives guests**

YANGON, 29 Dec — Minister for Information Brig-Gen Kyaw Hsan received visiting six-member delegation led by Laotian Minister of Information and Culture Mr Phandouangchit Vongsa this morning at his office on Theinbyu Road.

Also present at the call were Deputy Minister Brig-Gen Aung Thein, Ambassador of the Lao People’s Democratic Republic Mr Chanthavy Bodhisane, the directors-general and managing directors, the officer on special duty and officials. They discussed matters related to the quality control of cement plants.

**Laotain I & C Minister calls on Culture Minister**

YANGON, 29 Dec — Minister for Culture Maj-Gen Kyi Aung met Mr Phandouangchit Vongsa, Minister of Information and Culture of Lao People’s Democratic Republic Mr Chanthavy Bodhisane, this morning at his office on Kabay Aye Pagoda Road here this morning.

Also present at the call were Deputy Minister for Culture Brig-Gen Soe Win Maung, Director-General of the Department of Cultural Institute U Myint Thein, Director-General of the Archaeological Department U Nyunt Han, Director-General of the Fine Arts Department U Kyaw Win, Rector U Tin Soe of the University of Culture (Yangon) and Lao Cultural Institute U Myint and wife, Deputy Minister Brig-Gen Win Sein, Director-General of Archaeological Department U Soe Win Maung, Director-General of the Cultural Institute U Myint Thein and wife, Deputy Minister Brig-Gen Win Sein, and other officials.

**Marijuana and heroin seized in Mayangon, Muse**

YANGON, 29 Dec — A combined team comprising members of local intelligence unit and Bayintnaung Police Station, acting on information, on 26 October 2003 searched the house of Aung Than on Zeyathukha Street, Ward 2, Mayangon Township, and seized 2.7923 grams of marijuana hidden under the house and arrested Ma Khin Ma and Ma Naw Shan Mati who were at the house.

Likewise, a combined team comprising members of local intelligence unit and Muse Special Anti-Drug Squad, acting on a tip-off, on 8 November 2003 arrested La Taung (a) Mar Baik and Marla (a) Lahsan who arrived at the sugarcane plantation near Muse-Nankham motor road north of Seland Village in Muse Township with 2.103 kilos of heroin concealed in 134 soapcases. Action is being taken against the pushers according to law. — MNA

**Coord meeting of CIFHC commences**

YANGON, 29 Dec — Central Inland Freight Handling Committee of the Ministry of Labour held its work coordination meeting (2003) this morning at the office of Lamnadaw Township Inland Freight Handling Committee in Lamnadaw Township.

The meeting was attended by Minister for Labour U Tin Winn, Deputy Minister Brig-Gen Win Sein and Director-General of CIFHC U Maung Maung Ohn, departmental heads and officials.

The minister and deputy minister spoke on the coordination meeting. The second day session of the meeting will continue tomorrow. — MNA
Industry-1 Minister receives Laotian Minister

YANGON, 29 Dec— Chairman of Lao-Myanmar Friendship Association Minister for Industry-1 U Aung Thaung received Chairman of Lao-Myanmar Friendship Association Minister of Information and Culture of Lao People’s Democratic Republic Mr Phanouangchit Vongsa and party at his office this morning. Also present on the occasion were Deputy Ministers of Industry-1 Brig-Gen Thein Tun and Brig-Gen Kyaw Win, the directors-general and managing directors of departments and enterprises under the ministry.

The visiting minister was accompanied by Lao-Myanmar Ambassador to Myanmar Mr Chamthavy Bodhisane and Director-General of Archaeological Department U Nyunt Han.

--- MNA

Concert to mark School...

(from page 1)

Latha Township, No 2 BEMS of Thingangyun Township, No 2 BEHS of Bahan Township, No 1 BEHS of Lannadaw Township and No 5 BEHS of Tamwe Township took part in the concert. The concert continues tomorrow. --- MNA

--- MNA

Work Committee for...

(from page 16)

Associate Professor of the Ministry of Science and Technology U San Kyon on quality control of renovation work and Manager U Myint Thein of Woodland Co Ltd on measures for construction of Conference Hall and running of Cable Car.

This was followed by a general round of discussions.

Next, Commander Maj-Gen Myint Swe attended to the needs and gave necessary instructions to officials.

Afterwards, Commander Maj-Gen Myint Swe and party inspected measures being taken in the Central Forest Zone, the Recreation Zone, the Laxation Zone and the Education Zone, the site for construction of the Sky Pier, progress in construction of the Timber Trailing, construction of the Flower Garden Shop and gave instructions.

Next, the commander and party inspected beautifying work at the junction of Sule Pagoda Road and Strand Road and along Seikkantha Street, tarring of road from Wadan Jetty to Seikkantha Street, erecting of high mast. Deputy Minister for Transport U Pe Than reported on work being carried out for renovation of the jetty. The commander gave necessary instructions.

Afterwards, the commander and party inspected all-round renovation of Botataung Seikkan region where Deputy Minister U Pe Than reported on work being carried out, progress of work and future tasks.

Next, the commander gave necessary instructions and left there. --- MNA

Industry-1 Minister inspects...

(from page 16)

reclamation project for extended industrial zone in Pyay being implemented by Pyay District and inspected earth work. Next, the minister arrived at Textiles and Finishing Plant in Shwedagon and inspected installation of new weaving machines and parts of new machines. Afterwards, the minister inspected computer designs.

Next, the minister inspected production process of enamelware plant under Myanmar Ceramics Industries in Thayawady and gave instructions to officials. --- MNA

--- MNA

General banking training course for officers concludes

YANGON, 29 Dec— The general banking training course (No 2) for officers concluded at the meeting hall of the Central Bank of Myanmar this afternoon, with an address by Minister for Finance and Revenue Maj-Gen Hla Tun.

Present on the occasion were Deputy Minister Col Hla Thein Swe, Governor of the Central Bank of Myanmar U Kyaw Kyaw Maung, members of the Bank Supervisory Committee, directors-general and managing directors of the ministry, executives of Myanmar Banks Association and officials. --- MNA

NGO raises alarm over high maternal morbidity rate in Nigeria

LAGOS, 29 Dec— A frontline gender sensitive non-governmental organization in Nigeria, Women Action Initiative has raised alarm over high maternal morbidity rate in the country.

The NGO cried out to newsmen Saturday in Nigerian commercial nerve centre Lagos when on visitations to children and maternal morbidity wards of select hospitals in the country as part of its end-of-year activities.

The coordinator of the organization, Mrs. Nnene Ufo said newsmen that it is on record that large number of women die yearly from pregnancy and pregnancy-related conditions.

She quoted the World Health Organization statistics to substantiate her claim that women are dying in large number in the country in the course of fulfilling their natural role of procreation. --- MNA/Xinhua

--- MNA
Parmalat founder questioned in fraud probe

**Milan,** 29 Dec — Italian prosecutors interrogated the founder of food group Parmalat on Sunday after he was detained for suspected fraud and misappropriation of hundreds of millions of euros, judicial sources said.

Calisto Tanzi, the wealthy head of Italy’s eighth-biggest industrial group until less than two weeks ago, spent the night in a jail cell after authorities detained him on Milan’s San Vittore Prison after Tanzi himself informed them he had information about a financial scandal at the group. The 65-year-old Tanzi, who had been a member of the board of directors of Italy’s biggest food conglomerate, was held for questioning Monday.

According to Parma’s police, Tanzi was arrested “due to the discovery of evidence of the committing of the crime of fraud”.

Tanzi is at the centre of a criminal investigation into suspected fraud at Parmalat, which has raised far-reaching questions about the conduct of the company’s senior managers, its auditors and banks.

He has not been charged, and authorities have up to 48 hours from the time of his detention to decide whether to extend custody. The scandal erupted earlier this month when Parmalat, which has 35,000 employees in some 30 countries, revealed a hole in its accounts that investigators said could cost up to 10 billion euros.

In a day of reckoning on Saturday, Parmalat, now headed by a government-appointed rescue administrator, was declared insolvent by a Parma court, hours before Tanzi was detained. Insolvency allows Parmalat to reorganize in opera-

tion and to continue paying workers, dairy farmers and suppliers, putting thousands of financial creditors on hold while it draws up a recovery plan within six months.

The court said. Insolvency also triggered a mandatory investigation into fraudulent bankruptcy, which carries a penalty of up to 10 years in jail, stiffer punishment than under the suspended offences already under investigation.

Public prosecutors have named about 20 people in the fraud probe, including current and former employees of the group as well as unnamed outside auditors.

The United States declared Saturday that it will send a relief team of over 200 relief workers and 150,000 pounds of medical supplies to the earthquake-stricken Iran.

“The United States will deploy civilian teams composed of more than 200 experts in urban search and rescue, emergency sur-

First US plane arrives in Iran with aid

TEHRAN, 29 Dec—The first US plane, a Hercules C-130 carrying aid workers and medical materials for rescue operations in the earthquake-stricken Iranian city of Bam, arrived at 3 am local time Sunday (2330 GMT Saturday) in Kerman, southeast Iran, the official news agency IRNA reported.

Among the medical supplies being dumped aboard the C-130 cargo plane are blood, food, blankets and plastic sheeting for temporary housing.

An aid workers were arriving in Bam, carrying medical supplies and equipment.

The White House said that the United States will continue to work with the Iranian Government and international relief organizations to help Iranians to face the challenge.

President Bush issued a statement on Friday from Crawford to extend his condolences to the Iranians over the earthquake, which killed more than 20,000 people and injured 30,000 others in Iran’s southeastern ancient city of Bam.

Washington broke relations with Iran after students stormed the US Embassy in Tehran in 1979 and held 53 Americans hostage for 444 days.

Russia supports Indian-Pakistani peace moves

MOSCOW, 29 Dec— Welcoming the thaw in India-Pakistan ties, Russia has expressed its support to the efforts made by leaders from both countries to create an atmosphere conducive to resolving bilateral issues on the basis of the Simla Accord and the Lahore Declaration.

The situation in South Asia was among the issues discussed by Russian First Deputy Foreign Minister Vyacheslav Trubnikov at his meeting with the Pakistani Ambassador Itihkbar Munshe Thursday.

“In the course of discussions on the situation in South Asia the Russian side backed the efforts of the leadership of India and Pakistan aimed at strengthening mutual trust for the creation of favourable conditions for resolving outstanding bilateral issues on the basis of Simla Accord and Lahore Declaration,” Russian Foreign Ministry said in a statement. Special attention was paid to the problems of counteracting terrorism, religious extremism and other new global challenges, it said, adding both the sides expressed their mutual interest in launching an effective interaction in this field.

SARS checks resume in Italian airports for flights from China

Rome, 29 Dec—Italian Health Minister Girolamo Sirchia on Saturday ordered anti-SARS checks to be resumed for flights from China to Italy.

The measure was taken in Italian international airports after fresh reports of a new suspected SARS case in Guangdong Province, southern China. The Italian Health Minister’s decision went into effect immediately.

So far it only affects flights from China and not Chinese nationals coming to Italy on other flights.

SARS, a lethal form of pneumonia, killed more than 800 people earlier this year, mainly in some parts of Asia and Canada. Several possible cases were reported at that time in Italy involving tourists or businessmen returning from China or Sin-

The sixth Guanghua New Year Forum, sponsored by Peking University’s Guanghua School of Management, was held here to contribute to China’s economic development. It is one of the most influential economic forums in China.

At the sixth forum, leading economists, as well as Yining, Wang Qiuwen, Zhu Shanhui and Cao Fengqi, made speeches. The Guanghua School of Management was founded in December 1993.

It provides business students, corporate executives and future business leaders with world-class management education and executive training, so that China can meet the challenges of the Information Age.

Most of Guanghua’s staff members obtained their Ph.D. degrees abroad. Guanghua graduates can be found in large business corporations, government agencies and non-profit institutions.

Over 1,000 Chinese leading figures gather in Peking University

BEIJING, 29 Dec— More than 1,000 Chinese officials and leading businesspeople, as well as many academic experts, gathered in Peking University Saturday to discuss China’s new economic policies, study the new economic trends, and exchange ideas concerning the nation’s future.

The sixth Guanghua New Year Forum, sponsored by Peking University’s Guanghua School of Management, was held here to contribute to China’s economic development. It is one of the most influential economic forums in China.

At the sixth forum, leading economists, such as L.
Hailing the 56th Anniversary Independence Day:

Progress in the civil aviation sector in the time of the State Peace and Development Council

Progress of Myanma Airways

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Passenger (in thousand)</th>
<th>Earning (kyat in million)</th>
<th>Profit (kyat in million)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1989-90</td>
<td>361</td>
<td>176.62</td>
<td>2.78</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1990-91</td>
<td>466</td>
<td>277.43</td>
<td>9.40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1991-92</td>
<td>503</td>
<td>309.48</td>
<td>44.64</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1992-93</td>
<td>500</td>
<td>318.50</td>
<td>60.85</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1993-94</td>
<td>536</td>
<td>341.42</td>
<td>80.68</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1994-95</td>
<td>612</td>
<td>472.70</td>
<td>149.96</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1995-96</td>
<td>637</td>
<td>519.44</td>
<td>150.64</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1996-97</td>
<td>599</td>
<td>588.55</td>
<td>203.01</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1997-98</td>
<td>430</td>
<td>610.48</td>
<td>400.73</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1998-99</td>
<td>386</td>
<td>1443.90</td>
<td>998.20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1999-00</td>
<td>400</td>
<td>1469.89</td>
<td>976.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2000-01</td>
<td>445</td>
<td>1623.49</td>
<td>1004.32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2001-02</td>
<td>479</td>
<td>1803.11</td>
<td>1086.98</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In line with the development of the State, the Myanma Airways of the Ministry of Transport is spreading its wings. The tables show progress made by Myanma Airways and Department of Civil Aviation under the ministry from 1988 to 2003. Project for extension of Yangon International Airport, Hanthawady International Airport Project, Mandalay International Airport Project, Bagan International Airport Project and others have been or are being implemented.

Aircraft and Airport

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No</th>
<th>Subject</th>
<th>1998</th>
<th>2003</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>Aircraft (Myanma Airways)</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td>Aircraft (Private)</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.</td>
<td>Airport</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>27</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

New building in Kawthaung Airport was built in Kawthaung, Taninthayi Division.

Mandalay International Airport was opened on 17-9-2000 in TadaU Township, Mandalay Division. It was built on 25015 acres of land. Its concrete runway, 14,000 feet long and 200 feet wide, is the longest in South-East Asia.

New building of Tachilek airport in Shan State (East) was built for the convenience of passengers.
Black boxes found in Benin plane crash

Cotonou (Benin), Dec 29 — Divers recovered the black boxes from the wreckage of an airliner in Benin on Saturday as investigators puzzled over why the Beirut-bound Boeing smashed into the sea moments after take-off.

Nine more bodies were pulled from the surf on Saturday, taking the death toll to near 140, while 15 survivors were met after touching down in Lebanon.

The Boeing 727 was carrying 151 passengers plus crew, including over a hundred Lebanese nationals, 15 Bangladeshi Army officers returning from UN peacekeeping duty in Sierra Leone and Liberia, and people from many African nations.

A team of divers found the black boxes underwater in the plane’s tail section. The two orange-coloured devices should have recorded cockpit conversations prior to the crash and any anomalies in the functioning of the aircraft.

MNA/Reuters

Chinese film artists meet in Beijing

Beijing, 29 Dec — Chinese film artists gathered here December 25-27 to attend the Seventh National Congress of the China Film Artists Association.

Delegates from China’s 31 provinces, municipalities and autonomous regions, as well as from the Chinese People’s Liberation Army, were present at the meeting.

The participants shared their experience over the past five years, worked out a plan for the association’s work in the next five years, and revised the constitution of the body.

MNA/Xinhua

CLAIMS DAY NOTICE

MV JATIWANGI PB-400 VOY NO (377)

Consignees of cargo carried on MV JATIWANGI PB-400 Voy No (377) are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on 30-12-03 and cargo will be discharged into the premises of A.W.T 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 as 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 MYANMAR PORT AUTHORITY AGENT FOR: M/S ADVANCE CONTAINER LINE Phone: 256908/378316/376797

The said trade mark is the subject of Declaration of Ownership recorded with the Registrar of Deeds and Assurances, Yangon, Myanmar, in Book under No. IV/478/2000 dated 5th October 2000.

Any infringement or copyright imitation thereof or other infringement of the rights of the said Corporation will be dealt with according to law.

U KYI WIN, B. Comm, B.L. for ALCATEL, by its Attorneys REMFRY & SAGAR NEW DELHI-MUMBAI Dated: 30 December, 2003

services for remote uploading and downloading of updates of software for telecommunications networks; services for the registered changes (is swapping and/or replacement) of telecommunications apparatuses, devices, and installations; services for preparing files for remote diagnosis of telecommunications apparatuses, devices, and installations; services for preparing, testing and installation of telecommunications equipment.

The said mark is used in respect of Statistical analysis services in telecommunications matters, in particular with respect to rates, to telecommunications network charging, and to remote reading of meters for consumption of telecommunications units; audit services in the field of telecommunications; services for preparing files relating to data for program preparing; telecommunications apparatuses, devices, and installations; services for remote management of variable parameters of voice and data systems in telecommunications installations; services for recording of information concerning engineering, installation, and/or training in the field of telecommunications; Installation services for telecommunications apparatuses and devices. Repair services for telecommunications apparatuses, devices, and installations; Telecommunications services. Information services in telecommunications matters; services for remote reading of meters for consumption of telecommunications units; services for automated remote upload downloading of voice and data systems in telecommunications installations;
UNICEF sending 40 tons of relief to Iran quake victims

New York, 29 Dec — The United Nations Children’s agency is sending over 40 tons of relief supplies to Iran to help tens of thousands of children affected by Thursday’s earthquake in Bam.

UNICEF said two relief flights will arrive in Iran carrying 40 tons of relief items including first aid and health supplies capable of treating 120,000 people, dozens of special obstetric and surgical kits each sufficient to assist in the delivery of 150 babies, 14,000 blankets, including 7,600 baby blankets. It would also comprise 625,000 water purification tablets to ensure a safe drinking supply, 16 community water tanks with a capacity of 5,000 litres each, three portable generators, tents, and tarpskin.

The shipment is valued at approximately 285,000 US dollars. The first flight will come from neighbouring Afghanistan, where UNICEF’s ongoing relief effort is making available vital emergency supplies from its stocks. A medical doctor from UNICEF’s staff in Kabul will accompany the plane. A second, larger relief flight will depart from UNICEF’s global supply centre in Copenhagen.

Arab League to help Iraq in political process

Baghdad, 29 Dec — The Arab League (AL) has been considering to help Iraq in the political process including a power transfer from the US-led coalition to Iraqis. AL deputy secretary Ahmed Bin Helly said here recently.

“There is an effort being exerted on the level of the Arab League to help Iraqi people in the process of power transfer and in ending the occupation, which is a main and principal goal that we emphasize, and working on main taining Iraq’s unity,” Bin Helly told a Press conference.

He mentioned that many Iraqi parties dem anded that the AL be present in any elections and in setting the mechanisms to reach the goal of having an Iraqi constitution and government with sovereignty and credibility that are internationally recognized.

Giant cranes at Shanghai’s port prepare to load containers. China’s foreign trade is expected to top 840 billion dollars this year, up 35 percent from 2002 and making the nation the world’s fourth biggest trader. —Reuters

Two more found dead in California mudslide

Los Angeles, 29 Dec — The death toll from two Southern California mudslides rose to 11 on Sunday as authorities intensified the search for five more victims and a looming storm threatened more flash flooding.

On Sunday, searchers aided by cadaver-sniffing dogs found the bodies of a man and a woman near a church camp in the San Bernardino Mountains where five children and two adults were killed when the camp was engulfed by a rain-driven slide of rocks, mud and debris on Christmas Day.

The dead and missing were among 28 people who had gathered at the caretaker’s cabin at St. Sophia Camp, about 65 miles east of Los Angeles, for a Christmas luncheon.

Authorities believe they became trapped when the cabin was overrun by a wall of mud and debris. Two women and two children escaped the tide of mud and alerted a sheriff’s deputy who was patrolling a nearby mountain road.

Dean faults Bush over mad cow precautions

Aspen (Colo.), 29 Dec — Democratic presidential candidate Howard Dean on Sunday accused President George W Bush of failing America’s cattle producers by not having adequate plans in place to cope with the discovery of mad cow disease.

On Sunday, searchers aided by cadaver-sniffing dogs found the bodies of a man and a woman near a church camp in the San Bernardino Mountains where five children and two adults were killed when the camp was engulfed by a rain-driven slide of rocks, mud and debris on Christmas Day.

The dead and missing were among 28 people who had gathered at the caretaker’s cabin at St. Sophia Camp, about 65 miles east of Los Angeles, for a Christmas luncheon.

Authorities believe they became trapped when the cabin was overrun by a wall of mud and debris. Two women and two children escaped the tide of mud and alerted a sheriff’s deputy who was patrolling a nearby mountain road.

Dean said there should be a system in place to track the movement of cattle so investigators, when confronted with a case of mad cow disease, can check if meat from the animal had entered the food supply.

“You can’t blame the president because a cow came down with" bovine spongiform encephalopathy, "but you can blame the Bush Administration for a lot of what’s going to happen," the IGC members said. "This is a potential crisis for the near couple of weeks," Dean said.

"We didn’t adopt the procedure that Great Britain did after their terrible time, which ruined many cattle farmers," Dean, who is a physician, said. "The Bush Administration had killed a proposal passed by the Senate which would have prohibited meatpackers in the US from slaughtering so-called downer animals like the Washington State dairy cow that has become America’s first confirmed case of mad cow disease."

"What’s going to happen to the beef industry in the short term could have been prevented if the administration hadn’t thought more about the possibility," Dean said.

A Iraqi man moves the wheelchair with his injured son at a hospital in the city of Kerbula, some 110 km south of Baghdad, on 27 December, 2003. —Reuters

US expands mad cow-related beef recall to eight states

Washington, 29 Dec — The US Government on Sunday said it expanded a recall of beef to a total of eight states and the territory of Guam as a precaution after the discovery of mad cow disease.

USDA officials insisted the meat posed no human health risks. The USDA said that the brain, spinal cord and other highly risk parts of the Holstein cow with mad cow disease were removed from the food chain after slaughter.

A Iraqi man moves the wheelchair with his injured son at a hospital in the city of Kerbula, some 110 km south of Baghdad, on 27 December, 2003. —Reuters

"You can’t blame the president because a cow came down with" bovine spongiform encephalopathy, "but you can blame the Bush Administration for a lot of what’s going to happen," the IGC members said. "This is a potential crisis for the near couple of weeks," Dean said.

"We didn’t adopt the procedure that Great Britain did after their terrible time, which ruined many cattle farmers," Dean, who is a physician, said. "The Bush Administration had killed a proposal passed by the Senate which would have prohibited meatpackers in the US from slaughtering so-called downer animals like the Washington State dairy cow that has become America’s first confirmed case of mad cow disease."

"What’s going to happen to the beef industry in the short term could have been prevented if the administration hadn’t thought more about the possibility," Dean said.

One of Dean’s rivals for the Democratic nomination, Rich gerdhardt, also faulted Bush on Sunday, saying the discovery of mad cow disease could be devastating for farmers and rural towns. —MNA/Reuters

A couple of weeks," Dean said. "You can’t blame the president because a cow came down with" bovine spongiform encephalopathy, "but you can blame the Bush Administration for a lot of what’s going to happen," the IGC members said. "This is a potential crisis for the near couple of weeks," Dean said.

"We didn’t adopt the procedure that Great Britain did after their terrible time, which ruined many cattle farmers," Dean, who is a physician, said. "The Bush Administration had killed a proposal passed by the Senate which would have prohibited meatpackers in the US from slaughtering so-called downer animals like the Washington State dairy cow that has become America’s first confirmed case of mad cow disease."

"What’s going to happen to the beef industry in the short term could have been prevented if the administration hadn’t thought more about the possibility," Dean said.

One of Dean’s rivals for the Democratic nomination, Richard Gephardt, also faulted Bush on Sunday, saying the discovery of mad cow disease could be devastating for farmers and rural towns. —MNA/Reuters
Chelsea keep the pressure on United, Arsenal

LONDON, 29 Dec—Chelsea recovered from Friday's Premier League mauling by Charlton Athletic with an emphatic 3-0 win over Portsmouth at Stamford Bridge on Sunday.

Chelsea, whose 4-2 defeat by Charlton was their second loss in three league games, were kept scoreless until a second half blitz from defender Wayne Bridge and midfielders Frank Lampard and Geremi.

Chelsea stay third on 42 points on goal difference behind Arsenal, who play Southampton on Monday, and a point behind Manchester United, who were at Middlesbrough later on Sunday.

Chelsea had looked destined for a draw at best against Portsmouth at Stamford Bridge before turning on the style in the second half to keep the pressure on their title rivals.

Bridge broke the deadlock with a solo effort in the 65th minute. Lampard, who had hit the post in the first half, found the roof of the net off an Adrian Mutu pass eight minutes later and Geremi volleyed his first goal for Chelsea in the 82nd minute.

“Tired for this performance,” Chelsea coach Claudio Ranieri told reporters. “We knew December was a bad month for us and I’m sure in the new year it will be better.” — MNA/Reuters

Rangers reduce Celtic lead with win at Dundee

GLASGOW, 29 Dec—Champions Rangers reduced Celtic's lead in the Scottish Premier League to eight points with a 2-0 win at Dundee on Sunday. First-half goals from Nuno Capucho and Michael Ball secured victory to take Rangers to 44 points. Celtic thrashed Hibernian 6-0 at home on Saturday.

The Glasgow side fell in the second Old Firm derby of the season next Saturday and Rangers probably have to avoid defeat to keep alive realistic hopes of retaining their title.

“There’s no doubt it was a crucial win for us today before we go to Celtic Park next week,” Rangers manager Alex McLeish told reporters.

Rangers, with Australian defender Craig Moore back from injury, went ahead on six minutes when Capucho headed home a cross from Chris Burke.

Dundee had chances to level but Ball's 35th minute strike from a long-range free-kick that swirled into the net secured the three points.

MNA/Reuters

FA official Palios supports Ferdinand's ban

LONDON, 29 Dec—The Football Association’s chief executive Mark Palios on Sunday defended the eight-month ban imposed on Rio Ferdinand for missing a dope test.

“People are allowed to make mistakes and mistakes happen all the time,” said Palios, before turning on the style in the second Old Firm derby of the season next Saturday and Rangers probably have to avoid defeat to keep alive realistic hopes of retaining their title.

“Tired for this performance,” Chelsea coach Claudio Ranieri told reporters. “We knew December was a bad month for us and I’m sure in the new year it will be better.” — MNA/Reuters

Owen set to return from injury layoff

LONDON, 29 Dec—Liverpool striker Michael Owen could return to action from an injury layoff as early as next weekend's FA Cup Third round.

Owen, who has only been out with a thigh injury for a month, will have another scan next week as Liverpool manager Gerard Houllier considers whether to risk him in the Cup competition against Yeovil.

Houllier is keen to get Owen back as soon as possible, however the Frenchman's enthusiasm to have Owen back will be tempered by recent injury woes, which has left them with a mini-goalkeeping crisis.

Goalkeeper Chris Kirkland was put on the injury list on Friday when he broke a finger in the 1-1 Boxing Day win over Bolton at Anfield. He is likely to be out for around a month, meaning Jerzy Dudek will be recalled to face Manchester City, the club with which the out of form Pole has been linked of a transfer.

“We will have another look at Michael on Monday. It is too early to say whether he will be able to play against Yeovil,” said Houllier.
WEATHER

Monday, 29 December, 2003

Summary of observations recorded at 09:30 hours MST:
During the past 24 hours, rain has been isolated in Kayin and Chin States and scattered in upperSagaing Division and weather has been generally fair in the remaining areas. Night temperatures were (7°C) above normal in Kayin State, (3°C) to (6°C) above normal in southern Shan State and Sagaing Division, (3°C) to (4°C) above normal in southern Shan State and Mandalay Division, (0°C) to (3°C) below normal in Kayin, Mon States, lower Sagaing and YangonDivisions,(5°C) to (6°C) below normal in Kayah, Rakhine States, Bag and AyeawadyDivisions and about normal in the remaining areas.

Maximum temperature on 28-12-2003 was 32.0°C (72°F).
Minimum temperature on 29-12-2003 was 14.6°C (58°F). Relative humidity at 9.30 hrs MST on 29-12-2003 was 74%. Total sunshine hours on 28-12-2003 was (7.4)hrs approx. Rainfall on 28-12-2003 was 0.1mm at Yangon Airport. 0.2mm at Yangon Airport. 0.2mm at Yangon Airport.

Bay inference: Weather is partly cloudy in the West Central Bay and Southeast Bay and generally fair elsewhere in the Bay of Bengal.

Forecast valid until evening of 30-12-2003: Possibility of isolated light rain in Kayin, Chin and Shan States, Sagaing and Mandalay Divisions and weather will be partly cloudy in the remaining areas. Degree of certainty is (40%).

Outlook for subsequent two days: Likelihood of isolated increased light rain is mainly north and northwestern Myanmar.

Forecast for Yangon and neighbouring area for 31-12-2003: Partly cloudy forecast for Mandalay and neighbouring area for 30-12-2003: Partly cloudy.
**Work Committee for All-round renovation of Kandawgyi Garden and Yangon Zoological Gardens meets**

**YANGON, 29 Dec—**The Work Committee for All-round renovation of Kandawgyi Garden and Yangon Zoological Gardens held its work coordination meeting at the briefing hall of Water Plaza, construction project of Central Forest Zone, with an address by Chairman of Yangon Division Peace and Development Council Commander of Yangon Command Maj-Gen Myint Swe.

Also present on the occasion were Vice-Chairman of Yangon City Development Committee Vice-Mayor Col Maung Pa, heads of departments and enterprises, military region commanders, members of the Work Committee, guests and others.

First, Commander Maj-Gen Myint Swe made a speech. He said that systematic measures are being taken for renovation of Kandawgyi Garden and Yangon Zoological Gardens after forming the Work Committee for All-round renovation of Kandawgyi Garden and Yangon Zoological Gardens, adding that progress has thus been made to a certain extent. Renovation measures are to be taken with the effective use of natural resources that have already existed. Officials at different levels are to make efforts for timely completion of the work since the renovation tasks are divided into four zones. Officials are to report progress of work and future tasks and are to follow rules and regulations of Master Plan in undertaking the renovation work, he said.

Next, Vice-Mayor Col Maung Pa reported on progress of work in renovation of Relaxation Zone and future tasks.

Next, Deputy Director-General of Forest Department U Soe Win Hlaing reported on progress of work in renovation of the Central Forest Zone and Yangon Zoological Gardens and work to be carried out.

Chairman of Hoteliers Association Dr Khin Shwe reported on renovation of Recreation Zone, Deputy Director-General of Fisheries Department U Hla Win on construction of Fresh Water Fish Garden in Education Zone, Deputy Director-General of Irrigation Department U Khin Zaw on sanitation measures, (See page 9).

**Industry-I Minister inspects factories and plants in Ayeyawady, Magway and Bago Divisions**

**YANGON, 29 Dec—**Minister for Industry-1 U Aung Thaung together with officials on 27 December afternoon arrived at Winthura Shop in Pathein, Ayeyawady Division and inspected sale of the Industry-1’s products and gave instructions.

On arrival at Kyangin Cement Plant of Myanmar Cement Plant of Myanma, Minister Phandouangchit Nangsa and party at Karaweik Palace.

**Laotian minister visits Shwedagon Pagoda, National Museum**

**YANGON, 29 Dec—**Minister of Information and Culture of Lao People’s Democratic Republic Mr Phandouangchit Nangsa and party together with Ambassador of Laos to Myanmar Mr Chanthy Bodhiusane, Director-General of Archaeological Department U Nyunt Han and officials, this afternoon arrived at the National Museum on Pyay Road where they were welcomed by Director-General of Department of Culture Institute U Myint Thein Swe and officials.

Next, the director-general of DCI and officials conducted the visiting minister and party round the museum.

In the evening, the visiting minister and party arrived at Shwedagon Pagoda where they were welcomed by members of the Pagoda Board of Trustees.

While paying respects to the pagoda the visiting minister and party were briefed by officials on salient points of the pagoda.

Afterwards, the visiting minister signed in the visitors’ book and made cash donations.

Officials accepted the donations and presented a picture of Shwedagon Pagoda to the guest.

In the evening, Minister for Culture Maj-Gen Kyi Aung hosted a dinner in honour of the visiting minister and party at the Karaweik Palace.

**Pathien Home for Aged marks anniversary**

**YANGON, 29 Dec—**A ceremony to mark the 21st Anniversary of Pathien Home for the Aged in Ayeyawady Division was held at the home yesterday morning, attended by Chairman of Ayeyawady Division Maj-Gen Maung Maung and senior military officers, (See page 9).

**Commander’s Trophy Volleyball Tournament ends**

**YANGON, 29 Dec—**The final matches of the North-West Command Commander’s Trophy Volleyball Tournament (Men and Women) took place at the stadium of North-West Command on 25 December afternoon, attended by Commander of North-West Command Maj-Gen Tha Aye, Deputy Commander Col Tin Maung Ohn and senior military officers, officials and other ranks of the MNA and athletes. After the final matches, Commander Maj-Gen Tha Aye presented prizes to the winners. — MNA

**INSIDE**

**Perspectives**

A centre of rest and relaxation  
Page 2

**Article**

Irrigation facilities to boost crop yield  
Page 6

**Circulation**

23,557