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

Prime Minister General Khin Nyunt meets with local authorities, departmental officials, members of social organizations and town Elders at Banru Hall, Sampaibham, Kachin State on 29-12-2003 — YANGON COMMAND

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

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

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

At the lounge of the airport Director U Win Oo of the Department of Civil Aviation reported to the Prime Minister on upgrading of Myikyina Airport, extended construction of airport building and arrangements for keeping the rooms in proper order at the airport for the convenience of passengers. Superintending Engineer U Than Nyunt Win of Public Works reported on tarring of road between the airport runway and apron and upgrading of the runway with the length of 6000 feet and width of 150 feet. The Prime Minister gave necessary instructions.

The Prime Minister and party went to Putao Airport where they were welcomed by Tactical Operation Commander Col Khang Soe, local authorities, departmental staff, traditional cultural troupe members and local nationals. On arrival at Dothtan Basic Education School in Putao, the Prime Minister heard reports by Headmaster U Dain Khan Da W on progress in construction of the two-storey school building measuring 170-foot by 30-foot by 150 feet. The Prime Minister gave necessary instructions.

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

The Prime Minister met with Township PDC members, departmental employees and town Elders at the hall of Nagmon. Township PDC Chairman U Tun Mya reported on implementation of the guidelines given by the Prime Minister on education, health, construction of retransmission station and hydel power station, high yield of paddy and (See page 8)

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

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

Protect all the interests of the State

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

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

Prime Minister General Khin Nyunt presents New Year’s gift to a national race leader at Phonkanrazi Hall, Putao, Kachin State on 29-12-2003 — YANGON COMMAND
For eradication of narcotic drugs and border area development

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

The 57th Anniversary Union Day objectives

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

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

“Soon” offered to members of Sangha

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

Efficient use of electricity

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

All this needs to be known

People’s Desire

* 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.

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

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

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

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

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

MNA

School Family Day

(27 December 2003 to 3 January 2004)
Iraqi children stand next to a US soldier of 1st Battalion, 22nd Regiment, (1-22) of the 4th Infantry Division, carrying his machine gun during a foot patrol in Tikrit, Iraq, on Saturday, 27 December 2003. — Internet

Troops using faulty helmets in Iraq, says supplier

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Indian President suggests strategy to make education attractive

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

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

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

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

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

Vietnam maintains anti-SARS measures

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

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

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

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

Private enterprises contribute to east China’s foreign trade

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

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

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

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

Since the start of military operations, 2,368 US service members have been injured as a result of hostile action, according to the Defence Department’s figures. Non-hostile injuries numbered 572. The latest deaths reported by the military:

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

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

151 died of non-hostile causes, the department said.

Iraq had ended, 340 US soldiers have died since 5 May, when President Bush declared that major combat operations in Iraq had ended. 340 US soldiers have died — 212 as a result of hostile action and 128 of non-hostile causes, according to the Defence Department’s figures.

Private enterprises could participate in foreign trade. — Internet

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Tinley Park soldier killed in Iraq

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

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

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

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Blair rocked by new flood of criticism over Iraq war

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

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

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

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

He believed it, but he believed it because he believed it was right when everybody now can see he is wrong.

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

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

Mr Blair’s woes were further increased when Clare Short unleashed her most stinging attack on him.

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

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

He urged Mr Blair to make a New Year resolution to admit he was wrong and to resign. If he did not, Mr Cook said, “It is the duty of every MP to act.”

Visitor arrivals in Singapore grew 7.9 per cent in November

SINGAPORE, 30 Dec—Visitor arrivals in Singapore increased by 7.9 per cent in November 2003, compared with the same month last year, which is the first positive year-on-year growth since March last year, which is 5.1 per cent, official statistics said today.

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

Large amount of drugs seized in HK

HONG KONG, 30 Dec—The Narcotics Bureau (NB) of Hong Kong Police seized 3.2 million Hong Kong dollars (412.93 US dollars) worth of dangerous drugs and arrested four persons in two anti-drugs operations on Saturday.

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

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

Chinese Premier urges to carry out taxation strictly

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

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

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

China to monitor scenic spots with satellites

FUZHOU, 30 Dec—China has begun trial operation of a satellite system to monitor activities at key scenic areas. The Ministry of Construction said the satellite camera system will monitor thin panchromatic satellite images of some Chinese tea containinge inside a shopping bag.

The system is expected to cover all the country’s 151 key scenic areas by late next year.

Violence in Iraq shows no letup

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

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

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

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

Vietnam to focus on improving environment

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

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

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

Regarding the international economic integration, the Prime Minister said, “Raising quality and competitiveness of each product, goods category, enterprise and the whole economy is the foundation for negotiations towards the World Trade Organization’s entry.”

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

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

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

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

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

Bulgarian and US ambulances drive towards Karbala following an attack on foreign troops by guerrillas on 27 December, 2003. — Internet

US soldiers stand guard in Baghdad’s densely populated area of Karada on Tuesday, 30 December, 2003 after their convoy was targeted with a roadside bomb. — Internet
Energy plays a key role in the drive to develop the country, boost the economy and improve the living standard. Energy is essential for everyone and every factory.

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

When it comes to Myanmar petroleum, it is necessary to trace back to the course of history. Petroleum and natural gas can be obtained in the central Myanmar, Taninthayi coastal region, Rakhine coastal region and delta region. Petroleum has been exploited in Yenangyaung region since 906, over 1,000 years ago. Oil-wells were in the possession of Myanmar kings. After the second Anglo-Myanmar War, the colonialists monopolized all of Myanmar oil-wells and petroleum industries.

The colonialists made a lot of profits from those resources. When the World War II broke out, the colonialists blew up the oil-wells and destroyed them. They exploited the scorched earth policy. During the war time, the Japanese repaired oil-wells and destroyed them. They employed the scorched earth methods. After the World War II, the Tatmadaw Government is making efforts to overcome the failure to produce adequate petroleum. Relentless efforts are being made to discover new oil fields, both underground and underwater.

After assuming the responsibilities of the State, the Tatmadaw Government places emphasis on the prevalence of peace and stability in the country. It is working day on, day out in order to build the country into a modern and developed one, the ultimate aim of the State. Steps are also taken for the country to keep abreast of the world nations.

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

In 1988, the consumption of electricity amounted to 2264.45 million units. However, due to the systematic implementation of electricity projects, people are now using up to (5064.20) million units of electricity. In other words, electricity consumption has increased 2.27 times.

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

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

Eleven new Electric Power Projects including Paunglaung Hydroelectric Project that would produce 30,000 metric tons, Thanlayyan plant, 14,500 metric tons, Thanlyin plant, 6,900 metric tons, totaling 51,400 every year. Hoeiktha methanol plant is capable of producing 450 metric tons per day.

On 25 December 2002, Myanmar Oil and Gas Enterprise under the Ministry of Energy and Myanmar Foodstuff Industries under the Ministry of Industry each received High Efficiency Golden Asia Awards (New Millennium Award). The achievement is the milestone in the energy sector.

Myanmar Oil and Gas Enterprise in the endeavour to secure US$ 2.5 billion as foreign investment in the past ten years. MOGE was honoured because it could exploit crude oil and natural gas abundantly in the offshore oil and gas fields and put them on sale.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Number</th>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Capacity</th>
<th>Targeted year</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Pyimama, Mandalay Division</td>
<td>2 x 70 = 140</td>
<td>2003-2004</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Setata, Magway Division</td>
<td>2 x 70 = 140</td>
<td>2003-2004</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Mongai, Shan State (South)</td>
<td>3 x 25 = 75</td>
<td>2003-2004</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Kyauktadaung, Mandalay Division</td>
<td>195 x 4 = 780</td>
<td>2006-2007</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Naxikha, Mandalay Division</td>
<td>200 x 2 = 400</td>
<td>2006-2007</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Toungoo, Bago Division</td>
<td>2 x 15 = 30</td>
<td>2004-2005</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Pua Division</td>
<td>3 x 21.7 = 65</td>
<td>2005-2006</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Pyu Division</td>
<td>3 x 20 = 60</td>
<td>2006-2007</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>Shwekyi Division</td>
<td>4 x 18.75 = 75</td>
<td>2006-2007</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>Kyauktata, Bago Division</td>
<td>2 x 12.5 = 25</td>
<td>2004-2005</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>Pyinlaung, Shan State (South)</td>
<td>2 x 60 = 120</td>
<td>2003-2004</td>
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Total megawatts: 1,964
Hailing the 56th Anniversary Independence Day:

Endeavours to fulfil the energy needs

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Oil Field</th>
<th>Township</th>
<th>Division</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ayadaw Oil Field</td>
<td>Pakokku</td>
<td>Magway</td>
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<tr>
<td>Chauk Oil Field</td>
<td>Chauk</td>
<td>Magway</td>
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<tr>
<td>Yaynangyaung Oil Field</td>
<td>Yaynangyaung</td>
<td>Magway</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mann Oil Field</td>
<td>Minbu-Sagu</td>
<td>Magway</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Htinkshabin/Kanni Oil Field</td>
<td>Minbu-Sagu</td>
<td>Magway</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ppetau Oil Field</td>
<td>Minhla</td>
<td>Magway</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yaynanna Oil Field</td>
<td>Minhla</td>
<td>Magway</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pay Oil Field</td>
<td>Shwedaung</td>
<td>Bago</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Myanaung/Shwpyitha Oil Field</td>
<td>Myanaung</td>
<td>Ayeyawady</td>
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<tr>
<td>Aphyauk Oil Field</td>
<td>Taikkyi</td>
<td>Yangon</td>
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<tr>
<td>Nyaungdon Oil Field</td>
<td>Nyaungdon</td>
<td>Ayeyawady</td>
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<tr>
<td>Kyaukkhwet Oil Field</td>
<td>Myaing</td>
<td>Magway</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Letpanto Oil Field</td>
<td>Pauk</td>
<td>Magway</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thagyitaung Oil Field</td>
<td>Pauk</td>
<td>Magway</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sabaitaung Oil Field</td>
<td>Pakokku</td>
<td>Magway</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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

Power Station built in
Ahlon Township, Yangon Division, to fulfil the electricity needs.
Located in far north of...

(See page 9)

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

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

It is necessary to extend the sown acreage of crops to ensure sufficient local consumption. Officials are needed to organize the local people into growing tea on a commercial basis as the crop is the most suitable for the region. Moreover, agricultural techniques should be provided and strains of crops disbursed.

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

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

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

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

On arrival at Pannandin town in Nagmon township, Prime Minister General Khin Nyunt and party arrived back Putao by helicopter in the evening. Next, Prime Minister General Khin Nyunt and party presented exercise books and uniforms for 74 students.

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

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

Prime Minister General Khin Nyunt and party arrived at Khakaborazy National Park in Putao on 29 December, the Prime Minister met with local authorities, departmental personnel, social organizations, nationalities youth of border areas, and officials of the State.

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

Located in far north of the nation, and having the pristine nature decorated with snow-capped mountain ranges. The State has been making arrangements to build necessary infra-structures as success in the tourist industry may drive the region towards rapid progress.

In this regard, the local people will have to make efforts for development of their economies and region. As the region’s soil is fertile, the local people are required to grow more rice till ensuring regional food sufficiency, while putting land under tea, and fruits including macadamia and walnut, cultivating mushroom rooms and vegetables for hotel use, extending livestock breeding works, and growing edible oil crops. Moreover, the local people are urged to harmoniously strive for regional peace and stability and development and further strengthening of the Union, while keeping in mind the spirit of unity and Union Spirit. Likewise, the departmental personnel will have to organize the people to develop the regions they are assigned to and to raise the social standard of the locals.

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

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

Commander Maj-Gen Maung Maung Swe, ministers and deputy ministers also presented television, TV receiver, sewing machines, medicines, clothes, sweaters, blankets, and salt to departmental staff and local national people.

Prime Minister General Khin Nyunt and party posed for a group photo together with departmental staff and local national people.

The Prime Minister and party arrived back Putao by helicopter in the evening. Next, Prime Minister General Khin Nyunt and party presented exercise books and uniforms for 74 students.

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

Located in far north of …

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

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

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

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

The Prime Minister and party visited Theravada Buddhist Central Missionary Monastery in Putao and paid respect to the Sayadaws. They offered gifts to the Sayadaws.

He urged the departmental personnel to make efforts for regional development after organizing and leading the people in unity.

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

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

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

The Prime Minister gave instructions on upgrading the school to high school level.

He urged the departmental personnel to make efforts for regional development after organizing and leading the people in unity.

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

Rector U Thin Hlaing reported on academic matters and replied to the students. The Prime Minister and party proceeded to Myitkyina University where they were welcomed by Rector U Thin Hlaing and faculty members.

Opening of advanced...

The opening ceremony of the foundry plant was held in front of the plant. Managing Director of Myanma Automobil-e and Diesel Engine Industries U Soe Thein and Vice-President of Angenique International Ltd Mr M P Gupta formally opened the plant. The Secretary-1 formally unveiled the signboard of the plant. Similarly, Managing Director U Soe Thein and Vice-President Mr M P Gupta formally opened the plant, the Secretary-1 formally unveiled the signboard of the plant, and the Secretary-1 inspected samples of ball bearing, parts and production. The Secretary-1 and party inspected construction of aluminium conductor steel reinforced cable factory and installation of machines.

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

Universities’ Hospital celebrates diamond jubilee

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

YANGON, 30 Dec — Hailing the 56th Anniversary Independence Day, new tarred roads built on a self-reliant basis in Yankin township and North Okkalapa Township, Yangon East District, were opened this morning, attended by Chairman of Yangon Division Peace and Development Council Commander of Yangon Command Maj-Gen Myint Swe and Chairman of the Road Repaving Committee U Kan Tun formally opened the road. The new tarred road is 1,420 feet long and 10 feet wide.

First, new tarred Myananda lane in Ward 13, Yankin Township was opened in front of the archway of the road. Commander Maj-Gen Myint Swe, Mayor Brig-Gen Aung Thein Linn and Chairman of the Road Repaving Committee U Kan Tun formally opened the road.

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

Next, Thabye (middle) street, Padamya street, 2nd Hninsi street, 1,350 feet long and 10 feet wide.

Next, the commander of Road Repaving Committee U Myint Win reported that the discussions.

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

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

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

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

Addressing the meeting Minister Dr Kyaw Myint said it was the seventh time ever since the National Environmental Sanitation Week had been launched first in 1998.

The Ministry of Health in cooperation with the Ministry for Progress of Border Areas and National Races and Development Affairs was to make arrangements for building fly-proof latrines in all townships and villages of the country in accord with the ninth resolution passed during the 20th meeting of the National Health Committee held on 30 October 1995. Therefore, he said, officials of the ministries concerned as well as those of NGOs were to actively participate in the environmental sanitation week as they took part in the previous years’ activities.

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

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

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

Hole-in-one

YANGON, 30 Dec — U Myint Win while playing together with U Than Tun Aung, U Than Htay and U Myint Soe at the Myanmar Golf Club on 27 December 2003 scored hole-in-one at No 5 hole. He drove from 128 yards away with EV(03) ball and Callaway (96) wood (3).

Heroin seized in Monghay

YANGON, 30 Dec — A combined force of members of local intelligence unit, Myanmar Police Force and special anti-drug squad, acting on a tip-off, searched Nyanit (a) Aik Shan of Lawston village-tract, Tangyan, and Nyikar of Mongwa village-tract, Tangyan, on 13 December at the toll gate in Monghay. Altogether 110 heroin blocks weighing 36.63 kilos hidden in the body of their white Toyota Hilux from Nynam were seized. Nyikar managed to escape but was nabbed in Sutpalau village of Kengtung the next day. Action is being taken against them under the Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances Law.
Hailing the 56th Anniversary Independence Day:

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

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

### Progress in the rail transportation sector

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Subject</th>
<th>1988</th>
<th>2003</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Railroad (mile)</td>
<td>2793.86</td>
<td>3897.29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Distance (mile)</td>
<td>1976.35</td>
<td>2989.12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Station</td>
<td>487</td>
<td>768</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bridge (large/small)</td>
<td>5650</td>
<td>9056</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Railroads under construction:** 154.21 miles

**Railroads to be constructed:** 515.05 miles

### New station in Mandalay

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

### Bagan-Kyaukpadaung railroad

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

### Subject

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Subject</th>
<th>1988</th>
<th>2003</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Steam engine</td>
<td>79</td>
<td>39</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Diesel engine</td>
<td>150</td>
<td>196</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Local train</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>60</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Subjects

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Subject</th>
<th>1988-1989</th>
<th>2002-2003</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Passenger</td>
<td>36,689</td>
<td>61,763</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Passenger per mile</td>
<td>1870.125</td>
<td>2926.436</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Goods</td>
<td>1,269</td>
<td>3,442</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Goods per mile</td>
<td>196,579</td>
<td>723,098</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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

As a result, there have emerged nearly 3000 miles of railroad in the country, up 1012 miles from 1976 miles in 1988.
China sets up large organ transplant centre    
TIANJIN, 30 Dec — A large organ transplant institution opened recently in north China’s Tianjin Municipality. Tianjin Oriental Transplant Centre is the largest of its kind in China, covering an area of 3,000 square metres, said Shen Zongyong, director of the centre.

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

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

Angolan dies in Zimbabwe, tests under way for Ebola

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

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

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

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

Indian cold kills another 29, toll passes 50

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

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

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

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

State schools in Bihar had been opened up at night as thousands of books are waiting to give you knowledge free of charge.

ARRIVAL/CLAIMS DAY NOTICE    
MV “MANDALAY” VOY NO 115/N

Consignees of cargo carried on MV “MANDALAY” Voy No 115/N are hereby notified that the vessel arrives at Yangon port on 31-12-03 and will be berthing on about 1-1-04 and cargoes will be discharged into the premises of Myanma Port Authority where it will lie at the consignee’s risk and expenses and subject to the byelaws and conditions of the Port of Yangon.

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

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

CONTAINER FEEDER SERVICE MYANMA FIVE STAR LINE

Phone: 29147.296507.295754

WHO expert in China to help diagnose SARS suspect

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

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

But it was not yet clear when the WHO specialist would travel to Guangdong, Wadia said.

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

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

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

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

But it was not yet clear when the WHO specialist would travel to Guangdong, Wadia said.

The expert had been invited by China’s government to sift through data collected so far on the suspected patient and observe ongoing testing.

Over 13,000 road accidents recorded in Uganda in 11 months    
KAMPALA, 30 Dec — A total of 13,051 road accidents have been reported in Uganda between January and November this year which caused 1,304 deaths and 8,099 injuries, a report from the Ministry of Works, Transport and Communications has said.

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

The report listed some horrific speeding accidents occurred in April, August and September this year. For example, the September accident caused the unforgettable tragedy of the Katuna bus accident that claimed the lives of 54 passengers.

Meanwhile, regional traffic office in Kampala reported that between 1998 and 2001, an average of 1,650 people died in speeding road accidents each year.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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In 2002, some 2,017 people died in road accidents in the country which caused about 150 million US dollars loss. — MNA/Xinhua
US Iraq envoy contradicts Blair on WMD

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

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

But in a BBC’s Dmblyte programme about those words, the US administrator for Iraq, apparently unaware they came from Blair, was dismissive.

“It sounds like somebody who doesn’t agree with the policy, sets up a red herring and then knocks it down,” he said.

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

A spokesman in Blair’s Downing Street office said the Prime Minister had been referring to material published in the inspectors weapons inspection group’s interim report earlier this year.

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

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

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

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

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

Report says US Army stops soldiers from quitting

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

“The Army alone has blocked the possible retire- ment and departures of more than 40,000 soldiers, about 16,000 of them Na- tional Guard and reserve members who were eligi- ble to leave the service this year,” the newspaper said.

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

“It reflects the fact that duty, while others are lidding, insisting they have fallen victim to a policy that amounts to an unan- nounced, emergency draft,” the report said.

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

At a congressional testi- mony last month, Army Chief of Staff Peter Schoomaker disclosed that the number of US active- duty soldiers has exceeded the congressional author- ized maximum by 20,000 and now registered 500,000 as a result of stop-loss or- ders.

MNA/Xinhua

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

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

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

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

A strong earthquake with a magnitude of 6.3 on the open-ended Richter scale rocked the city of Bam in Iran’s southeastern province of Kerman at 5:28 am (0158 GMT) early Friday.

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

Pedestrians walk past a giant poster for the movie ‘Lord of the Rings: The Return of the King’ which continued to rule the North American box office raking in 50.5 million dollars.

Iran says quake death toll could reach 30,000

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

The stench of death filled the flattened ancient Silk Road city of Bam as the world united in relief efforts. As searches went into a fourth day, rescuers said they were no longer finding sur- vivors — only the mangled remains of people killed when the world’s most le- thal earthquake in at least 10 years levelled the ancient Silk Road city of Bam.

“Rescue operations will con- tinue at least for one more day (until midnight on Monday) when an assessment will be made to continue or not,” Alain Pasche of a UN rescue co-ordination team told Reuters. “After five days the chances of finding anyone alive are very slim.”

Round-the-clock efforts were complicated by piles of bodies in the streets, overflowing cemeteries, hit- terly cold nights, rain, re- peated aftershocks, confu- sion and some looting.

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

Interior Minister Abdolvahed Mousavi-Lari said on state television some 20,000 bodies had been re- covered, but the death toll was likely to be much higher.

“The destruction of the disease was a threat he said. “We have instructed various bodies to immediately start cleaning up. If we don’t bring hygiene back to the city we will have major problems.”

MNA/Reuters

Overseas Chinese Chamber of Commerce branches established

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

Li Hailong, deputy director of the Overseas Chinese Affairs Office under the State Council, said in a speech that the chambers play important roles in the relationship be- tween overseas Chinese commercial enterprises and the government.

The chambers also help promote cooperation and exchange between the enterprises and safeguard their legitimate rights and interests, Li said.

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

“Return of the King” leads US holiday box office

LOS ANGELES, 30 Dec— Bisk business for reignig box office champion “The Lord of the Rings: The Re- turn of the King” and several new releases helped drive ticket sales to a record high for the Christmas weekend in North America, accord- ing to studio estimates issued Monday.

The third installment in the lucrative “Rings” trilogy earned $2.1 million dol- lars for the three days beginning on 26 December, driving its 12-day total to $223.7 million dollars.— 123.7 million dollars were its predecessor, “The Two Towers” was at the same time last year. Additionally, the new film has already grossed $268.4 million US dollars in 38 foreign coun- tries. The “Lord of the Rings” films were released by New Line Cinema, a unit of Time Warner Inc.— MNA/Reuters

REPORT FOR HUMAN RIGHTS

HTTP://WWW.INTERNET.MNA/34/550/SAT0110.HTM

MNA/Reuters
**S P O R T S**

**Croatia sets up Euro 2004 warm-up matches**

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

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

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

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

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

**Arsenal keep in touch with 1-0 win**

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

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

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

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

“It was a deserved victory and a well done job,” Arsenal manager Arsene Wenger said, adding his side might have scored more had Niemi not been in such good form.

“In the second half we dropped physically and they got a bit more aggressive,” he said.

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

Southampton remain in eighth on 26 points—Manager Gordan Strachan said it was the first time he had watched his side playing as though they were frightened of the opposition.

“They must remember that smell of fear,” Strachan said of his players’ half-time performance. “We must remember how we embarrassed ourselves.”—MNA/Reuters

**Baggio sets to retire at end of season**

Rome, 30 Dec—Former World Player of the Year Roberto Baggio, 36, says he plans to retire at the end of the current season. Baggio (R) is tackled by Milan’s Andrea Pirlo during their Serie A soccer match in Milan, Italy, on 22 December, 2002.—INTERNET

“Let’s not put Parma in the same bracket as Fiorentina. That has left Parma struggling to find the funds to pay their players,” said Strachan.

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

“Their defence has made me and given me a rough ride over the years,” he said. “These days, at my age, it gets rougher and rougher.”

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

**Club boss says Parma will survive Parlatirn crisis**

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

“I am convinced that Parma can be saved,” Patrick Nerboli told local newspaper Gazzetta di Parma in an interview.

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

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

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

“Let’s not put Parma in the same bracket as Fiorentina. Parma is not at risk of disappearing,” Nerboli said.

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

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

**Veron three more weeks out of Chelsea**

LONDON, 30 Dec—High-flying Chelsea will be without Argentine midfielder Juan Sebastian Veron for three more weeks as he recovers from a back injury, coach Claudio Ranieri said on Sunday.

He has started training but will need another 20 days, Ranieri said after his side’s 3-0 home win over Portsmouth.

Veron has not played since returning from international duty six weeks ago.

His compatriot, striker Hernan Crespo, has also missed the last two Chelsea games through illness.

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

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

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

Aigner said the 1995 Bosman ruling, allowing players to move freely within Europe, was ty- ing the hands of football authorities.

“It is the most decisive factor why things are develop-
Wednesday, December 31

View today:

7:00 am
1. Daily News
2. Weather
3. News Summary
4. World News
5. World News
6. News Summary
7:25 am
2. To be healthy exercise
7:30 am
3. Morning news
7:40 am
4. Nice and sweet song
7:55 am
5. CNN News
8:10 am
1. Rambutan
8:20 am
2. Rambutan

Weather:

Tuesday, December 30, 2003

Summary of observations recorded at 09:30 hours MST: During the past 24 hours, light rain has been isolated in Kachin State and weather andND have been generally fair in the remaining areas. Night temperatures were (3°C) above normal in Kachin State and Mayong Division. (3°C) to (4°C) below normal in Chin State and Mrauk-U Division, (5°C) to (6°C) below normal in Mon State and Ayeyawady Division and about normal in the remaining areas. Slight night rain/light mist has been isolated in Kachin State and Ayeyawady Division. Generally fair in the remaining areas.

Maximum temperature on 29-12-2003 was 32.0°C (99°F). Minimum temperature on 30-12-2003 was 14.0°C (57°F). Rainfall at 9:00 hrs. 03:12 to 3:30 PM in 24 hours light rain in Yangon, Kaba-Aye and central Yangon. Total rainfall since 1-1-2003 is 2211 mm (87.05 inches) at Yangon Airport, 2135 mm (84.1 inches) at Kaba-Aye and 2394 mm (94.0 inches) at Yangon. Maximum wind speed at Yangon (Kaba-Aye) was 12 mph from NorthEast at 11:45 PM on 29/12/2003.

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

Forecast valid until evening of 31-12-2003: Possibility of isolated light rain in Kachin State and upper Sagain District and weather will be generally fair in the remaining areas. Degree of coastal safety (beach):

State of the sea: Seas will be slightly to moderate in Myanmar waters.

Outlook for subsequent two days: Generally fair in the whole country.

For Yangon and neighbouring area for 31-12-2003: Generally fair weather.

Forecast for Mandalay and neighbouring area for 31-12-2003: Fair weather.

Education Book Fair

Place — University Diamond Jubilee Hall (ground floor), Paya Road, Yangon.

Time — 8 am to 3 pm

Date — 27 December 2003 to 3 January 2004

Exhibition booths of Universities and discount sales.

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

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

YANGON, 30 Dec — The opening ceremonies of the power tiller engine factory, foundry plant and ball bearing plant of the Ministry of Industry-2 were held in Indagaw Industrial Zone in Bago Township this morning, attended by Chairman of Industrial Development Committee Secretary-1 of the State Peace and Development Council Lt-Gen Soe Win. Also present were Chairman of Bago Division Peace and Development Council Commander of Southern Command Brig-Gen Ko Ko, Minister for Industry-2 Maj-Gen Saw Lwin, Minister for Energy Brig-Gen Luu Thi, Minister for Electric Power Maj-Gen Tin Htut, the deputy ministers, Commander of No 77 LID, officials of the State Peace and Development Council Office, heads of departments of the Ministry of Industry-2, local authorities and guests.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Minister inspects runway extension projects

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

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

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

The minister inspected stockpile of gravel...