Established 1914

Senior General Than Shwe sends felicitations to Cuba

YANGON, 1 Jan — Senior General Than Shwe, Chairman of the State Peace and Development Council of the Union of Myanmar has sent a message of felicitations to His Excellency Dr Fidel Castro Ruz, President of the Council of State and of the Government of the Republic of Cuba on the occasion of the Anniversary of the Liberation Day of the Republic of Cuba which falls on 1 January 2004. — MNA

Rural development tasks facilitate and strengthen national development

Nowadays, the Government has been making all-out efforts to bring about harmonious development in all parts of the Union and rural development tasks facilitate and strengthen national development. Seventy per cent of Myanmar population reside in rural areas. Therefore, only with rural development, will all parts of the Union develop speedily and harmoniously, thereby contributing to national development.

Prime Minister General Khin Nyunt sends greetings to Kachin State Special Region-1 leaders

YANGON, 31 Dec — Prime Minister General Khin Nyunt attended the dinner to mark Kachin traditional Inlon Innan harvesting ceremony hosted by Nyein Foundation on the lawns of Malikha Yeiktha in Myitkyina, Kachin State on 29 December.

It is incumbent upon all the professionals in acting career to keep up the film industry as they did in the past.

Without having any bias against any race, Government implementing plans for harmonious development of all national races based on parental love, goodwill

Prime Minister General Khin Nyunt attends dinner to mark Kachin traditional Inlon Innan harvesting ceremony

YANGON, 31 Dec — Prime Minister General Khin Nyunt attended the dinner to mark Kachin traditional Inlon Innan harvesting ceremony hosted by Nyein Foundation on the lawns of Malikha Yeiktha in Myitkyina, Kachin State, at 7 pm on 29 December.

Also present on the occasion were member of the State Peace and Development Council Lt-Gen Ye Myint, Chairman of Kachin State Peace and Development Council Commander of Northern Command Maj-Gen Maung Maung Swe, ministers, the Chief of Staff (Navy), deputy ministers, senior military officers, officials of the State Peace and Development Council Office, departmental heads, local authorities, peace negotiators, national race leader of Kachin State Special Region-1 U-Za Khun Ting Ring and members, national race leader of Kachin State Special Region-2 U La Mon Tu Gyaw and members, Chairman of Nyein Foundation Rev Dr Sabew Jum and members, priests, officials of the Baptist Council, members of Kachin State cultural troupes, national races guests and specially invited guests.

Before the dinner, fireworks were displayed to welcome the Prime Minister and party and guests.

Prime Minister General Khin Nyunt being welcomed by the chairman of Nyein Foundation, peace negotiators and national race leaders at the dinner to mark Kachin traditional Inlon Innan harvesting ceremony at Malikha Yeiktha in Myitkyina, Kachin State, on 29-12-2003. — MNA

Prime Minister General Khin Nyunt being welcomed by the chairman of Nyein Foundation, peace negotiators and national race leaders at the dinner to mark Kachin traditional Inlon Innan harvesting ceremony at Malikha Yeiktha in Myitkyina, Kachin State, on 29-12-2003. — MNA

Prime Minister General Khin Nyunt beats Kachin traditional gong at the dinner on 29-12-2003. — MNA

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

Thursday, 1 January, 2004

For successful realization of 56th Anniversary Independence Day objectives

It was on 4 January, 1948, that our country succeeded in freeing itself from the colonial rule and it was designated as the independence day. Since that time, the Independence Day has been observed every year with objectives of full political essence.

It is necessary for all the citizens of the Union of Myanmar, especially the younger generation, to realize the sacrifices our forebears had to make to regain our freedom and the value of independence. It is only because ours is now an independent and sovereign nation that it has been possible for us to realize our national goal — emergence of a peaceful, modern and developed nation.

It is important for all the national brethren of the Union to be patriotic and regard it as their inborn duty to safeguard their national independence and sovereignty as long as the world lasts. And the younger generation must bear in mind that, as they are ones who will have to shoulder the responsibilities of the State, they will have to work unitedly for the perpetuation of independence and sovereignty.

Nowadays, the entire nation, under the leadership of the Government, is making concerted efforts for all-round development of the nation and for the successful realization of systematic transition to a discipline-flourishing democracy. The objectives for the 56th Anniversary of Independence Day have been laid down for these purposes. They are:

- All the national people to collectively safeguard the national independence and ensure perpetuation of sovereignty,
- All the national to be united to ensure non-disintegration of national solidarity,
- All the national people to strive in unity for the emergence of Enduring State Constitution and for the building a new, modern and developed nation
- All the national people to participate with full sense of Union Spirit and patriotism in the successful implementation of the seven-point roadmap of the State.

We would like to call upon the entire national people to work unitedly and as hard as they can for the successful realization of the objectives for the 56th Anniversary of Independence Day so that we will reach our national goal of building a peaceful, modern and developed nation.

Full dress rehearsal of Independence Day Flag Hoisting and Saluting Ceremony held

YANGON, 31 Dec — The full dress rehearsal of Yangon City Flag Hoisting and Saluting Ceremony of the 56th Anniversary Independence Day for the year 2004 was staged at the People’s Square on Pyay Road here this morning. The flag hoisting ceremony was held at 4.20 am and the saluting ceremony at 7 am. Present on the occasion were Yangon Command Deputy Commander Col Wai Lwin, military region commanders, senior tatmadaw officers, responsible personnel and others.

Pyay Road to be closed temporarily

YANGON, 31 Dec — The 56th Anniversary Independence Day Yangon City Flag Hoisting and Flag Saluting Ceremonies will be held on 4 January 2004, and Pyay Road between Alhon Road and Shinsawpu Road will temporarily be closed from 4 to 9 am, announced by the Yangon Division Peace and Development Council.

Prime Minister General Khin Nyunt receives the Chairman and Editor-in-Chief of Leaders Magazine

YANGON, 31 Dec — Prime Minister of the Union of Myanmar General Khin Nyunt received Mr Henry O Dormann, Chairman and Editor-in-Chief of Leaders Magazine at the Zeyathiri Beikman on Konmyinttha here at 4 pm today.

Also present on the occasion together with Prime Minister General Khin Nyunt were Minister for Foreign Affairs U Win Aung, Minister for Information Brig-Gen Kyaw Hsan, Minister for Culture Maj-Gen Kyi Aung, Deputy Minister for Foreign Affairs U Khin Maung Win and Director-General of Protocol Department Thura U Aung Htet.

Present together with the visiting Minister of LPDR was Laotian Ambassador to Myanmar Mr Chanthavy Bodhisane.

Prime Minister General Khin Nyunt receives Loatian Minister

YANGON, 31 Dec — Prime Minister of the Union of Myanmar General Khin Nyunt received Mr Phandouangchit Vongsa, Minister of Information and Culture of the Lao People’s Democratic Republic at the Zeyathiri Beikman on Konmyinttha here at 4 pm today.

Also present on the occasion were Yangon Command Deputy Commander Col Wai Lwin, military region commanders, senior tatmadaw officers, responsible personnel and others.

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People’s Desire

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

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Red Cross asks US-led coalition in Iraq for access to Saddam Hussein

GENEVA, 31 Dec — The International Red Cross has asked the US-led coalition in Iraq for access to captured former Iraqi President Saddam Hussein.

Under the Geneva Conventions the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) has the right to contact any prisoner of war or detained civilian, said ICRC spokesman Florian Westphal said Tuesday.

“We have been in contact with the Americans regularly concerning prisoners of war and other detainees in Iraq and in the course of this contact we have also talked about Saddam Hussein,” he told AFP. “Saddam Hussein, as somebody protected by the Geneva Conventions, has a right to ICRC visits,” he said.

The agency, which is the internationally-recognized guardian of the Geneva Conventions, has asked for access to the former President since his capture by US forces on 13 December, Westphal said, without elaborating.

The ICRC was merely following its mandate with regards to seeking access to all detained people, he explained. There was no fixed timeframe specifying when the ICRC could speak to Saddam.

“There are a number of different factors which can have an influence on each individual case. The general idea is that it should happen as soon as possible,” Westphal said. The ICRC is working under the assumption that Saddam Hussein is a prisoner of war and therefore protected by the third Geneva Convention, which details minimum standards of humane treatment, underlining the responsibility of the “detaining power” — in this case the United States.

It says that prisoners are only bound to give their name, rank, date of birth and equivalent information, and forbid physical or mental torture, or “any other form of coercion...to secure from them any kind of information whatsoever.” “Prisoners of war who refuse to be questioned may not be threatened, insulted or exposed to any unpleasant or disadvantageous treatment of any kind”, the convention adds. — Internet

China’s State Council calls for further western development

BEIJING, 31 Dec — The Leading Group under the State Council for Development of the Western Regions held a meeting Monday, which called for carrying out the western development strategy unwaveringly.

The meeting was presided over by Premier Wen Jiabao, who is also a member of the Standing Committee of the Political Bureau of the Chinese Communist Party Central Committee and head of the Leading Group.

The meeting reviewed the achievements in carrying out the western development strategy over the four years, and stressed that the western development, an important part of the country’s modernization drive, was a long-term and arduous historical mission.

The meeting called for blazing a new path in carrying out the western development strategy under new historical conditions. Participants discussed suggestions on promoting western development and the major tasks of western development next year.

The meeting urged all-round, coordinated and sustainable development in western regions, asking governments at all levels to continue to speed up economic and social development in the regions.

Efforts to develop the western regions next year should include protecting the environment, returning farmland to forest and pastures and improving farmers’ conditions for work and life.

Construction of infrastructure facilities in rural areas must be accelerated, the meeting said. — MNA/Xinhua

Indonesia’s consumer confidence in November highest in 2003

JAKARTA, 31 Dec — Indonesia saw its consumer confidence in November hit the highest level in 2003 on the back of soft inflation and large holiday bonuses that allowed consumers to spend generously, a survey said.

The consumer confidence index rose by 3.6 per cent in November to 95.60.

Fewer work days and Eid Fitri bonuses enabled consumers to celebrate the Islamic holiday under a more jubilant atmosphere, Boosting confidence in the economic recovery.

“People felt much better with regard to what went on during November and the economic environment,” the survey was quoted Tuesday by The Jakarta Post as saying.

It said people felt more sure that the momentum of the current recovery would continue, to generate more jobs and provide them with opportunities for improve- ment in family income in the six months to come.

The Danareksa consumer confidence survey is based on a representative sample of 1,700 households in six different main areas and on face-to-face interviews.

Consumer confidence is designed to measure the mood of consumers with regard to purchases, which can help predict buying patterns. — MNA/Xinhua

Mexican authorities seize 17 tons of US beef

MEXICO CITY, 31 Dec — Mexican authorities Monday seized 17 tons of US beef in the northwestern state of Sinaloa to guard its citizens against mad cow disease that erupted in the United States.

The Agriculture Ministry said the beef was intercepted by El Carrizo check post on the Pacific coast. It was to go on sale in the central market of Los Mochis City in Sinaloa.

The cargo would be returned to the US, said the Sinaloa State government and the National Sanitary Service.

Last Tuesday’s outbreak of the first mad cow case in the US caused widespread concern in countries importing US beef.

Mexico’s Agriculture Ministry last week announced suspension of US beef importing. — MNA/Xinhua

HK’s cancer fund spreads message of hope

HONG KONG, 31 Dec — Hong Kong’s oldest patient support group is export its formula for success to Shanghai to help improve “life after cancer” for thousands of patients.

The Hong Kong Cancer Fund will set up a foundation to help raise money for the Chinese Mainland project to be run in Shanghai to help improve “life after cancer” for thousands of patients.

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Mexico’s Agriculture Ministry last week announced suspension of US beef importing. — MNA/Xinhua

A US soldier stands guard on top of a humvee in Baghdad’s densely populated area of Karada on 30 December, 2003, after their convoy was targeted with a roadside bomb.

Sgt Curt E Jordan Jr, 25, of Greenacres, Spokane County, Ft Lewis soldier collapses and dies in Iraq

BAGHDAD, 31 Dec — A second Fort Lewis soldier has died in Iraq in the space of a week, Pentagon officials said yesterday.

Sgt Curt E Jordan Jr, 25, of Greenceres, Spokane County, died Sunday of noncombat injuries near Bayji, Iraq. He was assigned to the 14th Combat Engineer Battalion, 555th Combat Engineer Group, based at Fort Lewis. Another soldier from that unit, Spc Charles Guin Haight, 23, was killed Friday when a convoy vehicle he was riding in struck an explosive device.
Russia says only UNSC can end Iraqi weapons dispute

MOSCOW, 31 Dec— The Russian Government said in a statement that only the Security Council can put an end to the Iraqi weapons dispute, local media reported Tuesday.

Quoting the statement issued by the Russian Foreign Ministry’s Press Department Monday, the Interfax news agency said that the Russian Government “confirms that the Security Council made its decision based on the reports of two UN watchdog agencies.”

The UN agencies in charge of Iraqi weapons inspectors are the Monitoring, Verification and Inspection Commission (UNMOVIC) and the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA). The two agencies, the coalition forces led by the United States and of course the United States, are now in agreement that an area of interest in West Baghdad is not in compliance with Security Council Resolution 1441.

According to the statement, the two agencies are in charge of examining and verifying the suspected uranium enrichment facilities, and concerns about the possible presence of other chemical weapons.

“Since September 2001, tests all the cows it slaughters. Japan proposed sending a mission of experts to the United Nations on January 5 to discover the details surrounding the two countries need to discuss ways to lift the beef import restrictions.”

China strives to ease power shortage in 2004

BEIJING, 31 Dec— China is looking for solutions to its increasingly serious power shortage as demand for electricity is expected to continue rising next year.

China will give priority to supply power for residential quarters and schools, increase power production, do away with preferential policies formulated by localities to boost power consumption when supply exceeds demand, and restrict the expansion of some energy-intensive industrial projects.

Chen Jiaying, deputy general manager of the State Grid Corporation, said a growing demand for power and inadequate increases in power generating capacity in the country mean the gap between supply and demand will become even wider.

“Electricity consumption has been growing by at least 15 percent on average for the past 17 months since June, 2002. Twenty-one provincial areas, or two-thirds of China’s total, had to limit the use of electricity due to power shortages,” said Chen.

The power shortage has affected people’s lives and economic growth, said the deputy general manager.

According to the State Grid Corporation, China’s electricity consumption would grow to 2.091 billion kilowatt hour in 2004, up 207 billion kilowatt hour over 2003. Power shortage would worsen and more areas would encounter blackouts.

The Chinese Government has decided on fixed-point measures to boost power generation and supply at a recent special meeting, Chen noted. MNA/Xinhua

Japan rejects US request for beef import resumption

TOKYO, 31 Dec— The Japanese Government on Monday rejected a US request for early resumption of beef imports from the United States but agreed to send experts to the United States in early January to check on the safety of beef products.

According to Kyodo News, in the high-level talks since the discovery of the first case of mad cow disease in the United States earlier this month, US officials told Japan that the two countries need to discuss ways to lift the beef import ban that Tokyo imposed last week.

But the Japanese side turned down the request, saying the two countries should focus on fact-finding for the time being and it is premature to discuss resumption of imports, Kyodo said.

Japanese officials have been urging the United States to improve its inspection system for beef products, and Japan wants assurance that the source of the disease is not the beef itself. The Japanese side is also concerned that the US beef may contain mad cow disease agents that could be passed to Japan.

Japan banned beef imports from the United States immediately after Washington announced last Tuesday that it would introduce the ban in Washington State tested positive for the brain-wasting bovine disease, formally known as bovine spongiform encephalopathy (BSE).

Japan is among more than two dozen nations that suspended US beef imports after the announcement. Japan, which has so far reported nine cases of the disease since September 2001, tests all the cows it slaughters. US is calling on the United States to test all herds to ensure the safety of beef products.

Mad cow disease was first diagnosed in Britain in 1986. A fatal and incurable human disease, variant Creutzfeldt-Jakob disease, is believed to be caused by eating neural tissue from cattle with BSE. MNA/Xinhua

Russia says India deserving candidate for permanent seat in UNSC

MOSCOW, 31 Dec— Russia has said that India is a “deserving and worthy” candidate for a permanent birth in the reformed UN Security Council.

“From Russia’s point of view Germany, Japan, India and Brazil are deserving candidates for the expanded permanent membership of the Security Council,” Russia’s permanent envoy in the world body Sergei Lavrov said in an interview to ITAR-TASS.

Lavrov said that Russia will also insist on the mandatory inclusion of a representative of Africa in the expanded Security Council as there is a need for ensuring equal representation of developed and developing nations of all regions.

He, however, added that it was “premature” to say whether the new permanent members of the UN Security Council would have the coveted veto powers.

“Like many other countries we also propose to return to this veto right issue after the reforms if they take place — and election of new permanent members”, Lavrov said. MNA/ITAR-TASS

Three Gorges Project to get four more generators in 2004

YICHANG, 31 Dec — Four more generators are expected to be installed and go into operation next year on the Three Gorges Project on the Yangtze, China’s longest river, to play a role in flood control, will be able to generate 84.7 billion kilowatt-hours of electricity a year.

The four generators will have an installed capacity of 700,000 kilowatt each, according to sources from China Yangtze River Three Gorges Project Development Corporation.

The gigantic water control project will be installed with 26 generators. On completion in 2009, the entire project, which is also

Petrochemical industry becomes most profitable in China

BEIJING, 31 Dec — China’s petrochemical industry, with profits of 159.8 billion yuan (193.3 billion US dollars) from January to November, has become the most profitable industry in China, according to figures from the State Development and Reform Commission.

The petrochemical industry, followed by the machine, light industry, power and metallurgical industry in profits rankings, increased profits by 50.2 billion yuan over the same period last year.

The profits of the machine industry totalled 133.5 billion yuan, 50.7 per cent of which was contributed by China’s booming auto industry. MNA/Xinhua

Bomb blast on US convoy kills one

BAGHDAD, 31 Dec— A roadside bomb exploded near a US military convoy on Tuesday when it travelled through eastern Baghdad, killing at least one Iraqi, witnesses and Iraqi police said.

No US soldiers were killed or injured in the explosion, which occurred in the densely-populated Karrada District, according to Iraqi police.

Initial report indicated one Iraqi was killed and another wounded in the blast, which damaged many shops and grabbed nearby.

Iraqis were often compromised in various insurgent attacks presumed to be targeting the US-led coalition forces. A roadside bomb attack on a US patrol killed a US soldier and two Iraqi children in the same area on Sunday.

A total of 12 US soldiers have been killed by hostile fire in Iraq since the US forces captured former Iraqi leader Saddam Hussein on December 13.

According to US Defence Department, 327 US service men have died of hostile action since the US-led forces launched the war on Iraq last March.

MNA/Xinhua

THE NEW LIGHT OF MYANMAR   Thursday, 1 January, 2004
Iraq keeps Russia, France in running for oil deals

**BASHKIRIA, 31 Dec**—Iraq’s Governing Council will let Russian and French firms compete for oil sector development contracts despite opposition from pro-US members, a leading Iraqi politician said on Tuesday.

Hamid al-Bayati, a senior official with the main Shi’ite Islamic group Supreme Council for the Islamic Revolution in Iraq (SCIRI), said a Governing Council delegation led by his party has told Moscow and Paris not to fear doing business from Iraq, although they did business with Saddam Hussein and opposed the US-led war that toppled him.

Bayati said Iraq could also honour a 3.8 billion US dollar deal between Russian company Lukoil and former leader Saddam Hussein struck in 1997.

“We asked Paris and Moscow to be involved in the restoration of Iraqi sovereignty and reconstruction, including oil. We do not want them to be isolated from Iraq,” Bayati told Reuters.

**Parmalat founder admits diverting funds**

**Milan, 31 Dec**—The founder of the Italian food giant Parmalat, Stefano Palatucci, admitted misappropriating hundreds of millions of euros of company funds, one of his lawyers said on Monday.

Calisto Tanzi, under arrest for suspected financial crimes at the insolvent dairy firm, made the admission during questioning on Monday at Milan’s San Vittore prison, lawyer Fabio Belloni told Reuters.

“He admitted diverting funds,” Belloni said, adding Tanzi said he had funnelled around 500 million euros away from Parmalat and into other companies, including Parmatur, a family-owned tourism company.

Tanzi’s shock admission came after authorities had accused him of embezzling more than 800 million euros from his food conglomerate over the past decade.

A judicial source, speaking to Reuters after Tanzi was questioned on Monday, said the 65-year-old former Parmalat chief had also admitted falsifying company accounts.

“He admitted misappropriation and falsification of accounts, without knowing the arrangements that were entrusted to his officials,” the source said.

Tanzi resigned as Parmalat’s chairman and chief executive two weeks ago amid one of Europe’s biggest corporate scandals.

He was arrested at the weekend and held in jail on suspicion of financial crimes at Italy’s eighth biggest group, including fraud, false accounting and market rigging. Neither he nor any of the 20 odd others under investigation have been charged.**—MNA/Reuters**

**Aspirin plus ulcer drug tested for cancer prevention**

**London, 31 Dec**—British scientists said on Monday they had launched a major clinical study to see whether a combination of aspirin and an anti-ulcer drug could prevent thousands of cases of cancer of the oesophagus, or foodpipe.

Millions of people already take aspirin to relieve headaches and arthritis and to prevent heart attacks and stroke. More recently, however, researchers have also suggested the century-old drug could have a protective effect against cancer.

The trial will recruit 5,000 men at risk of cancer and last 10 years, making it one of the largest cancer prevention trials in the world.

Patients will be given aspirin alongside AstraZeneca Plc’s ulcer pill Nexium, with the aim of preventing a pre-cancerous condition developing and subsequently becoming cancerous.

Oesophageal cancer can start with a disorder called Barrett’s oesophagus, caused when stomach acid regularly flows back from the stomach — one of the symptoms of this being heartburn.

Acid damage can trigger changes within cells lining the foodpipe and lead in a minority of cases to oesophageal cancer, which kills around 7,000 Britons a year.

Cancer Research UK, which is funding the study, believes successful treatment of Barrett’s oesophagus could prevent up to half of cases of cancer in the trial.

Aspirin’s mechanism of action as a potential anti-cancer agent is unknown but researchers think it could cut cancer risk because of its impact on an enzyme called cyclooxygenase-2, which is involved in inflammation and is thought to be linked to the development of cancer.**—MNA/Reuters**

**US cattle prices sink further on mad cow fears**

**Chicago, 31 Dec**—US cattle futures prices fell the daily limit at the Chicago Mercantile Exchange for the third consecutive session on Monday as doubts about beef safety following the first US case of deadly mad cow disease hung over the markets.

Fallout from the December 23 announcement that a Holstein dairy cow in Washington state had contracted the fatal disease continued to pummel the 27 billion-US dollar US cattle industry.

But analysts on Monday also cited some hopes that, after a weekend report from the US Agriculture Department that the infected cow may have come from Canada, stability may return to the market as fears ease of a consumer backlash against beef. At the Chicago Mercantile Exchange, live cattle for delivery in December through April 2004 all closed down the allowable 5.00 cent per pound daily trading limit on Monday. The limit was expanded from 3.00 cents on Friday.**—MNA/Reuters**

**Democrats urge ban on sick cattle for US human food**

**Washington, 31 Dec**—Two Democratic lawmakers on Monday said they backed a Senate plan to ban US “downer” cattle, those too sick or injured to walk, from the human food supply as a safety precaution against mad cow disease.

The nation’s first case of the fatal mad cow disease was diagnosed last week by the US Agriculture Department in a downer cow sent to slaughter in Washington state on December 9.

Senator Byron Dorgan, a North Dakota Democrat, urged the Bush Administration to support an amendment approved by the Senate last month that would prohibit US slaughter plants from using downer cattle in beef for human consumption.

The Senate language, adopted as part of the USDA’s annual spending legislation, was dropped from a final bill by House Republicans. “This situation requires effective and decisive leadership,” Dorgan said in a letter to Agriculture Secretary Ann Veneman.**—MNA/Reuters**

**British clergy slams ‘White vigilantes’**

**London, 31 Dec**—Two British church leaders blasted Prime Minister Tony Blair on Monday for going to war in Iraq, with one bishop saying he and US President George W. Bush had acted like “a bunch of White vigilantes”.

Their criticism — plus an embarrassing contradiction over weapons of mass destruction by the US Administrator in Iraq at the weekend — comes at the end of a miserable year for Blair whose popularity has tumbled under the invasion of Iraq. The Archbishop of York, David Hope, who is the Church of England’s second most senior churchman, said the display “pleaded him.”

“He admitted diverting funds,” Belloni said, adding Tanzi said he had funnelled around 500 million euros away from Parmalat and into other companies, including Parmatur, a family-owned tourism company.

Tanzi’s shock admission came after authorities had accused him of embezzling more than 800 million euros from his food conglomerate over the past decade.

A judicial source, speaking to Reuters after Tanzi was questioned on Monday, said the 65-year-old former Parmalat chief had also admitted falsifying company accounts.

“He admitted misappropriation and falsification of accounts, without knowing the arrangements that were entrusted to his officials,” the source said.

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He was arrested at the weekend and held in jail on suspicion of financial crimes at Italy’s eighth biggest group, including fraud, false accounting and market rigging. Neither he nor any of the 20 odd others under investigation have been charged.**—MNA/Reuters**

The delegation, which met with Russian President Vladimir Putin, included SCIRI head Abdelaziz al Hakim, who is keen along with some Islamist and Kurdish members of the Governing Council to strengthen relations between countries like France and Russia and become less dependent on Washington and its allies.

Patriotic Union of Kurdistan leader Jalal al-Talabani, who was supported by the Soviet Union and lately became an ally of the United States, was also with Hakim.

They met with Lukoil, the major partner in a Russian-led consortium that signed a 3.8 billion US dollar deal with the former Baathist government to develop the West Qurna field in southern Iraq, whose production is projected at 600,000 barrels per day.

Saddam cancelled the contract after he refused to bust the UN sanctions. Lukoil expressed interest in discussing the contract and we responded by inviting them to Baghdad and asking his excellence the Oil Minister to see whether the contract was legally binding,” Bayati said.

“We are also examining whether it was competitive and whether it could be amended to further Iraq’s interests.”

But Oil ministry spokesman Assem Jihad said the contract was not discussed at a meeting on Monday between a delegation from the company and Oil Minister Ibrahim Bahu al-Uloom.**—MNA/Reuters**

“White vigilantes” Bush, Blair

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A judicial source, speaking to Reuters after Tanzi was questioned on Monday, said the 65-year-old former Parmalat chief had also admitted falsifying company accounts.

“He admitted misappropriation and falsification of accounts, without knowing the arrangements that were entrusted to his officials,” the source said.

Tanzi resigned as Parmalat’s chairman and chief executive two weeks ago amid one of Europe’s biggest corporate scandals.

He was arrested at the weekend and held in jail on suspicion of financial crimes at Italy’s eighth biggest group, including fraud, false accounting and market rigging. Neither he nor any of the 20 odd others under investigation have been charged.**—MNA/Reuters**

The delegation, which met with Russian President Vladimir Putin, included SCIRI head Abdelaziz al Hakim, who is keen along with some Islamist and Kurdish members of the Governing Council to strengthen relations between countries like France and Russia and become less dependent on Washington and its allies.

Patriotic Union of Kurdistan leader Jalal al-Talabani, who was supported by the Soviet Union and lately became an ally of the United States, was also with Hakim.

They met with Lukoil, the major partner in a Russian-led consortium that signed a 3.8 billion US dollar deal with the former Baathist government to develop the West Qurna field in southern Iraq, whose production is projected at 600,000 barrels per day.

Saddam cancelled the contract after he refused to bust the UN sanctions. Lukoil expressed interest in discussing the contract and we responded by inviting them to Baghdad and asking his excellence the Oil Minister to see whether the contract was legally binding,” Bayati said.

“We are also examining whether it was competitive and whether it could be amended to further Iraq’s interests.”

But Oil ministry spokesman Assem Jihad said the contract was not discussed at a meeting on Monday between a delegation from the company and Oil Minister Ibrahim Bahu al-Uloom.**—MNA/Reuters**
Hailing the 56th Anniversary Independence Day:

State-owned factories and industrial zones to fulfil basic needs of the people

These achievements have come through combined efforts of departments concerned, national industrialists and the people.

The Government with a view to developing the industrial sector has established 18 industrial zones at the regions with potential resources, after organizing private industries. Some 7,000 national industrialists are making efforts to the best of their ability to manufacture respective industrial products at the industrial zones.

Among them, Yangon, Mandalay, Ayeyarwady of Taunggyi and Monywa industrial zones are in the forefront. They are also fulfilling the requirements of the State, gaining technological assistance from the Ministry of Industry-2.

The Government has been taking systematic measures for promotion of the agricultural sector as well as transformation from manual farming to mechanized farming.

Mechanized farming

Now, construction of the economic, social and transport infrastructures essential for the nation’s development are nearly completed and so the industrial sector is about to make rapid progress.

Considering into food sufficiency of the increasing population, the Government has been taking systematic measures for promotion of the agricultural sector as well as transformation from manual farming to mechanized farming.

The private industrial zones are to make collective efforts to become reliable ones in a bid to build up an industrialized nation.

In the same time, the Ministry of Industry-2 established an industrial zone in Indawgaw region, Bago Township, and is carrying out the tasks. It is constructing factories in the 400-acre zone including modern factories which were opened on 30 December.

Indawgaw Industrial Zone, modern factories such as farm machines factory, automobile parts factory and aluminium wire factory in addition to power tiller factory, foundry plant and ball bearing factory have been constructed. The power tiller engine factory has a capacity of producing 3,000 18-HP power tiller engines and 3,000 18-HP power tillers annually.

The State-owned and private-owned factories gradually help the people reduce reliance on imported items. With the technological development of the industrial zones and the State-owned factories, reliance on imported machines will be reduced to the minimum.

By manufacturing personal goods and industrial machines of high quality, the nation will become an industrialized one, and there will definitely emerge a peaceful, modern and developed nation with high living standard of its people.

Translation: MS
Hailing the 56th Anniversary Independence Day:

Endeavours for industrial development

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No</th>
<th>Industry</th>
<th>Total number of factories</th>
<th>Projects under implementation</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>Textile</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td>Foodstuff</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.</td>
<td>Pharmaceutical</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.</td>
<td>Ceramic</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.</td>
<td>General and Maintenance</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.</td>
<td>Paper</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td></td>
<td>154</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Factories of the Ministry of Industry-1 in 2002-2003

Kyaukse Cement Plant: one of the three new cement factories in Kyaukse Industrial Zone. The plant was opened on 27 January 2003. The plant, which is situated one mile west of Thantaungmyat limestone mountain east of Kyaukse in Mandalay Division, can produce 120,000 tons of cement a year. Machinery of the plant cost the State 16.5 million US dollar.

Plastic packaging materials being produced with the use of modern machines in a plastic factory in South Dagon Industrial Zone-1, Yangon Division.

Cylinder blocks of farm machinery plant in Ingon Village in Kyaukse Township.
Without having any bias …

(From page 1)

and expressed his belief that all the national races would strive for the emergence of a peaceful, modern and developed nation by doing their bit under the leadership of the Prime Minister General Khin Nyunt.

He pledged to organize the national races to live like a family in the Union, expressing his firm conviction that all the national races are national brethren though slightly different in costume, dialect, traditions, culture, race and region settled. He said Nyein Foundation and Peace Negotiators, the Association of Kachin, Kayin, Kayah, Chin and Mon States are determined to organize the people of Kachin and religious, social and peace organizations to strive by doing their bit for the success of the seven-point future policy programme of the State initiated by the Prime Minister and Our Three Main National Causes—Non-disintegration of national solidarity, Non-disintegration of the Union and perpetuation of sovereignty of the State—laid down as the national policy.

Conspicuous development can be seen in all the regions of the State thanks to the peace and tranquillity restored since the leadership of the national races. He said he would like to thank the Government to see the people enjoying the fruits of development achieved with efforts to enhance the living standards of the State. Better peacemaking not be restored in Kachin State, it lagged 20 years in development. In all the peoples in Kachin State now felt the goodwill of the State, he added.

Dr. Jum stressed the importance of the Kachin national races are actively participating for the development of the State under the leadership of the dignitaries of the State.

Afterwards, Rev Dr Sabew Jum presented gifts, a Kachin traditional silver sword and Kachin traditional bag. Next, Rev Dr Sabew Jum presented traditional gifts to Li-Gen Ye Myint, Commander Maj-Gen Maung Maung Swe, national race leader U Za Khon Ting Ring of Kachin State Special Region-1 and national race leader U La Mon Tu Gaing of Kachin State Special Region-2.

Chairman of the committee for holding the dinner Rev Gregory Nordin prelate, Kachin traditional gifts to ministers, deputy ministers, national race leaders, peace negotiators and senior military officers.

Afterwards, Prime Minister General Khin Nyunt made a speech. He expressed pleasure to meet with the national brethren again at the ceremony commemorating the harvest festival of the ethnic Kachin brethren. The ceremony is like a reunion of the family members.

It is true that the brethren at the ceremony are also enjoying the festival, he said, the peace and stability and the taste of tranquillity of the Union family born of the national solidarity firmly flourishing in the Union. In this regard, the national races are urged to further strengthen their live in unity for perpetuation of the Union. The essence of the Inlon Innan harvesting ceremony including presentation of the fruits of the collective family life such as mutual understanding, friendship, sharing of the fruits among the relatives and friends, and the wishes for an abundant supply of food for the future are the cherished traditions of the Myanmar national races.

The Kachin State continues being preserved their own traditions and cultures and traditional festivals, with noble essence, while residing at places where plenty of food and water supply, in the nation for a period countable by the years in the thousand, and they later became the national races including Kachin, Kayah, Kayin, Chin, Bamar, Mon, Rakhine and Shan. It is the true history of the Union.

Time and eras have changed, and there emerged the 14 divisions in accord with the administrative system, but no state or division is a place of single national race, all are like mini Unions home to various national races. And it is one of the fine traditions of the Union.

For example, various national races including Kachin, Kayah, Kayin, Chin, Bamar, Mon, Rakhine and Shan are residing. While Kachin, Bamar, Rakhine, and Shan are residing, while Kngaung, Bago, and Lushaih together. Kachin State is a place where 33 ethnic Shan races as well as PaO, Palaung, Wa, Kokang, Lahu, Lihsu, Intha, Danu, Taungyo, Bamar, Kayin, Rakhine and Chin reside.

In addition to Kachin races including Jeinjaphw, Maru, Rawon, Lihsu. Lacheek and Azeel, Kachin State is also a home to Kayin, Bamar, Rakhine, Chin and Naga. But the Union formed with 14 mini unions has not emerged over night. It was gradually formed by the national brethren living in unity since the time of their ancestors. Or in other words, it is a family tradition.

Perpetuation of the Union, the heritage handed down by the ancestors, while preserving the tradition of living in a way or wise and in togetherness, is the duty of present day nation races. Without having any bias against any race, the Government has been laying down and implementing plans for harmonious development of all the national races. In this regard, the Government gave priority to prevalence of peace and stability in the border areas, while laying down and implementing border areas and national races development projects at the remote corners of the nation. Peace and stability had been restored, for regional development and raising the social standard.

The Government has launched projects to develop the rural areas of the remote regions that were far from the administrative machinery. In addition, it has been carrying out the development zone project to ensure that there is no development gap between the regions.

For example, Shan State already has three development zones, the first, based in Taunggyi, the capital of the region, the second, based in Lashio, and the third, based in Kengtung. The Panglong region, the birth place of the Union, has also been designated as a development zone. Thus, the Panglong zone now has the Panglong University, Loeim Government Technological College, Panglong Government Arts College and Loeim 200-bed hospital.

In addition to Myitkyina region, Bhamo region has also been designated as a development zone in Kachin State. Thus, a degree college, a college college and 200-bed hospital have already been built there.

Development infrastructures including education and health sectors are being built in some vital regions that are not included in special development regions. In Kachin State a degree college was established in Mohinyand and a 100-bed hospital was opened. Moreover, arrangements are being made for opening of a Government Technical Institute, he said.

Emphasis is in palced on building of development inf- rastructures in the respective regions according to the requirements of their conditions. Now the government is giving priority to better transport in Chin State and task for uplifting of health and education standard.

He said roads in Kachin State were upgraded for ensuring better transport between Myitkyina and Patrolw, Myitkyina and Phakant and Myitkyina and border areas. The region has developed economically as well as socially due to construction of major roads on the east and west banks of the Ayeyawady River linking Sagaing and Mandalay Divisions and Shan State, he said.

The region has also been designated as a development zone in Kachin State. Thus, a degree college, a college college and 200-bed hospital have already been built there.

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With the harmonious development of all parts of the Union all national races living in the various regions can share and enjoy fruitful results of development. Better foundations are being laid to further strengthen national solidarity and the Union Spirit among the national races, he added.

At a time when the government is making systematic efforts for strengthening of national solidarity and per- petuation of the Union Spirits, all national races are to live in unity forever while respecting cultural traditions of each other in accord with family characters and essence of family life such as mutual understanding, friendship, forgiveness and help that developed in the course of his- tory. By doing so, perpetuation of the Union safeguarded by the forefathers will last as long as the world exists, he added.

The government has laid down the seven-point future policy programme that can guarantee non-disintegration of national solidarity and essence of family life existed among the national races in the long run in successive eras and is implementing it, he said.

He urged all national races to make concerted efforts for prevailing of peace, unity and continued progress in the Union based on the Union Spirit and national solidarity for success in implementation of the seven-point future policy programme.

In conclusion, he wished prevalence of peace and prosp- erity in the Union including Kachin State. He also wished that all national races can endeavour for the Union based on national solidarity and the Union Spirit and consolidation of unity, friendship, understand- ing and sincerity safeguarded among them in the course of history.

He wished the Union made up of states and divisions enjoy peace, stability and prosperity forever.

Next, Rev Dr Sabew Jum said: We thanked Chairman of Nyein Foundation Rev Dr Sabwe Jum and officials who invited General Khin Nyunt as a Prime Minister. We thanked Chairman of Nyin Foundation Rev Dr Sabwe Jum and officials who invited General Khin Nyunt as a Prime Minister. We thanked Chairman of Nyein Foundation Rev Dr Sabwe Jum and officials who invited General Khin Nyunt as a Prime Minister.

Today is an auspicious day for us. It is because of the first arrival of General Khin Nyunt in Kachin State as a Prime Minister. We welcomed Chairman of Nyin Foundation Rev Dr Sabwe Jum and officials who invited General Khin Nyunt to Kachin State. The harvest festival is a significant one and of full essence among Kachin tra- ditional festivals. The festival is to offer fruits and rice produced from farms first to those who are worthy of respects, ancestors, parents and heads. Kachin nationals believe that they are free from dangers and gain success in their future work by doing so.

Therefore, the opportunity to offer feast to the Prime Minister like this is a historic golden opportunity for those who live in Kachin State. We upholding Our Three Main National Causes are to march to the new year in union regardless of race and religion.

Afterwards, member of Kachin Traditional Culture Karo Zein sang a song titled “the Union.”

Next, national race leader of Kachin State Special Region-1 U Za Khon Ting Ring made a new year speech. He said: Whenever Kachin traditional harvest festivals are held in years we have the opportunity to meet with and pay respects to the State leaders. We are grateful to officials concerned for regaining the fine tradi- tion of seeking guidance from the State leaders today. We are pleased to be able to strengthen the national soli- darity, to ensure perpetuation of the independence and sovereignty and help build the national unity through the union.

This year’s new harvest festival is significant since the Prime Minister, high-ranking officials and leaders of the national race peace group participated in it, thereby contributing to further strengthening the nationalism and Union Spirit. We believe that the seven-point roadmap of the State will make progress and the National Convention (See page 9)
Without any bias...

(From page 8)

We are grateful to the Tatmadaw who not only bring about peace across the nation but also safeguard independence and sovereignty for being able to hold the harvest festival in which the national races from north to south and from east to west could meet. We are pleased to be able to engage in national and regional development tasks. The success of the national races is the affairs of the Union. Only when all the national races have been able to make efforts in unison will the Union make progress. We the national races have to unite regardless of dialect, native and religion. We are to forge mutual trust and understanding and build friendship and co-operation among the national races. At the same time, we are to safeguard peace. We are to coordinate and address our internal affairs with goodwill. Much of progress has been made owing to the participation of the national races, the Tatmadaw and the people.

The national races are striving together with the Tatmadaw for national development. Accordingly, if the political parties and politicians participate in national development together with the Tatmadaw will the Union of Myanmar make progress all the more.

Next, Chairman of Nyen Foundation Rev Dr Sabew Jum presented Kachin traditional gong Simsa Bau Kyt in bearing words “Manaw-Myan-Nyeinchan-Than-Moung-Than-Swe-Myeyet-Twe” to Prime Minister General Khin Nyunt.

It is upon modern and developed democracy while maintaining the success already achieved in the film industry. It is upon all the film industry, and Myanmar films will be able to penetrate the world. To overcome these obstacles:

(1) Scenes and plots could be created with new foreign markets, and to participate in international film festivals and seminars.

(2) To develop the standard of the film industry, and Myanmar films will be able to penetrate the world. To overcome these obstacles:

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Without having any bias...

(From page 8)

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General Khin Nyunt attends the Motion Picture Award presentation ceremony and Minister Brig-Gen Kyaw Hsan delivers a speech. — NLM

POEM:

Will continue to strive together in harmony

* For the independence for Myanmar Union

We’ve had to work with sweat and blood
And giving lives, we attained it.

* Before Freedom could be enjoyed

Immediately, there was wedge-driving towards disorder
There was misunderstanding among us
And we were left divided.

* Among brothers

There was grudge and rivalry
There were those who sat and clapped
Who might it be?
Colonialists were seen.

* Our sovereignty

They returned it because they had to
From the distance
To meddle in our fate
They schemed and acted.

* This matter

Though we knew quite well
Because of the meddlesome evil
We had to take time and coordinate
And we held hands as we understood.

* Now again

With miscellaneous thoughts
Our hands are entwined
Though they worked to unsettle
With steadfast tenacity
For the strengthening of sovereignty
Our hands we hold fast
And continued to strive.

Byan Hlar (Trs)
Li-Gen Khin Maung Than tours Gwa Township of Rakhine State

YANGON, 31 Dec — Member of the State Peace and Development Council Li-Gen Khin Maung Than of the Ministry of Defence, together with officials of the State Peace and Development Council Office and Myanmar Agriculture Service, went to Gwa in Rakhine State on 29 December and inspected regional development tasks.

On arrival at Kakalay junction on Yangon-Pathin Road in Kyaukgyi Township at 9 am, Li-Gen Khin Maung Than and party were welcomed by Ayeawady Division Peace and Development Council Chairman South-West Command Commander Maj-Gen Maung Oo and military officers. Next, they proceeded by car along Yangon-Pathin road and Ngaingaung-Gwa road. They reached Beda camp at 10.55 am and were welcomed by Rakhine State Peace and Development Council Chairman Western Command Commander Maj-Gen Khin Maung Than.

Maj-Gen Khin Maung Than said that in building up the nation into a modern and developed one, prevalence of peace and tranquility, the rule of law and order, economic growth and human resources development are fundamental requirements. He observed that Gwa township is self-sufficient in rice and urged local people to extend the cultivation of pulses & beans, oil crops and perennial crops systemically by applying advanced technology and utilising natural and chemical fertilizers. He also urged to make efforts for extending fish and prawn breeding works and poultry farming in the region.

Later, Li-Gen Khin Maung Than and party viewed round the developments in the town. They arrived Nyaungmyaung affiliated middle school in Gwa Township at 5.30 pm. Responsible personnel reported matters on education.

Li-Gen Khin Maung Than donated a set of computers to the school. Next, Li-Gen Khin Maung Than and party inspected Kanthaya Beach in Gwa Township and gave necessary instructions.

Multimedia classrooms opened at Kyentiha high school in Gwa Township

YANGON, 31 Dec — Member of the State Peace and Development Council Li-Gen Khin Maung Than of the Ministry of Defence, together with officials of the Ministry of Defence, were welcomed by Rakhine State Peace and Development Council Chairman Western Command Commander Maj-Gen Maung Oo and military officers together with Rakhine State Peace and Development Council Chairman South-West Command Commander Maj-Gen Khin Maung Than and party.

Director of Defence Services Public Relations and Psychological Warfare Maj-Gen Khin Aung Myint delivered an address on the occasion. Altogether 21 teachers and 41 students took part in the competition and the contest.

Defence of Director of Defence Serv-
as Public Relations and Psychological Warfare Maj-
Gen Khin Aung Myint de-
erived an address on the oc-
cassion. Altogether 21 teach-
ers and 41 students took part in the competition and the contest.

Formation of Myanmar Women’s Affairs Federation explained

YANGON, 31 Dec — A meeting to explain the formation of the Myanmar Women’s Affairs Federation was held at Interna-
tional Business Centre on Pyay Road here at 9 am today. MWAFA President Dr Daw Khin Win Shwe attended the meeting and delivered an ad-
dress. Present were MWAFA Vice-
Presidents Prof Dr Daw May Myat, Daw Khin Lay That, Prof Dr Daw May Yi, Daw Khin Lay That, Daw Than Than Nwe and Daw Khin Khin Win, General Secretary Prof Dr Daw Khin Aye Win, Divisional SAC Commanders Daw Khin They Huy and Daw Khin They Huy.

Entry date for Sarpay Beikman Manuscript Awards extended

YANGON, 31 Dec — It has been announced that the Sarpay Beikman Manuscript Awards Contest are to submit their manuscripts not later than 31 December 2003. The entry date was extended up to 31 January 2004. Those from towns can obtain entrance form by sending K 40 for stamps. — MNA

Raw opium seized

YANGON, 31 Dec — The Union comprising members of the local intelligence unit and special anti- drug squad, stopped a motorcycle ridden by Mashe Than Guan of Liza town and Tan Naung of Kaunggyay village of Bhamo Township, at the entrance of Si village in Bhamo Township and seized 15.5 kg of raw opium together with arms and ammunition on 24 December. Action is being taken against them under the Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances Law. — MNA
Hailing the 56th Anniversary Independence Day:

**Bridges of 180 feet and above constructed in the time of the State Peace and Development Council**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>State/Division</th>
<th>Number of bridges</th>
<th>State/Division</th>
<th>Number of bridges</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Kachin State</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>Mon State</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kayin State</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>Rakhine State</td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chin State</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>Yangon Division</td>
<td>24</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sagaing Division</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>Shan State (East)</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Taninthayi Division</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>Shan State (South)</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bago Division</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>Shan State (North)</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Magway Division</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>Ayeyawady Division</td>
<td>39</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mandalay Division</td>
<td>9</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>174</strong></td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The Ministry of Construction has exerted efforts to construct new bridges and repaired old ones with the aim of ensuring smooth and secure transport and harmonious development of all the states and divisions of the Union including border areas.

A total of 174 bridges of 180 feet and above have been constructed in the entire Union.
THOUSANDS OF BOOKS ARE WAITING TO GIVE YOU
KNOWLEDGE FREE OF CHARGE

NEW YEAR GREETING
Hninzigone Home for the Aged

Happy, peaceful and prosperous New Year to all our donors and well-wishers.

Management Committee
Hninzigone Home For the Aged

Iran says US quake help will not alter relations

IRAN (Iran), 31 Dec — President Mohammad Khatami said on Tuesday US aid to earthquake victims in Iran, while welcomed, would not alter the state of relations between the two arch foes who broke off ties nearly a quarter century ago.

"I don’t think this incident will change our relations with the United States," Khatami told a news conference in the capital of the southeastern Kerman Province where officials say up to 50,000 people were killed in an earthquake that struck on Friday.

US Secretary of State Colin Powell said in an interview with the Washington Post published on Tuesday that Washington was open to restoring a dialogue with Iran after “encouraging” moves by the Islamic republic in recent months.

Powell referred to Iran’s willingness to accept US aid for the earthquake relief effort, paving the way for the first US military planes to land in Iran in over 20 years.

But Khatami, who is viewed as a foreign policy moderate in Iran, played down the importance of the US assistance.

"Incidents like this governments normally do not consider their differences," he said. "But this has got nothing to do with political issues. The problems in Iran-US relations are rooted in history. Washington broke ties with Iran shortly after the 1979 Islamic revolution when radical students stormed the US embassy in Tehran and held 52 hostages for 444 days. US President George W Bush last year included Iran along with North Korea and Iraq under Saddam Hussein in an “axis of evil” developing nuclear and chemical weapons and supporting terrorist groups." — MNA/Reuters

GCC agrees to provide $400m to help Iran’s quake victims

RIYADH, 31 Dec — The Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) decided Monday to offer 400 million US dollars to help finance reconstruction projects in Iran after a powerful earthquake almost flattened a city in southeastern Iran.

The GCC made the decision at an extraordinary meeting held Monday night in the Saudi capital in a bid to coordinate their efforts to help Iran’s quake victims, according to a statement released after the meeting. MNA/Xinhua

Israel to launch space telescope through Indian satellite

JERUSALEM, 31 Dec — Israeli and Indian technical space science teams will meet in New Delhi in January to prepare a timetable for launching an Israeli ‘TAUVEX’ experimental ultraviolet research telescope aboard India’s launch vehicle GSAT-4 by September 2007.

The development follows on the heels of last week’s signing in New Delhi of an MoU between the Israel Space Agency (ISA) and the Indian Space Research Organization (ISRO).

ISA has allocated four million US dollars to finance the project’s new interface programmes. These will adapt the TAUVEX’s (Tel Aviv University Ultra Violet Experiment) three, 20-centimetre wide field identical co-aligned Ritchey-Chretien UV telescopes to India’s 6.5 ton GSLV which will hurl GSAT-4 into space from Antartiksh Bharan space satellite station. Israeli and Indian science and industry teams will fly between New Delhi and Tel Aviv in efforts to complete the technical adaptations by June 2005 when the 32 kilos telescope is scheduled to arrive in India for final tests prior to the launch. — MNA/PITI

MIN KYAW MIN’S SPOKEN ENGLISH CLASS

Min Kyaw Min’s Spoken English Class

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THE NEW LIGHT OF MYANMAR

A D V E R T I S E M E N T S

Largest ship building base begins construction in Shanghai

SHANGHAI, 31 Dec — China State Shipbuilding Corporation (CSSC) on Monday began construction on the Changxing Shipbuilding Base on the Shanghai coast, which will be the largest shipyard in the world.

The base was built on Changxing Island with a water frontage of eight kilometres. Its annual shipbuilding capacity would reach eight million tons when it is completed in 2015, said the CSSC president Chen Xiaoping.

The first phase of the construction, about 15 per cent of the total area, is to enclose and fill a sea area of 1.8 million square metres by the end of next year.

Meanwhile, design companies from Europe, Japan and South Korea have been invited to bid for the project. The result would come out in February of 2004, Chen said.

Shanghai, where China’s shipbuilding industry originated, now has an annual shipbuilding tonnage of three million tons. The new shipyard would help increase Shanghai’s shipbuilding capacity to 12 million tons in 2015, said Chen. MNA/Xinhua

TRADE MARK CAUTION

The Siam Cement Public Company Limited, a company incorporated in Thailand of No. 1 Siam Cement Road, Bangsue Sub-district, Bangsue District, Bangkok Metropolis, Thailand, is the owner of the following Trade Marks:-

Reg. No. 2381/2000

In respect of “Cement, white cement, dry mortar, asbesto mortar, mortar for building, lime, concrete, fine plaster, general plaster, masonry mortar, asbesto cement and construction materials (not of metal)”

Reg. No. 2382/2000

In respect of “General plaster, masonry owner of the following Trade

Lost Announcement

We hereby announce that Country of Origion were lost for the below air shipment.

Shippere: Niyama Daewoo Int’l Co Ltd

CO Ref : 397/09(9)/899/02/03
Ref/AVII no : P0201935 E P020096
Scientist says “Beagle 2” might be in a crater

LONDON, 31 Dec — Europe’s first Mars lander Beagle 2 might have fallen down a crater on the red planet, close to where the probe was due to touch down, a leading scientist said here Monday.

Cameras on the Mars-orbiting spacecraft Mars Global Surveyor took a picture of the Isidis Planitia, a flat basin on the planet where Beagle 2 was supposed to land on Sunday night.

There is a crater of one kilometre wide in the centre of the area, Colin Pillinger, chief scientist of the Beagle 2 team, told a news conference in north London.

It is possible, although unlikely, that Beagle 2 may be unable to communicate because it landed in the crater. “We’d have to be incredibly unlucky that it went right down this crater,” he added.

In the past few days, the European team has received no transmissions from the probe, which was supposed to touch down on the distant planet on Christmas morning to begin its search for Martian life.

NASA’s orbiting Mars Odyssey has passed four times over the area where scientists hope Beagle 2 would have landed, without picking up a signal.

Scientists have now set up a “tiger team” of top experts to work through all possible reasons it landed in the crater. “We’d have to be incredibly unlucky that it went right down this crater,” he added.

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Iran quake death toll may reach 50,000

TEHRAN, 31 Dec — The death toll for Friday’s earthquake in southeastern Iran may reach 50,000 people, government officials told Reuters on Tuesday.

“We are expecting the death toll to reach around 50,000,” a senior Interior Ministry official said. “If we consider that, on average, five people lived in each house, we can say the death toll will reach 50,000.”

Another senior government official confirmed the projected death toll. “It’s what I am hearing as well,” he said.

Search and rescue teams have already begun to abandon the hunt for any more survivors trapped beneath the rubble in the ancient Silk Road city of Bam, 600 miles southeast of Teheran.

China offers a further 10 million yuan aid to Iran

BEIJING, 31 Dec — China decided Tuesday to offer another 10 million yuan (about $1.21 million US dollars) worth of relief supplies to Iran following last week’s powerful earthquake, Chinese Foreign Minister Li Zhaoxing said here.

Li made the remark at a meeting with Iranian President Mohammad Khatami after he heard of the earthquake in Bam a city in southeast Iran.

The Chinese government, including President Hu Jintao, top legislator Wu Bangguo and Premier Wen Jiabao, had already sent a high-profile team to help the quake-stricken country.

China’s Red Cross Society, the world body that helps with relief, already sent a team of rescue workers, including experts, to Iran. The Foreign Ministry said it had also provided Iran’s Red Crescent Society with 100,000 US dollars for rescue efforts, the minister said. China was one of the first countries to offer aid, which indicated that the earthquake hit the central region of Iran, he said.

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Iranian Foreign Minister Fereydoun Verdinejad said the earthquake was also the time to foster a friendship between the two nations.

Santos crashes from sky in Serbia

BELGRADE, 31 Dec — A helicopter carrying a man dressed as Santa Claus to street celebrations in a Serbian town crashed on Tuesday, injuring several people.

The helicopter crashed a few hundred metres from a crowd of children gathered to greet Santa in the central town of Krusevac, western Serbia.

The pilot, co-pilot and the Santa were all injured, a Serbia news agency reported. Four people were injured but their lives were not in danger, a hospital official said. There was no word on the cause of the crash.

US aviator Gustavus McLeod takes off in the Velocity, a four-seat canard pusher experimental aircraft, at College Park Airport in Maryland, on 29 Dec, 2003, where he is embarking on an attempt to capture one of the last aviation records, circumnavigating the globe from Pole to Pole in a single-engine aircraft. McLeod is flying the Velox, a modified Polaris, in the middle of the world.

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Clapton honoured a rung below Sir Mick, Sir Paul

LONDON, 31 Dec — Guitar legend Eric Clapton becomes the latest British rock legend to win high honours from Queen Elizabeth in this year’s annual New Year’s honour list.

The Grammy-winning rocker becomes a Commander of the British Empire, one of Britain’s highest honours, putting him just a rung below the full-blow knighthoods enjoyed by Sir Paul McCartney, Sir Elton John and Sir Mick Jagger.

Ray Davies, frontman for the rock group the Kinks, also wins a CBE.

German-based Munich Re said in an annual report on natural disasters that 50,000 people had been killed around the world this year by earthquakes as well as floods, storms and other extreme weather that could be a result of climate change.

It is only the fourth time such a high death toll has been recorded since 1980 and Munich Re warned that the recent spate of extreme weather was set to continue.

“Unusual events such as heatwaves in the past year are yet another sign of climate change,” Munich Re, the world’s biggest insurer to insurers said.

“They show that we should expect a new kind of risk from weather and potentially more damages,” it said.

Boosting the death toll, the earthquake in Iran on Friday and the earlier heatwave in central Europe had both killed more than 20,000 people, it said.

Rescuers in the ruined Iranian city of Bam on Monday held out little hope of finding more survivors in the rubble of the earthquake and a government official in the affected Kerman Province estimated that up to 30,000 people had died.

Munich Re expressed concern about the Middle East’s vulnerability to earthquakes and warned that the new wave of infrastructure projects in the region could prompt new risks.

The reinsurance giant said that Europe’s record temperatures from June to August caused economic losses of some 13 billion US dollars and it warned that the sweltering weather may be the “summer of the future.”

By the middle of the century it could turn out to be more or less normal,” Munich Re’s head of Geo-risk research, Gerhard Heinz, said.

Insurers paid out 15 billion US dollars this year, more than in 2002.

Damage from tornadoes and hail storms in mid-west America in May cost more than three billion US dollars, putting them among the 10 most costly storms in insurance history.

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Roy Keane reveals coaching ambition

Lozovo, 31 Dec—Manchester United captain Roy Keane revealed on Tuesday that he would manage a club at the end of his playing career.

The 32-year-old Irishman told Manchester United magazine that "I definitely see myself as a manager eventually."

"It is getting much stricter and there are lots of qualifications. It is important to have these things in place when you retire.

"With the right qualifications I can go for a job straight away if I want to. I would like to think further down the line I could be a good manager."

He had raised the prospect of managing a big club like English champions Manchester United.

"I'd like to pass on the experience I have had — and I have been fortunate to play under some brilliant managers such as Sir Alex Ferguson and Brian Clough," he told the News of the World last weekend.

"The challenge would appeal to me and to be manager of Manchester United? Why not?" he added. — MNA/Xinhua

Real coach Queiroz hopes to face United in dream final

Madrid, 31 Dec—Real Madrid coach Carlos Queiroz says he hopes to end his first season in charge by seeing his team meet his former side Manchester United in the Champions League final in May.

"It would be a dream final," Queiroz told Spanish sports daily on Tuesday. "It would be fantastic to see Real face up to United and that is the final I want to see."

The former Portugal coach was Alex Ferguson's assistant at United last season but left after just a year when he was offered the job of replacing Vicente del Bosque at Real.

Despite some criticism of his tactical decisions in early matches and difficulties in dealing with a shortage of cover in defence, Queiroz believes his first six months at the club have been a success.

"I think things have gone well so far because we have reached January in a comfortable position thanks to the motivation and confidence of the team."

"We know all about Javi Moreno and we are showing an interest in him but it will all come down to reaching an agreement with him and his club," he told Bolton's web site.

Moreno joined Atletico from AC Milan for 13 million US dollars in 2002 after they won a return to the top flight following two seasons in the second division.

But the 29-year-old has failed to earn himself a regular place in the starting line-up and has spent most of the last two seasons on the bench.

Moreno, who has won five caps for Spain, had a similar experience when he moved to Milan in 2001 following an outstanding campaign with Spanish side Alaves. He played a key part in Alaves's surprise run to the 2001 UEFA Cup final, which they lost 5-4 to Liverpool, and was one of the top scorers in the Primera Liga that season with 22 goals.

Bolton chairman Phil Gartside has said the club would not have any extra funds to help one of the city's four First Division clubs sign World Cup winner Rivaldo.

World 100 and 200-metre champion Kelli White and five other American athletes have tested positive for the banned substance EPO.

News of the World 100 and 200-metre champion Kelli White and five other American athletes have tested positive for the stimulant modafinil, the US Olympic Committee (USOC) announced on 31 Dec. — Xinhua

Owen set to return for Liverpool's Cup clash

Lozovo, Dec—Michael Owen could return for Liverpool's FA Cup third round tie at Third Division Yeovil on Sunday.

The England striker has been suffering from various leg injuries and has not played since Liverpool's 1-0 UEFA Cup win over Steaua Bucharest on November 27 when he tore a thigh muscle.

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It is incumbent upon ...

(from page 9)

Artists and technicians now also participate in the nation-building tasks enthusiastically just as they did in the past. It is necessary for them to play an active part in the implementation of the seven-point roadmap, through which a modern and developed nation will be established, by keeping Union Spirit and Our Three Main National Causes in the fore.

Next, he called upon movie fans to render their assistance to the development of Myanmar film industry. He also spoke of the need for the entire national people to cooperate with the Government and the Tatmadaw in building a modern and developed democratic nation.

Next, the list of academy award winners were announced. Best Sound Award went to Po Hauung and group for his work in ‘Hsan-yay’; Best Cinematography Award to Kyaukkyi (Padera) for his work in ‘Yaungkham-soda-takhatonka-thamapat’; Best Film Editing Award to Zaw Min (Hanthamay) for his work in ‘Nga-thudapa-yaungkya-meima’; Best Scriptwriter Award to Nyen Min for his work in ‘Nga-thudapa-yaungkya-meima’; Best Supporting Actress award to May Than Nu for her performance in ‘Nga-thudapa-yaungkya-meima’; Best Music Awards to Khin Maung Gyi for his work in ‘Nga-thudapa-yaungkya-meima’ as well as to Gualulin Maung Ko Ko for his work in ‘Hsan-yay’; Best Supporting Actor Award to Nyunt Win for his performance in ‘Hsan-yay’; Best Film Awards to ‘Nga-thudapa-yaungkya-meima’ and ‘Hsan-yay’; Best Director Awards to Bagyi Soe Moe for his work in ‘Nga-thudapa-yaungkya-meima’ as well as to Kyi Soe Tun for his work in ‘Hsan-yay’; Best Actor Award to Lu Min for his performance in ‘Shwe-hmon-kye-thaw Moe-kaung-kin’; Best Actress Award to Khin Zarchi Kyaw for her performance in ‘Nga-thu-da-pa-yaungkya-mens-ma’.

Next, some good scenes that helped win the awards were shown. Then, Minister for Information Brig-Gen Kyaw Huan presented motion picture award for 2002 and K 100,000 each contributed by the VeVe Co to the winners.

The award winners spoke words of thanks and the ceremony came to an end. After the ceremony, Prime Minister General Khin Nyunt and wife Dr Daw Khin Win Shwe cordially greeted the award winners. — MNA

8:30 am Brief news
8:35 am Music
8:40 am Perspectives
8:45 am Music
8:50 am National news/ Slogan
9.00 am Music
9.05 am International news
9.10 am Music
1.30 pm News/ Slogan
1:40 pm Lunch time music
2.00 pm Turn back time (Aqua)
9:00 pm 56th Anniversary Independence Day
Commemorative Radio Play: Our flag symbolizing Independence
9.10 pm Article/Music
9.20 pm Topics potpourri
9.30 pm Favourite songs
called by “Aung Soe Tint
— Obla Di, Ob-la-da (Beatles)
— Only you (Enrique Iglesias)
— When you say nothing at all (Ronan Keating)
9.45 pm News/Slogan
10.00 pm PEL

The best to plant a tree was 20 years ago.
The second best time is now.
Four political objectives
* Stability of the State, community peace and tranquillity, prevalence of law and order
* National reconsolidation
* Emergence of a new enduring State Constitution
* Building of a new modern developed nation in accord with the new State Constitution

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

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

It is incumbent upon all the professionals in acting career to keep up the film industry as they did in the past

Everybody in the film industry should be aware of the circumstances as it is more effective to use weapon of media in countering penetration of media

Artists and technicians now participate in the nation-building tasks enthusiastically just as they did in the past