Foreign Heads of State send felicitations to Senior General Than Shwe

YANGON, 5 Jan—The following are messages of felicitations from foreign Heads of State sent to Senior General Than Shwe, Chairman of the State Peace and Development Council of the Union of Myanmar, on the occasion of the 56th Anniversary Independence Day of the Union of Myanmar.

From Megawati Soekarnoputri, President of the Republic of Indonesia:

On behalf of the Government and People of the Republic of Indonesia, I have the great pleasure of extending to you and, through you, to the Government and People of Myanmar my sincere greetings and heartfelt felicitations on the auspicious occasion of the Independence Day of the Union of Myanmar.

I am pleased to observe that over the years, the relations between our two countries have been growing steadily both on bilateral basis and within the framework of ASEAN. I am confident that such cooperative relations will continue to strengthen in the years ahead as we strive for National Development and to contribute to the security and prosperity of our respective peoples.

Please accept, Your Excellency, the assurances of my highest consideration and best wishes for your good health and personal well-being as well as for the Progress and Prosperity of the People of Myanmar.

From S.R. Nathan, President of the Republic of Singapore:

On behalf of the people and the Government of the Republic of Singapore, I am delighted to convey to Your Excellency and the people of Myanmar our best wishes and warmest congratulations on this auspicious occasion of the 56th Independence Day of the Union of Myanmar.

About 300,000 people get opportunity to carry on their studies at home through ICT between 2000-2001 and 2003-2004 fiscal years

Prime Minister attends opening of Special Refresher Course No-4 for University, College Teachers

YANGON, 5 Jan—The opening of Special Refresher Course No-4 for University and College Teachers was held at the Nawarat Hall of Central Institute of Civil Service (Phaunggyi) in Hlegu Township, Yangon Division, this morning with an address by Chairman of Myanmar Education Committee Prime Minister General Khin Nyunt.

Also present were Vice-Chairmen of MEC—Secretary of the State Peace and Development Council Lt-Gen Soe Win, Secretary-2 Lt-Gen Thein Sein, ministers, the Chief Justice, the Attorney General, the Chairman of Civil Service Selection and Training Board, the Yangon mayor, deputy ministers, members of CSSTB, officials of the State Peace and Development Council Office, departmental heads, rectors and principals of universities and colleges, the rector, head of departments, instructors of CICS (Phaunggyi) and trainee teachers.

In his address, the Prime Minister said that nurturing the new generation youths who will take shape the future of the State to be equipped with academic spiritual and social powers is a prime task for the State and it is a national need in order to see that the Union of Myanmar stand tall in international community.

To fulfill the need, the role of basic education teachers and university and college teachers who have been nurturing the students from primary level to graduates level is very important, he said.

The teachers who are nurturing the students in accord with the needs of the State and educational goal of the State, and in this way, they will be able to perform their national duties in the education sector energetically, he noted. Therefore, the government has opened refresher courses, three times for university and college teachers and 34 times for basic education teachers.

With the concept that human resource with high calibre and human resource that is needed in the respective regions must be nurtured in various regions of the Union, 154 universities and colleges have been opened the length and breadth of the nation. As there are new university and college teachers and those who have been promoted to higher ranks, refresher courses for university and college teachers have been opened again.

In this 21st century, science and technology develop with rapid momentum without stopping in their respective fields but penetrate into and overwhelm other sectors such as politics, economy, social, defence and culture and create interchanges. At such a time like this, academicians cannot bury themselves in their own fields.

Moreover, only human resource with high qualification can brave the challenges of today’s world and face future challenges and serve the interests of the State and the people.

The Prime Minister also spoke of the need for teachers not to lose sight of scientific and technological development in international sphere. Realizing the prospects and goal of the State, teachers must lend themselves with their academic skill to realization of national objectives.

With this concept, the teachers are to nurture their students, he said.

With the aim of promoting science and technology in such development sectors as economic, social and defence fields, uplifting the education standard of the entire nation and emerging good foundations for education that emphasizes on... (See page 8)
For greater success of national education promotion measures

In the 21st century, the development of science and technology has been so great that it has become the sine qua non for development of health, educational, economic, social, cultural and military sectors. The whole socio-economic fabric has now been buttressed by knowledge. Therefore, only well-qualified human resources can contribute to and welfare of a nation and its people.

With this end in view, the Government of the Union of Myanmar has been systematically implementing the national education promotion plans and projects laid down for the all-round development of new generation students and honouring the outstanding students every year.

The School Family Day prize-distribution ceremony was held at the Diamond Jubilee Hall in Kamayut township, Yangon, on the afternoon of 3 January, 2004, and Chairman of Myanmar Education Committee Prime Minister General Khin Nyunt attended it and gave away prizes to the outstanding students. In his speech on the occasion, the Prime Minister said that the students’ display of various skills in literature, science and technology, sports and culture was a proof that the goal of the education sector was being achieved.

In the basic education sector, there are over 40,000 schools, more than 226,000 teachers and over 7.6 million students. A student has from 720 to 945 learning hours annually. Now is the time when the government is leading the entire nation along the right path that can serve the best national interests. Moreover, it is also the time when student youths are being systematically trained so that they will be able to take the responsibilities of the future State.

We would like to urge all the students, teachers and parents to actively take part in the projects and plans for raising the national education standard, especially the teachers to nurture their charges in such a way that the latter will become well-qualified and patriotic persons who love and cherish their traditional culture.

**Indonesian Vice-President sends felicitations to Vice Senior General Maung Aye**

YANGON, 5 Jan.—The following is the message of felicitations from Vice Senior General Maung Aye from Hamtaz Huz of the Republic of IndonesiaVice-President. On the auspicious occasion of the Independence Day of the Union of Myanmar, I have the great honour to convey to you my warm greetings and heartfelt felicitations.

**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 destractive elements as the common enemy.

It is my desire that the excellent relations and cooperation which exist between our two countries should be further developed for the mutual benefit of our two countries and peoples.

Please accept, Your Excellency, the assurances of my highest consideration.

— MNA

**Foreign Heads of Government send felicitations to PM General Khin Kyunt**

YANGON, 5 Jan.—The following are messages of felicitations from foreign Heads of Government sent to General Khin Kyunt, Prime Minister of the Union of Myanmar, on the occasion of the 56th Anniversary Independence Day of the Union of Myanmar.

From Megawati Soekarnoputri, President of the Republic of Indonesia:

On the commemoration of the Anniversary of the Independence Day of the Union of Myanmar, it is indeed a great and distinct pleasure to convey to you my heartfelt felicitations and warmest congratulations.

Let me also seize this opportunity to assure you that the excellent cooperation existing between Myanmar and Indonesia will be further enhanced along with our joint endeavours to attain greater accomplishment in the coming years.

Please accept, Your Excellency, the assurances of my most distinguished consideration.

From Goh Chok Tong, Prime Minister of Singapore:

I am pleased to convey, on behalf of the Government of the Republic of Singapore, our best wishes to you and the people of Myanmar on the occasion of the 56th Independence Day of the Union of Myanmar.

Our two countries enjoy an excellent relationship. Our close ties are underscored by cooperation in many areas, both bilaterally and within ASEAN. I look forward to continuing this partnership with you.

From Surya Bahadur Thapa, Prime Minister, Kingdom of Nepal:

On the occasion of the independence Day of the Union of Myanmar on behalf of the Majesty’s Government and on my own I extend to your excellency and the people of Myanmar my sincere congratulations. I wish you good health and happiness as well as progress and prosperity of the people of Myanmar. — MNA
Thai Govt to pour $253m into “knowledge centres”

BANGKOK, 5 Jan — Thai Prime Minister Thaksin Shinawatra revealed the Thai Government is to pour 10 billion baht (253 million US dollars) into the creation of an office for knowledge management and development, beginning with the establishment of a design centre to produce a new generation of designers able to compete at an international level.

Announcing the government’s plans on his weekly radio broadcast, the Prime Minister said that the government would establish a central agency for knowledge management and development, with subsidiary agencies including a design centre, which would not only help produce Thai designers but would also house exhibitions and design books from across the world, according to the Thai News Agency reported Sunday.

At the same time, the government will set up a learning centre to act as a “library plus.” Subsidiary learning centres will be developed in other provinces, and will be used by both children and adults.

Stressing the need for the Thai public to read more books, Prime Minister noted that reading was essential to keep up with rapid global developments. The government would now promote wider reading, he said, conceding that reading was not a popular pastime in Thailand. Thirdly, the government would establish an excellent centre for life sciences, as well as a “National Knowledge Museum” bringing together several different museums in a single complex. The focus would be on eradicating old images of dry and boring museums, instead creating somewhere fun and lively, the Thai leader said.

Thaksin also said the possibility of establishing a national centre for gifted and talented children, to encourage gifted youngsters to use their talents for the benefit of the nation. — MNA/Xinhua

North China city opens reading room for the blind

SHENZHEN, 5 Jan — The library of Zhangjiaokou City in north China’s Hebei Province has opened a special reading room for the blind.

The library has spent more than 4,000 yuan (482 US dollars) buying 120 Braille books and VCDs, mostly of classic literary works.

For easier access of blind readers, the reading room is on the ground floor and is open every working day and public holidays. “We hope to give blind readers the same opportunities of acquiring knowledge and information they need, so they know what’s going on in the world and pick up skills to make a better living,” said Feng Zhonghua, curator of the library.

Zhangjiaokou has nearly 30,000 blind people, but Braille books, normally much more expensive than normal books, are rarely available on the local market.

The Shenzhen Business Daily based in Shenzhen City, the southern Guangdong Province, published the country’s first newspaper supplement in Braille in 2002.

In 2003, China developed a Chinese Braille-based computer system in a bid to cater for Certificate of Hong Kong Origin CEPA (COCPEA), products exporting to the Chinese Mainland must be accompanied by a COCEPA issued by the Trade and Industry Department or one of the Government Approved Certification Organizations (GACO).

By the end of 11:00 pm Friday, the TID has received 18 applications. Of which, 11 are related to medicine products, four to paint and the other three to electronic, chemical and plastic products, the TID said.

HK approves first COCEPA application

HONG KONG, 5 Jan — The Trade and Industry Department (TID) of Hong Kong Special Administrative Region Government has approved the first application for Certificate of Hong Kong Origin CEPA (COCEPA), which is related to medicine products, the department told Xinhua Saturday.

To claim zero import tariff under Close Economic Partnership Arrangement (CEPA), products exporting to the Chinese Mainland must be accompanied by a COCEPA issued by the Trade and Industry Department or one of the Government Approved Certification Organizations (GACO).

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MNA/Xinhua

Gunfire kills woman helicopter pilot from South Carolina in Iraq

COLUMBIA, South Carolina, 5 Jan — An Easley High School graduate has become the first woman pilot killed in Iraq.

Capt. Kimberly Hampton, 27, died Friday after her OH-58 Kiowa helicopter went down in enemy fire near Fallujah, her parents said Saturday. The other pilot on the helicopter was injured in the crash.

Hampton also was the first woman from South Carolina killed in combat in Iraq.

Dale and Ann Hampton said the Army called them Friday afternoon and then put them in touch with Kimberly’s boyfriend, who also is an Army pilot stationed in Baghdad. The Hamptons said they were told that witnesses identified that missile fire brought down Hampton’s helicopter. The Kiowa, which must be operated by two people, is designed for reconnaissance and observation missions and is often used to spot targets for Apache attack helicopters.

Kimberly Hampton was stationed in Iraq with the 82nd Airborne Division. She was based in Fort Bragg, N.C., and lived in Fayetteville, N.C., before she left for Iraq on Aug. 31.

She had also served in Korea and Afghanistan Internet

Train attacked by guerrillas in western Iraq

BAGHDAD, 5 Jan — A train derailed after being attacked by guerrillas in western Iraq, the US military said on Saturday.

The Iraq train on route to Habbaniyah was attacked with a rocket-propelled grenade on Friday, the 82nd Airborne Division said in a statement.

Insurgents had previously ambushed trains ferrying goods and equipment for the US Army.

Habbaniyah, 80 kilometres west of Baghdad, is located in the al-Anbar Province, home to the restive towns of Ramadi and Fallujah.

On Friday, an oil tanker travelling in convoy caught fire near Ramadi after it was hit by a roadside bomb and ensuing fire. Three US soldiers were wounded.

One US soldier was killed and another wounded when a US reconnaissance/helicopter was brought down by ground fire in Fallujah midday Friday. — MNA/Xinhua

US troops raid Kurdish party offices in Kirkuk

TURKU (Iraq), 5 Jan — US troops raided the offices of Kurdish parties in the oil-rich city Kirkuk, where six people died in ethnic clashes last week, and seized AK-47 rifles and rocket-propelled grenades, officials said on Sunday.

One senior member of the Kurdish Democratic Party (KDP) was taken into custody after the raids on Saturday night, Sergeant Robert Cargie of the 4th Infantry Division told reporters.

A KDP office and an adjacent office of the Patriotic Union of Kurdistan — the two key parties representing the Kurdish minority in Iraq — were both raided, he said.

Tension surfaced on Wednesday in Kirkuk, 155 miles north of Baghdad, after Arab and Turkish-speakers Turkmen residents marched on the headquarters of a Kurdish party to protest a Kurdish political push for more control in the area.

At least six people have since been killed in ethnic clashes though tension seemed to abate after US troops imposed a night curfew on Saturday. Kirkuk sits on Iraq’s richest oil reserves. — MNA/Reuters

Iranian Parlt Speaker inspects Bam

BAM (Iran), 5 Jan — Iranian Parliament Speaker Mahdi Karrubi led a group of lawmakers to inspect Bam, a southeastern Iranian city devastated by a powerful earthquake on December 26, calling for increased government funding for the reconstruction of the city.

Speaking to reporters during the inspection, Karrubi said increased government funding is essential for the reconstruction of Bam, but he did not specify an expected increment. — MNA/Xinhua

Colorado Department of Transportation employees Lee Metzger, left, and Steve Schauer look on 3 Jan, 2004, as a rotary snowplow clears snow after a mid-morning avalanche covered the westbound lanes of Interstate 70 near Vail, Colorado. —INTERIOT
China boosts grid investment to ease power shortage

SHANGHAI, 5 Jan—The Chinese Government plans to invest a record of 18.85 billion yuan in the construction of the East China Power Grid in 2004 to relieve power shortages in the eastern region.

The region contributes one-third of the country’s economic strength, but consumes just a fifth of the power supply. Since 2000, the East China Power Grid has run at full capacity.

In the summer of 2003, the region suffered the worst power shortage in history. This winter, because of year-end maintenance and the scarcity of coal for generating, the power grid faces a shortage of nine million kilowatts. The figure is expected to reach 10 million kilowatts in the days with the lowest temperatures.

To ease the shortage, the East China Power Grid Corporation plans to merge the Fujian power grid into its own and put 23 generating units, with a total capacity of 7.79 million, into operation in 2004.

The corporation will also build a total of 1,672 kilometer, 500 kilovolt-kilowatt and bring into operation 18.5 million kilovolt-ampere transformer equipment.

HK health departments maintain vigilance against SARS

HONG KONG, 5 Jan—Representatives from Hong Kong Medical Association, Hospital Authority, Hong Kong Doctors Union and 12 private hospitals met and briefed them on the developments concerning the suspected SARS (severe acute respiratory syndrome) case in Guangzhou, Guangdong Province.

A spokesman for the Department of Health said the Department continued to maintain close contact with its Guangdong counterparts with a view to obtaining the latest information on the suspected SARS case.

Noting that precautionary measures had been stepped up at all the immigration control points, the spokesman said seven had been found to have a fever and 44 were reported to be unwell Friday.

Among these people, three were referred to hospitals for further examination.

"But none of them was suspected of having contracted SARS, and only one of them was admitted for treatment," the spokesman said.

The Department of Health’s SARS hotline 1872222 has received 86 inquiries from December 27 to 12:00 Saturday.

The hotline is operated during office hours.

"For safety’s sake, recent travellers to Guangdong who have fever and symptoms of respiratory tract infection should consult their doctors at once," the spokesman said.

The Department of Health has reminded the Hospital Authority, private hospitals, private doctors and laboratory personnel in Hong Kong to maintain vigilance in infection control and disease reporting.

Indonesia’s foreign tourist arrivals decrease in November

JAKARTA, 5 Jan—The number of foreign tourists visiting Indonesia in November 2003 reached to 305,500 or 14.2 per cent down from the previous month, but still 27.4 per cent higher than the same month in 2002, said the Central Bureau of Statistic (BPS) Friday.

The director of statistic said that the cumulative figure by November last year was 3.33 million people or 12.70 per cent lower than the same period in 2002.

The director said that the decrease of the figure in November compared to October was because of the low travelling season in the northern part of the world, as people there usually prefer to stay at home during winter rather than travel to the south.

The number of foreign tourists coming into the beautiful resort of Bali Island in November also decreased to 102,900 or 13.7 per cent down from the previous month, Herawan said.

The Tourism Ministry shows strong signs of recovery

PONSON PENO, 5 Jan—Cambodia’s tourism was affected seriously at the height of the severe acute respiratory syndrome (SARS) scare in April when tourism was down 40 per cent, but as the dry season travel continues, business has shown strong signs of recovery with foreign visitors going up 45 per cent in November from October.

"The situation has improved much after we had a big faint in the wake of SARS," the Cambodia Daily quoted Thong Khon, secretary of state of the Tourism Ministry, as saying Friday.

Cambodia hosted 620,000 international arrivals between January and November in 2003, down 12 per cent from the same period in 2002, according to the Tourism Ministry.

Though the Ministry of Tourism estimates the total number of visitors will drop 10 per cent in 2003 compared to 2002, officials are hoping that one million foreign tourists will arrive this year.

Tourists are flocking back to Cambodia after the tourism industry slumped earlier in 2003 due to the threat of SARS.

In 2002, Cambodia had 780,000 international arrivals, generating 560 million US dollars in revenue.

AUSRAIN: Jordan and Iraq have set up a liaison office handling electricity cooperation between the two countries, the local Jordanian Times newspaper reported on Sunday.

The two sides inked a memorandum of understanding on Saturday in an inauguration ceremony for the office, which will provide local and foreign investors with information on Iraq’s electricity industry’s needs, the report said.

Meanwhile, the liaison office, which is directly linked to Iraq’s Electricity Ministry, will also be in charge of Iraq electricity staffs’ training and technical and financial and administrative assistance for Iraq.

The Iraqi Government has been staring that it is ready to cooperate with Jordan in an electric grid project that will be finished by the end of 2004.

Jordan hopes that Iraq will soon join the regional electricity grid, which is expected to connect Jordan, Syria, Lebanon, Turkey, Egypt and Iraq. Four of these countries are already linked in the grid.

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IRAQ UNDER US OCCUPATION

US paramedic soldiers from the 1st Battalion, 22nd Regiment of the 4th Infantry Division carry an injured soldier for treatment at their base in Tikrit, 180 kilometres (110 miles) north of the Iraqi capital Baghdad. According unconfirmed reports, the soldier was shot in the leg by an unidentified gunman while he was taking part in a foot-patrol in Tikrit. —INTERNET

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

Iraqi paramilitary police protest in front of the mayor headquarters in the southern city of Basra on 4 Jan, 2004. —INTERNET

Iraqi children from al-Jubary family look at a crater made by US Army mortar outside their home in Baghdad’s Arab Ghoor District on Sunday, 4 Jan, 2004. —INTERNET

Iraqi children from al-Jubary family check an unexploded US Army mortar that landed on their farmland in Baghdad’s Arab Ghoor district on Sunday, 4 Jan, 2004. —INTERNET

An Iraqi man looks at a huge plume of smoke from an oil refinery in Basra, 550km south from Iraq capital of Baghdad on 4 January. —INTERNET

Iraqi children from al-Jubary family look at a huge plume of smoke from an oil refinery in Basra, 550km south from Iraq capital of Baghdad on 4 January. —INTERNET
Union of Myanmar  
State Peace and Development Council  
Notification No I/2004  
(Continued from yesterday)

167. Daw Khin Kywe Oo, Professor (Myanmarsar), University of Culture (Yangon), Ministry of Culture.

164. Daw Than Than Nwe, manager, Myanma Five Star Line, Ministry of Transport.

163. U Tun Tun, second officer, Myanma Port Authority, Ministry of Transport.


156. U Tun Aye, captain (coastal vessel), Myanma Five Star Line, Ministry of Transport.

154. Daw Cho Cho Khin, senior engineer, Myingyan Town Education Department, Ministry of Education.

152. Daw Than Than Lwin, principal of Women's training High School, Kamayut Township, Ministry of Education.

150. U Soe San, Principal, Border Areas and National Races Development Department, Ministry of Social Welfare, Relief and Resettlement.

146. U Myint Maung Kyaw, Director, Development Affairs Committee, the Ministry for Progress of Border Areas and National Races and Development Affairs.

144. U Hla Myo, Deputy Director, Lashio Township Development Affairs Committee, the Ministry for PBANRDA.

142. U Tin Hla, Driver, 7/10/217 (Kha), Shwe Wah Phyu Road, Pyay, Bago Division, Ministry of Transport.


135. Army/299432 WO I Tun Min, Defence Services Medical Department, Ministry of Defence.

133. U San Oo, (Technician, Production), No 2 Machine and Foundry Factory, Ministry of Forestry.


129. U Myint Soe, No 33 Sittathukha Road, Shwehninsi Kyaung Street, 8 1/2th mile, Mayangon Township, Ministry of Industry.

126. U Myint Thein, No 135, Bogyoke 3rd Road, Ward-2, Thanyarwadi Township, Yangon Division.

125. U Tun Myint, Supervisor, Myanma Timber Enterprise, Ministry of Forestry.

120. U Sein Tun, President, Union of Myanmar Federation of Chamber of Commerce and Industry, Ministry of Commerce.

119. U Sein Tun, President, Myanmar Rowing Federation, Ministry of Sports.

116. Daw Tin Aye (Htar), No 9, Nawaday Road, Mayangon Township, Ministry of Industry.

115. U Maung Maung Latt, building 68, Room 85, AFPFL Office, Mingalar Taungnyunt Township, Yangon Division.


111. U Aye Ko, assistant geologist, Technical Development and Cooperation Department, Ministry of Science & Technology.

108. U Aye, assistant lecturer, Myitkyina, Ministry of Culture.

106. U Hlaung Tin, deputy director, Myanma Timber Enterprise, Ministry of Forestry.

104. U Tun Myint, No 3249-2-3, New University Avenue Road, Yangon.

101. U Myint Thein, No 1339, Boggyoke 3rd Road, Ward-2, Thanyarwadi Township, Yangon Division.

100. Daw San Shair, No 84, Min Road, Maubin. 

97. U Tin Aung, headmaster, Border Area Youths Development Training School, Layshi, Ministry for PBANRDA.

96. Daw Than Lwin, principal of Women's training High School, Kamayut Township, Ministry of Education.

95. U Shwe Nan Tin, Cultural Theatre, Nanshe Ward, Mandalay. 

94. U Khin Maung Cho, pro-rector, Myeik University, Ministry of Education.

93. U Myint Maung Kyaw, Director, Development Affairs Committee, the Ministry for PBANRDA.


90. U San Tin, Head of Office of the Ministry of CPT.

89. U Ye Win, executive engineer (B), Huuksharbin oil field, Myanma Oil and Gas Enterprise, Ministry of Energy.

88. U Ye Win, executive engineer (B), Thargyiargyi oil field, Myanma Oil and Gas Enterprise, Ministry of Energy.

87. U Ye Win, administrative engineer, Ingwe oil test well, MOGE, Ministry of Energy.


85. U Shwe Myat Tha, assistant geologist, Technical Development and Cooperation Department, Ministry of Science & Technology.

84. U Aye Ko, assistant geologist, Technical Development and Cooperation Department, Ministry of Science & Technology.

83. U Khin Maung Cho, pro-rector, Myeik University, Ministry of Science & Technology.

80. Dr Aye Aye Khaing, demonstrator, Government’s Technical College, Kyauktan, Ministry of Science & Technology.

79. U Sein Myint, director (admin), No 1 Basic Education Department, Ministry of Education.

78. U Aye Tin, director, No 2 Basic Education Department, Ministry of Education.

77. U Mya Thein (Ma-1891), Deputy Director, Fire Services Development Department, Ministry of Social Welfare, Relief and Resettlement.

76. U Aung Soe, assistant manager, Myanma Airways, Ministry of Transport.

75. U Tun Tun, second officer, Myanmar Port Authority, Ministry of Transport.

74. U Ko Ko Aung, captain (coastal vessel), Myanma Waterways Line, Ministry of Transport.

73. U Shwe Kywe Oo, professor (Myamarsar), University of Culture (Yangon), Ministry of Culture.

72. U Ayeyawady Daily, security, No 5, Nawaday Road, Mayangon Township, Ministry of Industry.


70. Dir Sein Win, Director (Research/Development), Traditional Medicine Department, Ministry of Health.

69. U Khin Maung Win, director, Traditional Medicine Department, Ministry of Health.

68. Daw Ayeyawady Daily, security, No 5, Nawaday Road, Mayangon Township, Ministry of Industry.

67. U Hla Aung, director, No 2 Basic Education Department, Ministry of Education.

66. U Kyaw Hla, director, Sports and Physical Education Department, Ministry of Sports.

65. U Tun Aye Hsint, principal, No 2 Basic Education High School, Kamayut Township, Ministry of Education.

64. U Tun Aye, director, Sports and Physical Education Department, Ministry of Sports.

63. Daw Kyaw Soe Myint, Director, Sports and Physical Education Department, Ministry of Education.

62. U Tun Aye Myint, Director, Sports and Physical Education Department, Ministry of Education.

61. U Khin Maung Sein, assistant secretary, Myanmar Board of Examination, Ministry of Education.

60. Daw Hla Myint Aung, Education Officer, Pyay, Bago Division (West), Ministry of Education.


57. U Kyaw Soe Myint, Director, Sports and Physical Education Department, Ministry of Sports.

56. U Than Zaw, Director, Sports and Physical Education Department, Ministry of Sports.

55. U Zaw Lin, Director, Sports and Physical Education Department, Ministry of Sports.

54. U Nyan Tun, Director, Sports and Physical Education Department, Ministry of Sports.

53. U Maung Wai, Director, Sports and Physical Education Department, Ministry of Sports.

52. U Tun Win, Deputy Director, Sports and Physical Education Department, Ministry of Sports.

51. Dr Sein Win, Director (Research/Development), Traditional Medicine Department, Ministry of Health.

50. U Khin Maung Win, Director, Traditional Medicine Department, Ministry of Health.

49. U Tun Myint, Supervisor, Myanma Timber Enterprise, Ministry of Forestry.

48. U Tin Hla, Driver, 7/10/217 (Kha), Shwe Wah Phyu Road, Pyay, Bago Division, Ministry of Transport.

47. U Maung Aung, chairman, Naypyidaw Union City Town Council, Naypyidaw, Ministry of Basic Industry.

46. U Maung Aung, chairman, Naypyidaw Union City Town Council, Naypyidaw, Ministry of Basic Industry.

45. U Maung Aung, chairman, Naypyidaw Union City Town Council, Naypyidaw, Ministry of Basic Industry.
About 300,000 people get opportunity to carry on... 

(From page 1) constant learning, the government is implementing national education promotion plans, he elaborated.

As regards national plan in the higher education sector, he said, the National Education Promotion Special 4-year Plan (2000-2001 to 2003-2004) is being implemented in the higher education sector by linking the basic education sector with the higher education sector. The plan has been implemented in the third phase of education promotion programme which has been accelerated year by year in the basic education sector.

Under the National Education Promotion Special 4-year Plan, modern teaching facilities based on computer science and electronic technology have been installed, laboratories, research departments and e-libraries established in universities and colleges for the students to reach the international standard.

Especially, e-learning centres and resource centres that used satellite communication system based on modern information and communicaton technology were systematically established. e-Education system was first launched on 1 January 2001. In 2001-2002 fiscal year, the Head of State gave guidance on implementation of the 30-year long-term plan on education, health and social sectors for future national interest in line with economic plans on agricultural, industrial, mineral and energy sectors. Therefore, the 30-year education plan linking the activities of the second year of special four-year national education promotion project was undertaken, he said.

There were only 32 universities and colleges in 1988 and there are now 154 universities and colleges due to the government’s encouragement to the education sector. Efforts for promotion of human resource development are being made with greater momentum.

He said the regions that lagged behind in development were designated as special development regions and universities and colleges were opened there. Thereafter, general new generations there got opportunities to learn higher education.

Better foundations on education that can realize Myanmar Education Vision “to create an education system that can generate a learning society capable of facing the challenges of the Knowledge Age” have emerged in the whole education sector, he said. He said Myanmar ICT Park and Mandalay ICT Park, infrastructures for information and communication technology were established in Lower and Upper Myanmar. Various information and communication technologies can widely be used in learning of higher education and education management system. This is the huge basic foundation for realization of the Myanmar Education Vision, he added.

In Myanmar there are 455 e-learning centres using electronic data broadcasting system, 44 centres using V.SAT system, 11 centres using fibre optic network, 20 centres using iPSTAR broadband system, 630 centres consisting of 100 basic education schools linking the Internet and seven centres where video conferencing can be held make use of wireless communication system.

Anyone can enjoy opportunity of learning at any time in their respective regions because of ICT network throughout the country. Between 2000-2001 and 2003-2004 fiscal years, about 300,000 people got opportunity to learn their studies at home through ICT, saving travelling and living expenses of over K£4.430 million.

Database on educational information and management was established and homepage on higher education is uploaded on the Internet. It is very convenient and easy for managers and those wishing to seek knowledge. At a time when the better

Prime Minister General Khin Nyunt cordially conversing with university and college teachers. — MNA

...founding the seven-point future political programme that will shape the future of the national people, national people’s active participation and support with full national spirit are needed.

Teachers together with students and the public, knowing the international affairs and the true situation of the nation, the tradition, culture and future prospects of the nation, are to realize that the seven-point future political programme is the correct national path and to organize all to actively take part in the tasks.

Especially, all teachers, viewing the international incidents with national awareness, are to lead students and the public to have a wide range of knowledge to be able to safeguard the national interests, aware of the intention of instigation and avoid it. In addition, teachers at universities and colleges, realizing the role of new generation youths which is important for perpetuation of the Union and to stand tall among international community, are to nurture student youths to follow the correct national path in accord with national objectives.

In conclusion, he urged to participate in the tasks with firm national spirit for successful implementation of the seven-point future political programme for emergence of modern, discipline-flourishing democratic nation to strive for producing the outstanding intellectuals and intelligentsia continuously who will safeguard the modern and developed nation with national spirit and Union Spirit, to unitedly strive for successful implementation of national education programmes in accord with the Myanmar education motto “building the modern and developed nation with national spirit and intelligentsia continuoously who will safeguard the modern and developed nation with national spirit and Union Spirit, to unitedly strive for successful implementation of national education programmes in accord with the Myanmar education motto “building the modern and developed nation with national spirit and intelligentsia continuoously who will safeguard the modern and developed nation with national spirit and Union Spirit, to unitedly strive for successful implementation of national education programmes in accord with the Myanmar education motto “building the modern and developed nation with national spirit and intelligentsia continuoously who will safeguard the modern and developed nation with national spirit and Union Spirit, to unite—
Prime Minister attends dinner hosted in honour of Academy Award winners

YANGON, 5 Jan — Prime Minister General Khin Nyunt attended the dinner hosted in honour of the Myanmar motion picture Academy Award winners for 2002 awarded by Myanmar Motion Picture Association at the Myanmar Motion Picture Museum in Yangon on 29 April. The choice of Myanmar as CND member was the first in the founding of CND since 1946. Myanmar will perform duties for four years from 1 January 2004 to 31 December 2007. He said altogether 109 Myanmar delegates attended the conferences on narcotic drugs control in foreign countries five times, seminars four times, meetings 11 times, training courses four times, workshops seven times and made study tours three times.

He said international meetings included the ministerial level meeting on narcotic drugs control of Myanmar, China, India, Thailand and Laos held in Thailand from 22 to 26 July 2003 and the ministerial level meeting and senior officials meeting of six countries held in Vietnam from 24 to 25 September 2003.

In 2003 Myanmar hosted the 24th ASEAN Senior Officials Meeting on Drug Matters (ASOD) from 14 to 15 October. The meeting of ACORD work group for ASEAN-China cooperation in anti-narcotic drugs was held on 16 October.

After the announcement of rules on money laundering worries arose among the people and monetary organizations. In connection with this, a press conference was held to deter making profits by unscrupulous elements spreading rumours.

Minister Col Tin Hlaing went on to say that CDDAC actively participated in narcotic drugs control in cooperation with ASEAN countries and other countries including China and India in 2003. As a result, Myanmar was chosen as a member of Commission on Narcotic Drugs (CND). Myanmar delegation attended the 46th ministerial meeting of CND held in Vienna, Austria from 8 to 17 April 2003. The commission agreed to choose Myanmar as a member of CND at the meeting of the United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific held on 29 April. The choice of Myanmar as CND member was the first in the founding of CND since 1946. Myanmar will perform duties for four years from 1 January 2004 to 31 December 2007. He said altogether 109 Myanmar delegates attended the conferences on narcotic drugs control in foreign countries five times, seminars four times, meetings 11 times, training courses four times, workshops seven times and made study tours three times.

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Progressive Zoning Approach to Foot and Mouth Disease
Control in the Union of Myanmar

OIE which stands for International Des Epizooties also means World Animal Health Organization. OIE is one of the international organizations established in 1924. There are 155 member countries at present. The Union of Myanmar is one of the member countries. Myanmar always participates actively in the activities of OIE. Headquarters of OIE is situated in Paris, France. General Meeting of OIE is held every year to analyze the global status of animal health and for the future programme. To ensure the implementation of the animal health programme, OIE also organizes regional offices all over the world. Myanmar is included in East Asia and Pacific Region.

Among the Trans-boundary Animal Diseases (TADs), Foot and Mouth Disease (FMD) is endemic in most of South-East Asian countries. It causes significant economic losses through clinical disease and death of large (cattle and buffalo) and small ruminants (sheep and goats) and also pigs. The disease is a major barrier to the trade of livestock and livestock products. Because of its rapid spreading nature and the difficulty in controlling the trans-boundary movement of livestock mean that one country alone can not undertake effective control of this disease. For this reason, OIE has established a Sub-commission for FMD control in South-East Asia region and set up a Regional Coordination Unit for FMD in South-East Asia (OIE RCU for SEA FMD). This office plays a regional coordination role by assisting countries to develop harmonized plans and to implement effective FMD control measures.

The 21st Meeting of the ASEAN Senior Officials (SOM) and ASEAN Ministers of Agriculture and Forest (AMAF) in April 2000 endorsed OIE’s campaign to eradicate FMD in South-East Asia. Member countries were encouraged to support and commit necessary resources and to accord priority to the implementation of their respective national programmes for the control and eradication of FMD in their territories. OIE has assisted SEA FMD member countries (Myanmar, Thailand, Vietnam, Cambodia, Laos, the Philippines, Malaysia and Indonesia) to develop this regional plan for 2001-2004. This regional plan outlines defined activities and outputs required delivering the longer term strategy of FMD control and eradication. OIE SEA FMD Campaign has been an active regional campaign since 1994. This campaign has achieved significant success in the Philippines, the Visayas, Mindanao, Palawan and Batanes regions which have been accepted by OIE as FMD free zones. This means that two-thirds of the Philippines now have achieved FMD-free-zone status. Indonesia is totally free of FMD at present.

The next step in the strategic plan for SEA FMD is Myanmar-Thailand-Malaysia Peninsular (MTM) Campaign for FMD Freedom. The aim of the campaign is to establish a FMD free zone on the MTM Peninsula according to OIE standards. From Myanmar, Myeik District and Kawthoung District of Tanintharyi Division will be included in this campaign. Myeik District will be a buffer zone and Kawthoung District will be the control zone. Director Generals of the three countries (Myanmar, Thailand and Malaysia) have already signed an agreement at Hat Rai, Thailand in November 2003. Director General of Livestock Breeding and Veterinary Department (LBVD), Ministry of Livestock and Fisheries, attended the signing ceremony. The first step for this FMD campaign is now in progress with public awareness programme in Tanintharyi Division.

The SEA FMD Campaign of OIE RCU aims to establish at least two more free zones in areas that are the watersheds of livestock flows. The two other zones identified are the lower Mekong zone (involving Vietnam, Cambodia and possibly southern Laos) and a zone from Hanoi running west that will include areas of southern China including Hainan Island. Another possible zone is the Upper Chao Phraya which involves Myanmar, China, Laos and Thailand. Myanmar has to participate in the FMD control zone in these areas because of transboundary nature of the disease. OIE RCU considered the improvement of animal health will be an important benefit to the people of rural areas. Although rice production in some of the member countries are based on mechanized farming to some extent still most of the farmers in the region rely on cattle and buffalo as draught power. For many of the rural populace, the sale of livestock is often the only source to earn cash income. Therefore member countries of OIE SEA FMD control wish to create more FMD free zones in South-East Asia region by international collaboration. Therefore a workshop for “Progressive Zoning Approach to FMD Control in the Union of Myanmar” is being held at the Traders’ Hotel in Yangon, Myanmar from 5th to 6th January 2004. Senior Regional Coordinator of OIE RCU for SEA FMD control and other FMD experts from Food and Agriculture Organization of United Nations (FAO) and Japan International Co-operation Agency (JICA), Director General and senior LBVD officials including the State/Division Veterinary Officers will be attending this meeting. The objective of the workshop is to define the patterns of animal movement, FMD risks and to identify future FMD zoning proposals for Myanmar as part of the SEA FMD regional zoning approach to FMD control. It is hoped that the outcomes of this workshop will provide a more strategic future plan to control and eventually eradicate FMD in Myanmar.

Therefore the workshop “Progressive Zoning Approach to Foot and Mouth Disease Control in the Union of Myanmar” being held in Yangon from 5th to 6th January 2004 is hailed as a great step forward by all of us who are involved in the livestock production of Myanmar.

Sweater-knitting course opens

YANGON, 5 Jan — Domestic sweater-knitting course of the Ministry for Progress of Border Areas and National Races and Development Affairs was opened at the central training school in Dagon Myothit (North) this morning.

Director-General of Department for Progress of Border Areas and National Races Col Than Swe gave a speech. Twenty trainees from Haka, Mindat and Matusin in Chin State are attending the four-week course. — MNA

Myanma Rice Milling Industry Fair previewed

YANGON, 5 Jan — Representatives of Industrial Zones from states and divisions previewed the Myanma Rice Milling Industry Fair-2004, organized by the Ministry of Commerce, to be opened soon at Yangon Trade Centre on Upper Pazundaing Road here this afternoon.

Chairman of the leading committee for observing the fair Deputy Minister for Commerce Brig-Gen Aung Tun made an opening speech. Secretary of the committee Managing Director U Min Hla Aung of Myanma Agricultural Produce Trading explained display of the booths.

The deputy minister and President of UMFCCI U Win Myint and representatives viewed the display of exhibits there.

The fair will be held from 8 to 11 January daily. Papers on developing rice milling will be presented from 8 am to noon on 9 and 10 January.

Wushu boys and girls showing skills at School Family Day celebrations for 2003-2004 academic year at the National Indoor Stadium 1 (Thawunna) on 3 January 2004. — N.M.

Officials inspecting FMD infected draught cattle.
**Prime Minister General Khin Nyunt inspects Tennis Court in Yangon yesterday (News reported). — MNA**

**Prime Minister General Khin Nyunt speaks at the meeting to discuss all-round upgrading of Kandawgyi and Zoological Gardens on 4 January. (News reported) — MNA**

**Indonesia’s textile industry to lose more workers**

*Jakarta, 5 Jan* — Textile producers have painted a grim picture of the outlook for Indonesia’s textile industry this year, predicting the closure of dozens of factories and 50,000 job losses in West Java alone.

The slump will result in a reduction of national output by around 20 per cent, according to a senior official of the Indonesian Textile Association (API).

Apart from West Java, the other major textile centre in the country is in Central Java. Lili Asdjadireja, chairman of API’s West Java chapter, was quoted Saturday by The Jakarta Post as saying that around 20-30 per cent of the total textile factories in the industry might choose to close down in 2004 due to an inability to face cutthroat competition in local and international markets from producers in other countries.

Lili said that around 121 members of the association had reported closures in the past four years. Lili predicted textile production would decline by around 20 per cent this year. Automatically, this would mean an additional reduction from the present capacity utilization of around 60 per cent. — MNA/Xinhua

**Ministry of Transport computer course concludes**

*YANGON, 5 Jan* — The closing of the basic computer course No 5/2003 of the Ministry of Transport was held in conjunction with the opening of the basic computer course No 1/2004 at the meeting hall of the Myanma Shipyards on Bayintnaung Road this morning.

Present on the occasion were Minister for Transport Maj-Gen Hla Myint Swe, Deputy Ministers U Pe Than and Col Nyan Tun Aung, Officer on Special Duty Brig-Gen Myo Tin, departmental heads, and officials.

Speaking on the occasion, the minister said according to the functional nature of the ministry, there are many processes in which modern communication systems are used to contact foreign nations. The Government is making huge investment in the promotion of the national education programme. The courses are being conducted with the aim of sharpening the abilities of the staff, he said. Next, the deputy ministers and Brig-Gen Myo Tin presented course completion certificates to trainees of the course No 5/2003. — MNA

**Internal Revenue Department holds coord meeting**

*YANGON, 5 Jan* — The Internal Revenue Department held its work coordination meeting for the 2003-2004 fiscal year at the meeting hall this afternoon, with an address by Maj-Gen Hla Tun, Minister for Finance and Revenue.

It was attended by Deputy Minister Col Hla Thein Swe, Director-General of the IRD U Win Naing, departmental heads and officials.

In his speech, the minister urged the departments to keep high the efficiency of their employees. He also spoke of the need to serve the interest of the country. The meeting continues tomorrow. MNA
INVITATION TO SEALED TENDER

Myanmar Railways, corner of 51st Street and Merchant Street, Botataung, Yangon.

1. Sealed Tenders are invited by Myanma Railways, for supply of the following Spare Parts for Carriage & Wagon which will be purchased in Myanmar Kyats:-

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sr No</th>
<th>Tender No</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Qty:</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>12(T) 23/MR (MC)</td>
<td>(1) Vertical Oil Damper Complete</td>
<td>500-Nos</td>
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<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td>12(T) 24/MR (MC)</td>
<td>(2) Coupling Hook, Coupling Block, Screw Coupling Spring No. 60 and Piston Rod</td>
<td>1-Lot</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.</td>
<td>12(T) 25/MR (MC)</td>
<td>(3) Release Valve diaphragm, Seating Washer, Rolling Ring and Gland Packing</td>
<td>1-Lot</td>
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</tbody>
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Closing Date: 15-1-2004 (Thursday) (12:00) Hours For S No (1)
Closing Date: 15-1-2004 (Thursday) (14:00) Hours For S No (2)
Closing Date: 6-2-2004 (Friday) (12:00) Hours For S No (3)
Closing Date: 6-2-2004 (Friday) (14:00) Hours For S No (4)

2. Tender documents are available at the office of the Deputy General Manager (Supply), Myanma Railways, corner of 51st Street and Merchant Street, Botataung, Yangon starting from 6-1-2004 during the office hours.

3. For further details please call: 291982, 201555 Ext: 602, 605, 612.

Deputy General Manager
Supply Department, Myanma Railways, Botataung, Yangon.

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PHILIPPINES PRODUCES 50% OF PARTS OF CELL PHONES, LAPTOPS

MANILA, 5 Jan — The Philippine Presidential Palace said Friday the Philippines now produces 50 per cent of the main components used in the manufacture of digital cellular phones and laptops worldwide. Facts and figures from the Department of Trade and Industry showed that two out of the three digital cellular phones shipped worldwide have something made in the Philippines, the palace said in a statement.

For example, the digital switch processor (DSP) which is the heart of a Nokia cellular phone, is made by Texas Instruments in the Philippines.

The Texas Instruments, with a work force of 1,750, is the heart of the A.W.P.T where it will lie at the consignee’s risk and expenses and subject to the byelaws and conditions of the Port of Yangon.

Three Gorges power plant generates 8.6 billion kwh of electricity

WUHAN, 5 Jan — China’s Three Gorges hydro-power plant, with six generating units now in operation, had generated 8.6 billion kwh of electricity by the end of 2003. The first generating unit went into operation in July 2003, and another five were put into use successively.

The plant plans to comprise four more generating units in 2004.
US holds “Reuters” staff near chopper crash in Iraq

WASHINGTON, 5 Jan — The US Defence Department announced on Friday a 29.7-million-US-dollar order for anthrax vaccine based on the assumption that a federal judge’s ban on mandatory vaccinations will be reversed. — MNA/Reuters

Quake-stricken Iranian city requested to watch for diarrhoea

BAK (Iran), 5 Jan — Southeast Iran’s Ram City, which was hit by a powerful earthquake measuring 6.3 on the Richter Scale on December 26, has been requested by the United Nations to watch for diarrhoea, a disease of excessive and frequent evacuation of watery faeces.

A situation report released here Friday by the United Nations On-Site Co-ordination and Operation Centre (UNOSCO) said there is a mobile surveillance officer moving between field hospitals to collect information. The International Federation of the Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC) has set up a field hospital here to receive patients for treatment of injuries they sustained during the earthquake. The hospital is expected to remain operational in Ram for the next 12 months.

Besides the IFRC, a number of countries and international organizations have also established field hospitals here. The affected area was divided into 12 sectors by the UNOSCO, with the participation of the heads of 12 sectors, reporting their daily work.

WHO representatives regularly attend these meetings to make sure that the guidelines and standards on disease control and surveillance are followed. — MNA/Khinnua

China sends third batch of relief material to Iraq

BEIJING, 5 Jan — The third batch of relief materials offered by China left Shijiazhuang City for earthquake-stricken Iraq Friday evening, according to sources with the Ministry of Commerce.

The materials include 40 tons of water-purification equipment, tents, blankets, clothes and quilts, and medical equipment.

The sources said that China would also send the fourth and fifth batches of materials to Iraq on January 4 and 6 respectively.

A strong earthquake rocked the city of Ram in Iraq’s Kerwan Province on December 26, leaving tens of thousands dead. The Chinese Government decided on the day of the disaster to offer five million yuan (600 million US dollars) worth of relief assistance. In response to a request from the Iraqi Government Tuesday, China offered a further 10 million yuan (1.2 million US dollars’) worth of relief materials to Iraq. — MNA/Khinnua

Henry Tang optimistic about HK’s economy in 2004

HONG KONG, 5 Jan — Hong Kong Financial Secretary Henry Tang Saturday expressed cautious optimism about Hong Kong’s economic development this year and predicted an over 3.5-per-cent gross domestic growth for 2004.

Attending a radio programme Saturday morning, Tang said recovery signs have been witnessed in a number of sectors, including tourism, restaurants and retail sectors and the government revenue also improved recently.

He said though the deficit reached more than 70 billion Hong Kong dollars (9.02 billion US dollars) by the end of November 2003, the figure is less than expected. The financial secretary expressed his belief that with steady economic development of the Chinese Mainland and further improvement of the US economy, Hong Kong’s economy is expected to be pushed ahead.

Virus variation found in suspected SARS case

GUANGZHOU, 5 Jan — The results of a gene sequencing test show the coronavirus found in the suspected severe acute respiratory syndrome (SARS) case in Guangzhou is a virus variation with new sequence, according to the Centre for Disease Prevention and Control in southern China’s Guangdong Province Friday evening.

That is to say, it is possible that the man with the suspected case of SARS in the province have contracted SARS, according to the centre. The centre had carried out a series of tests on the case. Using the method of reverse transcription-polymerase chain reaction (RT-PCR), scientists obtained S, M and N genes of coronavirus from the suspect. Comparing the sequences of the gene section with all those of the SARS coronavirus published by the international gene bank, experts found that 98.9 to 99.7 per cent of 1,068 bases of S gene, 99.9 per cent of 560 bases of M gene, and 99 percent of 1,068 bases of N gene, are isogenous with those of S, M and N genes published by the gene bank.

“The results point to the possibility of the suspect infected by SARS coronavirus, polygenetic chain reaction (RT-PCR) shows that the S gene is a new sequence that has not been published,” said Dr Chen Qixia with the centre. Professor Zhong Nanshan, an academician of the Chinese Academy of Engineering, also said the test result showed a possibility that the SARS coronavirus has a variation. — MNA/Khinnua

US Army buys $30m in anthrax shots

WASHINGTON, 5 Jan — The US Defence Department announced on Friday a 29.7-million-US-dollar order for anthrax vaccine based on the assumption that a federal judge’s ban on mandatory vaccinations will be reversed. — MNA/Reuters

Report says massive US troop rotation may invite attacks

WASHINGTON, 5 Jan — The US Defence Department is gearing up for a massive rotation of troops in Iraq this year, and this may lead to opportunistic attacks on US soldiers as they arrive and depart, USA Today reported Friday.

From late January to May, some 123,000 US troops will be pulled out of Iraq and replaced by about 110,000 fresh soldiers. In addition, 11,000 US forces in Afghanistan will be brought home and replaced with about the same number of soldiers.

Guerrillas fighting the US-led occupation forces in Iraq may view the massive arrival and departures as a unique opportunity to inflict further casualties on Americans, the report quoted Pentagon officials and analysts as saying. A total of 212 US soldiers have been killed in combat since President George W. Bush declared an end to major combat operations in Iraq on May 1, 2003. — MNA/Khinnua

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Algerian footballer first to gain from FIFA rule change

JOHANNESBERG, 5 Jan — French-born defender Antar Yahia has become the first footballer to profit from the change in FIFA's rules on international eligibility when he made his debut for Algeria in an Olympic Games qualifier.

Yahia, from the French First Division club Bastia, scored the only goal of the 1-0 win over Ghana with a 19th minute header for the Algerian Under-23 side in Blida on Friday.

Yahia, a former French Under-18 international but benefits from a change in the FIFA statutes, brought into effect in October in the organization's congress in Qatar.

Previously, a footballer who played for one country in a competitive international at both senior and junior level was not permitted to change nationality and play for another. But FIFA have introduced a new rule that allows a footballer capped at junior level to be able to later represent another country, but only as long as he possesses dual nationality and makes the request to change nationality under the age of 21.

FIFA have waived the age limit until October, allowing Yahia, who turns 22 in March, to start his international career over again in the colours of Algeria, from where his parents had migrated to France.

It is also under the same rules that Malik are seeking to use striker Frederic Kanoute of English Premier League side Tottenham Hotspur at the Nations Cup finals.

Kanoute was capped several times by France's Under-21 side in the European Championship qualifiers in 1999 and would not have been able to represent Mali, where his parents were born, until the statutes were changed.

The same ruling also effects Liverpool's Djimi Traore, who is also being sought by Mali for the upcoming tournament in Tunisia, and the St Etienne defender Herrita Ilunga, who is likely to play for the Democratic Republic of Congo.—MNA/Reuters

Lokomotiv's Loskov voted Russia's top player again

Moscow, 5 Jan — Lokomotiv Moscow captain Dmitry Loskov has been voted Russia's top player for a second year in a row in a nationwide poll of coaches and other soccer experts.

The 29-year-old playmaker, the league's top scorer with 14 goals last season, beat Spartak Moscow captain and 2000 Russian footballer of the year Vegor Titov and CSKA Moscow skipper Sergei Semak.

Loskov, who was also named the country's best player by his colleagues, has helped Lokomotiv to the knockout phase of the Champions League where they meet French Ligue 1 club Monaco.

Barthez returns to Marseille in triumphant style

PARIS, 5 Jan — France goalkeeper Fabien Barthez celebrated his Marseille return by saving twice and scoring once as his team beat RC Strasbourg 4-3 on penalties in their French Cup first round tie on Saturday.

The 29-year-old former Alaves and AC Milan striker has struggled to make an impression at the club, which he signed for in a world record fee for a goalkeeper in 2000 for a world record fee for a goalkeeper, before moving to Manchester United in 2003.

He left for a five-year spell at Monaco but was dropped by manager Alex Ferguson as long as he possesses dual nationality and makes the request to change nationality over again in the colours of Algeria, from where his parents had migrated to France.

Barthez, who were locked 1-1 after extra time before Barthez palmed away Strasbourg's third kick and then dived full length to block a powerful shot from Senegalese striker Mamadou Diouf.

Barthez, whose loan transfer from Manchester United was approved only the day before, applied the finishing touch by taking his team's last penalty, blasting the ball past Richard Dutruel.

"I had been waiting to return to club football for so many weeks that I felt a lot of pressure," the 32-year-old told French television.

"I had the feeling I was going back to the beginning of my career and I didn't want to disappoint the staff, the players and the fans."

In 1998 World Cup and Euro 2000 winner, Barthez won the 1993 European Cup with Marseille in the first of his three seasons at the club.

He left for a five-year spell at Monaco before moving to Manchester United in 2003 for a world record fee for a goalkeeper of 7.8 million pounds (13 million US dollars). He has won two league titles with United, but was dropped by manager Alex Ferguson at the tail-end of last season.

Barthez was capped several times by France's Under-21 side in the European Championship qualifiers in 1999 and would not have been able to represent Mali, where his parents were born, until the statutes were changed.

The same ruling also effects Liverpool's Djimi Traore, who is also being sought by Mali for the upcoming tournament in Tunisia, and the St Etienne defender Herrita Ilunga, who is likely to play for the Democratic Republic of Congo.—MNA/Reuters

Celtic close on title after Old Firm victory

Glasgow, 5 Jan — Celtic took an enormous stride towards regaining the Scottish Premier League title after they drew their opening day clash with Rangers — a run starting with two late goals by Stilian Petrov’s 19th minute header for the Rangers a distant second on 1968. Celtic now have 55 points set by Jock Stein’s European Cup winning side, a club record.

Celtic dominated the opening exchanges but were rewarded after 19 minutes when Henrik Larsson floated a neat cross deep into the box and although the excellent Kollo Lopez tipped Petrov’s header onto his right hand post the ball spun back across the line.

The home side continued to dominate and after 32 minutes Larsson had a volleyed goal disallowed by the assistant referee.

It was Celtic’s second goal in two games as they beat Rangers 2-0 at Ibrox in October — and although the campaign is only at the halfway point it makes them odds-on favourites to reclaim the championship after Rangers pipped them on the last day of last season.

It was also a club record 18th successive league win for Celtic — a run starting after they drew their opening day clash with Rangers 1-1 on Saturday.

Battling Telford toast of minor leagues

London, 5 Jan — Telford United were the toast of the English league minor clubs on Saturday as they provided one of the biggest shocks of the FA Cup third round.

Veteran striker Lee Mills’ second-minute goal sealed a 1-0 victory for the Conference club at First Division Crewe Alexandra, their 13th League scalp in the world’s oldest cup competition.

Telford, who reached the fifth round in 1985 when they lost to winners Everton, also disposed of League opposition in round two when they beat Second Division Bromford.

“Telford went in front and it was a one-off chance, if we were going to beat Crewe it had to be today,” Telford manager Mick Jones told Sky Sports.

“Our players got it into our heads as we normally play they would have murdered us. This is a fantastic day.”

Telford will be joined in Monday’s fourth-round draw by fellow Conference clubs Scarborough and Accrington Stanley and Third Division Kidderminster Harriers.

Scarborough, who have never gone beyond the third round, drew 1-1 at Third Division Southend United, while Accrington Stanley, who dropped out of the Football League in 1962, earned a replay with Second Division Colchester after a 0-0 draw.

Kidderminster, managed by former Liverpoo double winner Ian Mobley, looked set for a famous victory over their illustrious local rivals Wolverhampton Wanderers when substitute John Williams gave them the lead in the 77th minute.—MNA/Reuters

Bolton close to signing Moreno

LONDON, 5 Jan — Bolton Wanderers are close to signing Atletico Madrid’s Javier Moreno on loan, the English Premier League club said on its web site on Saturday.

The 29-year-old former Alaves and AC Milan striker has struggled for first team opportunities this season and Bolton manager Sam Allardyce is confident he will join his multi-national squad.

“We hope to have him before Monday,” Allardyce said after his side’s 1-1 draw with Tranmere Rovers in the third round of the FA Cup on Saturday.

“We have sorted it out with him verbally and it will be approved on Monday. It is important to have a player like him in our squad.”

Moreno, who has played five times for Spain, would provide cover for Nigeria international Jay-Jay Okocha who will join up with his country for the African Nations Cup later this month.

Japanese soccer star Hidetoshi Nakata, left, shows his new Bologna soccer club jersey, with team president Renato Cipollini, at a press conference in Bologna, Italy, on 3 Jan, 2004.

Nakata, who played with Parma in Italy’s Serie A top league last season, has joined rival team president Renato Cipollini, at a press conference in Bologna, Italy, on 3 Jan, 2004. —INTERNET

Olympique Marseille goalkeeper Fabien Barthez reacts during their French Cup soccer match against Strasbourg, on 3 Jan, 2004 in Marseille, southern France. Barthez, the former goalkeeper for Manchester United in England, was playing his first match with his new team.—INTERNET
**Prime Minister receives Special Envoy of Vietnamese PM**

**YANGON, 5 Jan** — Prime Minister of the Union of Myanmar General Khin Nyunt received visiting Mr Le Van Bang, a Special Envoy of the Prime Minister of Vietnam, and party at Zeyathiri Beikman Hall on Konmyinttha here this afternoon. Present at the call were Minister for Foreign Affairs U Win Aung, Deputy Minister U Khin Maung Win and Director-General of the Protocol Department Thura U Aung Htet. The Special Envoy of the Vietnamese Prime Minister and party were accompanied by Mr Pham Quang Khon, Vietnamese Ambassador to Myanmar. — MNA

**CCDAC holds its meeting 1/2003**

**YANGON, 5 Jan**—The Central Committee for Drug Abuse Control held its meet- ing 1/2003 at the meeting hall of the Ministry of Home Affairs this afternoon. It was attended by Chair- man of CCDAC Minister for Home Affairs Col Tin Hlaing, Minister for Labour U Tin Wnun, Minister for Health Dr Kyaw Myint, Chairman of the Working Committee deputy ministers, guests and others.

Reviewing measures taken by the CCDAC and the Working Committee in 2003, CCDAC Chairman Minister Col Tin Hlaing said that steps were taken with added momentum for culti- vation of poppy-substitute crops in 2003 under the 15- year narcotic drugs eradica- tion plans and the New Destiny Project, adding in the process, altogether 8,221 baskets of seeds of high yield paddy, maize, wheat and gram, 395,756 kilos of seeds of hybrid paddy and maize, edible oil crops and vegeta- bles, and 13,656 viss of seeds of kitchen crops were distributed; that 1616.6 tons of fertilizer, 765.5 litres of pesticide and 80 kilos of pes- ticide powder were distrib- uted for 559,323 perennial plants; that 2178.5 acres of model cultivation plots, 76.5 acres of pilot cultivation plots were taken under and 6,017 acres of land were re- claimed for cultivation of poppy-substitute crops; that 19,473 acres of monsoon crops were cultivated in 2003-2004 against the tar- geted acres of 19,327, ac- counting for 101 per cent, that 4,993 acres of winter crops were cultivated up to 30 November against the tar- geted acres of 10,570, rep- resenting 47 per cent, that cultivation of monsoon crops and winter crops was completed 82 per cent. In the livestock breeding sector, vaccines and treatment were given to animals in vil- lages of the project area in 2003 and pedigree pigs were distributed to Mongmyin and Lweyon region, Monghsat and Mongtung townships in Shan State (East), Kunhein and Hmeinmyauk region, Pangsaing and Mongtung townships in Shan State (West), Monghsat and Mongtung townships in Shan State (South), spending K 12.5 million disbursed out of the funds of the New Destiny Project; and under the Kokang Region Livestock Breeding Project, mulch cows, sheep and poultry were distributed with the funds of the respec- tive ministries and 0.11 mil- lion fingerlings distributed by the Fisheries Department in 2003. In the health care serv- ices, the Ministry of Health issued Order No 1/2003 re- lating to control of drugs and psychotropic substances on 7-3-2003 to ensure the sys- tematic control of narcotic drugs and psychotropic sub- stances and enable the pa- tients in need of medicines to buy and use medicines easily; that workshop on Order No 1/2003 was held at the auditorium of Myanmar Medical Association, Yangon on 19-9-2003, at- tended by delegates from State and Division Commit- tees for Drug Abuse Con- trol, heads of State and Divi- sion Health Departments and specialists of the respective drug control centres. (See page 2)

**Foreign Minister receives Vietnamese**

**YANGON, 5 Jan** — Min- ister for Foreign Affairs U Win Aung received Mr Le Van Bang, Deputy Minis- ter for Foreign Affairs of Vietnam and special envoy of Mr Phan Van Khi. Prime Minister of the So- cialist Republic of Vietnam at Ayeyawady Room, Minis- try of Foreign Affairs, this morning. Present on the occa- sion were Director-Gen- eral U Thaung Tun of the Political Department and officials of the min-istry. In the evening, Deputy Minister for Foreign Af- fairs U Khin Maung Win hosted a dinner in honour of visiting Vietnamese Deputy Foreign Minister and delegation at Karaweik Palace. — MNA

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<tr>
<th><strong>Four political objectives</strong></th>
<th><strong>Four economic objectives</strong></th>
<th><strong>Four social objectives</strong></th>
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<tr>
<td>* Stability of the State, community peace and tranquillity, prevalence of law and order</td>
<td>* Development of agriculture as the base and all-round development of other sectors of the economy as well</td>
<td>* Uplift of the morale and morality of the entire nation</td>
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<td>* National reconsolidation</td>
<td>* Proper evolution of the market-oriented economic sys- tem</td>
<td>* Uplift of national prestige and integrity and preservation and safeguarding of cultural heritage and national charac- ter</td>
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<td>* Emergence of a new enduring State Constitution</td>
<td>* Development of the economy inviting participation in terms of technical know-how and investments from sources inside the country and abroad</td>
<td>* Uplift of dynamism of patriotic spirit</td>
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<td>* Building of a new modern developed nation in accord with the new State Constitution</td>
<td>* The initiative to shape the national economy must be kept in the hands of the State and the national peoples</td>
<td>* Uplift of health, fitness and education standards of the entire nation</td>
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Prime Minister General Khin Nyunt receives Mr Le Van Bang, Special Envoy of the Prime Minister of Vietnam, and party at Zeyathiri Beikman Hall on Konmyinttha. — MNA

Chairman of the Central Committee for Drug Abuse Control Minister Col Tin Hlaing delivers an address at the CCDAC meeting. — MNA