Ariyasaccana dassanam, to discern the noble-truth; this is the way to auspiciousness.

The NEW LIGHT OF MYANMAR

Volume XI, Number 266 2nd Waning of Pyatho 1365 ME Thursday, 8 January, 2004

Foreign Head of State sends felicitations to Senior General Than Shwe

YANGON, 7 Jan — The following is the message of felicitations from President of Socialist Republic of Vietnam Mr Tran Duc Luong to State Peace and Development Council Chairman of the Union of Myanmar Senior General Than Shwe on the occasion of the 56th Anniversary of the Independence Day of the Union of Myanmar.

"On behalf of the State and people of Vietnam and in my own name, I would like to extend to Your Excellency and, through Your Excellency, to the people of Myanmar, our warmest congratulations on the occasion of the 56th Anniversary of the Independence Day of the Union of Myanmar.

It is our wish that the people of Myanmar will continue to accord further achievements in the course of construction and development of Myanmar into a prosperous country and for the happiness of the Myanmar people.

We are delighted to note that our relations of traditional friendship and multi-faceted cooperation have achieved new encouraging developments in recent years, thus contributing to the further consolidation of the existing fine relationship between our two countries, for peace, stability, cooperation and development in the region and the world over.

Please accept, Your Excellency, my best wishes for your good health, happiness and the assurances of my highest consideration."

MNA

Foreign Head of Government sends felicitations to Prime Minister General Khin Nyunt

YANGON, 7 Jan — The following is the message of felicitations from Prime Minister of Socialist Republic of Vietnam Mr Phan Van Khai to Prime Minister of the Union of Myanmar General Khin Nyunt on the occasion of the 56th Anniversary of the Independence Day of the Union of Myanmar.

"On behalf of the Government and people of Vietnam, I would like to extend to Your Excellency and, through Your Excellency, to the Government and people of Myanmar, our warmest congratulations on the occasion of the 56th Anniversary of the Independence Day of the Union of Myanmar.

I am very satisfied at the fine recent developments of the relations of the traditional friendship and multi-faceted cooperation between Vietnam and Myanmar and I firmly believe that, with the common efforts made by our two Governments and peoples, our relationship will be further consolidated and developed on the bilateral basis as well as in the framework of ASEAN, regional and international organisations for the interests of our two peoples and that of peace, stability, cooperation and development in the region and the world over.

Please accept, Your Excellency, my best wishes for your good health, happiness and the assurances of my highest consideration."

MNA

Prime Minister General Khin Nyunt receives Chairman of Shan State Nationalities People’s Liberation Organization U Takleh and party — MNA

Prime Minister receives Shan national race leaders

YANGON, 7 Jan — Border Areas and National Races Development Work Committee Chairman Prime Minister General Khin Nyunt received Chairman U Takleh of Shan State Nationalities People’s Liberation Organization, Secretary U Chit Maung, CEC member U Sein Win Naung, In-Charge (Regional Development Tasks) U Peter and Deputy In-Charge (Relation and Commerce) U Maung Maung Win at Zeyathiri Beikman Hall on Konmyinttha here at 4 pm today.

Present on the occasion were Minister for Mines Brig-Gen Ohn Maung, Minister for Progress of Border Areas and National Races and Development Affairs Col Thein Nyunt, Minister for Forestry Brig-Gen Thein Aung, Director-General Lt-Col Pe Nyein of State Peace and Development Council Office, Director-General U Soe Tint of Government Office and senior officers of Military Intelligence.

At the meeting, the national race leaders expressed their support for the seven-point future political programme of the State and pledged to take part in the tasks to successfully implement the programme under the leadership of the government. Afterwards, they reported on regional development tasks, road and bridge construction tasks and economic matters. — MNA

Emergence of the State Constitution is the duty of all citizens of Myanmar Naing-Ngan.
The 57th Anniversary Union Day objectives
— for all national races to safeguard the national policy— non-disintegration of the Union, non-disintegration of national solidarity and perpetuation of sovereignty
— to keep the Union spirit ever alive and dynamic among the national people
— for all national people to defend and safeguard the Union for its perpetual existence
— to prevent, through national solidarity, the danger of internal and external destructive elements undermining peace and stability of the State and national development, and
— for all national races to make concerted efforts for successful implementation of the seven-point future policy programme.

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

Efficient use of electricity
* Use daylight as the main source of light
* Use the least possible amount of electricity only if there is not enough natural light
* Use the least possible amount of electricity required in production and service enterprises
* Preventing waste of electricity benefits the user and others
There are about 500,000 households using electricity in Yangon. Thus, saving a four-foot fluorescent lamp every day by each household amounts to saving power that is equal to the capacity a 20-megawatt power station can supply.

Construction of Sabbathnû Stupa inspected
YANGON, 7 Jan—Chairman of the Committee for Construction of Sabbathnû Stupa Minister for Transport Maj-Gen Hla Myint Swe inspected progress in construction of the stupa in Mayangon Township, Yangon Division, yesterday afternoon.
In response to the reports presented by officials, the minister fulfilled the requirements.
Minister for Transport Maj-Gen Hla Myint Swe also looked into the tasks for greening of the environs of the stupa. — MNA

PERSPECTIVES
Thursday, 8 January, 2004
New roads and bridges for regional development
Smooth and easy transport is the most important and fundamental requirement for the development of a nation or a region. Improved transportation contributes not only to the trade and economic growth of a region but also to the development of its other sectors such as health and education. This being so, the government is building new roads and bridges wherever necessary for the development of each and every region of the Union.
The opening ceremony of the Puheton bridge constructed by the Directorate of Military Engineers under the supervision of the office of the Quartermaster-General was held in Kani Township, Monywa District, Sagaing Division, on 3 January. Member of the State Peace and Development Council Quartermaster-General Lt-Gen Tha Thura Tin Aung Myint Oo spoke on the occasion and member of the State Peace and Development Council Lt-Gen Ye Myint of the Ministry of Defence formally opened the bridge.
The bridge is 450 feet long and situated on the Monywa-Yargyi-Kalaywa road. It was designed by Myanmar engineers and built with the use of beams produced by the State-owned steel plant. It is something Myanmar engineers can be proud of.
The opening of the bridge will surely contribute not only to the socio-economic development of Sagaing Division and Chin State but also to the growth of border trade with India. The old road linking Monywa, Kalay and Kalaywa is 160 miles long and the new road linking Monywa, Yargyi and Kalaywa is 45 miles shorter. The new road and the new bridge will lead to rapid development of the region on the west bank of the Chindwin river.
We believe that the entire national people and members of the armed forces will fully cooperate with the Government and so its efforts for the parallel development of various regions across the Union will meet with a complete success.

AIDS educative billboard put up in Insein
YANGON, 7 Jan—An AIDS educative billboard was put up at the corner of Pyay Road and Mindhamma Road in Sawbwa (Insein) Ward in Insein Township this morning.
The ceremony was organized under the anti-AIDS project and Ranbaxy—Myanmar Deputy Director General of Health Department Dr Soe Aung and Country Manager of Ranbaxy Mr Dinesh Kapoor formally unveiled the billboard. — MNA

AIDS is a national concern.
Syrian, Turkish leaders meet amid concern over Kurds in Iraq

ANKARA, 7 Jan — The leaders of Iraq's neighbours, Syria and Turkey, insisted Tuesday that Iraq remain united, issuing a warning to Kurds who may aspire to create an independent state in the north of the country.

In Washington, Secretary of State Colin Powell said the United States believes the Iraqis should decide the future of the overwhelmingly Kurdish northern region, but "it is absolutely clear" it must remain part of Iraq.

The statements came as Iraq's Governing Council has been hammered out details of a new government for Iraq. Iraqi Kurdish leaders are asking for greater autonomy for their oil-rich north and a federal Iraq based on two ethnic states.

"Two Iraqi Kurdish leaders are not asking for independence. Turkey fears that increased autonomy and states based on ethnic identity will encourage separation. Turkish Kurdish rebels fought a 15-year war for autonomy in southern Turkey that claimed some 37,000 lives.

Turkish leaders have repeatedly said they will not tolerate Kurdish independence in Iraq, which they say will lead to the disintegration of the country and the destabilization of the region. Iran, Syria and Turkey all have large Kurdish minorities in regions bordering Iraq.

"We condemn all approaches that pose a threat to Iraq's territorial integrity," Syrian President Bashar Assad said after his visit to Ankara in the first visit to Turkey by a Syrian head of state and meeting with his Turkish counterpart, Ahmet Necdet Sezer.

Sezer added that Syria and Turkey "share the same views on the protection of Iraq's territorial integrity and of its national unity... We confirmed that Turkey and Syria, as two countries of the region that neighbor Iraq, are determined to effectively watch over these goals.

Earlier, Assad told CNN Turk television that "if there is no territorial integrity in Iraq, we cannot talk about stability in Iraq or in our countries. We are not only against a Kurdish state, but any state that would break the integrity of Iraq." The warnings came in statements delivered at the end of a ceremony to mark the signing of agreements to promote mutual cooperation.

Northern Iraq is a largely autonomous area that is one of the relatively stable regions of the country with few US troops.

Turkey is particularly worried about Kurdish control over the oil-rich northern city of Kirkuk. Iraqi Kurdish fighters moved into the city after the fall of Saddam Hussein, and control over its resources would make a possible state more economically viable.

UN's Annan presses US on Iraq meeting

UNITED NATIONS, 7 Jan — United Nations Secretary General Kofi Annan said he expects the United States to send senior officials to a January 19 meeting he is hosting with Iraqi leaders on the UN's role in Iraq.

As the United States and Britain prepare to hand over power to Iraqis at the end of June, Annan wants to know what will be expected of the United Nations — and what security measures are in place to protect UN personnel.

The UN chief will meet officials from the US-appointed Iraqi Governing Council to try to thrash out the UN's role about attending.

"I would expect the US government to send a senior delegation, hopefully including people from Baghdad," Annan told reporters. "I expect all the parties to attend."

The Washington Post reported Monday that US officials felt they had been "repeatedly burned" on the Iraq issue at the United Nations, where Washington failed last year to get strong international support for the Iraq war.

It cited officials saying that it was now time for Iraqis themselves to make their case at the world body as they prepare to take over power when the US occupation formally ends in six months.

Annan will host an Iraqi delegation headed by Ahmed Fouad, the current President of the Governing Council and adjourned Greenstock, the top British envoy in Iraq, was likely to attend.

The United Nations Secretary General Kofi Annan addresses the media at UN headquarters on Tuesday, 6 Jan, 2004. Annan said he expects the United States to attend a January 19 meeting with him and the Iraqi Governing Council to determine the United Nations' role in Iraq as the country moves to self-government.

Canadian company to mine Tanzanian gold

OTTAWA, 7 Jan — Canada's Northern Mining Explorations Ltd and a subsidiary of Barrick Gold Corp are to start mining gold in Tanzania, it was reported here today.

The Tulawaka gold mine will begin production immediately following approval of an environmental impact study completed for the project last September and the granting of a special mining licence in November by the Tanzanian Government.

Northern Mining holds a 30-per cent interest in the project while Pangana Goldfields Inc, a wholly-owned subsidiary of Barrick and the project's operator, owns the remaining 70 per cent.

Northern Mining said it has accepted from Barrick a project debt financing offer for Northern's entire share of the project's capital cost.

Northern Mining also has a majority interest in four gold and base metal exploration projects in the east African country of Eritrea and in four gold projects in Canada's Quebec Province.

Austrian jet makes emergency landing in German field

BERLIN, 7 Jan — A passenger jet has made an emergency landing in a field near Munich Airport after the pilot reported problems with one of the engines, police said on Monday. No one was hurt.

The Fokker 70 plane carrying around 30 passengers landed between two and three kilometres short of Munich Airport, a police spokesman said.

An airport spokesman said the plane belonged to Austrian Airlines.
US army battles to keep soldiers in Iraq, Kuwait and Afghanistan from leaving the service.

London, 7 Jan—The US army is introducing a series of measures to prevent soldiers serving in Iraq, Kuwait and Afghanistan from leaving the service.

Those who were planning to retire or leave in the next few months will now have to remain with their unit.

Soldiers whose terms of enlistment have expired will be offered up to $10,000 to serve another three years.

An army spokesman said the moves were designed to maintain cohesion and combat effectiveness.

BBC Pentagon correspondent Nick Childs says it is another sign of the strain the US army is under because of the operation in Iraq.

He adds that it will encourage critics who say the military simply does not have enough troops.

The “stop loss” order to troops currently in Iraq, Kuwait and Afghanistan means they will have to remain in service while their units are deployed — and for up to 90 days after they return to their home bases.

A correspondent says there are already ready some stop loss orders in place and US army officials are playing down the significance of this planned new extension.

But he adds that it could mean real hardship for some soldiers.

Army spokesman Major Steve Stover said the order would affect about 7,000 soldiers currently in Iraq who were likely to end their service or retire before their unit redeployed.

They are likely to be in leadership positions because of their level of experience.

“The combatant commanders said that if you replace them by taking them out now, it’s going to cause turbulence and confusion, because you’re taking away key leaders at a key time when a unit is currently in operation,” said Major Stover.

Tel Carpenter, a defence analyst with the Cato Institute think tank, said the stop loss decision went against the concept of volunteer military service.

“Clearly, if large numbers of personnel have their terms extended against their will, that violates the principle of volunteerism,” he said.

“It also suggests just how strained the military is in trying to provide for the Iraqi occupation plus all the other US obligations around the world.”

Internet

Iraqis say US killed two civilians in Baquba

Baquba, Iraq, 7 Jan—Crowds of angry Iraqis gathered in the central town of Baquba on Tuesday to bury two men they said were civilians killed by US soldiers while walking home from a coffee shop on Monday evening.

Relatives said the two men were returning to their homes in a village near Baquba at around 7pm (1600 GMT) on Monday when they were shot by US tanks.

A US military spokeswoman said she had no information about an incident in the area.

Crowds gathered for the funeral on Tuesday, chanting “America is the enemy of God” and other anti-US slogans.

Middle-school graduates line up to join Air Force in China

Beijing, 7 Jan—Over 60,000 Chinese middle-school graduates have registered for the 2004 recruitment exam for Air Force pilots, 23 per cent more than last year.

Officials with the Chinese Air Force Draft Board said the preliminary interview, which started last October, had concluded and the students who had passed were advised to prepare for the second-round test.

Candidates who received qualified academic results and passed the physical exam during the second-round test lasting from February to August, would be accepted by the China Air Force Aviation College.

The college has started recruiting and training high-calibre candidates to match the increasing complexity of weapons and facilities in recent years.

Last June, it recruited the first group of 19 graduates specialising in sciences and engineering from thousands of applicants from 74 Chinese universities.

They were the first batch without military backgrounds to be recruited since the reform of military aviation college enrollment in 1987.

In June last year, China’s first group of 20 Air Force pilots with bachelor degrees left the training centre for service in operational units flying new fighter planes.

India may capture 56% of offshore BPO market by 2006

New Delhi, 7 Jan—India is likely to capture 56 per cent share of offshore business process outsourcing (BPO) business by 2006 with the demand for BPO services increasing at an annual growth rate of 50 per cent during 2004-06, according to a report by credit rating agency ICRA.

However, the prospects of a US BPO backlash may act as a constraining factor for the offshore BPO market and in such a scenario, India may be able to capture only 42 per cent share of the offshore market by 2006, the report said.

The size of the Indian BPO market is likely to be around 9.12 billion US dollar by 2006 and will employ around 0.4 million people, ICRA said in its Indian BPO industry report.

Indicating a consolidation trend within the industry, the report points out that even though there are a large number of BPO players in the Indian market at around 400, the percentage of third party vendors to total BPO players have declined from 57.4 per cent in FY 2001 to 42.2 per cent in FY 2003 while that of captive players have increased from 42.6 per cent to 57.8 per cent during the same period.

The relative decline in the share of third party vendors may be explained by the mergers and acquisitions currently taking place within the industry, it said.

With a projection of 50 per cent annual growth for BPO industry over 2004-06, the ICRA report said that established BPO players are likely to move up the value chain in quest for better price realization.

For BPO service providers, moving up the value chain is critical, given the attrition rates in the industry which are on an average higher in low value-added segments (in call centres) as compared to higher value-added segments like engineering, the report said.

As these Indian firms scale up rapidly, ICRA expects that some of the big players in the market may use the BPO route to raise funds for moving up the ladder. It said a number of countries have emerged in the BPO segment like Australia, Philippines, China and Ireland.
IRAQ UNDER US OCCUPATION

A US soldier guards a group of Iraqis as they stand and wait for work near the 101st Airborne’s divisional headquarters in the northern Iraqi city of Mosul, northwest of Baghdad, on 6 Jan, 2004. — Internet

British Army troops take position near a crowd of protesting former Iraqi soldiers after stones were thrown in the southern Iraqi city of Basra on 6 Jan. 2004. Iraqi police opened fire on soldiers of the former Iraqi army in Basra on Tuesday as they staged a protest, witnesses said. — Internet

A US soldier secures the area after their supply truck came under roadside explosive attack, injuring the driver in the Baghdad suburb of Abu Ghraib on 6 Jan, 2004. — Internet

Iraqi man Ali Al Jibouri, 40, walks across his cousin’s farmland past an unexploded mortar round in the Baghdad suburb of Arab Jibour on 5 Jan, 2004. — Internet

Armed Iraqi police rush into a crowd of protesting former soldiers in the southern Iraqi city of Basra on 6 Jan, 2004. — Internet

US Army soldiers of the 1-22 Infantry Division sit on their humvee as they leave their military base in Tikrit, Iraq, on 6 Jan, 2004. — Internet

Iraqi man Ali Al Jibouri, 40, walks across his cousin’s farmland past an unexploded mortar round in the Baghdad suburb of Arab Jibour on 5 Jan, 2004. — Internet
**Philippines isolates 34 at home over SARS scare**

**MANILA, 7 Jan—** The Philippines has ordered 34 people to stay at home after they had contact with a woman suspected of contracting SARS while working as a maid in Hong Kong, a health department spokesman said on Tuesday.

The 42-year-old woman and her husband are in isolation but health authorities will have to wait until Wednesday to confirm if she has flu-like severe acute respiratory syndrome, which killed 800 people around the world during an outbreak last year.

"The woman’s condition, her breathing, has slightly improved since last night," said Dr Luningning Villa, a spokeswoman for the health department. "Both of them are in a stable condition."

**Study warns of eye injuries from paintball game**

**CHICAGO, 6 Jan—** Hundreds of US children suffer eye injuries each year from paintballs while playing a simulated war game in which guns fire gelatin capsules filled with paint, a researcher said on Monday.

Teen-aged boys playing informal versions of the war game often dispense with protective gear, leaving them vulnerable to disabling eye injuries, said study author David Listman of St. Barnabas Hospital in New York.

Based on data from between 1997 and 2000, Listman estimated there were more than 500 eye injuries annually from paintballs to US children aged 15 or younger.

"Children are ‘playing’ in backyards, woods, and basements — not organized paintball centres that both provide and require face masks," Listman wrote in *Pediatrics,* a medical journal published by the American Academy of Pediatrics.

Some children avoid using protective face masks or goggles because they can fog up and become dislodged while running.

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**Japanese zoo keeps snow leopard at home over SARS fears**

**SYDNEY, 7 Jan—** Japanese officials will visit Australia and New Zealand to discuss increasing beef imports from the two countries after Tokyo banned US beef because of its first case of mad cow disease.

Officials from the Japanese Ministry of Agriculture were due to arrive in Australia on Thursday to meet cattle farmers in northern Queensland State before heading to New Zealand on Sunday.

Japan, the top overseas market for US beef, suspended beef imports from the US in December 2003 following a case of mad cow disease.

"They are among a total of 19 people who died and 200 who were wounded. General Kolev said a few soldiers who had decided immediately after the attack not to go to Iraq had since changed their minds." He said most of the soldiers who had dropped out of the case, showing that the father of two suffered his injuries in a severe beating. British military authorities offered Musa’s family $8000 in compensation, providing they were not held responsible for his death, but his relatives planned to take Britain’s Ministry of Defence (MoD) to court.

A Ministry of Defence spokeswoman declined to give details about the case. "There is an ongoing military police investigation into a death that we had in custody," she said. —Internet

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**UNHCR announces first return of Iraqis**

**GENEVA, 7 Jan—** United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) announced on Tuesday that some 630 Iraqis have returned home from refugee camps in Iran and Saudi Arabia in the last two days.

"A convoy carrying 330 refugees arrived today in southern Iraq, ending their long exile in Saudi Arabia," said UNHCR spokesman Ron Redmond.

The UNHCR has been facilitating returns of Iraqis from Rafha refugee camp in Saudi Arabia since last July. Tuesday’s convoy was the 14th group of Iraqis to leave Rafha.

"On Monday, some 300 Iraqis also returned from camps in Iran, where some of them have been exiled for more than two decades," Redmond said.

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**Bulgarian troops reject Iraq duty**

**LONDON, 7 Jan—** More than 40 Bulgarian soldiers have refused to serve in Iraq following a suicide attack which killed five of their compatriots there last month.

A majority of six were from logistic units reporting to Chief of Staff General Nikola Kolev who said no action would be taken against them, because participation in the mission was voluntary.

The soldiers were to be part of a 500-strong battalion replacing another Bulgarian unit in Karbala this month.

The general said the mission would go ahead regardless.

Twenty-six Bulgarian soldiers were wounded in the December 13 bombing, in addition to the five who died.

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**More Iraqi refugees return home**

**GENEVA, 7 Jan—** Eight young Iraqis arrested in the southern Iraqi town of Basra last year were assaulted by British soldiers and one of them died of his injuries, a British newspaper has reported.

Baha Musa’s body was returned to his family on Monday after a forensic examination showed his nose broken, after he and seven other men were arrested by British forces in September 2003, according to the Sunday edition of the independent newspaper.

They were held in military custody for three days, the UK paper reported.

The newspaper said in its report by veteran Middle East correspondent Robert Fisk that it had seen military and medical records of the case, showing that the father of two suffered his injuries in a severe beating. British military authorities offered Musa’s family $8000 in compensation, providing they were not held responsible for his death, but his relatives planned to take Britain’s Ministry of Defence (MoD) to court.

A Ministry of Defence spokeswoman declined to give details about the case. "There is an ongoing military police investigation into a death that we had in custody," she said. —Internet

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**42 journalists killed in 2003**

**MANILA, 7 Jan—** Forty-two journalists were killed throughout the world during 2003, the highest figure since 1995, and 14 of them lost their lives while covering the Iraq war, a document by Reporters Without Borders (RWB) revealed on Thursday.

The document showed that at the beginning of 2004, 124 reporters remained imprisoned in 26 countries because of their opinions and professional activities.

The RWB said "the most dangerous zone for the practice of journalism" last year was the Middle East, where 14 reporters were killed and 15 injured while reporting the Iraq war, and two cameramen were killed in Palestine.

The RWB termed 2003 a "black year." It was also the most dangerous year for Philippine journalists since 1987. Seven were killed in the Philippines during denouncing corruption and local mafias.

One journalist was killed in Nepal, another in Indonesia and one in India. An Iranian-Canadian photographer was killed in Iran and two in Cote d’Ivoire.

It was also revealed that, one in Cambodia, and four in Colombia were killed. In Brazil two were killed and one reporter lost his life in Guatemala.
From a less developed region to... 

Senior General Than Shwe meets with local authorities, departmental officials, members of USDA, social organizations and townsmen,

...the Head of State of the Union of Myanmar Commander-in-Chief of the Defence Services Senior General Than Shwe has often visited the Anya region (Upper Myanmar), and Pakokku is one of the most important regions during his inspection tours. Clean water supply project has been achieving significant success in the endeavours of the Head of State to develop the nation. Building of 155 dams and 265 water pumping stations serve as the proof to his endeavours.

The Head of State attended the ceremony to open the North Pinle Dam in Myingyan Township on 13 April 1996. At the ceremony, he gave guidance, saying, “As I was born and brought up in Anya region, I have known the hardships of the farmers of the region since childhood days.

The people of Anya want water not gold. And when they have water, they feel happy as if they got gold. In this regard, the Government has been striving with utmost efforts for providing water and bringing prosperity to the region. As water is now available in the region, the local people will have to work harder.” The Head of State met with departmental personnel, members of Union Solidarity and Development Association and other social organizations and local elders in Pakokku on 16 December 2003. At the meeting, he said, “I was assigned to Pakokku region when I was young. Thus, I am familiar with the region. The rural is using its financial resources, with sincere goodwill, to develop the region. Firm development of Pakokku region

...In the past Pakokku lying on the west bank of Ayeyawady River lagged behind in development. But now the west bank including Pakokku region has improved much. The Government has built a number of new motorways, railroads and major bridges to facilitate its transport sector. The Ayeyawady river can no longer hinder development of Pakokku on the west bank of Ayeyawady.
Cash and kind donated to MNWAF

YANGON, 7 Jan — Wellwishers donated cash and kind to Myanmar National Women’s Affairs Federation at a ceremony held at the hall of Social Welfare Department on Kaba Aye Pagoda Road here this morning.

It was attended by Deputy Minister for Information Brig-Gen Aung Thein, Chinese Ambassador to Myanmar Dr Daw Khin Win Shwe, Ad- viser Daw Khin Than Nwe, Vice-Presidents Professor Dr Daw May May Yee, Daw Khin Lay Thet, Daw Than Than Nwe and Daw Khin Khin Win, General Secretary Professor Dr Daw Khin Aye Win, guests and wellwishers.

The president of the MNWAF expressed her thanks and presented K 100,000 to the federation through Vice-President Pro- fessor Dr Daw May May Yee, who then presented a certificate of honour to her. The adviser presented K 150,000 donated by wives of members of the State Peace and Develop- ment Council to the MNWAF president, who then presented a certificate of honour to her.

Next, the Chinese em- bassy to Myanmar presented five sets of comput- er and printer worth K 3,530,000, the Ministry of Information, K 300,000, and Myanmar War Veterans Organization, K 500,000.

The MNWAF president accepted the donations and presented certificates of honour to the wellwishers. Thiri Thudhamma Manijotadhara U Tin Hsan, Dr Hlay Hlay Nyin of ACE Construction Group presented K 5 million; the leading panel of patrons of Myanmar Women’s Sports Federation, K 110,000; Thiri Thudhamma Manijotadhara U Nay Win Tun (Chairman, Ruby Dragon and Jade Dragon Co) presented K 3 million; Daw Aye Aye Myint and family, K 3 million; (U Maung Maung Nyunt)-Daw Khin Swe Yu (Managing Director, Science & Tech- nology Advisory Group Co Ltd), K 3 million; Thiri Thudhamma Manijotadhara Thiri Thudhamma Manijotadhara U Thein Win-Thiri Thudhamma Theingi Thiri Thudhamma Theingi Agga Maha Thiha Thudhamma Theingi Daw Ni and family (Shwe Thwin Co Ltd), K 1 million; Tampawady Co Group Chairman U Maung Maung Lwin-Thiri Thudhamma Theingi Thiri Thudhamma Theingi Daw Hse (Ngwe Yadana Co), K 500,000, U Thein Maung- Daw Pa Pa (Sandi Tradi- tional Medicine Enterprise), K 500,000, MNWAF law enforcement work group, K 300,000; Daw Khin Lay Thet and Daw Than Than Nwe accepted the donations and presented certificates of honour to them. Today’s donations amounted to over K 18.8 million. — MNA

Livestock breeding tasks inspected in Yangon Command

YANGON, 7 Jan — Chairman of Yangon Divi- sion Peace and Develop- ment Council Commander of Yangon Command Maj- Gen Myint Swe inspected the livestock breeding farms of the command on the fifth day of the Tatmadaw Independence Day Exhibition.

Commander inspected the livestock breeding of broilers and fish, breeding of broilers and fish, requirements of the command. Myint Aung reported to the commander on breeding production and incubation of broilers at the briefing hall of the farm. Next, Secretary Lt-Gen Thein Sint of the Yangon Command Leading Committee for Agriculture and Livestock Breeding briefed the com- mander on agriculture and livestock breeding tasks being carried out in the command.

After the reports, the commander gave instructions on taking measures to fulfil the meat and fish requirement of the people in Yangon.

Afterwards, the commander inspected the bri- quette factory and incubators in the farm and gave instruction on systematic breeding of broilers and cultivation of vegetables.

Next, the commander inspected the supply of vegetables, meat and fish shop of the command in Sawbwyegywn and gave necessary instructions.

Later, the commander proceeded to the main fish breeding pond of the command in Mingaladon Town- ship.

In charge of the ponds Maj Thet Hlaing reported to the commander on breeding and hatching of fish, breeding of pigs and layers. The commander then fulfilled the requirements.

Afterwards, the commander inspected the poultry farm of the camp command office of the command gave necessary instructions.

The command engages in agriculture and livestock breeding tasks systematic- ally and distributes meat, fish, eggs and vegetables to the public through tax-free markets in Yangon.

— MNA

Minister receives Chinese guests

YANGON, 7 Jan — Minister for Industry U Aung Thaung received President Ms Fang Fang and part of China National Building Material Equipment Corpora- tion (CBMEC) of the Republic of China at his office here yesterday morn- ing.

Also present at the call were Deputy Minister Brig- Gen Kyaw Win, directors-general and managing direc- tors of the departments un- der the ministry. — MNA

Minister receives Japanese ambas- sador

YANGON, 7 Jan — Minister for Labour U Tin Winn received Japanese ambassador Mr Yui Miyamoto at his office here yesterday afternoon.

Also present at the call were Director-General U Soe Nyunt of Labour De- partment and officials.

— MNA

Independence Day Exhibition continues

YANGON, 7 Jan — The 56th Anniversary Independ- ence Day Commemorative Exhibition continued for the fifth day at the Tatmadaw Convention Centre on U Wisara Road here from 9 am to 5 pm today.

Visitors took great interest in the booths on Myanmar: origin of man, ancient and first, second and third Myanmar Kingdoms; independence struggle of Myanmar, regaining and peaceful and developed Myanmar, march towards the new and developed na- tion and development of contemporary Myanmar, and booths of ministries and the Central Committee for Drug Abuse Control.

Students also took part in computer quiz. The News and Periodicals Enterprise of the Ministry of Informa- tion has opened NPE Book Shop along with the Sarpy Beikman Book Shop of the Printing and Publishing Enterprise near the exhibition hall.

Monks, students and the public totally 7653 vis- ited the exhibition today. It will be kept open daily till 11 January. Admission is free. — MNA

Dr Daw Khin Win Shwe accepts five computer sets donated by Chinese Embassy to Myanmar. — MNA

Minister receives Japanese ambassador

Commander Maj-Gen Myint Swe inspects the fish breeding works in Mingaladon Township. — MNA

Minister Col Tin Hlaing being seen off at the airport. (News on page 16) — MNA

NEW SHOP OPENED: A new sports shop named Winner International Sports Service was opened with ceremony on 6-1-2004 on Maha Bandoola Garden Street in Yangon. Agya Maha Thiha Thudhamma Manijotadhara Dr Khin Swe formally opens the shop. — MNA

Drive Safely

THE NEW LIGHT OF MYANMAR Thursday, 8 January, 2004

8
US begins fingerprinting foreign visitors

**ATLANTA. 7 Jan** — The United States began fingerprinting and photographing visitors from most countries on Monday in a controversial programme to try to prevent potential terrorists from slipping in through the borders.

The programme was launched at 115 airports and 14 cruise ship ports across the country, but not at land borders, which account for a large part of traffic into the United States.

Tourists and business travellers on short visits from 27 mostly European nations are exempt from the new measures. Canadians, who fall under special immigration rules, are also exempt. Some foreign nationals have complained of discrimination.

Traffic accident kills 13 in S Africa

**Johannesburg. 7 Jan** — Thirteen people were killed and five others injured Monday in a five-car pile-up between Ermelo and Piet Retief, about 450 kilometres southeast of Johannesburg, South African police said.

Sergeant Charles Nkosi, a spokesman for the Mpumalanga provincial police, said a minibus taxi was attempting to pass another vehicle at 1:50 p.m. (1150 GMT) when it slammed into an on-coming truck. Other vehicles were involved in the accident.

The 13 dead — including the driver — were all travelling in the taxi.

Another two taxi passengers were injured and taken to hospital. The driver of the truck was also injured and hospitalized.

Nkosi said all those injured were in a serious but stable condition. He said it was difficult at this stage to say where the taxi had come from and what its destination was, but papers indicated the vehicle had been registered in KwaZulu-Natal Province.

He said it was overcast but not raining at the time of the accident and that the particular stretch of road was not especially dangerous.

Police were working to identify those injured and killed and to notify their next-of-kin as soon as possible.

**Santiago, 7 Jan** — The UN Economic Commission for Latin America and Caribbean (ECLAC) on Monday called for economic integration in the sub-region, saying that instability and economic risks are looming in the region.

ECLAC economist Victor Tokman said in an article that structural changes in the world economy and the handling of public policies have affected employment, poverty reduction and foreign investment which results in more insecurity and economic uncertainty in the sub-region.

“Latin America is now a more socially and economically insecure region, which leads to uncertainties and causes tensions, affecting people, families and society as a whole,” said Tokman.

It is necessary to push for economic integration in the region to help abate instability and risks, he said.

In the article, the Santiago-based UN agency analyzed the effects of a more open global economy especially in relation to the most vulnerable groups.

Tokman said in the article that Latin America has been witnessing economic adjustment for two decades which has resulted in varying rates of economic performance and social consequences characterized by a greater insecurity, unemployment and increasing poverty.

**Narcotic drugs and paraphernalia seized along with arms and ammunition**

YANGON, 7 Jan — Acting on information, a combined team comprising members of the local intelligence unit and the Special Anti-drug Squad searched a farm hut at an estimated map reference (LP-5382), where Sai Pyan, son of Sai Shen with seized narcotic drugs and paraphernalia in Kengtung Township. — MNA

The Traditional Medicine University Construction Project being implemented in Mandalay. (News reported) — MNA

**Costa Rica, US resume free trade negotiations**

SAN JOSÉ, 7 Jan — Costa Rica and the United States on Monday resumed their negotiations over a free trade agreement (FTA) in Washington, said the Costa Rican Foreign Trade Ministry.

Ministry spokesperson Carol Uriza said the two countries would endeavour to overcome their differences in this round of talks scheduled to finish on January 9.

The second round is scheduled to kick off on January 19, while the date of closing has yet to be determined, she said.

Costa Rica is the only Central American country that has not yet signed the Cen-
"To supply enough clean water for Yangonites" is the motto of the Engineering Department (Water and Sanitation) of the Yangon City Development Committee. And to realize the motto, the department is carrying out its work in accord with the five objectives.

Daily supply of enough clean water that meets the hygienic standard for the city dwellers is one of the five objectives. To realize the objective, the department is using the Gyobyu Reservoir, the Phugyi Reservoir and the Hlawga Reservoir as the main lakes in supplying clean water to the city. In the past, 56-inch pipes were used to directly provide water from the Gyobyu Reservoir to the city. The Phugyi supplied water to Hlawga with 60-inch reinforced concrete pipes, and then water from the latter lake was piped to the city.

As the staff of the department are working night and day, it is hoped that the station will start to run equipped with taps have been erected on roadsides. The Engineering Department (Water and Sanitation) of the YCDC in cooperation with the Fire Services Department, has made arrangements to repair the old fire hydrants and installed new ones at important places in the city. The new fire hydrants are ready to supply water for fire engines round the clock. Some of the fire hydrants can fill the 1,600-gallon tank of a fire engine within three minutes.

At present, plans are under way to provide the city with water from the Ngamoeyek Reservoir. The reservoir is 30 miles from the city, and pipe laying has been completed up to ten miles. When the whole project is completed, it will supply another 90 million gallons.

As the daily provision of water to the city is 90 million gallons, roughly, individual consumption of tap water in the metropolis of five million people is 18 gallons. But some places in the city still face water shortage, and in some places people are consuming water much more than necessary. In this regard, installation of meters at every tap of a household will help reduce the unnecessary water consumption, and will help provide more water to the places facing water shortage.

As the programme is helping the Gyobyu to store 3.36 billion more gallons of water; the Phugyi, 324 million more gallons; and the Hlawga, 1.2 billion more gallons annually.

The programme to build the station started in December 2003. When the whole project is completed, it will supply another 90 million gallons.
Japanese minister plans push for nuclear fusion plant

**Tokyo, 7 Jan—** Japan’s Science Minister plans to visit Russia and China next week to try to win backing for Tokyo’s bid to host an experimental nuclear fusion programme, a ministry spokesman said recently.

The campaigning tour, which may start on January 14 and which would include South Korea, is the latest move in a tug-of-war between the European Union and Japan, both of which are bidding for the International Thermonuclear Experimental Reactor (ITER).

The European Union is backing Cadarache in southern France, while Tokyo is pushing Rokkasho, a remote fishing village in northern Japan, as its proposed site for the world’s first attempt at generating energy in the same way as the sun.

At a meeting in Washington on December 20, the six members of the ITER joint venture failed to reach agreement, with the United States and South Korea backing Japan, while Russia and China favoured France. The six countries are set to meet again next month.

France has proposed a compromise whereby the reactor would be in Cadarache, but data analysis could take place elsewhere.

Nuclear fusion has been touted as a solution to the world’s energy problems, as it would be low in pollution and would theoretically use seawater as fuel.

Source of new confirmed SARS case remains unclear

**Geneva, 7 Jan—** Though results from laboratory tests received Monday have confirmed a case of severe acute respiratory syndrome (SARS) in southern China, the source of infection for the case remains unclear, World Health Organization (WHO) announced on Monday.

Epidemiological investigations in China have not yet been able to link the patient to exposure to wild animals or any other known or suspected source of the virus, the WHO said.

Several lines of investigation last year suggest that SARS may have originated from contact with wild animals sold for human consumption at live markets in southern China.

Studies conducted last year detected a SARS-like virus in some animal species, including the masked palm civet.

Retrospective analysis of patient records has linked several of the earliest cases, which surfaced in Guangdong in mid-November 2002, to contact with wild animals. However, no animal reservoir of the SARS coronavirus has been conclusively identified to date, the WHO said.

As of Monday, the 18 people who were exposed to the SARS case in southern China had not developed symptoms.

Sayawun Tin Shwe Literary Awards presented

**YANGON, 7 Jan —** The Second Sayawun Tin Shwe Literary Award Presenting ceremony was held at MICT Park in Hline Township here this morning.

The ceremony was attended by Chairman of Myanmar Writers and Journalists Association U Hla Myaung (Ko Hsaung), Vice-Chairmen U Tin Khai (Tektatho Tin Kha) and U Myint Thein (Myint Thein Aung), Secretary U Hla Tun (Hla Tun - Twantaw) and the Joint-Secretaries and CEC members, Leader of the Sayawun Tin Shwe Literary Award Scrutinizing Committee MWJA CEC member U Myo Thant (Maung Hsu Shin) and members, literati, prize-winning writers, contestant writers, family members of Sayawun Tin Shwe and invited guests.

MWJA Chairman U Hla Myaung (Ko Hsaung) made an opening speech. U Myo Thant (Maung Hsu Shin) explained scrutinizing committee members and contestant writers.

Afterwards, Dr U Khin Aye (Maung Khin Min - Danubyu), Professor of Myanmarzar Department of Yangon University, made a speech. Daw Aye Thant spoke words of thanks and the ceremony came to a close. Under the super vision of MWJA, the literary award will be presented yearly.

Iranian authorities strive to restore water supply to Bam

**BAM (Iran), Jan 7 —** Iranian authorities are striving to restore water supply to the earthquake-stricken city of Bam, as part of the government efforts for rebuilding the city.

In the city proper, government officials are directing efforts to repair water systems damaged in the December 26 earthquake measuring 6.3 on the Richter Scale that left 30,000 people dead, and to restore water supply to survivors.

As the water supply system in most part of Bam is damaged, the government has operated numerous waterdistribution points throughout the city.

Bam was formerly supplied with water coming from 11 boreholes located outside the city, which are around 200 metres deep. Nine of the boreholes are still full function follow ing the devastating earthquake.

The water was stored in four underground water tanks, three with a capacity of 10,000 cubic metres and the other 5,000 cubic metres. It is likely that the earthquake has not damaged the tanks.

Two main lines are supplying water to the city through a distribution network.

The first cement line of 700 metres in diameter is out of order after the earthquake, according to Iranian Government sources.

The network is currently providing water to 20 per cent of the city, while other parts of the city are supplied through 80 water trucks at 60 distribution points.

A compound of military barracks in Bam used for temporarily accommodating foreign relief workers and journalists, including Xinhua reporters, is also supplied with water from water trucks.

The quality of water has not yet been evaluated following the earthquake. However, it is most likely that the water is clean and potable due to its nature and chlorine gas in the water tanks, Iranian Government sources said.

The sources said that 20 of the wells supplying the surrounding villages with water have been damaged and are out of use.

Currently, some 60 villages in the region have to be supplied by external water and some 70 water tanks are circulating among them.

The lack of sufficient water tanks has been proven to be a major problem, but the expected arrival of a number of bladder tanks appears to be able to ease this problem.

**Source** of new confirmed SARS case remains unclear

**MNA/Reuters**

**Iranian authorities strive to restore water supply to Bam**

**MNA/xinhua**

**Sayawun Tin Shwe Literary Awards presented**

**MNA**

**Iranian authorities strive to restore water supply to Bam**

**Prime Minister General Khin Nyunt cordially greets Shan State Nationalities People’s Liberation Organization leaders.** (News on page 1) — MNA.
INVITATION TO TENDER
(Tender No. 10 (T) MPE/HSID (8)/2003-2004)

1. Sealed Tenders are invited by the Myanma Petrochemical Enterprise, The Ministry of Energy for the Supply of 50,000 ± 10% Metric Tons HSD (Gas Oil Regular 0.5%).

2. Tender Closing Dated (14-1-2004) at 12:00 Noon.

3. Tender Documents and detail information are available at the Department of Finance, Myanma Petrochemical Enterprise, No 23, Min Ye Kyaw Zwa Road, Yangon, during office hour commencing (8-1-2004) on payment of one hundred (100) FEC (or) USS per set.

4. Only bid from tenderer who has purchased tender document officially from Myanma Petrochemical Enterprise will be accepted for evaluation.

Managing Director
Myanma Petrochemical Enterprise

CLAIMS DAY NOTICE MV DAWEI VOY NO (24)

Consignees of cargo carried on MV DAWEI Voy No (24) arrived on 7-1-04 are hereby notified that their cargo will be discharged into the premises of Myanmar Port Authority where it will lie at the consignee’s risk and expenses subject to the byelaws and conditions of the Port of Yangon.

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

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

AGENCY DEPARTMENT MYANNA FIVE STAR LINE
Phone: 295279/295280/295281/295652/295659

TRADE MARK CAUTION
SNOW BRAND MILK PRODUCTS CO., LTD. is a company duly organized under the laws of Japan carrying on business as Manufacturers & Merchants and having its principal office at 1-1, Naocho-cho 6-chome, Higashiku-Ku, Sapporo, Japan, are the owners and proprietors of the following trade marks:

1. (Reg. No., IV/592/1993)

2. (Reg. No., IV/596/1993)

3. (Reg. No., IV/597/1993)

The above 3 Trade Marks are used in respect of:

“Food for babies including powdered milk for babies, Milk, milk-based beverages, cakes, milk products, edible oils and fats, including margarine, jellies, jams; Coffee, coffee-based beverages, coffee beverages, tea, tea beverages, cocoa, cocoa-based beverages, coffee beverages, chocolate, chocolate-based beverages, chocolate ice cream, ice cream puddings; Non-alcoholic beverages, including fruit beverages, fruit juices, lemonades, vegetable juices, whey beverages, mineral waters.”

Any fraudulent imitation or unauthorised use of the said Trade Marks or other infringements whatsoever will be dealt with according to law.

U Kyi Win, B.Com., B.L.
P.O. Box No. 26, Yangon
Date: 10th January 2004

MNA/Xinhua

New Year generates over $30.57m tourism revenues in Thailand

BANGKOK, 7 Jan — New Year celebrations this year have generated over 1.2 billion baht (30.75 million US dollars) tourism revenues nationwide, according to the Tourism Authority of Thailand (TAT).

A TAT survey after public New Year holidays on January 1–4 found that the number of New Year revelers travelling across the country during the period reached over 300,000 daily. TAT’s Governor Juratham Siriran was quoted Tuesday by the Thai News Agency as saying.

“The figure, about 15–25 per cent increase from New Year celebrations last year, included only people travelling by public transport—planes, buses, and trains—but excluded those travelling by their own cars,” she stated. —MNA/Xinhua
**Malaysian paints, coatings sector to achieve high growth rate**

KUALA LUMPUR, 7 Jan — Malaysia’s paints and coatings industry is expected to hit a 14-per-cent annual growth in the next five years, an industry study released on Monday predicted.

This bullish outlook is on the back of both domestic and external demand, said the study entitled ‘Paints and Coatings Industry: Key Challenges, Opportunities and Prospects in the Malaysian and Global Markets’.

The study was conducted and released by the Consultancy Services of the Rating Agency Malaysia, the top evaluation institute in the country.

The total sales value of the paints and coatings sector was estimated at 342 million ringgit in 2002, up 9.2 per cent over the previous year, it revealed. Over the last 12 years, the sector’s average annual growth was 10.5 per cent, it added.

The industry’s favourable outlook is due to an expected upturn in the electrical and electronics sector as well as the broad-based demand from the automotive, industrial equipment, metal products and marine industries, according to the study.

However, there are only a few local players in this segment, the chief operating officer for the study, Yeah Kim Leng, said when releasing the study.

‘Paints and coatings are both an intermediate and final product which protects, enhances performance and raises the aesthetic appeal of Malaysian-made goods and structures. Having a strong paints and coatings industry will facilitate Malaysia’s ongoing industrialization and export thrust,” Yeah said.

He said that the industry has benefited from a significant multinational presence that forms part of the global supply chain.

‘Despite the competitive environment, proprietary technical know-how and high quality standards, it is heftening to find successful Malaysian-owned companies in the industry,” he said.

Besides import-substitution opportunities, Yeah pointed to the growing regional market where various end user industries are expected to expand more rapidly as Southeast and East Asia maintain its status as the fastest growing region in the world.

**Novel allele found to help leukemia treatment**

BENGALURU, 7 Jan — Chinese scientists have identified a new allele in a girl in southwest China’s Sichuan Province, which they said would enhance the success rates of bone marrow transplants for leukemia treatment.

The discovery of the HLA-B8 allele was made at the HLA (human leukocyte antigen) Typing Laboratory of the Institute of Blood Transfusion under the Chinese Academy of Medical Sciences when researchers were HLA typing a blood sample of a female patient from a bone marrow donor in the provincial capital city of Chengdu.

The 25-year-old girl known as “Angel” was found to have something abnormal in the normal length of her HLA-B gene, in the early 2003.

“It looked different compared with normal reaction patterns,” said Dr Chen Qiang, a research fellow. “I

The reason I want to become a volunteer donor is simple, ”Angel said. “I just want to help those diseased.”

**NASA shows off Spirit’s “post card” from Mars**

PASADENA, 7 Jan — NASA scientists on Tuesday showed off their first colour “post card” of Mars taken by the robot explorer Spirit, a high-definition portrait revealing the rocky, wind-swept surface of the red planet in greater detail than ever seen before.

The photograph, actually a mosaic of a dozen three-colour frames shot by Spirit’s triple-camera panoramic camera, brought into sharp focus such vivid details as the shape and texture of rocks, gripped in left by dust devils, nearby hills, and a tantalizing but distant mesa.

‘One of the most intriguing features noticed was a scientist was a darkened patch of the martian surface at the edge of the lander, where the soil had been scraped by Spirit’s air bags, leaving a crinkled pattern with a mud-like cohesive appearance.

‘It looks like mud but it can’t be mud,” said Steven Squyres, the principal investigator for the team at NASA’s Jet Propulsion Laboratory. “It’s very cohesive. It holds together well.”

A plaque commemorating the STS-107 Space Shuttle Columbia crew is shown on the Mars Spirit rover on Mars in this image released by NASA on 6 Jan, 2004. The plaque is mounted on the back of Spirit’s high-gain antenna, a disc shaped tool used for communicating directly with Earth.—MNA/Xinhua

**South Asian nations seal free trade pact**

ISLAMABAD, 7 Jan — Leaders of the seven South Asian countries here on Tuesday inked the Framework Agreement of the South Asia Free Trade Area (SAFTA), at the conclusion of the 12th Summit of the South Asia Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC).

The SAFTA accord, which the top agenda of the summit, will enter into force by January 1, 2006, after the completion of the required formalities, including ratification by all the member states.

Under the treaty, the non-least developed countries (NLDC) in the region will reduce their tariffs from an average 80 per cent to zero in 5 years, in a period of seven years, from the date of coming into force of the agreement. —MNA/Xinhua

**Cold wave death toll reaches 63 in Nepal**

KATHMANDU, 7 Jan — At least 11 more Nepali people died from cold wave on Monday, raising the death toll in the country to 63, The Kathmandu Post newspaper reported Tuesday.

The cold wave paralyzed normal life in the Terai Belt in southern Nepal as five dozen people have been reported from Mahottari District alone, while another six died in Rautahat and Morang districts, the independent English daily quoted a local official as saying. A total of 63 Nepali people, mostly the poor, aged or sick, have already died of the winter cold that took the country in its grip since the end of 2003, the official said on condition of anonymity.

The cold waves also adversely affected agriculture, education, transportation and communications in southern Nepal. Flights to the Terai Belt were cancelled or delayed as black fog intermittently blanketed the airports there. Meteorologists forecast that there is no immediate respite from the cold wave, conditions expected to continue for several days.

The cold wave generally hits the Himalayan kingdom in the beginning of January and lasts for one or two weeks every year. As many as 80 Nepali people died of a cold wave that continued for one month in early 2003. — MNA/Xinhua

**Watchdog sues music labels over copy-protected CDs**

LONDON, 7 Jan — A European consumer watchdog is suing the world’s largest music companies for selling copy-protected compact discs that will not play in car stereos and on computers, the Belgian-based organization said on Monday.

The group, known in Dutch as Test-Aankoop, said it has received more than 200 complaints from consumers who objected to a technological protection that prevents consumers from making a back-up version on a blank disc and limits its playback on certain devices.

Industry observers believe Test-Aankoop’s suit is the biggest European consumer challenge yet to the music industry’s controversial campaign to release copy-protected discs to minimize the impact that digital piracy is having on sales. —MNA/Reuters

**A butterfly searches for pollen from a flower at the Copenhagen Zoo on 6 Jan, 2004. Thousands of butterflies are hatched in the dead of winter to fill an enclosure which serves as a hot house.**
Late penalty lifts Porto five points clear

Spanish striker Moreno joins Bolton on loan

Milan sink Roma as Nedved keeps Juve in touch

Deportivo hold Atletico to Cup draw in Madrid

Villa jump to sixth after win over valiant Portsmouth

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Bologna 2 Empoli 1
Minister leaves to attend fourth ASEAN Ministers’ meeting on control of transnational crimes

YANGON, 7 Jan — Minister for Home Affairs Col Tin Hlaing left here this morning to attend the fourth ASEAN Ministers’ meeting on control of transnational crimes and the first ASEAN +3 Ministers meeting to be held in Bangkok, Thailand, from 7 to 10 January 2004. The minister was seen off at the airport by Minister for Culture Maj-Gen Kyi Aung, Minister for Labour U Tin Winn, heads of departments of Myanmar Police Force and departments under the ministry and families. — MNA

YANGON, 7 Jan — A combined team comprising members of the local intelligence unit, the criminal investigation department and Taunggyi Anti-drug Squad, stopped and searched a passenger bus with number plates Tha/3065 leaving Taunggyi for Mandalay at Kayinmayethet of Sao San Htun, Taunggyi, on 11 April 2003. The authorities discovered 4,407 kilos of raw opium from passenger Tin Soe. Taunggyi No 2 Police Station filed a lawsuit against Tin Soe, son of U Tun Kyaw of Lonicin in Phakant under Sections 15/19(a)/21 of Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances Law.

Later on 8 September, Taunggyi District Court handed down 25 years’ imprisonment on him under Section 19(a). In a similar action, a team comprising members of the local intelligence unit and Taichilek Anti-drug Squad, acting on information, searched the house of Aik Sai (a) Aik Shen in Taichilek on 25 May 2003. The authorities found Aik Rong in the house together with 1.1 litres of opium oil, 0.06 kilo of opium gel, and 0.024 kilo of opium along with 50 stimulant tablets.

Tachilek Police Station filed a lawsuit against Aik Rong, son of U Aik Sam of Taichilek under Sections 15/19(a)/21 of Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances Law.

Later, Taichilek District Court sentenced him on 20 years’ imprisonment under Section 19(a) on 6 October. — MNA

Drug pushers get jail terms

59th Anniversary Armed Forces Day Organizing Management Committee meets

YANGON, 7 Jan — Management Committee for Organizing the 59th Anniversary Armed Forces Day held a coordination meeting at the meeting hall of the Resistance Park here this afternoon, with an address by the Chairman of the committee Chairman of Yangon Division Peace and Development Council Commander of Yangon Command Maj-Gen Myint Swe.

Vice-Chiefs of Armed Forces Training Maj-Gen Win Myint and Brig-Gen Nyan Win, Vice-Adjutant-General Brig-Gen Hla Shwe, Camp Commandant of the Ministry of Defence Maj-Gen Hla Aung Thein, members of the committee, chairmen and members of the work groups, officials and guests.

Speaking at the meeting, the commander said dutiful performances of the members of the committee and work groups are required to hold the 59th Anniversary Armed Forces Day on a grand scale in accord with the objectives — to strive hand in hand with the people for successful realization of the State’s seven-point policy programme; to crush internal and external destructive elements hindering the stability and progress of the State through people’s military strategy; to implement border area development tasks and the five rural development tasks hand in hand with the entire people; and to build up a strong and efficient Tatmadaw to uphold ‘Our Three Main National Causes’.

They will have to make harmonious efforts sector-wise for the soldiers of the parade columns to match with full energy and high spirit, so that the ceremony will help raise the dignity of the nation. Heads of the administrative camps should make preparations for the convenience of the soldiers of the parade columns during their stay at the hostels. They will have to look into the requirements so that every sector is in accord with hygienic conditions.

Secretary of the committee Staff Officers (Grade-1) of Yangon Command Li-Col Min Naing explained the minutes of the previous meeting and accomplishments.

Chairman of the Parade Work Committee Maj-Gen Win Myint, chairman of the other work groups and officials presented progress of work and future programmes. Officials of the Myanmar Police Force, Fire Services, Myanmar Red Cross Society and departments also gave suggestions, followed by a general round of discussions. The commander looked into the requirements. — MNA

National Convention Management Committee meets

YANGON, 7 Jan — The National Convention Management Committee held a work coordination meeting in Pyidaungsu Hall at Kyaiakasan Grounds here this morning.

Present were Chairman of the NCMMC Maj-Gen Lun Maung, Vice-Chairmen Directors of Supply and Transport of the Ministry of Defence Maj-Gen Than Htay and Deputy Minister for Hotels and Tourism Brig-Gen Aye Myint Kyi, and members of the NCMMC and subcommittees.

Chairman of the NCMMC Maj-Gen Lun Maung gave a speech.


The chairman and the vice-chairmen gave suggestions, followed by a general round of discussions. The chairman then gave concluding remarks. — MNA

Construction of water treatment plant inspected

YANGON, 7 Jan — Yangon City Development Committee Chairman Mayor Brig-Gen Aung Thein Lin, accompanied by officials, inspected the tasks being carried out at the construction project of YCDC’s Water Treatment Plant in Botataung Township this afternoon and gave instructions.

At the briefing hall of the project, the mayor heard reports on tasks being carried out at the project by Dr Tun Than Tun. Next, the mayor attended to the requirements and looked into the project site.

The mayor also inspected the progress of the tarring of the six-lane Strand Road, construction of drains on both sides of the road, and the laying of tiles on the pavement. — MNA

Commander Maj-Gen Myint Swe addresses the 2nd coordination meeting of Management Committee for Observance of 59th Anniversary Armed Forces Day (2004). — MNA

Maj-Gen Lun Maung speaks at the meeting of National Convention Convoking Management Committee. — MNA

Drug pushers get jail terms

59th Anniversary Armed Forces Day Organizing Management Committee meets