Foreign Heads of State send felicitations to Senior General Than Shwe

From Mr Aleksander Kwasniewski, President of the Republic of Poland:
On the occasion of the National Day of the Union of Myanmar, on behalf of the Polish nation and on my own, I convey to you and to all the citizens of the Union of Myanmar my heartfelt congratulations.
I wish, Mr President, that the coming future, beside achievements in economic and social development of your country, may also bring a sustainable progress in the process of the national reconciliation with participation of all the political and social forces of the country, thus bringing the Union of Myanmar’s nation closer to full implementation of its desires and aspiration.
Please accept, excellency, the assurances of my highest consideration.

From Mr Leonid Kuchma, President of the Republic of Ukraine:
On behalf of the people of Ukraine and on my own, I sincerely congratulate you on the occasion of the National Holiday of the Union of Myanmar — Independence Day.
I am confident that the relations of friendship and mutually beneficial partnership, which exist between our states, will be further successfully developed and strengthened on the benefit of Ukraine and the Union of Myanmar.
I wish you, Your Excellency, happiness, good health, success and inspiration in your State activity as well as peace and prosperity to the friendly people of Myanmar. — МШ

Deep-water seaport in Dawei District will benefit not only Myanmar, but also neighbouring and regional countries

Prime Minister General Khin Nyunt inspects development tasks in Myeik

Prime Minister General Khin Nyunt, accompanied by Member of the State Peace and Development Council Lt-Gen Maung Bo, Chairman of Taninthayi Division Peace and Development Council Commander Brig-Gen Oba Myint, ministers, deputy ministers, officials of the State Peace and Development Council Office and departmental heads, inspected the upgrading of approach roads of Kyweku-Kyaunkphyu Bridge on Myeik-Dawei road near Myeik, the current of the Kyaukphyu river and the bridge from Kut hilllock on 13 January Morning.
Superintending Engineer U Ba Wan of Public Works reported to the Prime Minister on salient points and consideration.

Kyweku-Kyaunkphyu bridge, with reinforced concrete foundation and steel frames, is situated on Myeik-Dawei road and 3,162-foot long. It supports a 28-foot motorway flanked by 6-foo pedestrian lanes on both sides. It can withstand 60-ton loads.
Next, the Prime Minister and party proceeded to Government Computer College (Myeik). Principal Daw Mya Mya Zin and teachers welcomed the Prime Minister there. After hearing the report on academic and administrative affairs of the college presented by the principal, the Prime Minister fulfilled the requirements for construction of the main building and a recreation centre for the students.

Afterwards, the Prime Minister and party went to the construction site of Maha Theikdiya pagoda on Sandawadi hill in Myeik. First, the Prime Minister inspected the construction tasks of the pagoda and paid reverence to a Buddha Image in the Gandakuti Taik and Htidaws to be hoisted atop the main pagoda and circling pagodas.
After hearing the report on construction of the pagoda presented by Superintending Engineer U Ba Wan, the Prime Minister gave instructions on taking measures for durability and gracefulness of the pagoda by employing Myanmar traditional architecture.
Afterwards, Lt-Gen Maung Bo accepted a total of K102.5 million donated to the funds of the pagoda including K 2.5 million donated by the ministers who accompanied the Prime Minister, K 30 million donated by Chairman Dr Khin Shwe of Zay Gaba Co Ltd, K 10 million donated by Chairman U Htay Myint of Yuzana Co Ltd, K 6.3 million each by Pyi Phyoo Tun Co and International Fisheries.

Prime Minister General Khin Nyunt views Kyweku-Kyaunkphyu Bridge on Myeik-Dawei Road in Myeik, Taninthayi Division. — sess.
PERSPECTIVES
Friday, 16 January, 2004
Towards higher national health standard
It goes without saying that health and fitness of people is the basic requirement for the development of a nation. Therefore, the government is taking systematic measures to provide better and wider health care services. It is also striving for the development of human resources, medical sciences and research work and for the emergence of modern hospitals.

The 50th Conference of the Myanmar Medical Association was held at the Hall (A) of the Association on the morning of 14 January in Yangon and Prime Minister General Khin Nyunt, also head of the National Health Committee, attended the ceremony and delivered an address. In his address on the occasion, Prime Minister General Khin Nyunt said that progress of Myanmar medical world and providing better health care services are the objectives of the health sector.

The Government, since its assumption of State responsibilities, has been building new hospitals the length and breadth of the nation. As a result, there has been 763 hospitals now, compared with 617 in 1988. In 1988, there was a total of 11,300 doctors in the whole nation and, out of them, only 3,200 were in the government service but in March last year, 5,000 out of 18,000 were serving in various hospitals under the Ministry of Health. In 1988, there were only three medical institutes and one institute of dental medicine. But now, there are altogether 14 institutes and universities under the Ministry of Health, including four institutes of medicine, two institutes of dental medicine, two institutes of nursing, two institutes of pharmacy, two institutes of paramedical sciences, one university of primary health and one university of traditional medicine.

In the past, only one postgraduate diploma course and 12 master's degree courses could be conducted. But now, there are six postgraduate diploma courses and 29 master's degree courses. Moreover, as seven Ph.D courses and 30 Dr Med. Sc courses are being conducted, 17 Ph.D degree holders and 55 Dr Med. Sc degree holders have been turned out up to now. Not only that, there have been 82 MRCP's, 28 MRCPH's, 35 MRCOG's, 78 FRCS's and 10 MRCS's of royal colleges of the United Kingdom.

Therefore, we believe that, as there are highly-qualified health staff, the development of the health sector and higher national health standard are ensured if they work in concert in the interests of the nation and the people.

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.

Foreign Head of Government sends felicitations to General Khin Nyunt
YANGON, 15 Jan — The following is the message of felicitations from foreign Head of Government sent to General Khin Nyunt, Prime Minister of the Union of Myanmar, on the occasion of the 56th Anniversary Independence Day of the Union of Myanmar.
From Mr Viktor Yanukovych, Prime Minister of the Republic of Ukraine:
On behalf of the Government of Ukraine and on my own, I sincerely congratulate you on the occasion of the National Holiday of the Union of Myanmar — Independence Day. I am confident that the relations of friendship and cooperation, which exist between two countries, will be further developed and strengthened on the basis of our peoples. Aiding myself of this opportunity, I wish you, Your Excellency, good health and success in your state activity as well as peace and prosperity to the people of Myanmar. — MNA

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 everyday by each household amounts to saving power that is equal to the capacity a 20-megawatt power station can supply.

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MYANMAR GAZETTE
YANGON, 15 Jan — The State Peace and Development Council has confirmed the appointment of the following heads of service organizations on expiry of the one-year probationary period.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Appointment</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>U Saw Maung Hla</td>
<td>Director-General, Budget Department, Ministry of Finance &amp; Revenue</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>U Mya Than</td>
<td>Managing Director, Myanmar Investment and Trade Bank, Ministry of Finance &amp; Revenue</td>
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The State Peace and Development Council has appointed Col Soe Win of the Ministry of Defence as Managing Director of the News and Periodicals Enterprise, of the Ministry of Information on probation from the date he assumes charge of his duties. — MNA

Jayisya and Jeyatlaka of Sri Lanka beat Thirumalai Chelvam and Vythihanath of Malaysia 6-2, 6-0.

The matches of the first round of the championship finished today and the matches of the second round continue tomorrow at the same venue. — MNA

MYANMAR ICT Week 2004
MICT Park, Yangon, (From 9 am to 5 pm daily from 21 to 27 January)

21 January 2004
1 pm — Opening Ceremony + Projects Launching
1 pm — Professional Certification (seminar & ceremony)
1 pm — Capability Maturity Model Integration (workshop)
22 January 2004
9 am — Role of women in ICT industry (workshop)
9 am — PKI application (CA)
1 pm — Myanmar language implementation (workshop)
1 pm — Hardware Trend for software developers (seminar)
23 January 2004
9 am — Database Trend Technology (workshop)
1 pm — Object oriented software development with unified modeling language (workshop)
24 January 2004
9 am — Security issues and related products (seminar)
9 pm — Software products for SME (presentation & promotion)
1 pm — Software products for SME (presentation & promotion)
25 January 2004
9 am — Wireless and broadband application (seminar)
1 pm — Myanmar National Counter-Strike C’ship Final (Admission free)

The PRC delegation visit Myanmar Gems Museum. — MNA

PRC delegation visit Gems Museum
YANGON, 15 Jan — Deputy Minister for Foreign Affairs of the People’s Republic of China Mrs Meng Xiao Si and party, together with official went on a trip and arrived at the Myanmar Gems Museum on Kaba Aye Pagoda road here at 9:30 am. Officials conducted them round the museum

MNA
WASHINGTON, 15 Jan— The Army’s suicide rate in Iraq has been about a third higher than past rates for troops during peacetime, the Pentagon’s top doctor said Wednesday.

Also, the military still has about 2,500 troops waiting for medical care after returning from overseas, said Dr William Winkenwerder, the assistant secretary of defense for health affairs. The Pentagon is preparing for even more soldiers on “medical extension” after tens of thousands of troops are rotated home from Iraq this spring, Winkenwerder said.

The issue of suicides so worried the military that the Army sent an assessment team to Iraq late last year to see if anything more could be done to prevent troops from killing themselves. The Army also began offering more counseling to returning troops after several soldiers at Fort Bragg, NC, killed their wives and themselves after returning home from the war.

Winkenwerder said the military has documented 21 suicides during 2003 among troops involved in the war. Eighteen of those were Army soldiers, Winkenwerder said.

That’s a suicide rate for soldiers in Iraq of about 13.5 per 100,000. Winkenwerder said. During recent peacetime years, that number for the Army has hovered around 10.5 to 11 per 100,000. Winkenwerder said.

“We don’t see any trend there that tells us that there’s more we might be doing,” said Winkenwerder.

The military prefers to treat mental health problems, and each division has a psychiatrist, psychologist and social worker, Winkenwerder said. He said between 300 and 400 troops have been medically evacuated from Iraq for mental health problems.

The military prefers to treat mental health problems such as depression by keeping troops in their regular duties while they get counseling and possibly medication, Winkenwerder said. Less than one percent of the troops in Iraq are treated for mental issues during an average week, he said.

Winkenwerder said he had no specifics on the number of troops being treated for battlefield stress, although the military is focused on treating that problem.

“We believe they are being identified, they are being supported,” Winkenwerder said.

The military also is working to solve the issue of soldiers awaiting medical care. Since November, about 1,900 of the 4,400 troops waiting for medical care have been treated, Winkenwerder said.

But the military expects more problems when tens of thousands of troops are rotated in and out of Iraq this spring. Winkenwerder said. Many of those troops may have to wait at various bases for medical treatment such as physical therapy for injuries, he said.

The Army is working to sign contracts with civilian medical providers and bringing in more staff from the Navy, Air Force and Department of Veterans Affairs to help, Winkenwerder said. —Internet

Two dead, about 30 injured in Iraqi car bomb explosion

BAQUBA, 15 Jan— A car bomb blew up outside a police station in the restive Iraqi town of Baquba on Wednesday, killing two people and wounding around 30, local police, doctors and the US military said.

Witnesses and a US soldier at the scene said the explosion was set off by a suicide car bomber but a military spokeswoman later said the blast appeared to have been remotely detonated.

“A suicide bomber in a green civilian sedan targeted the quick reaction police force,” First Lieutenant Brian Elliott of the US 4th Infantry Division told Reuters at the scene, adding that there were at least two deaths and a number of casualties.

“It could have been much worse if he had gotten the car inside the compound,” he said.

The US military estimated 29 people were injured in the explosion.

Doctors at Baquba’s main hospital said two people had died and more than 25 people were admitted with injuries sustained in the blast, which threw scores to the ground.

“The two dead were civilians and we have admitted 26 people for injuries, many of them police,” said Mohammed Ayuba Jibouri, a surgeon and deputy head of Baquba General Hospital.

A police officer at the scene said he saw the car heading toward the police station seconds before it detonated about 50 feet from the entrance to the compound.

He said police fired on the vehicle but the driver didn’t stop. One policeman at the scene said it appeared the bomber had tied his foot to the accelerator to make sure the car would speed ahead even if he was killed.

“All I saw was an explosion and went out and I saw a car with someone whose body was blown to bits,” said police Sergeant Raed Mehdi Ziaihi. “There was nothing left.”

Police said they spoke to the driver moments before the attack and told him to get away from the area as it was a secure zone. The man spoke with something other than an Arabic accent, they said.

US military spokesman Major Josslyn Aberle in Baquba said the car bomb “was an IED (improvised explosive device) consisting of artillery rounds and grenades that was placed in a small automobile near the scene of the explosion.”

“It was command detonated. Two additional IEDs were found nearby and disarmed by US troops,” she said. —Internet

Irak seeks Australia’s help to clean river

CANBERRA, 15 Jan— Iraq’s interim governing body, the Governing Council, on Tuesday asked Australia to help clean its historic river in Iraq, “will make an offer of assistance to rid the historic river in Iraq of American ‘non-hostile’ deaths since the war began last March, the Pentagon said on 14 Jan. 2004. The Defence Department’s top health official said the military plan to deal with tens of thousands of troops waiting for medical care after returning home from the war. Eighteen of those were Army soldiers, Winkenwerder said.

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The Army is working to sign contracts with civilian medical providers and bringing in more staff from the Navy, Air Force and Department of Veterans Affairs to help, Winkenwerder said. —Internet

Brazil’s President says US fingerprinting rules useless

MONTERREY (Mexico), 15 Jan— Brazilian President Luiz Inacio Lula da Silva said on Tuesday the new US policy of fingerprinting Brazilians entering the United States would do nothing to stop terrorism.

The United States says the week-old policy of fingerprinting arrivals from all but 27 countries is aimed at tracking terrorists, preventing criminals from entering the country and controlling illegal immigration. Brazil retaliated by requiring US citizens entering the South American country to be fingerprinted as well.

Gene Cretz, officials privately complain the US measure is aimed at illegal immigrants using forged documents, and that the United States is using the threat of terrorism to justify tougher controls.

“If the problem is to fight terrorism, this measure makes no sense. We have no culture of terrorism (in Brazil),” Lula told reporters at the Summit of the Americas in the northern Mexican city of Monterrey. — MNA/Reuters

12,000 evacuated as violent storms hit Bolivia

LIMA, 15 Jan— Violent tropical storms caused the evacuation of 12,000 people from the Bolivian city of Trinidad, capital of the Amazon state of Beni, the official news agency ABI reported on Tuesday.

Figures from Civil Defence showed the intense downpour affected 70 percent of the 100,000 inhabitants of Trinidad, which is about 600 kilometres northeast of La Paz, capital of Bolivia.

It forced 5,000 of them to be evacuated at the weekend as their houses were flooded or verging on collapse.

On Monday, another 7,000 Trinidad residents were evacuated aboard boats to provisional shelters.

Rescue teams, which included civilians, worked hard to take food, clothing, blankets and medicine to the victims, and try to re-establish the sewage system which had collapsed.

Beni Governor Edwin Rivero said that those evacuated “remain in provisional shelters located in the highlands of Trinidad”. They expect rains to ease allowing a start for humanitarian relief programmes, the prevention of diseases and assessing material damage. — MNA/Xinhua

THE NEW LIGHT OF MYANMAR Friday, 16 January, 2004 3
Tests show no agent in Iraq mortar shells

**Camp Eden, 15 Jan—** US tests on mortar shells found in Iraq and suspected of containing blister agent have turned up negative, though further tests will be conducted, a Danish army spokesman said Wednesday.

The 36 shells, discovered last week by Danish troops, are believed to be from the 1980-88 Iran-Iraq war.

Four initial tests by British and Danish experts came up positive for blister agents, Danish spokesman, Capt Kim Vibe Michelsen, told The Associated Press.

But later tests by US experts from the Iraq Survey Group on five of the shells have shown no trace of chemical weapons, the Danish military said.

However, more tests are needed, and the results will be sent to the Idaho National Engineering and Environmental Laboratory, the military said in a statement.

A US official said the tests suggest the munitions may not contain blister agents, as initial field tests had indicated.

The official, speaking on condition of anonymity, said that the test results aren’t definitive, but “it seems to be ruling out a blister agent.”

The official said there are chemicals associated with certain munitions, such as phospohrous, that can produce false positives.

Initial tests by troops in the field are designed to favour a positive reading, erasing on the side of caution to protect soldiers. More sophisticated tests are often necessary.

“The Iraqi Survey Group has never encountered this type of shells before,” the Danish military said. “They will therefore take a shell for closer investigation,” including a look into why the four initial tests gave a positive result.

Before invading Iraq, the United States said Saddam Hussein’s regime had stockpiles of mustard gas, a World War I-era blister agent that is stored in liquid form. The US military has already destroyed its own stockpile.

US intelligence officials also claimed Iraq had failed to destroy stocks of sarin, cyclosarin and VX in violation of UN resolutions. So far, however, no such materials have been found nine months after the collapse of Saddam’s regime. The Danish troops initially found 36 shells, exposed in rain, in the ground outside a village near Qurnah on Friday.

“The Danish army’s Camp Eden is near Qurnah. This was a stash. They were packed and ordered and wrapped in plastic,” Michelsen said, adding they must have been buried 10 or more years ago.

Michelsen said the 120mm shells, which have no markings indicating the country of manufacture, “don’t look like any known” mortars in the Iraqi arsenal.

Michelsen said the Danes have unearthed 50 shells so far and at least 50 more are believed still buried. Villagers told the troops that they had found about 400 or more some years ago and threw them in the Tigris River, Michelsen said.—Internet

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US curfew in northern Iraqi city arouses complaints

**Baghdad, 15 Jan—** A 12-hour curfew imposed by American forces overnight in the city of Talilad, 80 kilometres north of Baghdad, has aroused complaints by local residents.

The American forces slapped a curfew on Baghdad from 6 pm (1500 GMT) Monday to 6 am (0300 GMT) Tuesday as they were about to be replaced by a batch of reinforcements, local residents told Xinhua on Tuesday.

“American military vehicles with loudspeakers informed people in Arabic language the decision of the curfew,” said 29-year-old Saad Abdul Amer.

He described the decision as a way to increase the suffering of the people in the city, which might lead to increasing dissatisfaction and widen the gap between the citizens and the occupying forces.

The curfew was due to the arrival of new US forces to replace the current, said a source from the local Iraqi police on condition of anonymity.

Some residents criticized the American decision as it hinders work in the city and paralyzes people there.

“Farmers come early to sell their goods from the surrounding areas of Baghdad, such a decision deny them their return to their houses,” said Abdullah Khalil, a 45-year-old farmer.

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Kenyan grandfather joins primary school at 84

**Nairobi, 15 Jan—** An 84-year-old Kenyan grandfather has joined primary school to learn to read, after the government introduced free primary education last year, Kenyan daily newspapers reported on Tuesday.

Kimani Murage, who has 30 grandchildren, said he hopes to become a veterinarian.

His classmates’ average age is seven years old, and two of his grandchildren attend more advanced classes in the same school in Kenya’s Eldoret District, some 162 miles northwest of the capital Nairobi.

Headmistress Jane Obinutho told the Daily Nation the school first thought Murage’s interest was a joke.

“So we told him to come this year in first term, then we could see about it. It was a total surprise when he showed up — in school uniform!” she was quoted as saying.

Murage said he was part of the Mau Mau movement that fought against British colonial rule in Kenya in the 1950s, and wanted to learn to read so he could count his hoped-for grandchildren.

“Trained and experienced pilots in the US and other forces have been killed. A spokesman said one US soldier, a driver of an unarmed bomb onto the countryside in northern England near Fallujah, Iraq. The owner of the house is suspected of being responsible for attacks on coalition forces. —Internet

Foreign nationals killed in Iraq

**Tikrit, 15 Jan—** Occupation forces and foreigners come under attack near Tikrit. "Three foreign nationals have been killed near the Iraqi town of Tikrit when unknown assailants fired on their convoy.

The three men two Pakistani and one Turkish were killed when unknown assailants fired on their vehicles Wednesday, said Iraq police. The US military confirmed that two foreign nationals had been killed. A spokeswoman said one US soldier, a driver of an unarmored bomb onto the countryside in northern England last week, a spokesman said on Tuesday.

There were no injuries and only “limited property damage” in the incident, which happened near the town of Market Weighton in Yorkshire at around 1715 GMT on Thursday, the Air Force spokesman said.

The 25 lb practice bomb was dropped by a F-15E Strike Eagle on a routine training run from a base in eastern England.

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World’s largest cruise ship sets sail

**Southampton (England), 15 Jan—** The world’s largest cruise ship, the 800 million US dollars (base Mary 2, set off across the Atlantic on its maiden voyage on Monday.

Bathed in multicoloured, France three weeks ago, lights like a floating city, smoke winding out of its enormous stack, the QM2 drifted out of the English port

As it left the harbour fire worked filled the night sky.

The send-off contrasted

A sequence of television images shows an Argentine man being with a lion named Quisque on top of him, after he leapt over a fence at the Buenos Aires Zoo, in Argentina on 12 Jan, 2004. Television footage showed Quisque the lion sitting on top of a 22-year-old Lucas Tomas, padding him with his paw and leaving only superficial injuries to his head, arm and chest, doctors said.—Internet

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US soldiers spread out documents and other objects on the floor while looking for evidence during a raid on an Iraqi house on 14 Jan, 2004 near Fallujah, Iraq. The owner of the house is suspected of being responsible for attacks on coalition forces. —Internet

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Over 60 Bulgarian soldiers quit Iraq-bound unit

SOFIA (Bulgaria), 15 Jan—A total of 62 Bulgarian soldiers have quit a peacekeeping unit due to replace troops in Iraq after a car bomb killed five of their compatriots last month, Chief of Staff Nikola Kolev said Wednesday.

Kolev said some 600 Bulgarian soldiers were on their way to Baghdad since the incident. The decision to quit came after five of their colleagues were killed last week in an explosion in the northern Iraqi city of Mosul.

He said the soldiers would give up their duties before the end of February, but dozens of the new unit have already signed their notices.

The Kerbala deaths have sparked debate in Bulgaria about security at their base in the Polish sector, with many asking why the troops had not been better protected.

The Balkan country, a staunch supporter of the US-led military campaign that toppled Saddam Hussein, has sent a 480-strong light infantry battalion to serve in the Polish-led force in Iraq’s holy city of Kerbala.

Poland plans to rotate the peacekeepers in Kerbala with another 480 soldiers by mid-February, but dozens of the new unit have decided to abandon the mission after the Kerbala deaths.

State radio quoted Kolev as saying some of the Bulgarian contingent’s duties would be taken over by coalition allies because of increased tension among soldiers after the bomb attack.

He did not say which duties the Bulgarians would give up.

Kolev and President Georgi Parvanov were quoted by the state-run radio as saying that Bulgaria “bears no responsibility” for the Kerbala deaths.

Nations cautious on Iraq contracts

PARIS, 15 Jan—Nations frozen out of US-financed reconstruction contracts for opposing the Iraq war reacted cautiously to an apparent policy change that could allow them to bid for future projects.

US President George W Bush yesterday outlined a new policy as he announced that Canada would be allowed to bid on some of the US$18.6 billion ($23.95 billion) in reconstruction work from which it had been excluded.

And Defence Secretary Donald Rumsfeld said three or four other countries, which he declined to name, would be eligible to bid for a second wave of reconstruction contracts.

France, Germany and Russia—which vehemently opposed the invasion that toppled Saddam Hussein—stand to benefit from any policy change on rebuilding contracts.

Jochen Muenker, head of the Middle East division at the German Chamber of Industry and Commerce, said the US hints were welcome.

“Naturally it’s a very encouraging development,” he said. “There are big German companies that have had projects in Iraq in recent decades that could shoulder such jobs.”

“If confirmed, this would be a breakthrough for German business in Iraq.”

French companies are also eager to participate in the reconstruction effort, but the French government will not drop its demand for the transfer of power into Iraqi hands.

“We have expressed for a long time our availability to participate in Iraq’s reconstruction,” French Defence Minister Michele Alliot-Marie said.

“But obviously only if it is in the framework where the Iraqi authorities will get back their sovereignty and the ability to exercise their powers in full.”

Alliot-Marie was to hold talks in Washington with Rumsfeld tomorrow. President Jacques Chirac said in a speech to French diplomats earlier this month that France was ready to assist in rebuilding the country “at the request of the Iraqis themselves.”

US soldier dies in Iraq

BAGHDAD, 15 Jan—An American soldier has died in a non-hostile incident in northern Iraq, the US military said today, raising the US death toll since the Iraq conflict began to 496.

A US press statement said the soldier, attached to the 101st Airborne Division, died last night in the northern city of Mosul.

It said the “non-hostile incident” that led to the death is under investigation. It gave no other details.

The name of the soldier was withheld pending notification of next-of-kin.

Since the US invasion of Iraq last March, a total of 496 soldiers have died, including 342 in combat. Most of the deaths—358—have occurred after May 1 when President George W Bush declared an end to major hostilities.

Turkey, Finland sign security cooperation agreement

ANKARA, 15 Jan—Turkey and Finland signed an agreement on fight against crimes here on Tuesday.

Speaking at the signing ceremony, Turkish Interior Minister Abdul- kadir Aksu said that Turkey attaches great importance to international cooperation in the field of security.

Aksu added that the target was to form an international platform for fighting against crimes that were changing in course of time and were committed through more sophisticated methods.

He stressed that it is no more possible to register terrorism with national borders of a country.

And his part, Finnish Interior Minister Kari Rajamaki said the signed cooperation agreement would lay the foundation for fight against crimes.

Record number of ancient bronze characters confirmed in China

XI’AN, 15 Jan—Chinese epigraphy experts have identified a record 4,048 characters on a collection of 27 ancient bronzes unearthed in northwest China’s Shaanxi Province after a year of study and research.

Zhang Runtang, deputy director of Baoji bureau of cultural relics in Shaanxi, said at a meeting to mark the anniversary of the discovery that the bronzes, including vessels used for rituals, drinking and food, were all large and elegantly shaped. The bronze site was unearthed on January 19 last year by five villagers in Meixian county.

“Inscriptions are found on all the vessels, the content of which covers 12 emperors of the Western Zhou Dynasty (about 1046-771 BC),” said Zhang.

A three-legged, wide shallow bowl with handles has 372 characters, the most of all the bronzes ever discovered from the Western Zhou Dynasty, the content of which is about eight generations of the Shan family, an important political power of the time.

“The inscriptions not only provide valuable material for research into the history and culture of the Western Zhou Dynasty, but are also significant to the dating of the Xia (about 2070-1600 BC), Shang (about 1600-1044 BC) and Zhou (about 1046-221 BC) dynasties, which is still unclear because of the lack of recorded history, but is important for the research into the development of ancient Chinese culture,” said Zhang.

Liu Yunhai, deputy director of Shaanxi bureau of cultural relics, said the five villains were rewarded for protecting the bronzes.

East China sees rapid economic development

JINAN, 15 Jan—East China’s Shandong Province enjoyed a coordinated and healthy economic development in 2003, said Han Yuqun, governor of Shandong Province.

Speaking at a session of the provincial people’s congress, Han said that the gross domestic product (GDP) of Shandong amounted to 150 billion US dollars, up 13.3 per cent from the previous year.

The growth rates of the provincial industry, agriculture and service industries were 5.6 per cent, 16.1 per cent and 11.9 per cent respectively, contributing 8.6 billion US dollars to the provincial finance, said the governor.

Shandong Province spent 64 billion US dollars in fixed assets in 2003, the governor said, and over 1,000 projects with over 12 million US dollars investment each were being constructed.
Frustration, clashes rise in Iraq

Baghdad, Iraq, 15 Jan — Angry Iraqi demonstrators confronted Ukrainian army tanks and police in Kut for a second day, the Washington Post reported Wednesday. Officials and witnesses said at least 440 civilians and police were injured Tuesday, the fifth day of anti-government protests since 6 January in southern Iraqi cities with largely Shiite Muslim populations. The southern Shiites were sympathetic to the demonstrations held this week in the Lebanese capital, Damascus, and, until recently, largely supported the US-led invasion and appointed interim government.

The southern demonstrations coincided with a growing split between US officials and a prominent Shiite leader, Grand Ayatollah Ali Sistani, who demanded Monday that direct elections be held soon. US authorities plan to hold a national assembly but do not want to schedule elections until mid-2005. The protests in Kut included recently dismissed soldiers and laborers who have long been without jobs. Their anger was directed largely at local officials and said demanded bribes or were former members of Saddam’s Baath Party.

Art therapy helps Iraqi children recover from war

Baghdad, 15 Jan — At the Seasons Art School in south Baghdad, the goal is not to teach or learn but to give back Iraqi children their lost childhood.

There are no classes and no exams. After formal lessons at other schools, about 100 children between the ages of five to 14 come here for a few hours a day, and teachers help them use art, music and drama to unlock emotions which they may have suppressed during years of war.

“Music or painting can help the children by making them forget their real life,” staff member Iyad Hadi said on Tuesday, as a class of girls and boys scribbled happily with wax crayons on paper.

“When they get here, they play, that makes them psychologically happier.”

Set up in last October by a new Iraqi non-governmental organization called Childhood’s Voice, the school welcomes disabled and deprived children among an intake from a wide range of backgrounds.

“We believe in the inherent creativity and loving potential of all children,” reads a poster drawn up for a small art exhibition of the school’s paintings at a Baghdad hotel.

The pictures displayed are bright drawings of brick houses and flying birds which shine so brightly on any classroom or fridge door worldwide. But teachers said that when the children first came to the school, their images were darker.

“A lot of kids used to draw tanks, airplanes, guns,” Husni Mohammad said. “We used to tear them apart, say it’s over, it’s OK now.”

Kiyoko McCrae, who works for an anti-war coalition in the United States and visited the school in Baghdad, said her experience was that traumatized children used art as both an escape and a way to deal with buried problems.

“The art therapy is a way to express emotions we are feeling inside,” she said. “Many children have no way to express themselves at all, when you go through a traumatic situation your only defense is that you shut off, don’t speak very much.”

The school has two psychologists on hand to monitor the children and help them mix. One of the psychologists, Rasha Imad, said she had seen significant improvement in many children since starting work there three months ago.

“They have started to be calmer in the classroom, to mix better, to recognize letters and numbers and understand the meaning of play,” she said.

MNA/Reuters

NASA says “Space Station” leak traced to US lab

Moscow, 15 Jan — A leak which caused air pressure to drop aboard the International Space Station is most likely to have originated in a hose in a US laboratory on board, a NASA official in Russia said on Monday.

The leak, discovered late last month, sparked a fresh row over the 16-nation station between the United States and Russia. But both acknowledged that it posed no danger to the two-man crew.

“The leak is in a flex hose in the lab window,” said Jim Neuman, Director of NASA’s Human Space Flight Programme in Russia, told Reuters by telephone.

“It’s 95 per cent at this stage... It is most likely the culprit.”

He said the problem, if confirmed, would probably be solved by replacing the hose which helps keep air and condensation out of the windows around the laboratory.

Neuman believed there was no longer any need to proceed with a plan to isolate the crewmen — US astronaut Michael Foale and Russian cosmonaut Alexander Kaleri — in a station module for five days.

That plan called for closing hatches connecting the four main modules — two Russian and two American — in order to trace the leak.

MNA/Reuters

US economic policies under fire at Americas-wide summit

Monterrey, (Mexico), 15 Jan — Latin American leaders told President George W. Bush on Tuesday “perverse” US-backed economic policies had failed their nations although they also agreed to fight corruption and terrorism together.

Bush tried at the 34th Union of the Americas Summit of the Americas in Mexico to win back the support of regional leaders after spending the last two years focused almost exclusively on Iraq and security.

Although he earned backing for modest anti-corruption measures and the fight against terrorism, Brazil and Argentina have moved to the political left so US-backed policies are no longer an easy sell.

President Nestor Kirchner of Argentina, which suffered financial collapse two years ago, said past mistakes were being repeated today and complained he was not getting enough support for his efforts to rebuild the economy and pay off debt.

“We suffer pressures, incomprehension and delays from international organizations which do not appear to understand our need to grow,” he said. “It is unacceptable to insist on recipes that have failed.”

Latin American nations defeated a US proposal that the most corrupt government in the Americas be barred from regional meetings. They said it was too vague and some feared Washington would use it to isolate its rivals.

Other anti-corruption proposals were approved, however, including a commitment to deny safe haven to corrupt officials on the run as well as extradite them to corrupt officials on the run as well as extradite them to their home countries and seize their assets.

MNA/Reuters
In the airspace of the Union of Myanmar, I flew to Tachilek in eastern Shan State on 25 December 2003 on board a Myanmar Airways flight. I saw the Flag of the Union proudly flying in the morning breeze under the blue sky, with blush mountain ranges in the background during the stopover at the Heho Airport, and also at the Tachilek Airport. As a citizen of Myanmar, I was happy and proud to see the State Flag fluttering in the air. And with so much joy, I felt the taste of independence.

At that moment, my mind went back to the morning on 19 September 1985. At 9.15 am on that day, as already agreed upon as Myanmar Ambassador to Australia, I presented my credentials to the Governor General in Canberra, Australia. I also took the salute of the guard of honour. While saluting the Union Flag being hoisted to the accompaniment of the national anthem, I came to remember the gratitude I owed to the State and the gratitude of my parents and teachers. I could serve as an Ambassador as Myanmar is an independent and sovereign nation. I was deeply thinking about the actual taste of independence.

As a citizen of the Union of Myanmar, I attended the ceremony to open a new hospital, covered by the Yaungkha Village Project, Monghsat District, eastern Shan State, on 16 December 2003. The project is being jointly implemented by Myanmar and Thailand under a friendship journey.

The earth road was rather rough. But it was an important journey. The motorcades drove on for over 30 miles together to Yaungkha. The earth road was rather rough. But it was an important journey.

Along the journey, I was enjoying the taste of independence fully. I know well the sufferings of living under subjugation and living under independence, and also value the independence. Those were my memories for the independence. At the same time, I was thinking about and thanking the Tatmadaw members and the national people who sacrificed lives to restore and safeguard independence. Because of their sacrifices, we can live in the independent Union of Myanmar with dignity. I heartily thank all the heroes.

Then, I remembered what my Russian friends told me while I was serving as the Cultural Attache at the Myanmar Embassy in Moscow. They were the persons who defended Leningrad while the Nazi troops besieged the city for over 400 days. With patriotism, they faced hunger and all kinds of sufferings to drive out the enemy in safeguarding independence. More than 20 million Russians died during the World War II. They knew the value of a loaf of brown bread. They told me that they wished to enjoy the independence they had safeguarded with a lot of life, blood and sweat.

We crossed the Friendship Bridge, and went up a hillock to pay homage to a pagoda built by King Alunghpha near Maesai. When viewed from the hillock, we saw Tachilek and Maesai lying together peacefully. I was also enjoying the taste of independence with pride, as I saw from the hillock the State Flag of the Union of Myanmar flying in Tachilek.

The earth road was rather rough. But it was an important journey. The motorcades drove on for over 30 miles together to Yaungkha. The earth road was rather rough. But it was an important journey.

Prime Minister General Khin Nyunt inspects development tasks in Myeik

Prime Minister General Khin Nyunt views text books prescribed at Myeik University in Myeik, Tanintharyi Division on 13-1-2004. — MNA

Prime Minister General Khin Nyunt inspects newly-constructed Myeik General Hospital (200-bed) in Myeik, Tanintharyi Division on 13-1-2004. — MNA

Prime Minister General Khin Nyunt inspects tasks for construction of the Maha Siddhi Pagoda on Sandawady Hill in Myeik, Tanintharyi Division on 13-1-2004. — MNA

Prime Minister General Khin Nyunt inspects tasks for the project to wipe out the narcotic drugs and conduct border area development. The project has come into being under the agreement signed between the two countries to jointly implement a Yaungkha Village Project, Monghsat District, eastern Shan State, on 16 December 2003. The project is being jointly implemented by Myanmar and Thailand under a friendship journey. The Thai side contributed 20 million baht.

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Deep-water seaport in Dawei District ...

(From page 1)

(Taninthayi) Ltd and Htoo Toe Foo Fisheries Ltd, K 5 million each by Taninthayi Division Peace and Development Council and Coastal Region Command Headquarters, K 3.6 million each by the Mon peace group, U Saw Jet of Amawwa Soe Co and Temyai Co, K 2 million each by Myeik, Kawthoung and Dawei District Peace and Development Councils, K 1 million each by Ahsaung Kaung Fisheries Ltd and Mockaung Oil Palm Co, K 200,000 by U Sai Kyaw of the Paradise Hotel, K 350,000 each by U In Hone and U Maung Win (Kanypha), K 1.05 million by Thida Fisheries Co, K 6.3 million by Vintage Co and Summi Co, and K 5 million each by Dr Soe Win and U Khin Zaw of Tour Mandalay. Next, the Prime Minister and party arrived at Myeik University. Protector U Khin Maung Cho and faculty members welcomed the Prime Minister.

Deputy Minister for Education U Myo Nyunt reported to the Prime Minister on brief history of the university, courses and specialisation conducted, student population, organizational set-up and IT centre complete with 84 sets of computers and construction tasks. Senior Engineer U Kyaw Myint reported to the Prime Minister on construction tasks. After hearing the reports, the Prime Minister gave instruction on construction of a main building attached to convocation hall.

Next, the Prime Minister and party viewed round the books displayed at the oceanography lab and gave instructions on taking necessary measures for development of oceanography study. Later, the Prime Minister and party went to new 200-bed General Hospital in Myeik. The medical superintendent, doctors and nurses welcomed the Prime Minister and party. Next, the Prime Minister and party viewed round the hospital and inspected the construction of the main operation theatre.

Deputy Minister for Health Dr Mya Oo and the medical superintendent of the hospital reported to the Prime Minister on treatment and construction tasks of the hospital. The Prime Minister gave necessary instructions. Afterwards, the Prime Minister arrived at Laykyun Hsemi pagoda in Myeik and paid reverence to a Buddha Image. The Prime Minister and party also contributed cash towards the funds of the pagoda. Next, the Prime Minister and party proceeded to the International Fish Auction Market in Myeik.

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Prime Minister General Khin Nyunt inspects the International Fish Auction Market in Myeik, Taninthayi Division, on 13-1-2004. — mna

Prime Minister General Khin Nyunt inspects the 1,000-ton cold storage of Pyae Phyo Tun Int’l Co Ltd on Pahtaw Island in Kyunsu Township on 13-1-2004. — mna

The newly-constructed 200-bed General Hospital (Myeik) in Taninthayi Division. — mna

As the private sector has become the driving force of the economy, the Government is making arrangements to assign duties to the private sector, combining its financial power, efforts and efficient management system, based on common interest. Thus, the private entrepreneurs should extend their enter- prises, while existing as a force worthy of the State’s protection and support. Of- ficials are required to strive for progress of the regional businesses including rubber, pepper and mining. As pearl culture is achieving success under the leadership of the State, efforts should be made for the business to flourish with added momentum.

As the private sector has been assigned to develop nature tourism in Taninthayi Division possessing wide and long beaches, vast diversity of flora and fauna.

(See page 9)
Deep-water seaport in...

(from page 8)

and pristine islands and coral reefs, the government bodies are required to support the sector. The team inspected the arrangements to hold the Salone Festival, making arrangements for the national entrepreneurs and the departments to implement development undertakings including the eco-tourism business to help Salone race settle at appropriate places, improve their social standard, promote their culture, and preserve their race. The Salone is a rare and significant people of the world living on boats, and earning their living fishing, their skilled profession. The Government has been further improving the transport sector, the main requirement for development of the whole Taninthayi Division.

In addition to Lenya Mandaing Bridge and Kywek Kyaukphyu Bridge, major bridges were constructed. Moreover, Kawthaung-Myeik-Mawlamyine motor road was constructed. As a result, there has emerged a motor road linking Kawthaung, the southernmost town in Myanmar, to Putao, the northernmost town in Myanmar. At a time when the Government is making systematic arrangements for developing all sectors in Taninthayi Division, departmental officials, on their part, should make field trips down to grass-roots level and implement the arrangements to hold the Salone Festival, making active and harmonious cooperation with the Government, so as to secure achievements in these tasks in the spirit of national solidarity and Union Spirit, he concluded.

Next, U Htay Myint, Chairman of Yuzana Co Ltd, donated K 50 million to the education, health and rural development tasks of Myeik region and K 500,000 to the Pale Kyun BEHS (branch); Zegaba Co Ltd Chairman U Kha Myint Shwe, K 500,000 to the Pale Kyun BEHS (branch); U Kya Maung of International Marine Products Co, K 500,000 to the Pale Kyun BEHS (branch); and Managing Director of Tour Mandalay Co Ltd U Kha Maw, K 200,000 to the same school. The donations of cash were received by Commander Brig-Gen Ohn Myint.

Later, Prime Minister General Khin Nyunt and party went to Hseiknge Bridge in Myeik, and then they left for Daungkumaw crabs breeding camp in Thantok village-tract in Kyunsu Township. Officials of Ahsaung Kaung Industries Co Ltd reported to the Prime Minister and party on production of fresh fish and prawns, the breeding of crabs in 15 ponds, and the condition of the company’s incomes realized from the export of crabs.

After hearing the reports, the Prime Minister gave instructions, saying that efforts are to be made to breed crabs which have a ready market in foreign nations as many as possible and that the ministries concerned are to offer necessary assistance to private sectors with the conviction that the development of private economies is in other way round the economic growth of the country.

Manager of Ahsaung Kaung Industries Co Ltd U Aung Lin donated K 1.5 million worth of school exercise books and pencils to the basic education primary schools; Director U Maung Sit, K 1 million for the same reason. The donations were received by Commander Brig-Gen Ohn Myint.

Next, Prime Minister General Khin Nyunt and party inspected the production and breeding of crabs at the camp. The Prime Minister and party also went to the 1000-ton cold storage of Pyae Phyo Tun Int’l Co Ltd on Pathaw Kyun in Kyunsu Township. They were conducted round the storage by officials. In giving instructions to officials of the storage, Prime Minister General Khin Nyunt said that ways and means should be sought for the penetration of fish and prawns into foreign markets. Afterwards, Prime Minister General Khin Nyunt and party left Myeik by air and arrived back here in the evening.

Minister for Information Brig-Gen Kyaw Hsann, one of the members of the entourage of the Prime Minister, went to the subprinting house in Shanchaung Ward of Myeik on 13 January morning. There the minister inspected the construction works being carried out at the subprinting house and heard reports on progress of construction. Officials also conducted him round the construction site.

Later, the minister gave instructions on construction of the buildings meeting the set standards. He also met with employees of the Information and Public Relations Department at district and township levels and gave instructions on efforts to achieve the targeted goals in the implementation of the tasks.
The Secretary-1 of the State Peace and Development Council Li-Gen Soe Win, accompanied by members of the State Peace and Development Council Li-Gen Ye Myint, deputy ministers, officials of the State Peace and Development Council Office, and departmental heads, led a delegation to Myitkyina on 12 January morning.

On arrival at the Myitkyina Airport, the Secretary-1 and party welcomed by Kachin State Peace and Development Council Chairman and Commander of Northern Command Maj-Gen Maung Maung Swe, Brig-Gen Bo Kyi Win, and senior military officers, departmental officials, and local people.

At the Myitkyina Government Technological College, the Secretary-1 and party inspected the teaching aids at the electronic communication department, the electricity department, and the mechanical department, workshops and computers.

At the briefing hall, the principal of the college gave a brief account of the history of the college, courses available at the college, the population of students and the strength of faculty members of the college, followed by supplementary reports by Deputy Minister for Science and Technology Dr Chan Nyo Aung.

Speaking on the occasion, Secretary-1 Li-Gen Soe Win said that the Government is making efforts to develop human resources crucial for the establishment of a modern nation. Therefore, it is necessary for the teachers of the college to arm themselves with advanced technologies while nurturing their students to become intellectuals.

Moreover, steps are to be taken to be able to produce essential new items and innovative import-substitute goods through the integration of their intellects with the growing private industries. The Secretary-1 then cordially met with the faculty members of the college.

Next, the Secretary-1 and party arrived at the Drug Addicts Treatment Hospital in Myitkyina, where officials of the hospital reported on matters related to treatment being given to drug addicts, mental as well as physical treatment, and anti-drug campaigns. Director-General of the Health Department also made additional reports.

After hearing the reports, the Secretary-1 gave instructions and inspected round the hospital. Secretary-1 Li-Gen Soe Win and Li-Gen Ye Myint signed in the visitors’ book of the hospital.

At the briefing hall, the General Hospital, the Secretary-1 and party inspected the man and women patient wards, the surgical room, the intensive care unit, and the operation theatre. At the hall of the hospital, the Secretary-1 met with specialists, doctors and nurses and heard reports on treatment being given to patients, the raising of medical trust funds, and necessities of the hospital.

In response to the reports, the Secretary-1 said that with an average life expectancy of 62 years for men and that of 65 years for women, it is found that the people of Myanmar now enjoy longer life. Apart from it, Myanmar made clear to the world that since 2003 it has reached the status of a country free from leprosy and polio, and of a country that has brought TB under control. Similarly, the successful separation of combined twins, kidney transplants, and the rejoining of crushed arms are significant achievements in the health sector.

These measures being taken by health staff to provide public health care are in accord with the social objectives of the State. The Secretary-1 later attended to the requirements.

The Secretary-1 and party proceeded to the Myitkyina University, where he met with the rector, professors, associate professors, lecturers, demonstrators at the hall of the university. On the occasion, the rector reported on matters related to the university. After hearing the reports, the Secretary-1 gave instructions saying that the Government is making efforts to achieve simultaneous development in political, economic and social sectors. Success has been achieved in these tasks owing to the active participation of employees and the people. An adequate amount of infrastructure has been provided for the health, education and road transportation sectors. Arrangements are underway to further provide such requirements.

At the same time, as the seven-point roadmap of the State has been set, measures to phase out the economic security of the people. He then called upon the faculty members of the university to do everything in their capacity to implement the goals.

Later, the Secretary-1 and party inspected the microbiology laboratory and the library at the university and the construction works being carried out there. After inspecting the construction of Adipadi road and the archway of the university, the Secretary-1 gave instructions to officials.

In the afternoon, the Secretary-1 and party headed for Government Computer College in Myitkyina. Principal Daw Khin Than Myint reported on salient points about the college and Managing Director of the Ever Green Construction Co Ltd U Than Shwe, on construction tasks. Commander Maj-Gen Maung Maung Swe gave a supplementary report.

The Secretary-1 inspected the scale model of the college and left necessary instructions. Next, he attended the stake-driving ceremony for construction of a Government Technological College near Paimmati Village in Myitkyina. Vice-Chairman of the Government Computer College in Myitkyina informed the Secretary-1 Li-Gen Soe Win, Li-Gen Ye Myint and the commander drove the stakes at the designated places and sprinkled scented water on them.

The Secretary-1 looked into the site chosen for construction of the college and gave instructions to the officials concerned.

The Secretary-1 and party held a meeting with industrialists at Myitkyina Industrial Zone Chairman of Myitkyina Industrialists Association U Soe Myint Tun reported on establishment of the industrial zone, and assistance rendered by Kachin State Peace and Development Council for development of the zone, and industrialists, on tasks being implemented.

In response to the reports, the Secretary-1 elaborated on necessary assistance provided and encouragement in November 1998. The Secretary-1 then inspected the site chosen for the industrial development. He spoke of the need of the industrialists to visit the other industrial zones for development of Myitkyina Industrial Zone.

The Secretary-1 and party viewed the farm implements, and machines produced by Myitkyina Industrial Zone.

Next, they headed for Bala Minthit Bridge across Ayeayarwady River Office. Secretary-1 Li-Gen Soe Win, Deputy Superintendent Engineer of Bridge Special Group 15 U Soe Thet reported on condition of the bridge, work being done, efforts being made for ensuring completion of the project by the end of 2004, and arrangements being made for distribution of electricity from the 10.5 megawatt power plant to Myitkyina and Waingmaw.

The Secretary-1 gave instructions to the officials concerned. Afterwards, Deputy Superintendent Engineer of Bridge Special Group 15 U Soe Thet reported on condition of the flow of Ayeyarwady River, construction of stone embankment near the bridge on the left of Myitkyina and work progress.

The Secretary-1 inspected the site chosen for construction of a control tower, progress in construction of the stone embankment and the bridge opened in the evening. U Hsin Wah Naung of Kachin State Special Region 2 reported on measures being taken for upgrading of Myitkyina-Bhamo Road by Kachin State Special Region 2 and JadeLand Myanmar Co; and Engineer (Project) U Tin Myint, on repair work to the road. The Secretary-1 and Li-Gen Ye Myint gave necessary instructions.

The Secretary-1 and party inspected construction of 110-mile Myitkyina-Bhamo Road. They arrived back Myitkyina later in the evening and inspected the chosen site for construction of the main sub-power station of Mali Hydropower Project. They inspected the stone embankment along Ayeayarwady River near Kachin State Development Affairs Committee office. Officials reported on building of the stone embankment. The Secretary-1 and party visited Myitkyina Dhamma Rakkhamo Khuntho Monastery and presented offerings to President Sayadaw Vice-Chairman of the State Sangha Mahayana Nayaka Committee Sayadaw Agga Maha Pandita Agga Maha Saddharmma Jotikadha Bhaddanta Silavamsa and members of the Sangha.

Member of the Central Panel of Patrons of the Union Solidarity and Development Association Secretary-1 Li-Gen Soe Win, accompanied by Commander Maj-Gen Maung Maung Swe, met with secretaries, executives and members of Kachin State, Myitkyina District, Putao District and Myitkyina Township USDA offices at the office of Kachin State USDA office.
Prime Minister General Khin Nyunt attends ASEAN Steering Committee Meeting 1/2004

YANGON, 15 Jan — ASEAN Steering Committee Meeting 1/2004 was held at Zeyathiri Boikman on Konmyinttha at 4 p.m. today attended by Chairman of the ASEAN Steering Committee Prime Minister General Khin Nyunt.

It was attended by Secretary-2 of the State Peace and Development Council Li-Gen Thein Sein, the auditor general, the chairman of the Civil Service Selection and Training Board, the judge advocate-general, deputy ministers, members of the steering committee, officials of the State Peace and Development Council Office, departmental heads and officials.

First, Minister for Foreign Affairs U Win Aung reported on the requirements to add new members in the steering committee, and attendance of the delegations of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs at ASEAN meetings. Next, Deputy Minister for Foreign Affairs U Kyaw Thu reported on matters related to reduction of taxes for imports up to 0 per cent. In accord with the ASEAN Industrial Cooperation Scheme, participation of Myanmar in Standards and Conformity in accord with the ASEAN Industrial Cooperation Scheme, participation of Myanmar in Standards and Conformity became stronger and leaders of the member countries were extending friendly relations based on mutual respect towards each other, said the Prime Minister.

In this way, leaders of the ASEAN nations supported the seven-point future policy programme of Myanmar. Today, problems caused by rapid developments in international affairs could not be overcome by any single nation. With this in mind, world nations had established organizations to work for the mutual benefit. Myanmar was participating not only in the ASEAN but also in the BIMSTEC that would connect the South Asian and South-East Asian countries.

It could be seen that with its participation in regional countries and organizations, Myanmar was able to enjoy the gradual progress in political, economic, social sectors, as favourable foundations had been achieved in the country.

Ministries concerned were required to actively participate in the ASEAN meetings and implement the results of the meetings in Myanmar, the Prime Minister pointed out. In conclusion, the Prime Minister urged those present to exert efforts to enable Myanmar to actively participate in the activities of the ASEAN for the realization of the objectives enshrined in the ASEAN Vision: 2020 that aims at the harmonious development of its member countries and strengthens the political, economic, social infrastructures of them. — MNA

Hsamalauk Village MCWA’s day nursery opened

YANGON, 15 Jan — Myanmar Maternal and Child Welfare Association President Dr Daw Khin Win Shwe, Vice-Presidents Dr Kyi Soe and Dr Daw Tin Lin Myint and CEC members arrived at Hsamalauk Village in Nyaungdon Township, Ayeyawady Division, this morning.

They were welcomed there by Division MCWA Supervisory Committee President Daw Tin Tin Lat, wife of Chairman of Ayeyawady Division Peace and Development Council and Commander of South-West Command Maj-Gen Soe Naing, local authorities, members of the supervisory committee, officials, wellwishers, townswelders and others.

They attended the opening of the day nursery of Township MCWA (branch) at the township. Patron Daw Tin Tin Lat and Director of Dagon International Ltd Daw Moe Mya Mya formally opened the building. The MMCWA president unveiled the signboard of the day nursery.

Next, Dr Daw Khin Win Shwe and party viewed the building and presented gifts to the children. At the cash donation ceremony, the MMCWA president made a speech. Maubin District PDC Chairman Li-Col Sein Maung presented facts about the nursery.

Chairman of the company U Win Aung handed over the cash donations made by the wellwishers to Division MCWA Supervisory Committee President Dr Than Aung, who then presented certificates of honour to him.

Dr Daw Khin Win Shwe presented teaching and learning aids to the school through Patron Daw Tin Tin Lat. The team proceeded to Myanmar-Known You-Parents’ Hospital in the village. They inspected the hospital and donated cash to the hospital and comforted the patients.

Vice-President Dr Kyi Soe held discussions with the youths of Lungye Yokmon opened at the rural health care centre in the village.

CPT Minister arrives back

YANGON, 15 Jan.—Minister for Communications, Posts and Telegraphs Brig-Gen Thein Zaw, after attending the Asia IT Ministers’ 2nd Summit held in Hyderabad, India on 12 and 13 January, arrived back here by air yesterday evening.

The minister was welcomed at the airport by Minister for Labour U Tin Winn, Chairman of Civil Service Selection and Training Board Dr Than Nyan, officials of Indian embassy, departmental heads from the Ministry of Hotels and Tourism and the Myanmar Telecommunication and family members.

CEC member U Thaung Tin of the UMFCU, who accompanied the minister, also arrived back on the same flight.

West Bangalore State Governor arrives

YANGON, 15 Jan.—At the invitation of Minister of Foreign Affairs U Win Aung, West Bangalore State Governor Mr Viren J Shah and party of India arrived here by air this afternoon.

The guests were welcomed at the airport by Director-General Thura U Aung Htet of Protocol Department, Director-General U Thaung Tin of Political Department, Indian Ambassador Mr Rajiv Kumar Bhatia, Military Attaché Colonel Jaisvinder Singh Chopra and officials.

The Indian governor was accompanied by his wife and his personal assistants. The Indian guests, together with officials from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, visited the National Museum on Pyay Road here in the evening. After looking around the museum, the governor signed in the visitors’ book and left there.

Minister U Win Aung hosted a dinner in honour of the guests at Karaweik Palace, Kandawgyi, here. — MNA

THE NEW LIGHT OF MYANMAR Friday, 16 January, 2004

Prime Minister General Khin Nyunt addresses the Meeting No 1/2004 of the ASEAN Steering Committee. — MNA

Prime Minister General Khin Nyunt attends ASEAN Steering Committee Meeting 1/2004
MYANMAR IVANHOE COPPER COMPANY LIMITED
INVITATION TO TENDER
EXPLORATION DRILLING PROGRAM
MICCL invites sealed Tenders from suitable drilling Contractors to perform an Exploration Drilling Program at the Sebetaung and Kyesintaung Mine Site, west bank of Pyay Road, Hlaing Township, Yangon, Myanmar.

2. Tender documents will be available at the office of Procurement & Sales Section, City Hall, Yangon, during office hours by cash or money order payable to "MICCL" or "Myanmar Ivanhoe Copper Company Limited".

3. Tenderer who have officially purchased the Tender documents.

The said tender document is subject to the regulations of the Myanmar Government and may be interrogated in respect of any infringement of the said document or failure to comply with the tender requirements specified in the tender document.

Tender closing date is 30-1-2004 at 4:00pm
Application for bidding to Exploration drilling program tender toll: 70B, Bo Chein Street

Pyay Road, Hlaing Township
Yangon (Phone: 951-514194 to 951-514197.
Fax: 951-514208)

U Kyi Win, B.Com., B.L., for W.R. GRACE & CO.-CONN., by its attorneys REMFRY & SAGAR
INDIA
Dated: 16th January 2004

TRADE MARK CAUTION
NOTICE is hereby given that W.R. GRACE & CO.-CONN., a corporation organised and existing under the laws of the State of Connecticut, United States of America of 7500 Grace Drive, Columbia, Maryland, 21044, United States of America, are the Owners and Sole proprietors of the following Trade Marks in Myanmar:

GRACE COATINGS

The said mark is used in respect of 'coatings, sealants, and sealing compounds used in cans and bottles'.

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

U Kyi Win, B.Com., B.L., for W.R. GRACE & CO.-CONN., by its attorneys REMFRY & SAGAR

THE UNION OF MYANMAR
YANGON CITY DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE,
PROCUREMENT & SALES COMMITTEE
Dated 7th January, 2004

INVITATION TO TENDERS

1. Sealed Tenders are invited by the Yangon City Development Committee for the supply of the following materials for Construction of the Multi Purpose Hall:-
(a) Air-Conditioning and Ventilation - 3 Lots
(b) Tempered Glass Door, Reflective - 4 Items
(c) Sanitary Equipment - 5 Items
2. Tender documents will be available at the office of Budget & Accounts Department, Procurement & Sales Section, City Hall, Yangon, during office hours by cash at Kyat 500/- to be paid to the above office for each set of documents. Tender closing date is 21-1-2004 at 16:00 hours.
3. Tenders shall be accepted only from Tenderers who have officially purchased the Tender documents.

Chairman,
Procurement & Sales Committee

ASEAN economic ministers to meet in Indonesia
JAKARTA, 15 Jan — The Association of South-East Asian Nations (ASEAN) economic ministers are to meet informally in Yogyakarta in Indonesia on January 19 and January 20 to discuss, among other things, economic integration in the region.

"The meeting will prepare for a formal meeting due in September in Jakarta," the Director General for International Cooperation of the Ministry of Industry and Trade, Pus M.Hunabarat, was quoted Wednesday by The Jakarta Post as saying.—MNA/Xinhua

Archeologists baffled by ancient wordless bamboo slips
WUHAN, 15 Jan — Archeologists declared they found written records on over 1,000 ancient bamboo slips which recently unearthed in Jiujiandun Tombs in central China's Hubei Province.

The archaeologists said this is the first time for them to find wordless ancient bamboo slips. Ancient Chinese wrote their records on bamboo slips, which usually provide more direct information than other cultural relics.

The slips, found on December 25, 2002, were expected to provide new information on politics, economics, culture, art or religion of that period when first excavated.

Instead of words on the yellow (or inner) side of bamboo, said Wang. Excavations began in September and ended last December in 2003. Three archeologists hit upon a tomb when making a survey along the plotted route of an expressway in central China's Hubei Province.

"The legend of a great general who died at the battlefield had been passed down through generations along the Guhe River in Hubei Province. It was said that nine tombs were built and his body was placed in one of them. The survey showed a ridge beside the river and nine tombs were subsequently found. Besides bamboo slips, the tombs also yielded bronze battle cats and horses, musical instruments, household articles, and wooden sacrificial vessels.—MNA/Xinhua

Don't smoke
in Cameroon and Benin.

World Health Organization (WHO), battling to eradicate polio worldwide by the end of the year, confirmed on Tuesday that the disease had resurfaced after an earthquake in Taiwan four years ago.

The UN health agency said one case had been identified in each of the West African states, and had spread elsewhere from neighbouring Nigeria.

Once one of the world’s most devastating and widespread diseases, polio is now endemic in only six countries — India, Pakistan, Nigeria, Afghanistan, Niger and Egypt — but stamping it out completely has proved difficult. Over 650 cases were reported in 2003, Nigeria topping the list with 300, followed by India with 214 and Pakistan with 96. But the total was sharply down on the 1,918 recorded in 2002.

India and Bahrain sign five agreements

NEW DELHI, 15 Jan — India and Bahrain Tuesday signed five agreements including an Extradition Treaty that deals with concrete steps to combat terrorism and strengthens bilateral cooperation in suppression of crime.

The agreements, signed in the presence of visiting Bahrain Prime Minister Shaikh Khalifa bin Salman Al Khalifa and Indian Prime Minister Atal Bihar Vajpayee, includes a Memorandum of Understanding on Foreign Office consultations.

The other agreements are of mutual legal assistance in criminal matters and judicial, commercial and civil matters. The two sides also signed a bilateral investment, promotion and protection agreement.

The Extradition Treaty was signed by Finance Minister Jawant Singh and Shaikh Ali bin Khalifa Al Khalifa, Bahrain’s Transportation Minister. Bahrain is the second Gulf country after UAE with which India has signed the Extradition Treaty.

The MoU on Foreign Office consultations which recognizes the importance of exchange of opinions at different levels on matters of bilateral relations and international issues of mutual interest was inked by External Affairs Minister Yashwant Sinha and Bahrain’s Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Shaikh Mohammad bin Mubarak Al Khalifa.

At the delegation-level talks, Vajpayee underlined the historical links between India and Bahrain and their cooperation in multilateral fora like the Non-Aligned Movement.

Vajpayee hoped that the visit of the Bahraini Prime Minister would mark a qualitative surge in bilateral relations, the External Affairs Ministry spokesman said.

Referring to the agreements signed on Tuesday, he said these would initiate regular exchanges between security and law enforcement agencies of the two countries and establish a framework for institutional and investment relationship.

The Prime Minister lauded the consistent policy of the Bahrain Government of ensuring that Indian expatriates work in an atmosphere that enables them to contribute fully to the economic success of that country.

He also welcomed the initiatives taken by the Gulf Cooperation Council to establish institutional relations with India, both in the political and economic fields.

India’s External Affairs Minister called on the Bahraini leader who will also have meetings with Vice-President Bhairon Singh Shekhawat — MNA/PTI

Who confirms new polio cases in Cameroon, Benin

GENEVA, 15 Jan—The World Health Organization (WHO), battling to eradicate polio worldwide by the end of the year, confirmed on Tuesday that the disease had resurfaced in Cameroon and Benin.

The WHO said a case had been identified in each of the West African states, and had spread elsewhere from neighbouring Nigeria.

Once one of the world’s most devastating and widespread diseases, polio is now endemic in only six countries — India, Pakistan, Nigeria, Afghanistan, Niger and Egypt — but stamping it out completely has proved difficult. Over 650 cases were reported in 2003, Nigeria topping the list with 300, followed by India with 214 and Pakistan with 96. But the total was sharply down on the 1,918 recorded in 2002.

Bam survivors face rising heat, irrigation damage

BAM (Iran), 15 Jan — Rapidly rising temperatures in southern Iran and damage to underground irrigation systems vital to the local economy are clouding the outlook for the survivors of last month’s devastating earthquake in Bam.

Mohammad Ali Karimi, Governor of the southern Kerman Province, told the European Union’s visiting foreign policy chief Javier Solana that the initial rescue phase was over but the impending onslaught of the desert spring and summer heat made permanent housing possible only six countries — India, Pakistan, Nigeria, Afghanistan, Niger and Egypt — but stamping it out completely has proved difficult. Over 650 cases were reported in 2003, Nigeria topping the list with 300, followed by India with 214 and Pakistan with 96. But the total was sharply down on the 1,918 recorded in 2002.

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Mohammad Ali Karimi, Governor of the southern Kerman Province, told the European Union’s visiting foreign policy chief Javier Solana that the initial rescue phase was over but the impending onslaught of the desert spring and summer heat made housing the top priority.

Karimi told Solana that he believed 42,000 of Bam’s 100,000 people had died in the quake measuring 6.8 on the Richter Scale, significantly higher than the official toll of around 30,000.

Fears were also raised that an ancient system of underground irrigation canals, or qanats, may be badly damaged, threatening the long-term future of the desert oasis, whose economy depends on horticulture, especially dates.

Aid workers from around the world working at Bam echoed Karimi’s concerns about the region had been damaged.

The full extent of the damage was not yet clear, but one visiting diplomat said there were fears the local qanats may have been shattered. "If they’re not repaired, you’ll be facing a desert," he said.

Despite the devastation and piles of rubble everywhere, Bam had a sense of calm and order on Tuesday, as children played and queues formed patiently at mobile hospitals.

"We’re treating about 550 patients a day, mostly for the normal things you’d expect in a community of this size," said Ingrid Tjoflaat, a Norwegian nurse at a tent hospital.

Knife-wielding 90-year-old sends NZ intruder packing

WELLINGTON, 15 Jan — A 90-year-old New Zealand man grabbed a carving knife from his kitchen and chased away a masked intruder who had threatened his wife with a butter knife.

The intruder waved the flimsy weapon at David Saulbrey’s wife when she tried to ring the police to report Tuesday’s break-in at their home in Lower Hutt, near Wellington, the Dominion Post newspaper reported.

Saulbrey, who failed to hear the hapless intruder’s demand for money because he was not wearing his hearing aid, then beat the burglar in a search for a more threatening weapon.

"Once I got the carving knife I said: ‘Now you bastard, you’re for it.’ With that he threw his knife at me and took out the door," Saulbrey told the newspaper.

"I was that bloody wild.

I would have struck (the knife) in his Adam’s apple,” he said.

New Zealand police said they did not recommend confronting an armed intruder but praised Saulbrey’s bravery.

"He’s a tough old bugger. You wouldn’t think he was 90, that’s for sure," Detective Scott Cooper was quoted as saying — MNA/Reuters

The New Light of Myanmar, Friday, 16 January, 2004

White smoke rises about 800 metres (2,600 feet) in the air from a crater of Mount Aso in Kumamoto Prefecture (state), southern Japan, on 14 Jan, 2004. The Fukuoka Meteorological Observatory issued public warning on Wednesday of volcanic activity. The 1,592-metre (5,223-foot) volcano is one of Japan’s five most active volcanoes — INTERFAX

Eastman Kodak Co on 13 Jan, 2004 said it will stop selling traditional film cameras in the US, Canada and Western Europe, another move by the photography company to cut lines with declining appeal in favour of faster-growing digital products. With sales of digital cameras outselling those of film cameras for the first time this year, Kodak is redefining itself in an effort to keep pace. But the No 1 maker of photographic film will continue to sell one-time use cameras in the West and expand its sales of these and other film-based cameras — and film — in emerging markets where demand is on the rise. Kodak Advantix cameras are seen in this February 1996 file photo. — REUTERS
Inter scrape draw in Italian Cup quarter-finals

Rome, 15 Jan—A second-string Inter Milan side scraped a 0-0 draw against Udinese in the first leg of their Italian Cup quarter-final on Tuesday.

With several first-team regulars resting, including Christian Vieri and Fabio Cannavaro, the most impressive visiting player at Udinese's Friuli stadium turned out to be reserve keeper Alberto Fontana, who kept his side in the contest with a string of fine saves.

Udinese midfielders Valentim Albertino and Martin Jorgensen and playmaker David Pizarro blocked the Fontana in a one-sided first half.

Inter's only chance before the break arrived in the 25th minute, when Obafemi Martins blasted the ball against the side netting.

There was no respite for the visitors after the interval either, though they tightened up their defence enough to ensure they carried the deadlock into the second leg on January 21.

In Wednesday's quarter-final features reigning Cup champions AC Milan repeat last season's final when they face AS Roma and Parma play Lazio, while Perugia take on Juventus on Thursday.

Ecuador beats Peru 4-2 in Olympic qualifier

SANTIAGO, 15 Jan—Johnny Baldeon scored twice in the first half to help Ecuador beat Peru 4-2 in a South American Olympic qualifying match in Coquimbo, Chile, on Monday.

Colombia beat Bolivia 2-0 in another Group B game. Baldeon opened the scoring in the 9th minute in a counter-attacking on a pass from Fernando Saritama.

He made it 2-0 seven minutes later, dribbling past three defenders to score with a low shot.

Alberto Rodriguez scored again for Peru one minute into the second half. But Franklin Salas scored on a penalty kick in the 59th minute and Roberto Mina scored in the 47th minute to give Ecuador its second victory in the tournament.

England keeper James to join Man City

LONDON, 15 Jan—England goalkeeper David James is set to join Premier League rivals Manchester City from first division West Ham United for an undisclosed fee, replacing the retiring David Seaman.

The 33-year-old James, who has yet to agree personal terms, is likely to make his debut against Blackburn Rovers at the City of Manchester stadium on Saturday providing he passes a medical on Wednesday. City said on their website on Tuesday. James has won 20 caps for England, where he has succeeded Seaman as Sven Goran Eriksson's number one keeper.

"David James is a tremendous acquisition," City manager Kevin Keegan said.

"We have been looking to strengthen the goalkeeper position and to secure the England number one is terrific news." James joined West Ham, relegated from the Premier League last season, in 2001 following a two-year spell at Aston Villa and seven years at Liverpool.

Real fine Ronaldo for flying visit to London

MADRID, 15 Jan—Brazilian striker Ronaldo has been fined by Real Madrid for making an unauthorized trip to London, the club's sporting director Jorge Valdano said on Tuesday.

"Ronaldo made the trip without the permission of the club and the appropriate sanction was applied," Valdano told Telemadrid Radio.

The player said last week that he did not think he should be punished for the visit, explaining that he had gone to London to fulfil publicity obligations with the sportswear firm Nike and had used training on his return because of difficulties with his flight. "I don't think I will be fined because I have done nothing wrong," he said at the time.

"The plane couldn't land at the airport on time because of fog and that's why I arrived late for training. I'm fully aware of my obligations and want to fulfil all of them," Valdano said that reports that the club had intervened to prevent him attending Chelsea's match against Liverpool on Wednesday were not true.

"It is not correct that we rang him to stop him going to see Chelsea because we didn't even know he was in England at that time," Valdano said.

"Ronaldo made the trip without the permission of the club and the appropriate sanction was applied," Valdano told Telemadrid Radio.

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THE NEW LIGHT OF MYANMAR Friday, 16 January, 2004

WEATHER

Summary of observations recorded at 09:00 hours MST: During the past 24 hours, rain or thundershowers have been isolated in Kachin State and upper Sagoing Division and weather have been partly cloudy in the remaining areas. Night temperatures were (3°C) above normal in upper Sagoing Division (5°C) above normal in Kachin State and about normal in the remaining areas. Significant night temperature was Lashio (0°C). Maximum temperature on 14-1-2004 was 34.0°C (93°F). Minimum temperature on 15-1-2004 was 15.5°C (60°F). Relative humidity at 9:00 hours on 15-1-2004 was 74%. Total rainfall on 15-1-2004 was nil at Yangon Airport, Kaba-Aye and central Yangon. Total rainfall since 1-1-2004 was 8 mm at Yangon Airport, Kaba-Aye and central Yangon. Maximum wind speed at Yangon (Kaba-Aye) was 8 mph from Northerly at (14:30) hours MST on 14-1-2004.

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

Forecast valid until evening of 16-1-2004: Likelihood of scattered rain or thundershowers over Kachin State and upper Sagoing Division, weather will be partly cloudy in the remaining areas. Degree of certainty (65%).

State of the sea: Seas will be moderate in Myanmar waters. Outlook for subsequent two days: Isolated light showers over some areas are likely in Northern Myanmar areas.


For more information, please contact The New Light of Myanmar Press, No 22/30 Strand Road at 43rd Street, Yangon. Cable: Newspaper. PO Box 43, Telegraphs: 296115, Manager 296864, Circulation 297093, Advertisement 298643, Accounts 296545, Administration 296161, Production 297032 (Office) / 297028 (Press).
World-class commercial-scale gas deposit found at A-1 block offshore Rakhine coast

The deposit can hold gas from 4.2 trillion to 5.8 trillion cubic feet. According to calculations, A-1 block may yield up to 14 trillion cubic feet of gas.

As host nation, it will enjoy proportionate benefits, considerable amount of profit from shares.

YANGON, 15 Jan — The Myanma Oil and Gas Enterprise reached an agreement with the Daewoo International Corporation of the Republic of Korea to explore and exploit oil and gas at A-1 block offshore Rakhine coast on 4 August 2000 under production sharing contract. Seismic survey was conducted up to 3,552.75 line kilometres in the area in 2001. Follow-up measures were then taken. The offshore drilling machine Energy Searcher started drilling at Shwe-1 test well in the block on 21 November 2003 and struck the gas deposit on 26 December 2003 at the G-5 sand layer 10,588 feet below the seabed.

According to the geological condition, the deposit may yield from 4.2 trillion to 5.8 trillion cubic feet of gas. Serving as the operator, the Daewoo International Corporation has a 60 per cent stake in the business, while Korea Gas Corporation, another ROK enterprise is holding 10 per cent of the share; ONGC Videsh Ltd of the Republic of India, 20 per cent; and GAIL (India) Ltd, 10 per cent.

It is a world-class commercial-scale gas deposit, with a promising geological condition to yield platinum and silver. According to the calculations, the whole A-1 block may yield up to 14 trillion cubic feet of gas. As the host, Myanmar will have the right to enjoy the proportionate share of the benefits. The country is going to have shares of the business, and she will gain considerable profit from the gas deposit.

MNA