Senior General Than Shwe tours Kawthoung, Khamaukgyi in Taninthayi Division

YANGON, 29 Feb—Chairman of the State Peace and Development Council, Commander-in-Chief of Defence Services Senior General Than Shwe, accompanied by members of the State Peace and Development Council General Thura Shwe Mann, Lt-Gen Maung Bo, Lt-Gen Thiha Thura Tin Aung Myint Oo, Lt-Gen Kyaw Win and Lt-Gen Tin Aye, Commander-in-Chief (Navy) Rear-Admiral Soe Thein, Commander-in-Chief (Air) Maj-Gen Myat Hein, the ministers, the deputy ministers, senior military officials, officials of the State Peace and Development Council Office and departmental heads, left here by Myanma Airways on 25 February morning and arrived in Kawthoung, Taninthayi Division, at 10 am. The Senior General and party were welcomed at Kawthoung Airport by Chairman of Taninthayi Division Peace and Development Council Commander of Coastal Region Command Brig-Gen Ohn Myint, Brig-Gen Khin Zaw Win of Khamaukgyi Station, Col Myint Tun of Kawthoung Station, military officers, division, district and township level departmental officials.

Next, the Senior General and party went to Pyidawaye Sasana Beikman in Kawthoung where they paid homage to Sayadaws of monasteries in Kawthoung and donated provisions to the Sayadaws. Chairman of Township Sangha Nayaka Committee (Thudhamma) Aungchaung of Monastery Sayadaw Bhaladanta Pahhasami delivered a sermon and the Senior General and party shared merits gained. Next, the Senior General asked after health of the Sayadaws and supplied on religious affairs. Then, the Senior General cordially conversed with members of religious associations and local people. At 11.30 am, the Senior General and party met with divisional departmental officials, district and township authorities, members of the Union Solidarity and Development Association, social organizations, town-selders and entrepreneurs at Myinzuthaka Hall in Kawthoung.

(See page 16)
PERSPECTIVES
Monday, 1 March, 2004

Uplift of health and fitness of the entire nation

At present, endeavours are being made through self-reliant basis and relying on the strength that lies within, to build a modern and developed nation for the progress and prosperity of the people and the nation to stand shoulder to shoulder with other nations.

The Government has been laying down and implementing the national health projects to raise the health standard of the entire nation. It has been extending the primary health care services to reach all the remote areas including the border regions and to narrow the health gap between the rural and the urban areas.

Thus, the nurses, midwives and health assistants working at the places from major cities to rural areas play a key role in the Government’s endeavours to extend health care services till covering the entire nation. As the State has acknowledged nurses, midwives and health assistants as the most basic forces of the health sector, it has been making arrangements for producing more nurses, midwives and health assistants, enhancing their skills, enabling them to pursue further studies and assigning them heavier responsibilities.

The 49th Nursing Conference of the Myanmar Nurses Association was opened on 24 February at the Institute of Nursing, with an opening address by Chairman of the National Health Committee Prime Minister General Khin Nyunt.

In his address, the Prime Minister said that with the concept that the government has assigned noble and extensive duties of health sector, it has been making arrangements for producing more nurses, midwives and health assistants, enhancing their skills, enabling them to pursue further studies and assigning them heavier responsibilities.

In the past there were seven nurses training schools and 15 midwifery training schools. Now there are three nursing institutes — Defence Services Institute of Nursing, Yangon Institute of Nursing and Mandalay Institute of Nursing — 23 nurses training schools and 20 midwifery training schools.

Nowadays, over 15,400 nurses and 14,000 midwives are discharging duties in providing health care services in the nation. They have been participating in significant activities which achieved success in Myanmar medical history. Moreover, they are actively taking part in mass movements to render health care services.

At such a time, all the nurses, midwives and health assistants are urged to participate most extensively in endeavours for raising the health standard of the entire national people.

59th Anniversary Armed Forces Day 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 militia strategy
— To implement border area development tasks and the five rural development tasks hand in hand with the entire people
— To build up a strong and efficient Tatmadaw to uphold “Our Three Main National Causes”

Nursery Market Festival continues

YANGON, 29 Feb — The Nursery Market Festival continued at Myay-napada Park in Bahan Township here today with the aim of providing necessary assistance to growers and attracting the public to take interest in agriculture, horticulture, livestock breeding and vegetable farming. Kitchen crops, fruits and saplings of herbal plants are being shown there.

Tatmadaw and departmental cars checked on Dry Day

YANGON, 29 Feb — Dry Day Supervisory Committee members Deputy Minister for Home Affairs Brig-Gen Phone Swe, Deputy Minister for Energy Brig-Gen Than Hlay, Vice-Quartemaster-General Maj-Gen Htin Aung Kyaw, Director-General of Myanmar Police Force Brig-Gen Khin Yi, Police Quartermaster-General Police Brig-Gen Win Soe, Director-General of Irrigation Department U Kyaw San Win, Director-General of the Ministry of Industry-2 U Khin Maung, Director-General of the Central Equipment Statistics and Inspection Department Lt-Col Tin Maung Tun, and officials in two groups today supervised the inspection teams which checked the Tatmadaw and departmental cars at the main points in Yangon City.

Delegation leaves for Vietnam

YANGON, 29 Feb — A 5-member delegation headed by UMFCI Vice-President Greater Mekong Sub-region Business Forum President U Win Aung left here by air this morning to attend the First Greater Mekong Sub-region Trade Fair from 4 to 7 March 2004 in Hanoi, Vietnam.

The delegation was seen off at Yangon International Airport by UMFCI President U Win Myint and officials.

People’s Desire

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

UMFCI General Secretary meets guests

YANGON, 29 Feb — Charge d’Affaires ai of Pakistan Embassy Mr Habib Ur-Rehman called on U Sein Win Hlaing at the UMFCI head office on 26 February afternoon. They discussed matters on bilateral trade promotion. U Sein Win Hlaing also met with a 6-member delegation headed by Vice-Chairman of CCPIT Sichuan Council Mr Zhang Jinchuan of China the same afternoon.
Britain and US shared transcripts after bugging Blix’s mobile phone

WASHINGTON, 29 Feb—The controversy over alleged British and American “dirty tricks” at the United Nations deepened yesterday with claims that two chiefs of Iraq arms inspection missions had been victims of spying. Hans Blix and Richard Butler were said to have been bugged by the United States in the run-up to war. He said bugging was to be expected between enemies, but “here it is between people who cooperate and it is an unpleasant feeling.”

The new charges came within 24 hours of the former cabinet minister Clare Short stating Britain it clear that the British government had bugged Mr Annan and that he had read transcripts of his conversations while she was a member of the government.—INTERNET

Anti-war movement to sue Bush, Blair over Iraq

BAGHDAD, 29 Feb—A coalition of groups opposed to the US-led invasion of Iraq says it intends to take legal action for “mass murder” against British Prime Minister Tony Blair and US President George Bush before the International Criminal Court (ICC) in The Hague.

“This has happened is the mass murder of 20,000 or so Iraqis,” Chris Coverdale said, a spokesman for the Stop the War coalition, told Sky News.

“We have to ensure that Bush and Blair and all the others associated with that decision to attack and kill Iraqis are held accountable for it.”

Some 600 supporters of the coalition, which was formed in September 2001, met in London to prepare for a mass demonstration in the capital on 20 March, the anniversary of the invasion of oil-rich Iraq.

The anti-war movement brought together more than a million people to demonstrate against the war in London a year ago and up to 200,000 brave mass security to protest at a visit by Bush to London in November 2003.

Mr Coverdale said the coalition had asked police, the prosecution service and the nation’s top legal officer, Attorney-General Lord Goldsmith, to investigate the accusations.

He said that under the statute establishing the ICC, if such requests at the national level were refused, the move was then “entitled to approach the prosecutor in The Hague to ensure and ask him to initiate an investigation and a criminal prosecution of the offenders.”

The coalition’s decision coincided with mounting pressure on Mr Blair to explain the basis on which he went to war.

“The war with Iraq was illegal but, furthermore, crimes were committed,” Mr Coverdale said. “Therefore you want to ensure that people who have committed the crimes answer for them in court.”

He said Stop the War was laying its position on articles in the United Nations charter forbidding war.

CPC leader on implementation of inner-party supervision regulations

BEIJING, 29 Feb—Wu Guangzheng, top leader of the watchdog of the Communist Party of China (CPC), called on the party to study and implement its first ever inner-party supervision regulations made public earlier this month.

Wu, secretary of the CPC Central Commission for Discipline Inspection, said Friday that the party will continue to expand inner-party democracy as an important basis for improved inner-party supervision.

Addressing members of the commission gathering to study the regulation, Wu said the regulations underscored the important role of institutional building for inner-party supervision and made it clear that the supervision of major leading officials and organizations of the party is a top priority.

Wu also a member of the Political Bureau of the CPC Central Committee, said the regulations stress the need for its members to abide by both the party’s disciplines and the law.

No organizations or individuals will be allowed to enjoy privileges above the Constitution and the law, said Wu. He promised the party will constantly improve the regulations.

The party made public the regulations on February 17 in an apparent bid to improve inner-party democracy and as part of its efforts to fight corruption.

El 10,000-word Regulations of Internal Supervision of the Communist party of China (CPC) put all the party’s 60 million members, including its leader and top decision-making body, under public supervision, said Professor Chen Dengcai of the Beijing-based Party School of the CPC Central Committee.—MNA/Xinhua

Roadside bomb damages British Army vehicle in Iraq

LONDON, 28 Feb—A roadside bomb damaged a British army vehicle on patrol in Iraq today, but no one was injured, a UK military spokesman said.

The vehicle was on a routine patrol on the outskirts of southern Basra when the bomb went off in the afternoon.

Major Hisham Halawi said.

There are some 8,000 British troops stationed in Iraq following the conflict which ousted Saddam Hussein. Basra and other southern towns have seen killings and attacks.—INTERNET

China appoints chief commander, architect of lunar probe project

BEIJING, 29 Feb—Luan Enjie, director of the China National Space Administration (CNSA), has been appointed chief commander of China’s project to launch a lunar probe satellite, sources with the administration said here.

Sun Jiadong, a leading space expert, has been appointed chief architect of the lunar probe project, and Qian Yangzi, a member of the Chinese Academy of Sciences, has been named chief scientist.

With funding of 1.4 billion yuan (about 170 million US dollars), China’s lunar probe project involves launching of a satellite to orbit the moon by 2007, said senior officials with the administration.

Sun Laiyan, deputy director of the administration, said the satellite would obtain three-dimensional images of the lunar surface, analyse the content of useful elements and materials, and prove the depth of the lunar soil and the space environment between the Earth and the moon.

The satellite project is part of the country’s ambitious three-stage exploration programme, which would be followed by the landing of an unmanned vehicle on the moon in the second stage by 2010, and collecting samples of lunar soil with an unmanned vehicle by 2020.

Sun described the satellite project as an important step toward China’s exploration of deeper space, and the moon would provide a good platform from which to explore new areas.

A group of space officials and leading scientists in charge of the project gathered earlier this week for the first meeting on the project.

The programme is named the Chang’s Programme, referring to a goddess who flew to the moon in an ancient Chinese fairy tale.

MNA/Xinhua

Actress Keisha Castle-Hughes (L) and director Nick Caro of New Zealand pose backstage with their Best Foreign Film award for their film ‘Whale Rider’ at the 56th San Francisco Film Festival Awards Show.

—INTERNET
Ex-minister says British army feared Iraq war would be illegal

LONDON, 29 Feb — British army chiefs refused to go to war in Iraq until they were reassured over its legality by the nation’s top law official, said former cabinet minister Clare Short.

In response, Britain’s Attorney General Lord Peter Goldsmith hastily redrafted his official advice to the government just days before war was launched last March, to assure the armed forces the conflict would not be illegal, the Observer newspaper reported.

Short, who earlier this week controversially claimed that London spied on UN Secretary General Kofi Annan during the tense weeks leading to the invasion of Iraq, told the Observer: “It was told at the highest level...that the military were saying they wouldn’t go (to war), whatever the PM said without the attorney general’s advice.”

“The question is was the AG (attorney general) keen?”

Short, Britain’s former international development secretary, quit in May in protest over the Iraq invasion. Earlier this week, she sparked controversy by alleging that transcripts of Annan’s bugged telephone calls were circulated to senior British ministers.

Her claims came after British prosecutors dropped charges against an intelligence translator, Katherine Gun, who leaked a memo revealing apparent US and British plans to spy on members of the UN Security Council in the run-up to the conflict.

While Blair attacked Short’s revelation as “deeply irresponsible”, the opposition condemned that the prime minister say whether she was telling the truth or not.

Blair also came under pressure to reveal the legal reasoning for joining the invasion of Iraq alongside the United States.

The government refused, other than to say that it had advice of the attorney general that the war was legitimate under international law.

Three Iraqis killed in northern Iraq violence

MOSSUL, 29 Feb — An Iraqi policeman was shot dead and two Iraqis killed overnight in fresh violence in the north of the country, local police and US military sources said.

A US patrol in Mosul “responded to a drive-by shooting directed at an Iraqi police traffic control point by four assailants in a car and a motorcycle,” an army statement said.

“Working with the Iraqi police, the patrol engaged the car, killing two of the assailants,” it said, adding that two suspects were detained.

But Lieutenant Colonel Abdelajal Hazem Hattabi from the provincial police said the US army shot dead civilians who happened to be in a vehicle at the scene of the attack.

“Three on a motorcycle were preparing to attack the checkpoint with rocket-propelled grenades and automatic weapons. US forces opened fire and hit a car that was happening to be there,” he told AFP.

In other operations in Mosul, the military said it detained four suspects, three after it found a homemade bomb in a search operation and one other suspected of “anti-coalition activities.”

In Sulaimaniya in the north, a car opened fire on a police roadblock this morning at 8:30 (0530 GMT) at the eastern entry to the city and police officer Ali Hamada was killed,” said police chief Turhan Yousif.

“We will pursue them and open an investigation,” he said, without providing further details about the suspects.

Ancient Chinese cuisine is the subject of HK exhibition

HONG KONG, 29 Feb — Over 100 priceless Chinese culinary artifacts will be on display Saturday until 26 May at the Hong Kong Heritage Museum.

The items, including tableware, cooking utensils, drinking sets, rocks and brick engravings dating from the Neolithic Period (8000-2000 BC) to the Qing Dynasty (1644-1911 AD), are on loan from the National Museum of China.

“Fine Dining — An Exhibition of Ancient Chinese Culinary Ware” traces the changes the Chinese food culture has undergone over the centuries. Speaking at a ceremony for Saturday’s opening of the exhibition, Hong Kong Deputy Director (Culture) of Leisure and Cultural Services, Choi Suk-kuen, said that Chinese food culture was characterized by the great variety of cooking methods and diversified cuisine across regions.

“Food becomes so much more appetizing if complemented by appropriate culture ware,” Choi said.

Chinese food culture can be traced back to the late-middle Paleolithic Period, which was about 600,000 to 10,000 years ago. Initially, the Chinese were hunters and gatherers and they had virtually no cooking skills. But they gradually abandoned the habit of eating raw flesh as they mastered the use of fire and cooking with water.

The Chinese had individual servings and sat on the ground for meals during the Neolithic Period, which was about 10,000 to 4,000 years ago. The period also saw the birth of agriculture and animal husbandry, and subsequently the development of pottery with the increasing need for containers of various kinds.

The exhibition, with a wealth of treasures on display, reflects the richness and diversity of Chinese food culture and will enhance visitors’ understanding of ancient Chinese cuisine.

Highlights include a pottery cauldron and stove made in the Neolithic Period, one of the earliest; complete cooking sets; caldrons and dongs and snacks — the earliest of their kind — excavated from a Tang Dynasty (AD 618-907) tomb in Xingjian; a boat-shaped model of a pottery stove, which is believed to have been used for funerary purposes during the Han Dynasty (206 BC-AD 220); and a number of other pieces of cultural relics.

Italian Fiat group cuts losses in 2003

ROZZO, 29 Feb — The Italian Fiat group cut losses last year by 252 million euros, that declined from 762 to 510 million euros, a statement from the Turin automaker’s board of directors said on Friday.

This allowed net indebtedness to decline from 3.8 billion euros to about three billion euros at the end of 2003.

Fiat Auto’s operating losses dropped sharply from 1,343 billion euros in 2002 to 979 million euros last year despite turnover falling by 9.6 per cent to 20.1 billion euros. This was the result of car sales sinking 8.8 per cent, with a total of 1.7 million vehicles sold.

— MNA/Xinhua

Three Iraqis killed in northern Iraq violence

MOSSUL, 29 Feb — An Iraqi policeman was shot dead and two Iraqis killed overnight in fresh violence in the north of the country, local police and US military sources said.

A US patrol in Mosul “responded to a drive-by shooting directed at an Iraqi police traffic control point by four assailants in a car and a motorcycle,” an army statement said.

“Working with the Iraqi police, the patrol engaged the car, killing two of the assailants,” it said, adding that two suspects were detained.

But Lieutenant Colonel Abdelajal Hazem Hattabi from the provincial police said the US army shot dead civilians who happened to be in a vehicle at the scene of the attack.

“Three on a motorcycle were preparing to attack the checkpoint with rocket-propelled grenades and automatic weapons. US forces opened fire and hit a car that was happening to be there,” he told AFP.

In other operations in Mosul, the military said it detained four suspects, three after it found a homemade bomb in a search operation and one other suspected of “anti-coalition activities.”

In Sulaimaniya in the north, a car opened fire on a police roadblock this morning at 8:30 (0530 GMT) at the eastern entry to the city and police officer Ali Hamada was killed,” said police chief Turhan Yousif.

“We will pursue them and open an investigation,” he said, without providing further details about the suspects.

Ancient Chinese cuisine is the subject of HK exhibition

HONG KONG, 29 Feb — Over 100 priceless Chinese culinary artifacts will be on display Saturday until 26 May at the Hong Kong Heritage Museum.

The items, including tableware, cooking utensils, drinking sets, rocks and brick engravings dating from the Neolithic Period (8000-2000 BC) to the Qing Dynasty (1644-1911 AD), are on loan from the National Museum of China.

“Fine Dining — An Exhibition of Ancient Chinese Culinary Ware” traces the changes the Chinese food culture has undergone over the centuries. Speaking at a ceremony for Saturday’s opening of the exhibition, Hong Kong Deputy Director (Culture) of Leisure and Cultural Services, Choi Suk-kuen, said that Chinese food culture was characterized by the great variety of cooking methods and diversified cuisine across regions.

“Food becomes so much more appetizing if complemented by appropriate culture ware,” Choi said.

Chinese food culture can be traced back to the late-middle Paleolithic Period, which was about 600,000 to 10,000 years ago. Initially, the Chinese were hunters and gatherers and they had virtually no cooking skills. But they gradually abandoned the habit of eating raw flesh as they mastered the use of fire and cooking with water.

The Chinese had individual servings and sat on the ground for meals during the Neolithic Period, which was about 10,000 to 4,000 years ago. The period also saw the birth of agriculture and animal husbandry, and subsequently the development of pottery with the increasing need for containers of various kinds.

The exhibition, with a wealth of treasures on display, reflects the richness and diversity of Chinese food culture and will enhance visitors’ understanding of ancient Chinese cuisine.

Highlights include a pottery cauldron and stove made in the Neolithic Period, one of the earliest; complete cooking sets; caldrons and dongs and snacks — the earliest of their kind — excavated from a Tang Dynasty (AD 618-907) tomb in Xingjian; a boat-shaped model of a pottery stove, which is believed to have been used for funerary purposes during the Han Dynasty (206 BC-AD 220); and a number of other pieces of cultural relics.

Indonesian Govt prepares team to combat dengue fever

JAKARTA, 29 Feb — The Indonesian Government plans to dispatch over 70,000 field workers to 10,000 villages nationwide to help eradicate dengue fever and increase people’s awareness of sanitation, said an official.

The secretary of the directorate-general of communicable diseases at the Ministry of Health, Syaiffi Ahmad, was quoted Saturday by the Jakarta Post as saying that the ministry proposed the initiative last year but lacked the necessary funding to carry it out.

“Currently, the ministry is waiting for state funds to enable this programme to work,” Syaiffi said.

The programme would cost about 119 million US dollars and would deal with other communicable diseases along with dengue fever, he said. It would involve about 70,000 graduates from nursing academies, who would help locals eradicate communicable diseases and provide education and treatment.

A similar programme was launched by the government in the 1990s to contain malaria. A team called the Malaria Extermination Command was formed in 1999 and managed to curb malaria cases in Indonesia to 0.16 per 1,000 people by 1999, far below the epidemic ratio of 1 per 1,000 people.

Syaiffi said it would be difficult to eliminate dengue fever completely because no vaccines has been developed to provide immunity against the virus. “Without vaccines, we can only kill the carrier — a mosquito — and clean up the environment,” he said. — MNA/Xinhua

Three Iraqis killed in northern Iraq violence

MOSSUL, 29 Feb — An Iraqi policeman was shot dead and two Iraqis killed overnight in fresh violence in the north of the country, local police and US military sources said.

A US patrol in Mosul “responded to a drive-by shooting directed at an Iraqi police traffic control point by four assailants in a car and a motorcycle,” an army statement said.

“Working with the Iraqi police, the patrol engaged the car, killing two of the assailants,” it said, adding that two suspects were detained.

But Lieutenant Colonel Abdelajal Hazem Hattabi from the provincial police said the US army shot dead civilians who happened to be in a vehicle at the scene of the attack.

“Three on a motorcycle were preparing to attack the checkpoint with rocket-propelled grenades and automatic weapons. US forces opened fire and hit a car that was happening to be there,” he told AFP.

In other operations in Mosul, the military said it detained four suspects, three after it found a homemade bomb in a search operation and one other suspected of “anti-coalition activities.”

In Sulaimaniya in the north, a car opened fire on a police roadblock this morning at 8:30 (0530 GMT) at the eastern entry to the city and police officer Ali Hamada was killed,” said police chief Turhan Yousif.

“We will pursue them and open an investigation,” he said, without providing further details about the suspects.
IRAQ UNDER US OCCUPATION


Turkmen protesters, who chained themselves to the barricade outside the Iraqi Governing Council office in Baghdad, react as a US soldier in civilian clothes tries to remove it during their protest on Saturday 28 Feb, 2004.

A US soldier sits on an armoured vehicle in front of a graffiti calling for peace while patrolling Baghdad’s Yarmuk neighbourhood.

Iraqis shouts during a rally in front of the Coalition Provisional Authority building in the port town of Basra, some 550 km (330 miles) south of the Iraqi capital Baghdad, on 24 Feb, 2004.

Several hundred Iraqis staged a demonstration to demand jobs and protest against foreign contractors, such as US oil giant Halliburton.

An Iraqi fireman trains his hose at the burning oil pipeline in Samarra, 100 kilometres (62 miles) north of Baghdad, Iraq, following an explosion on 28 Feb, 2004, the second time an oil facility near Samarra was damaged. Since the US ouster of Saddam Hussein, attackers have fired mortars, sprayed bullets and planted explosives that have damaged pipelines and other oil facilities in Iraq.

Turkmen protesters, who chained themselves to the barricade outside the Iraqi Governing Council office in Baghdad, react as a US soldier in civilian clothes tries to remove it during their protest on Saturday 28 Feb, 2004.

US soldiers and Iraqi police comb the Mosul commercial area, 400 kilometres late on Friday 27 Feb, 2004. Insurgents have been stepping up their attacks around the country lately and are now targeting Iraqis mostly working for the US coalition forces.
Iraqi lawmakers split as Constitution deadline looms

BAGHDAD, 29 Feb — Iraq’s Governing Council was deeply divided on Saturday just hours before a deadline to approve an interim Constitution — a crucial step in the run-up to the planned US transfer of sovereignty to Iraqis on June 30.

The interim Constitution should be agreed by the end of Saturday according to a US timetable, but Council members were still wrangling over Islam’s role in social issues and a government that is supposed to take power from July 1.

Other Council members have warned the talks could drag on beyond the deadline. Mahmoud Othman, a Sunni Kurdish independent on the Council, said many issues remained to be resolved and debate was heated. He said he feared running over the deadline if that meant a deal could be reached, rather than the Council announcing an agreement in principle by the deadline and leaving some issues for later, as some other Council members had suggested.

“This is a law, it is not a political communique,” he told Reuters. “The law should be announced only when all issues are settled, when the document is complete and written in a way that there aren’t any mistakes.”

He said the Council may decide to give a progress report later on Saturday, but gave no indication of when negotiations might be concluded. “If we have to work through the night to reach an agreement, then we are ready to do that,” he said.

Council members said some participants left the negotiating table on Friday after the cancellation of a previous Governing Council decree letting religious law take precedence in divorce, inheritance and other “personal status” issues.

Any lengthy delay in agreeing an interim Constitution would deal yet another blow to US plans to hand over sovereignty to Iraqis, who Washington and the United Nations say cannot hold a proper election before the mid-year handover.

Washington, which wants to avoid delaying the formal end of its occupation of Iraq as the 2004 US presidential election nears, has said it is willing to negotiate on the details of the handover of power but not on the date.

UN/Reuters

Tug-of-war for control of Net set for Rome Summit

LOMOMO, 29 Feb — A debate over whether to allow free-market or government interests to set future Internet policy will be reignited next week at a meeting of technology officials in Rome.

For the past nine months, a movement has been growing from within the United Nations to tackle some of the less desirable aspects of the Internet: torrents of spam e-mail, cybercrime and a “digital divide,” where much of the developing world has little access to modern Internet and telecommunications innovations.

The UN in December appointed the International Telecommunication Union (ITU) to forge a plan for surmounting these issues, pledging to include the opinions of policy-makers from the developing world who have argued their concerns are too often overlooked under the current regime.

But by taking up the cause, the ITU could muscle out the only governance body the medium has ever engaged in dialogue about how to work together to push the Internet into the next era. But the differences between the two groups is stark.

ICANN, from its formation, has embraced a decidely business-friendly approach. It holds the open market, and not government, is the best way to foster Internet growth. At a December UN summit on the Internet, delegates from Africa, the Middle East and Eastern Europe rejected this stance, saying it is aggravating the digital divide.

For now, ICANN and the ITU are downplaying the growing rivalry, saying they are engaged in dialogue about how to work together to push the Internet into the next era. But the differences between the two groups is stark.

ICANN, from its formation, has embraced a deci-
dely business-friendly approach. It holds the open market, and not government, is the best way to fos-
ter Internet growth. At a December UN Summit on the Internet, delegates from Africa, the Middle East and Eastern Europe rejected this stance, saying it is aggravating the digital divide.

MNA/Xinhua
The new Myanmar and her pleasant environs

Yadanasi Saydaw (Loilem)

(Continued from yesterday)

ASEAN and BIMST-EC

The first letters of member nations—Bangladesh (B), India (I), Myanmar (M), Sri Lanka (S) and Thailand (T), are combined as BIMST. Geographically, Myanmar is situated between BIMST-EC countries and ASEAN nations. Myanmar lies at the focal point of transport and communications. In other words, Myanmar is in strategic position between South East Asian and South Asian nations. In fact, it is a blessing for Myanmar.

Blessed with such a favourable position, Myanmar needs to take the leading role among the regional democracies. So, Myanmar can become a leading nation in Asia.

The sixth Ministerial Meeting of BIMST-EC with the objective of cooperating in transport, trade and economy was held on 8 February 2004. Minister for Foreign Affairs of Myanmar U Win Aung attended the meeting. The association accepted Bhutan and Nepal as new members. Another two rivers are thus added to the five rivers and all flow into the sea. The beauty of the sea of BIMST-EC will appear soon and Myanmar will be able to play a more active role.

The Union of Myanmar is promoting constructive relations and cooperation with the nations of the world, neighbouring countries and those in the region for mutual benefits. It is heartening to see that, fruitful results have been achieved in the country.

However, some big nations are still putting pressure on Myanmar giving various excuses. Besides levelling accusations on democracy, human rights, narcotic drugs and forced labour, they are raising other issues such as child soldier to put pressure on Myanmar.

With concrete facts, Myanmar systematically reacted to those false accusations. It cooperated with the UN in order to know political and human rights situations in Myanmar and accepted Razali Ismail, the special envoy of UN Secretary-General and Professor Pen Heiro, who submitted a report on human rights situation in Myanmar. The government explained about true condition and its correct attitudes. Myanmar allowed them to study freely. Therefore accusations are just accusations. In other words they are unclear and the accusations are words of the foolish and are just lies.

Right. If one does not assume that politics of Myanmar is not the affairs of a single person nor affairs of a party organization and if one assumes that politics of Myanmar is the affair of the three-quarters of the whole which consists of over 100 national races, such false accusations will never surface. Whatever it is, let it be.

The Union of Myanmar can now significantly promote constructive relations with neighbours, regional and world nations based on mutual respect and mutual understanding. In this respect, it can be witnessed that Myanmar, on her part, maintains cordial relations with the world nations including those without clear outlook while dutifully abiding by rules and regulations. So, Myanmar can stand tall as an independent and sovereign nation among the world nations. Myanmar has declared her seven-point policy programme to the world.

The Tatmadaw Government has made concerted efforts day in, day out in building the nation to become a truly strong one. The Government, practicing forbearance, patience and loving-kindness with faultisghedness, has given top priority to prevalence of peace and stability that is necessary for a nation at any time of the day. Thus, now one can safely go anywhere one wants without worry in the nation at any time of the day. It has made endeavours with added momentum in all spheres, resulting in greater progress in education, health and transport sectors and so on and so forth.

It has also restored peace and stability to pave the way for superstructure or democracy. Now, the State’s seven-point road map has been adopted, which is the only way promising the good future of the nation. It is time the entire people actively took part in implementation of the seven-point policy programme.

The UN, the ASEAN and nations with positive views welcomed the State’s seven-point road map. The people of 14 States and Divisions in the nation have supported the seven-point policy programme with one voice by holding mass rallies. The representatives of national races from various parts of the nation unanimously supported the seven-point policy programme of the State at the mass rally held at the sports ground at the foot of the Shwezigon Pagoda in the Bagan Archaeological Zone. The national groups who had returned to the legal fold have heartily supported the policy programme in the presence of the Prime Minister. It is known to all that the Government is speeding up implementation of the first of the seven points after forming different committees.

Here, what is the most important point is that the Government will never accept any situation that will adversely affect the already-gained national solidarity and Union Spirit. In other words, the Government firmly believes that there is nothing equivalent to national solidarity and Union Spirit which cannot be replaced. It is because national solidarity and Union Spirit play the most crucial role in practising concentration on the politics of the Union of Myanmar.

In this regard, it can be compared to Vipassana meditation. A lay person has to cultivate concentration first before practising meditation. As is known to all the truth that no one should pay reverence to the Lord Buddha by the way of the time of the meditation process. If one persists in paying homage to the Lord Buddha for a long time during the period of meditation, one cannot attain insight as one’s activities encroach upon cultivation of concentration. Then, one is far away from Maggas and Phalas, and one cannot make great progress in practising concentration. It is due to the loss of concentration.

(To be continued)

(Translation: NY + MS)

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.

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

All this needs to be known

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

Defence Services Museum to be closed temporarily

YANGON, 29 Feb — The Defence Services Museum on Shwedagon Pagoda Road, here, will be temporarily closed for the public beginning 1 March to decorate the museum for holding the exhibition to mark the 59th Anniversary Armed Forces Day. The museum will reopen on 26 March 2004.— MNA
Every region to carry out tasks for rice…

(from page 16)

Next, the Senior General gave necessary guidance and cordially conversed with Tatmadawmen and family members. In the evening, the Senior General and party proceeded to Bayinnaung Hill in Kawthoung and viewed Bayinnaung Hill and King Bayinnaung Statue. Afterwards, they went to Pyidawaye Pagoda and paid obeisance to Htauamguyay Buddha Image. Next, the Senior General presented cash donations to the funds of the pagoda board of trustees. The Senior General cordially met with pilgrims. The Senior General cordially met with the Tatmadawmen and family members of regiments and units of Khamaukgyi Station. The Senior General gave guidance and cordially met with the Tatmadawmen and their families. Next, the Senior General and party arrived at the site for construction of Raw Palm Oil Mill of Yuzana Co Ltd and attended the ceremony to drive stake for building the raw palm oil mill which will produce 30 tons of raw palm oil an hour. General Thura Shwe Mann laid the cornerstone. After that, Senior General Shwe Mann planted a sapling near the stone inscription and sprinkled scented water on it. The Senior General performed the rituals of golden and silver showers to mark the success of the ceremony.

At the briefing hall of the company, the Senior General and party viewed nursery of oil palm, fertilizers, bunches of oil palm and the condition of the raw oil mill.

Next, they met with departmental officials and oil palm entrepreneurs. At the meeting, Chairman of Yuzana Co Ltd U Htay Myint reported that the company, on its part, has been growing over 40,000 acres of oil palm plantations under the Taninthayi Division Oil Palm Project. Efforts are being made for planting 100,000 acres of oil palm plantation in 2007. Next, he reported on machinery being used in the project, strength of staff and workers, production and construction for the raw oil mill and the oil mill.

In response to the reports, Senior General Than Shwe gave instructions, saying that the companies that are engaged in oil palm cultivation are to make strenuous efforts in cultivating oil palm at their set acres, adding that it is required to regularly grow oil palm year-wise to meet the targeted acres of 500,000.

Only when oil palm is grown fully and edible oil produced speedily will Taninthayi Division become an oil pot of the State. Systematic measures are to be taken in growing oil palm to be able to meet the target for self-sufficiency in edible oil in the nation by 2007-2008. The companies are also to grow paddy in the areas where oil palm cannot be grown to enable staff and workers to enjoy self-sufficiency in rice while striving for the successful cultivation of oil palm. Highland cultivation system is to be created to be able to grow paddy in the areas where there is no plain regions. There has been better transport in the regions where there are oil palm plantations with the emergence of transport infrastructures such as roads, waterways and airways, thereby contributing to delivery of goods.

The oil palm entrepreneurs are to respond to the goodwill of the State by successfully carrying out oil palm cultivation.

Next, Senior General Than Shwe met with personnel discharging duties in Khamaukgyi and called on them to strive together with local people for regional development.

After that, Senior General Than Shwe signed in the visitors’ book of Yuzana Co. Next, Senior General Than Shwe planted a sapling of oil palm near the briefing hall. Next, General Thura Shwe Mann and party also planted saplings of oil palm.

MNA

Jade Buddha Image consecrated

YANGON, 29 Feb — A consecration ceremony of the Jade Buddha Image was to be kept in Maha Pasana Cave on Thiri Mingala Kaba Aye Hillock where the fourth World Buddhist Summit to be held took place at the cave this morning. Present were member Sayadaws of the State Sangha Maha Nayaka Committee, Deputy Minister for Religious Affairs Brig-Gen Aung Ko, officials and wellwishers.—MNA
Commander attends meeting on all-round upgrading of environs of Yangon Kandawgyi Gardens and Zoological Gardens

YANGON, 29 Feb — A work coordination meeting of the work committee for all-round upgrading of the environs of Yangon Kandawgyi Gardens and Zoological Gardens was held at the briefing hall of the Water Plaza construction project in Central Forest Zone in Kandawgyi Gardens this morning, with an address by Yangon Division Peace and Development Council Chairman Lt- Col Myint Kyi, chairmen of departmental heads, Yangon Mayor Col Maung Pa, military region commissioner, deputy ministers, Vice-Mayor Col Maung Pa, and officials, wellwishers, teachers of the monastic education school and guests.

In his address, the commander said in the upgrading task of the Kandawgyi Gardens and its environs, it is divided into four zones such as Central Forest Zone, Education Zone, Relaxation Zone and Recreation Zone. Measures are to be taken to complete the upgrading task in time in accord with the set standard and detailed design, he said. In implementing the task, it is important to maintain natural beauty of the gardens. He stressed the need for departmental officials to actively cooperate in the successful implementation of the tasks.

Next, Vice-Mayor Col Maung Pa reported on the construction of bridges linking islands, construction of timber walk-way, timber, viewing deck and car parks in the Relaxation Zone; Deputy Minister for Agriculture and Irrigation U Ohn Myint on construction of agricultural zone, flower garden, shops and educative agricultural booth-9 and sanitation works in the Education Zone; Forest Department Director-General U Soe Win Hlaing on progress in construction of the Central Forest Zone, upgrading of Yangon Zoological Gardens; project manager of Zay Kabar Co U Myint Zaw on construction of the Recreation Zone; Deputy Director U Min Thein of the Ministry of Livestock and Fisheries on construction of fresh water fish garden; U Nyunt Pe of YCDC construction of restaurants; Associate Professor of Yangon Technological University U San Kyu on quality control to maintain the durability of the gardens; and Managing Director of Woodland Co U Win Aung on construction of conference hall. The deputy ministers and departmental officials also took part in the discussions, and the commander gave concluding remarks. After the meeting, the commander and party inspected construction progress of water plaza and foundation in the Central Forest Zone and tasks for landscaping and gave necessary instructions to officials. Later the commander and party looked into construction tasks in the Relaxation Zone, Education Zone and Recreation Zone, and gave necessary instructions to officials. — MNA

Prizes presented to students of Bagaya Monastic Education School

YANGON, 29 Feb — A respect-paying ceremony for teachers of Bagaya Shwezaung Sarthintaik Monastic Education School was held in conjunction with the prize-presentation ceremony for students, who matriculated in 2002-2003 Academic Year, at the Sarthintaik this morning.

It was attended by Chairman of Tipitaka Selection Ovdacariya Committee member of the Central Working Committee of the Sangha Abhidhajha Maha Rattha Guru Mawlamyine Sasana Manaung Wepyan Monastery Sayadaw Bhaddanta Vijaya and members of the Sangha, Yangon Division Peace and Development Council Chairman Yangon Command Commander Maj-Gen Myint Swe, No 3 Military Region Command Commander Col Tint Hsan, Yangon West District PDC Chairman Li-Co Kyaw Tint and officials, wellwishers, guests, teachers of the monastic education school and students.

Commander Maj-Gen Myint Swe and officials presented offertories to the Sayadaw and members of the Sangha, and presented prizes to the outstanding students of the school.

Next, on behalf of wellwishers in Sanyoung Township, officials donated K 1.5 million to the monastic education school to Commander Maj-Gen Myint Swe. — MNA

MWAF officials meet Bago Division OWA

YANGON, 29 Feb — Members of Myanmar Women’s Affairs Federation met members of Bago Division Organization for Women’s Affairs at combined hall in Youngoo on 24 February 2004. General Secretary of MWAF Professor Dr Daw Khin Aye Win explained about formation and objectives of the association, and efforts for development of women’s life. Secretary of MWAF Daw Khin Mar Tun and officials reported on duties and responsibilities of the federation. Wellwishers presented K 3 million for the federation to officials. — MNA

Donate blood

General Thura Shoe Mann plants an oil palm at the hall of Yuzana Co Ltd Oil Palm Project. — MNA

MWAF officials meet Bago Division OWA

YANGON, 29 Feb — Members of Myanmar Women’s Affairs Federation met members of Bago Division Organization for Women’s Affairs at combined hall in Youngoo on 24 February 2004. General Secretary of MWAF Professor Dr Daw Khin Aye Win explained about formation and objectives of the association, and efforts for development of women’s life. Secretary of MWAF Daw Khin Mar Tun and officials reported on duties and responsibilities of the federation. Wellwishers presented K 3 million for the federation to officials. — MNA

Donate blood
Yangon, 29 Feb.—Member of the State Peace and Development Council Lt-Gen Khin Maung Than of the Ministry of Defence, accompanied by Chairman of Ayeyawady Division Peace and Development Council Commander of South-West Command Maj-Gen Soe Naing and party, left Pathein for Ngapudaw Township by naval boat on 27 February morning.

At the hall of Ngapudaw Township General Administration Department, Lt-Gen Khin Maung Than met with departmental officials, social organizations and local people. He heard reports on matters related to Ngapudaw Township presented by district and township authorities. Then, the commander gave a supplementary report. Afterwards, Lt-Gen Khin Maung Than gave necessary instructions.

On arrival at Township Hospital, Lt-Gen Khin Maung Than and party were welcomed by Ayeyawady Division Health Department Head Dr Thant Aung and officials. Next, Lt-Gen Khin Maung Than and party cordially met with patients at the hospital and presented cash assistance to them. Then, they inspected the operation theatre, the lab and the X-ray room. Afterwards, they presented K 200,000 for a sucker of the hospital to Assistant Surgeon Dr Daw San Thida Aung.

Lt-Gen Khin Maung Than then paid homage to Shwemyintin Pagoda and donated K 30,000 to the funds of all-round renovation of the pagoda.

Accompanied by the commander and party, Lt-Gen Khin Maung Than proceeded to Kyonuku Village, Ngapudaw Township. On arrival at Kyonuku Village BHS, Lt-Gen Khin Maung Than inspected construction of new building of the school and fulfilled the requirements. At the hall of the school, they met local people. Lt-Gen Khin Maung Than gave a speech, saying that as the State is carrying out five rural development tasks, the new school building is being constructed at Kyonuku BHS. Local people are to make efforts for development of their region. And officials are also to render assistance to development of the village.

Next, the ceremony to present cash for construction of the school building followed. Chairman of the School Board of Trustees U Myint Tun and Headmaster U Myint Naing accepted K 2.65 million donated by wellwishers including K 1 million by Lt-Gen Khin Maung Than; K 500,000 by Commander Maj-Gen Soe Naing; K 500,000 by Ayeyawady Division Peace and Development Council; K 100,000 each by Pathein District Peace and Development Council, Ngapudaw Township Peace and Development Council; the Ministry of Livestock and Fisheries and others.

They proceeded to Hainggyikyun in Ngapudaw Township at 6.30 pm. At the hall of the local military station, they met with departmental officials, social organizations and local people. Commissioner of Pathein District GAD U Myint Than reported on history of Hainggyikyun, location and area, economic, social and health condition, development tasks and future tasks.

The commander gave a supplementary report. Captain Maung Oo Lwin (Navy) of the local military station reported on development tasks being carried out.

Speaking on the occasion, Lt-Gen Khin Maung Than said that Hainggyikyun is a historic region and it has been designated as a town because of its being an important area in the economic sector and its location. As the government designated 24 development regions for equitable improvement of rural and urban areas including border regions, Hainggyikyun is being upgraded to have characteristics of a town.

Departments concerned, social organizations and townsellers are to make greater efforts for regional development. It is necessary to apply modern techniques in producing industrial products and agricultural and livestock breeding tasks. And, extended breeding of sea prawn and cultivation of Thitseint (Bellerticia myrobalan) and pepper should be carried out.

After the ceremony, Lt-Gen Khin Maung Than cordially conveyed with departmental officials and local people.

MNA

Forty nine armed group members exchange arms for peace

Yangon, 29 Feb.—The State Peace and Development Council, upholding Our Three Main National Causes, has forged the national reconciliation and has been making efforts for bringing about harmonies development in all parts of the nation. Understanding correct endeavours and genuine goodwill of the government and realizing their destructive acts, the remnant armed group members exchanged arms for peace individually or in groups at respective military camps in December 2003 and January 2004. In the triangle region command area, Private Aik Kyauk of SURA armed group, Private Sai Khin Maung of Company-5, Battalion-7 together with one M22, one magazine and 30 rounds of ammunition; in the eastern command area, Cpl Kwi Kwi, Private Aung Nge and Lu Ye of Company-2, Battalion-2 of KNPP armed group together one AK-47, M-16, one M-16 attached to M-17, 79, six magazines, 320 rounds of ammunition and ten grenades; in the southern command area region, Private Kyi Win of Company-4, DO Battalion-2, No 1 Brigade of KNU armed group; District organizer U Kyaw Han of BCP armed group together with two 22 pistol and eight rounds of ammunition, Cpl Win Htay, Private Naung Oo, Kyaw Oo and Aung Soe of Mon Splintered armed group together with one M-16, one AK-47, two M-79, six magazines, 152 rounds of ammunition and 13 grenades; in the coastal region command area, WO Saw The Wa of Brigade-4 of KNU armed group together with one AK-47, one magazine and 16 rounds of ammunition; Medic Saw Lar La of Company-2, Battalion-1 of KNU armed group together with two mines, L-Cpl Saw Hti Khu and wife Naw Phaw and sons Saw Htiro Khu and Saw Khaw La Htu of Company-1, DO Battalion-7 of KNU armed group, Deputy Medical In-charge Kyi Soe and wife Ma Khin Ma Cho, daughters Soe Sandra Kyaw and Hnin Hnin Wai and son Kyaw Thwin of Battalion-202 of ABSDF armed group, Region In-charges Win Zaw Oo and Saw Phaw Wai, Deputy Company Commander Tin Maung Myint, Sgt Myint Kyaw and wife Naw Aye and Maung Tha Tin Thein Lay, Cpl Win Naung, Private Win Bo and wife Naw You Chaw and son Maung Kyaw Tha Kyaw, Private Maung Zin, Aye Lwin and Pho Zaw, Private Maung Kyaw and wife Naw Tar Li, Private Kaw daw and wife Naw Ga Gi, daughter Ma Pan Nwe and son Maung Kha Phu, Private Than Kyaw, Private Maung Hwe and wife Ma Than Kyu, Private Yan Gyi Aung and wife Ma Chit Pho, daughters Ma Tha Za May, Ma Win Maw and Ma Pan Wa of NDA armed group together with two RPG launchers, one M-16, two AK-47s, one carbine, nine magazines, 152 rounds of ammunition, five hand grenades, eight projectiles and two mines exchanged arms for peace at the respective military command in December 2003 and January 2004. Altogether 49 persons who exchanged arms for peace during the period were warmly welcomed by officials of the respective military camps and provided with necessary assistance. There are still more remnants of armed groups to follow suit.—MNA

Drug traffickers get jail terms

Yangon, 29 Feb.—Taunggyi special anti-drug squad in cooperation with the local police force and intelligence unit, acting on information, on 3 July 2003 searched the house of Sai Tun Sar in Konkham Village, Hsihseng Township, and seized 5,800 stimulant tablets.

Local police station filed Sai Tun Sar, son of U Maung Nyunt, Sai San, son of U Shwe Kyawng of the same village and Sai Shwe Oo, son of U San Chone in Panglong Township, under section 15/19 (A) of Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances Law. On 22 December 2003 Taunggyi District Court sentenced 20 years’ imprisonment each to them under the law.

Similarly, acting on a tip-off, a combined team comprising members of Thaketa Township police force and local intelligence unit on 19 February 2003 discovered 42,882 g of marijuana from Myo Zaw Tun and Maung Myo. In connection with the case, action was taken against Myo Zaw Tun, son of U Tin Tun, and Maung Myo, son of U Myat Thu, of Thaketa Township by the township Police Station under section 15/19 (A) of Narcotic Drug and Psychotropic Substances Law. On 26 January 2004, District Court handed down Myo Zaw Tun to 20 years’ imprisonment and Hla Myo to 25 years’ imprisonment under the law.—MNA

Say no to drugs

Longest Serving Natives

MNA

Lt-Gen Khin Maung Than supervises development tasks in Ngapudaw, Hainggyikyun

Lt-Gen Khin Maung Than presents cash donations for all-round renovation of Shwemyintin Pagoda.—MNA
Arroyo orders continued search for ferry fire victims

MANILA, 29 Feb — Philippine President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo ordered government agencies Saturday to continue search and rescue operations for those missing after a ferry they were aboard caught fire off the Manila Bay early Friday.

Presidential Spokesman Ignacio Bunye said President Arroyo ordered the Navy and the Coast Guard and all other government agencies involved in the search and rescue operations to find all the 112 people still missing and to keep their families and the public informed of the developments. The passenger ferry caught fire near Corregidor Island off the Manila Bay before dawn Friday, killing two passengers and injuring 12 others. Authorities said a total of 766 passengers and crewmen have been rescued so far.

President Arroyo also ordered the Department of Transportation and Communication to conduct a thorough inquiry into the incident and to pinpoint responsibility.

Visitor arrivals in Singapore up 1% in January

SINGAPORE, 29 Feb — Visitor arrivals in Singapore hit 651,299 in January 2004, up 1 per cent compared with a year ago, the Singapore Tourism Board (STB) said here on Saturday.

This is the second time the year-on-year figure has shown growth since the SARS (severe acute respiratory syndrome) outbreak in March 2003, said the STB in a Press release. Visitor arrivals grew by 8 per cent on-year to some 635,000 visitors in November 2003.

It said that Indonesia, China and Australia were Singapore’s top three markets in January 2004, accounting for about 41 per cent of the total number of visitors in the month.

Holiday arrivals grew by 4 per cent while business-related arrivals fell by 18 per cent, said the STB.

Singapore’s tourism industry, one of the pillar industries in the Singapore economy, was severely damaged by the outbreak of the SARS disease with visitor arrivals plummeting by up to 70 per cent when the epidemic was in full swing. It has been recovering steadily since the city-state was declared SARS-free in late May. — MNA/Xinhua

Int’l organizations to help rebuilding Kabul Airport

KABUL, 29 Feb — International organizations and the Afghan Government are committed to the reconstruction of Kabul International Airport in an agreement signed here Friday.

The project will cost somewhere between 42 million and 60 million US dollars. It will be borne by NATO, the World Bank, International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO) and the transitional government, Afghan Foreign Minister Abdullah Abdullah told reporters after the signing ceremony. Speaking on the occasion, NATO’s representative to Afghanistan Adam Kohieracki expressed his full commitment towards the implementation of the project.

Kabul Airport, the only airfield in the capital, has been badly damaged due to two decades of devastating war. “NATO is committed to help and harmonize to rebuild Kabul International Airport,” said the NATO official. “This is the commitment of international community that Kabul Airport will become a gateway to the world for Afghanistan,” he emphasized.

Bashar Hakim, the representative of ICAO also assured the government’s support to the project by saying: “two instruments will be installed by the beginning of April at the airport which will allow aircraft to take off and land in bad weather.” — MNA/Xinhua

Blair just cannot shake Iraq war criticism

LONDON, 29 Feb — Legal challenges, outspoken ex-ministers and the public acquittal of a whistleblowing spy helped to keep alive on Saturday accusations that British Prime Minister Tony Blair’s government misled Britons over the reasons for going to war in Iraq last year.

A legal challenge from environmental group Greenpeace demanding to see what advice Britain’s Attorney-General gave government ministers on the legality of the war was the latest headache for a government keen to put the war behind it.

Greenpeace says the Attorney-General’s advice on the legality of the Iraq war to ministers is essential evidence needed to defend 14 of its activists arrested at an anti-war protest and charged with aggravated trespass. Throughout their case the defendants have argued that their actions were necessary to prevent loss of life, a spokeswoman for Greenpeace said. “We think it is essential for a fair trial that they see what the Attorney-General thought at the time.”

Greenpeace’s demands appear only days after the term of Attorney-General Lord Goldsmith ended because the former spy demanded to see the legal advice to ministers on the Iraq war. The British Government has said releasing the Attorney-General’s full advice is against national security and is expected and is expected to refuse to disclose it.

However a former minister, who accused the Blair government this week of bugging the Secretary-General of the United Nations in the run-up to the war in Iraq, on Saturday said she thought the Attorney-General had offered his resignation because of his views on the legality of the war was very odd,” former international affairs minister Clare Short wrote in The Independent newspaper. It is hard not to suspect that he had doubts and was let down,” she said. — MNA/Xinhua

Snow storms hit Belgium

BRUSSELS, 29 Feb — Snow storms swept Belgium on early Friday morning, causing tremendous traffic jams, cancellation of trains and disruption of flights in the two countries.

In Belgium, the snow storm started in the west at around 3 a.m. on Friday morning and travelled eastwards during the night, local radio KVI said.

“The CPS [Crown Prosecution Service] now says they could not have disproved such a defence in the Gun case. Greenpeace lawyers wonder how the CPS will proceed against the four accused, the spokesman said.

Attorney-General Lord Goldsmith denied the case was part of a spin war, saying “the public acquittal of the whistleblowing spy helped to keep alive on Saturday accusations that British Prime Minister Tony Blair’s government misled Britons over the reasons for going to war in Iraq last year.”

—a report

“A legal challenge from environmental group Greenpeace demanding to see what advice Britain’s Attorney-General gave government ministers on the legality of the war was the latest headache for a government keen to put the war behind it.”

—a report

— Manila Bulletin

— MNA/Xinhua

— Manille de Liberte

— MNA

— AP

— Reuters

— Ch’ung-Hua News

— The New Light of Myanmar

— MNA/Xinhua

— STR

— The Gettysburgian

— MNA

— Reuters

— The Gettysburgian

The 59th Anniversary Armed Forces Day commemorative postcard.
Thousands of books are waiting to give you knowledge free of charge

New Zealand ready to aid cyclone-hit Vanuatu

Wellington, 29 Feb— New Zealand was ready to provide help to cyclone-hit Vanuatu once that country’s government had determined what it needed, Associate Foreign Affairs Minister Marian Hobbs said Friday.

Cyclone Ivy has cut a swath through the centre of the South Pacific nation, smashing homes and destroying property and infrastructure. Vanuatu’s capital, Port Vila, was worst hit, with up to 190 kilometres per hour winds and heavy rain causing flash flooding.

Officials from New Zealand, Australia and France met in Wellington Friday to coordinate a response once the Vanuatu Government made it known what it needed, she said.

Vanuatu’s capital, Port Vila, appeared to have escaped major damage although the main wharf was out of action as two fishing vessels had turned on their sides and sunk against it. Telecommunications had been disrupted with links down to Santo, Lakatou and Ambrym islands.

Port Vila’s International Airport was open.

Cyclone Ivy was tracking southwest towards New Caledonia and was expected to hit the Loyalty Islands and the Isle of Pines.

Trade mark

Aventis Behring GmbH, a Company incorporated in Germany, of Marburg, Germany is the owner of the following Trade Marks:

STREPTASE
Reg. No. 42586000
in respect of "A pharmaceutical preparation being a thymol bromide on an enzyme base"

Fraudulent imitation or unauthorised use of the said Trade Mark will be dealt with according to law.

HP customs officials seize 27 crocodiles from smugglers

Hong Kong, 29 Feb— Hong Kong Customs officials Friday seized 27 live baby crocodiles and arrested three men involved in the smuggling case, according to local television reports.

Meanwhile, the Hong Kong Customs and Excise Department also forecast another 20 crocodiles would be seized in the next few days.

FDA approves colon cancer medicine

Los Angeles, 29 Feb— U.S. biotech giant Genentech Inc has won a Food and Drug Administration approval of its colon cancer drug Avastin, in a move to win back patients whose disease has spread to other parts of the body.

China launches programme to research resource demand

Beijing, 29 Feb— China Friday launched a wide-ranging strategic research programme to assess the overall demand for farmland, grain, freshwater, energy and other resources that the country’s population will peak at approximately 1.6 billion by 2030.

Addressing a seminar in Beijing on the country’s population and development strategy, State Councillor Hua Jianmin said China needs accurate quantitative and scientific conclusions on the future demands for land, power and water.

He also secretary-general of the State Council’s Cabinet, said the research on China’s population strategy aims to produce basic data on population and economic and social development.

Experts and scholars from the Chinese Academy of Sciences, Chinese Academy of Engineering, Chinese Academy of Social Sciences, Research Development Centre of the State Council, Beijing University, Tsinghua University, Nanu University and other research institutions.

Chinese experts say the Chinese population will peak at 1.6 billion around 2030 from the present 1.29 billion.

China will make efforts to develop weather modification service

Beijing, 29 Feb— China will make further efforts in the next several years to improve its weather modification service from the current single function of disaster prevention and reduction to a multi-functional service, Qian Dahe, director of the China Meteorological Administration, said here Friday.

Qin made this statement at the second China weather modification meeting from February 26 to 28. According to Qin, such a multi-functional service includes not only disaster prevention and reduction but also air and water resources exploitation and ecological environmental protection.

"As one of the countries most severely harassed by meteorological disasters, especially drought, China has seen extreme weather days and water shortage since the 1990s, all of which have greatly pre- duced China’s economic and social development," said Qin.

To lessen this problem, China established the National Coordination Committee of Weather Modification in 1994 and held the first China weather modification meeting in 1995.

"Since then, great progress has been made in China’s weather modification service. From 1995 to 2003, China has become the world’s number one in its weather modification service scale," said Qin.

However, the weakness of insufficient scientific research has begun and will further impede the development of China’s weather modification service, said Qin.

In the next few years, while continuing to take advantage of the major service, China will make efforts to enhance air water resources exploitation to lessen the country’s hunger for water and in improving its service in environmental protection and transportation.

Weather modification means to modify the weather under certain weather conditions to the needs of people by artificial methods, including mainly precipitation enhancement and hail suppression, as well as fog, cloud and precipitation dispersal, frost prevention and thunder producing.

TRADE MARK CAUTION

Aventis Behring GmbH, a Company incorporated in Germany, of Marburg, Germany is the owner of the following Trade Marks:

STREPTASE
Reg. No. 42586000
in respect of "A pharmaceutical preparation being a thymol bromide on an enzyme base"

Fraudulent imitation or unauthorised use of the said Trade Mark will be dealt with according to law.

China launches programme to research resource demand

Beijing, 29 Feb— China Friday launched a wide-ranging strategic research programme to assess the overall demand for farmland, grain, freshwater, energy and other resources that the country’s population will peak at approximately 1.6 billion by 2030.

"Since then, great progress has been made in China’s weather modification service. From 1995 to 2003, China has become the world’s number one in its weather modification service scale," said Qin.

However, the weakness of insufficient scientific research has begun and will further impede the development of China’s weather modification service, said Qin.

In the next few years, while continuing to take advantage of the major service, China will make efforts to enhance air water resources exploitation to lessen the country’s hunger for water and in improving its service in environmental protection and transportation.

Weather modification means to modify the weather under certain weather conditions to the needs of people by artificial methods, including mainly precipitation enhancement and hail suppression, as well as fog, cloud and precipitation dispersal, frost prevention and thunder producing. — MNA/Xinhua

China will make efforts to develop weather modification service

Beijing, 29 Feb— China will make further efforts in the next several years to improve its weather modification service from the current single function of disaster prevention and reduction to a multi-functional service, Qian Dahe, director of the China Meteorological Administration, said here Friday.

Qin made this statement at the second China weather modification meeting from February 26 to 28. According to Qin, such a multi-functional service includes not only disaster prevention and reduction but also air and water resources exploitation and ecological environmental protection.

"As one of the countries most severely harassed by meteorological disasters, especially drought, China has seen extreme weather days and water shortage since the 1990s, all of which have greatly pre- duced China’s economic and social development," said Qin.

To lessen this problem, China established the National Coordination Committee of Weather Modification in 1994 and held the first China weather modification meeting in 1995.

"Since then, great progress has been made in China’s weather modification service. From 1995 to 2003, China has become the world’s number one in its weather modification service scale," said Qin.

However, the weakness of insufficient scientific research has begun and will further impede the development of China’s weather modification service, said Qin.

In the next few years, while continuing to take advantage of the major service, China will make efforts to enhance air water resources exploitation to lessen the country’s hunger for water and in improving its service in environmental protection and transportation.

Weather modification means to modify the weather under certain weather conditions to the needs of people by artificial methods, including mainly precipitation enhancement and hail suppression, as well as fog, cloud and precipitation dispersal, frost prevention and thunder producing. — MNA/Xinhua

China launches programme to research resource demand

Beijing, 29 Feb— China Friday launched a wide-ranging strategic research programme to assess the overall demand for farmland, grain, freshwater, energy and other resources that the country’s population will peak at approximately 1.6 billion by 2030.

Addressing a seminar in Beijing on the country’s population and development strategy, State Councillor Hua Jianmin said China needs accurate quantitative and scientific conclusions on the future demands for land, power and water.

He also secretary-general of the State Council’s Cabinet, said the research on China’s population strategy aims to produce basic data on population and economic and social development.

Experts and scholars from the Chinese Academy of Sciences, Chinese Academy of Engineering, Chinese Academy of Social Sciences, Research Development Centre of the State Council, Beijing University, Tsinghua University, Nanu University and other research institutions.

Chinese experts say the Chinese population will peak at 1.6 billion around 2030 from the present 1.29 billion.

FDA approves colon cancer medicine

Los Angeles, 29 Feb— U.S. biotech giant Genentech Inc has won a Food and Drug Administration approval of its colon cancer drug Avastin, in a move to win back patients whose disease has spread to other parts of the body.

Avastin was approved for use in combination with chemotherapy as a first-line treatment for colon cancer in patients whose disease has spread to other parts of the body. — MNA/Xinhua
WTO Chief sees new momentum to world trade talks

WASHINGTON, 29 Feb — The head of the World Trade Organization said on Friday that world trade talks appear to have recovered from their collapse six months ago in Cancun, Mexico, and could make substantial progress by July.

A letter from US Trade Representative Robert Zoellick in January urging WTO members to evacuate their talks came just “at the time we needed this stimulus,” WTO Director General Supachai Panitchpakdi told reporters.

Senior office of WTO member countries could be invited to Geneva in April to try to resolve differences on agriculture and other issues that blocked agreement on a final negotiating framework in Cancun, Supachai said.

WTO members also are considering Zoellick’s idea of expanding the July meeting of the WTO General Council by inviting trade ministers to attend.

The session would not be a formal “ministerial” meeting, such as the gathering in Cancun. But it would provide a forum for countries to make the difficult decisions that require direct input from capitals.

Supachai said he would hold judgment until after the July meeting about whether a final deal can be reached by the long-established January 1, 2005, deadline.

“By that time, we should know what needs to be done to finish the round by the end of 2005,” he said.

Meanwhile, Supachai urged developing countries to respond to the EU’s request for a list of commodities that they want targeted for early elimination.

Such a list would help EU Trade Commissioner Pascal Lamy make the case for taking action in his consultation with EU member states, Supachai said.

The EU has faced pressure to sign off on the goal of eliminating all export subsidies as part of the framework agreement countries must now work to reach.

It has been politically difficult for Brus- sels to embrace that target, but Lamy has come increasingly closer.

On Thursday, he emphasized that the EU’s offer to negotiate the elimination of export subsidies on commodities of interest to developing countries was open-ended and could even include highly protected prod- ucts, such as sugar.

Library

EU pledges 250m euros for African peacekeeping

NURS (Libya), 29 Feb — The EU pledged 250 million euros on Friday to help African peacekeeping efforts, as African leaders debated the creation of a rapid reaction force empowered to intervene unilaterally across the troubled continent.

At the moment, the force exists only in a draft docu- ment prepared by African Union (AU) defence minis- ters earlier this week. Heads of state and prime ministers were expected to approve the proposal at a two-day sum- mit that opened on Friday.

With fragile peace ef- forts under way in the conti- nent’s many trouble spots, there is international pres- sure on the Ethiopia-based AU to take an active lead in peacekeeping.

European Commission President Romano Prodi told the assembled leaders in Libyan leader Moammar Kadafi’s hometown of Sirte: “Africa will and will keep a priority for the European Union. He said the EU had pledged under a Peace Facility 250 million euros “for peace-sup- port operations” under the authority of the 53-nation AU.

“It will provide a power- ful, innovative instrument for support African peacekeep- ing efforts and will lay the foundations for development in areas of conflict,” Prodi said.

An EU spokesman in Brus- sels made clear the funding was not specifically for the standby force because it was only in the planning stages.

The AU draft document says wars and civil conflicts — such as those in Burundi, the Republic of Congo and the Democratic Republic of Congo — are the main ob- stacles to development, damage economies, create millions of refugees and scare off foreign investors.

The draft empowers the AU to adopt emergency inter- vention or impose sanctions on a member state in the case of civil war or geno- cide, human rights abuses and AU sources said.

“Two key issues will domi- nate the agenda: a security and defence policy and the optimum use of agricultural and water resources,” AU Commission President Al- pha Oumar Konare told the opening ceremony.

African leaders last year approved in principle a pro- posal to establish an interna- tional peacekeeping force on the continent by 2010. But questions over funding and logistics have delayed implementation.

MNA/Reuters

Two new dinosaur species found in Antarctica

WASHINGTON, 29 Feb — Two new species of dinosaur, one a quick- moving meat-eater and the other a giant plant-eater, have been discovered in Antarctica, US researchers said on Thursday.

The 70-million-year- old fossils of the carnivore would have rested for millennia at the bottom of what is now the Weddell Sea, where remains of the 100-foot-long herbivores were found on the top of a moun- tain.

They would have lived in a different Antarctica — one that was warm and wet, the two teams of researchers, both funded by the Na- tional Science Foundation, said.

The little carnivore — about six feet tall — was found on James Ross Is- land, off the coast of the Antarctic Peninsula.

Not yet named, the animal probably floated out to sea after it died and set- tled to the bottom of what was then a shallow area of the Weddell Sea, said Judd Caldwell of St. Mary’s College of California, who helped find the fossils.

Its bones and teeth suggest it was a predator, a population of two-legged carnivores that survived in the Antarctic long after other predators took over elsewhere on the globe.

MNA/Reuters
Fabiano double inspires Sao Paulo to 3-1 win

**RIO DE JANEIRO**, Feb 29 — Luiz Fabiano struck at either end of the match to help twice South American champions Sao Paulo beat 10-man Cobreloa 3-1 in the Libertadores Cup.

The Chilean side were a man down for the second half after defender Luis Fuentes was sent off in the Group Four match at Sao Paulo’s Morumbi Stadium on Thursday.

Fuentes, whose 11th-minute own goal had put the Brazilians two goals up after Fabiano’s third-minute opener, spat at the striker at the end of the first half and was shown the red card.

Another own goal minutes into the second half by Sao Paulo defender Cicinho put Cobreloa, twice runners-up in the early 1980s, back in the match but Fabiano killed them off with his second of the final minute.

Sao Paulo, champions in 1992 and 1993, have taken a maximum six points from two matches but are behind Ecuador’s Liga Deportiva Universitaria, who beat Alianza Lima 3-0 on Wednesday, on goal difference.

Peruvian sides had a good night with Cesar Vallejo La Libertad and Sporting Cristal holding Rosario Central 1-1 in Argentina.

A substitute Sergio Buarco scored the only goal in Lima with his first touch of the ball in the 63rd minute of the Group Five match. In Rosario, substitute Mariano Messera volleyed an equalizer in the final minute for Central after striker Luis Bonnet had headed Cristal in front in the 72nd.

**Euro 2004 fans to be tested for drunkenness**

**LISBON**, Feb 29 — Fans at the Euro 2004 soccer championship will be tested for drunkenness and those over a certain blood alcohol limit barred from games, Portuguese authorities said on Friday.

Fans who show a blood alcohol level of 1.2 grammes per litre will be turned away from stadiums, said Lieutenant General Leonel de Carvalho, head of a government security commission for the 16-team tournament in June.

“The test won’t be made on everybody, but in exceptional circumstances,” he told a news conference after a meeting with UEFA organizers on security. Portugal’s legal blood alcohol limit for motorists is 0.5 grammes per litre. A level of 1.2 grammes per litre is considered a crime.

Carvalho said tests would be made at stadium gates with equipment similar to that used to check drivers’ sobriety.

Portugal is hosting the tournament at 10 stadiums and organizers expect about 500,000 fans to attend.

Jacob Erel, director of UEFA’s competition operations, said the main challenge was crowd control, such as access, transport and alcohol bans. Portuguese authorities needed better coordination, especially since many of the stadiums were new, he said, before adding he had “confidence about the competence of this country to perform in the best way during the Euro 2004”.

**America have coach, two players sent off in 3-1 defeat**

**MEXICO CITY**, Feb 29 — America, Mexico’s richest club, had veteran Dutch coach Leo Beenhakker and two players sent off as they crashed to a 3-1 defeat at Atlas.

Former Ajax, Real Madrid, Netherlands and Saudi Arabia coach Beenhakker was dismissed in the 47th minute of Thursday night’s match for dissent and leaving the coach’s designated area.

The Eagles were reduced to 10 men after 12 minutes when defender Alvaro Ortiz was sent off for a violent challenge on Juan Carlos Medina. Chilean striker Reinaldo Nava also got his marching orders in the 76th minute for a second bookable offence.

Atlas took full advantage, winning with two goals from Brazilian Robert de Pugno and one from Uruguayan Carlos Maria Morales. His 100th goal in competitive matches in Mexico.

German Villa pulled a goal back for America. Atlas are second in Group One while America dropped to third in Group Two.

**Coaches oppose FIFA plans to change rules on substitutes**

**LISBON**, Feb 29 — FIFA president Sepp Blatter’s plan to end “farce” friendly matches by restricting the number of substitutes allowed to a maximum of five per team may be derailed when the International Board meets on Saturday.

Blatter is determined to stop the practice of using up to 11 substitutes in friendly internationals claiming it is undermining the credibility of the matches.

But the English Football Association, one of eight members of the International Board, the sport’s ultimate law-making body, is expected to bring a file to the meeting at Clasград’s Hotel which opposes Blatter’s plan.

The file contains the views of more than a dozen leading coaches, including Sven-Goran Eriksson of England, Italy’s Giovanni Trapattoni and Luis Felipe Scolari of Portugal, who want to continue with unrestricted substitutions in friendlies.

Six of the eight board representatives have agreed before any law can be changed and Blatter’s proposal might be rejected.

Neither that might sour the “party atmosphere” surrounding Blatter’s visit to London remains to be seen.

Blatter will head a FIFA Executive Committee meeting in London on Sunday and is also meeting Queen Elizabeth and English Minister Tony Blair to discuss soccer’s governing body kicks off its centenary year celebrations this week and next.

**Oliveira begins third stint at Corinthians with a win**

**RIO DE JANEIRO**, Feb 29 — Corinthians gave Oswaldo Oliveira a winning start to his third stint as their coach when they came from two goals behind to beat Juventus 3-2 in a Paulista (Sao Paulo state) championship match.

Wellington scored either side of halftime to put the visitors in the driving seat but Corinthians hit back with a controversial penalty converted by Coelho midway through the second half of Thursday night’s match.

Substitute Wilson equalized in the 81st minute and Coelho struck the winner two minutes later for a relieved Oliveira, who replaced Juninho Fonseca to become the club’s fourth coach in the last six months.

The chopping and changing began when Genaro signed after a 6-1 defeat by Juventude and was replaced by former Brazil international Junior, who walked out after 10 days at the club.

Junior was then promoted from the youth team to fill the void only to be fired just six games into the current season. Oliveira first took charge at Corinthians in December 1998, was sacked after three months and returned another two months later after his replacement Evairisto Macedo was also fired.

He then led Corinthians to the Brazilian championship title in 1999 and won FIFA’s inaugural World Club championshi in Brazil in January 2000.

But he was dismissed again the following May after his side lost in the semifinals of the South American Liberadores Cup.
Every region to make efforts for realization...

(from page 1)

At the ceremony, Chairman of Kawthoung District Peace and Development Council Li-Col Tin Soe reported on the location of the district, organizational set-up of townships, wards/village-tract, collection of taxes, development of rural areas, border area development tasks, land utilization, cultivation and per-acre yield of monsoon and summer paddy, local food sufficiency, reclamation of vacant and virgin lands, growing of oil palm and rubber, fisheries and livestock breeding tasks.

Afterwards, Senior General Than Shwe delivered an address.

He said he arrived in Kawthoung for the first time in 1962. At that time there were only three or four hundred houses. In the time of the Tatmadaw government emphasis was placed on development of border areas after being laid down the policy to develop border areas that lagged behind development. Kawthoung region has now developed to district level, he said.

He said education, health, transport and economic facilities were fulfilled in conformity with the status of a district. Kawthoung has developed like a major city. Like Kawthoung, border towns such as Tachilek, Muse and Myawady have significantly developed in a short time, he added.

He said society must advance as a result of innovative measures constantly taken by men. He spoke of the need to make efforts for development of Kawthoung District.

He said service personnel discharging duties at the respective departments and local people are to work hard for progress.

He said in carrying out the tasks for development there must be local sufficiency and economic development in one region without relying on other regions for food, clothing and shelter needs.

He said although Kawthoung district has water and land resources, rice is not sufficient in the region. He said even deserts can be turned into cultivable lands. To ensure sufficiency of rice in the region, efforts should be made for extension of sown acreage in Kawthoung District and cultivation of quality strains, he said.

Cultivation of kitchen crops should be extended. Utilizing the sown lands fully, crops that are suitable to the region and climate are to be grown, he said.

By doing so there will be food sufficiency in the region and old tradition of depending on other regions can be removed, he said.

He spoke of the need to make efforts effectively for development of fish and prawn breeding tasks and cultivation of perennial crops such as oil palm and rubber based on human efforts and creative power.

There should always be food sufficiency and economic development in a region. In this way, there will be progress in the region both in form and essence. Therefore, every region is to make efforts for realization of these two points, he added. He said officials at different levels are to study and review economic progress, community peace and security and education, health, cultural and social conditions in their respective regions and they are to make endeavours for emergence of fully-developed regions.

It is required to regularly grow oil palm yearly to meet the targeted acres of 500,000.

Only when oil palm is grown fully and edible oil produced speedily will Tanintharyi Division become an oil pot of the State.

Systematic measures are to be taken in growing oil palm to be able to meet the target for self-sufficiency in edible oil in the nation by 2007-2008.

Inspections of senior officials and party members are to be carried out in order to inspect development of Kawthoung by car.

In the afternoon, the Senior General and party met with Tatmadawmen and their families of regiments and units in Kawthoung Station at Bayintnaung Hall of the local battalion in Kawthoung.

At the meeting, General Thura Shwe Mann explained the purpose of the inspection tour of the Senior General and party in Tanintharyi Division and procedure for building the Tatmadaw.