YANGON, 5 March — Religious titles were presented to 261 members of the Sangha, 24 nuns, 28 lay men and 22 lay women at home and abroad at a ceremony held at Maha Pasana Cave on Kaba Aye Hill here this afternoon, attended by Daw Kyaing Kyaing, wife of Chairman of the State Peace and Development Council Commander-in-Chief of Defence Services Senior General Than Shwe.

The ceremony was graced by the presence of member Sayadaws of the State Sangha Maha Nayaka Committee, Tipitakadhara Tipitakakovida Sayadaws and title recipient Sayadaws and nuns. Also present were Vice-Chairman of the State Peace and Development Council Deputy Commander-in-Chief of Defence Services Commander-in-Chief (Army) Vice-Senior General Maung Aye and wife Daw Mya Mya San, Prime Minister General Khin Nyunt and wife Dr Daw Khin Win Shwe, Daw Khin Than Nwe, wife of Lt-Gen Tin Oo, member of the State Peace and Development Council General Thura Shwe Mann and wife Daw Khin Lay Thet, Secretary-1 of the State Peace and Development Council Lt-Gen Soe Win and wife Daw Than Than Nwe, Secretary-2 Lt-Gen Thein Sein and wife Daw Khin Khin Win, members of the State Peace and Development Council and their wives, the Commander-in-Chief (Navy), the Commander-in-Chief (Air), the chairman of Yangon Division Peace and Development Council and their wives, ministers and their wives, the Chief Justice, the Attorney-General and the Auditor-General and their wives, the chairman of Civil Service Selection and Training Board, the chairman of Yangon City Development Committee the mayor and wife, senior military officers, deputy ministers, the vice-mayor, the deputy chief-justice, the deputy attorney-general, the director-general of the State Peace and Development Council Office, departmental heads, heads of missions and diplomats of Sri Lankan Embassy, Cambodian Embassy, Laos Embassy and Nepalese Embassy to Myanmar.

(See page 9)
Perspectives

Saturday, 6 March, 2004

Utilize the natural resources most effectively

Taninthayi Division is blessed with land and mineral resources and deep sea fish and prawn, petroleum and gas contribute towards national development.

Pearl culture is a reliable and potential business of the division. Mineral resources can still be explored not only in the sea but also in the land.

With the aim of developing Taninthayi Division, the Government is fulfilling the requirements in education, health and transportation sectors of the division.

The government is implementing the development tasks spending a large sum of money with the aim of developing even the far-flung areas.

Chairman of the State Peace and Development Council Commander-in-Chief of Defence Services Senior General Than Shwe met members of Taninthayi Division Peace and Development Council, departmental officials, chairmen of Myeik District and Township PDCs, officials, members of Union Solidarity and Development Association, social organizations, town elders and entrepreneurs at Pale Yadana Hall in Myeik on 28 February.

In his guidance given to officials, the Senior General said that exploiting the land resources, paddy cultivation is to be extended so that there will be sufficiency of rice in Taninthayi Division; that lands where oil palm and rubber can be grown are still left and thus the crops can be exported through extended cultivation; that pepper which earns foreign exchange can be grown well in the region; and that effective exploitation of natural resources in Taninthayi Division contributes towards the national economic progress and per capita income of the people in the division.

It is sure that Taninthayi Division will become a prosperous one on which the State can rely if the tasks can be implemented with might and main after realizing the better prospects for development.

In response to the government’s goodwill, town elders are to make efforts for development through hard work. For national development, the State, the people and the Tatmadaw are to make endeavours harmoniously.

We would like to urge local people to strive for local rice sufficiency, regional and national development by utilizing the natural resources in Taninthayi Division effectively and extending the cultivation of paddy and new items of crops.

59th Anniversary
Armed Forces Day Objectives

— To strive hand in hand with the people for successful realization of the State’s seven-point policy programmes.
— 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’.

People’s Desire

• Oppose those relying on external elements, acting as stooges, holding negative views and misguiding the State and progress of the nation.
• 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.

Merits shared to mark success of rice and ‘soon’ offering ceremony

Yangon, 5 March — Organized by Yangon Division Peace and Development Council, a ceremony to offer rice and ‘soon’ to members of the Sangha took place at Maha Nayaka Kyaundawgyi on Kaba Ayel Hill this morning.

Chairman of Yangon Division Peace and Development Council and Commander of Yangon Command Maj-Gen Myint Swe attended the ceremony and offered provisions to members of the Sangha.

Also present on the occasion were State Sangha Maha Nayaka Committee Vice-Chairman Sayadaw Abhidhammahaṇa Rattha Guru Abhidhaja Agga Maha S a d h a m m a j o t i k Aungnyeboonsan Sayadaw Bhaddanta Patindabhisamvama and SSMB Secrecy Sayadaw Abhidhaja Maha Ratthai Guru Abhidhaja Agga Maha Saddhamma-jotika Magway Sayadaw Bhaddanta Kumara, member Sayadaws, Minister for Religious Affairs Brig-Gen Thura Myint Maung, Deputy Commander of Yangon Command Col Wai Lwin, local authorities, commanders of Military Commands, directors-general of departments under the Ministry of the State Peace and Development Council to confer religious titles on tithe-recipient Sayadaws.

Next, Maj-Gen Myint Swe supplicated on matters related to holding the ceremony, saying that the ceremony was held under the Notification No 1/2004 released by the State Peace and Development Council to confer religious titles on tithe-recipient Sayadaws at home and abroad and Sayadaws from different states and divisions who attended the fifth State Central Working Committee for the Sangha’s fourth meeting, adding that he believed such meritorious deeds done today would support their efforts to attain Nirvana.

Later, Maj-Gen Myint Swe, Brig-Gen Thura Myint Maung and the congregation presented ofertories to members of the Sangha, followed by a sermon delivered by Sayadaw Bhaddanta Kumara.

Afterwards, the commander, the minister and the congregation shared the merits gained from good deeds.

Sandhi herbal medicines family offered provisions to 18 members of the Sangha present on the occasion, while U Sein Hla Win, President of Myanmar Travel and Tourism Association U Kin Zaw and officials do- nated K 3,000 each to the Sayadaws.

After the ceremony, the commander, the minister and officials offered ‘soon’ to the Sayadaws present on the occasion.

Measure for assessing hotel grades coordinated

Yangon, 5 March — A meeting to coordinate measures for assessing hotel grades was held at the Ministry of Hotels and Tourism, here yesterday morning, attended by Minister for Hotels and Tourism Brig-Gen Thein Zaw.

After giving an address by the minister, the president of Myanmar Travel Association, the president of Myanmar Hotels Association, officials of hotels, the chairman of Myanmar Marketing Committee and others discussed services of the hotels and fixing of prices.

Later, the minister gave necessary instructions.
Senators question intelligence chiefs on Iraq WMD

WASHINGTON, 5 March — The Senate Intelligence Committee questioned the heads of the major US intelligence agencies behind closed doors on Thursday about prewar estimates on Iraqi weapons programs, which critics say showed a stronger threat than what was discovered after the US-led invasion.

The directors of the CIA, the National Security Agency, the Defense Intelligence Agency, and the National Geospatial-Intelligence Agency, flanked by staff, met with the Senate panel that is drafting a report expected to criticize the prewar intelligence on Iraq.

“Virtually every concern that you ever read about or heard about was brought up,” said Senate Intelligence Committee Chairman Pat Roberts, a Kansas Republican.

Whether Iraq had weapons of mass destruction has become a political issue ahead of the November presidential election. Republicans say it is too early to reach any conclusions and Democrats raise questions about whether the White House exaggerated the threat to gain support for the war.

Senators also focused on questions about “what can be done to fix any potential failures that might have taken place,” said Sen John Rockefeller of West Virginia, the senior Democrat on the panel.

The committee plans to have CIA Director George Tenet return to answer more questions before it completes its report, expected in April.

One key intelligence report before the war, a National Intelligence Estimate issued in October 2002, said Iraq had biological and chemical weapons and a program to develop a nuclear weapon. Since the US-led invasion of Iraq in March 2003, no such weapons have been uncovered. — Internet

Europeans say Iraq war raised threat

WASHINGTON, 5 March — A majority of people living in the two countries bordering the United States and in five major European countries say they think the war in Iraq increased the threat of terrorism in the world, Associated Press wrote.

In the United States, people were evenly divided on whether the war has increased or decreased the terrorist threat.

The AP poll were conducted by Ipsos, an international polling form, in Britain, Canada, France, Italy, Germany, Mexico, Spain and the United States. — Internet

Resolution violation did not make Iraq war legal, says Blix

LONDON, 5 March — Former chief UN weapons inspector Hans Blix said in an interview on Friday he did not believe the Iraq war was legal because Baghdad had broken United Nations resolutions.

“I don’t buy the argument the war was legalized by the Iraqi war of earlier resolutions,” Blix told Britain’s Independent newspaper.

He said it would have required a second UN Security Council resolution explicitly authorizing the use of force for the invasion of Iraq to have been legal.

Blix has become highly critical of Washington and London since the war, accusing President Bush and British Prime Minister Tony Blair of hyping the threat posed by Saddam Hussein.

Since the Iraqi leader was toppled, no banned weapons of mass destruction — the reasons Bush and Blair gave for the war — have been found.

Blix said while it was possible to argue Iraq had violated UN resolutions adopted since 1991, it was for the UN Security Council to take action not individual states.

“It’s the Security Council that is party to the cease-fire, not the UK and the US individually, and therefore it is the Council that had ownership of the cease-fire in my interpretation,” he said.

He repeated his belief that Bush and Blair had acted in good faith but said both leaders’ credibility had suffered. — Internet

China’s govt helps boost grain output

ZHENGZHOU, 5 March — Farmers are busy digging wells to irrigate their spring crops in Huaxian County, central China’s Henan Province, but unlike previous years, they are being paid for their efforts.

Huaxian is listed among the top 100 grain producing counties in China. The payments, which are valued according to the depth of the well, are part of a series of local government policies to encourage farmers to grow grain.

Nearly all major grain producers in the country have adopted similar incentives for grain production, like slashing agricultural taxes, subsidizing farm equipment and quality seed purchases, and providing more loans for grain production.

China’s grain output has been declining since 1999. Last year’s production was 430.65 billion kilos, 5.8 per cent less than 2002. At the same time, demand for grain totalled 485 billion kilos.

Experts attributed the fall to many factors, including lack of enthusiasm for farmers in growing grain because of low prices.

To stop the decline and to ensure food security, the central government has adopted incentive policies from the second half of last year. At the beginning of 2004, the government also issued “No 1 Document”, the first document in 2004, to underline problems in the farming sector.

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To stop the decline and to ensure food security, the central government has adopted incentive policies from the second half of last year. At the beginning of 2004, the government also issued “No 1 Document”, the first document in 2004, to underline problems in the farming sector.

The document details the central government’s decision to slash agricultural tax rates by one percentage point and abolish taxes on special farm produce.

Also, resources will be channelled into the development of regions specializing in the production of key high-quality grains. Up to 10 billion yuan will be earmarked from the country’s grain venture fund, which is worth 30.2 billion yuan, to directly compensate farmers for losses caused by low grain prices.

About 70 per cent of China’s grain is produced in what the document calls “regions specializing in the production of key high-quality grains”, such as the three provinces in northeastern China, the plains along middle and lower reaches of the Yangtze River and Hunbei Plain in north China.

“As long as the grain output in those major grain-producing regions is stable, the whole country will avoid grain shortages,” said Han Jun, director of the agricultural department under the State Development and Research Centre. — MNA/Xinhua

Stamp marks 10 years of Sino-Singaporean industrial park

SUZHOU, 5 March — China Post and Singapore’s SINGPOST have jointly published a stamp to mark the 10th anniversary of the founding of Suzhou Industrial Park, the biggest cooperation project between China and Singapore.

The stamp, with a face value of 8 jiao (0.8 yuan), was published by the Beijing Stamp Plant on Monday.

The design of the stamp is a sculpture named “Harmony” against the backdrop of the Suzhou Industrial Park.

The sculpture, standing on the west bank of Jinji Lake in the park, was erected in June 2001. The governments of China and Singapore signed an agreement on building the Suzhou Industrial Park, east China’s Jiangsu Province, on 26 February, 1994. Construction of the park began on 12 May that year.

The industrial park has flourished after 10 years of development, with a gross domestic product of 36.5 billion yuan (4.41 billion US dollars) in 2003. The park also registered a revenue of 4.6 billion yuan (556 million US dollars) last year.

The two sides issued a set of two stamps featuring the park in 1996. — MNA/Xinhua

Last week’s earthquake killed 628 in Morocco

RABAT, 5 March — A total of 626 people were ultimately killed and 926 others injured in last week’s earthquake in central Morocco, according to a rescue committee report released Wednesday night.

According to the report, 101 of the 926 injured are still in hospital, and 2,539 houses were destroyed, with 152,300 people being homeless.

The Moroccan Government has provided the victims with 18,767 tents, 168,870 blankets, 1,561 tons of food, 106 tons of medicines and 48 tons of clothes in addition to generators and farm equipment.

Since the earthquake, more than 20 countries including China have offered humanitarian aid to victims.

Moroccans in other parts of the country have also donated food, clothes and medicines to the tremor-hit area, said the committee. — MNA/Xinhua

Don’t smoke
Polls find world not pleased with Bush

WASHINGTON, 5 March — The AP-Ipsos poll found that people in the two countries bordering the US and in five major European countries think the war in Iraq increased the threat of terrorism in the world.

(AP) A majority of people in Canada, Mexico and five European countries have a negative view of the role that President Bush plays in world affairs, Associated Press polls found.

Only in the United States did a majority of those questioned, 57 percent, have a positive view of President Bush’s role.

The AP polls were conducted by Ipsos, an international polling firm, in Britain, Canada, France, Italy, Germany, Mexico, Spain and the United States. Just over half in Mexico and Italy had a negative view of Mr Bush’s role. In Britain, the closest US ally in the war in Iraq, and in Canada, two-thirds had a negative view.

Sam McGuire, director of opinion research at Ipsos UK, said Mr Bush’s low ratings in Britain are notable, given that country’s close alliance with the United States. Britain traditionally has been seen as the United States’ staunchest European ally on world affairs,” he said. and long has been a buffer between the United States and Europe.

Three-fourths of those in Spain and more than 80 percent in France and Germany had a negative view of Mr Bush’s role in world affairs.

“Bush has a lot of work to do if he wants to be popular in France,” said Edouard LeCerf, director of opinion research for Ipsos France.

The AP-Ipsos poll found that people in the two countries bordering the US and in five major European countries think the war in Iraq increased the threat of terrorism in the world.

In the United States, people were evenly divided on whether the war has increased or decreased the terror threat.

Senator John Howard said Flood, a former member of Australia’s Foreign Office and head of the Office of National Assessments (ONA) that advises the Prime Minister, would report back to the government by June 30.

Former top Australian diplomat to head Iraq inquiry

CANBERRA, 5 March — A former top Australian diplomat and intelligence chief, Philip Flood, was appointed on Thursday to head an independent inquiry into intelligence that led to Australia’s involvement in the Iraq war.

Prime Minister John Howard said Flood, a former head of Australia’s Foreign Office and head of the Office of National Assessments (ONA) that advises the Prime Minister, would report back to the government by June 30.

The 10-year bond was launched with a yield of 6.85 percent, lower than the 7 percent target set earlier by the government.

Government officials could not be reached for confirmation, although the increase in the size of the offer had been expected as Minister of Finance Boediono had hinted earlier in the week.

“There is a possibility it will be more than 400 million US dollars, as we see room for it,” Boediono told reporters before the announcement late on Wednesday.

Demand for the bonds has topped four billion US dollars, more than 10 times larger than the 400 million US dollars initially planned.

The upcoming issue, jointly managed by JP Morgan and Deutsche Bank, will be the first since the 1997-1998 financial crisis after the government issued its maiden sovereign bond issue in 1996 worth 400 million US dollars, due to mature in 2006.

In the 2004 state budget, the government plans to issue a total of 32.5 trillion rupiah (3.38 billion US dollars) in bonds throughout the year — both international and domestic — to help plug the deficit.

State budget deficit is forecast to narrow to 1.2 percent of gross domestic product this year, down from 1.9 percent last year.

Bank Indonesia governor Burhanuddin Abdullah said demands from investors had skyrocketed to 4.2 billion US dollars, in what he claimed as a vote of confidence from the international community on Indonesia’s economy.

“Demands received from Asia, Europe and the US have reached 4.1 billion US dollars. This is a warm welcome to our economy,” he said.

The demands were booked during a week-long roadshow ending on Wednesday by a government team to a number of the world’s major financial centres, including Hong Kong, Luxembourg, Frankfurt, Boston and Los Angeles.

Indonesian govt launches $1b int’l bond

JAKARTA, 5 March — The Indonesian Government launched a one billion US dollars international bond, more than double the initial plan of 400 million US dollars, following overwhelming demand from global investors, The Jakarta Post reported Thursday.

The five-day festival — "Made by Women" — is to be inaugurated by film director Aparna Sen of India at the V B Chavan auditorium, according to sources at "Point of View," a non-profit organization and one of the organizers of the film festival.

The festival, also commemorating the Women’s Day on March 8, would showcase the works of directors from Iran, Australia, Argentina, Czech Republic, besides India.

The festival would also pay tribute to the first women film-maker ever — French Producer-director Alice Guy, who made films in 1896 — a century ago, it said.

The films to be featured at the festival include "The Apple" by Samira Makhmalbaf (Iran), "Dasries" by Vera Chytilova (Czech Republic) "Sweetie" by Jane Campion from New Zealand, "La Cienaga — The Swamps" by Lucrecia Martel from Argentina and the landmark film "36 Chowringhe Lane" by Aparna Sen.

The festival, before it concludes on April 23, would travel to six major Indian cities — Delhi, Kolkata, Hyderabad, Chennai, Trivandrum and Bangalore, the sources said.

Chinese govt’s agenda on education, science

BEIJING, 5 March — Premier Wen Jiabao Friday pledged to continue implementing the strategy of invigorating China through science and education and stay on the road of sustainable development.

"In the course of development, we will steadily give priority to education and devote more efforts to develop modern distance resources to accelerating its development," Wen said in a report on government work at the opening of the Second Session of the Tenth National People’s Congress.

This year China will begin to implement the plan to make nine-year compulsory education basically available throughout the western region and basically eliminate illiteracy among the adults there by 2007. The central government will spend 10 billion yuan on this work.

Meanwhile, the central government will contribute six billion yuan to carry out the second phase of the plan for renovating dangerous primary and secondary school buildings in rural areas. Both central and local governments will increase their investment to develop modern distance education in rural primary and secondary schools.

First Int’l Women’s Film Festival to be held in India

MUMBAI, 5 March — An international festival of films by woman directors from India and four other countries, the first of its kind, will be held here from March 5.

The five-day festival — "Made by Women" — is to be inaugurated by film director Aparna Sen of India, the festival said.

The festival would also pay tribute to the first woman film-maker ever — French Producer-director Alice Guy, who made films in 1896 — a century ago, it said.

The films to be featured at the festival include "The Apple" by Samira Makhmalbaf (Iran), "Dasries" by Vera Chytilova (Czech Republic) "Sweetie" by Jane Campion from New Zealand, "La Cienaga — The Swamps" by Lucrecia Martel from Argentina and the landmark film "36 Chowringhe Lane" by Aparna Sen.

The festival, before it concludes on April 23, would travel to six major Indian cities — Delhi, Kolkata, Hyderabad, Chennai, Trivandrum and Bangalore, the sources said.

US soldier investigated in Iraq

BAKU, 5 March — The US military is investigating two incidents near Kirkuk involving claims that American soldiers killed five Iraqis while on missions to seek out insurgents, the Army said Thursday.

In one, a group of Iraqis claimed soldiers shot and killed four people Wednesday in the northern Iraqi city. In the other, an Iraqi man was killed 27 Feb during a US military operation to arrest insurgents.

Both involved soldiers from the 25th Infantry Division that arrived in Iraq about a month ago to replace soldiers who had been in the country for about a year. They followed a 18 Feb killing of an Iraqi girl, also near Kirkuk. Soldiers were cleared of any wrongdoing in that case.

"I don’t think it’s a case of unseemly soldiers being twicky on the trigger," Army spokeswoman Maj Josslyn Aberte told The Associated Press. "These are soldiers who have been specifically trained for the combat mission they are facing in Iraq."

Aberte said the military is investigating the complaints that soldiers from the 1st Battalion, 14th Infantry Regiment of the 25th Infantry Division killed four Iraqis early Wednesday.

She said the soldiers were on a mission to capture insurgents involved in attacking an American forward operation base in the area when militants fired AK-47 machine guns at them.

The soldiers returned fire and captured two men, one of whom was wounded. The wounded man was taken to Kirkuk Hospital for medical treatment.

“Later that day, some civilians approached a (US military) base claiming that four civilians were killed during the earlier fire fight," Aberte said. — Internet
Turkey vows to promote ties with Djibouti

ANKARA, 5 March — Turk- ish Foreign Minister and Deputy Prime Minister Abdullah Gül said on Wed- nesday that his country will fur- ther improve its relations with Djibouti while taking new steps in its policies towards Africa.

Gül made the remarks at a joint Press conference with visiting Djiboutian Minister of Foreign Affairs, Interna- tional Cooperation and Par- liamentary Relations Ali Abdi Farah.

The two ministers also signed an agreement on coop- eration in culture, education, science, Press, youth and sports between Turkey and Djibouti.

Gül said that despite the geographical distance between the two countries, there was a close friendship between them in the long history.

Commenting on the stra- tegic importance of the east- ern African country, Gül said that the Djibouti port was one of the most important ports in the continent and enhanced cooperation with it would be beneficial. — MNA/Xinhua

Indian scientists claim to devise technology for diabetes drug

NEW DELHI, 5 March — Indian scientists claim to have devised a technology which can speed up drug development against the disease for which currently there is no medicine in the world.

“Indians have filed the US and Indian patents for the technology,” Dr C S Dey, professor at the National Institute of Pharmaceutical Education and Research (NIPER), Punjab, told a symposium on Non-In- nocent Fatty Liver Disease, organised by Ranbaxy Sci- ence Foundation on Tues- day.

The new technique would reduce the expendi- ture on drug testing for dia- betes, hasten the process and is ethically more desirable. The development is sig- nificant in view of the fact that the world market for a diabetic drug is likely to be billions of dollars, he said.

The technology, in-vitro screening model, involves biotechnologically modify- ing animal cell lines so that they behave like diabetic cells. The cell lines that have been modified are muscle cells from mice, Dey said.

The potential drug mol- ecules can then be fed to these modified cells and their impact analysed. It would minimize analysis time as a molecule may be tested in as little as single day while in the conven- tional method, it would take months to see the impact of a drug.

In the usual screening of drug molecules against dia- betes, scientists need to kill a number of animals which are genetically modified for the purpose, Dey said.

Such animals are expen- sive, costing about 10,000 rupees to 20,000 rupees per piece. He said. Besides, ani- mal testing has been a prob- lem in the country, he added.

Thus, out of thousands of molecules, scientists can zero down to ten molecules which can be clinically tested on animals, the pro- fessor said. The obtaining alternative is to test all of them on animals.

The team is negotiating with companies for its com- mercialization. The tech- nique has potential not only in India but the world over as pharmaceutical compa- nies engaged in drug devel- opment against diabetes would like to use it, he said.

The team is working on further improving the tech- nology so that these cells can absorb more glucose from the medium, he said. — MNA/PTI

China saw 27.39% growth in social security insurance last year

BEIJING, 5 March — Chinese taxation departments collected a total of 169.174 billion yuan (20.481 billion US dollars) in social security insurance last year, up 27.39 per cent on-year-on-year. A spokesperson for the State Administration of Taxation said Wednesday that 129.645 billion yuan (15.695 billion dollars) in basic pension insurance was collected last year, up 22.54 per cent over the previous year, 10.031 billion yuan (1.247 billion dollars) in unemployment insurance and 27.32 billion yuan (3.077 billion dollars) in basic medical insurance.

The country’s taxation departments also collected a total of 1.425 billion yuan (172.5 million dollars) in workplace injury premiums and 751 million yuan (90.92 million dol- lars) in birth insurance, according to the administration. — MNA/Xinhua

Israel signs deal to import water from Turkey

JERUSALEM, 5 March — Israel on Thursday signed a deal to buy drinking water from Turkey in a move aimed in part at enhancing relations between the two Middle East allies.

Under the agreement, Israel will buy 50 million cubic metres of water a year from Turkey’s Manavgat River for 20 years. That would account for about three per cent of Israel’s annual fresh water consumption of 1.5 billion cubic metres.

Turkey and Israel have become important Israeli strategic ally in recent years and have widened security cooperation.

Turkey will ship the water to Israel in specially built tankers. A shipping company has yet to be chosen while Israel will equip its ports with a suitable water storage facility. — MNA/Reuters

Airbus, American blame each other for 2001 crash

WASHINGTON, 5 March — American Airlines and aircraft maker Airbus blamed each other on Wednesday for the second-worst air disaster in US history — a 2001 crash that killed 265 people in New York. The submissions also crystallize arguments the companies have been mak- ing piecemeal and in private since the Airbus A300-600 lost its tail fin over New York and plunged into a residen- tial neighborhood near John F. Kennedy Airport.

All 260 people on the American Airlines flight, bound for the Dominican Republic, and five on the ground were killed. The crash shook an already traum- atized New York City just two months after hijacked airliners slammed into the World Trade Center in the September 11 attacks.

The American Airlines crash was the first time any- one could recall a tail fin and rudder snapping off a com- mercial plane, creating a mys- tery that has tested the most advanced theories on the ef- fects of turbulence and aerody- namics on aircraft con- struction. — MNA/Reuters

Two die in helicopter crash near England airport

LONDON, 5 March — A helicopter crashed Wednes- day near Bournemouth Air- port, southern England, kill- ing two people on board.

The Augusta helicopter came down close to a wooded area about one mile east of the airport and burst into flames shortly before 2000 GMT, a BBC report said. A Dorset police spokesman said two bodies had been removed from the scene while police were still searching the area for any otherbodies. — MNA/Xinhua

BAGHRA, 5 March — The number of foreigners involved in attacks in Iraq has increased significantly, but Iraqi guerrillas remain the mainstay of the insurgency, a senior US military official said on Thursday.

Brigadier General Martin Dempsey said that while foreign fighters posed the big- gest threat in terms of the sophistication and effectiveness of their attacks, it was wrong to suggest Iraq was awash with foreign guerrillas.

“That’s a misconception,” he told re- porters. “When we say foreign fighters, we are really talking about expertise, financial support, sometimes about command and control.” So less than 10 per cent of the physical enemy is foreign fighter and that is proven true in the number of people we captured.”

Dempsey, commander of the 1st Ar- moured Division in charge of security in Baghdad, said in the past six months about 35 suspected foreign fighters had been taken into custody in the capital, mainly Syrians and Jordanians. — MNA/Reuters

Foreign fighters still small minority in Iraq

BAGHRA, 5 March — A rocket slammed into a Baghdad street near a telephones exchange on Thursday, killing at least three people, Iraqi police at the scene said.

On Wednesday, a bomb exploded in another telephone exchange in Baghdad, sparking fears that guerrillas were targeting Iraq’s communica- tions system in a new form of sabotage. The country’s en- ergy infrastructure has fre-
Sept 11 families disgusted by Bush campaign ads

New York, 5 March — Families who lost relatives in the September 11, 2001, attacks voiced outrage on Thursday at President George W Bush’s first ads of his re-election campaign that use images of the devastated World Trade Center to portray him as the right leader for tumultuous times.

“Families are enraged,” said Bill Doyle, 57, of New York, who is active in several September 11 family groups. “What I think is disturbing is that the president is trying to use 9/11 as a springboard for his re-election.”

“It’s entirely wrong. He’s had 3,500 deaths on his watch, including Iraq,” said Doyle, whose 25-year-old son, John Doyle, was killed in the World Trade Center collapse.

The Interior Department has designated the Otero Mesa, a large desert grassland in New Mexico, as the right leader for tumultuous times. The wilderness is the first new national monument created under the Antiquities Act, which allows presidents to protect cultural and natural resources.

A view of the Otero Mesa, a large desert grassland in New Mexico is seen in this undated photo released by the New Mexico Wilderness Alliance. The Interior Department has designated the Otero Mesa as the right leader for tumultuous times.

Iraqi police station comes under mortar attack

Mosul, 5 March — Guerrillas launched at least five mortar rounds on a police station and mosque in the northern Iraqi city of Mosul on Thursday, injuring three people including a police officer, police said.

Officers at the station in central Mosul said the attackers fired a volley of rounds, hitting the station, the street in front and an adjacent mosque, before fleeing by car.

Police cordoned off the area and began searching vehicles, witnesses said. One of the injured people was in serious condition, a police officer said.

The attack was the latest in a string on Iraqi police and security forces, which were set up by the country’s US occupiers as a key element in a plan to put Iraqis in charge of security before Washington hands them sovereignty in July.

Guerrillas assassinated a senior police commander in Mosul in February, when separate suicide attacks on a police station in the northern Iraqi city of Kirkuk and another just outside Baghdad killed dozens of people.

ASEAN Ministerial Meeting Retreat ends in Vietnam

Halong, 5 March — The ASEAN Ministerial Meeting Retreat ended here Thursday.

Delegates focused their discussions in the retreat on the three pillars, namely security, economy and socio-culture of the Association of South-East Asian Nations (ASEAN) community.

Nine ASEAN foreign ministers, general secretaries of the Malaysian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, who is on behalf of the foreign minister of Malaysia, and ASEAN General Secretary Ong Keng Yong also discussed measures to build the ASEAN community by 2020 on the three themes.

They talked about regional and international issues, including the upcoming admission of Myanmar, Laos and Cambodia to the Asia-Europe Meeting (ASEM), the possibility of establishing a peacekeeping force in ASEAN and the role of the United States in Iraq, Noer Hassan Wirajuda, Minister of Foreign Affairs of Indonesia, said after the retreat.

“We have discussed common concerns in a very friendly and open manner, even on sensitive issues,” he noted.

Wirajuda’s retreat’s delegates proposed that the 10th ASEAN summit be held in Laos in late 2005, and put forward concrete directions to strengthen ties between ASEAN and dialogue countries. Myanmar, Laos and Cambodia are potential candidates for the summit.

The issue of peacekeeping in ASEAN has been raised in the retreat, but it is too early. ASEAN is an organization which is unlike the EU (the European Union). Each country has its own policy about politics and military,” he concluded.

Father of hybrid rice suggests efforts to improve food security

Beijing, 5 March — An eminent Chinese agronomist and father of hybrid rice, Professor Yuan Longping, urges his government Thursday to spend more on projects to increase per-hectare yield and protect the country’s shrinking farmland resources so as to ensure food safety.

Professor Yuan, a noted academician of the Chinese Academy of Engineering, said China’s grain output continued to drop in the fifth consecutive year in 2003 to about 430 million tons from a record of approximately 520 million tons for 1998.

Yuan, a member of the National Committee of the Chinese People’s Political Consultative Conference (CPPCC) that is in its second plenary session, said governments at all levels should increase input in research programmes to increase per-hectare yield, and provide more direct subsidies to grain growers in a bid to fill them with zeal to produce more cereals.

Yuan, who is currently in Beijing for the on-going CPPCC session, said he would go on working hard and consistently on his super-hybrid rice project.

Hybrid rice, which has been introduced to more than half of the rice acreage in China, makes up 60 percent of its total rice output since it was developed by the prestigious agronomist Yuan Longping in the 1970s.

Partly thanks to the spread of hybrid rice strains, Chinese farmers are able to maintain rice production for food safety, while several million hectares of paddies have been released for growing other crops to raise farmers’ incomes.

Meanwhile, China has, since the early 1990s, sent veteran rice specialists to Bangladesh, India, Indonesia, Vietnam, Myanmar and other south and South-east Asian nations to impart hybrid rice technology, cultivate and other related technologies.

ASEAN supports “one-China” policy

Halong, 5 March — Members of the Association of South-East Asian Nations (ASEAN) have deep concern in situations in Taiwan, and continually supports the “one-China” policy, Indonesian Foreign Minister Noer Hassan Wirajuda said on Thursday.

He made the remarks after the ASEAN Ministerial Meeting Retreat which concluded here on Thursday.

ASEAN member countries have a strong interest in the maintenance of peace and stability in Taiwan in particular, and of course in the region in general. In this regard, ASEAN member countries reaffirm that they continue to support the “one-China” policy, he said.

Asia remains bright spot in world economy

New York, 5 March— Deutsche Asset Management reported Wednesday that Asia, excluding Japan, continued to be a bright spot in the global economy aided by its proximity to China.

In its report on Asia economic outlook, Deutsche Asset Management, which takes its headquarters here, said that China was enjoying a boom fuelled by rising consumer credit and robust confidence.

In Hong Kong there was room for spending to recover further as tourism from the Mainland increased. In Singapore and Taiwan, however, consumption would remain sluggish due to the drug on confidence from structural transition.

Overall, the economic situation in Japan was more favourable now than at any time in the last ten years. But Japanese economy was heavily dependent on foreign trade, and therefore, any sharp slowdown in either the US or China could undermine its recovery.
Hidaws hoisted atop MyoU pagodas at Mingaladon Garden City

YANGON, 5 March — Under the aegis of Kyakhitsaung Sayadaw Bhaddanta Pannyadipa, hidaws were hoisted atop 171 pagodas at Mingaladon Garden City on Fullmoon Day of Tabaung today. At the Mingaladon Garden City, replicas of Shwedagon Pagoda, Mandalay Maha Muni Image, Kayalatha Hanadawshin Pagoda, Bagan Dhammazedi Pagoda, Kyakhiyo Hanadawshin Pagoda, etc. have been built. Diamond orbs and bingetyma vans will also be hoisted atop the pagodas on 7 March. MNA

Wellwishers invited for sinking tube-wells

YANGON, 5 March — The Development Affairs Committees under the Ministry for Progress of Border Areas and National Races and Development Affairs are making concerted efforts in sinking tube-wells in order to get sufficient fresh water in rural areas in States and Divisions where water is scarce. One 200 feet deep two-inch diameter tube-well costs K 250,000; one 400 feet deep two-inch diameter tube-well costs K 500,000; and one 200 feet deep four-inch diameter tube-well costs K 500,000.

Those wishing to donate for the tube-well sinking projects for rural areas may contact the Director-General (Tel: 01-245420 & 253581), the Deputy Director-General (Tel: 01-240188), the Director (Engineering) (Tel: 01-249190), District Affairs Committee (Sagay Division Development Affairs Committee) (Tel: 071-21012), the Director (Mawgyaw Division Development Affairs Committee) (Tel: 063-23164) and the Director (Mandalay Development Affairs Committee) (Tel: 02-546675). MNA

Nursery Market Festival continues

YANGON, 5 March — The Nursery Market Festival continued at Myay Padetha Park in Bahan Township here today with the aim of providing necessary assistance to growers and attracting the public to be interested in agriculture, horticulture, livestock breeding and vegetable farming. Kitchen crops, fruits and saplings of herbal plants are being shown at the festival. Poultry farming and fish breeding are also exhibited there. MNA

China to launch new-generation communication satellite in 2005

BEIJING, 5 March — SinoSat-2, a new-generation communication satellite, is to be launched at Xichang space launch centre in 2005, according to sources with the Chinese Research Institute of Space Technology.

The new satellite, which is being assembled, had a bigger capacity and longer service duration, said Zhou Zhicheng, chief designer of the satellite.

The institute will start a month-long test for the launch in a few days, Zhou said. The satellite will be carried by Long March 3B rocket.

China faces asbestos disease crisis

WASHINGTON, 5 March — Ten-thousand Americans die each year from asbestos-related diseases and the number appears to be increasing in a growing public health crisis, according to a report by an environmental research group released on Thursday. The analysis by the Washington-based Environmental Working Group (EWG) also projects that more than 100,000 people in the United States will die of four asbestos-related diseases — mesothelioma, asbestosis, lung cancer and gastrointestinal cancer — over the next ten years.

The nonprofit research organization said it based its analysis on 25 years of US Government data on asbestos mortality and examined the toll from just two causes of asbestos deaths — mesothelioma and asbestosis.

The report said that while most of the deaths were among workers who were exposed to the fire-proofing mineral decades ago, more than one million people are currently exposed to asbestos on the job and millions more are exposed to asbestos in the environment.

Asbestos was widely used for fireproofing and insulation until the 1970s. Scientists have concluded that inhaled asbestos fibers are linked to cancer and other diseases.

“We’re at the beginning of a tidal wave of asbestos diseases and mortality that needs to be brought to the attention of the public, federal policymakers and health officials,” the report’s author, Richard Wiles, said in an interview.

Among recommendations to address what it says is a public health problem of epidemic proportions, the EWG report calls for an immediate ban on asbestos.

Dr Richard Lemen, an occupational and environmental health consultant and former assistant US Surgeon General, said that beyond a ban, public health agencies need to work to dispel the misconception that asbestos is no longer a threat.

“Asbestos is still with us. We have reduced exposure and that’s a step in the right direction,” Lemen said in a telephone interview. “What we haven’t done is what we need to do.”

The EWG report also recommends federal asbestos health screening and a “fair measure of assistance” for victims of asbestos exposure. — MNA/Reuters

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

Minister for Information Brig-Gen Kyaw Huan and wife offer robes and provisions to a Sayadaw. (News on page 1) — MNA

International Women’s Day

8th March 2004

THE NEW LIGHT OF MYANMAR Saturday, 6 March, 2004 7
Religious titles conferred on members of the Sangha, nuns and laity
Religious titles conferred...

(from page 1)

Religious Affairs Brig-Gen Thura Aung Ko supplicated on religious matters.

Next, on behalf of Chairman of the State Sangha Maha Nayaka Committee Abhidhaja Maha Ratna Guru Abhidhaja Agga Maha Saddhammajotika Myingyan Sayadaw Bhaddanta Panñinda-bhivamsa administered the Five Precepts to the congregation.


Member of the State Peace and Development Council General Thura Shwe Mann presented certificates of Abhidhaja Maha Wiruddhavaya Taikthit, East Daywyn Ward, Maha Wiruddha Monastery in Sagaing, Bhamadanta Bhagyiya.

Secretary-1 Lt-Gen Soe Win presented certificates of Bago Division, Bhaddanta Indriya, Maha Wiruddha Monastery in Sagaing, Bhamadanta Bhagyiya.

Secretary-1 Lt-Gen Thein Sein presented certificates of Agga Maha Saddhammajotika Title to four Sayadaws.

(See page 10)
Presented certificates of Agga Maha Saddhamma Jotikadhaja Title to three Sayadaws.

Member of the State Peace and Development Council Lt-Gen Tin Aye of the Ministry of Defence presented certificates of Agga Maha Saddhamma Jotikadhaja Title to five Sayadaws.

Commander-in-Chief (Navy) Rear Admiral Soe Thinn presented certificates of Agga Maha Saddhamma Jotikadhaja Title to five Sayadaws.

Commander-in-Chief (Air) Maj-Gen Myat Hein presented certificates of Agga Maha Saddhamma Jotikadhaja Title to five Sayadaws.

Commander Maj-Gen Myint Swe presented certificates of Agga Maha Saddhamma Jotikadhaja Title to five Sayadaws.

Minister for Health Dr Kyaw Myint presented certificates of Agga Maha Saddhamma Jotikadhaja Title to five Sayadaws.

Minister for Religious Affairs Brig-Gen Thura Aye Maung presented certificates of Agga Maha Saddhamma Jotikadhaja Title to five Sayadaws.

Minister for National Planning and Economic Development U Soe Thinn presented certificates of Agga Maha Saddhamma Jotikadhaja Title to five Sayadaws.

Minister for Communications, Posts and Telegraphs Brig-Gen Thein Zaw presented certificates of Agga Maha Gandhavacaka Pandita Title to five Sayadaws; Minister for Livestock and Fisheries Brig-Gen Maung Thein presented certificates of Maha Saddhamma Jotikadhaja Title to six Sayadaws;

Minister for Energy Brig-Gen Lun Thii presented certificates of Maha Saddhamma Jotikadhaja Title to six Sayadaws; Minister for Education U Than Aung presented certificates of Maha Saddhamma Jotikadhaja Title to six Sayadaws; Minister for Ports Brig-Gen Thura Aye Myint presented certificates of Agga Maha Gandhavacaka Pandita Title to six Sayadaws; Mayor Brig-Gen Aung Thein presented certificates of Maha Saddhamma Jotikadhaja Title to six Sayadaws; Chief Justice U Aung Thein presented certificates of Agga Maha Gandhavacaka Pandita Title to six Sayadaws and Maha Saddhamma Jotikadhaja Title to six Sayadaws; Attorney-General U Aye Maung presented certificates of Maha Saddhamma Jotikadhaja Title to six Sayadaws; Auditor-General Maj-Gen Lun Maung presented certificates of Maha Saddhamma Jotikadhaja Title to six Sayadaws.

Chairman of Civil Service Selection and Training Board Dr Than Nyunt presented Maha Saddhamma Jotikadhaja Title to six Sayadaws and Kumamthana Cariya Title to six Sayadaws; Deputy Minister for Agriculture and Irrigation Brig-Gen Khin Maung presented Maha Saddhamma Jotikadhaja Title to six Sayadaws; Deputy Minister for Construction U Tint Swe presented Maha Saddhamma Jotikadhaja Title to seven Sayadaws; Deputy Minister for Forestry Brig-Gen Tin Maung presented Maha Saddhamma Jotikadhaja Title to six Sayadaws; Deputy Minister for Transport Col Nyan Tun presented Maha Saddhamma Jotikadhaja Title to seven Sayadaws; Deputy Minister for Water Resources Brig-Gen Khin Maung presented Maha Saddhamma Jotikadhaja Title to six Sayadaws; Deputy Minister for Peace and Development U Mynn Win presented Maha Saddhamma Jotikadhaja Title to seven Sayadaws; Deputy Minister for Peace and Development U Mynn Win presented Maha Saddhamma Jotikadhaja Title to six Sayadaws; Deputy Minister for Peace and Development U Mynn Win presented Maha Saddhamma Jotikadhaja Title to seven Sayadaws.

Minister for Rail Transport Maj-Gen Aung Min presented certificates of Agga Maha Saddhamma Jotikadhaja Title to six Sayadaws; Minister for Mines Brig-Gen Ohn Maung presented certificates of Agga Maha Gandhavacaka Pandita Title to five Sayadaws; Deputy Minister for Agriculture and Irrigation Brig-Gen Khin Maung presented Maha Saddhamma Jotikadhaja Title to six Sayadaws; Deputy Minister for Peace and Development U Mynn Win presented Maha Saddhamma Jotikadhaja Title to seven Sayadaws; Deputy Minister for Peace and Development U Mynn Win presented Maha Saddhamma Jotikadhaja Title to six Sayadaws; Deputy Minister for Peace and Development U Mynn Win presented Maha Saddhamma Jotikadhaja Title to seven Sayadaws.

Minister for Defence Lt-Gen Maung Bo presented certificates of Agga Maha Saddhamma Jotikadhaja Title to six Sayadaws.

Lt-Gen Khin Maung Than presented certificates of Agga Maha Saddhamma Jotikadhaja Title to five Sayadaws.

Lt-Gen Aung Htwe presented certificates of Agga Maha Saddhamma Jotikadhaja Title to six Sayadaws.

Lt-Gen Maung Maung presented certificates of Agga Maha Saddhamma Jotikadhaja Title to five Sayadaws.

Lt-Gen Khin Maung Than presented certificates of Agga Maha Saddhamma Jotikadhaja Title to five Sayadaws.

Lt-Gen Maung Bo presented certificates of Agga Maha Saddhamma Jotikadhaja Title to six Sayadaws.

Lt-Gen Maung Bo presented certificates of Agga Maha Saddhamma Jotikadhaja Title to five Sayadaws; Deputy Minister for Transport Col Nyan Tun presented Maha Saddhamma Jotikadhaja Title to six Sayadaws; Deputy Minister for Peace and Development U Mynn Win presented Maha Saddhamma Jotikadhaja Title to seven Sayadaws; Deputy Minister for Peace and Development U Mynn Win presented Maha Saddhamma Jotikadhaja Title to six Sayadaws; Deputy Minister for Peace and Development U Mynn Win presented Maha Saddhamma Jotikadhaja Title to seven Sayadaws; Deputy Minister for Peace and Development U Mynn Win presented Maha Saddhamma Jotikadhaja Title to six Sayadaws; Deputy Minister for Peace and Development U Mynn Win presented Maha Saddhamma Jotikadhaja Title to seven Sayadaws; Deputy Minister for Peace and Development U Mynn Win presented Maha Saddhamma Jotikadhaja Title to six Sayadaws; Deputy Minister for Peace and Development U Mynn Win presented Maha Saddhamma Jotikadhaja Title to seven Sayadaws; Deputy Minister for Peace and Development U Mynn Win presented Maha Saddhamma Jotikadhaja Title to six Sayadaws; Deputy Minister for Peace and Development U Mynn Win presented Maha Saddhamma Jotikadhaja Title to seven Sayadaws; Deputy Minister for Peace and Development U Mynn Win presented Maha Saddhamma Jotikadhaja Title to six Sayadaws; Deputy Minister for Peace and Development U Mynn Win presented Maha Saddhamma Jotikadhaja Title to seven Sayadaws; Deputy Minister for Peace and Development U Mynn Win presented Maha Saddhamma Jotikadhaja Title to six Sayadaws; Deputy Minister for Peace and Development U Mynn Win presented Maha Saddhamma Jotikadhaja Title to seven Sayadaws; Deputy Minister for Peace and Development U Mynn Win presented Maha Saddhamma Jotikadhaja Title to six Sayadaws; Deputy Minister for Peace and Development U Mynn Win presented Maha Saddhamma Jotikadhaja Title to seven Sayadaws; Deputy Minister for Peace and Development U Mynn Win presented Maha Saddhamma Jotikadhaja Title to six Sayadaws; Deputy Minister for Peace and Development U Mynn Win presented Maha Saddhamma Jotikadhaja Title to seven Sayadaws; Deputy Minister for Peace and Development U Mynn Win presented Maha Saddhamma Jotikadhaja Title to six Sayadaws; Deputy Minister for Peace and Development U Mynn Win presented Maha Saddhamma Jotikadhaja Title to seven Sayadaws; Deputy Minister for Peace and Development U Mynn Win presented Maha Saddhamma Jotikadhaja Title to six Sayadaws; Deputy Minister for Peace and Development U Mynn Win presented Maha Saddhamma Jotikadhaja Title to seven Sayadaws; Deputy Minister for Peace and Development U Mynn Win presented Maha Saddhamma Jotikadhaja Title to six Sayadaws; Deputy Minister for Peace and Development U Mynn Win presented Maha Saddhamma Jotikadhaja Title to seven Sayadaws; Deputy Minister for Peace and Development U Mynn Win presented Maha Saddhamma Jotikadhaja Title to six Sayadaws; Deputy Minister for Peace and Development U Mynn Win presented Maha Saddhamma Jotikadhaja Title to seven Sayadaws; Deputy Minister for Peace and Development U Mynn Win presented Maha Saddhamma Jotikadhaja Title to six Sayadaws; Deputy Minister for Peace and Development U Mynn Win presented Maha Saddhamma Jotikadhaja Title to seven Sayadaws; Deputy Minister for Peace and Development U Mynn Win presented Maha Saddhamma Jotikadhaja Title to six Sayadaws; Deputy Minister for Peace and Development U Mynn Win presented Maha Saddhamma Jotikadhaja Title to seven Sayadaws; Deputy Minister for Peace and Development U Mynn Win presented Maha Saddhamma Jotikadhaja Title to six Sayadaws; Deputy Minister for Peace and Development U Mynn Win presented Maha Saddhamma Jotikadhaja Title to seven Sayadaws; Deputy Minister for Peace and Development U Mynn Win presented Maha Saddhamma Jotikadhaja Title to six Sayadaws; Deputy Minister for Peace and Development U Mynn Win presented Maha Saddhamma Jotikadhaja Title to seven Sayadaws; Deputy Minister for Peace and Development U Mynn Win presented Maha Saddhamma Jotikadhaja Title to six Sayadaws; Deputy Minister for Peace and Development U Mynn Win presented Maha Saddhamma Jotikadhaja Title to seven Sayadaws; Deputy Minister for Peace and Development U Mynn Win presented Maha Saddhamma Jotikadhaja Title to six Sayadaws; Deputy Minister for Peace and Development U Mynn Win presented Maha Saddhamma Jotikadhaja Title to seven Sayadaws; Deputy Minister for Peace and Development U Mynn Win presented Maha Saddhamma Jotikadhaja Title to six Sayadaws; Deputy Minister for Peace and Development U Mynn Win presented Maha Saddhamma Jotikadhaja Title to seven Sayadaws; Deputy Minister for Peace and Development U Mynn Win presented Maha Saddhamma Jotikadhja
Religious titles conferred...

(from page 10)

Afterwards, Vice-Senior General Maung Aye conferred Agga Maha Thiri Thudhamma Manijotadhara title on five lay men. Prime Minister General Khin Nyunt presented Thiri Thudhamma Manijotadhara title to four lay men and Thiri Thudhamma Thiri Thudhamma Manijotadhara title to one lay man. General Thura Shwe Mann presented Thirha Thudhamma Manijotadhara title to three lay men and Thudhamma Manijotadhara title to two lay men. Secretary-1 Lt-Gen Soe Win gave away Thudhamma Manijotadhara title to three lay men and Maha Saddhamma Jotikadhaja title to two lay men. Secretary-2 Lt-Gen Thein Sein conferred Maha Saddhamma Jotikadhaja title on five lay men. Member of the State Peace and Development Council Lt-Gen Ye Myint of the Ministry of Defence conferred Maha Saddhamma Jotikadhaja title on three lay men.

Daw Kyaieng Kyaieng conferred Agga Maha Thiri Thudhamma Thiri Thudhamma Thiri Thudhamma Thein title on three lay women and Thiri Thudhamma Thein title on two lay women. Daw Mya Mya San gave away Thiri Thudhamma Thein title to four lay women and Thira Thudhamma Thein title to one lay woman. Dr Daw Khin Win Shwe also presented Thira Thudhamma Thein title to five lay women. Daw Khin Than Nwe presented Thira Thudhamma Thein title to five lay women. Daw Khin Lay Thet conferred Maha Thiri Thudhamma Thiri Thudhamma Thein title to two lay women.

Afterwards, Minister for Religious Affairs Brig-Gen Thura Myint Maung supplicated on religious affairs that nowadays the government and the people are giving encouragement to purification, promotion and propagation of the Sasana such as wiping out of dogmatisms, all-round renovation of historic pagodas and stupas, building of religious edifices where necessary. On 4 January 2004, the State Peace and Development issued Notification No. 1/2004 to offer religious titles to the Sayadaws. In conclusion, the minister supplicated that the government and the people are to join hands in serving the interest of the Sasana. Next, Joint-Secretary of the State Sangha Maha Nayaka Committee Nyaungdon Ponnamayama Zaykyuangtaik Presiding Nayaka Sayadaw Abhidhaja Maha Rathana Guru Bhaddanta Osadhabhivamsa gave the Sammodaniya Ovadakatha.

Then, Secretary Sayadaw Abhidhaja Maha Rathana Guru Bhaddanta Magway Sayawd Bhaddanta Limara delivered a sermon. The congregation shared merits gained before the concluding of the religious title offering ceremony.

After the ceremony, the rice and provision offering ceremony followed. At the ceremony, families of the Ministry of Defence, the office of the Prime Minister, families of Military Intelligence, the office of the State Peace and Development Council and Central Offices, families of the Adjutant-General’s Office and the Quartermaster-General’s Office, Defence Services (Navy), Defence Services (Air), Yangon Command Headquarters, ministries, the Supreme Court, the Attorney-General’s Office, the Auditor-General’s Office, Yangon City Development Committee, district and township Peace and Development Councils, religious and social organizations, UMFCCI, companies and wellwishers donated rice and provisions to title recipient members of the Sangha and nuns at the designated places.

At the donation ceremony, Daw Kyaieng Kyaieng, Daw Mya Mya San, Prime Minister General Khin Nyunt and wife Dr Daw Khin Win Shwe, Daw Khin Than Nwe, Daw Khin Lay Thet, Secretary-1 Lt-Gen Soe Win and wife Daw Than Nwe, Secretary-2 Lt-Gen Thein Sein and wife Daw Khin Win Shwe, members of the State Peace and Development Council and their wives, the Commander-in-Chief (Navy) and wife, the Commander-in-Chief (Air) and wife, Commander Maj-Gen Myint Swe and wife and the ministers and their wives, the Chief Justice, the Attorney-General, the Auditor-General, the Mayor, the deputy ministers and their wives, departmental heads, officials and local people took designated places and presented rice and offertories worth K 70,579,115 to the title recipient Sayadaws and nuns.

Wellwishers and those present at the ceremony were served with bottled water and soft drinks by Sunday Evening Sanitation Group of Kaba Aye Pagoda. — MNA
CAIRO, 5 March — An Egyptianologist who had found the first evidence that the earliest rulers of Egypt had influence deep into the Western Desert, more than 120 miles from their powerbase in the Nile Valley, said her team had discovered a royal name dating from before 3,000 BC inscribed on a rock outcrop near the oasis of Kharga.

Salima Ikram of the American University in Cairo said her team had discovered a rock outcrop near the oasis of Kharga. She told Reuters she had found the name of the previously unknown king as Aa and thought he lived about 5,000 years ago.

Ikram said her team had discovered a royal name dating from before 3,000 BC inscribed on a rock outcrop near the oasis of Kharga. She told Reuters she had found the name of the previously unknown king as Aa and thought he lived about 5,000 years ago.

Egyptologist finds early king’s name in desert

Drought causes less wine production in South Africa

JOHANNESBURG, 5 March — The drought in South Africa’s Western Cape Prov-ince means that the 2004 wine grape harvest will be slightly lower than last year’s, according to the industry’s in-formation gathering body.

The latest estimate of the 2004 wine grape harvest was 1.23 million tons. SA Wine Industry Information & Sys-tems executive manager Yvette van der Merwe said in a statement on Tuesday.

This represented a decrease of 0.8 per cent from the 2003 harvest.

It was expected that the 2004 wine harvest, including the produce concentrate for non-alcoholic purposes, rebate and distilling wine, would total 947.9 million liters at an av-erage recovery of 772 liters per ton of grapes.

This was 16.8 million li- ters or 1.74 per cent less than what was made in mid-January this year.

The most important rea-sons for the decrease can gen-erally be attributed to the heat wave that occurred in Febru-ary and the drought, currently experienced in the Western Cape, she said.

The Orange River was the only region that showed a decrease in 2003 compared to the previous year.

The domestic sales of natural wine showed a 12.1-per-cent decrease in 2003 compared to 2002, and would decrease by a further 4.4 per cent in 2004. Exports however grew by an estimated 9.7 per cent and were expected to increase by an additional 11.5 per cent in 2004.

Indonesia expects bank of China’s loan for gas field project

JAKARTA, 5 March — Bank of China has expressed agree-ment to disburse more than $1 billion US dollars in loan to finance the liquefied natural gas (LNG) project at Tangguh gas field, an Indonesian official said Wednesday.

Bank of China agreed to disburse more than $1.1 billion US dollars during a recent meeting with us,” Kardaya Warnika, deputy head of the Indonesian oil and gas execu-tive board (BP Migas), was quoted as saying by Detikcom online news service.

He added Japan is also interested in investing in the project through the Japan Bank for International Coop-eration (JBIC) but no com-mitment has been mutually reached.

“It’s more likely that China will become the major finan-cial sponsor of the project,” he said.

Located in the eastern-most province of Papua, the Tangguh gas field is the ma-jor gas source for the govern-ment’s LNG export.

The field is projected to supply 2.7 million tons of LNG a year to China’s Fujian Province starting in 2007 and Indonesia has planned to supply 1.5 million tons a year to South Korea also from the same project.

Last December, the gov-ernment and Beyond Petro-liersc issued a letter of objection on the Tangguh project.

Russia says US plans to put armed guards on flights “negative”

MOSCOW, 5 March — A senior government official said on Wednesday that Russia opposed US plans to put armed guards on pas-senger flights having tried similar experiments with disastrous results, RIA news agency reported.

“Putting armed guards on passenger flights can be more negative than positive,” it quoted acting Deputy Trans-port Minister Gennady Mov of as saying.

The US Government has ordered foreign airlines to put “air marshals” on selected flights to and from the United States as a precaution against a repeat of the sui-cide hijack attacks in the United States on September 11, 2001.

“Our aviation security department has prepared a letter of objection on this for the United States,” Mov said.

He said the Russian Union put used armed guards on passenger planes during the 1970s. But when a TU-104 airliner was hijacked, the guard fired at the hijackers and hit an explosive device, caus-ing a catastrophe.

Moskov did not specify which US flight he was referring to, but according to data on a bomb on an Aeroflot TU- 1044 killed 81 people in May 1972.

He also said terrorists might see an armed guard as a means of getting hold of a weapon on an aeroplane.

Australia, NZ discuss single economic market

CANNIBRA, 5 March — The Australian and New Zea-land prime ministers on Wednesday thinned their support to advance a single economic market linking their countries.

At a joint press confer-ence held here, both John Howard and visiting Helen Clark said the two countries’ relationship will go beyond the current bilat-eral Close Economic Relations (CER) trade agreement.

The 21-year-old CER has virtually removed all trade barriers between the two countries. The two countries are working on a single acc-count standard and a harmoniza-tion of the banking sys-tems of the two countries.

The two prime ministers also agreed that the two countries should work harder to help the Doha Round of World Trade Organization talks break through global trade reforms. “The intransigence of the larger trading blocs, particularly the European Union and the apparent re-luctance of other big agricul-tural subsidisers, the Ameri-500 billion in trade this year in this area, means that we have to work harder through the Cairns group to revive Doha and to keep it very much on track,” Howard said.

352 people die of dengue fever in Indonesia

JAKARTA, 5 March — The death toll of the dengue fever across Indonesia has reached 352, while the sufferers have increased to 2,384 since the disease began to hit the coun-try in January, a spokeswoman of the Health Ministry said Wednesday. Two people died of the disease and 1,625 peo-ple became new patients on Wednesday according to the Health Ministry.

But the number of prov-inces experiencing the ex-traordinary cases decreased to 12 from 13, according to the spokeswoman.

Russia says US plans to put armed guards on flights “negative”

Egyptologists have been piecing together the political history of Dynasty Zero only for the past few decades and do not claim to have identi-fied all major rulers of the pe-riod. They have worked with a new light on Egypt’s political history, which traditionally began when the first king of the First Dynasty united the north and the south.

Egyptologist Corinna Rossi of the North Kharga Oasis Survey project, said the inscription lay on a wall of a tomb of a nobleman.

He said the inscription lay on a wall of a tomb of a nobleman. She also said terrorists might see an armed guard as a means of getting hold of a weapon on an aeroplane.
Scientists say ants, like humans, avoid traffic congestion

LONDON, 5 March—Ants, just like motorists, hate congestion and use alternative routes to avoid it, scientists said on Wednesday.

The industrious insects push and shove each other out of the way when it gets too crowded, forcing some to find another route from a food source back to the nest.

“Ants are able to find a solution when they are faced with congestion on trails,” said Vincent Fourcassie, a biologist at the Centre for Cognitive Animal Research in Toulouse, France.

In a study published in the science journal Nature, Fourcassie and a team of researchers analyzed videotapes of thousands of ants in an experiment on collective movement.

Using a mathematical model, they explained how the individual behaviour of the ants affected their collective movement and group behaviour.

Foraging ants prefer to carry food along a favourite trail that is marked with scent clues. In the experiment, the insects had to cross a diamond-shaped bridge between the location of the food and their nest.—MNA/Reuters

Study says drugs cut kidney failure risk in lupus

BOSTON, 5 March—Patients with lupus have a better chance of preventing kidney failure if they start taking one of two drugs which suppress the immune system, researchers reported on Wednesday.

A study on Wednesday found that people with lupus, a chronic disease in which the immune system can confuse healthy and foreign tissues and sometimes attacks both, have a 57 per cent chance of developing kidney disease.

By comparison, one of the drugs found to be effective, azathioprine, worked about 75 per cent of the time. The other drug, mycophenolate mofetil, was effective in about 77 per cent of the volunteers.

The research team, led by Gabriel Conteras of the University of Miami, said there were not enough people in the study to determine whether mycophenolate mofetil, marketed as CellCept by Roche, was actually better than azathioprine, sold by several companies.

An editorial in the Journal said both drugs “are good options for maintenance therapy” in patients whose lupus was damaging their kidneys.—MNA/Reuters

Early copy of “Hamlet” could fetch up to $2m

NEW YORK, 5 March—To bid, or not to bid, that is the question that will face collectors when offered a 1611 edition of Shakespeare’s Hamlet at auction next month.

The extremely rare third quarto edition of the tragedy, that was first published in 1603 is from the collection of Mary, Viscountess Eccles, and is expected to fetch between 1.5 million US dollars and 2 million US dollars at Christie’s sale on 14 April.—MNA/Reuters

Sony, Marvel plan to shoot “Spider-Man 3” movie

LOS ANGELES, 5 March—Sony Pictures is already planning to shoot a third sequel, Sony Pictures confirmed on Wednesday.

Sony Pictures had already started development plans for a third Spider-Man movie with comic books publisher Marvel Enterprises Inc., an unidentified Sony Pictures spokesman said.

The plan for a third film was first disclosed Tuesday by Marvel’s film chief Avi Arad.

Speaking to financial analysts and reporters on a conference call, Arad said a “Spider-Man 3” movie could possibly come out in 2006, but he would play it safe by predicting its first release in 2007.—MNA/Xinhua

Americans under 25 do not save for retirement

BOSTON, 5 March—Millions of young Americans are not putting away any money for retirement, according to a new study released days after the top US central banker warned federal retirement benefits may soon need to be cut.

According to a study conducted by CIGNA Retirement & Investment Services, one-third of all US workers under the age of 25 are not participating in company retirement plans.

Instead, they are spending their salaries on everyday expenses and saving a little for big-ticket items like new cars or houses, the study found.

The survey was released only one week after Federal Reserve Chairman Alan Greenspan said Congress should consider trimming future Social Security benefits by raising the retirement age and offering less generous adjustments to future payments.

For US workers who are not saving for the future now and face the prospect of receiving fewer benefits later, Arad said, they may prove to be far less glamorous than many people had hoped.

“We are definitely on a road to disaster here,” said Rick Meigs, president of Web site http://www.401khelpcenter.com..—MNA/Reuters
Inter face Benfica, Celtic get Barca in UEFA Cup

London, 5 March—Inter Milan will meet Benfica and last season’s finalists Celtic take on Barcelona in a UEFA Cup fourth round draw filled with former European champions.

Liverpool play Olympique Marseille in another showcase clash thrown up by the fourth round draw at UEFA’s Nyon headquarters in Switzerland on Thursday.

With four teams, Spain is the best represented nation. In addition to Barca’s clash with Celtic, twice Champions League finalists Valencia take on Genclerbirligi of Turkey. Villarreal play Italy’s AS Roma and Real Mallorca face English team New Castle United.

The two leg matches will be played on March 11, with the second leg ties on March 25. Inter, who won this competition three times in 1990s, will start out with home advantage at the San Siro against Portugal’s Benfica but almost certainly without talisman Christian Vieri.

The Italian striker was sent off in the closing minutes of Europe’s last-gasp draw with Sochaux which booked his side into the fourth round on the away goals rule.

Adding further spice, the winners will then meet either four-times European champions Liverpool or Marseille in the quarter-finals. Liverpool, whose boss Gerard Houllier will be returning to his home country for the second leg at the Stade Velodrome, have come through a turbulent week with flying colours.

Liverpool revealed that Houllier had received a death threat after the club’s mediocre form this season, but the Frenchman insisted it had not dimmed his love of the club or the city.

The players answered their critics by hammering Levski Sofia 4-2 on Wednesday for a 6-2 aggregate win, throwing down the gauntlet to a Marseille team with an old foe, former Manchester United keeper Fabien Barthez, between the posts.

Scottish club Celtic, the first British club to win the European Cup back in 1967, will have to make the most of their home leg before travelling to the Nou Camp.

Barca will be looking for a potential all-Spanish quartefinal if Villarreal see off Roma. New Castle manager Bobby Robson expressed some relief at being drawn with Mallorca, though the former Barca boss was taking nothing for granted. —MNA/Reuters

Howell targets Ryder Cup after strong start in Dubai

Dubai, 5 March—Former winner David Howell signalled his Ryder Cup intentions after a five-under-par 67 in the Dubai Desert Classic first round on Thursday.

The 28-year-old Briton, champion at Dubai Creek Golf and Yacht Club in 1999, was one of the most consistent players in Europe’s last season and is determined to play his way on to the European Ryder Cup team at Oakland Hills this September.

“I definitely feel I can make it,” he told reporters after mixing six birdies with a solitary bogey in bright sunshine at Emirates Golf Course. “Consistently, it relies upon playing well but it is a goal of mine.”

“I played the Walker Cup and I loved that.”

Howell won 2-1/2 points out of three in Britain and Ireland’s 1995 victory over the United States in the Walker Cup amateur team competition.

He finished 16th in the 2003 European Tour order of merit and lies 12th in the overall European Ryder Cup standings for this year.

Bernhard Langer’s 12-man team to take on the US will comprise the top five in a Ryder Cup world points list, the leading five not otherwise qualified in a Ryder Cup European points list and two captain’s picks.

“In previous years I’ve been reasonably close (to selection),” said Howell. “I played like I did last year, wouldn’t be a million miles away, even without winning.”

The Englishman ended 2003 with earnings of 1.03 million euros (1.26 million US dollars), including four top-eight finishes in September.

He has not won since making his European Tour breakthrough in Dubai in 1999 but believes he has become a much more consistent player.

“It’s taken a lot of hard work to become a lot more consistent and I am more consistent. I’m not really paying any more great golf than I used to, I’m just playing a lot less bad golf and waiting for the good stuff to come out.”

“When I’m good enough to get in (the Ryder Cup), I will,” he added.

The 2004 Ryder Cup will take place between holders Europe and the United States at OakHall Hills Country Club in Detroit, Michigan from September 17-19.

MNA/Reuters

Owen says death threats part of modern game

London, 5 March—England striker Michael Owen has received several death threats in his career but he said on Thursday it was “part and parcel” of the modern game.

“There is no place for this kind of thing in the game or in life,” Owen told the Liverpool web site.

“Sadly, these days it seems it can happen to anyone in a high profile position. I can’t tell you how many times it has happened to me now.”

Owen’s club manager, Liverpool’s Gerard Houllier, received a death threat in the past last week that is being investigated by police.
Prime Minister attends ceremony to drive stake for construction of Gandakuti of Tampalawha Maha Muni Buddha Image in Bago

YANGON, 5 March — Prime Minister General Khin Nyunt, accompanied by members of the State Peace and Development Council Lt-Gen Khin Maung Than, ministers, deputy ministers, officials of the State Peace and Development Council Office, departmental heads and officials, left here by car this morning.

They were welcomed at Wanbawdat Bridge near Thayagon Model Village, Bago Division, by Chairman of Bago Division Peace and Development Council Commander of Southern Command Maj-Gen Ko Ko and officials.

Afterwards, the Prime Minister and party proceeded to the construction site of Theravada Gandakuti Taikkyaungdawgyi in Bago where Tampalawha Maha Muni Buddha Image will be kept.

At 7.30 am, the ceremony to drive stake for construction of the Image was held in conjunction with the cornerstone laying ceremony at the venue, attended by Prime Minister General Khin Nyunt.

Also present on the occasion were Bago Dhammalankara Monastery Sayadaw Abhidhaja Agga Maha Saddhammajotiika Bhaddanta Visuddha and members of the Sangha, Lt-Gen Khin Maung Than, Commander Maj-Gen Ko Ko, the ministers, the deputy ministers, officials of the State Peace and Development Council Office, departmental heads, local authorities, social and religious organizations, wellwishers and local people. Sayadaw Bhaddanta Visuddha administered the Nine Precepts.

Next, the Prime Minister offered Yadana stake, Yadana casket, Golden pot and provisions to the Sayadaw. Lt-Gen Khin Maung Than, Commander Maj-Gen Ko Ko and party also donated provisions to the Sayadaws.

Then, Bago Panhlaing Monastery Sayadaw Agga Maha Pandita Agga Maha Saddhamma Jotikadha Bhaddanta Sasana delivered a sermon, followed by sharing of merits gained. Afterwards, the stake driving ceremony and the cornerstone-laying ceremony followed.

The Prime Minister drove the stake at the centre of the foundation. Then, the ministers and the deputy ministers drove stakes at the designated places.

The Prime Minister placed the gems casket at the centre of the foundation. Dhammalankara Sayadaw also put the golden pot in which various kinds of gems are kept, in the foundation.

At the auspicious time, Prime Minister General Khin Nyunt, Lt-Gen Khin Maung Than, Commander Maj-Gen Ko Ko and the ministers laid cornerstones at the designated places.

The General then laid the bronze plaque and sprinkled scented water on it. Afterwards, Prime Minister General Khin Nyunt performed the rituals of golden and silver showers to mark the success of the ceremony. Next, they paid homage to Sayadaw Bhaddanta Visuddha.

The Prime Minister and the party proceeded to the work site of Myathalyangon reclining Buddha image in Bago and paid obeisance to the Image.

After hearing the reports on construction tasks presented by Myanmar handicraft technicians, Prime Minister General Khin Nyunt gave instructions on construction of the Image.

Next, they watered Bo tree in the compound of the goda. The Prime Minister and party arrived back here in the afternoon.

Secretary-1 inspects Water Treatment Plant Project

YANGON, 5 March — Secretary-1 of the State Peace and Development Council Lt-Gen Soe Win inspected the Water Treatment Plant Project being undertaken by the Yangon City Development Committee in Thanlyetsum, Botahtaung Township, this morning. Accompanied by YCDC Chairman Mayor Brig-Gen Aung Thein Lin, Deputy Minister for Industry-2 Lt-Col Khin Maung Kyaw, Deputy Minister for Science and Technology Dr Chan Nyin, Vice-Mayor Col Maung Pa, officials of the State Peace and Development Council Office, and departmental heads, the Secretary-1 heard a report by YCDC Secretary U Kyi Win on the purpose of the project.

Dr Tun Than Tun of the YCDC also reported on area of the project, water treatment process, arrangements made for arrival of machinery for the project, and work progress. The Mayor gave a supplementary report. Regarding the reports, the Secretary-1 gave necessary instructions. Afterwards, the officials reported on benefits to be gained on completion of the project with the use of a scale model.

The Secretary-1 looked around work progress at the project site. The project is aimed at ensuring systematic sewage disposal system. It is the first of its kind in Myanmar being implemented by Myanmar experts and engineers. — MNA