Four political objectives
* Stability of the State, community peace and tranquillity, prevalence of law and order
* National reconsolidation
* Emergence of a new enduring State Constitution
* Building of a new modern developed nation in accord with the new State Constitution

Four economic objectives
* Development of agriculture as the base and all-round development of other sectors of the economy as well
* Proper evolution of the market-oriented economic system
* Development of the economy inviting participation in terms of technical know-how and investments from sources inside the country and abroad
* The initiative to shape the national economy must be kept in the hands of the State and the national peoples

Four social objectives
* Uplift of the morale and morality of the entire nation
* Uplift of national prestige and integrity and preservation and safeguarding of cultural heritage and national character
* Uplift of dynamism of patriotic spirit
* Uplift of health, fitness and education standards of the entire nation

Prime Minister General Khin Nyunt inspects a raw ruby stone for Myanma Gems Emporium at Myanma Gems Mart.— MNA

Prime Minister previews Myanma Gems Emporium
YANGON, 12 March — Prime Minister General Khin Nyunt previewed the 41st Myanma Gems Emporium (2004) this afternoon. Accompanied by officials of the State Peace and Development Council Office, the Prime Minister arrived at the Myanma Gems Mart on Kaba Aye Pagoda Road here. The Prime Minister was welcomed there by member of the State Peace and Development Council Lt-Gen Tin Aye, Yangon Division Peace and Development Council Chairman Yangon Command Commander Maj-Gen Myint Swe, ministers, the attorney-general, deputy ministers, members of the Central Committee for the exhibition and officials. The Prime Minister and party viewed gems shops of the Myanma Gems Enterprise and private gems shops on the ground floor of Myanma Gems Mart. Officials concerned conducted the Prime Minister and party round the emporium. Next, the Prime Minister and party observed uncut jade in the compound of the Myanma Gems Mart. They also inspected the gem lots and pearl lots on the top floor and jade lots on the first floor. Patron of the Central Committee Minister for Mines Brig-Gen Ohn Myint reported on facts about the emporium. The Prime Minister gave instructions.

59th Anniversary Armed Forces Day commemorative special features on pages 7, 8 and 9.

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Prime Minister General Khin Nyunt inspects a raw ruby stone for Myanma Gems Emporium at Myanma Gems Mart.— MNA

Measures for ensuring secure and smooth transport co-ordinated
YANGON, 12 March — The Yangon Division Supervisory Committee for Ensuring Secure and Smooth Transport held its work coordination meeting at the meeting hall of All Private Bus Lines Control Committee on Laydaunikan Road in Tamwe Township at 6 pm today with an address by Chairman of the Supervisory Committee Chairman of Yangon Division Peace and Development Council Commander of Yangon Command Maj-Gen Myint Swe.

Also present were Deputy Commander of Yangon Command Col Way Lwin, military region command- ers, station commanders, Secretary of Yangon Division Peace and Development Council Lt-Col Myint Kyi and members, members of the Supervisory Committee, departmental personnel, local authorities the chairmen of bus lines that are running in Yangon Division and guests.— MNA

Emergence of the State Constitution is the duty of all citizens of Myanmar Naing-Ngan.
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.”

People’s Desire

* Oppose those relying on external elements, acting as stooges, holding negative views on the internal affairs of the State.
* 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.

Chief of Armed Forces Training Lt-Gen Kyaw Win inspects the practising of marching by parade columns. — MNA

Chief of Armed Forces Training Lt-Gen Kyaw Win inspects the practising of marching by parade columns

Yangon, 12 March—Chairman of the Leading Committee for Observance of the 59th Anniversary Armed Forces Day member of the State Peace and Development Council Chief of Armed Forces Training Lt-Gen Kyaw Win inspected practising of marching by parade columns from Myanmar Ground to the Resistance Park this morning. Also present together with the Chief of Armed Forces Training were Vice-Chiefs of Armed Forces Training Maj-Gen Win Myint, Maj-Gen Aung Kyi and Brig-Gen Nyan Win, Vice-Admiral Nyan Win, Vice-Admiral Aung San and senior military officers. Tatmadaw men, members of Myanmar Police Force, Fire Brigade and Red Cross Brigade of Anawrahta, Kyansitha, Bayintnaung, Nawade, Aungzeya, Hsinbyushin, Bandoola, Myawady and 20 patients will be given treatment one month for a course under the supervision of the surgeon from Tachilek District Hospital. One assistant surgeon and two nurses will perform health care service to the drug addicts.

Archer Federation holds meeting

Yangon, 12 March—The Myanmar Archery Federation held its meeting 1/2004 at its meeting hall here at 9 am today. Patrons of MAF Daw Khin Hla Hla, Daw Khin Aye and Daw Nilar Thaw, MAF President Dr Khin Shwe, vice-chairmen and executives attended the meeting. Matters relating to construction of buildings, major repairs to training ground and building, training conducted for 23rd SEA Games, formation of executive committee were discussed at the meeting. — MNA

Deputy Minister inspects Tachilek TV relay station, District IPRD

Deputy Minister for Information Brig-Gen Aung Thein, accompanied by Col Myint Han of Tachilek, Deputy-General U Chit Naing of Information and Public Relations Department, Deputy Chief Engineer U Myint Aung of Myanmar Radio and Television, Chairman of Tachilek District Peace and Development Council Lt-Col Zaw Moe Aye and officials, inspected TV re-transmission station and Tachilek District Information and Public Relations Department Office on 10 March. Next, the deputy minister saw over the community-based drug addict treatment camp being built by Akha national race...
US military deaths in Iraq rise to 554

BAGHDAD, 12 March—As of Thursday, 11 March, 554 US service members have died since the beginning of military operations in Iraq, according to the Department of Defense. Of those, 380 died as a result of hostile action and 174 died of non-hostile causes, the department said.

The British military has reported 58 deaths; Italy, 17; Spain, eight; Bulgaria, five; Thailand, two; Denmark, Ukraine, Estonia and Poland have reported one each.

Since May 1, when President Bush declared that major combat operations in Iraq had ended, 416 US soldiers have died — 265 as a result of hostile action and 151 of non-hostile causes, according to the military.

Since the start of military operations, 2,777 US service members have been injured as a result of hostile action, according to the Defense Department’s figures. Non-hostile injuries numbered 424. The latest death reported by US Central Command:

— A Task Force Ironhorse soldier was killed Wednesday when an explosive hit a convoy near Baqouba. The latest identifications reported by the military:

— Army Spc Edward W Brabazon, 20, Philadelphia; died Tuesday in Baghdad, Iraq, from a non-hostile gunshot wound; assigned to the 2nd Battalion, 505th Parachute Infantry Regiment, 82nd Airborne Division; Fort Bragg, NC.

— Army Sgt 1st Class Richard Gotfried, 24, Lake Ozark, Mo.; killed by an explosive Tuesday in Iraq; assigned to the 1st Division Support Command, 1st Infantry Division; Kreuzberg, Germany.— Internet

US breaks deficit records

WASHINGTON, 12 March—A fall in dollar’s value has not stopped growing deficit The US trade deficit has hit an all-time high of $43.1 billion, disproving forecasts that a recent fall in the dollar would help exports.

Figures for January show that imports stayed close to historic highs after a rise in imported oil prices. Even the politically sensitive trade deficit with China increased to $11.5bn, up from $9.9bn in December.

“To me this is very worrisome. The trade deficit is not improving. It is getting worse despite the dollar depreciation,” said Wells Fargo Banks chief economist Sung Won Cho.

In theory, a weakening dollar should have made US exports cheaper and thus more competitive in overseas markets. The idea was that it should make imports more expensive, reducing demand for foreign goods.

However, analysts noted there were some one-off factors behind the worse-than-expected figures.

Wells Fargo Bank imported oil prices during January were at their highest level since March 2003, which led to a 10% rise in the US’s petroleum deficit.

Also, exports were hit by restrictions on meat exports following outbreaks of mad cow disease and bird flu.

The trade deficit with China rose after imports from the country grew by 6.6%. The US government has been placing pressure on China to revalue its currency against the dollar.

The yuan is currently pegged at 8.28 yuan to the dollar, but US manufacturers have complained the currency is undervalued by as much as 40% giving Chinese exporters an unfair advantage.

America’s total outstanding debt now stands at over $7,112,000,000,000, which means that every single US citizen has a share of just over $24,000.

Chinese, Israeli entrepreneurs hold business seminar

BEIJING, 12 March—The government of Heilongjiang Province in northeast China and the Israeli Embassy in China jointly held a business seminar here Wednesday evening. “Heilongjiang is rich in natural resources, energy, skilled workers, well equipped state-owned enterprises and a good environment for foreign investment,” Heilongjiang Governor Zhang Zojiu said, welcoming Israeli entrepreneurs to find partners in the province.

Thousands of Jews were saved in Harbin, capital of Heilongjiang, during World War II, said Yehoyada Haim, Israeli ambassador to China, noting that Israel and Heilongjiang share long-term friendship and cooperation.

Representatives from over 40 enterprises in Heilongjiang and nearly 30 companies from Israel, mostly in agricultural and high-tech sectors, attended the seminar. — MNA/Xinhua

Eight killed in fresh Iraq attacks

BAGHDAD, 12 March—Eight people, including a US soldier, were killed yesterday in a continuing wave of violence directed against people linked to the US project of installing a pro-Western and democratic government in Iraq.

Two Iraqi sisters working as laundrywomen for US contractors were gunned down on their way home from work in Basra, relatives and a UK official said.

The women were working for Kellog Brown & Root, which handles a range of logistics and support services for US-led forces.

In Samarra, 100km north of Baghdad, two policemen were killed when attackers opened fire on their car, a regional police spokesman said.

A US soldier and an Iraqi civilian were killed in separate roadside bombings, while, for the first time, a top US general complained about the Pentagon’s failure to fully equip Iraqi security forces.

A Sunni Muslim cleric was wounded in what he claimed was an assassination attempt against him that killed his son and son-in-law in a Baghdad mosque in Abu Dseeh, a suburb in southwestern Baghdad, said that assailants drove up next to his car and opened fire.

He was wounded in the head and hand, and his 21-year-old son and 37-year-old son-in-law were killed.

Police in Karbala confirmed that six men arrested in connection to the killing of two US government employees and their interpreter were police officers. — Internet

Austria—China air flights expanded

SHANGHAI, 12 March—Austrian Airlines Group announced it would increase Shanghai in its flight service network beginning from April 29 with the operation of three flights a week from Pudong International Airport to Vienna.

In the meantime, the number of flights from Vienna to Beijing will also increase from four to six this summer, said Josef E. Burger, chief commercial officer of the Austrian Airlines Group, who made the announcement in Shanghai on Tuesday.

According to Burger, 120,000 tourists from China visited Austria last year. “The figure is expected to rise 20 per cent annually with the opening of the European tourism market to China,” said Burger. “I believe scheduled flights to China will be very important to our long-distance flight service network.”

In accordance with an MoU signed by the China National Tourism Administration and the European Union on February 15, Chinese tourists may apply for a special tourist visa known as ADS via designated travel agencies and will be allowed to travel freely within 12 nations in Europe if they are granted the visa. The agreement will come into effect on May 1.

The World Tourism Organization predicts that China will be the fourth largest source of tourists in the world by 2020, and the number of people traveling overseas will reach 100 million by then.

Chinese tourists made 20.22 million journeys overseas last year, up 20 per cent from 2002, said statistics provided by tourism administrative departments of China.

Before the Austrian Airlines Group, other European airlines such as Air France and Lufthansa also decided to launch or add flights to cater to the craze for tourism to Europe in China. — MNA/Xinhua

Toyota to commercialize humanoid robot by 2010

TOYOTA, 12 March—Toyota Motor Corp aims to commercialize humanoid robots around 2010 by establishing a section specializing in their development early next year, a major Japanese business daily reported Thursday.

The leading automaker will consolidate the resources of group companies and business partners to achieve the objective, the Nikkei Keizai Shimbun said.

The section will be established within Toyota’s production technology headquarters and staffed with several hundred people, including robot engineers from the automaker’s technology headquarters and those from Toyota’s technology lab in Shizuoka Prefecture. — MNA/Xinhua
Ex-congressional aide accused of spying for Iraq

MARYLAND, 12 March — A Maryland woman who is a cousin of White House Chief of Staff Andrew Card and once worked for three members of Congress was arrested Thursday and charged with spying for Saddam Hussein for nearly three years.

Susan Lindauer, 41, who law enforcement officials said is Card’s second cousin and whose father ran for governor of Alaska as a Republican, is accused of accepting $10,000 from Saddam’s Iraqi Intelligence Service as payment for her work and expenses.

In an indictment unsealed in federal court in Manhattan, Lindauer was charged with acting and conspiring to act as an unregistered agent of the Iraqi Intelligence Service. She was also accused of engaging in prohibited financial transactions with the Iraqi government.

FBI agents arrested Lindauer Thursday morning at her home in Takoma Park, Md. She was expected to be presented late Thursday before US Magistrate Judge Susan Gauhay in Baltimore, said a spokesman for the Manhattan US Attorney’s Office.

“I’m an anti-war activist, and I’m innocent,” Lindauer told WBAL-TV outside the Baltimore FBI office. “I did more to stop terrorism in this country than anybody else. I have done good things for this country. I worked to get weapons inspectors back to Iraq when everyone else said it was impossible. I’m very proud, and I’ll stand by my achievements.”

Lindauer is scheduled to appear before US District Judge Michael Mukasey in Manhattan Monday.

The two men, Wisam Noman Al-Anbuke and Raed Noman Al-Anbuke, have pleaded not guilty and are awaiting trial.

The Manhattan US attorney’s office declined comment when asked to describe what relationship, if any, Lindauer had with the Al-Anbuke brothers.

However, the indictment charges she met with an Iraqi intelligence officer in Manhattan at least eight times between October 1999 and March 2002. She also accepted a task given to her by an Iraqi officer in October 2001, the indictment said.

She is accused of travelling to Baghdad as a guest of the Iraqi Intelligence Service.

Lindauer allegedly met in Iraq with several intelligence officers at the Al-Rashid Hotel, accepting cash payments of about $5,000. On her return, Lindauer allegedly met with an Iraqi officer in Manhattan.

The indictment further accuses her of delivering a letter “to the home of a Government official” on January 8, 2003. Prosecutors contend that in the letter Lindauer “conveyed her established access to, and contacts with, members of the Saddam Hussein regime.” The indictment described the letter as “an unsuccessful attempt to influence US foreign policy.”

If convicted of acting as an unregistered agent, Lindauer could face up to 10 years in prison and up to five years if convicted of conspiracy. — Internet

Members of the media look into the yard of Susan Lindauer’s home in Takoma Park, Md, on Thursday, 11 March, 2004. Lindauer, a former journalist and ex-press secretary for two members of Congress was arrested on March 11, on charges she acted as an Iraqi spy before and after the US invasion of Iraq. — Internet

British envoy warns of ‘spectacular’ suicide attacks in Iraq

London, 12 March — The greatest danger to Iraq currently comes from foreign “terrorists” who may be planning to trigger suicide bombings, Britain’s top envoy to the country warned.

“That is the most lethal threat at this moment — spectacular attacks by suicide bombers coming out of this area,” Sir Jeremy Greenstock told parliament’s Foreign Affairs Committee in London.

“The more sophisticated planning and operations have been-done by imported terrorism, not all of it Al-Qaeda, but people who have learned from the experience of international terrorism,” said Greenstock, a former British ambassador to the United Nations.

Iraq’s US civilian administrator, Paul Bremer, Thursday warned the likelihood of terror attacks there will increase as the June 30 date for a handover of sovereignty approaches.

“I think we will have more of a threat from terrorism as we go toward the June 30 handover because the terrorists clearly understand that once there is democracy here, there is no pretext for attacking anymore,” Bremer said in Iraq. Last week Iraq’s Shiite Muslims were targeted in bombings in Baghdad and the holy city of Karbala that killed more than 170 people. — Internet

Possible grain markup expected to do good to farmers’ income

Beijing, 12 March — China is likely to see a grain markup in the next few months, hoped to do good to income growth of farmers this year, said economists here.

The grain price in 2004 will be at a high level and there is room for the price to rise a further 5 per cent, said Qi Jingmei, a senior economist with the State Information Centre, quoted by Wednesday’s China Daily.

China’s grain price has increased since October last year but the impact of the price rise remains slight on ordinary people’s life.

The price of a 10-kilo bag of rice increased from 32 yuan (3.86 US dollars) to 40 yuan (4.8 US dollars) within one week at a local Haide convenience store in Shanghai.

The grain supply shortage indicated that there is still room for further price increases, said Zhang Xueying, another economist with the State Information Centre.

The grain output will slump in the summer, he added.

Prices of rice, up from 10 to 20 per cent last

Vietnam exports rice to China

HANOI, 12 March — Vietnam is to export 250,000 tons of rice to China this month, said the Trade Information Centre under the Vietnamese Trade Ministry on Wednesday.

China has started buying rice from Vietnam and Thailand, and can become a rice-importing country this year, because rice stock has decreased due to bad crops for years, the centre stated.

At least 200 tons of Vietnamese rice was daily exported to the China’s Guangxi via the Mong Cai border gate in the Vietnamese northern province of Quang Ninh late last month.

Vietnam shipped 304,000 tons of rice worth 67 million US dollars in the first two months of this year to foreign markets, year-on-year falls of 44.1 per cent and 29.7 per cent, respectively. It is expected to export around 3.8 million tons of rice in 2004, of which 46 per cent are to the Asia-Pacific Region, mainly Indonesia and the Philippines.

Vietnam exported 3.86 million tons of rice worth 727 million US dollars last year, up 19.2 per cent and 0.2 per cent, respectively, according to the country’s General Statistics Office. — MNA/Xinhua

Spanish soldiers watch as newly-trained Iraqi Army frisk motorists at a mobile checkpoint in Diwaniya, 160 kilometres south of Baghdad, Iraq, on Thursday, 11 March, 2004. — Internet

The government should allow the price to resume to a rational level, said Chen Xiwen, deputy director of the Office of Central Finan-

cial Work Leading Group.

Around 60 to 70 per cent of Chinese farmers feed on income from growing crops, which means the grain price hike is a good news for them.

“Slow income growth will hinder the overall economic development and even undermine social stability,” Qi said.

MNA/Xinhua
Bomb injures one at office in Iraq

BAGHDAD (Iraq), 12 March—A bomb exploded beside Shi’ite Party offices in the Iraqi town of Baquba on Wednesday, injuring at least one person and badly damaging the building, police and witnesses said.

The blast just after 6 am (0300 GMT) shattered windows and doors at the offices of the Supreme Council for the Islamic Revolution in Iraq (SCIRI), one of the main Shi’ite parties, in Baquba, 40 miles north of the capital. Shi’ite leaders, including the head of SCIRI, have criticized a transitional Constitution signed on Monday, saying that a clause relating to minority rights could jeopardize the natural dominance of Iraq’s 60 per cent Shi’ite majority.

Shi’ites were largely excluded from power under the rule of Saddam Hussein, a Sunni. Baquba is in a largely Sunni Muslim area, where guerrillas have often targeted US troops or those they see as cooperating with them. US officials accuse guerrillas of trying to divide Iraq’s various communities, saying foreign terrorist networks — and more specifically, Jordanian al-Qaeda operative Abu Musab al Zarqawi — want to target Shi’ites to provoke civil war.—MNA/Reuters

Second UN assessment team visits southern Iraq

GENEVA, 12 March—A joint United Nations assessment team visited Basra on Sunday, which is the second time that UN expatriate staff have been to southern Iraq since most international personnel’s withdrawal following last August’s devastating bombing, a UN agency said Tuesday.

The mission came at the request of the UN Secretary-General’s Acting Special Representative for Iraq, said Ron Redmond, spokesperson for the UN refugee agency UNHCR.

After crossing over from Kuwait, the team spent a day in Basra to assess the security situation and overall conditions on the ground and met with partner agencies.

The team reported that Basra appears busier, in part due to the return of many Iraqis to the south, said Redmond.

According to the Iraqi Ministry of Trade, over 122,000 refugees have returned to the nine southern governorates since last year.

With so many refugees going back to communities impoverished by decades of conflict and sanctions, the UN team warned that if the flow of people is not regulated, economic hardship and social unrest will increase.

—MNA/Reuters

India exempts Zanzibar from import duty for cloves

DAR ES SALAAM, 12 March—India has agreed to abolish import duty for cloves imported to India from Zanzibar, the Indian Ocean islands of Tanzania, officials said Tuesday.

Sources with the Zanzibar Government said the decision was reached by Indian Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee and Zanzibar President Amadi Abed Karume, who is on a visit to India.

The move will help increase the competitiveness of Zanzibar’s clove products, which are crucial to the island’s economy, they said.

Clove export has long been the most important source for Zanzibar to earn foreign currency, but it came into difficulties last year due to the price drop in the world market. —MNA/Xinhua

Japan changing oil supplies from its Gulf importers

ABU DHABI, 12 March—Japan slashed its oil imports from the United Arab Emirates in November because of a resumption of Iraqi crude supplies and a decline in domestic seasonal demand, the English-language daily Gulf News reported Wednesday.

The UAE’s crude oil exports to Japan slumped by 19.5 per cent to nearly 793,000 barrels a day in November from around 987,000 BPD in the previous month, according to a report of the Japanese Ministry of Economy, Trade and Industry.

From zero supplies during most of 2003 and 2002, Japan imported around 125,655 bpd of Iraqi crude in November, the report showed. During the first nine months of 2003, the UAE was the top oil exporter to Japan, supplying it with around 1.03 million bpd, the report said.

Although oil imports from Saudi Arabia also receded, the sharp decline in UAE supplies pushed the emirates back to the second place after the kingdom on the list of oil exporters to the eastern Asian industrial giant, according to the report.

Japan’s crude oil imports from Iran also tumbled by nearly 25 per cent last year while supplies from Kuwait surged by more than 37 per cent, according to the report.

The report said the oil shipments from Iraq in November were the first in nearly 19 months as crude production in the Arab country has been disrupted for several months due to UN sanctions before it was occupied by a US-led coalition in April. Japan has assured Gulf producers it will remain heavily reliant on their crude given their large oil reserves, strong political ties and proximity to the region. —MNA/Xinhua

Digital R&D base to be built in hi-tech park in Beijing

BEIJING, 12 March—Dubbed China’s Silicon Valley, Beijing’s Zhongguancun hi-tech park plans to invest 30 million yuan (3.62 million US dollars) to build a base for digital research and development, according to the park’s administration committee.

Promoting digital industry and aiding related enterprises are listed as key projects in the development schedule of the government run hi-tech park.

“In recent years, digital appliances such as palmtop computers, cellphones and digital cameras have gained popularity in China,” said Xu Feng, a technical supervisor of the base.

“One of our plans to promote digital products is to encourage the use of High Definition Television,” Xu said. “However, HDTV works to its full potential only if it is showed with high definition TV programmes tailored for it. And China has very limited such programmes.” Xu said.

The chairman added that six of the hi-tech sectors under the six major topics will also be held during the forum. The sessions include the present status and perspective of petroleum exploration and development, the petroleum industry and environment/social responsibility, as well as management, human resources and the contribution of youth.—MNA/Xinhua

China to host WPC Youth Forum

BEIJING, 12 March—The World Petroleum Congress (WPC) First Youth Forum is scheduled to be held in Beijing between October 17-20 this year.

According to Wang Tao, Chairman of the WPC Chinese National Committee, the noted experts, scholars and senior executives from the world petroleum industry will be invited to deliver keynote addresses on the latest scientific and technological achievements of the petroleum industry as well as its future development.

The theme for the forum is “Youth and Innovation — the Future of the Petroleum Industry.”

The main topics in the forum include petroleum refinement and petrochemical technology in the new century, the rapid development of alternatives for petroleum, IT and other new technologies leading the industry into a new epoch of development and youth.

The chairman added that six of the seven technical sessions under the six major topics will also be held during the forum. The sessions include the present status and perspective of petroleum exploration and development, the petroleum industry and environment/social responsibility, as well as management, human resources and the contribution of youth.—MNA/Xinhua
Iraq in the aftermath of US invasion

Children deaths

Children deaths in Iraq

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Target</th>
<th>Death toll</th>
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<tr>
<td>26-3-2003</td>
<td>Rutbah</td>
<td>Children’s hospital bombed</td>
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<td>3-4-2003</td>
<td>Karbala</td>
<td>10-year old boy shot</td>
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<td>28-4-2003</td>
<td>Outside school in</td>
<td>demonstrators including pre-teen children</td>
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<td>Fallujah</td>
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<td>Basra Highway</td>
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<td>22-7-2003</td>
<td>Mosul</td>
<td>a child shot</td>
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<td>3-year old bystander shot</td>
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<td>2-11-2003</td>
<td>Near Fallujah</td>
<td>11-year old boy caught in crossfire</td>
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<td>5-11-2003</td>
<td>Mosul town centre</td>
<td>ten-year old boy killed</td>
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<td>Fallujah</td>
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<td>Karada district, Baghdad</td>
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An Iraqi girl, Heba Hachem Hussein, injured in clashes between Iraqis and US troops, is held by her mother in a Baghdad hospital on 16 February, 2004.

An unidentified Iraqi father carries his son for treatment at Samawa General Hospital in southeastern Iraq, on 19 Feb, 2004.

More and more Iraqi children are becoming victims of the US-led invasion against Iraq.

Wounded people, including children, were rushed to hospitals by ambulances, which were not enough to carry children and others injured. It remains unknown how many children fell victim to US-led invasion.

Haidar Azz, 11, injured in the leg in an explosion in a crowded shopping centre in south Baghdad, leaves the al-Kindi hospital after receiving treatment.

Wissam Ali, right, aged 7, and his sister Gezek, 6 months old, are treated at a hospital in Hillah, Iraq after they were injured when two explosives-laden trucks were detonated outside a Polish military camp in Hillah, south of Baghdad on Feb. 18, 2004. The two children survived but both their parents were killed in the blast.

An Iraqi girl lies in the Central Children’s Hospital in Baghdad, capital of Iraq, on 15 Feb, 2004.
Hailing the 59th Anniversary Armed Forces Day:

Nation-building tasks carried out by the Tatmadaw and the people

Tatmadaw, the tenacious and persevering force

Railroads constructed in the entire nation

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No</th>
<th>Subject</th>
<th>1988</th>
<th>Extension</th>
<th>2004</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
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<td>Railroad (mile)</td>
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<td>1022.01</td>
<td>2998.36</td>
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<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Railway line (mile)</td>
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<td>3907.25</td>
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<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Railroad being built (mile)</td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Railroad in the process (mile)</td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Part of the nation Railroad No

Railroads constructed by Tatmadaw members

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No</th>
<th>Part of the nation</th>
<th>Railroad</th>
<th>Railroad mile</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
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<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>East</td>
<td>Shwenyaung-Yaksawk</td>
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<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>East</td>
<td>Aungpan-Loikaw</td>
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<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>East</td>
<td>Shwenyaung-Namhsan</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>South</td>
<td>Ye-Dawei</td>
<td>101.47</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Central</td>
<td>Pyay-Aunglan-Taungdwingyi</td>
<td>90.35</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Pyintha-Htiri section of Hsaikkhaung-Namhsan Railroad under construction in Shan State (South) with Shan Mountain Range in the background.
The Tatmadaw (Armed Forces) in perpetual service of the people

The course of history of efficient Tatmadaw

The Union of Myanmar became a sovereign state on 4 January of 1984. It is not that Myanmar regained her independence easily. The regaining of independence cost the Tatmadaw comprising sons and daughters of national people and patriots a lot of lives, blood and sweat.

A look at the history of Myanmar independence struggle will reveal the important role of the Tatmadaw vividly. The Tatmadaw, which is founded with a diversity of national races, which is the first time a situation in which independence had been regained, played a leading role in the independence struggle. As a result, Myanmar could regain its independence after independence had been regained.

The Tatmadaw in safeguarding the independence after independence had been regained. Just a few months after the regaining of independence in 1948, Myanmar encountered for the first time a situation in which independence might be lost again.

After independence, there were splits in the APFL government. It was on 28 March of 1948 that BCP went under attack. BCP, which went underground at the end of March in 1948, and PVO, which also went underground in July the same year, gathered in central Myanmar and plotted to seize Yangon. Therefore, the insurgents who were determined to give up their lives for their country and race. Severely wounded in the fight, Major Aye Cho later sacrificed his life for the country on 21 August of 1948. The time was at about 7 pm on 19 August of 1948. The Myanmar Tatmadaw under the command of Commanding Officer Major Aye Cho stationed in Nattalin bravely resisted the insurgents whose strength was far greater than his from Pho-tha-aung overpass.

After their revolts in Madaya, Myingyan, Pakokku, Chaung, Yenang, and so on and nearly all over the country, the Tatmadaw (Army) was able to recapture Insein. The time was at 3 pm on 19 August of 1948. The Myanmar Tatmadaw under the command of Commanding Officer Major Aye Cho stationed in Nattalin bravely resisted the insurgents whose strength was far greater than his from Pho-tha-aung overpass.

In Insein battle, the insurgents took a strong hold in the vicinity of Insein to threaten the capture of Yangon. Beginning 31 January of 1949, the Tatmadaw and the insurgents engaged in numerous fights on Insein battle ground. The Tatmadaw (Navy) also helped with supporting fires by cannons from the embankment of Inya Lake. So did the Tatmadaw (Air) from the air. In Insein battle, the Tatmadawmen were determined to give up their lives for their country and race. Severely wounded in the fight, Major Aye Cho later sacrificed his life for the country on 21 August.

Maj Aye Cho, who received ‘Aung San Thuriya Medal’ for his valour.

Hailing the 59th Anniversary Armed Forces Day

Pakokku, Chaung, Yenang young, Mbin, and nearby areas of Magway in mid-1948, the insurgents came down to Yangon along Pyay-Yangon motor road. In the third week of August the same year, the insurgents got close to Nattalin and planned to seize Yangon. The insurgents could not advance and had to withdraw as they were no match for the bravery of the Tatmadawmen who were determined to give up their lives for their country and race. Severely wounded in the fight, Major Aye Cho later sacrificed his life for the country on 21 August.

He was therefore awarded ‘Aung San Thuriya Medal’, the highest medal given by the State for great valour, for his courage and determination and for the sacrifices he made for the country at the cost of his life during the fight.

At the dawn of 1949, the insurgents taking a strong hold in the vicinity of Insein came to threaten the capture of Yangon. Beginning 31 January of 1949, the Tatmadaw and the insurgents engaged in numerous fights on Insein battle ground. The Tatmadaw (Navy) also helped with supporting fires by cannons from the embankment of Inya Lake. So did the Tatmadaw (Air) from the air.

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(from page 8) from the hands of the insurgents, the Tatmadaw (Air) gave support by dropping bombs from the air. For the same reason, Mayyu and Hsinmin, naval vessels of the Tatmadaw (Navy), also provided shellfire from the river. The combined efforts exerted by the army, navy and air force of the Tatmadaw risked their lives for the country and the people resulted in the recapture of Insein on 22 May 1949. At the time when Insein battle was going on, the Tatmadaw was simultaneously crushing the insurgents on the fronts in Bago, DaikU and Thayawady regions. In a fight on DaikU battlefield, the base of the Tatmadaw was surrounded by the insurgents. At that time, Private Hla Thaung courageously fought back the insurgents killing many of them. To be able to do so he stayed behind firing his Bren gun at the insurgents so that his comrades could leave the place without being injured. He sacrificed his life for the country and the people. Therefore, ‘Aung San Thuriya Medal’ was awarded to him for his unusual bravery. The Tatmadaw could successfully crush the internal insurgencies at such places as Pho-thaung overpass, Wetkaw bridge, Bago Phayaggi, Insein and Thazi. The Tatmadaw also managed to recapture Gyothingank on 13 May 1949; Zigon fort, 14 May; Pyaywwe, Yamethin, Taikon and TadaU on 22 May; Kayukse, NyangU, Chant and Yenangyoung on 12 June; Thatoh on 25 June; Thayawady on 13 July; Myingyan on 24 July; Lashio on 1 September; Taunggyi on 21 November; and Hmonee village in December 1949. Later, Yangon-Bago rail road had been reopened. Even after the regaining of independence, the Myanmar Tatmadaw which was born together with the independence struggle safeguarded the independence by engaging in above-mentioned battles. It is a proof that the Tatmadaw is of great importance in a nation.

What can be found here is the patriotism, unity and selflessness of the Tatmadaw.

Tatmadawmen who had been surrounded by the insurgents in Maubin. In that fight, Commanding Officer of Shwepazun Lt Tun Tin was wounded in the face severely, but he put up a strong resistance against the insurgents. Moreover, he could save the watercraft loaded with supplies and arms from the danger. Therefore, the State awarded ‘Thiha Thura Medal’ to Lt Tun Tin and ‘Thura Medal’ each to Sub- Lt Khin Aung Din and leading Seaman Khin Maung Gyi. As members of the Tatmadaw (Navy) possessed valour and were prepared to make supreme sacrifices they could overcome any difficulties, and thus won the victory. Moreover, the Tatmadawmen also received medals awarded by the State. The brilliant services of the Tatmadaw (Air) in safeguarding independence were of great help to land operations. The endeavours made by the Tatmadaw (Air) in March 1949 were prominent in the history of the Tatmadaw. The Oxford aircraft of the Tatmadaw (Air) helped Tatmadaw (Army) with supporting fire in the latter’s quelling the insurgents near Bili island on 31 March 1949. The warplane piloted by 2nd Lt Aung Myat gave supporting fire amid the bad weather. Later, the plane dived into the water as it was hit. 2nd Lt Aung Myat could rescue his companion L/Cpl Olivary while the plane was sinking. The State awarded ‘Thura Medal’ to him for his outstanding service. Furthermore, the State also awarded ‘Thiha Thura Medal’ to Major Thura Aung Myat who could carry out the assigned duties well amid hardships in the 1960 Sino-Myanmar demarcation.

Thus, the Myanmar Tatmadaw quelled internal insurgencies following the independence and safeguarded the nation for the first time when the independence was almost lost. In this process, what can be found is the Tatmadaw’s fine traditions such as immense patriotism, courageous acts in the fights and preparedness to sacrifice their lives for the people, discipline, bravery, unity, efficiency, selflessness, noble mind, ability to take great pains, industry and perseverance, and the keeping of our three main national in the fore.
Kanbawza Football Team

YANGON, 12 March—Kanbawza Football Team which stood first in the First Division Soccer Tournament for 2004-2005 was honored in a dinner at Thimbhbu Tennis Centre, here this evening.

At the dinner, Kanbawza Football Team Chairman U Zaw Win Naing presented K 100,000 cash prize each to the players, the manager and the coaches. Then, Patrons of the team Maj-Gen Kyaw Win and U Aung Ko Win urged them to strive for gaining more success in the soccer matches of the Premier League.

MFA

Kanbawza Football Team honoured

YANGON, 12 March—The final matches of Myanmar Tennis Championship 2004, organized by the Myanmar Tennis Federation, was held in conjunction with the prize presentation ceremony at Thimbhbu Tennis Plaza here this evening.

MTF Patron Maj-Gen Kyaw Win, executives of MTF, guests and enthusiasts watched the matches.

In the men’s duel at the age group of 60 and above, first prize went to Harbert and Khin Maung Win while second prize went to Ye Myint and Pein Yi. In the men’s single match, Kyaw Maung and Hauk Kho Pao stood first and second respectively.

In the men’s doubles at the age group of 45 and above, first prize went to MTF Patron Maj-Gen Kyaw Win and Maung Lay while second prize went to Tin Maung Lwin and Ko Kyi. MTF General Secretary Dr Tin Aung Lin presented awards to winners. In the men’s singles match, Tin Maung Lwin and Maung Maung Lay stood first and second respectively.

For the men’s doubles at the age group of 45 and above, Khin Win and Tin Maung Lwin stood first while Sai Kauk and Khin Maung Cho stood second. For the men’s single match, Aung Moe and Kyi Ma Myint stood first while Moe Chi The and Khine Nyintu Tha stood second. Hta Hla Lwin and Zin Ma Hwe held third position together with Thanda Aung and Thet Ma Tun. In the women’s singles match, Aung Myint, Kyi Mya Zaw and Moe Chit The stood first, second and third respectively.

MTF Patron Maj-Gen Kyaw Win presented awards to Zaw Zaw Lat and Tu Maw, who stood first in the men’s professional dual, to Khin Maung Win and Thei Lwin, who stood second; and to Myat Khine and Phyo Min Tha, who shared third prize with Min Min and Man Lian Sein. He also presented first prize to Tu Maw, second prize to Zaw Zaw Lat, and third prizes to Min Min and to Khin Maung Win for the men’s professional singles match. Maj-Gen Kyaw Win also presented Championship Cup to Tu Maw.

MTF executives also presented awards to winners. Afterwards, MTF Patron Maj-Gen Kyaw Win posed for a group photo together with the winners.

MFA

Myanmar Tennis C’ship 2004 concludes

In the men’s doubles at the age group of 35 and above, first prize went to MTF Patron Maj-Gen Kyaw Win and Aung Moe won first prize while Tin Aung Lin and Maung Maung Lay stood second. For the men’s singles match, first prize went to Zaw Lin Naing, and second to Aung Moe.

In the women’s professional dual, Aung Myint, Kyi Ma Myint, Zaw Lin Naing and Aung Moe topped the list. In the men’s professional singles match, Aung Myint, Kyi Mya Zaw stood first while Moe Chi The and Khine Nyintu Tha stood second. Hta Hla Lwin and Zin Ma Hwe held third position together with Thanda Aung and Thet Ma Tun.

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MFA

Secretary-1 attends cash donation...

Association, Myanmar Maternal and Child Welfare Association and Myanmar National Committee for Women’s Affairs also cooperate with the Ministry in the rural water supply task.

Next, the cash donation ceremony followed.

The Secretary-1 accepted K 40 million donated by Sibin Thayayaw Bank Ltd; K 2.5 million for the Minister for Livestock and Fisheries Brig-Gen Maung Maung Thein and wife David Myint Aung Myint Aye and family; K 3.5 million for Myanmar ASEAN Women’s Friendship Association; 10,000 FECs by Miss YVE Callebunt President Support Fund Myanmar Belgium; and K 3.5 million by U Lin Win-Daw Yi Yi Sein.

In the women’s professional dual, Aung Myint, Kyi Ma Myint, Zaw Lin Naing and Aung Moe topped the list. In the men’s professional singles match, Aung Myint, Kyi Mya Zaw stood first while Moe Chi The and Khine Nyintu Tha stood second. Hta Hla Lwin and Zin Ma Hwe held third position together with Thanda Aung and Thet Ma Tun.

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Source-1 attended cash donation...
**Press conference on holding Tiger Myanmar Amateur Open**

**Yangon, 12 March** — Tiger Beer announced the sponsorship of the 5th Tiger Myanmar Amateur Open, organized by Myanmar Golf Federation, at the Grand Plaza Park Royal Hotel today.

Present were MPGA and MGF President Brig-Gen Win Hlaing, officials of the Ministry of Sports, MPGA General Secretary U Chan Han and journalists.

At the press conference, Maj-Gen Win Hlaing gave a speech. The Tiger Myanmar Amateur Open will be held at Yangon Golf Club from 23 to 26 March.

There will be many activities leading up to the event, such as a Longest Drive Contest, a Tiger Invitational match and unique Putting Challenge. The Longest Drive Contest will be held at Pun Hlaing Golf Course on 22 March, starting at 10.30 am. Top 8 Amateur players have been invited to put in their best efforts to be this year’s long drive champion.

The Tiger Invitational match will be held at Pun Hlaing Golf Course on 22 March and tees-off at 12.30 pm. The co-sponsors will be Kodak, Canon, Grand Plaza Park Royal Hotel, Peng Golf, Air Mandalay, Wilson and Maruman and Han Event Management.

**Opium, speciosa seized**

**Yangon,** 12 March — While discharging security duty on Mandalay-Myikyina Up train, members of No 2 Company of Railways Police Force, Ywathuang, searched suspect passenger Law Hsan (a) Maung Myo on arrival at Ywathuang Station on 14 January. They seized 4,081 kilos of opium from his two boxes.

Similarly, a combined team comprising members of the local intelligence unit, Kawhohung Special Anti-Drug Squad, Bureau of Special Investigation, Criminal Investigation Department, Special Investigation Department and local police station, acting on information, raided the house of Daw Shu Kyi of Shwenatha Street, Myothit Ward 6, South Myeik, and seized 14 packets of speciosa weighing 0.9 kilos.

Respective police stations are taking action against them under the Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances Law.

**Chinese delegation continues tour**

**Yangon,** 12 March — The visiting Chinese writers delegation led by Chairman of the Writers Association of the People’s Republic of China Mr Wang Chonglu visited the Union National Races Village of the Ministry for Progress of Border Areas and National Races and Development Affairs in Thaketa Township here this morning.

In the afternoon, they visited the Drug Elimination Museum in Kamaryut Township. Deputy Director of the museum Police Lt-Col Hse Maung and officials briefed the Chinese visitors on anti-drug efforts made in successive periods of Myanmar, implementation of the 15-year Drug Eradication Plan laid down by the State Peace and Development Council and achievements.

**Heroin seized in Namkham**

**Yangon,** 12 March — Action on a tip-off, a combined team made up of members of local intelligence unit, Myanmar Police Force and Anti-drug Squad, searched the house of U Lu Yan Shin of Namkham, Namkham Township, on 25 February. And the authorities seized 30 blocks of heroin weighing 10.5 kilos hidden in the mustard plantation in the compound, and arrested drug possessor Kyaw Tun, son of U Lu Yan Shin.

In connection with the case, action is being taken against Kyaw Tun under the Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances Law.

**Minister U Win Aung sends message of condolence to Spanish FM**

**Yangon,** 12 March — U Win Aung, Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Union of Myanmar, has sent a message of condolence to Her Excellency Mrs Ana Palacio, Minister for Foreign Affairs of Spain, for the loss of innocent lives in the bombing incident in Madrid, Spain, on 11 March 2004.

**Prime Minister General Khin Nyunt sends message of condolence to his Spanish counterpart**

**Yangon,** 12 March — General Khin Nyunt, Prime Minister of the Union of Myanmar, has sent a message of condolence to His Excellency Mr Jose Maria Aznar, Prime Minister of Spain, for the loss of innocent lives in the bombing incident in Madrid, Spain, on 11 March 2004.

**Minister receives PRC delegation**

**Yangon,** 12 March — Minister for Information Brig-Gen Kyaw Hsun received a delegation of Chinese writers led by visiting Chairman of the Writers Association of the People’s Republic of China Mr Wang Chonglu at his office on Thainbyu Road here at 11 am today.

Present at the call were Deputy Minister Brig-Gen Aung Thein, directors-general and managing directors of departments and enterprises under the ministry, the chairman and officials of the Myanmar Writers and Journalists Association, PRC Cultural Counsellor of the Chinese Embassy in Myanmar Mr Pan Feng, and Third Secretary Mr Zhang Zhongmeng.

**Homage paid to two title recipient Sayadaws at Tachilek Airport**

**Yangon,** 12 March — A ceremony to pay homage to Agga Maha Saddhamma Jotikadhaja title recipients Nayaka Sayadaw Agga Maha Pandita Bhaddanta Ajeya Dhammyon of Maha Myatmuni Monastery. Present were Naga Hnakaung Aungmingala Tawya Monastic Education School Headmaster Sayadaw Bhaddanta Pandita who was held at Tachilek Airport on 9 March morning. Present were Naga Hnakauang Monastery Sayadaw Agga Maha Pandita Agga Maha Saddhamma Jotikadhaja Sayadaw Bhaddanta Dhammasin and 300 members of the Sangha, Col Myint Han of Tachilek, Chairman of Tachilek District peace and Development Council Lt-Col Zaw Moe Aye and departmental officials and local people totalling about 5,000. On 10 March, the two Sayadaws were reordained at the Dhammyon of Maha Myatmuni Monastery Presiding Nayaka Sayadaw Agga Maha Pandita Bhaddanta Ayeja and members of the Sangha, local authorities and departmental officials and local people.

On behalf of Chairman of Shan State (East) Peace and Development Command Commander of Triangle Region Command Maj-Gen Khin Zaw and family, the District Chairman donated robes and provisions to Naga Hnakauang Sayadaw. After the ceremony, Aswedaw Mini Mart and Shwe Nga Construction Material Trading proprietor U Maung Lay-Daw Nan Kein and family of Makaoshom Ward, Tachilek, offered ‘soon’ to the Sayadaws.

**Opium, speciosa seized in Ywathuang, Myeik**

Investigation Department, Special Investigation Department and local police station, acting on information, raided the house of Daw Shu Kyi of Shwenatha Street, Myothit Ward 6, South Myeik, and seized 14 packets of speciosa weighing 0.9 kilos.

Respective police stations are taking action against them under the Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances Law.

**MGF President Maj-Gen Win Hlaing delivers an address at the press conference**
260 kilos of heroin seized in Turkey

Ankara, 12 March -- Turkish Gendarmerie teams and police have separately seized 260 kilos of heroin in two regions in Turkey in the past two days.

Anatolia news agency reported that acting on a tip-off, gendarmerie teams on Wednesday captured six persons who were coming to Guppinar Town of eastern Van Province on horses and seized 90 kilos of heroin put on two horses in two sacks.

CLAIMS DAY NOTICE

MV GEE HONG VOY NO (405)

Consignees of cargo carried on MV GEE HONG Voy No (405) are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on 14-3-2004 and cargo will be discharged into the premises of M.I.T.T where it will lie at the consignee’s risk and expenses and subject to the byelaws and conditions of the port of Yangon.

Damaged cargo will be surveyed daily from 8 am to 11.20 am and 12 noon to 4 pm up to Claims Day now declared as the third day after final discharge of cargo from the vessel.

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

SHIPPING AGENCY DEPARTMENT
MYANMA PORT AUTHORITY
AGENT FOR: M/S EAGLE CORPORATION

Phone No: 256908/378316/376797

CLAIMS DAY NOTICE

MV QING CHUN MEN VOY NO (065)

Consignees of cargo carried on MV QING CHUN MEN Voy No (065) are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on 14-3-2004 and cargo will be discharged into the premises of A.W.P.T where it will lie at the consignee’s risk and expenses and subject to the byelaws and conditions of the port of Yangon.

Damaged cargo will be surveyed daily from 8 am to 11.20 am and 12 noon to 4 pm up to Claims Day now declared as the third day after final discharge of cargo from the vessel.

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

SHIPPING AGENCY DEPARTMENT
MYANMA PORT AUTHORITY
AGENT FOR: MS ADVANCE CONTAINER LINES

Phone No: 256908/378316/376797

S Korea designate special disaster zones

Seoul, 12 March — South Korean Government designated Wednesday areas badly affected by last week’s record snowfall as special disaster zones so that residents in those areas can be eligible for state subsidies and compensation.

The zones include all regions, except for southeast part in the country’s South Gyeongsang Province, that endured the snowstorm late last week, South Korean Yonhap news agency reported.

The government plans to offer the state subsidies and financial assistance to the residents starting from March 19 at the earliest.

Residents of special disaster zones are eligible for 50 per cent to 150 per cent of the financial assistance normally provided by the government, maximum up to 36 million won (30,660 US dollars) for one household, to those suffering damage from natural disasters.

This is the second declaration of special disaster zones in less than a year. In September last year, the government designated all of South Korea, except for Souil and Incheon City, as special disaster areas in the aftermath of the destruction wrought by Typhoon Maemi, which left at least 117 people dead and 13 others missing and causing an estimated 4.7 trillion won (4.00 billion dollars) in property damage.

AIDS is a national concern.

Latin America’s first contagious disease centre set up in Mexico

Mexico City, 12 March — The construction of the Mexican contagious disease research centre, the first of its kind in Latin America, was completed here, according to local reports on Wednesday.

Reports said that the centre was funded by both national and private sources, totalling 25 million US dollars, and was equipped with the most advanced facilities, by which Mexican research staff are able to study pathogens leading to AIDS, pneumonia, tuberculosis, SARS, bird flu and other diseases.

Reports said that this center will especially help researchers study the development of AIDS in patients and test its drug-resistance. In the face of the spread of the number of HIV/ AIDS people is increasing at a fast pace in Mexico, the centre is expected to play an important role in fighting the fatal disease.
Kerry slams Bush economic record, meets rival Dean

CHICAGO, 12 March—Democratic White House candidate John Kerry on Wednesday slammed George W Bush for giving average Americans “the short end of the stick” and said the Republican President’s tax cuts were digging the US economy into a deeper hole.

Before heading to Washington for talks with former rival Howard Dean, Kerry told the AFL-CIO labour federation’s winter meeting that Republicans would run a campaign of “fear and blame” but that he was ready for it. “It must be getting lonely for George Bush. It seems he’s the last person in America who actually believes his failed policies will ever work,” Kerry told the umbrella group of more than 13 million workers. He spoke by satellite from a factory in Chicago to the meeting in Ball Harbour, Florida. Borrowing from Dean’s rhetoric, Kerry argued that there really was no middle class tax cut under Bush. “When the President’s economic policies were added up then the burden on the middle class was effectively increased by a “Bush tax.”

Unlike Dean, the four-term Massachusetts senator did not advocate rolling back all of Bush’s tax cuts, only the breaks for those earning more than 200,000 US dollars a year. He said he supported targeted tax breaks for the middle class for college, education and health care.

“Everywhere I’ve been in this campaign, I’ve met working Americans who are getting the short end of the stick,” Kerry said. “Jobs on the run. Wages and salaries dead in the water. Property taxes.

He called the president too “stubborn” to admit his policies were not working and said Bush’s economic programs “begins and ends with tax giveaways”.

“When you’re in the hole, step number one is pretty simple: stop digging.” Bush, on a trip to Ohio, an important battleground state that has been hard hit by manufacturing job losses, fought back with a strong defence of his economic policies, accusing his opponents of having a “tired defeatist mind-set.” —MNA/Reuters

New smallpox vaccine looks safe, effective

WASHINGTON, 12 March—An experimental smallpox vaccine may provide a solution for US health officials seeking a safe protection against biological attack for the millions of people who cannot risk the current immunization, US researchers said on Wednesday.

The vaccine protects monkeys against a virus related to smallpox, and created a strong immune response, the researchers reported. Past study has shown the vaccine, called Modified Vaccinia Virus Ankara, or MVA, is safe for people. The same team tested MVA on immune-compromised mice. Writing in the Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences, they said the mice remained healthy even when given 1,000 times the usual MVA dose.

This might offer new hope for US health officials who have been trying, with only limited success, to vaccinate hundreds of thousands of health and emergency workers in case of a smallpox attack. “The issue is not only health workers who might be absolutely much more amenable to getting vaccinated but also those people in the population who, for whatever reason, in fact, was a smallpox attack, you’d want to get vaccinated,” said Dr. Anthony Fauci, director of the National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases. —MNA/Reuters

China steps up crackdown on counterfeiting currency

BEIJING, 12 March—The People’s Bank of China, the central bank, said Thursday that China stepped up efforts on combating currency counterfeit in the past year, confiscating 605 million yuan and 5.007 million US dollars in counterfeit notes.

Meanwhile, banknote management was strengthened and a total of 9,007 financial institutions were found violating cash management regulations last year, according to background materials released Thursday by the central bank at a Press conference.

The Press conference was sponsored by the Press centre of the ongoing Second Session of 10th National People’s Congress and Second Session of the 10th National Committee of the Chinese People’s Political Consultative Conference. —MNA/Xinhua

Parasitic twin removed from newborn baby boy

WUHAN, 12 March—Doctors in the central China Province of Hubei have successfully removed a rare parasitic twin from a four-day-old baby boy.

The surgeons said they had to remove the underdeveloped “sibling” that was conjoined to Chen Maomao from hip to breast because it threatened the newborn’s survival.

The parasitic twin, slightly smaller than Chen himself, was only partially formed, smaller than Chen himself, was only partially formed, was a well-formed pair who had to remove the underdeveloped legs, said Professor Ruan Qinglan, one of the surgeons with the Union Hospital based in the provincial capital Wuhan, who operated on Chen Monday.

It was the first successful removal of such a big parasitic twin ever reported in China, she said. But she said the baby needed further treatment to repair his bulgy navel and skin damages on the belly. “This has to wait until he becomes stronger because any further operation at this moment could cause him breathing difficulty.”

Chen was born on March 5. He was in a critical condition when he was sent to the Union Hospital 10 hours after birth. The hospital has not released any information about the baby’s parents.

Professionals had said this was the second pair of conjoined twins she had treated during her 40-year practice as a paediatrician. “The first one was a well-formed pair who were born five years ago, joined at the belly and liver. Only one of them survived after they were separated.”

Conjoined twins form exactly like identical twins. “But at some point during the stage where the single pair of lungs, the process stops and the twins become attached to one another,” said Tang Shaotao, an associate professor who participated in Chen’s operation. “No one knows why conjoined twins occur, although genetic and environmental factors have been explored,” said Tang. MNA/Xinhua

WHO holds photo contest on, reproductive health

GENEVA, 12 March—The World Health Organization (WHO) said Wednesday that it is inviting photographers from around the world to submit images under the theme of sexual and reproductive health that capture four key stages in the “River of Life: Love, Life, Illness and Death.”

The contest, which runs until April 13, is open to both amateur and professional photographers, the agency said. The winning photographs will be displayed at the World Health Assembly in Geneva in May, and used in a WHO campaign on sexual and reproductive health, it said.

The competition is part of WHO’s broader effort to raise public awareness of the importance of sexual and reproductive health and the challenges the international community faces in this area. —MNA/Xinhua

US sailor from ‘Kitty Hawk’ dies in HK

HONG KONG, 12 March—A sailor from the aircraft carrier USS Kitty Hawk died Tuesday night in Hong Kong after drinking too much alcohol in the street, said the local police Wednesday.

Kitty Hawk ported in Hong Kong on March 6. Local news media quoted the police as saying that the sailor, Thomas Dougherty, 23, passed out and died during his shore leave. Police spokesman Edwin Hung said that Dougherty and a friend had been drinking alcohol in the Tsim Sha Tsui tourist district and when later getting out of a taxi he fell to the ground unconscious.

The sailor was taken to a hospital and confirmed dead on Tuesday night, said the police. —MNA/Xinhua

US sailor from ‘Kitty Hawk’ dies in HK

The Hubble Space Telescope. NASAnow send a robot to service the Hubble Space Telescope instead of astronauts in a bid to save the telescope from abandonment, the US space agency said. —Ibotta

US sailor from ‘Kitty Hawk’ dies in HK

Pittsburgh-based robot company Rethink Robotics announced in May it will send a robot to help maintain the Hubble Space Telescope.
Toldo helps Inter to goalless draw at Benfica

LISBON, 12 March — Inter Milan were indebted to their goalkeeper Francesco Toldo as they drew 0-0 at Benfica on Thursday in the first leg of their UEFA Cup fourth-round tie.

Toldo was in inspired form for the three-time winners of the competition as Benfica dominated the match, helping Inter recover from their 4-1 mauling by Italian Serie A rivals AS Roma at the weekend. Just before the end of the match Toldo made two excellent saves, blocking a long shot from Armando Petit and turning aside an effort by Croatian striker Tomislav Sokota.

Benfica captain Simon Sabrosa set up several probing attacks in the first half but the Lisbon side failed to convert two golden opportunities. Defender Armando Sa was unmarked in front of the goal after 15 minutes but Toldo cleared his shot with his foot and Argentine defender Javier Zanetti scrambled the ball away following a strike by Ricardo Rocha just before half-time.

Inter were without their leading forward Christian Vieri who was suspended after being sent off in the last round against French side Sochaux. — MNA/Reuters

10-man Celtic beat nine-man Barcelona 1-0

Glasgow, 12 March — Ten-man Celtic beat a Barcelona side reduced to nine men courtesy of Alan Thompson's second-half strike in the first leg of an ill-tempered UEFA Cup fourth round match on Thursday.

Both teams went down to 10 men after home goalkeeper Robert Douglas and Thiaig Motta were red-carded at halftime.

 Argentine striker Javier Saviola was then sent off for a late lunge on Thompson four minutes into the second half.

The English midfielder made Barcelona pay when he volleyed home the winner on 59 minutes.

Celtic — beaten finalists in last season's UEFA Cup — will be happy to avoid conceding against a Barcelona side who squandered a number of clearances.

Ronaldinho had problems as early as the fifth minute with a shot that deflected wide but an injury-depleted Celtic, without injured strikers Chris Sutton, John Hartson, and Shaun Maloney, were keen to make a contest of the evening.

Stephen Pearson was unlucky to thrash a volley wide on 11 minutes but Barcelona wasted three great opportunities to carve out a lead with Saviola and Ronaldirinho missing the target when clear on goal.

David Marshall, 19, replaced the sent-off Douglas and was almost picking the ball out of the net when Saviola knocked wide after racing clear on 46 minutes.

That was Saviola's last involvement as the Argentine striker was sent off after three minutes later when he was sent off for a late tackle on Thompson.

Barcelona remained dangerous even with nine men but Celtic made their advantage count whenilian Petrov threw a cross into the area for Larsonto head home and Thompson to finish in plenty of space. Both sides threatened towards the end but Celtic — who are now 74 matches unbeaten at home — held firm ahead of the second leg at the Nou Camp on March 25. — MNA/Reuters

Ferdinand talks of suspension agony

MANCHESTER, 12 March — Manchester United defender Rio Ferdinand says training and watching his teammates play is helping him cope with his ban for missing a drugs test.

"It has been important to stay among the boys and train and be among the banter. That is keeping me off the air," Ferdinand has told Manchester United radio.

"It has been very disappointing to say the least. It is frustrating. I would be lying if I said I was enjoying my time. I would much rather be out there playing."

"I have to feel lucky that I am not injured and I can keep training. It has been a difficult few months for me but I get my kicks out of watching the boys play."

Ferdinand was given an eight-month suspension in December for failing to take a drugs test at United's Carrington training ground last September.

United appealed against the verdict and the hearing is due to be heard next Thursday and Friday.

However, the England international agreed to start a ban in January and has missed United's last 10 matches.

During Ferdinand's absence the United defence has kept only one clean sheet, against Northampton Town in the FA Cup.

The 25-year-old has had to watch as his club has gone out of the Champions League to Porto this week and slipped nine points behind leaders Arsenal in the Premier League.

Ferdinand hopes to have the length of his ban reduced, but admits he will need time to get back to his best.

He added: "People will say I'm having a holiday but I'm not. I am working to stay fit."

"I won't have a problem with ballooning up. I'm a slim lad so I don't put weight on."

"But keeping match fit is a totally different ball game. No matter what training I do, it will take me a good few weeks and a few games to get match fit again." — MNA/Reuters

Villarreal claim convincing 2-0 UEFA Cup win over Roma

CASTELLON, 12 March — UEFA Cup debutants Villarreal claimed a convincing 2-0 victory over injury-hit Italian side AS Roma in the first leg of their fourth-round tie on Thursday.

First-half strikes from Brazilian striker Sonny Anderson and Spanish forward Jose Mari left the Spanish side on course to book their place in the quarter-finals.

Villarreal, who had beat Turkish side Galatasary 5-1 on aggregate in the last round, took the early initiative with Sebastian Battaglia imposing himself at the centre of the midfield.

The former Boca Juniors player went close to putting the home side ahead when he skimmed the bar with a fierce drive on 25 minutes after fellow Argentine Juan Roman Riquelme had darted into the area.

It came as little surprise when the home side took the lead three minutes later. Anderson scoring with a neat angled shot after a fine through ball from Jose Mari.

Seven minutes later the former AC Milan forward grabbed one for himself to put his side 2-0 up when he headed in unmarked at the far post after a well-struck corner from midfielder Roger.

Villarreal had several chances to extend their lead, Roger going close before the break and Riquelme twice forcing sharp saves from Roma keeper Carlo Zotti early in the second half.

Roma coach Fabio Capello, who was without the injured Francesco Totti and Marco Delvecchio, among others, brought in frontman Antonio Cassano to try and spark the attack, but the Italians rarely managed to get near the Villarreal goal.

As a mark of respect for the victims of the bomb attacks in Madrid that killed nearly 200 people earlier on Thursday both sides took to the field wearing black arm bands before observing a minute's silence. — MNA/Reuters

Six tied for lead after Qatar Masters opening round

Doha, 12 March — A group of six players fired four-under-par 68s for a share of the lead after the opening round of the European Tour-sanctioned Qatar Masters on Thursday.

British trio Matthew Blackey, Andrew Oldcorn and Paul Broadhurst are tied with Japan's Nobuhito Sato, Sweden's Pierre Fulke and Austria's Martin Wiegele, one stroke clear of a group of eight players in the 152-man US-dollar event.

Blackey peppered the pin with his approaches and the five birdsies in his round came in the final eight holes.

Broadhurst scored 34 on both nine holes although the former Ryder Cup player admitted that he had not slept well over the last two weeks but was glad to be back after missing the first two months of the season.

Like Blackey, Oldcorn favoured the back nine, where he recorded four birdsies. After a strong second place finish last week, Ireland's Paul McGinley opened with a battling 72, recovering from a two-over-par front nine with a pair of late birdsies to bring him back to even par.

Former US Masters champion Ian Woosnam, who played the back nine first, was left to rue several missed short putts and had to settle for a three-under-par 69 for a share of seventh. Defending champion Darren Fichardt of South Africa finished on two-under-par 70 while another former champion Andrew Coltart had a disastrous six-over-par 78. — MNA/Reuters

Japan's Riko Higashio watches her tee shot on the third hole during the first round of the LPGA Welch's/ Fry's Championship in Tucson, Arizona, on 11 March, 2004. Higashio, a rookie on the LPGA tour, finished the round with a three under par 69. — INSETRIST

Marseille's Didier Dropna (R) beats Liverpool's goalkeeper Chris Kirkland (L) and Stephen Finnan to score during their UEFA Cup fourth round, first leg soccer match at Anfield, Liverpool, on 11 March, 2004. The match finished 1-1. — INSETRIST

Cudicini suffers hand injury

LONDON, 12 March — Chelsea goalkeeper Carlo Cudicini faces a spell on the sidelines after suffering a hand injury in training, the Premier League club said on their web site on Thursday.

The 30-year-old Italian, who has been outstanding in goal for Roman Abramovich's club this season, badly bruised a finger and cracked a bone in his hand during a training session.

Chelsea's web site said Cudicini was definitely out of Saturday's trip to Bolton Wanderers but was hopeful of resuming training once the bruising went down.

Cudicini kept a clean sheet in Chelsea's 0-0 home draw with German side VfB Stuttgart on Tuesday to help secure his team a place in the Champions League quarter-finals.

Neil Sullivan is his likely replacement against Bolton. — MNA/Reuters
General Thura Shwe Mann addresses coordination meeting on cultivation of 500,000 acres of oil palm in Taninthayi Division

YANGON, 12 March—Member of the State Peace and Development Council General Thura Shwe Mann addressed the coordination meeting on cultivation of 500,000 acres of oil palm in Taninthayi Division held at Zeyathyin Thalay Hall, Yankin township here at 8 am today.

Also present on the occasion were the deputy ministers, officials of the State Peace and Development Council Office, heads of department, entrepreneurs of the oil palm companies, businessmen who are interested in growing oil palm and owners of the crude palm oil factories.

In his address, General Thura Shwe Mann said that efforts are being made for extended cultivation of oil palm and owners of the crude palm oil factories.

Secretary-1 Lt-Gen Soe Win accepts cash donations from Minister for Livestock and Fisheries Brig-Gen Maung Maung Thein for supply of potable water in rural areas.—MNA

General Thura Shwe Mann addresses meeting to put 500,000 acres of land under oil palm in Taninthayi Division — MNA

State Peace and Development Council Chairman Senior General Than Shwe sends message of condolence to King of Spain

YANGON, 12 March—Senior General Than Shwe, Chairman of the State Peace and Development Council of the Union of Myanmar, has sent a message of condolence to His Majesty King Juan Carlos I of Spain for the loss of innocent lives in the bombing incident in Madrid, Spain, on 11 March 2004.—MNA

Secretary-1 attends cash donation ceremony for supply of potable water in rural areas

YANGON, 12 March—The seventh cash donation ceremony for supply of potable water in rural areas of the Ministry for Progress of Border Areas and National Races and Development Affairs was held at the meeting hall of the Development Affairs Department in Thanlyin Township, this afternoon, attended by Secretary-1 of the State Peace and Development Council Lt-Gen Soe Win.

Also present on the occasion were ministers, deputy ministers, Daw San Yon who is member of the Panel of Patrons of Myanmar-ASEAN Women’s Friendship Association, wife of the Minister for Foreign Affairs, Vice-President of the Association wife Foreign Affairs and Development Minister Mrs. Poh Choo de Cruz, Executive Committee member Philippines Ambassador Mrs. Phoebe A. Gomez, officials of the State Peace and Development Council Office, departmental heads of the Ministry for Progress of Border Areas and National Races and Development Affairs and wellwishers.

At the ceremony, Deputy Minister for PBANRDA Col Tin Ngwe reported that in April 1999, Senior General Than Shwe gave guidance to implement the 10-year plan on supply of potable water in all villages of divisions in the tropical region where water is scarce. From the 2000-2001 fiscal year to date, 60 per cent of tasks for supplying water have been completed as tasks of water availability have been carried out in 4,783 villages out of 8,042 villages in three tropical divisions.

Thanks to participation of the wellwishers in the tasks, momentum has been gained in the rural water supply tasks. In addition, international organizations also provide assistance to the rural water supply projects.

Japan International Co-operation Agency (JICA) has sunk 91 tube-wells out of 250 in the five-year plan in Shan State (North). As the master plan on supply of potable water in tropical region is being implemented, a total of 22 deep test-wells have been sunk in 11 townships, so far.

Bridge Asia Japan (BAJ) also is digging 48 4” and 6” tube-wells in Kyaukpyu Township beginning 2001-2002. Similarly, UNICEF has been participating in 390 water supply tasks of the rural water supply project in three tropical divisions from 2001-2002 to date. Likewise, the Union Solidarity and Development (See page 10)