Matapitu upatthanam, to serve thy parents; this is the way to auspiciousness.

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

The noble traditions of the Tatmadaw

Our Tatmadaw has proved capable of adequately dealing with any crisis due to its good discipline, loyalty, unity, capability, willingness to make sacrifices, willingness to give priority to national interests over individual interests, high morale, courage in the face of difficulties, endurance and perseverance. As these points constituted the noble traditions of the Tatmadaw, it is incumbent on all of us to maintain these characteristics forever.

Senior General Than Shwe
Chairman of the State Peace and Development Council
Commander-in-Chief of Defence Services
(From address at the parade of 58th Anniversary Armed Forces Day)

Prime Minister addresses meeting on Electronic Transactions Law (draft)

YANGON, 17 March — The meeting on Electronic Transactions Law (draft) took place at the MICT Park in Hline Township here yesterday afternoon, with an address by Chairman of Myanmar Computer Science Development Council Prime Minister General Khin Nyunt. Also present on the occasion were Secretary-1 of the State Peace and Development Council Lt-Gen Soe Win, Chairman of e-National Task Force Minister for Communications, Posts and Telegraphs Brig-Gen Thein Zaw, Chief Justice U Aung Toe, Attorney-General U Aye Maung, deputy ministers, the deputy attorney-general, senior military officers, members of e-National Task Force, officials of the State Peace and Development Council Office, officials and guests. At the meeting, the chairman of the e-National Task Force reported on progress in drawing the Electronic Transactions Law (draft) in cooperation with ministries; and the attorney-general, on prescriptions of the law (draft). Next, the Chief Justice, Deputy Attorney-General Dr Tun Shin and those present made discussions on the law (draft). The Prime Minister gave instructions to the officials. Member of the e-National Task Force U Thein Oo gave an account of Myanmar character code (See page 11)

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

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Article
Point 6041 battle, testament to Tatmadaw’s heroic sacrifices (Pages 8+9)

Circulation
22,737

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

Senior General Than Shwe sends congratulations to President of Russian Federation

YANGON, 17 March — Senior General Than Shwe, Chairman of the State Peace and Development Council of the Union of Myanmar, has sent a message of congratulations to His Excellency Mr Vladimir V Putin, on his re-election as the President of the Russian Federation.—MNA

Senior General Than Shwe sends felicitations to President of Ireland

YANGON, 17 March — Senior General Than Shwe, Chairman of the State Peace and Development Council of the Union of Myanmar, has sent a message of felicitations to Her Excellency Dr Mary McAleese, President of Ireland, on the occasion of the National Day of Ireland, which falls on 17 March 2004. —MNA

Prime Minister General Khin Nyunt addresses meeting on Electronic Transactions Law (draft). — MNA
PERSPECTIVES
Thursday, 18 March, 2004

Strive for speedy realization of educational goal

The Government of the Union of Myanmar is making every endeavour for the emergence of a modern, developed and discipline-flourishing democracy by laying down the seven-point future policy programme and by fulfilling absolute necessities for the future of the State.

Rule of law and community peace are the sine qua non for the realization of the future policy programme. Moreover, harmonious development in all economic sectors and human resource development in the education sector are also necessary. This being the case, the government is taking systematic measures to meet these three most fundamental requirements.

The meeting (1/2004) of the Myanmar Education Committee was held at the hall of the Universities Central Council on 16 March in Yangon and Chairman of MEC Prime Minister General Khin Nyunt delivered an address. In his address, the Prime Minister said that it was necessary for all those responsible in the education sector to realize that human resource development was very important for the future of the State and that the government was opening new schools, colleges and at the same time upgrading the existing ones to open up opportunities for the youths to be able to pursue their education easily and to develop human resources. The purpose of doing so is to raise the educational standard of the entire nation.

A modern and developed nation will be realized only if the education sector improves qualitatively as well as quantitatively. As universities, colleges and basic education schools are located in various States and Divisions, it is necessary for responsible personnel at all levels to coordinate and cooperate zealously to realize the educational goal of the State.

Hence, while the Government is making earnest efforts for promoting the educational standard of the nation, the officials and staff of the education sector are incumbent to make concerted efforts for reaching the educational goal speedily.
Honduras says it’s pulling Iraq troops

The decision marked an about-face from a day earlier when President Ricardo Maduro said the forces would stay.

Tuesday’s announcement “coincides with the decision of the prime minister-elect of the Spanish government,” Breve said.

Jose Luis Rodriguez Zapatero, the socialist candidate who won Spain’s elections Sunday, has called the Iraq invasion an error, and said he would recall Spanish troops from Iraq by June 30 unless the United Nations assumes control of multinational military operations there.

There was mounting criticism of outgoing Spanish Prime Minister Jose Maria Aznar for being to closely allied to the United States and making Spain a terrorist target.

Honduras, El Salvador and Nicaragua all have sent soldiers to the Spanish-led Plus Ultra Brigade to do humanitarian and peacekeeping work.

Salvadoran Defence Secretary Gen. Juan Martinez said Tuesday that the country would keep its troops in Iraq last month, and is scheduled to stay until August of this year.

Whether additional troops are sent after that may depend on the outcome of Sunday’s presidential elections, disputed by Tony Saca, of the conservative ruling Nationalist Republican Alliance, and Schafti Handal, of the leftist Farabundo Marti National Liberation Front.

Current Salvadoran President Francisco Flores has stressed that the help it sent to Iraq is in thanks for the international community’s backing of the 1992 peace accords that ended El Salvador’s 12-year civil war.

Nicaragua sent about 115 soldiers, mostly sappers and medical personnel, last September to join the brigade. Those troops have since returned, and the government announced last month that it could not afford to send a second contingent.

Poverty reduction tops Asian parliamentarians meet agenda

Manila, 17 March — Asian parliamentarians and UN representatives met here Monday in a two-day gathering to focus on poverty reduction in the Asian region.

Representatives and leaders from across the region discussed their experience in addressing poverty through key legislation in order to move forward the Millennium Development Goals at the meeting organized by the Asian Parliamentary Policy Analysis Network in partnership with the United Nations Development Programme.

It is stated in the Millennium Development Goals that by year 2015, all 189 UN members have pledged to address the challenges among least developed nations which include eradication of poverty and hunger, a universal primary education, gender equality and women empowerment and reduction of child mortality.

These goals are used by countries as benchmarks to wipe out poverty and ensure human development by 2015.

Deborah Landey, UN Resident Representative to the parliamentarians also emphasized the importance of Parliament in good governance.

“Parliaments are not just an effective check on the executive branch of the government but are the best way to ensure that all citizens — including the poor and the excluded — have their voices heard and their needs addressed,” she said.

Landey stressed that the United Nations is working hard in partnership to ensure that government institutions from legislatures to local authorities are “transparent and accountable and have the capacity to carry out their critical work”.

Dengue fever deaths reach 452 in Indonesia

Jakarta, 17 March — The death toll of the dengue fever across Indonesia has reached 452, a senior official of the Health Ministry said here Monday.

“The number of death toll today across Indonesia is 452 people and some 5,000 sufferers are still in hospitals,” Rikatiusiastuti told Xinhua.

Some 90 per cent of the sufferers have recovered and returned home from hospitals since mid-January when the disease began to spread in the country, she said.

Previously, spokesman of the ministry, Mariani Reksosopojo said that some 12 of the 30 infected provinces still had extraordinary cases. — MNA/Xinhua

Four Europeans, two Americans killed in separate incidents in Iraq

Baghdad, 17 March — Gunfights killed four Americans and two Europeans in different parts of Iraq, as a top US official said he’s confident that others will fill any void left if Spain withdraws its forces from the country.

Spain’s Prime Minister-elect Jose Luis Rodriguez Zapatero has vowed to bring home his country’s 1,300 troops no later than June 30 unless the United Nations assumes control of the multinational force there.

Zapatero’s Socialist party swept to victory in elections Sunday after more than 200 people were killed by bombs that exploded on four Madrid commuter trains last Thursday.

The vote was seen as a repudiation of outgoing Prime Minister Jose Maria Aznar’s support for the US invasion of Iraq. In Iraq, two Europeans — thought to be one German and one Dutch national — were killed along with three Iraqis when their car came under fire near the southern Iraqi city of Karbala on Tuesday.

Unknown assailants attacked the car of the five men in Jorf al-Sakhir, north of Karbala, 110 kilometres (65 miles) from the Iraqi capital, said a police spokesman in the Shiite holy city.

On Monday night, four American aid workers with the Southern Baptist International Mission Board were killed and another wounded in a drive-by shooting in the northern city of Mosul, the US military and the board said.

An Iraqi woman working as a translator for the US army was killed in the same city Tuesday, police and the military said.

Castro calls on S American troops to quit Iraq

Havana, 17 March — Cuban President Fidel Castro says 1,600 Latin American troops are “cannon fodder” in Iraq and calls for them to withdraw along with the Spanish unit they are serving in.

Castro, a fierce critic of the US-led occupation of Iraq, applauded Spanish Prime Minister-elect Jose Luis Rodriguez Zapatero for his decision to withdraw Spain’s contingent of 1,300 troops by the June 30.

In a message published on Tuesday by the ruling Communist Party daily Granma, Castro said “more than 1,000 young men from small and impoverished Latin American countries were sent to Iraq as cannon fodder under the command of the Spanish Legion. The death of any of those youths is thus the responsibility of the Spanish state,” he said.

“The Latin American people have the right to expect the immediate return of those young men,” he said.

There are 380 Salvadoran, 370 Honduran and 300 Dominican soldiers in Iraq as part of the Spanish-led Plus Ultra Brigade.

The three Latin American countries said they intended to keep their contingents in Iraq even if the Spaniards leave.

The Dominican Republic government said its men would stay for the time being in Iraq, while El Salvador and Honduras said they intended to withdraw at the mandate given by their Congress runs out in August.

Nicaragua had 115 troops in Iraq until February, when they were pulled out as part of a normal rotation. Nicaragua says it cannot afford to replace them.

Zapatero, who defeated pro-US Prime Minister Jose Maria Aznar in an election on Sunday after train bombings in Madrid, strongly criticized the “disastrous” US-led war in Iraq and said Spain’s 1,300 troops should come home at the end of June unless stronger resolutions take over operations in postwar Iraq.

Castro welcomed the Socialist victory in Spain and condemned the attacks that killed 201 people, lamenting that the Spanish people had paid the price of involvement in an unjustified war in Iraq.

A boy pulls a cow past an Iraqi tank destroyed almost a year ago by air strikes, in a rural area outside Baghdad, on 16 March, 2004. — Reuters

MNA/Xinhua

A boy pulls a cow past an Iraqi tank destroyed almost a year ago by air strikes, in a rural area outside Baghdad, on 16 March, 2004. — Reuters

THE NEW LIGHT OF MYANMAR Thursday, 18 March, 2004 3
British support for Iraq war tumbles

LONDON, 17 March—British public support for the war in Iraq has dropped to 43%, from 61% last May at the end of that war, according to a poll released tonight.

British Prime Minister Tony Blair got lower ratings in France, Germany and Russia (35, 33 and 36%, respectively).

President George Bush got 39% approval among Britons, 15% among the French and 14% among Germans.

In the United States, support for the Iraq war dropped to 60%, from 74% in May.

Germans, French and Russians all continued to support their countries’ decisions to oppose the war, by 86, 88 and 88% respectively.

Most Britons, 56%, said they wanted Western Europe to be more independent of a European Union equal in power to the United States would be good.

The poll, conducted by the Washington-based group, found that a majority of people in Germany, France and Russia shared those views.

In Germany, France and Britain, views of the United States were less positive than they had been in May at the end of the Iraq war.

In Germany and France, more people held negative than positive views of the United States.—Internet

Poll shows three quarters of Britons fear terror attack because of Iraq

LONDON, 17 March—Three quarters of Britons believe their country is more vulnerable to terrorist attack as a result of its participation in the US-led invasion and occupation of Iraq, according to a poll reported by Sky TV.

According to the Internet poll of more than 1,500 people, only one percent of those who responded thought that the fall of Saddam Hussein had made the country less vulnerable to the risk of attack, and 22 percent thought the situation had changed neither for the better nor for the worse.

Forty-eight percent still thought the government was right to go to war in Iraq against 41 percent who thought it was wrong. Seventy-three percent said the threat of attack would not alter the way they voted, but 20 percent said an actual attack would.

Indonesia urges for end to mines operation in protected forest areas

JAKARTA, 17 March — Indonesian Minister of Environment Nabiab Makarim said on Monday that decision to allow the 13 mines operating in protected forest areas is an accident, and be asked to stop allowing other mines operating in the areas.

However, the minister said that the contract work, which had been signed before the issuance of the government law prohibiting mines operation in the protected forest areas, cannot be aborted.

“We consider this as an accident, but after that, it must be stopped,” he told reporters, promising to monitor the implementation of the licences. The Indonesian Government issued a law, ruling that 13 of the 22 mines are proposed to operate in the protected forest areas, because of the contract work had been signed before the adoption of the government law on forestry, which forbids mines operation in protected forest.

Besides, the 13 mines have already completed their exploration phase and came into the production phase, the investors’ confidence could be badly affected if the operations were stopped.

Last week, Indonesian Mines and Energy Minister Purnomo Yusgiantoro asked to reopen 22 mines, which have closed due to the government law on protecting forest.

Indonesian Coordinating Minister for Economic Dorodjumun Kujjorehak said that the long dispute in the mines industry could hamper foreign investment in Indonesia. There were only 2 per cent of the protected forest areas destroyed by the mines activities, he said.—MNA/Xinhua

Protestors get ready for year anniversary of Iraq war

BAGHDAD, 17 March—One year ago this week, protestors took to the streets of San Francisco to show their anger about the war with Iraq.

Now, it seems that more Americans are coming over to their view about the conflict.

In exclusive Eyewitness News poll, 44% of people told Survey USA that there is more of a terrorist threat now than before the war started. Only 17% said there was less of a terrorist threat, and 37% said the level was the same. Two percent said they weren’t sure.

As for the anti-war group, is preparing for a major rally and march this Saturday to mark the first anniversary of the invasion.

The group says more people than ever are ready to step up dialogues and communications with the EU to make joint efforts towards the progress of the Doha Development Agenda.

Lamy said EU is willing to strengthen cooperation with China within the framework of the WTO and jointly push for substantial progress of the Doha Development Agenda.—MNA/Xinhua

Wu Yi urges closer trade links with EU

BEIJING, 17 March — Chinese Vice-Premier Wu Yi said here Monday that China and the European Union (EU) should strengthen dialogue at all levels to solve the existing problems in bilateral trade and economic cooperation.

Wu made the remark during her meeting with visiting EU Trade Commissioner Pascal Lamy in Beijing on Monday afternoon.

Wu said China holds a positive stance on pushing forward the Doha Development Agenda of the World Trade Organization (WTO). She said China supports the multilateral talks to reach a win-win solution at the earliest date possible. She said China is ready to step up dialogues and communications with the EU to make joint efforts towards the progress of the Doha Development Agenda.—MNA/Xinhua

New Delhi rolling out plans for strategic oil reserves

NEW DELHI, 17 March—After rolling out plans for setting up strategic oil reserves, India is studying ways to have strategic supply once the market matures five years from now.

“With gas expected to play a bigger role in the energy sector, India is working on plans to have a strategic gas reserve,” said Petroleum Secretary BK Chaturvedi.

“We are presently doing in-depth studies as were undertaken for oil strategic reserves. The issues of carrying cost and technology all have to be considered,” Chaturvedi told Indo-Asian News Service.

“The study should be completed in two months to three months time and me would be seeking Cabinet approval.” Chaturvedi said.

The idea of strategic gas reserves has been floated with India’s gas consumption projected to go up from 65 million metric standard cubic metres per day to 300 million metric standard cubic metres per day by 20025. Strategic storage would be ideal for balancing the highs and lows in demand and supply.—MNA/Xinhua

New Zealand to export 20,000 dairy cows to China

WELLINGTON, 17 March — New Zealand is expected to export more than 20,000 dairy cows to China this year, New Zealand Press Association (NZPA) reported Monday.

Two of three shipments, totalling close to 10,000 cows, have already left Timaru for China, and another shipment of about 4,000 leaves this month.

NZPA quoted dairy industry sources as estimating that more than 20,000 New Zealand cows will be shipped to China this year, markedly more than previous years.

New Zealand farmers are being offered 900 New Zealand dollars (about 575 US dollars) for two-year-old in-calf heifers, 150 New Zealand dollars more than current domestic values, although the cows have to be of high quality, NZPA said.—MNA/Xinhua
Seventh Iraqi war veteran kills himself

WASHINGTON, 17 March — A Colorado-based Army Special Forces soldier back from Iraq shot himself in the head in his front yard Sunday night according to police — at least the seventh soldier who has committed suicide after serving there.

William Howell, 36, shot himself after following his wife around the yard with a handgun, according to the El Paso County Sheriff’s Office. Howell served with the 10th Special Forces group in Iraq and returned to Fort Carson last month, according to the Army.

Another soldier who was attached to that unit in Iraq, Staff Sgt Georgios Pogany, also served with the 10th Special Forces Group and is believed there, and then charged him with cowardice instead. Pogany, 32, also says the Army is ignoring the side effects of an anti-malaria drug called Lariam he took with the Special Forces which has been linked to mental problems, aggression and suicides.

The El Paso County Sheriff’s Department got a phone call just before 9:30 Sunday night from Howell’s wife about a “physical disturbance” at their home in Monument. She said her husband had gone to get a gun. Police said the line then went dead. When they called back, Howell said there was no problem.

When police arrived, Howell was following his wife around the yard with a handgun and talking to her. “He was ordered to drop his weapon by one of the officers, but instead placed the weapon to his head and pulled the trigger,” the sheriff’s office said in a statement.

One officer fired at Howell, not realizing whom Howell was shooting at, and Howell was shot in the arm. The El Paso County Coroner said Howell died from his own shot.

Howell’s wife was treated for a minor head injury. A 13-year-old and two infants were in the house, unhurt.

According to the Army, six soldiers killed themselves after returning from Iraq, not counting Howell (UPI reported that one soldier back from Iraq died last July, and another this January, at Walter Reed Army Medical Centre). A Fort Campbell soldier who had been in Iraq killed himself in January — Internet.

US forces trade fire on Iran-Iraq border

IRKUK, 17 March — US forces in Iraq skirmished with what appeared to be Iranian border guards on the Iran-Iraq frontier at the weekend, a US military spokesman said on Monday, but Iran denied there was any such encounter.

Brigadier-General Mark Kimmitt, the deputy director of operations for the US military in Iraq, said soldiers from the 4th Infantry Division were patrolling along the border in the far northeast of Iran when the exchange of fire occurred. “(They) were in fact shot and fired upon by what were believed to be personnel wearing uniforms resembling those worn by Iranian border guards,” Kimmitt told a news conference.

“The US soldiers took self-defence measures and returned fire, and soon after that broke contact.”

We are trying to ascertain what actually happened at the scene,” Kimmitt said, adding that the skirmish took place around 11:30 pm (2030 GMT) on Sunday.

But officials in Teheran, with whom Iraq fought an eight-year war in the 1980s, denied any clash had taken place. “There was no such skirmish.”

Iranian Army and Foreign Ministry officials were not immediately available for comment. Skirmishes have occurred along the border in the year since US troops invaded Iraq to overthrow Saddam Hussein. But Sunday’s incident would be the first since US authorities tightened border controls along the Iranian frontier.

Last week, the US Administration in Iraq said it was reducing from three from 10 the number of official crossing points along the nearly 1,000 miles border in an effort to clamp down on foreign fighters entering Iraq.

Iranian authorities have rejected US criticism that they are not doing enough to police their borders.

Kimmitt said US authorities were working through military and diplomatic channels to try to head off any fallout from Sunday’s incident, which he tried to play down. — MNA/Reuters

ElBaradei says UN inspections to resume in Iran

WASHINGTON/TEHERAN, 17 March — Iran will allow the resumption of nuclear inspections later this month, ending a freeze by Teheran in protest at a tough resolution on its atomic programme, the UN’s nuclear watchdog said Monday.

Mohamed ElBaradei said in an interview on 16 March, 2004 on the BBC radio programme that his organization had been invited by Teheran to resume inspections of its nuclear facilities. This was the first admission of Iran since the 1979 revolution that the Islamic Republic would allow international inspectors access to sites suspected of making nuclear weapons.

“When the authorities in Iran gave us a green light, the next thing you do is to turn up at their door,” ElBaradei said.

“I was informed by the Iranian authorities that the new date for inspectors arriving would be on March 27,” International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) chief Mohamed ElBaradei said in Washington. “Although this delay is regrettable, nonetheless the new date is still within our time schedule for conducting inspections.”

Iran’s decision to halt nuclear inspections had fuelled US charges Teheran was trying to hide parts of its extensive nuclear sector because it had a secret programme to build an atom bomb. Teheran denies this, saying its programme is solely for peaceful generation of electricity.

ElBaradei on Sunday urged Teheran to let the IAEA return as soon as possible to dispel suspicions it was trying to hide something. “Without the IAEA, Iran said it had taken the step on Friday to show...”

“I am very pleased at the drafting of an IAEA resolution criticizing it for failing to report sensitive research and equipment which could be used to make atomic bomb material.”

Speaking to reporters after a meeting with Senate’s Foreign Relations Committee, ElBaradei said Teheran had clearly realized that it had no choice but to cooperate with UN watch-dogs. — MNA/Reuters

Arab official assassinated in Kirkuk

KIRKUK, 17 March — An Arab member of Kirkuk’s city council and his bodyguard were shot dead in a drive-by shooting on Monday, underscoring rising political tensions in the ethnically divided northern Iraqi city.

Witnesses said a red car pulled up alongside a vehicle carrying Agar al-Tawil, a Shi’ite Arab council member, and his bodyguard and opened fire. The vehicle skull-dented to a halt and the assailants then got out and fired more shots at the victims.

“Two men got out of the red car and went to Tawil’s car and just starting shooting,” witness Haidar Mohamed said.

Major-General Hazim al-Obeidi of the Kirkuk police confirmed the assassination and said an investigation was under way.

Kirkuk, which sits on some of Iraq’s richest oil reservoirs, is divided among Arabs, Kurds and Turkmens, all of whom lay claim to the city. — MNA/Reuters

UN gets first food convoy to north Haiti city

PORT-AU-PRINCE, Haiti, 17 March — The first UN food convoy since Haiti’s armed revolt began on 5 February has reached the northern city of Cap Haitien and will distribute emergency supplies to schools on Monday.

Alejandro Chicheri, chief of the UN’s World Food Programme said a truck with 20 tons of food to feed 3,700 children managed to get from Port-au-Prince to Cap Haitien on Sunday, passing through several roadblocks in rebel-held areas. “We haven’t spoken to any of the authorities here but we expect they will receive the food convoy was the first delivery of food to Cap Haitien in more than a month. The UN agency’s warehouse in the city was looted during the revolt. Tens of thousands of people, scraping subsistence living from arid and eroded soils, are dependent on food handouts in Haiti’s north. — MNA/Reuters

US soldier stabbed in Baghdad’s “Green Zone”

BAGHDAD, 17 March — An assissinated stab and badly wounded an American Army officer inside the Baghdad compound of Iraq’s US-led administration, a US spokesman said on Monday.

Dan Senor, chief spokesman of the Coalition Provisional Authority (CPA), said the officer had been stabbed on Saturday evening while walking in the “Green Zone”, a sprawling, heavily guarded area on the west bank of the Tigris River.

“To my knowledge this was the first attack of its kind inside the Green Zone. We do not know at this point whether or not the attacker was Iraqi or an American,” Senor said.

“The victim suffered serious stab wounds to his torso, head and neck.” Senor said, adding that the officer, unconscious immediately after the attack, had been flown on Sunday to a US medical facility in Germany, where he was in stable condition. — MNA/Reuters

A Spanish soldier (R) patrols with Iraqí paramilitary police in the Iraqi town of Dhiwanyi, about 200 km (120 miles) south of the capital Baghdad, on 16 March, 2004. — INTERNET

Japan’s Rysanez Engineering unveils a fish robot shaped like a coelacanth. Tanzanian fishermen have caught coelacanths, a rare species of fish that was once believed to be extinct, a senior conservation official said recently. — Internet

President A. Chicheri of the UN’s World Food Programme said a truck with 20 tons of food to feed 3,700 children managed to get from Port-au-Prince to Cap Haitien on Sunday, passing through several roadblocks in rebel-held areas. “We haven’t spoken to any of the authorities here but we expect they will receive the food convoy was the first delivery of food to Cap Haitien in more than a month. The UN agency’s warehouse in the city was looted during the revolt. Tens of thousands of people, scraping subsistence living from arid and eroded soils, are dependent on food handouts in Haiti’s north. — MNA/Reuters

The arrival of the UN food convoy was the first delivery of food to Cap Haitien in more than a month. The UN agency’s warehouse in the city was looted during the revolt. Tens of thousands of people, scraping subsistence living from arid and eroded soils, are dependent on food handouts in Haiti’s north. — MNA/Reuters
Iraq under US and allies’ occupation

Innocent civilian deaths under US occupation in Iraq

US and allies invaded Iraq on 20 March 2003. Following the invasion, armed attacks against US-led coalition forces by Iraqi guerillas increased and more and more Iraqis are becoming victims of the US-led led occupation and remain hopeless.

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<tr>
<td>8-4-2003</td>
<td>to Al-Jazeera office</td>
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<td>Pathila</td>
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<td>11 to 22-4-2003</td>
<td>Ar-Ramadi</td>
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<tr>
<td>23-9-2003</td>
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<td>Tikrit</td>
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<td>7-1-2004</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>14-1-2004</td>
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<tr>
<td>29-2-2004</td>
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<tr>
<td>2-3-2004</td>
<td>to Samawah</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
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Innocent civilian deaths in Iraq

Iraqi men check the destroyed house of Mohammed al-Issawi, a local leader in the village of Ameriya, near the restive town of Fallujah, 50km west of Baghdad, on 16 February. Witnesses said US forces killed al-Issawi.

Iraqi girl Aween Aras, age 11, is kept company by relatives, inside a hospital as she recovers from wounds she suffered when a car bomb exploded near where she had been walking to school, in Kirkuk, northern Iraq on 23 Feb 2004.

A group of Iraqi men survey the damaged house of a local leader in the village of Ameriya, near Fallujah, some 50 km (30 miles) west of the Iraqi capital Baghdad, on 16 February, 2004.

A civilian wounded in a car bomb attack lies in the al-Karama hospital in Baghdad on 16 February.
Hailing the 59th Anniversary Armed Forces Day:

Tatmadaw always serving the interest of the nation and the people

Pahtolon Bridge on Monywa-Yagyi-Kalewa Road

The Pahtolon Bridge constructed by the Tatmadaw was inaugurated on 3-1-2004. It is situated at milepost No 57 on Monywa-Yagyi-Kalewa Road in Kani Township, Monywa District, Sagaing Division.

Salient points on Pahtolon Bridge

The Pahtolon Bridge Project could be accomplished in a year thanks to day-and-night efforts of the Tatmadaw. All the quality steel beams installed to the facility are produced by the State-owned steel factory.

Facts about Pahtolon Bridge

- Length: 450 feet
- Width of motorway: 28 feet
- Width of each pedestrian lane: 4 feet
- Type of the bridge: upper structure steel beam reinforced concrete, lower structure reinforced concrete
- Tonnage permitted: 60
- Launching date: 9-12-2002
- Completion date: 8-12-2003

Beautiful scenery of the Pahtolon Bridge.
The Tatmadaw (Armed Forces) in perpetual service of the people

Myanmar Tatmadaw has been discharging its duties brilliantly from Bagan period up to the present time.

—Whenever the State’s sovereignty was encroached upon, Tatmadaw members managed to completely wipe out the destructive elements at risk to their lives.

—Whenever a foreign country intruded into the nation, the Tatmadaw, holding whatever arms they could get, brilliantly and bravely fought against the intruders. It never hesitated to launch just battles to defend the lives and property of the people.

—When peace prevails across the nation, its members serve the interests of the people.

In the battles against insurgents, many Tatmadaw members have sacrificed their lives or limbs. They also sustained serious injuries. Years passed but the people still remember the heroes of the Tatmadaw. They have been recorded in history.

There have been a great deal of historic battles launched to defend and safeguard the national sovereignty of around 20 bullets with a machine gun, four M-22 launchers and one 40mm launcher from the dead insurgents lying near the bunkers. We used the enemy weapons to resist their attacks. In the afternoon, they tried to attack us again,” he said.

“Some 200 BCP insurgents attacked the hill from the south. And they engaged bayonet fights for three times with us. But we steadfastly resisted their attacks. Then, they withdrew in disorder. At that time, the ammunition left in our hands was very low. So, we got hold of an M-23 sub-machine gun, four M-22 launchers and one 40mm launcher from the dead insurgents lying near the bunkers. We used the enemy weapons to resist their attacks. In the afternoon, they tried to attack us again,” he said.

“While I was firing a 2-inch mortar on the insurgents, the four launcher shells of the enemy exploded around me and my left eye was hit by a shrapnel. However, I had to ignore the wound. I tied the wound with a piece of cloth and then went on fighting”, he said.

At 5pm on 13 March evening, I witnessed the arrival of BCP reinforcements numbering some 70. We were unperturbed. We were prepared to sacrifice our lives while fighting in order to save our nation and the people. Before long, the enemies fired their weapons on the camp most intensively. But, we fought them back without fear.

1987 was not only an exemplary one for the Tatmadaw members but also the one that reflected the great courage, heroicivities to launch an attack on our camp. Then, we received reinforcements. And I got the four platoons including Lieutenant Khin Maung Aye ready for the attack.

He said that local residents of nearby villages informed them about the arrival of BCP brigade Nos 8 and 12 arrived at Lwesan via Tathasaichan jetty at about 8 am on 6 March 1978. At 9 pm on that day, Lieutenant Khin Maung Aye and his men lay in wait at a hilltop and a close battle ensued. After several engagements, Lieutenant Khin Maung Aye sacrificed his life.

On 7 March, about 200 BCP insurgents launched an attack on the camp with the use of small and heavy weapons. But in the face of a strong resistance, the insurgents suffered heavy losses and had to withdraw, he said.

“At 6 am on 8 March, the BCP insurgents again made a fierce attack on our camp. They opened artillery fire on us. But we did not return fire in order to save our ammunition. The enemies approached closer to the camp. But, our men fought them with hand grenades. So, they had to retreat. They no longer dared for a close fight and instead provided us with supporting air-to-surface fire, they retreated at last”, he said.

“On 10 March, they attacked cowardly. They set fire to the foothold. But, we had already taken preventive measures for that and we had been able to extinguish the blaze”, said Major Thiha Thura Thein Tun Tin (Retd).

“In the battles against intruders, it never hesitated to launch just battles to defend the lives and property of the people. Before long, the enemies fired their weapons on the camp most intensively. But, we fought them back without fear. At that time, there left average of around 20 bullets with each of us. Considering all the facts, I decided to penetrate the enemy and move out of the camp at 8 pm sharp. The wounded one and I moved first. Under-officer Win Myint and five members remained at the camp and resisted the enemy. About 30 minutes later, they followed us along the way we had retreated. Under the light of the stars, we continued. We arrived at the top of Namlaung Creek at 1 am on 14 March. And we got to the bank of Thanlwin River at 12.30 pm. We sent a scout to Phanmon village to contact the villagers. They helped and treated us well. When we arrived at Nankyein village, we met with other platoons that had also penetrated the enemies. We then met with No 104 Light Infantry Regiment. And then we arrived at Tanyang at 2 pm on 17 March. Officials concerned and townspeople welcomed us. This is a brief account of Point 6041 battle”, he said.

(See page 9)
Hailing the 59th Anniversary Armed Forces Day

(from page 8)

His explanation was so interesting that I had goose-pimples when I heard him recall his experience. And I could not help praising them for their unyielding spirit. The villagers helped the Tatmadaw members ignoring possible dangers to them.

It indicated that the villagers responded to the genuine goodwill of the Tatmadaw members who served the interest of local people. I asked him for more information.

“Let me know how the Tatmadawmen under your command faced the situation without any fear in the battle.”

“Though the Tatmadawmen knew that they had to face the greater number of enemies and death, they did not feel depressed. In the battle, the enemy fired heavily. If someone felt frightened, so would be others. If one had courage, so did others. We faced and overcame difficulties in the battle.

Water and ammunition got less and less. According to the advice of the training masters, a pit was dug and it was covered with some length of water-proof and it evaporated. The moisture was collected in the mug and we drank some drops of water and ate a kind of asparagus and bark of eastern gooseberry in order to satisfy the thirst. We reported on our situation to the superior level and we were not depressed.

Senior officials encouraged us. We decided to continue to fight the enemy after drinking the blood of the chickens raised at the camp if there was no water and the help rendered by the local people.

He said he was not shocked when his eye was wounded by a shrapnel. He kept on fighting after tying the eye with a piece of cloth. Red flags were hoisted near the battlefield and the spirit of the Tatmadawmen was enhanced. There were BCPs on nearby mountain ranges. If the leader had given up hope, the company would have collapsed. But there was mutual confidence among them.

He said that his men believed that the company commander would never abandon them and would be with them alive or dead forever. With this belief, they became alert and active.

He told them the banners and Bayintnaung’s spirit which would make them active and gave them poems written by himself to read. He told them that even if they sacrificed their lives for the country, their performance would be documented.

He said, “I would like to express kindness of local people towards the Tatmadawmen. When our company retreated from the camp, a sergeant who was wounded severely was left with a hand grenade.

When the enemies captured him they buried him with only his head was on the ground.

After a week, the enemies left. Local villagers took him to the hospital. He finally died there. That was their loving-kindness and good-will shown towards the Tatmadawmen. When we reached their regions they helped us and showed us the way”, he said.

The people in that region have witnessed atrocities of the BCP insurgents. The Tatmadawmen rendered assistance to the people and distributed medicines. As a result, the local people helped the Tatmadaw.

When we review the situation of the battle.

Many historic battles have proved the brave spirit of the Tatmadawmen.

(Translation MS + NY)
Parade columns practises marching drills

YANGON, 17 March—Parade columns which will participate in the 59th Anniversary Armed Forces Day Parade practised marching drills from Myoma Grounds to the Resistance Park from 6 am to 9.30 am today.

Tatmadawmen, members of Myanmar Police Force and Red Cross Brigade of Anawrahta, Kyanitha, Bayinnaung, Nawade, Aungzeya, Hnibyushin, Bandoa, Myawady and Aung San Columns led by Reserve Parade Commander Col Nyi Tun participated in the marching drills.

Present on the occasion were 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, Vice-Chiefs of Armed Forces Training Maj-Gen Win Myint and Brig-Gen Nyan Win, senior military officers and officials.

Second round of ISD Golf Team Championship continues

YANGON, 17 March—The 26th Inter-State/Divi- sion Golf Team Championship, mainly sponsored by Isuzu Motors Ltd of Japan, co-organized by Sports and Physical Education Department and Myanmar Golf Federation, continued for the second day at Yangon Golf Club in Danyyang this morning.

Shan State (East) team was leading the team scratch event with 456 strokes in the second round, followed by Yangon Division with 465 and Sagaing Division with 469.

In the individual scratch event, Naing Naing Lin of Yangon Division put his position in the first place with 148 strokes. Maj Khin Zaw Win of Shan State (East) was behind the leader with 149 and Aung Win of Sagaing Division with 150.

In the team handicap event, Shan State (East) scored 406 strokes. Its runners-up were Kachin State with 410 and Mon State with 413.

In the individual handicap event, Eike Haung of Shan State (East) was leading with 133 strokes, followed by Maj Khin Zaw Win of Shan State (East) with 133 and Kyaw Thei Wai of Shan State (North) with 135.

The third round of the championship will continue tomorrow. — MNA

Shwedagon Township MCWA gets new pre-primary school Building

YANGON, 17 March—The opening of pre-primary school building of Shwedagon Township Ma- jor-Gen Win Myint and Brig-Gen Nyan Win, senior military officers and officials.

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Ziwaka Mobile Health Train gives treatment to 1,899 patients

YANGON, 17 March—Hailing the 59th Anniver sary Armed Forces Day, Ziwaka Mobile Health Train, jointly sponsored by the Ministry of Health and the Ministry of Rail Transport, stopped over in Nyaunglaybin Station yesterday and provided treat ment to patients from Nyaunglaybin and its sur rounding villages.

Minister for Health Dr Kyaw Win and Deputy Minister for Rail Transportation Thura U Thuang Linw performed surveillance visits and performance of specialists.

They gave health care service to 1,128 patients and performed surgical operations on 17 patients at the operation theatre of Nyaunglaybin Hospital.

Minister Dr Kyaw Win and Deputy Minis ter Thura U Thuang Linw inspected the surgical operations at the hospital. This morning, 771 pa tients were also given treatment at the train and two patients were performed surgical operations at Nyaunglaybin Hospital.

The mobile train could give medical treatment to 1,899 patients in Nyaunglaybin yesterday and today and arrived back here in the evening.

The train will leave for railway stations in various regions of the country, to provide medical treat ment at public request. — MNA

Minister for Finance & Revenue Maj-Gen Hla Tun sees off Deputy Minister Col Hla Thein Swe and delegation. — MNA

Deputy Minister leaves for Manila

YANGON, 17 March—Deputy Minister for Finance & Revenue Col Hla Thein Swe left here by air yesterday evening to attend a seminar for laying down financial and monetary policies in East Asian region by ASEAN+3 countries to be held in Manila, the Philippines.

Minister for Finance & Revenue Maj-Gen Hla Tun, officials and relatives saw him off at the Yangon Interna tional Airport. — MNA

Information Sub-committee for Organizing Fourth World Buddhist Summit meets

YANGON, 17 March—The Information Sub-com mittee for Organizing the Fourth World Buddhist Summit held its fourth co-ordination meeting at Myanmar Radio and Televisi on on Paya Road, here, this morning. Information Sub-committee Chairman Deputy Minister for Infor mation Brig-Gen Aung Thein and member depart mental heads and officials attended the meeting.

Speaking on the occasion, Deputy Minister Brig-Gen Aung Thein said that dissemination of informa tion, keeping on records and covering of documentary news will be harmoniously carried out through mass media by departments and enterprises under the Minis try of Information. These tasks will be divided into three portions—before the summit, during the summit and after the summit.

Next, the chairman and secretaries of work groups reported on tasks for news release and watched the videoed songs covered for the summit. Later, the deputy minister gave necessary instructions. — MNA

MNA
Organizational set-up of MWAF explained

MWAF President Dr Daw Khin Win Shwe delivers an address in meeting with Tamu District Organization for Women’s Affairs. — MNA

Daw Khin Win Shwe gave a speech, saying that Myanmar Women’s Affairs Federation was formed on 20 December 2003. Being a social organization, the federation can carry out development of the women’s section effectively. They arrived in Tamu, a border town, so as to explain organizational set-up of the federation. It is necessary to actively participate in elimination of human trafficking in that border region. All members are to forge national spirit and cherish traditional culture. And, the members are to actively carry out tasks in accord with the guidance of the government and efforts of computer scientists.

In this regard, collective efforts are to be made in unison to maintain and speed up the already-achieved momentum, he said. With combination of originally high intelligence of Myanmar nationals, modern ICT equipment and technologies, success can be made as expected, he said. Experts, scholars and industrialists engaged in the ICT field, on their part, are to carry out their tasks in an active manner catching up with international ICT developments and to present reports to responsible persons on requirements to be rendered by the State in time, he said. — MNA

Prime Minister addresses meeting (from page 1) of set: Daw Chaw Khin Khin, on behalf of e-Procurement Project Coordinator, on e-Procurement Project being implemented by the MICTDC, Project Coordinator of the MICTDC Daw Khin Aye Win, on Smart Card Based Vehicle Registration Project; member of the board of directors of the MICTDC U Pyone Maung Maung, on Budget P.C Project; and those present, on progress in carrying out ICT tasks.

In his address, the Prime Minister said that the ICT sector is making progress with a great momentum thanks to the encouragement of the government.

Prime Minister addresses meeting …

Observation of Thingyan in traditional way discussed

YANGON, 17 March — The Discipline Enforcement Committee for 1365 ME Traditional Maha Thingyan Festival held a coordination meeting at the office of Yangon Division Peace and Development Council this afternoon, with a speech by Chairman of the Discipline Enforcement Committee Chairman of Yangon Division Peace and Development Council Commander of Yangon Command Maj-Gen Myint Swe.

Also present were Vice-Chairman of the committee Deputy Commander Col Wai Lwin, military region commanders, Yangon City Development Committee Secretary Col Myint Aung, departmental heads, officials and local authorities. In his speech, Maj-Gen Myint Swe said that this year’s traditional Thingyan Festival will be observed in accordance with Myanmar’s fine traditions. Necessary measures are to be taken in advance to hold educative talks to the people since action will be taken against those who violate the rules and regulations during the festival period, he said. — MNA

Youth Teachership Course opened

YANGON, 17 March — The Youth Teachership Course, co-organized by Myanmar Maternal and Child Welfare Association, UNFPA, Fund for Prevention of HIV/AIDS in Myanmar (FHAM), was opened at the building of MMCCA in South Okkalapa Township this morning.

Present were MMCCA President Dr Daw Khin Win Shwe, Vice-President Dr Daw Tin Lin Myint, CEC members, Patron of Yangon Division Supervisory Committee for MCWA Daw Khin Thet Htay and members, Resident Representative of UNFPA Mr Najib M Assifi and officials, officials of UN agencies, course instructors and youths. First, Dr Daw Khin Win Shwe spoke on the occasion. Resident Representative of UNFPA Mr Najib M Assifi explained the purpose of opening the course. Altogether 42 youths of states and divisions are attending the course which will last up to 22 March. — MNA

MAWFA members visit Union National Races Village

YANGON, 17 March — The Myanmar ASEAN Women’s Friendship Association led by members of the Board of Patrons Daw San Yone, wife of Minister for Foreign Affairs U Win Aung, and Daw Le Le Kyi, wife of Deputy Minister U Kyaw Thu, accompanied by honorary members cum wives of ministers, Lady Ambassador and wives of embassies of ASEAN member countries and diplomats, visited Union National Races Village in Thakayta Township this morning. Afterwards, they paid homage to Kyakhamawgun Pagoda in Kyauktan and donated cash towards the funds of the pagoda. Next, they toured other places of interest. — MNA

Jade lots earn over 1.3 million euro on second day

YANGON, 17 March — Jade lots were being sold through tender system at the 41st Myanmar gems emporium from 5 pm to 10 pm yesterday and 218 lots of jade worth 1,197,654 euros were sold. A total of 378 jade lots worth 3,257,641 euros were sold through tender system and competitive bidding yesterday. The emporium continued today and 50 lots of jade worth 1,351,986 euros were sold. — MNA
MENA/Reuters

Missile umbrella ready for Athens Olympic Games

ATHENS, 17 March — A “missile umbrella” made up of Patriot, Stinger and Hawk missile batteries will protect Athens in an effort to boost defence against terrorism during the upcoming Olympic Games scheduled for August 13-29, local media reported Monday.

The air defence map for the safety of the Olympians is ready, according to the Athens Greek-language newspaper Apogeo. The air defence umbrella will be completed with the presence of Mirage 2000 and F-16 interception fighters, as well as the state-of-art single engine turboprop aircraft T-6A Texan II and flying radar stations.

Other four Greek cities with Olympic venues will have similar protection. The country will also be protected from nuclear threat, as the competent authorities are considering any likelihood.

Security issue has been the top concern of the international community.

United Nations, 17 March — Spain backed down on Monday in its assertion that only the Basque separatist group ETA was responsible for the Madrid train bombings, telling the United Nations it was investigating foreign nationals.

Despite misgivings, the 15-member Council adopted an unusual resolution just hours after the attack on Thursday that identified ETA as the perpetrator of the bombings that killed 200 people and wounded 1,500 on four commuter trains.

Spain’s UN Ambassador, Inocencio Arias, said in a letter to the Council that his government acted in good faith when it told members that ETA was responsible for the bombings.

“Since then they have found, through the efforts of the state security agencies, new data during the March period that led us to open other lines of inquiry that point to the involvement of citizens of other countries in the attacks,” Arias said.

“It is not possible for the moment to reach definitive conclusions. The government of Spain will inform the council of the results of its investigations,” he said in the letter.

Envoy’s they considered the Spanish letter the equivalent of a careful diplomatic apology. Rescinding a resolution is nearly impossible.

France’s UN Ambassador Jean-Marc de La Sabliere, president of the Council, called the letter “a welcome development”. Sabliere had drawn up original draft that did not blame ETA.

MENA/Reuters

Spain retreats from blaming ETA in attack

A polar bear chews a special frozen treat of blood and bone while sitting on the March Break ‘Feeding Frenzy’ at the Toronto Zoo in Toronto, on 16 March, 2004. The zoo will allow visitors to get a close-up look at zoos residents’ gastronomic favours by featuring an animal a day during this week’s March Break ‘Feeding Frenzy.’ — Internet

Brazil struggles to slow Amazon destruction

BRAZIL (Brazil), 17 March — Brazil unveiled a proposed land plan Monday to stop destruction of the Amazon rain forest.

Amid criticism the centre-left government failed to move swiftly enough on the issue in its first year, Environment Minister Marina Silva proposed a system of satellite monitoring, investigations and new laws to curb environmental crimes that activists fear destroyed an area of jungle the size of Belgium during 2003.

“We have to make a difference in relation to this perverse dynamic of deforestation,” Silva told reporters on Monday before the government was expected to release figures showing Amazon deforestation increased during 2003. President Luiz Inacio Lula da Silva promised to introduce satellite monitoring of deforestation last year after he announced a 40 per cent jump in deforestation in the world’s largest jungle from 2001 to 2002. Critics accuse Lula of allowing the deforestation to go unabated, and even hastening it as he focuses on projects to end the economic stagnation and high unemployment that has dogged Brazil since he entered office in January 2003.—MENA/Reuters

HK scientists get another chance joining Mars exploration

HONG KONG, 17 March — Hong Kong scientists will get another job in Mars exploration after the British-made Beagle 2 landing craft carrying their tools failed the mission recently.

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“Beagle 2 was an
Mobile phones top consumers’ complaint list in China last year

BEIJING, 17 March — China reported 79,000 complaints on mobile phone quality or after-sale services last year, over 45 per cent higher than the previous year, ranking the first among 60 categories of goods that have provoked complaints.

The State Administration for Industry and Commerce (SAIC) recently disclosed the top 10 most complained of goods or service trades in 2003, including cellphones, food, housing, products used in farming, automobiles, telecommunications, home decoration, intermediate service, Internet service and computer security software.

Farmers have complained a lot about the poor quality and adulteration of seeds, pesticides, fertilizers and forage. Online shopping also proved to be a trap to many netizens, according to sources from the official Qianglong web site.

The list, issued just before the annual “consumers’ rights day” which falls on Monday this year, is expected to remind consumers of improving vigilance against shoddy goods and cheating in trades, said the sources. Officials with the China Consumers’ Association (CCA), an arm of the SAIC, said that the list was compiled after a four-month campaign from March 12 to receive and handle complaints at open-air venues.

Two men have complained about such annual activities for six years, and I am impressed by consumers’ growing awareness of rights protection,” said an official surnamed Sun from SAQSQ, seeing more people lining up before the advice centre this year. It showed that consumers were relying more on legal channels to protect their rights, which would help build a normal market order, Sun said.

China, Poland to push forward economic, trade cooperation

BEIJING, 17 March — China is ready to make concerted efforts with Poland to strengthen economic and trade cooperation, China’s Vice-Minister of Commerce Zhang Zhigang said here Monday.

At the 11th meeting of the China-Poland business committee on commerce and trade, Zhang said that economic and trade cooperation between China and Poland has seen sound progress in recent years and Poland has become China’s second largest trade partner in Central and Eastern Europe.

Statistics indicated trade volume between China and Poland reached 1.98 billion US dollars in 2003, an increase of 43.1 per cent year-on-year, the highest record in history.

Miroslaw F Zielinski, Vice-Minister of Economy, Labour and Social Policy of Poland, expressed satisfaction with the bilateral coop-eration in economy and trade. He said he believed the economic and trade ties will be further promoted with the close cooperation between governmental departments and enterprises.

The two sides agreed to encourage their enterprises to strengthen exchanges and expand investment, and to hold the 12th meeting of the comm-itee in the Polish capital Warsaw in 2005.

A young Sumatran tiger is seen at the Ragunan Zoo in Jakarta on 16 March, 2004. A leading environmental group on Tuesday warned that the exotic Sumatran tiger was bound for extinction if the government of Indonesia did not crack down on illegal trading in the endangered species. The World Wildlife Fund (WWF) said only 400-500 tigers remained on the island of Sumatra as hunters continue to kill the animal commercially and for sport — Internet

Britain grapples with its binge-drinking culture

LONDON, 17 March — Britain launched a campaign on Monday against excessive alcohol in a bid to tackle its binge-drinking culture, which some say has turned many town centres into virtual no-go areas at night.

Ministers say alcohol misuse costs around 20 billion pounds a year in associated crime, health and social problems and employee absenteeism.

Last year, a government report found that Britons were the worst binge drinkers in Europe, with excessive drinking accounting for 40 per cent of all drinking occasions by men and 22 per cent by women.

The government plans to issue more exclusion orders to ban trouble-makers from pubs and clubs and make greater use of fines for anti-social behaviour.

Two dead, two hurt in Kyrgyz rescue charger crash

BISHKEK, 17 March — A helicopter rescuing snowbound hunters crashed in Kyrgyzstan, killing two people and injuring two, officials in the Central Asian state said on Tuesday.

The Mi-8 helicopter had picked up 15 hunters, including two from the United States and one from Canada, on Monday from a remote camp blocked by snow in the Tien Shan mountains.

Bad weather forced the helicopter, carrying 19 people altogether, to make an emergency landing near the Chinese border. The two dead were local rescuers, while the Canadian hunter was one of two injured.

Kyrgyzstan offers tours to wealthy foreign hunters seeking rare species. — MNA/Reuters
Three players, coach sent off in fiery Brazil derby

RIO DE JANEIRO, 17 March—Three players and a coach were sent off in a fiery but goalless Brazilian derby between Atletico Mineiro and America-Bel O horizonte Sunday.

Trouble began in the second half of the Belo Horizonte clash when Atletico were awarded a penalty for a handball offence which appeared to take place outside the area. America players furiously protested and coach Carlos Alberto Silva was sent off in the confusion.

Atletico striker Tuchao then saw his spot kick saved by goalkeeper Laisson but there was more trouble when the linesman waved his flag, apparently indicating that Laisson had moved and was over-ruled. MNA/Reuters

**Panathinaikos defender Morris banned by FIFA**

JOHANNESBURG, 17 March—Panathinaikos defender Nasief Morris has been provisionally banned from playing football anywhere in the world pending FIFA investigations into an alleged attack on a referee by the South African Under-23 international at an Olympic Games qualifier last month.

The player was banned provisionally after he attempted to assault the referee “after the game,” FIFA Press spokesman Andreas Herren told Reuters on Monday.

The FIFA Disciplinary Committee will pass a decision once we have all the documents later this week,” he added. Morris allegedly attempted to strike out at the official after South Africans were beaten 2-1 in Zambia in a qualifying match at Chingola on February 21.

Baton-wielding police had to restrain Morris and several of his team-mates as they advanced towards Malawi referee Youngson Chilinda, who they blamed for the Group D loss that virtually ended hopes of a second consecutive appearance in the Olympic football tournament. FIFA said it was awaiting documents from Morris and the South African Football Association.

**Beckham says United will bounce back**

MADRID, 17 March—Manchester United will bounce back from their Champions League exit and their poor form in the league to finish the season on a high, David Beckham says.

“It’s a tough time for United at the moment,” the former United midfielder, now at Real Madrid, told a news conference on Monday.

“But I’ve worked with those players for so many years that I’ve got no doubt they’ll come back from any defeat they’re involved in.”

United were knocked out of the Champions League last week after a last-minute 3-2 aggregate defeat against Porto and then saw their hopes of challenging Arsenal for the league title all but disappear when they were beaten 4-1 by arch-rivals Manchester City on Sunday.

“Manchester United as a club and a team have come back from a lot of things especially in the years I was playing there,” said Beckham.

“People are bound to say that it is the end of a cycle because of the way some of the games have gone this season, but I’d never bet against Manchester United coming back from anything.”

The England captain said that despite criticism of his recent performances from some sections of the Spanish media he was satisfied with his own form and was looking forward to the opportunity to win his first major trophy with Real when they meet Real Zaragoza in the final of the King’s Cup on Wednesday.

“I’ve felt a lot better in the last couple of games,” he said. “I started the season well but I dipped in form a little after a few injuries and a few suspensions, but I’m okay now.”

“It would mean a lot to win a first Spanish Cup and the final will be special for me... I am hoping that we can win the game and gain another trophy for Real Madrid.”

**TSV 1860 boss resigns over corruption scandal**


The Bundesliga club said in a statement it had accepted an offer by Wildmoser, who was released from prison on bail on Friday, to step aside.

Karl Auer, formerly a member of the club’s supervisory board, takes over from Wildmoser, who had chaired the club for 12 years, the statement added.

Wildmoser, his son and two others were arrested last Tuesday on suspicion they took bribes from a company that won the bid to build the Munich stadium to be used as one of the showcase arenas for the 2006 World Cup finals in Germany.

Wildmoser’s son, also named Karl-Heinz, remained in custody and was dismissed on Friday as manager of the stadium’s holding company.

T SV 1860 and city rivals Bayern Munich, who both play their home games at the Olympic stadium, are to share the new stadium known as the Allianz Arena and the costs for its construction, estimated at 280 million euros.

Franz Beckenbauer, the Bayern president, said last week the club could finance the works even without the help of T SV 1860, who now face an uncertain future.

The World Cup-winning captain and coach, who is also the chairman of the local organizing committee of the 2006 World Cup, said construction of the new Munich stadium would continue as planned.

The four arrested last week are suspected of receiving a 2.8 million-euro bribe from Austrian construction company Alpine during the bidding process for the Allianz Arena contract, prosecutors said.

Alpine denied any improper influence and said it was convinced the investigation would show no commissions had been paid to project managers or their representatives. The local organizing committee of the 2006 World Cup have said they have nothing to do with the criminal investigation that was made public last week.

The 66,000-seat stadium being erected in a Munich suburb will replace the Olympic stadium, which was built for the 1972 Summer Games and hosted the final of the 1974 World Cup in West Germany but is now showing signs of wear.

**Anelka apologizes to Santini and French team**

PARIS, 17 March—Outcast striker Nicolas Anelka has issued a public apology to France coach Jacques Santini three months before the start of the Euro 2004 finals in Portugal.

The Manchester City striker, not considered by Santini since turning down a late call for European championships France aside a friendly against Yugoslavia in November 2002, has been dubbed France’s most ineligible player.

However Anelka, who won the last of his 28 caps against Russia in April 2002, has now said he is sorry for his behaviour.

“Those who know me, know that despite our differences I have always had the greatest respect for the French team,” the 24-year-old said on his personal web site on Monday.

“This is why it is necessary to make a public apology to Mr. Jacques Santini and to the French team for the Allianz Arena contract, prosecuting officials said.

Alpine denying any improper influence and said it was convinced the investigation would show no commissions had been paid to project managers or their representatives. The local organizing committee of the 2006 World Cup have said they have nothing to do with the criminal investigation that was made public last week.

The 66,000-seat stadium being erected in a Munich suburb will replace the Olympic stadium, which was built for the 1972 Summer Games and hosted the final of the 1974 World Cup in West Germany but is now showing signs of wear.

**Three Zimbabwean footballers die in car crash**

HARARE, 17 March—Zimbabwe international midfielder Blessing Makanike was one of three footballers killed in a car accident after returning from a league match in Bulawayo, reports on Monday said.

CAPS United players Makanike, Shingirai Altron and Garry Mason were killed along with two of the club’s fans on Sunday when their car spun out of control, hit a bridge and burst into flames, the official Herald newspaper reported.

They were returning to Harare from Bulawayo after a 2-1 Premier League win over Njube Sundowns on Saturday during which Makanike had scored. —MNA/Reuters

Lindsay Davenport follows through on her return to tennis tournament on 16 March, 2004, in Indian Wells, Calif. Davenport won, 6-1, 6-3.—INTERNET

Japan’s Ryoichi Maeda, left, and Lebanon’s Khaleed Hamidi battle for the ball during their match in the Asian elimination soccer tournament for Athens Olympics at National Stadium in Tokyo on 26 March. 2004. Japan won the match 2-1.—INTERNET
15:30 Signature Tune
9:02 Song of Myanmar Beauty & Scenic Sights “Mingalabar”
9.06 Victories of the State, the People and the Tamadaw “Education through Victory” Ceremony
9:10 Headline News
9:12 Aung San Oranges
9:15 National News
9:20 The Beauty of the 1st Defile of The River Ayeyawady
9:25 The Unforgettable Bouffle Dance
9:30 National News
9:35 Rakhine Ordination Novitiation & Ear-bor
9:40 Myanmar Modern Songs “Suphabum”
9:45 National News
9:50 Foreign Correspondents Visit Border Areas (Part-I)
9:58 Song of Myanmar Beauty & Scenic Sights “Come and See Myanmar”
18-3-2004 (Thursday) Regular Programmes for Visitors from Abroad
Evening Transmission 19:30 – 23:30
15:30 Signature Tune
15:35 Song of Myanmar Beauty & Scenic Sights “Mingalabar”
15:40 The Beauty of the State, the People and the Tamadaw “Education through Victory” Ceremony
15:44 Headline News
15:42 Aung San Oranges
15:45 National News
15:50 The Beauty of The 1st Defile Of The River Ayeyawady
15:55 The Unforgettable Bouffle Dance
4:00 pm
1. Martial song
2. Songs to uphold National Spirit
4:30 pm
English For Everyday Use
4:45 pm
5. Cate little dancers
6. “ Come and See Myanmar Beauty & Scenic Sights “Come and See Myanmar”

WEATHER
Wednesday, 17 March, 2004
Summary of observations recorded at 09:30 hours MST: During the past 24 hours, light rain or thundershowers has been isolated in Kachin, northern Shan States, Mandalay Division and the Tharlar area have been generally fair in the north-western parts. Day temperatures were (3°C) to (4°C) above normal in Shan State and (6°C) to (7°C) above normal in Kachin State. Minimum temperature at 17-3-2004 was 8°C (10°F) below normal in Kachin State, Bagi Division and about normal in the remaining areas. The significant day temperature was (4°C) each in Puunmay, Muaw and Nawin.
Maximum temperature on 16-3-2004 was 37°C (100°F). Minimum temperature at 17-3-2004 was 10°C (50°F) below normal in Kachin State. The state of the sea: Sea will be moderate in moderate wave conditions. Forcast valid until evening of 18-3-2004. Possibility of isolated rain in Kachin State. Tamadaw Division and weather will be partly cloudy in the remaining areas (certainty is 40%).
Leading Committee for Observance of the 59th Anniversary Armed Forces Day meets

YANGON, 17 March — The Leading Committee for Observance of the 59th Anniversary Armed Forces Day held its third coordination meeting at Yangon Command this afternoon, with an address by 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.

Also present were Management Committee for Observance of the 59th Anniversary Armed Forces Day Commander of Yangon Command Maj-Gen Tun, senior military officers of leading committee, management committee, work committee and subcommittees, the deputy director-general of Myanmar Police Force, departmental heads and officials.

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 delivered a speech. He said he found the drill of parade columns satisfactory.

He also found that the parade companies kept military discipline well. He spoke on arrangements for the parade were good due to the efforts of various committees.

Secretary of the leading committee Deputy Adjutant-General Col Khin Soe reported on the resolutions passed by the second coordination meeting.

Next, Commander Maj-Gen Myint Swe and officials of the various committees reported on work done.

Officials of MPF, Fire Services Department and Myanmar Red Cross Society reported on participation of members of MPF, Fire Brigade and Red Cross Brigade at the parade. Those present took part in the discussions.

Lt-Gen Kyaw Win fulfilled the requirements and the meeting ended in the evening with the concluding remark by Lt-Gen Kyaw Win. — MNA

Chinese fugitive handed over in Muse

YANGON, 17 March— Myanmar Police Force arrested murderer and looter Wam Wein Paung, 41, who was wanted in China, son of U Wam Shii Chune of Toehmyoe Village, Pauksan region, Chinl, Chinlent District, Yunnan Province. The ceremony to hand over the fugitive was held in Muse, Shan State (North), at 8.40 am on 10 March 2004.

Present were Muse Special Anti-Drug Squad Supervising Officer Police Maj Win Naing, Captain Kyaw Zeya of the local intelligence unit, Chairman of Township Peace and Development Council Capt Aung Lwin, Head of Muse District Immigration and National Registration Department U Aye Than and officials, Chinlent District Police Station Head Police Col Ding Zhi Shen, Police Li-Col Su Hong Min and officials.

As Shweli Police Station asked Muse District Police Force to arrest Chinese fugitive Wam Wein Paung, Muse District Police Force and local intelligence unit of Myanmar made concerted efforts for exposing the fugitive. Then, the fugitive was arrested in Manwingyi Village, Pauksan District, Yunnan Province. Speaking on the occasion, Police Maj Win Naing said success has been achieved in bilateral fugitive exchange tasks thanks to cooperation of Muse District Police of Myanmar and Keigaung/Shweli police members.

Chinlent District Police Station Head Police Col Ding Zhi Shen thanked for Myanmar Police Force for the arrest of the fugitive. He added he will ask MPF members to arrest fugitives of their side in the future. And, success was achieved because of information exchange between the two countries. Police Maj Win Naing and Police Col Ding Zhi Shen signed the document on handing over of the fugitive. — MNA

Nantmaung Creek Bridge in Momeik inaugurated

YANGON, 17 March — Hailing the 59th Anniversary Armed Forces Day, the inauguration of the Nantmaung Creek Bridge in Momeik, Shan State (North), undertaken by the Ministry of Construction took place at the facility on yesterday morning.

It was attended by Chairman of Shan State (North) Peace and Development Council Commander of Eastern Command Maj-Gen Myint Hlaing, Minister for Construction Maj-Gen Myint Soe, senior military officers, officials, members of social organizations and local people.

On the occasion, the minister delivered a speech. In his speech, the minister said that in its pace to march towards the goal of a peaceful, modern and developed democratic nation, the government has been making strenuous efforts in all fields for laying the sound basic foundations.

In the process, the Ministry of Construction is contributing towards the goal by carrying out tasks for smooth transport.

Number of road miles has now increased to 18,112 in the nation, up from 13,635 in 1988. The government has constructed 168 bridges with 180 feet and above in length.

With the emergence of the facility, local people can travel to other states and divisions in addition to the townships in Shan State (North) via Momeik and Mogok enjoying greater regional development in the sectors of economy, education and health.

In response to the government’s genuine goodwill, local people are to make collective during endeavours durability of the facility, he urged. Next, the commander said that like local people, he takes pride in the emergence of the bridge.

With the opening of new roads and bridges, Shan State (North) has enjoyed fruits of economic improvement along with better transport and further cementing of amicable relations among local people.

In conclusion, the commander called for participation of local people in the tasks for long lasting of the bridge and regional development.

Afterwards, the commander and the minister formally opened the 300-foot-long bridge and walked along it. — MNA