The following is a translation of the address delivered by Chairman of the State Peace and Development Council Commander-in-Chief of Defence Services Senior General Than Shwe at the USDA Annual General Meeting (2004).

At the 11th Annual General Meeting of the Union Solidarity and Development Association, I extend greetings to you, members of the Association, with pleasure and honour. I have found with pride that you, members of the USDA, have discharged the national duty in strict accord with the aims, policies and codes of conduct stipulated in the basic principles of the Association. Formed with young and middle-aged persons, the USDA is gearing itself up to become a firm national force, while organizing, training and activating the new generation of youths. We need a strong patriotic force that keeps in the fore Our Three Main National Causes, the national policy, and fully imbued with Union Spirit, to build a peaceful, modern and developed nation.

The USDA is worthy of honour, for, it has been organizing and nurturing youths to develop in accord with the aims stated in the basic principles, and, with constructive attitude, it has also been actively participating in the development endeavours in the vanguard of the drive. The Association has been teaching a wide array of subjects in its courses to equip youths fully with national conviction and technical skills. It has been conducting a large variety of courses such as courses in Executives' Management, Special Refresher courses, Advanced Courses, Myanmar and international studies, international relations, cultural and moral lessons, Myanmar development studies, languages, technical courses, basic aviation and marine, public relations and management of knowledge, and art courses.

Over 18 million youths have already attended the courses conducted by the USDAs at different levels from central down to grassroots levels. This summer alone, over 3.7 million youths in the entire nation attended the courses conducted at 29,044 different venues.

A large number of summer courses, opened at various places, on culture and morals have uplifted the morale and morality of youths and nurtured their ability to preserve the national identity. So, honour is due to the instructors of the courses and as well as the trainee youths. The opening of the cultural and moral courses is to hand down inherent national values, we have been accepting and practising since yore, to future generations. New generations youths, who can shape a better Myanmar society in the future, are the human resources to establish a peaceful, modern and developed state and a democratic society.

(See page 8)
PERSPECTIVES

Thursday, 18 November, 2004

Strive for successful implementation of national education promotion plans

With a view to achieving our national goal, the emergence of a peaceful, modern and developed nation, the State Peace and Development Council has been expending its efforts in realizing the twelve political, economic and social objectives. As health and education standards of the entire people are sine qua non for our national goal, “uplift of health, fitness and education standards of the entire nation” is embodied in the four social objectives.

For the education sector to be able to contribute to the emergence of a peaceful, modern and developed nation, the Government has been taking all the necessary measures to raise the national education standard. National education promotion plans are being implemented in the interests of the entire people and in order that the Union of Myanmar can stand proudly in the international community. Refresher courses are being conducted to broaden the horizons, raise the qualifications and uplift the morale of the teachers who play a pivotal role in the implementation of the national education promotion plans. The Special Refresher Course No 6 for faculty members of universities and colleges was inaugurated at the Central Institute of Civil Service (Phaunggyi) on 15 November and it was attended by Secretary-1 of the State Peace and Development Council Lt-Gen Thein Sein, also Chairman of Myanmar Education Committee.

In his address on the occasion, the Secretary-1 said that, at a time when rapid progress of science and technologies has come to have greater and greater influence on various fields such as education, health, security and defence, developing countries like the Union of Myanmar are required to raise their national education standards.

Only then will they be able to avoid being at the beck and call of some big nations with a sharp technological edge and safeguard and promote their national interests. In other words, only the highly-educated intellectuals and intelligentsia will be able to safeguard and promote the interests of their country and enable it to stand on a par with other developed nations.

Now is the time when the entire people are translating the seven-point policy into reality. At a time like this, highly-educated people with wide knowledge and international outlook can see through tricks and machinations of destructive elements within and without the nation. Therefore, we would like to call upon teachers to put their energies into the task of implementing the national education promotion plans.

Kasco Open Golf Championship on 25-28 November

Kasco Open Golf Championship (2005), according to the Religious Affairs Department.

State Sangha Maha Nayaka Committee Presiding Sayadaw passes away

YANGON, 17 Nov—Chairman of the State Sangha Maha Nayaka Committee Presiding Sayadaw of Koesaungtaik Maha-Pithuyatama Pakokku Kyaungthit Monastery in Myingyan, Mandalay Division, Bhaddanta Sobhita (Abhidhaja Maha Rattha Guru) Abbidhaja Agga Maha Saddhamma Jotika) aged 95, Vasa 76, passed away at 11.35 am on 17 November (Wednesday) (6th Waxing of Tazaungmon 1366 ME), according to the Religious Affairs Department.

SWRR Minister receives Japanese guest

YANGON, 17 Nov — Japanese war veteran Mr Takesaburo Mashimo this afternoon called on Minister for Social Welfare, Relief and Resettlement Maj-Gen Sein Hwaw at the latter’s office.

The Japanese veteran recently contributed fire engines to the Fire Services Department.

Mayor inspects Yangon City Water Supply Project (Ngamoyeik)

YANGON, 17 Nov—Chairman of Yangon City Development Committee Yangon Mayor Brig-Gen Aung Thein Lin and Vice-Mayor Col Maung Pa inspected Yangon City Water Supply Project (Ngamoyeik) in Hlegu Township this afternoon.

The project is being implemented by the Engineering Department (Water and Sanitation) of YCDC near Ahtayu Village in the township.

Yangon Mayor Brig-Gen Aung Thein Lin and party inspected land preparations for construction of a sub-power station, filtering plant and water pumping station. Member of YCDC Col Tin Soe, Head of Assessor Department Dr Tun Than Tun and Head of Engineering Department (Water and Sanitations) U Thaung Yin reported on progress of work, construction of plants for water supply and systems to be employed.

The mayor and the vice-mayor called for implementation of the project with increased momentum.

Work Committee for Organizing 60th Anniversary Armed Forces Day commemorative TV Quiz

YANGON, 17 Nov — As a gesture of hailing the 60th Anniversary Armed Forces Day (2005), a coordination meeting of the Work Committee for Organizing TV Quiz was held at the meeting hall of Myanmar Radio and Television on Pyay Road here this afternoon, with an address by Deputy Minister for Information Brig-Gen Aung Thein. Present on the occasion were Director-General of the MRTV U Khin Maung Htwe, Work Committee members and officials.

After the opening address by the Deputy Minister, the Secretary of the Work Committee for holding TV Quiz the Director-General reported to the Deputy Minister on the arrangements made for organizing the quiz.

Afterwards, the officials selected the competitors and fixed books and date for holding the quiz.

Next, the Deputy Minister gave concluding remarks.

All this needs to be known

* Do not be frightened whenever intimidated
* Do not be bolstered whenever flattered
* Do not be softened whenever appealed
Fresh fighting breaks out in Fallujah

**FALLUJAH, 16 NOV—** Fresh fighting broke out in the Iraqi city of Fallujah on Monday after US forces attacked suspected guerilla targets with airstrikes, artillery and mortar rounds, a Reuters correspondent in Fallujah said.

US forces said they had targeted a fortified underground bunker with reinforced tunnels leading to stores of weapons, including an anti-aircraft artillery gun.

At least five artillery rounds and airstrikes hit the southern portion of the city and soon afterwards exchanges of gunfire and blasts could be heard.

US forces also launched sporadic mortar rounds against targets overnight.

In a statement, the military said it was clearing remaining spots of resistance, and removing stores of weapons from buildings including mosques.

"One mission early on November 15 attacked a bunker complex in the southernmost unpopulated section of Fallujah after multi-national forces discovered an underground bunker and steel-reinforced tunnels," the statement said.

"The tunnels connected a ring of facilities filled with weapons, an anti-aircraft artillery gun, bunk beds, a truck and a suspected weapons cache." US officers say they have retakers full control of Fallujah after a week of intense combat with guerrillas.

Marines now face the task of trying to track down every last remaining guerilla, fearing many could blend back into the community or conceal themselves in hideouts until US forces have withdrawn.

Tank commanders said late on Sunday that the Shubada District in the south of the city, the last guerilla stronghold, still had a significant number of guerrillas.

At the same time, relief agencies are trying to get food, water and medicine to hundreds of families they say were trapped inside Fallujah during the offensive.

The military said it was announcing over loudspeakers in the city that civilians needing medical or other help should seek out US forces.

The US military said 38 of its soldiers were killed and 275 wounded in the battle to capture the city ahead of elections due in January.

US forces have said some 1,000 guerrillas were killed and 450 to 550 captured. There is no word on civilian casualties, but residents say many people have died. —Reuters

More than 150 foreigners kidnapped in Iraqi guerilla’s campaign

**BAGHDAD, 16 NOV—** Guerillas in war-ravaged Iraq have kidnapped more than 150 foreigners in their campaign to drive out coalition forces and hamper reconstruction.

The abduction of UK-born Margaret Hassan, who lived in Iraq for 30 years and who headed Care International’s operation in the turbulent country, came less than two weeks after the horrific murder of Ken Bigley.

The 62-year-old engineer from Liverpool was beheaded after being held for more than 20 days by the Tawhid and Jihad Group, who demanded the release of two women prisoners.

His fellow captives Americans Jack Hensley and Eugene Armstrong were also killed by the militants. The number of kidnappings soared in Iraq earlier this year when 31 foreigners were captured in August alone.

Often captors demand that foreign governments withdraw their military from Iraq in exchange for the hostage’s freedom.

Many captured foreigners have been freed but more than 20 have been killed; their deaths broadcast on the Internet and Arabic television. —Internet

Beijing plans intercity transit network with Tianjin

**BEIJING, 17 NOV—** Neighbouring Beijing and Tianjin municipalities are planning to build a high-speed intercity transport network to propel regional economic integration, China Daily reported here Tuesday.

Top leaders of the two cities have agreed to build a new railway which will take only half an hour to get commuters between the two cities. Tianjin Mayor Dai Xianglong was quoted as saying.

Dai said the construction of the railway project, with an estimated investment of 14.3 billion yuan (1.7 billion US dollars), is scheduled to start before June next year and begin operating in 2007.

Two new expressways linking the two metropolises are also expected to be built within a couple of years, said Dai, who was former governor of the People’s Bank of China and elected Mayor of Tianjin last year.

Sources with the Tianjin Development and Planning Commission said the initial plans for the three projects have already been drawn up but still need to get the nod from the central government before construction can be started, according to the paper.

The commission said Tianjin is busy making preliminary preparations such as requisitioning land and relocating households along the railway and expressway lines. There is currently only one expressway between Tianjin and Beijing. Built in 1991, the four-lane route has seen an annual flow increase of 20 per cent, resulting in traffic congestion. —MNA/Xinhua

UN mission closely monitoring situation in Fallujah

**UNITED NATIONS, 16 NOV—** UN spokesman Fred Eckhard said Monday that the UN Assistance Mission for Iraq has been closely monitoring the situation in Fallujah, Iraq.

The UN pacekeepers in Iraq are ready to properly assist in meeting the needs of the civilian populations in and outside the city, Eckhard told reporters in New York.

The World Health Organization has provided the Ministry of Health with medical supplies, and about 50,000 blood bags while UNICEF, the UN Children’s Fund, supplied portable water to be distributed among the internally displaced persons, he added.

The Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees and the International Organization for Migration have also made available tents and other essential non-food items to displaced persons, according to the spokesman. —MNA/Xinhua

Three coalition soldiers sue US Army over Iraq injuries

**BAGHDAD, 15 NOV—** A Houston lawyer is seeking $2.3-million for three British soldiers and a Kuwaiti interpreter who were hurt in Iraq. The accident happened just after the end of major combat operations in May of 2003. Attorney Michael Doyle today said the four were injured when a tank transporter struck their vehicle and forced it off the road. It’s believed to be the first claim by coalition soldiers under the Foreign Claims Act. The law outlines procedures for claims involving wrongful or negligent acts by US soldiers overseas. The claim was filed at the US Army’s tort claims division at Fort Meade, Maryland. Army officials didn’t immediately return a call for comment today. —Internet

A video image shows US Marines sneak into a breach in a wall in the city of Fallujah, on 16 Nov, 2004. —Internet

Nov ranks 2nd in US deaths in Iraq

WASHINGTON, 16 Nov—US deaths in Iraq this month are approaching 100, making it the second-deadliest month since American forces invaded the country in March 2003, Pentagon records show.

The worst month was last April, with 135 deaths, when the insurgency intensified and US and UN forces fought fierce battles in Fallujah, only to be withdrawn from the city. That was part of a failed attempt to put the now-defunct Fallujah Brigade of US and allied Iraqi forces in charge.

Until now the second-deadliest month was November 2003 with 82 deaths, and 80 Americans died in May and September this year.

The rising death toll coincides with US military commanders’ efforts to pacify areas of Iraq that need to be brought under Iraqi government control before elections scheduled for late January. It also reflects an escalation of attacks by the insurgents, although some US commanders say they believe this may be a last-gasp effort by rebel forces outmatched by US firepower.

It is difficult to gauge the effect of the growing death toll on US troop morale. Commanders say their men and women are holding up well, although they caution that more hard fighting lies ahead.

Most of the deaths this month have been in the Fallujah offensive that began 7 November. Many Marines and soldiers also have been killed in Ramadi and other cities in Anbar province west of Baghdad, as well as in Mosul in the north, Babil province south of Baghdad and in and around the Iraqi capital.

Support troops also have been killed along supply routes.

Rules of war broken in Fallujah battle

LONDON, 16 Nov—The rules of war protecting civilians and wounded combatants have been broken by both sides in the week-long assault on the Iraqi city of Fallujah, Amnesty International said on Monday.

The London-based group, which gave examples of what it said were breaches of the rules by both US troops and guerrillas, demanded that all violations be investigated and those responsible brought to justice.

Not only had the attacks of US and Iraqi troops failed to take the necessary steps to ensure that non-combatants did not come under fire, but guerrillas had also used flags of truce and fired indiscriminately.

“Amnesty International fears that civilians have been killed. In contravention of international humanitarian law, as a result of failure by parties to the fighting to take necessary precautions to protect non-combatants,” Amnesty said.

Amnesty said 20 Iraqi medical staff and dozens of other civilians were killed when a missile hit a Fallujah clinic on November 9, according to a doctor who survived the strike — though it was not known who fired the missile.

On the same day a nine-year-old boy died to death after being hit in the stomach by shrapnel. Unable to take him to hospital because of the fighting, his parents buried him in their garden.

Elsewhere a woman and her three daughters were reported killed when their house was bombed, Amnesty said.

It also said a British television programme, Channel Four News, broadcast footage on November 11 that appeared to show an American soldier firing a shot in the direction of a wounded guerrilla behind a wall and then commenting “he’s gone”.

“Under international humanitarian law the US forces have an obligation to protect fighters hors de combat. Amnesty International calls on the US authorities to investigate this incident immediately,” the human rights watchdog said. It said guerrillas were also reported to have violated international humanitarian law.

In one incident, some Iraqis are reported to have come out of building waving a white flag. When a Marine approached this group, guerrillas opened fire on the Marine from different directions.

A US military official in Iraq also accused guerrillas of storing weapons in mosques and schools. Guerrillas were reported to be firing from a mosque on November 10, Amnesty said. —MNA/Reuters

Britain gains nothing from supporting US invasion of Iraq

LONDON, 17 Nov—French President Jacques Chirac said in a newspaper interview on Tuesday that Britain has gained nothing from its support for the United States-led invasion of Iraq.

Chirac said he had urged Britain before the invasionpress US President George W Bush to revive the Middle East peace process in return for London’s support.

“Well, Britain gave its support but I did not see much in return,” Chirac was quoted as saying in the Times. “I am not sure that it is in the nature of our American friends at the moment to return favours systematically.”

Blair’s staunch support for Washington over Iraq led to bitter divisions within his ruling Labour Party and dragged down his public approval ratings. Chirac, who will hold talks with Blair when he makes a state visit to Britain on Thursday, recalled a Franco-British summit last year when he asked his British counterpart to try to influence US policy on the Middle East.

“I said then to Tony Blair: ‘We have different positions on Iraq. Your position should at least have some use’. That is to try to obtain in exchange a relaunch of the peace process in the Middle East,” Chirac questioned whether Britain could act as a bridge between the United States and Europe to help heal the rift that developed over the Iraq war. France and Germany were among the most vocal opponents of US military action to oust former Iraqi president Saddam Hussein. “I am not sure with America as it is these days that it would be easy for someone, even the British, to be an honest broker,” Chirac was quoted as saying in the Times. —MNA/Reuters

1,210 US troops killed since beginning of Iraq war

WASHINGTON, 17 Nov—A total of 1,210 US soldiers have been killed in Iraq since the United States launched war against the Middle Eastern country in March 2003, latest figures from the Pentagon showed on Tuesday.

Of the dead, 943 were killed in combat and 267 in non-battle circumstances.

Ninety-one casualties were reported for November so far, bringing the number to 1,210 from 1,119 at the beginning of this month. Many of the deaths occurred during the US military operation in Fallujah that began on November 7.

A total of 38 US soldiers were killed in the week-long offensive, which was aimed at helping pave the way for the general elections in Iraq scheduled for January next year. November would become the second-deadliest month for American forces since March 2003, following April this year when 135 deaths were reported.

Since the start of the war, 8,956 US servicemen have been wounded, including at least 320 US soldiers who were wounded in the Fallujah operation.

MNA/Xinhua

Baghdad’s al-Yarmook hospital staff help 40-year old man, Zakariya Dawood who was wounded in a car bomb explosion on the airport highway in Baghdad on 17 Nov, 2004.—INTERNET

An Iraqi guerrilla points his rifle towards a blazing oil storage tank near the northern city of Mosul on 15 Nov, 2004.—INTERNET

IMAGES

= Internet

MNA/Reuters

MNA/Xinhua

IMAGES
US aircraft strike Baquba, killing 20

BAQUBA, 16 Nov— US forces launched airstrikes and fought gunbattles after guerrillas overran police stations and other areas in the Iraqi city of Baquba on Monday, killing about 20 guerrillas, the US military said.

Explosions and gunfire echoed across Baquba, 40 miles northeast of the capital, as US and Iraqi forces battled to restore order after guerrillas attacked a police station and US troops at a traffic circle, witnesses said.

Another police station in the town of Buhriz, just south of Baquba, was also attacked.

US planes dropped two 500-pound bombs on Baquba after at least 15 guerrillas arrived by bus from outside the city and joined other militants in carrying out attacks.

Some fighters positioned themselves on rooftops, others set up road blocks and planted roadside bombs, US military spokesman Captain Bill Coppernoll said.

About 20 guerrillas were killed in the gunbattles, artillery and airstrikes. Four US soldiers were wounded, Coppernoll said, two of them seriously.

US Marine shoots dead unarmed, wounded Iraqi prisoner

LONDON, 16 Nov— A television pool report by US network NBC said on Monday that a US Marine had shot dead an unarmed and wounded Iraqi prisoner in Fallujah.

The Iraqi was one of five wounded prisoners left in the mosque after Marines had fought their way in on Friday and Saturday. There was no immediate comment from the Pentagon on the report.

US forces launched an offensive one week ago on Fallujah, and have gained overall control of the formerly guerrilla-held city, although scattered resistance remains.

The pool report by NBC correspondent Kevin Sites said the mosque had been used by guerrillas to attack US forces, who stormed it and an adjacent building, killing 10 militants and wounding the five.

Sites said the wounded had been left in the mosque for others to pick up and move to the rear for treatment.

No reason was given why that had not happened.

A second group of Marines entered the mosque on Saturday after reports it had been reoccupied. Footage from the embedded television crew showed the five still in the mosque, although several appeared to be already close to death, Sites said.

He said one Marine noticed one of the prisoners was still breathing. “The Marine then raises his rifle and fires into the man’s head. The pictures are too graphic for us to broadcast,” Sites said.

No images of the shooting were shown in the footage provided to Reuters.

The report said the Marine, who had returned to duty after being shot in the face a day earlier, had been removed from the field and was being questioned by the US military.

Sites said the shot prisoner “did not appear to be armed or threatening in any way”.

MNA/Reuters

US urged to help slow Arctic thaw

STOCKHOLM, 16 Nov— Indigenous people from the Arctic have urged the US to cut greenhouse gas emissions to slow down the current rate of polar ice, an Icelandic web site reported on Monday.

At a conference in Reykjavik, Iceland, they warned that the rest of the planet.

“Climate change is not just about weather or sea ice, it’s a fight to preserve a way of life,” she added. A team of international researchers published the results of a study before the meeting kicked off, predicting that the summer sea ice could melt completely before the end of this century.

The Arctic Climate Impact Assessment report (ACIA) found that the faster warming rate of the Arctic is due to a build-up of greenhouse gases, mainly carbon dioxide released from burning oil, coal and gas in power plants and cars.

MNA/Xinhua

US officer charged with murder of Iraqi

BAGHDAD, 16 Nov— A medium-rank US officer serving in Baghdad was charged with wrongful killing of an Iraqi and allowing a murder, the US military said on Monday.

Secondary Lieutenant Erick J Anderson has been charged with premeditated murder and conspiracy to commit premeditated murder, the 1st US Cavalry Division announced.

A US military statement said that the allegations were under investigation by the US authorities and specific events relating to the charges could “not be discussed in detail at this time”.

The case was the latest among several similar allegations surfacing in the US forces in Iraq. Last month, two soldiers of the same company with Anderson were charged with murdering an Iraqi in Sadr City, a Shi’ite slum in eastern Baghdad. Anderson was under investigation on whether he granted the two soldiers permission to shoot an injured Iraqi whom they thought was so badly wounded that he would die anyway.

Staff Sergeant Jonathan Alban was accused of firing “multiple rounds” with a rifle at the badly wounded Iraqi, who managed to pull himself out of a burning garbage truck attacked by a group of US troops, who suspected the men in the truck were planting roadside bombs. It was not clear if bombs were found at the scene.

Alban appeared before a military court on October 21. The other soldier, Staff Sergeant Johnny Horne, is due to appear in court later. If tried and convicted, the two could face a minimum punishment of life in prison and a maximum of the death penalty, said the US military.

MNA/Xinhua

Blix launches scathing attack on US, others

STOCKHOLM, 16 Nov— Former chief UN weapons inspector Hans Blix said that the effectiveness of the United Nations is threatened by countries that ignore its recommendations, signalling out the United States and Britain in their push to invade Iraq last year. Radio Sweden reported on Monday.

Blix told a seminar here in Stockholm that “the UN today is in a difficult situation after the US, Britain and some other states ignored the majority of the Security Council and intervened in Iraq to eliminate weapons of mass destruction—weapons that were not there”.

He also criticized the United States for acting unilaterally when international groups, including the UN, disagreed with US views. — MNA/Xinhua
USDA Secretary-General U Htay Oo presents gift to Maung Thinzar Sho of Myeik BEHS No 1 in Taninthayi Division. — MNA

USDA Secretary-General U Htay Oo presents gift to Maung Aung Kyaw Soe of Myaing Village, Hpa-an Township, Kayin State. — MNA

USDA Secretary-General U Htay Oo presents gift to Maung Zaw Wan who won gold in seventh SEA bodybuilding and physical culture championship (Indonesia). — MNA

OUTSTANDING STUDENTS AWARDED
OUTSTANDING STUDENTS AWARDED

USDA Secretary-General U Htay Oo presents gift to Ma Myat Noe Zin Myint of Institute of Education Practising School in Kamayut Township, Yangon Division. — MNA

USDA Secretary-General U Htay Oo presents gift to Maung Yin Kyay of Kanni Village in Mrauk U Township, Rakhine State. — MNA

USDA Secretary-General U Htay Oo presents gift to Maung Kyi Zaw Lat of Bogale Township, Ayeyawady Division. — MNA

USDA Secretary-General U Htay Oo presents gift to Ma May Thandar Kyaw of Wettun affiliated BEHS in Pyin Oo Lwin, Mandalay Division. — MNA

USDA Secretary-General U Htay Oo presents gift to Maung Ne Myo Lin of Shanywa (A-thabyu) affiliated BEHS in Laymyethna Township, Ayeyawady Division. — MNA

USDA Secretary-General U Htay Oo presents gift to Ma Thu Thu Aung of Latha Township BEHS No 2 in Yangon Division. — MNA

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The Institute of Traditional Medicine in Mandalay. — MNA

The government firmly believes …

(from page 1)

I have already stated that the Association is endeav-ouring to develop itself into a firm national force, while organizing, training and activating new generation youths. The endeavour is helping to produce human resources which the nation needs.

The seven objectives, that will be the focal points of discussions at the AGM, are aimed at consolidating national solidarity, ensuring success of the seven-point Road Map, developing the socio-economy with added momentum and warding off the destructive elements with the strength of the people.

The USDA will have to take part energetically in shaping a modern state with high efficiency and con-solidated efforts.

You are the young patriotic leaders with abilities to study and analyze the nation’s objective conditions. When we recall the period about half a century ago, we will see that political integrity was weak because of our condition then; which was the legacy of colonialism.

All the people suffered ill effects of misunderstand- ing among them. Over 40 years of armed conflict smeared Myanmar history. The people had to live in miserable condition in the colonial period. National solidarity weakened soon after regaining the inde-pendence due to the divide-and-rule policy of the colonial period resulting in the loss of peace, tranquil-

The government has realized the objectives hand in hand with the people. Investments were made in every sector for realization of the objectives during the period of over ten years.

The government has laid down the objectives hand in hand with the people. Investments were made in every sector for realization of the objectives during the period of over ten years.

The government firmly believes that the most basic requirement for national development is national soli-darity. With this conviction after taking up the State duties, the government tried to make peace with armed groups as the first priority task. Since all the people shared the view that national solidarity is the most important requirement peace initiative became a reality. As is known to all, there prevails peace, stability and security in various border areas after building mutual trust.

Therefore, Central Committee for Development of Border Areas and National Races chaired by me was formed and tasks were implemented. Considerable progress has been made in economic infrastructures, transport, livestock breeding, education and health sectors in border areas. The government hand in hand with local national race leaders and local people under-took the projects. Development projects were launched first in the border areas where there was slow progress due to lack of security. Development of border areas and national races is the demand of history. Tangible results were achieved as the government had carried out the tasks with genuine goodwill. Better founda-tions for national solidarity came together with devel-opment.

The government has laid down and practised Our

If we study the developments from the time of taking up the State duties to present day, the period from 1988 to 1992 was the time of making special efforts for peace and tranquility.

With prevalence of peace and tranquillity in the border areas, the country headed for development, the very requirement of the State. The task for building of a peaceful, modern developed nation was laid down as the national goal.

In order to reach the goal, national short-term projects were laid down. Infrastructure is the main requirement for implementation of the national plans. As is known to all, there was no sufficient infrastruc-ture in the region as well as in various sectors. It is a great task to fulfill the requirements for implementation of the project. In order to build infrastructures needed in the projects the Special Projects Implementation Committee was formed and region-wise and sector-wise requirements were fulfilled.

No efforts are spared to turn the country into a peaceful, modern and developed nation. As is known to all, the border area development project, the 24 development zones project, and the rural development tasks are being implemented to see that no region is left unattended.

With 75 percent of the working population, agricul-ture is the kind of national economy, providing almost full percentage of basic foodstuff. This being the case, the government’s investment mainly goes into the improvement of agricultural infrastructures. The number of dams and reservoirs and that of river water-pumping projects constructed during the period of over ten years stood at 167 and 271 respectively. Another 36 dam projects and another 34 river water-pumping projects are under way.

(See page 9)

Agro Culture Sector

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* The government’s investment mainly goes into the improve-ment of agricultural infrastructures.
* The number of dams and reservoirs and that of river water-pumping projects constructed during the period of over ten years stood at 167 and 271 respectively.
* Another 36 dam projects and another 34 river water-pumping projects are under way.

Transport Sector

* Transport infrastructure is instrumental in bringing about moderni-zation as well as the advancement of socio-economic life and regional development.
* The total length of roads across the country increased from 21,483 miles in 1988 to 56,695 miles in 2004.
* Besides road construction, river-crossing bridges were built wherever necessary with the use of in-ternal labour. As the longest bridge in Myanmar, the river-crossing Thalwin bridge (Mawlamyine) will be inaugurated soon.

MNA

THE NEW LIGHT OF MYANMAR Thursday, 18 November, 2004

Senior General Than Shwe cordially greets delegates to Annual General Meeting (2004) of Union Solidarity and Development Association. — MNA
The government firmly believes…

(continued from page 6)

A huge amount of investment is also being put in the generation of electricity, an engine for the economic growth and for social advancement as well. The capacity of electricity generation nationwide in 1988 totalled 707 megawatts. The present government has increased the generation capacity to another 767 megawatts in a span of over a decade. Electricity projects, large and medium, are being implemented to satisfy the demand of industry and social status likely to rise. On completion, they will be able to meet the demand of not only the present but also the future.

Transport infrastructure is instrumental in bringing about modernization as well as the advancement of socio-economic life and regional development. During the past ten years or so, momentum was added to the drive for construction of motor roads, town link roads and village link roads. The total length of roads across the country increased from 21,483 miles in 1988 to 56,695 miles in 2004. It means that there has been an increase of 35,212 miles in the total length of roads. Besides road construction, river-crossing bridges were built wherever necessary with the use of internal labour. The longest bridge in Myanmar, the river-crossing Thanlawin bridge (Mawlamyine) will be inaugurated soon.

With 1,128 miles in length, new railroads that play a strategic role in transport were constructed. Now, the total length of railroads has reached 3,921 miles. Moreover, airports are being upgraded. The number of airports has now stood at 33, with an increase of 12 new airports.

When it comes to modernizing the country, the government also invests heavily in the development of human resources.

Education is a prime source of development. In view of increased opportunities for learning and of higher education both at basic and higher levels, measures have been taken to widen the scope of courses in line with the need of the country.

The government is implementing the special four-year plan for national education promotion. At the same time, it also drew up the 30-year long-term plan, speeding up its efforts. In accord with the fine tradition, the education programmes are being implemented with the cooperation of the public and the social organizations.

Now in the basic education sector, altogether 40,505 schools have been opened all over the country, whereupon plans are being implemented to ensure that all citizens have the right to receiving basic education. Thanks to these measures, enrolment rate of primary school increased from 77 percent in 1988 to 96.6 percent in this academic year.

health sector

* The State is well convinced that health and fitness of the people, part of the social sector, is indeed an important factor that contributes towards producing human resources.

* The Government is promoting and expanding the scope of the medical science and academic matters on the medical field, and upgrading hospitals and health care centres in respective development regions.

* The number of the nation’s hospitals has increased to 813, up from 631 in 1988.

* There have emerged an institute of traditional medicines in Mandalay, traditional hospitals at all traditional hospitals across the country.

* Electricity projects, large and medium, are being implemented to satisfy the demand of industry and social status likely to rise. On completion, they will be able to meet the demand of not only the present but also the future.

Power supply

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(a) Education sector

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* Thanks to these measures, enrolment rate of primary school increased from 77 percent in 1988 to 96.6 percent in this academic year.

* It is due to the “Education For All” programme that the literacy rate rose from 78 percent in 1988 to 93.3 percent in 2004.

* The learning opportunity has also been on the rise in higher institutions.
Senior General Than Shwe hosts dinner…

(from page 16)

the State, artistes, chairmen of social and economic organizations and officials.

Also present were Members of Panel of Patrons of USDA Vice-Chairman of State Peace and Development Council Deputy Commander-in-Chief of Defence Services Commander-in-Chief (Army) Vice-Senior General Maung Aye, Member of the State Peace and Development Council General Thura Shwe Mann of the Ministry of Defence, Prime Minister Lt-Gen Soe Win, Secretary-1 of the State Peace and Development Council Lt-Gen Thein Sein, members of the State Peace and Development Council, the Commander-in-Chief (Navy), the Commander-in-Chief (Air), the chairman of Yangon Division Peace and Development Council the Commander, ministers, the chief justice, the attorney-general, the auditor-general, the chairman of Civil Service Selection and Training Board, central executive committee members of USDA, members of National Convention Convening Commission, senior military officers, deputy ministers, directors-general

of State Peace and Development Council Office, President Office, Government Office, and Pyithu Hluttaw Office, directors-general and managing directors of departments and enterprises, chairmen and members of the respective subcommittees of the AGM, secretaries of state/division USDAAs, regional coordinators of USDA HQ, delegates to the AGM, outstanding students, journalists, chairmen of social and economic organizations, officials, artistes, vocalists and specially invited guests.

Arists of Myanmar Motion Picture Asiayon and Myanmar Music Asiayon gave performances to the accompaniment of modern music troupe of Myanma Radio before the dinner. Arists of Fine Arts Department of the Ministry of Culture presented a variety dance show during and after the dinner. — MNA

Senior General Than Shwe addresses…

(from page 16)

Myanmar Floriculturists Association, the Myanmar National Committee for Women’s Affairs, the Union

Senior General Than Shwe has a cordial conversation with delegates to the USDA Annual General Meeting (2004). — MNA

Senior General Than Shwe cordially greets delegates to the USDA Annual General Meeting (2004) of the Union Solidarity and Development Association. — MNA

USDA Secretary-General U Htay Oo presents gift to Ma Thin Thin Khun, who won gold in Asia Archery Circuit (2004). — MNA

USDA Secretary-General U Htay Oo presents gift to Maung Zin Lin of Mandalay BEHS No 14 in Mandalay Division. — MNA

Maung Zin Lin of Mandalay BEHS No 14 in Mandalay Division. — MNA

of Myanmar Federation of Chambers of Commerce and Industry, the Myanmar Construction Entrepreneurs Association, the Myanmar Hoteliers Association, the Myanmar Fisheries Federation, secretaries and representatives of USDAAs from states and divisions, outstanding youths of 2004 and guests.

At the meeting, Daw Theingi Aung, executive of Singaing Township USDA of Mandalay Division acted as master of ceremonies with Daw Chaw Su Yi, member of Shartaw Township USDA of Kayah State as co-master of ceremonies.

At first, the master of ceremonies declared the fourth day session of the meeting open with the permission of the USDA Patron, who later addressed the meeting.

Next, U Hway Oo, Secretary-General of USDA, presented prizes to students who stood first to ten with science combination in the matriculation examination 2004 in the entire Myanmar.

The outstanding students were Maung Zin Lin of No 14 BEHS, Mandalay, Mandalay Division and Ma Thu Thi Htwe of No 13 BEHS, Mandalay Division who stood not only first in the entire Myanmar but also first in Mandalay Division; Maung Ye Oo of No 3 BEHS, PyinOoLwin Township, Mandalay Division, who stood second in the entire Myanmar; Ma Myat Noe Zin Myint of Institute of Education Practising School, Kamayut Township, who stood not only second in the entire Myanmar but also first in Mandalay Division; Maung Ye Min Oo of No 16 BEHS, Mandalay, Mandalay Division, who stood third in the entire Myanmar; Ma Pan Ei San of No 1 BEHS Mingalardon Township, Yangon Division, who stood fourth in the entire Myanmar; Maung Pyi Phyo Kyaw of No 4 BEHS, Taunggyi, who stood fourth in the entire Myanmar and first in Shan State (South); Ma Yu Yu Chit of No 12 BEHS, Mandalay, Mandalay Division, who stood fifth in the entire Myanmar; Ma May Thi Thi Htwe of Wetwun Affiliated BEHS, Mandalay Division, who stood not only second in the entire Myanmar but also first in Mandalay Division; Ma Soe Thet San of No 1 BEHS, Dagon Township, Yangon Division, who stood seventh in the entire Myanmar; Ma Ei Mon Aung of No 1 BEHS Dagon Township, Yangon Division, who stood seventh in the entire Myanmar; Ma May Moe of Institute of Education Practising School, Kamayut Township, Yangon Division, who stood seventh in the entire Myanmar; Ma Yin Mon Mon Aung of No 1 BEHS Dagon Township, Yangon Division, who stood eighth in the entire Myanmar; Ma Thandar Kyaw of Wetwun Affiliated BEHS, Mandalay Division, who stood eighth in the entire Myanmar; Maung Ye Win Tun of No 3 BEHS, Bago, who stood not only ninth in the entire Myanmar but also first in Bago Division (East); Ma Hnin Wint Wint Aung of No 2 BEHS, Sangyoung Township, Yangon Division, who stood ninth in the entire Myanmar; Maung Pyi Phyo Kyaw of No 4 BEHS, Taunggyi, who stood fourth in the entire Myanmar and first in Shan State (South); Ma Yu Yu Chit of No 12 BEHS, Mandalay, Mandalay Division, who stood fifth in the entire Myanmar; Ma May Thi Thi Htwe of Wetwun Affiliated BEHS, Mandalay Division, who stood not only second in the entire Myanmar but also first in Mandalay Division; Ma Soe Thet San of No 1 BEHS, Dagon Township, Yangon Division, who stood seventh in the entire Myanmar; Ma Ei Mon Aung of No 1 BEHS Dagon Township, Yangon Division, who stood seventh in the entire Myanmar; Ma May Moe of Institute of Education Practising School, Kamayut Township, Yangon Division, who stood seventh in the entire Myanmar; Ma Yin Mon Mon Aung of No 1 BEHS Dagon Township, Yangon Division, who stood eighth in the entire Myanmar; Ma Thandar Kyaw of Wetwun Affiliated BEHS, Mandalay Division, who stood eighth in the entire Myanmar; Maung Ye Win Tun of No 3 BEHS, Bago, who stood not only ninth in the entire Myanmar but also first in Bago Division (East); Ma Hnin Wint Wint Aung of No 2 BEHS, Sangyoung Township, Yangon Division, who
Senior General Than Shwe addresses...

(from page 10) stood ninth in the entire Myanmar; Maung Zaw Ni Ko of No 3 BEHS, PyinOoLwin, Mandalay Division, who stood tenth in the entire Myanmar and Ma Tha Thu Aung of No 2 BEHS, Latha Township, Yangon Division, who stood tenth in the entire Myanmar.

Afterwards, U Htay Oo, Secretary-General of USDA, presented prizes to students who stood first to tenth with art combination in the matriculation examination 2004 in the entire Myanmar.

The outstanding students were Ma Tin Nwe Lin of Pyin Kyaiyang BEHS, Ngapudaw Township, Ayeyawady Division, who stood first in the entire Myanmar; Maung Yin Kye of Kani Village BEHS, Meiktila Township, Mandalay Division, who stood in the entire Myanmar.

General also presented gifts for winning first in art combination of matriculation exam (2004) in respective States and Divisions to Ma Naw Tapyi Thar of Nanphe Village in PyinOoLwin Township, Kayah State; Maung Aung Kyaw Soe of Myaung Village, Hpa-an Township, Kayin State; Maung Ban Kyin Man of Thantlang, Chin State, Maung Khin Maung Nein of Kanbula in Sagaing Division, MaungShweLin Oo of Theindaw Village

USDA Secretary-General U Htay Oo presents gift to Maung Nay Win who won nine gold in Cultural Arts Competitions. — MNA

Executive Daw Theingi Aung and Daw Chaw Su Yi act as masters of ceremonies.— MNA

 Mandalay Division; Maung Kyi Zaw Latt of Bogale Township BEHS, Ayeyawady Division, who stood third in the entire Myanmar; Maung Swe Nyein Hlaing of Yekyi Township BEHS, Ayeyawady Division, who stood fourth in the entire Myanmar; Ma Wai Hlaing Phyoo of Hopin BEHS, Mohnyin, who stood fifth in the entire Myanmar and first in Mon State; Maung Pye Soe of Kyawkwin village, Kyangin, Ayeyawady Division, who stood sixth in the entire Myanmar; Ma Tha Thu Aung Po of Hopang BEHS in Moghnin Township, Kachin State, who stood seventh position; Maung Chan Min Ko of Welang affiliated BEHS in Taungtha Township, Mandalay Division, who stood seventh; Maung Ne No 1 in Kayin State, Maung Joseph Ban Bwe Oak of Haka BEHS No 1 in Chin State, Ma Thet Thet Myat of Chauk In Saingang Division, Ma Thinzar Sho of Myeik BEHS No 1 in Taninthyai Division, Maung Kyaw Zeya Htin of Pyay BEHS No 1 in Bago Division (West), Maung Chan Myae Aye Thaung of Magway BEHS No 1 in Magway Division, Ma Win Le Mon of Mawlamyine BEHS No 9 in Mon State, Maung Win Naing Soe of Kyaukpyu BEHS No 2 in Rakhine State, Maung Aung Ye Kyaw of Hsipaw BEHS in Shan State (North), Maung Tha Tin Oo of Tachilek BEHS in Shan State (East) and Maung Tiha Kyaw Soe of Pathein BEHS No 6 in Ayeyawady Division.

The Secretary-General presented gifts to Maung Phyo Mintha and Maung Win Htet Pang, who won gold in the U-14 event of the Junior World Ranking Tennis Tournament held in Myanmar, gold medalist Maung Min Zaw Oo and Maung Zaw Wan of

YANGON, 17 NOV — Sayadaw Bhaddanta Sobhita, Chairman of State Sangha Maha Nayaka Committee, passed away peacefully at the age of 95, vasa 76, at 11.35 am today.

Sayadaw Bhaddanta Sobhita (Abhidhaja Maha Raththa Guru Abhidhaja Agga Maha Saddhammajotika) was born in Thiri Pissaya village, NyaungU Township, Mandalay Division.

He was novice at the age of 10. He studied basic religious knowledge since he was very young, and continued to learn Pariyatti at various monasteries. He became a lecturer Sayadaw when he attained five vasa as a monk.

The Sayadaw had dedicated his whole life to studying Pariyatti and practising Patipatti and disseminating the religious knowledge to disciples.

He had been to Japan, Sri Lanka, Nepal, India, Thailand, the Republic of Korea, Laos, and England as a missionary Sayadaw. — MNA

MNA
Man sets fire to his belongings outside White House

WASHINGTON, 16 Nov — A man set fire to his belongings outside the northwest gate of the White House on Monday, injuring himself before the flames were put out by Secret Service agents, media reports said.

The man was trying to present an envelope to the head, back, arms and face, and reportedly shouted “Allah,” the reports said.

Moments later, smoke was seen rising and flames engulfed his briefcase and overcoat near the guard post. The man was subsequently subdued by guards there.

The area was cordoned off and fire trucks and ambulances arrived on the scene, and the man was taken to a local hospital, according to the reports. MNA/Xinhua

22% of Vietnamese in danger of cardiovascular diseases

HANOI, 16 Nov — Some 18 million Vietnamese people, or 22% of Vietnam’s population, are at high risk of suffering from cardiovascular diseases, the Ho Chi Minh City Cardiovascular Association said on Monday.

Of the 18 million people, more than 12 million suffer from high blood pressure, 3.2 million from local myocardium anaemia, and 2.8 million from diabetes. MNA/Xinhua

Five nations short-listed for slot in India’s unmanned moon mission

NEW DELHI, 16 Nov — The Indian Space Research Organization (ISRO) has short-listed experiments from five nations including the United States, Britain and Germany, for a slot on India’s unmanned moon mission Chandrayaan-1 to be undertaken by 2006-2007, the Press Trust of India (PTI) reported Monday.

“We have shortlisted scientific experiments from researchers in five countries — US, Britain, Sweden, Bulgaria and Germany. We will finalize the right partners by December,” PTI quoted ISRO sources as saying in Bangalore in south India.

India plans to put a 255-kilogram orbiter using Polar Satellite Launch Vehicle rocket 100,000 kilometres over the moon to explore the earth’s satellite.

ISRO had allotted 10 kilos and 10 watts of power for space agencies of other nations and had invited international bids for the purpose that had evoked 15 responses from 10 nations.

“The best suited proposals have been shortlisted. We have to find out whether they finally fit into our mission payload,” the sources said.

India’s mission is aimed at expanding the scientific knowledge about the moon, upgrading India’s technological capability and providing challenging opportunities for planetary research to the younger generation.

ISRO officials said a three-dimensional atlas of regions of solar interest of the moon will be made with maps on board the mission, beside exploring the lunar surface for elements such as magnesium, aluminium, silicon, calcium, iron and titanium. MNA/Xinhua

Peruvian police seize 698 kilos of drugs

LIMA, 16 Nov — Anti-narcotics agents seized 698 kilos of drugs in the capital city and arrested seven suspected members of an international criminal ring, Peruvian Interior Minister Javier Reategui said Monday.

The new disease, which has hit by severe acute respiratory illness in a hospital that has infected 28 children.

Tests conducted late last week showed the children were not infected with SARS or influenza. “We will see if they need to be further isolated, and to see if we need staff reinforcement,” Health Minister York Chow told reporters on Monday.

The children are all long-term residents at two public Caritas Medical Centre, a hospital for mentally handicapped children.

Four more children developed fever and symptoms of respiratory infection on Monday. An 11-year-old girl, who had chronic medical problems, died of a chest infection in the same hospital on November 9, but authorities have yet to confirm if the girl died of the same disease now afflicting the other children.

“Tests on the children have turned up negative for SARS, influenza A and B, and other respiratory related diseases. We are still checking,” a Health Department spokesman said.

The outbreak of a mysterious respiratory illness in a hospital that has infected 1,020 kilometres northwest of Lima. MNA/Xinhua

HK investigating outbreak of mysterious respiratory illness

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Some local newspapers have sharply criticized the government for its handling of the case, which evoked memories of health disasters that have dogged Hong Kong in recent years, including SARS and the deadly H5N1 bird flu.

Hong Kong was badly hit by severe acute respiratory syndrome last year. The new disease, which originated in southern China, infected nearly 1,800 people in Hong Kong, killing 299 of them.

The outbreak highlighted deficiencies in the healthcare system and a poor chain of command. MNA/Reuters
Gulf countries witness rise in heart disease and diabetes

Abu Dhabi, 16 Nov — The Gulf countries are witnessing a rapid increase in heart disease, diabetes and other serious illnesses, especially among youngsters who eat too much junk food while exercise little, local newspaper Gulf News reported here Monday.

Leading doctors in the Gulf region have warned that heart disease will become as common in the region as it is in the United States and Europe, both suffering a high incidence of the deadly disease, said the report.

Moreover, serious illnesses including heart disease, diabetes have already posed problems to young people under their 30s in the region.

Experts were quoted as saying that chubby youngsters, many of whom have a poor diet and little exercise, were more likely to develop heart disease and Type 2 diabetes as more people in their 30s and 40s in the region suffered from cardiac problems.

Heart disease caused about 35 per cent of deaths in the region annually, a figure that could soon increase to 45 per cent as it is seen in the United States and Europe if people's lifestyles failed to improve, said the experts.

The warning came in the wake of a report recently published by the World Health Organization (WHO), which showed that childhood obesity was becoming more prevalent around the world and the Gulf region witnessed a 25 per cent increase in obesity over the past decade.

The WHO and the International Diabetes Federation said this week that 10 per cent of school-aged children around the globe were overweight or obese.

Besides heart disease, diabetes, obesity is also associated with strokes, cancer and even Alzheimer's disease.

Doctors advise that youngsters must be encouraged to exercise more and eat healthily and that parents should ensure that their children exercise at least twice a week on top of any physical activity they have at school.

UAE Airline wins top TTG honour

Abu Dhabi, 16 Nov — The Emirates Airway of the United Arab Emirates (UAE) has been voted Best Middle East and African Airline at the prestigious Asia Travel Awards of Thomson Travel Group (TTG), local newspaper Gulf News reported Monday.

Readers of TTG Asia and TTG China, the leading publications for the travel trade in the region, have awarded Emirates Airway the top accolade in this category for the second year.

The 15th annual TTG Awards took place last week in Bangkok, Thailand, attended by key figures in the Asian travel and transport industry.

China seeking greater scientific cooperation with India

Beijing, 16 Nov — China has identified India as a country with which to step up cooperation in scientific field, including health, biotechnology and information technology to widen bilateral exchanges, an official source said here on Sunday.

The other country Beijing has shown interest in similar cooperation is South Korea, he said.

Chinese State Councillor Chen Zhili, who is overseeing China's science and technology sectors, will be in India on an official two-day goodwill visit (November 14-18) at the invitation of the Indian Government and will meet officials to promote technology cooperation between the two countries.

She will meet senior information technology executives and will tour Infosys as part of her trip to Bangalore, India's "Silicon Valley". Infosys is in the process of establishing its full-fledged software development facility in China.

During her stay in New Delhi, Chen will hold talks with Minister of Science and Technology and Ocean Development, Kapil Sibal during which both sides are expected to identify new areas of cooperation in the scientific field, he said.

The new areas of cooperation between India and China may include health, biotechnology apart from the information technology sector where a number of Indian IT companies are already in China, he said.

China seeking greater scientific cooperation with India

Beijing, 16 Nov — Envoys from 12 nations, led by Pakistan UN Ambassador Munir Akram, have warned the UNGA against expanding permanent membership of the Security Council and have called for rejection of a resolution which, they said, is being drafted by the Group of Four — India, Germany, Japan and Brazil — the contenders to the permanent slot.

During a meeting with Jean Ping, the President of the United Nations General Assembly, the envoys said that the resolution would undermine the UN reform process and "wreck it irreversibly", Pakistani diplomats said.

The spokesperson for Ping declined to give any details except that the meeting Wednesday evening was private and as such, she would not comment.

The 12 members of the so-called "coffee club", claimed that most of the 191 members of UNGA are opposed to expansion of permanent membership of the Council. Most of them want only the expansion in the non-permanent category, they told Ping.

Pakistan has been opposing expansion of permanent membership for which India has wide support. Ping was told that the entire reforms process should be adopted by consensus, the diplomats said.

Leading artists gather to re-record charity hit

London, 16 Nov — Twenty years after the release of one of the biggest singles of all time, leading British artists gathered on Sunday to re-record the Bob Geldof-inspired charity hit “Do They Know It’s Christmas?”

Paul McCartney, Coldplay's "Chris Martin", "Jamelia" and "The Darkness" were among the 40 artists, in 1984 and with the hit single raised over 10 million pounds (18 million US dollars) for famine relief in Ethiopia.

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Paul McCartney, Coldplay’s ‘Chris Martin’, ‘Jamelia’ and ‘The Darkness’ were among those at a London studio to record the single, which bookmakers have already tipped for the Christmas number one spot.

“It’s time to recreate the magic, and perhaps add a little of our own,” ‘The Darkness’ singer Justin Hawkins told XFM radio.

Geldof and Ultravox singer Midge Ure created Band Aid, a supergroup of 40 artists, in 1984 and with the hit single raised over 10 million pounds (18 million US dollars) for famine relief in Ethiopia.

Ure has described the latest line-up as a “who’s who of coolness” after he managed to get big names like Robbie Williams and Dido on board for the slightly re-arranged song.

Artist Damien Hirst is making the CD’s cover. Proceeds will again go towards aid for Africa, particularly for Sudan’s volatile Darfur region, where tens of thousands have died since March from disease and malnutrition.

One injured in two-car train crash in E-England

London, 16 Nov — One person was injured when a two-car passenger train carrying 80 people struck a level crossing barrier in Lincolnshire, eastern England on Monday, police said.

The collision — just nine days after the deadly train crash in similar cooperation is South Korea, he said.

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Chelsea want Mourinho to stay for next 10 years

LONDON, 16 Nov— Premier League leaders Chelsea are looking to become financially independent of billionaire owner Roman Abramovich and want manager Jose Mourinho to stay for the next 10 years, media said on Sunday.

The Sunday Telegraph said chief executive Peter Kenyon had prepared a five-year plan to generate profits and cut the club's dependency on oil tycoon Abramovich, who has poured hundreds of millions of pounds into Chelsea since buying the club last year.

"It is not prudent to run a football club on the basis of a benefactor building up a big debt stream. It is in the best interests of Chelsea to be self-sufficient," Kenyon was quoted as saying.

Kenyon also told the Sunday Mirror that Mourinho, who won the European Cup with Porto before guiding Chelsea to the top of the Premier League this season, was the central part of a 10-year vision. —MNA/Reuters

Beckham denies retiring from int'l soccer after 2006 World Cup

MAIRO, 16 Nov— England captain David Beckham has denied reports that he plans to retire from international soccer after the 2006 World Cup and says he is "determined to fight the appearance records set by Bobby Moore and Bobby Charlton.

"I was asked if the next World Cup was going to be my last and I said possibly it could be but I hope it isn't," Beckham told a news conference in Madrid before Wednesday's friendly against Spain.

"I want to carry on playing for England as long as I can and if that means playing after the World Cup then great. I don't want to retire from playing for my country because it's one of the best honours I've ever been given in football."

"I set a target for myself when I got into the team and when I was given the captaincy and that was to reach the records of Bobby Charlton and Bobby Moore, both of whom were idols of me and my dad."

Former Manchester United forward Charlton won 106 caps and England captain Moore won 108, to become the two outfield players to make the most appearances for the national side. The 29-year-old Beckham, who has won 76 caps, said he would continue playing as long as his body would allow him.

"I get a few more aches and pains after games these days, but that's the only thing and as long as the legs can stand it I will carry on."

"But the most important thing for me is to carry on playing for England, to reach the World Cup and to win the World Cup."

—MNA/Reuters

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Giggs turns down one-year contract at Man Utd

LONDON, 16 Nov— Manchester United winger Ryan Giggs has turned down a new one-year contract at Manchester United and is holding out for a longer deal, media reported on Sunday.

The 30-year-old Welsh international, whose contract runs out at the end of next season, has spent his entire career at Old Trafford.

"I have been offered a one-year extension to my current deal but I turned it down," he told the News of the World. "I was hoping for a longer deal. I want to end my career at Manchester United and asked them to reconsider."

The Sunday Mirror said Giggs could be sold as early as January after chief executive David Gill told manager Alex Ferguson that players must be sold before anyone can be brought in. —MNA/Reuters

Schluenz resigns as Hansa Rostock coach

FRANKFURT, 16 Nov— Jurii Schluenz resigned as Hansa Rostock coach on Sunday following the team's 0-1 home defeat by Hamburg SV.

"That was a revealing performance," Schluenz said after the defeat which left the club rooted to the bottom of the table. "I can't let the fans come to expect a display like that."

"I've therefore offered my resignation to the club. Everyone has been behind me but I wouldn't like to abuse the confidence that has been placed in me."

The club said on their web site they had accepted Schluenz' resignation.

Assistant coaches Wolfgang Funkel and Perry Braestigum will train the team until a successor is found.

Sunday's defeat left Rostock bottom with just eight points from 13 games. —MNA/Reuters

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Newcastle manager to contest FA charge of improper conduct

NEWCASTLE, 16 Nov— Newcastle United manager Graeme Souness is to contest a Football Association (FA) charge of improper conduct.

Souness has requested a personal hearing with the FA, who charged him on Tuesday after he was sent from the dugout during last Sunday's 4-1 home defeat by Fulham.

"I am asking for a personal hearing," Souness wrote in the programme for Sunday's Premier League match at home to Manchester United, which they lost 3-1.

"I don't believe I should have been sent off and I certainly don't think I should have been charged, and I am determined to fight my case," said Souness, who had been given until next Wednesday to respond to the charge.

Flamengo players insulted at airport after defeat

RIO DE JANEIRO, 16 Nov— Flamengo players lashed out at their own supporters after being insulted, jeered and pushed as they arrived at Rio de Janeiro airport following their 1-0 defeat in the Brazilian championship on Sunday.

Television pictures showed goalkeeper Julio Cesar push one man to the ground and then kick him.

Defender Junior Baiano, sent off after two minutes of the game, was seen wounds with another supporter while other players exchanged insults with fans.

Dozens of supporters swore at the players as they got off the flight which brought them back from Ipuranga, where they were earlier beaten 6-1 by Atletico Mineiro in a relegation battle.

The defeat left the country's most popular club stuck in the relegation zone with only five matches to play.
Scientists, meet for saving world’s endangered species

BANGKOK, 17 Nov—More than 5,000 scientists, conservationists and politicians meet in Thailand over the next week to hammer out a blueprint for saving some of the world’s most endangered species and fragile ecosystems.

The IUCN World Conservation Union, which is hosting the four-yearly World Conservation Congress, is billing the eight-day Bangkok convention as one of the biggest environmental meetings in history.

“This sends a very powerful message that conservation is not a marginal issue in the year 2004,” said Achim Steiner, director-general of the Geneva-based organization.

“There has been a record level of interest.” One of the gathering’s top events will be the unveiling of the IUCN’s “Red List” of endangered animals, the most comprehensive scientific assessment of species at risk of dying out, and concrete measures to slow or reverse their extinction.

The prognosis is not good. “Despite all our efforts in the conservation community and in governments, we have not really succeeded in stemming the loss of species,” Steiner told Reuters.

“The number has now risen to over 15,000 threatened species on our planet — and this is just the number we have been able to assess so far.”

Threats to the environment from rapid economic and population growth — a major issue in Asia, home to half of humanity — will also feature prominently at the forum, which includes names from the world of big business.

Old guards BP and Royal Dutch/Shell, mining conglomerate Rio Tinto and insurer Swiss Re are among multinational- als putting in an appearance, reflecting the growing prominence of green issues in the boardroom.

“There has definitely been a shift in the big corporations, who now realize the importance of biodiversity,” said IUCN spokesman Deric Quaile.

“Most of big business now incorporates this as part of their strategic planning.”

— MNA/Reuters

British house prices fall

LONDON, 17 Nov—British house prices fell at their sharpest rate since the recession of the early 1990s in the three months to October, a survey said on Tuesday, the latest solid evidence that the housing boom is over.

The Royal Institution of Chartered Surveyors said 41 percent of their members were reporting house price falls rather than rises, pushing down their seasonally adjusted house price balance to -41 in October from -30 in September.

That was the lowest balance since December 1992 when the last British housing market bubble burst, trapping millions in negative equity. It was also below economists’ expectations for a more modest fall to -35.

— MNA/Reuters

France, Britain vow to prevent illegal immigration

CALSAS, 17 Nov—France and Britain vowed on Monday to work more closely to prevent illegal immigration, saying the number of asylum seekers in the Channel region had already fallen dramatically over the last two years.

In June 2004, less than 200 people per month had applied for asylum near the British port city of Dover — 10 times fewer than the number of people seeking asylum there in July 2002, the French Interior Ministry said in a statement.

— MNA/Reuters

Mental illness, drug abuse rise in England

LONDON, 17 Nov—Cases of mental illness and drug abuse in England and Wales have risen more than 60 percent in five years, researchers said on Tuesday.

In a survey of 230 general practitioners, equivalent to about 3 percent of the population, scientists from Keele University found that not only were more people suffering from the two problems brought by the average case of patients had fallen from 30 to 34 over the same period.

“It has serious implications,” said Professor Ilana Crome, who reported the findings in the Journal of Epidemiology and Community Health.

“Our results show that general practice is playing a growing part in the management of range of ... substance misuse psychiatric conditions,” she added.

— MNA/Reuters

WEATHER

Wednesday, 17 November, 2004

Summary of observations recorded at 09:30 hours MST: During the past 24 hours, light rain or thunder-showers have been isolated in Taninthary Division and weather has been fair in the remaining states and divisions. The noteworthy amount of rainfall recorded was Myeik (0.20 inch). Night temperatures were (3°C) above normal in Taninthary Division, (3°C) to (4°C) below normal in Kachin, Rakhine States, Mandalay. Upper Sangu and Magway Divisions.(5°C) below normal in Mon State and Bago Division and above normal in the remaining area. The significant night temperature was (4°C) with a minimum at Heho.

Maximum temperature on 16-11-2004 was 98°F. Minimum temperature on 17-11-2004 was 66°F. Relative humidity at 9.30 hrs MST on 17-11-2004 was 70%. Total sunshine hours on 16-11-2004 was (8.3) hours approx. Rainfall on 17-11-2004 was nil at Yangon Airport, Kaba-Aye and central Yangon. Total rainfall since 1-1-2004 was (112.24 inches) at Yangon Airport, (106.77 inches) at Kaba-Aye and (109.64 inches) at central Yangon. Maximum wind speed at Yangon (Kaba-Aye) was 5 mph from Northwest at (15:30) hours MST on 16-11-2004.

Bay influence: Weather is cloudy in the Andaman Sea and South Bay and generally fair elsewhere in the Bay of Bengal.

Forecast valid until evening of 18-11-2004: likelihood of isolated light rain or thunder-showers in Taninthary Division, weather will be partly cloudy in Mon State, Yangon and Ayeawaddy Divisions and generally fair in the remaining states and divisions. Degree of certainty is (60%). State of the sea: Seas will be slight to moderate in Myanmar waters.

Outlook for subsequent two days: Generally fair in the whole country.

Forecast for Yangon and neighbouring area for 18-11-2004: Generally fair weather.

Patron of USDA Senior General Than Shwe cordially greets delegates to USDA Annual General Meeting (2004) and outstanding youths at the dinner. — MNA

YANGON, 17 Nov — Patron of the Union Solidarity and Development Association Chairman of the State Peace and Development Council Commander-in-Chief of Defence Services Senior General Than Shwe hosted a dinner in honour of delegates of state, division, district and township USDAs to the USDA Annual General Meeting (2004) and outstanding youths at Zeyathiri Beikman on Konmyntha here this evening.

The USDA Patron arrived at the dinner at 6.45 pm and cordially greeted secretaries of State and Division USDAs, regional coordinators of USDA Headquarters, the delegates to the Annual General Meeting, students who stood first to tenth in matriculation examination (2004) in the entire Myanmar, students who stood first in matriculation examination in respective States and Divisions, who won gold in Asia level sports events, outstanding Red Cross members, Auxiliary Fire Brigade, outstanding new generation youths in aviation and marine courses, those who won prizes in the 59th Anniversary Armed Forces Day commemorative extempore talks contest (USDA central level), students who won five gold and above in the Myanmar Traditional Cultural Performing Arts Competitions organized by (See page 10)

USDA Patron Senior General Than Shwe cordially greets delegates to USDA Annual General Meeting (2004) and outstanding youths. — MNA

YANGON, 17 Nov — Patron of Union Solidarity and Development Association Chairman of State Peace and Development Council Commander-in-Chief of Defence Services Senior General Than Shwe attended the fourth day session of the USDA Annual General Meeting 2004 at the Pyidaungsu Hall of the central training school of the association in Hmawby Township this morning.

Present on the occasion were Member of the Panel of Patrons of USDA Vice-Chairman of State Peace and Development Council Deputy Commander-in-Chief of Defence Services Commander-in-Chief (Army) Vice-Senior General Maung Aye, Member of the State Peace and Development Council General Thura Shwe Mann, Prime Minister Lt-Gen Soe Win, Secretary-1 of the State Peace and Development Council Lt-Gen Thein Sein, members of the State Peace and Development Council, the Commander-in-Chief (Navy), the Commander-in-Chief (Air), the Chairman of Yangon Division Peace and Development Council Commander of Yangon Command, ministers, the Chief Justice, the Attorney-General, the Auditor-General, the Chairman of the Civil Service Selection and Training Board, CEC members of the USDA, members of the National Convention Convening Commission, senior military officers of the Ministry of Defence, the deputy ministers, the directors-general of the State Peace and Development Council Office, the President’s Office, the Government’s Office and the Pyithu Hluttaw Office, the rector of the Central Institute of Civil Service (Lower Myanmar), directors-general and managing directors of the departments and enterprises, chairmen and members of work committees and subcommittees for USDA Annual General Meeting 2004, media men, chairmen and representatives of the Myanmar War Veterans Organization, the Myanmar Red Cross Society, the Myanmar Women’s Affairs Federation, the Myanmar Women Entrepreneurs Association, the Myanmar Writers and Journalists Association, the Myanmar Women Sports Federation, the Myanmar Thabin Artists Asiayon, the Myanmar Music Asiayon, the Myanmar Motion Pictures Asiayon, the (See page 10)

Dignitaries at the Annual General Meeting (2004) of the Union Solidarity and Development Association. — MNA

Four political objectives
• Stability of the State, community peace and tranquility, 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