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Saturday, 18 December 2004



Senior General Than Shwe addresses the graduation parade of 47th Intake of Defence Services Academy at the parade grounds of DSA in PyinOoLwin.— MNA

Excerpts from speech of Senior General Than Shwe

- * In any nation the three might are interdependent.
- * Economic might is mainly the central focus and it helps to sustain both political and military might.
- * The Tatmadaw is at the same time striving to build, commensurate with the growing economic wealth, a strong and highly capable modern Tatmadaw to defend the emerging state.
- * Must deeply love own race and own nation based upon the knowledge of the nation's history and traditions.
- * Must maintain loyalty to the state and citizens.

Have esprit de corps, in addition to patriotism Build a stronger and more capable modern Tatmadaw

Senior General Than Shwe addresses Graduation Parade of 47th Intake of Defence Services Academy

YANGON, 17 Dec — The Graduation Parade of 47th Intake of Defence Services Academy was held at the parade grounds of DSA in PyinOoLwin at 8 am to-

General Than Shwe.

Also present on the occasion were Member of the State Peace and Development Council General Thura Shwe Mann, Secretary-1 of the

the State Peace and Development Council Lt-Gen Ye Myint and Chief of Armed Forces Training Lt-Gen Kyaw Win, Commander-in-Chief (Navy) Rear-Ad-

Commander of Central Command Maj-Gen Ye Myint, Ministers Maj-Gen Htay Oo, U Aung Thaung, Maj-Gen Saw Tun, Brig-Gen Ohn Myint, Maj-Gen Thein Swe, Brig-Gen

Appoint-General Maj-Gen Hsan Hsint, Judge Advocate-General Maj-Gen Soe Maung, Defence Services Inspector-General Maj-Gen Thein Htaik, Vice-Chief of Armed Forces Training Maj-Gen Aung Kyi and Vice Quartermaster-General Maj-Gen Htin Aung Kyaw, Directors Maj-Gen Mya Win, Maj-Gen Tin Soe, Maj-Gen Thein Tun, Maj-Gen Khin Aung Myint, Maj-Gen Khin Maung Tint, Brig-Gen Than

Aung, Maj-Gen Tin Tun, Maj-Gen Than Htay, Maj-Gen Aye Myint and senior military officers of the Ministry of Defence, military attachés of foreign missions, Mandalay Mayor Brig-Gen Yan Thein and departmental officials, members of the Union Solidarity and Development Association, Red Cross and Auxiliary Fire Brigades, parents and relatives of the cadets and guests.

(See page 8)

Tatmadaw and people join hands in the spirit of national pride and not subservient to foreign domination

day, with an address by Commander-in-Chief of Defence Services Senior

State Peace and Development Council Lt-Gen Thein Sein, Members of

miral Soe Thein, Commander-in-Chief (Air) Lt-Gen Myat Hein,

Thein Zaw, U Thaung, Maj-Gen Tin Htut and Dr Kyaw Myint, Military



Cadet companies seen at the graduation parade of 47th Intake of Defence Services Academy at DSA parade grounds in PyinOoLwin.—MNA

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

PERSPECTIVES

Saturday, 18 December, 2004

Towards successful realization of USDA future tasks

The Union Solidarity and Development Association is a national organization formed with new generation youths who cherish the State and the people, who want to forge national solidarity, who wish prevalence of law and order and community peace and who are to discharge national duty.

In accord with the fine traditions, the Union Solidarity and Development Association has been holding the annual general meetings since its formation.

Implementation of future tasks in one-year period were discussed at the meeting and future works for the coming year have been laid down and are being implemented.

The Mandalay Division USDA held a meeting to implement the seven objectives and nine future tasks laid down at the USDA Annual General Meeting (2004), and to carry out the plans in Mandalay Division by Mandalay Division USDA at the National Theatre in Mandalay on 15 December.

In his address, Secretary of Mandalay Division USDA U Tin Maung Oo said that those objectives and future tasks are indeed initiatives for the Association as well as national policy of national patriotic forces.

The Association will implement the objectives and tasks with added momentum in cooperation with new generation youths and the people.

Nowadays, the government has laid down and is implementing the seven-point Road Map for the emergence of a peaceful, modern, developed and discipline-flourishing democratic nation. In doing so, national consolidation plays a key role.

Thus, necessary steps will have to be taken for further strengthening national solidarity in the interest of the State and the people.

With this end in view, emphasis is being placed on realization of basic requirements which are stability and peace, strong economy of the State and the people and uplift of national education standard.

At such a time, it is necessary to guard against the dangers of internal and external destructive elements, who do not want to see stability and development of the State, with the united strength of the people.

Seven objectives and nine future tasks laid down at the USDA Annual General Meeting (2004) are the initiatives for works to be implemented by USDA at different levels.

Therefore, we would like to call upon the new generation youths and the people to make integrated and well co-ordinated efforts for successful realization of the objectives and future tasks laid down at the USDA Annual General Meeting (2004).

Representatives to CAFEO arrive

YANGON, 17 Dec — Representatives of engineering societies from ASEAN countries arrived here by air yesterday to attend the 22nd Conference of ASEAN Federation of Engineering Organizations to be organized by Myanmar Engineering Society.

The representatives were welcomed by Chairman of the MES Dr Sein Myint and members.

The Conference will be held at Sedona Hotel on 18 and 19 December. Representatives of Japan, the Republic of Korea, Australia, Canada, the UK and the US are scheduled to attend the conference.— MNA

People's Desire

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

Meeting to review successful completion of World Buddhist Summit held

YANGON, 17 Dec — A meeting to review successful holding of the World Buddhist Summit was held at the Ministry of Religious Affairs on Kaba Aye Pagoda Road here this afternoon, with an address by Minister for Religious Affairs Brig-Gen Thura Myint Maung.

In his address, he said that due to encouragement and assistance of the Head of State and leaders of the State, Ovadas of member Sayadaws of State Sangha Maha Nayaka Committee and Sitagu Sayadaw and harmonious efforts of various organizing committees for the Summit and ministries, the World Buddhist Summit was successfully held



Minister for Religious Affairs Brig-Gen Thura Myint Maung addresses the meeting to review successful holding of the World Buddhist Summit.— MNA

on a magnificent scale. He thanked all ministries, staff at different levels and contributors for their performance in the Summit. And, he urged the participants in the meeting to compile the record books on the summit. Officials of the sub-committees reported on their

respective sectors.

Also present on the occasion were Secretary of the Work Committee for Organizing the Summit Deputy Minister for Religious Affairs Brig-Gen Thura Aung Ko, members Deputy Minister for Finance and Revenue Col Hla Thein Swe,

Deputy Minister for Information Brig-Gen Aung Thein, Deputy Minister for Hotels and Tourism Brig-Gen Aye Myint Kyu and Deputy Minister for Immigration and Population U Maung Aung, departmental heads and officials.

MNA

MWAF holds coord meeting

YANGON, 17 Dec — A coordination meeting between Myanmar Women's Affairs Federation and Yangon Division Organization for Women's Affairs was held at the office of the federation this afternoon.

President of the federation Daw Than Than Nwe delivered an opening address. Vice-President Daw Khin Lay Myint reported on organization tasks and General Secretary Prof Dr Daw Khin Mar Tun, on duty and functions of the federation and drawing of future tasks. Later, the meeting ended with concluding remarks of the president.— MNA

ATF Awareness Presentation 20 Dec

YANGON, 17 Dec — Organized by the Myanmar Market Promoting Committee, the ATF Awareness Presentation related to ASEAN Tourism Forum will take place at Traders Hotel at 1 pm on 20 December.

The enthusiasts from hotels, domestic and international airlines and transport services for tourists and tour guides may attend the presentation. Admission fee is K 1,000 per head.

The ASEAN Tourism Forum 2006 will be hosted by Myanmar in January 2006.

MNA

Myeik Open Golf Championship begins



YANGON, 17 Dec — The Myeik Open Golf Championship, jointly organized by Coastal Region Command, Myanmar PGA and MGF and sponsored by Rothmans of Pall Mall Myanmar Pte Ltd, began at Myeik Golf Club in Myeik this morning.

Chairman of Taninthayi Division Peace and Development Council Commander of Coastal Region Command Maj-Gen Ohn Myint extended greetings.

The Commander, Myeik Golf Club Chairman Brig-Gen Zin Yaw, Executive of MPGA and MGF U Ko Ko Lay and Marketing Support Manager U Aung Win of Rothmans of Pall Mall Myanmar Pte Ltd teed off

the ball to open the championship. After the first round, Min Naing (Srixon) led the professional golfer event firing 69 strokes, followed by Aung Win (YCDC) and Thant Zin with 72 each, Nanda Kyaw (Wilson), Yin Htwe (Taylor Made) and Zaw Zaw Latt (Srixon) with 73 each.

In the men's amateur

golfer event, Bo Bo played 70 strokes to stand first position.

Nay Lin Tun followed behind the leader with 72 strokes, Aung Kyaw Moe with 74 and Khin Maung Myint with 74.

Co-sponsors are Air Mandalay, Myanmar Brewery Ltd, Alpine Purified Drinking Water,

KM Golf Centre, Maruman, Tour Stage, Wilson, Srixon, Grand Slam, Accel International Co Ltd, Sun Far Travels and Tours and Myeik Golf Club.

The championship is organized by Han Event management. The second round matches continue tomorrow.

MNA



Min Naing (Srixon) taking part in Myeik Open Golf Championship in Myeik.— MGF

Chinese Foreign Minister on “diplomacy for the people”

BEIJING, 16 Dec—“Diplomacy for the people” is an important guideline for China’s diplomatic work, said Chinese Foreign Minister Li Zhaoxing.

In an interview with the *People’s Daily* published in the newspaper on Wednesday, the Foreign Minister said China’s leaders have showed great concern about the safety and interests of Chinese nationals, including compatriots from Hong Kong, Macao and Taiwan, who stay or travel in foreign countries.

To secure the lives and property of Chinese living abroad, the Foreign Ministry and relevant departments have mapped out a series of measures this year. These include the establishment of an emergency squad and a regular meeting system, Li said.

The Foreign Ministry and Chinese embassies and consulates abroad have enhanced the release of information for

Chinese nationals in foreign countries, Li said.

To enrich Chinese understanding and experience in the world, the Foreign Ministry doubled its efforts in organizing cultural exchange programmes. For example, “French Culture Year” has had a profound influence across China, especially among the young Chinese.

In 2004, the Foreign Ministry also moved to open its affairs to the general public and sent its staff to communities to speak about its policies and progress.

The Foreign Minister said promoting trade and economic cooperation has been viewed as a crucial aspect of China’s foreign affairs as it concerns China’s development.

MNA/Xinhua

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Workers arrange the foundation work of a hotel under construction, on 17 Dec, 2004 in Shanghai, China. China’s investment in construction and factory equipment, a key growth indicator, slowed slightly in November on lower public spending, but local-level investments surged, the government reported this week. — INTERNET

Philippines should consolidate economic gains

MANILA, 16 Dec—The Philippines should move toward a firmer economic footing after it showed surprising economic resilience this year, the Asian Development Bank (ADB) said in a report released on Wednesday.

According to ADB’s latest Country Economic Review for the Philippines, the country registered the economic growth of 6.5 per cent in the first nine months of the year, higher than expected and likely to result in full-year growth in excess of expectations.

The ADB said in the report that buoyed by this economic outlook, the country should follow up with actions to reduce the country’s fiscal imbalance, which has the potential to cause economic instability.

“The administration is clear in its focus: fiscal consolidation is primary and urgent,” says Tom Crouch, director at ADB’s Philippines Country Office.

“The task is formidable, and demands high quality responses that will cause some economic pain. Concrete actions are needed immediately: delay is the enemy of success,” he said.

Crouch noted that the services sector contributed most to growth on the supply side, while the demand-side is led by personal consumption expenditure, assisted by strong inflows of remittances from the almost one-in-ten Filipinos working abroad. —MNA/Xinhua



A US Marine looks at black smoke billowing from an explosion in the restive city of Fallujah, west of Baghdad recently. —INTERNET

India, South Korea set \$10b target for bilateral trade

SEOUL, 16 Dec—India and South Korea have set an ambitious target of 10-billion-dollar bilateral trade by 2008 and are exploring new opportunities of cooperation in wide areas like information and communication technology, Indian External Affairs Minister K Natwar Singh said on Wednesday.

Addressing the Korea-India Society here, he said close cooperation between the two countries was an important factor of stability in a rapidly transforming Asia.

Speaking on “India-Korea partnership in the changing Asian architecture”, he said the topic highlighted the importance New Delhi attached to Korea in its foreign policy.

He also spoke of the

role both countries were destined to play in the emerging prominence of Asia in the global political and economic order.

Observing that the respective strengths and complementarities of the two countries threw open new opportunities for collaboration, he said “we are seeking to promote our cooperation in a wide range of areas, including, to name a few, information and communication

technology, infrastructure, textiles, petrochemicals, oil and gas field development including third country collaborations, automobiles, ship building and agriculture.”

The two countries have also agreed to explore expanding cooperation in science and technology, including in the area of high technology and space, he said.

India, he stressed, was committed to pursuing a

comprehensive social and economic development programme.

Noting that this year, the two sides celebrate the 30th anniversary of the establishment of their diplomatic ties, Natwar Singh said “our traditional friendship is developing on the strong foundations of our shared commitment to democratic ideals and the common desire to consolidate and diversify our exchanges.” — MNA/PTI

1,304 members of US military killed since beginning of Iraq war

WASHINGTON, 16 Dec—As of Thursday, 16 December, 2004, at least 1,304 members of the US military have died since the beginning of the Iraq war in March 2003, according to an *Associated Press* count. At least 1,019 died as a result of hostile action, the Defence Department said. The figures include three military civilians.

The AP count is six higher than the Defence Department’s tally, last updated at 10 a m EST Thursday.

The British military has reported 74 deaths; Italy, 19; Poland, 13; Spain, 11; Ukraine, nine; Bulgaria, seven; Slovakia, three; Estonia, Thailand and the Netherlands, two each; and Denmark, El Salva-

dor, Hungary and Latvia one death each. Since 1 May, 2003, when President Bush declared that major combat operations in Iraq had ended, 1,166 US military members have died, according to AP’s count. That includes at least 910 deaths resulting from hostile action, according to the military’s numbers. —Internet

Japanese manufacturers less upbeat, but still confident

TOKYO, 16 Dec—Japanese companies are less upbeat in December than they were three months ago, amid recent data indicating that the world’s second-largest economy may be losing steam, a key government survey showed Wednesday.

In the Bank of Japan’s quarterly survey of companies, the index for large manufacturers for December fell to 22 — from 26 for the previous survey in September. It measures the percentage of companies saying business conditions are better, minus the percentage saying they are worse. It was the first time the figure had fallen since March 2003.

MNA/Reuters

Italian hostage killed in Iraq

BAGHDAD, 16 Dec—Gunmen in Iraq claim to have shot dead an Italian photographer they had taken hostage, reports say.

A blindfolded body — purportedly that of 52-year-old Salvatore Santoro — was shown to a group of Iraqi journalists in the desert near the town of Ramadi.

The militants who led the journalists to the body also showed them a passport and documents in Mr

Santoro’s name.

Mr Santoro is believed to have been a resident of the UK. Officials in Rome and London cannot confirm the reports. Italian Foreign Minister Gianfranco Fini said reports of Mr Santoro’s killing should be treated with caution.

The blindfold on the body seen in pictures taken by the Iraqi journalists made it difficult to identify the man, Mr Fini said.

According to the *Associated Press* news agency, the journalists were led to the body by a group of militants that stopped them at a checkpoint near Ramadi in central Iraq. The gunmen told them the Italian photographer was taken prisoner after he tried to drive through an guerilla roadblock, crashed his vehicle and killed one of their group. —Internet

National drug list expanded in Thailand

BANGKOK, 16 Dec — The newly-revised national drug list in Thailand will enable patients to have access to more than 150 additional medications with standard prescriptions, the local Press reported on Wednesday.

The revised list, which is set to take effect on December 27, will comprise 882 drugs, up from the 629 compiled in 1999, said Pakdee Pothisiri, secretary-general of the Food and Drug Administration.

"The new list has been designed to improve patients' access to drugs and to increase prescription options for infectious diseases, such as AIDS and tuberculosis," Pakdee was quoted by *The Nation* newspaper as saying.

Under the list, people living with AIDS can obtain 13 drugs through 26 formulas, while the old catalogue provided only three AIDS medications.

The list also contains a large variety of drugs available for common disease, including asthma, diabetes, heart and vascular diseases, intestinal infections, arthritis, skin disease and cancer.

MNA/Xinhua

Thailand bans alcohol and cigarette sale in schools, temples

BANGKOK, 16 Dec — The Thai Government has approved a ban on alcohol and cigarette sales in educational institutions and temples, local Press reported on Wednesday.

"We expect the measures will improve the lives of youths and result in the reduction of alcohol and cigarette consumption as well as boost social order measures," government spokesman Jakrapob Penkair was quoted by *The Nation* as saying.

The proposal raised by Finance Ministry also prohibits the sale of cig-

arettes and alcoholic drinks to people aged under 18.

The rules limit sales of alcoholic drinks to 10 hours per day in two periods — from 11:00 am to 2:00 pm and from 5:00 pm to midnight.

Alcoholic drinks have legally been sold for 12 hours per day, until 2:00 am. — MNA/Xinhua

Anti-war New Zealanders protest against US attack on Fallujah

WELLINGTON, 16 Dec — Some anti-war New Zealanders, angered by US-led military attack on Fallujah, held a protesting march to the US Embassy in Wellington Wednesday afternoon to voice opposition to the continued war of aggression in Iraq.

The march, organized by the Peace Action Wellington (PAW), began outside Parliament building and proceeded to the US Embassy via the British High Commission and the Australian Embassy.

PAW Spokesperson Stephen Hay said in a statement that the civilian population in Fallujah had been systematically brutalized by the United States-controlled forces. This assault has been

an exercise in cruel collective punishment.

"The people of Fallujah have had their power cut off, and the US denied the Red Cross access to deliver clean water. The first target of the United States forces was to destroy or occupy the hospitals and arrest doctors to deny both guerillas and civilians access to medical aid," Hay said.

MNA/Xinhua



Men ride bicycles loaded with Christmas trees along a street in Shanghai, China, on 15 Dec, 2004. — INTERNET

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China's cultural industry opens wider

BEIJING, 16 Dec — China's state-run cultural industry has opened wider to private and overseas capital during the past year.

In early November, the State Administration of Radio Film and Television (SARFT) announced a policy to let foreign investors produce, distribute and screen movies, a milestone for the country's movie industry.

The Beijing-based China Film Group, the country's biggest film producer, Time Warner and the Hengdian Group set up the country's first joint venture film production company in

October.

A month later Sony Pictures set up a film/television digital production company with the China Film Group, becoming the first Hollywood studio to do so.

This year's most popular Chinese movies, "House of Flying Daggers" and "A World without Thieves," were funded by private producers.

MNA/Xinhua

China, Pakistan vow to further economic, anti-terrorism cooperation

BEIJING, 16 Dec — China will enhance cooperation with Pakistan in economic and anti-terrorism activities, Premier Wen Jiabao said here on Wednesday, adding that China welcomes the improvement of Pakistan-India ties.

"China and Pakistan have established an all-weather, all-around cooperative partnership despite volatile international changes," Wen told Pakistani Prime Minister Shaukat Aziz in the Great Hall of the People in downtown Beijing.

Sino-Pakistani trade increased steadily in recent years, and the two countries conducted fruitful cooperation in infrastructure construction, Wen said. He noted that the two economies were complementary and have "great potential".

Wen suggested the two sides to speed up the study of establishing a free trade area (FTA) and focus on energy, natural resources cooperation and agriculture.

Aziz told Wen that Pakistan recognizes China's full market economy status, which helps pave the way for the forging of an FTA.

The two leaders witnessed the signing of seven economic agreements, including one on trade facilitation and FTA study, after their talks.

China is eager to further cooperation with Pakistan in educational and cultural fields, such as teaching of the Chinese language, higher education, science and arts, Wen acknowledged.

However, terrorism and extremism were directly endangering the security of both China and Pakistan, as well as regional peace and stability, Wen said, urging the two countries to take further actions and enhance anti-terrorism cooperation.

Wen said that China endeavours to develop friendly and cooperative ties with all neighbouring countries, including South Asian nations.

MNA/Xinhua

Gunmen kill senior iraqi official in Baghdad

BAGHDAD, 17 Dec — A senior official of Iraq's Communications Ministry was shot dead by armed gunmen as he was heading to work in Baghdad on Thursday, an official at the ministry said.

Qassem Mehawi, regarded as one of the minister's top aides, was assassinated in a drive-by shooting in Haifa Street in central Baghdad, which has been a scene of frequent insurgent activities, he added.

One of his bodyguards was killed in the incident and two others were seriously wounded, the official added. — MNA/Xinhua

Australia to boost maritime security

CANBERRA, 16 Dec — Australia will carry out new offshore protection command under which the government will monitor thousands of ships approaching Australia's busiest shipping lanes and intercept suspicious vessels.

A 1000-nautical-mile (1,850-kilometre) security zone around the coastline of Australia will be cast as part of the new plan, *The Australian*, one of the country's leading newspapers, reported Wednesday.

The four million-dollar (three-million-US-dollar) revamp arises from a task force which found threats from the sea increase as a result of increased risk of terrorist attacks around the world, according to the paper.

MNA/Xinhua

A pedestrian walks by a giant sculpture entitled 'Alpa the Sound of the Mountain' by Japanese sculptor Takashi Yoshida in a financial district in Tokyo, Japan, on 16 Dec, 2004. Sculptures are on display as part of renovation in the fast changing Tokyo city scape.

INTERNET



China hails improvement in Indo-Pakistani ties

BEIJING, 17 Dec— China welcomes the improvement in Indo-Pakistani ties and will play an “active” role in promoting peace in South Asia, Premier Wen Jiabao said here Wednesday.

“China will play an active role in promoting peace, stability and development in South Asia,” Wen, who is expected to visit India in March, told his visiting Pakistani counterpart Shaukat Aziz during a meeting. Beijing endeavours to develop friendly and cooperative ties with all neighbouring countries, including South Asian nations, Wen was quoted as

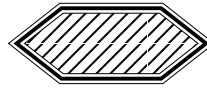
saying by *Xinhua* news agency. Responding to Wen’s remarks on the situation in South Asia, Aziz said Pakistan was holding comprehensive dialogue with India and was willing to settle problems on the basis of equality and peaceful coexistence.

Pakistan hopes China will continuously play an active role for the peace in the region, he said.

“China and Pakistan

have established an all-weather, all-around cooperative partnership despite volatile international scenario,” Wen said.

Sino-Pakistani trade increased steadily in recent years, and the two countries conducted fruitful cooperation in infrastructure construction, Wen said. He noted that the two economies were complementary and have “great potential.”— *MNA/Pti*



A Vietnamese vendor

selling oranges walks

past a giant inflated

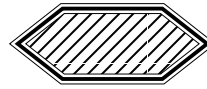
Santa Claus display at

a hotel in Hanoi.

Vietnam, on 16 Dec,

2004.

INTERNET



China to label fridges, air-cons with energy information

BEIJING, 16 Dec— China will label all the refrigerators and air-conditioners manufactured after next March with energy efficiency information, said an official with the National Reform and Development Commission (NRDC) here Tuesday.

The move is the latest of China’s efforts to combat its chronic power shortages.

According to the report, labels will be pasted on the front of the appliances containing product information about energy efficiency levels, electricity consumption per 24 hours and so on. The energy efficiency level ranges from one to five, one being the highest. “We launch the energy label to improve public awareness of energy-saving and to guide consumers’ behaviour in buying energy-efficient products,” said an official with NRDC.— *MNA/Xinhua*

Vietnam Airlines to fly direct route to US next year

HANOI, 17 Dec — Vietnam Airlines, the country’s national flag carrier, has announced that it will open a direct route to the United States late next year.

“We would like to launch the direct route in conjunction with Vietnam’s entry into the World Trade Organization, expected by the end of 2005,” *Vietnam News Agency* on Thursday quoted carrier spokesman Nguyen Chan as saying.

To prepare for the future route, the carrier has already signed a code-share contract with American Airlines, and may ink a similar deal with United Airlines, he said, adding that it has recently signed contracts for an additional ten Airbus A321s and four

Boeing 777-200ERs.

United Airlines became the first US carrier to offer Vietnam direct services since 1975, with the inauguration of its first flight from San Francisco to Ho Chi Minh City on December 10. Under the Air Services Agreement approved by Vietnam in December 2003, two US and two Vietnamese passenger airlines can fly between the two countries for the first two years. By 2005, Vietnam Airlines will possess and lease 40 planes, including eight *Boeing 777s*, four *Boeing 767s*, ten *A320s*, seven *A321s*, nine *ATR 72s*

and two *Fokker 70s*, of which 18 will be owned by the carrier. It plans to increase its fleet to 75 aircraft, hoping to serve 10 million passengers and 190,000 tons of cargoes by 2010.

Vietnam Airlines, which now launches international flights to 25 cities, including Paris, Los Angeles, Sydney, Bangkok and Guangzhou, is expected to transport over five million passengers, including 2.4 million foreigners, and reap an all-high revenue of more than one billion US dollars this year. — *MNA/Xinhua*

Macao to issue stamps marking fifth founding anniversary

MACAO, 16 Dec — The Macao Special Administrative Region (SAR) will issue stamps on 20 December to mark the fifth anniversary of the founding of the SAR, the Macao Post Office announced here Tuesday.

Speaking at a Press conference, Director of the Post Office Carlos Roldao Lopes said that Chief Executive Edmund Ho Hau Wah has contributed a special article to be carried on the souvenir sheet of the stamp, in which he reviewed Macao’s five-year development and the remarkable memory in administering the SAR.

In his article, Ho said the issue of the stamps commemorating the fifth

anniversary of the establishment of the SAR is a unique way of keeping an extraordinary memory of the five-year development of Macao. “In the past five years, the Macao SAR Government firmly carried forward the superior tradition of patriotism to the country and Macao and cautiously dealt with the relations of improvement, development and stability,” noted Ho in his article.— *MNA/Xinhua*

Helicopter crash kills three Polish soldiers in Iraq

WARSAW, 16 Dec— Three Polish soldiers died in a helicopter crash in Iraq on Wednesday, a day after Poland announced it would cut troop numbers there by one-third.

Lieutenant-Colonel Artur Domanski, spokesman for the Polish-led multinational division in Iraq, said the soldiers died after a Polish-made *Sokol* helicopter made an emergency landing following what was most probably engine failure.— *MNA/Reuters*



Wasaen, a three-year-old Iraqi girl displaced from Falluja, looks at US Marines on the outskirts of the war-torn town, 30 miles west of Baghdad, on 15 Dec, 2004.— *INTERNET*

Thailand curbs noise pollution at entertainment venues

BANGKOK, 17 Dec — The Thai Government on Wednesday set limit for sound volume at entertainment places in a bid to protect people’s hearing, local Press reported on Thursday.

Under the newly adopted regulation, entertainment places including bars and restaurants are required to keep noise levels down to a maximum 91 decibels.

The decision followed a recent survey that found three quarters of night-spots employees had hear-

ing problems, which were caused by loud music played at their working places.

“Studies have found that exposure to noise over 91db for seven hours will have a long-term impact on auditory nerves, while the highest level of noise that humans can tolerate is

about 140db,” Deputy Health Minister Suchai Charoenratanakul was quoted by *Bangkok Post* as saying. However, discotheques in Bangkok pump out music at 90-120db on average, with some reaching as high as 148db, according to the deputy minister.— *MNA/Xinhua*

Britain warns Iraqi-bound travellers against going to Baghdad

LONDON, 16 Dec— Britain advised Iraqi-bound travellers on Wednesday against going to the Baghdad area because of intensifying violence.

The government advice said all but essential travel to the country should be delayed if possible. “The revised advice takes into account the rise in insurgent activity in and around Baghdad in November and the likelihood of fur-

ther attacks in the run-up to the elections,” the Foreign Office said in a statement.

It warned against travelling to Baghdad and the neighbouring provinces of Al Anbar, Sala Ad Din, Diyala, Wasit and Babil.

There are no signs of

post-conflict violence in Iraq abating.

In the holy city of Kerbala a bomb which exploded near the offices of a senior Shiite cleric on Wednesday killed eight people and wounded 32.

MNA/Reuters

Discussion of Pensioners-2

Hein Myint

We, pensioners, have already read in the dailies the latest developments in Myanmar and the future work programmes of the State explained in detail by Member of the State Peace and Development Council General Thura Shwe Mann and Prime Minister Lt-Gen Soe Win on 24 October 2004.

As we had witnessed the on-going progress in the nation afterwards, we were again having a discussion concerning our nation's affairs.

"I see the Government sticks to its words in accord with the clarifications made by the two State level officials". One of us opened the discussions with his opinion.

"Yes. The Government has declared openly to resume the National Convention in February 2005. In addition, it is crystal clear that the State Peace and Development Council Secretary-1 himself has been holding cordial meetings with the leaders of the armed groups that returned to the legal fold and are joining hands with the Government for regional and national development," another expressed his view.

Afterwards, the meeting gained more ground on its focal point as we all joined in the discussions, which were as follows:

"The national race leaders have confirmed their stance to work together with the Government for the success of the National Convention."

"The Wa national race peace group has also reaffirmed its open declaration to totally end the practice of poppy cultivation after June 2005."

"The Head of State paid a goodwill visit to India and has further strengthened the bilateral goodwill relations."

"It is one of the Tatmadaw Government's deeds to cement cordial relations with all neighbouring nations."

"The Myanmar Prime Minister attended the China-ASEAN Economic and Investment Summit hosted by the People's Republic of China, as well as the 10th ASEAN Summit held in Laos, the Cambodia-Laos-Myanmar-Vietnam Summit (CLMV Summit), and the Summits of the heads of state/government of ASEAN and those of China, Japan, the Republic of Korea, India, Australia and New Zealand."

"In addition to holding separate meetings with all the leaders of the ASEAN nations, the Myanmar Prime Minister also held talks with his Chinese, Indian and Japanese counterparts to cement cordial ties with the countries. During the talks, he explained Myanmar's latest developments and future work programmes of the State."

"By the way, some nefarious persons held a meeting on Myanmar affairs in Malaysia at the same time, urging the ASEAN Summit to apply pressure on our nation, to bar her from taking the alternative chairmanship seat of the ASEAN in 2006, and even to expel her from the Association."

"It is said that some MPs of some nations did take part in the meeting. But their acts to prefer interfering in other's internal affairs to putting their own house in order show that they are just self-seekers."

"Moreover, we can easily imagine who is behind the scheme, acting as a puppeteer."

"All the traces show that it is the work of persons who cling to the policy — regarding someone who denies his role as the enemy; who practise hegemonism; and who hatch plots to install a puppet government under their control."

"Their plots failed as our nation stands firmly on her own correct stance for development and strengthen the cordial relations with all the regional countries."

"But we must keep constant vigil."

"The Myanmar TV is now broadcasting news reports to the point, as it has already stopped the old way of presenting long news footages. Have you noticed it?"

"Aha, it's human nature. People do want to read, listen to or watch only what they think is necessary and

important for them. It's a correct act as families tended to watch video plays during the lengthy and boring news programme in the past."

"Everyone would like to see news about him being broadcast or featured in detail, as it is also human nature. But news that lacks essence cannot attract the public. A news report must be short and to the point."

"I have noticed in a news photo what has been written on the plaque marking the inauguration of Ngawun River Bridge (Patheingyi), the 40th bridge in Ayeyawady Division and also the 176th in the nation. On the plaque are inscribed the words — Under the guidance of the State Peace and Development Council, the Ministry of Construction began to build the Ngawun River Bridge (Patheingyi) on 30 July 2003, and commissioned it into service on 22 November 2004. Well, the opening ceremony was attended by the Secretary-1."

"The words stated on the plaque marking the opening of Thantamagyi Bridge, the 31st facility in Rakhine State, are similar to those inscribed on the Ngawun River Bridge plaque. Only the name of the bridge and opening date are changed. The bridge was put into service on 12 December 2004."

"In the past, names of the State leaders were mentioned on the plaques marking the launching of bridges. So, we can say that it's a sign of change giving low profile to personal importance."

"We assume that the changes are for better."

"After the dissolving of the National Intelligence Bureau on 22 October, the Government has suspended

As there is reaction for every action, persons who are always harbouring evil thoughts and schemes in their minds are sure to meet their tragic end.

the jail terms of 14,318 prisoners and released them from jails. It released 3,937 prisoners on 18 November, 5,311 on 25 November, and 5,070 on 11 December."

"The Government made a declaration, saying, 'It is observed that the NIB might have committed irregularities. After due review of the case, prison terms of the inmates were suspended and they were released.'"

"The entire people of Myanmar and the international community have welcomed the news on the release of prisoners. However, some destructionists, as usual, are watching the matter from the negative point of view and floating foul air, saying that the Government has released the prisoners because it is facing pressure, and it wants to make political gains out of the matter and improve its image at the ASEAN Summit; and that certain politicians were not included in the freed prisoners."

"You might remember the pedestrian overpasses the State Law and Order Restoration Council built on a number of roads in Yangon for traffic safety in 1988 soon after it had taken over the State duties. But some alleged that those overpasses were built for the Government troops to take positions to shoot at the street demonstrators. The persons holding negative views cannot see things in a positive way. Because they are always placing self-interest above the national interest. They are just ciphers."

"As there is reaction for every action, persons who are always harbouring evil thoughts and schemes in their minds are sure to meet their tragic end. They had better take the lessons of history and amend themselves."

"Propagandists criticizing the present State leaders as hard-liners were silent when the Government released the prisoners."

"As they are propagandists they are going to criticize others whenever there arises an opportunity. They will remain silent if they do not get any opportunity

to do so. They will see good things from the negative point of view and will speak ill of them. It's their practice."

"In my view, our leaders were decisive in this matter. After due review of the case, they as real Tatmadawmen dared to make the right judgment."

"What about the demands to release all the so-called political prisoners?"

"In the declaration, it is openly stated that the prisoners were released after due review of the case to find out the irregularities. Nobody whether he may be a politician or otherwise is above the law. Anyone who violates the law will face punishment. The review draws a conclusion that the released prisoners were subject to irregularities. So, I assume that those who faced legal punishment will not be included in the freed prisoners. All must understand this."

"It is certain that all the freed prisoners and the entire nation except the destructionists at home and abroad, who have been coloured by evil influences, are happy."

"Isn't it a pride for the nation and the people that Myanmar successfully hosted the World Buddhist Summit which will go down in the annals of Sasana history?"

"The Prime Ministers of Laos, Thailand and Sri Lanka, and the Deputy Prime Minister of Cambodia attended the Summit."

"The most venerable monks and chief monks of Ganas of the world Buddhist nations and senior researchers on Buddhism of 38 countries took part in the discussions."

"But there were persons who maliciously predicted that the Summit would be a failure because the would-be co-sponsor Japanese organization had turned its back on the Summit."

"Of course there were. The perpetrators who are always trying to find fault with Myanmar and tarnish her image first thought that they got another chance to slander Myanmar."

"Ah, the State would not cancel the Summit for any reason, as its aim was to propagate Buddhism in the world. Despite the many disturbances and obstacles it faced, the Government held the Summit successfully and on a grand scale."

"Leaders of Buddhist nations and organizations, who were not able to attend the Summit in person, sent messages of congratulations to Myanmar."

"Thanks to the Government and the people, venerable Buddhist monks of the world nations, learned monks and Buddhists, Myanmar has been able to hold the Summit successfully and on a grand scale."

"The Government has been providing support and encouragement for the Sasana, the people have deep reverence for the Sasana, and the members of the Sangha or the sons of the Buddha are studying and practising the Dhamma in all seriousness. So, we can say that because of the harmonious efforts of the Buddhist monks and lay persons to serve the interest of the Sasana, Myanmar has been able to hold the Summit successfully."

"We can also thank the efforts, leadership and religious knowledge of the eminent monks of Myanmar, the correct management of the Government and the support of the people."

After we had wound up our discussions, I came to realize and believe firmly the goodwill and the resolve of the Tatmadaw Government to definitely serve the interest of the nation, the people and the Sasana, without fail, whatever sacrifices it will have to make. Hence, I have complete trust in the Government that it will materialize the seven-point Road Map successfully, and without fail, and it will also lead us on the right track to reaching a discipline-flourishing state in the near future.

(Translation: TMT)

Kyemon+Myanma Alin: 17.12.2004.

24 bridges constructed in Yangon Division...



(from page 16)

First, they saluted the State Flag. USDA member schoolgirls opened the meeting singing the songs titled "Eternal Union" and "The

tives, successful implementation of the State's seven-point Road Map, speedy implementation of tasks for boosting the State's social and economic development, guarding against the danger of internal and external destructive elements through the might of the unity of the people, promotion of the efficiency of the members, and extension of organizational measures across the nation and cementing the constitution of the Asso-



USDA members, social organizations and outstanding students salute the State Flag at the meeting held at the Myanmar Convention Centre. — MNA

tional solidarity in line with the future tasks adopted by the AGM (2004). And based on the already-gained national unity, the members are also to safeguard the sta-

Afterwards, Division USDA Executive U Tin Hlaing said that success has been achieved to a certain degree in carrying out the five functions of the USDA. After mak-

USDA, said that the association would play an active part in regional development tasks, educational campaigns, sport activities and health care programmes. She also said that the association would organize extempore talks and quiz contests in commemoration of the 60th Anniversary Armed Forces Day.

Next, U Aung Kyaw Moe, executive of Yangon East District USDA, said with the success achieved in the implementation of the political, economic and social objectives of the State, the desired goal would be materialized.

With this end in view, the government was implementing the four political, four economic, and

forts to ensure a better and secure network of transport, 24 bridges had been constructed in Yangon Division, where there existed only two bridges, he said.

Daw Thanda Saw, Executive of Yangon West District USDA, seconded the motion, saying the implementation of the project to build high-rise residential buildings for the people living in the huts is under way. In fiscal 2003-2004, the Yangon City Development Committee has spent about K 1,259 million to upgrade roads and drainage system in the city and to beautify it. The kyat-3.5-billion Ngamoeyek project is being implemented to supply water for Yangon. Yangon now



Yangon Division USDA Secretary U Aye Myint gives introductory speech at the meeting. — MNA

Myanmar Land". The meeting chairman delivered a speech, saying that the purpose of the meeting was to seek ways and means through discussions so as to accomplish the seven objectives laid down by the Annual General Meeting (2004) of the USDA (Central) — upholding of the national policy "Our Three Main National Causes", successful implementation of the State's political, economic and social objec-

tion.

He pledged that the USDA, a strong national force, will see to successful implementation of the State's seven-point Road Map in collaboration with the people.

bility and peace and to protect the infrastructures already constructed or under construction in the interests of the nation and the people. The Patron called on the members to be equipped with Union

ing reviews on progress of implementation of the future work programmes laid down at the previous meeting, AGM (2004)

The USDA, a strong national force, will see to successful implementation of the State's seven-point Road Map in collaboration with the people.

Yangon Division USDA Joint-Secretary U Tha Win elaborated on the seven objectives. He quoted the address delivered at the AGM (2004) by Patron of the USDA Commander-in-Chief of Defence Services Senior General Than Shwe, as saying that the members were to make efforts for further strengthening na-

Spirit and to adhere to the commitment — to make collective efforts in unison for emergence of a peaceful, modern and developed discipline-flourishing democratic nation. He urged the members to play an active role in the tasks for successful implementation of the seven objectives hand in hand with the people.



Members of the panel of chairmen at the meeting organized by Yangon Division USDA. — MNA

was able to lay down the nine future tasks for 2004-2005.

Daw Aye Min Moe, in her explanation as to pragmatic measures to be taken by Yangon Division

four social objectives, he said, adding that the participation of the entire national people in that drive was accounted for all-round development.

As part of the ef-

has 31 institutions of higher learning, up from only 10 in the past.

U Than Htay, Executive of Yangon South District USDA, seconded (See page 11)



Yangon Division USDA Joint-Secretary U Tha Win. — MNA



Yangon South District USDA Executive U Than Htay. — MNA



Yangon Division USDA Executive U Tin Hlaing. — MNA



Yangon North District USDA Executive U Kyaw Thura Aung. — MNA



Yangon East District USDA Executive U Aung Kyaw Moe. — MNA



Yangon West District USDA Executive Daw Thandar Saw. — MNA



Yangon Division USDA Executive Daw Aye Min Moe. — MNA



Senior General Than Shwe takes the salute of cadet companies at the Graduation Parade of the 47th Intake of Defence Services Academy. — MNA

Have esprit de corps, in...

(from page 1)

First, Senior General Than Shwe took the salute of the cadet companies.

The Commander-in-Chief of Defence Services presented Best Cadet Award to Cadet Tin Maung Latt, Excellence in Training Award to Cadet Aung Naing Lin, Excellence in Study Award (Computer Science) to Cadet Zaw Zaw Naing and Excellence in Study Award (Science) to Cadet Kyaw Thu.

Next, the Senior General delivered an address. He said:

Today marks the graduation ceremony of the 47th intake of the Defence Services Academy and it is also the birth of the new generation that will carry forward the twelve noble traditions of the Tatmadaw. As you are about to be commissioned as junior leaders in the Tatmadaw I will solemnly impart to you what you should know.

When the Tatmadaw had to un-

avoidably assume responsibility of the State, it was realized that only with the dynamic development of political, economic and defence powers could there be a transition to a disciplined-

flourishing democratic state. In any nation the three might is interdependent. Economic might is mainly the central focus and it helps to sustain both political and military might.

This is the reason the Tatmadaw, which

always has the people's desire at heart, on striving to put the State on the path to democracy has placed in the forefront the Three Main National Causes while implementing the Twelve Objectives. Hence today the basic in-

of a New Peaceful, Modern Developed State, the Tatmadaw is at the same

time valuable sons that will help build the state. Therefore begin-

Only with the dynamic development of political, economic and defence powers could there be a transition to a disciplined-flourishing democratic state.



Senior General Than Shwe presents the Best Cadet Award to Cadet Tin Maung Latt. — MNA



Senior General Than Shwe presents the Award for Excellence in Training to Cadet Aung Naing Lin. — MNA

A military leader and his subordinates share similar military qualities. They are of one flesh and blood. But the leader must, over and above his subordinates, exercise utmost restraint and be more resourceful, he must always practice to be more proficient in the Five Strengths, he must have excellent qualities of both mind and body, and be full of ability and skill, he must be wise and well-read. Only then will your subordinates repose their trust in you and you will gain the role of a leader.

frastructure necessary for development has emerged in almost all parts of the country. This is the reason the Seven-Step Road Map for a transition to a peaceful, stable and democratic state is being implemented.

While endeavouring for the construction

time striving to build, commensurate with the growing economic wealth, a strong and highly capable modern Tatmadaw to defend the emerging state. Just as you comrades are the human resources for a strong and highly capable modern Tatmadaw, you are at the same

ning from today you, comrades are to embody the motto of the Defence Services Academy—The Triumphant Elite of the Future.

You are the offspring from parents of national races. You have resolved to join the Tatmadaw that believes

(See page 9)



Senior General Than Shwe meets four outstanding cadets and their parents. — MNA

Have esprit de corps, in...

(from page 8)

the sacrifice of one's life for the country is the best honour of the soldier. The much renowned Defence Services Academy has

high mountain ranges and high plateaux, rivers beginning and ending within our land, rich alluvial soil, precious gems and abundance of natural resources, naturally ad-

ate and sincere. These are in fact our national characteristics. In addition, we have our own culture which reflects national pride and pride in our antecedents.

Our race has a long historical tradition and

throughout history it has shown great courage. Without any territorial ambition our race unify by prowess, heroism and gallantry. With exceptional capability the great kings Anawrahta, Bayinnaung and

Alaungphaya established the First, Second and Third Myanmar Naing Ngan Daw respectively. During their reigns, these great kings were able to build the State's political, economic and military might and thus secure a

cepted the life of a soldier you must also have esprit de corps, in addition to patriotism. This means that you are willing to give up your life to defend the noble traditions of the Tatmadaw. Our Tatmadaw is a patriotic Tatmadaw. Our Tatmadaw is highly disciplined, trustworthy, united, capable, daring, self-sacrificing for the state, possesses high morale, courage to overcome adversity, to bear hardship, perseverance, determination and diligence. In addition, our Tatmadaw always holds in high esteem the Three Main Causes.

Therefore, I would solemnly say that only by having the firm determination to be willing to sacrifice one's life in shouldering the fine traditions of the Tatmadaw can you be a worthy son of the Tatmadaw.

As you will be starting to shoulder duties as junior leaders, I would like to say a few



Senior General Than Shwe presents Award for Excellence in Study (Science) to Cadet Kyaw Thu. — MNA



Senior General Than Shwe presents Award for Excellence in Study (Computer Science) to Cadet Zaw Zaw Naing. — MNA

imparted to you, comrades military training needed by a platoon commander and a modern university education. In addition, the Academy has also imparted to you values that would make you a truly worthy man.

Patriotism is the most decisive factor for you comrades to selflessly shoulder the responsibilities entrusted to you by the State. You must deeply love your race and your nation based upon the knowledge of the nation's history and traditions. Our cherished nation is made up of river basins, low plains,

vantageous seacoasts and a temperate climate. Since time immemorial our ancestors have cleared the land by the sweat of their brow and worked and lived on our motherland.

The nationalities which had descended from the same ancestors have lived together through weal and woe in this country. For thousands of years all our nationals have lived together as equal citizens from the moment of their birth.

All our nationals have the same virtues of truthfulness, honesty, uprightness and straightforwardness, of being hospitable, generous, consider-



General Thura Shwe Mann and party attend the Graduation Parade of the 47th Intake of Defence Services Academy. — MNA



Secretary-1 Lt-Gen Thein Sein and party attend the Graduation Parade of the 47th Intake of Defence Services Academy. — MNA

strong State. But when our military might weakened our people fell prey to outsiders. However, history clearly shows the tradition of brave resistance when our Tatmadaw and people joined hands in the spirit of national pride and not subservient to foreign domination.

You, comrades are the inheritors of history. You must cherish your country and people who possess great tradition and the love for your nation must be ardent. You must maintain loyalty to the state and citizens. This is the spirit of the patriotic Tatmadaw.

As you have ac-

words on leadership. A military leader and his subordinates share similar military qualities. They are of one flesh and blood. But the leader must, over and above his subordinates, exercise utmost restraint and be more resourceful, he must always practice to be more proficient in the Five Strengths, he must have excellent qualities of both mind and body, and be full of ability and skill, he must be wise and well read. Only then will your subordinates repose their trust in you and you will gain the role of a leader.

(See page 10)

Have esprit de corps, in...

(from page 9)

When you have accumulated experience and unceasingly strived to better yourself, you will have developed leadership qualities and when your subordinates are united under your command you will then have become a good leader with the ability of successfully discharging all responsibilities. You, comrades must therefore practice the sixteen characteristics of leadership. You must continu-

ally strive throughout your life for self improvement. You must build up the mindset of wanting to lead the units under your supervision for the greater glory of the Tatmadaw.

In conclusion, it is essential that every country needs an Armed Forces to protect and defend its independence and sovereignty. This is why I leave with you the message that you must carry on the proud legacy bequeathed by the

Tatmadaws of the great kings Anawrahta, Bayintnaung, Alaungphaya U Aung Zeya, and help to build a stronger and more capable modern Tatmadaw.

The Senior General took the salute of the cadet companies and left the parade grounds. After the graduation parade, Senior General Than Shwe met with four outstanding cadets and their parents at the DSA Headquarters.

MNA



Distinguished guests at the Graduation Parade of the 47th Intake of Defence Services Academy. — MNA



Diplomats and military attaches attend the Graduation Parade of the 47th Intake of Defence Services Academy. — MNA

Paper-reading session of Traditional Medicine Practitioners' Conference concludes successfully

YANGON, 17 Dec — The paper-reading session of the 5th Myanmar Traditional Medicine Practitioners' Conference continued for second and final day at Pyidaungsu Hall of Kyaikkasan Grounds, here, this morning.

The morning session was presided over by Deputy Director-General Dr Daw Myat Myat Ohn Khin together with members of the Myanmar Traditional Medicine Council U Maung Nyan and Prof Dr Tin Myint Htwe of Mandalay Technological University.

U Kyaw Soe Win of Traditional Medicine Department, Head of Myeik District TMD Daw Wah and U Than Myint Tun of Hlegu Township presented papers to the

session. And, the paper-reading session went into recess.

Deputy Director-General Dr Ye Myint of Health Department together with Delegate U Tan Kay and Associate Professor Dr Daw Hla Myint of Chemistry Department of Yangon University presided over the paper-reading session which resumed at 10.30 am. Resource persons for the paper-reading session were U Thet Swe (Shayhsaung Tin Swe) of Yangon Division, U Mya Than of Dagon Myothit (North) Township and U Win Myint (Magway Win Myint) of Magway Division.

At 12.30 pm, the session was presided over by Deputy Director-General Dr Soe Thein of Medical

Research Department (Lower Myanmar) together with member of MTMC U Soe Hlaing and Deputy Factory Manager of Myanmar Pharmaceutical Factory Dr Myint Sein.

U Hla Myint of Yangon Division, MTMC Member U Nyan Tun and U Thaug Naing (Dhammacariya Abhivamsa) of Yangon Division submitted their papers. At 2.30 pm, U Kyaw Soe of Mawlamyine Township, U Ba Hlaing of Nyaunglebin Township and Dr Thein Kyaw of Yangon General Traditional Medicine Hospital read the papers at the last session presided over by Deputy Director-General Dr Daw Myat Myat Ohn Khin. Afterwards, the

Fifth Myanmar Traditional Medicine and Medical Equipment Exhibition continues

YANGON, 17 Dec — The Fifth Myanmar Traditional Medicine and Medical Equipment Exhibition organized by the Ministry of Health with the aims of promoting and developing the quality of Myanmar traditional medicine and boosting the uses of Myanmar traditional medicines, continued as second day at Tatmadaw Convention Centre on U Wisara Road here this morning.

Photos of kinds of forest, herbal plants, medicines and their

uses, activities of State and Division traditional medicine practitioner associations and MTMA (Central), research theses for PhD and MSc degrees with assistance provided by Medical Research Department (Lower Myanmar) and research works on traditional medicines are put on display in the exhibition of 134 booths of ministries and private traditional medicine booths.

The exhibition will be kept open up to 25 December.

MNA



Visitors at the fifth Traditional Medicine and Medical Equipment Exhibition. — MNA

Orbis comes to Myanmar

YANGON, 17 Dec — Minister for Health Dr Kyaw Myint observed eye surgery on board the Orbis International at Mandalay International Airport on 15 December.

Director of the Orbis International Mrs Suzanne Sebert conducted him around the plane.

Together with Myanmar surgeons, eye specialist Dr Larry Benjamin and Dr Francisco Bernardini have been conducting eye surgery on patients on board the plane since 7 December.

Dr Bernardini gave lectures on eye surgery through close-circuit TV.

Dr Alemayehu also lectured on microsurgery techniques and phacoemulsification at wet-lab at the airport building.

Dr Ailliam Basuk and party of Orbis were also conducting eye surgery at Eye, Ear, Nose and Throat Hospital in Mandalay, while Dr Garnham was lecturing on optical problems.

The following day, Orbis physicians continued to conduct eye surgery on patients and gave lectures to medical students. The Orbis International conducted eye surgery on 65 patients from 7 to 16 December. — MNA



Deputy Director-General Dr Daw Myat Myat Ohn Khin speaks at concluding of the fifth Traditional Medicine Practitioners' Conference. — MNA

Observance of 57th Anniversary Independence Day coordinated

YANGON, 17 Dec — The Subcommittee for Flag Hoisting and saluting the State Flag on 57th Anniversary Independence Day held its first coordination meeting at the hall of Pyithu Hluttaw Building on Pyay Road here yesterday afternoon.

Chairman of the Subcommittee, Chairman of Yangon Division Peace and Development Council, and Commander of Yangon Command Maj-Gen Myint Swe addressed the meeting.

Present at the meeting were Yangon City Development Committee Vice-Chairman Vice-Mayor Col Maung Pa and officials, departmental officials, commanders of military regions, local authorities, chairmen of work committees, members of social organizations, and guests.

In his speech, the commander said that efforts were to be made to hold the ceremony on a grand scale like those in previous years. He called upon responsible personnel to play their respective roles actively in line with the four National Objectives: all the national people to collectively safeguard the national independence and sovereignty of the State and ensure non-disintegration of the Union and national unity; all the national people to unitedly strive with might and main for emergence of an enduring State Constitution and



Commander Maj-Gen Myint Swe addresses the meeting of the subcommittee for organizing ceremony for Flag Hoisting and State Flag Saluting on the 57th Anniversary Independence Day. — YGN COMMAND

for building a new modern and developed nation; all the national people to work in concert for success of the seven-point Road Map of the State with Union Spirit and nationalist spirit; and all the national people to make concerted efforts for building of a new, discipline-flourishing democratic nation.

Next, Secretary of the Subcommittee and Yangon Division PDC Secretary Lt-Col Myint Kyi reported on

arrangements made for celebrating the day on a grand scale.

The chairmen and officials of the respective work committees also reported on the tasks to be carried out by their committees.

After hearing the reports, the commander added some suggestions to the reports and gave concluding remarks. — MNA

24 bridges constructed in Yangon Division...

(from page 7)

the motion, saying that the work programmes of the division USDA include the task to provide necessary assistance for the public, to develop the human resources, to extend the USDA organizational set up and to consolidate the association's strength. Moreover, about 140,000 members have taken part in the anti-

malaria and anti-dengue fever campaigns.

Next, executive U Kyaw Thura Aung said Twelve dams and reservoirs such as Ngamoeyiek Dam, Tabuhla Dam, Banbwe Dam, Bagantaung Dam and Shwehlay sluice gate were constructed and two others are being built. Fifteen river-water pumping stations were constructed and three others are under way. In addition, 559 underground water tapping projects have been implemented and 5196 tubewells constructed to supply drinking water to villages of the division. With regard to industrial development, there have emerged 10 industrial zones in the division such as Hlinethaya Industrial Zone, Shwepyitha Industrial Zone, Dagon Myothit (South) Industrial Zone and North Oakkalapa Industrial Zone. For power supply, 398.6 Megawatts of electricity is being generated, he said.

Joint-Secretary of

Yangon Division USDA U Tha Win presented prizes to 10 outstanding students; Major Maung Maung (Retd) of Myanmar War Veterans Association to six medalists of performing arts competitions; Chairperson of Yangon Division

Organization for Women Affairs Daw Khin Myo Thu and Daw Myint Khin of Yangon Division MCWA to outstanding athletes.

Later, the meeting chairman passed the resolutions of the successful implementation of the

seven objectives and nine future tasks of the USDA's Annual General Meeting (2004) and active participation of association members and the people in the drive. And the meeting concluded at 10.30 am.

MNA



Major Maung Maung (Retd) presents a gift to a gold medalist. — MNA



Those present chanting slogans at the meeting organized by Yangon Division USDA. — MNA



Minister Dr Kyaw Myint views an eye operation on a patient on the aeroplane ORBIS International. (News on page 10) — HEALTH

မြန်မာ့ရုပ်ရှင်လုပ်ငန်း

၂၀၀၃-ခုနှစ်အတွက် အကယ်ဒမီရွှေစင်ရုပ်ဆွဲပေးပွဲ

ကျင်းပမည့်နေရာ

အမျိုးသားအားကစား
ဗိုလ်ပွဲ(၁) သုတေသန

ကျင်းပမည့်နေ့ရက်

၂၆-၁၂-၂၀၀၄ (တနင်္ဂနွေနေ့)

ကျင်းပမည့်အချိန်

ညနေ (၅:၃၀)နာရီ

လက်မှတ်
ရောင်းချမည့်
နေရာများ

လက်မှတ် စတင်
ရောင်းချမည့်ရက်

လက်မှတ်ရောင်းချမည့်
အချိန်

ဝင်ကြေးနှုန်း

အဘူရင်ရှင်ရှင်ရုံ
ဗိုလ်ချုပ်အောင်ဆန်းလမ်း

၂ ရတနာပုံရုပ်ရှင်ရုံ
ပြည်လမ်း

၃ အမျိုးသားအားကစား
ဗိုလ်ပွဲ(၁) သုတေသန

၂၁-၁၂-၂၀၀၄
(အင်္ဂါနေ့)

နေ့စဉ် နံနက်(၉:၀၀)နာရီ
မှ ညနေ (၄:၀၀)နာရီ

ကျပ် ၂၀၀၀/- ၁၈၀၀/-
၁၅၀၀/- ၁၀၀၀/-



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အထူးသတိပေးချက်။ ။ လက်မှတ်အတုများ ပေါ်ပေါက်နိုင်မှုကြောင့် အထက်ပါ သတ်မှတ်နေရာများတွင် ဝယ်ယူသော လက်မှတ်များမှလွဲ၍ အခြားမြင်ပတ်၍ ဝယ်ယူသော လက်မှတ်များ အတွက် တာဝန်မယူပါ။

Australian FM rejects job as IAEA head

CANBERRA, 16 Dec — Australian Foreign Minister Alexander Downer has dismissed the speculation that he would head up the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA).

Downer, who is in Papua New Guinea (PNG) to attend the 16th Australia-PNG Ministerial Forum, told reporters that he was happy in his present position as Australia's foreign minister and as MP for his local South Australian electorate of Mayo.

"In the way the media has reported this is right that I've not taken up the opportunity to demonstrate a great deal of interest in this job, I'm very happy with the job I've got," Australian Broadcasting Corporation radio quoted him as saying Wednesday.

"I'm the Foreign Minister of Australia, and a member for Mayo, and I'm happy with what I've been doing and I've only just been re-elected," he said. —MNA/Xinhua

CLAIMS DAY NOTICE MV QING CHUN MEN VOY NO (105)

Consignees of cargo carried on MV QING CHUN MEN Voy No (105) are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on 19.12.04 and cargo will be discharged into the premises of A.W.P.T where it will lie at the consignee's risk and expenses and subject to the byelaws and conditions of the Port of Yangon.

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

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

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WB provides multi-million loan for Nigeria's mine management

LAGOS, 16 Dec — The World Bank has approved two loans of 260 million US dollars to improve the sustainable management of Nigeria's mineral resources, as well as support the west African country's economic reform and governance programme.

A credit of 120 million US dollars will go to the sustainable management of mineral resources project while the Nigerian Government will provide an additional funding of 6.96 million US dollars, the Bank said in two state-

ments made available to Xinhua Wednesday.

"The sustainable management of mineral resources project aims at integrating artisan and small-scale mining into the formal economy... leaving the operational and implementation roles to the private sector and to communities," the Bank said.

Over-dependence on oil coupled with the stagnation of the non-oil part of the Nigerian economy over the last two decades has been a principal factor in the persistence of

poverty in the country, it said.

Nigeria is Africa's top oil producer, but about 70 per cent of its 130 million people live below the poverty line, less than one US dollar per day.

According to estimates, as many as 500,000 Nigerian households currently depend solely or partly on informal mining for their sustenance.

The other credit of 140 million US dollars is for the economic reform and governance project with the total cost of 179.69 million US dollars. The

Department for International Development of the British Government and the Nigerian Government will partially fund the project.

"The project will help adopt financial and economic management systems that are less prone to corruption and begin implementation of the wider civil service reform in a number of pilot government departments or ministries," said Victoria Kwakwa, the Bank's task team leader for the project in the statement.

MNA/Xinhua

Jordan, US launch economic talks

AMMAN, 16 Dec — The Jordanian-US Coordination Committee on Trade and Investment here on Wednesday kicked off talks on developing economic and trade ties between the two countries, the state-run Petra News Agency reported.

Mazin Hmoud, deputy director of the Jordan Investment Board presided the talks and reviewed the country's investment opportunities and facilities to the public and private sectors. The number of projects that benefitted from the foreign investment have increased this year by 41 percent to reach 382 projects, compared to 271 projects for the same period of last year, said the official.

The meeting, which was attended by representatives of the Jordanian-US Chamber of Industry and Trade, US economic experts and officials, aimed at exploring investment prospects and increasing trade exchange as well as eliminating trade obstacles between the two countries. —MNA/Xinhua

Germany urges African nations to develop credit culture

ADDIS ABABA, 16 Dec — German President Horst Koehler Wednesday urged African countries to develop credit culture to get out of the burden of billions of dollars debt.

Addressing an African Union (AU) meeting here, Koehler, who is on a five-day visit to Ethiopia said unless Africa develop credit culture, the continent will face a great challenge to obtain funds to fight the existing poverty in the continent.

"It is in your own inter-

est to develop a credit culture in Africa, that in the long term will enable people here to obtain also personal loans. This means private creditors must be able to have confidence that their money will be paid back," the President said.

He however said his government will progressively increase its annual development assistance to Africa, and he also asked countries that have so far failed to meet the 0.7 per cent budget support to the

developing countries to step up their efforts.

"That applies also to Germany. However, the special burdens we have shouldered since our country regained its unity have made reaching that target particularly difficult. Nevertheless, I hope and I certainly make the case for it that despite our budgetary constraints, Germany will progressively increase its annual development assistance," Koehler said.

MNA/Xinhua

Britain's barley output looks set for all-time low in 2005

LONDON, 16 Dec — Britain's barley output looks set for an all-time low in 2005 because growers are snubbing the crop in favour of more profitable crops like wheat and rapeseed, agronomists said on Wednesday.

Estimates point to a drop of between 10 and 20 per cent in the winter barley area ahead of next year's harvest, with the spring area also seen contracting, they added.

"There's an awful lot of growers around the

country who are not growing barley any more because prices are not particularly attractive. It's not a cheap crop to grow so they are dropping it out of their rotation," grain expert Richard Overthorpe of major farm consultants The Arable Group said.

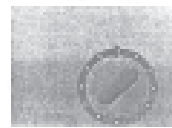
Crop specialist John Garstang agreed.

"The big area drop is likely to be in barley again because prices are rubbish," he said, noting that at this time last year feed barley prices were around

95 pounds a ton on an ex-farm basis against 65 pounds now. Last year, Britain's total barley crop — including feed, malting, winter and spring — came in at between 5.7 and 5.9 million tons, its lowest for around 40 years.

For harvest 2004, growers planted just over one million hectares of barley, a drop of 6.6 per cent on the previous season, with winter sowings of 419,000 hectares accounting for an 8.1 per cent fall on the year.

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Britain to close nine overseas embassies to cut costs

LONDON, 16 Dec — Britain's Foreign Secretary Jack Straw said Wednesday nine overseas British embassies and high commissions will be closed to cut costs.

The closures will come in Lesotho, Swaziland and Madagascar in Africa, Vanuatu, Tonga, East Timor and Kiribati in the Asia-Pacific area, and Paraguay and the Bahamas in South America and the Caribbean region. Nine consulates or consulates-general, mostly in Europe and America, will also be closed and British staff will be replaced by local personnel in a further 11 consulates.

The biggest shake-up in the British diplomatic service for years is aimed at saving the government about 100 million pounds between 2005 and 2008.

MNA/Xinhua

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Fuji proposes HIV/AIDS penalty

WELLINGTON, 16 Dec — The Fiji Government is considering a penalty for people who intentionally spread HIV/AIDS to other people, Fiji-based Pacnews reported Wednesday.

Pacnews quoted Fiji's Attorney-General Qoriniasi Bale as saying that penalty could be one way of combating the spread of the disease.

Bale was responding to questions on whether the intentional spread of the AIDS virus was a crime. He said there was no specific law, which bordered on the deliberate intention to spread the disease.

"This is a new dimension to our criminal law," Bale said. "Those who spread the disease intentionally could be charged under the category of act with intent to cause grievous bodily harm because, after all, it is an act. However, you will need to verify that with the police."

Bale said if Parliament decided to enact a legislation, which specifically targeted people who spread AIDS intentionally, it would have to borrow ideas from other countries or jurisdictions, which had such a framework in place.

MNA/Xinhua

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Bulgaria destroys two tons of drugs

SOFIA, 16 Dec—The Bulgarian Government on Tuesday destroyed 2.051 kilos of drugs, which were seized in the past one and a half years, the Bulgarian news agency reported.

The drugs, which were burned in a Sofia Hospital, were worth about 1 billion US dollars, said the report.

Recently, the Bulgarian Government has reinforced measures to fight drug trafficking, including setting up a 1,000-strong anti-drug force to help check vehicles and personnel at the Customs.—MNA/Xinhua

Czech Republic to build polar station in Antarctic

PRAGUE, 17 Dec—Fifteen Czech explorers will leave for the Antarctic to build up a polar station for scientific purposes on Ross Island at Christmas, Hynek Adamek from Czech *National Geographic* magazine said Thursday.

A group of geologists monitored a location for the station this February, in the middle of the Antarctic summer. "We are leaving on 25 December. On 2 January we should land on the island, and we will immediately start to unload material and build the station," said Adamek who will not only report on the mission, but also help with the construction.

The team of polar explorers who will build the station comprises, among others, a bricklayer, a carpenter, a plumber, an electrician and a geologist.

A boat with 100 tons of cargo aboard, which is the exact weight of the dismantled station, will pick them up in Punta Arenas port, south Chile, Adamek said, adding that the group will take about six tons of food to the undoubtedly greatest adventure in their life.

Polar explorers expect the construction of the Czech station to take 80 to 90 days. Then they will secure the station for winter and return home. The first scientific team will start working there next Christmas.

The station will enable to research into climatic changes and the phenomenon of "Antarctic oases", the areas where the glacier has receded and the first life starts to turn up, in the form of plants as mosses and lichens.

Last Antarctic summer, a group of four Czech geologists and a botanist led by Petr Mixa visited Ross Island for six weeks.

They collected about 250 kilos of samples of minerals and plants, and brought them to the Czech Republic.

MNA/Xinhua



A Bangladeshi weaver designs a Jamdani Sari on the outskirts of Dhaka.—INTERNET

Kenyan police seize \$43m worth of cocaine

NAIROBI, 16 Dec—Kenyan police have seized a massive haul of narcotic drugs destined for European markets with an estimated worth of 43 million US dollars in the biggest drugs bust so far in Africa, police sources said here Wednesday.

The drugs, weighing 954 kilos, were seized on Tuesday evening following raids by security forces in Kenyan capital Nairobi and coastal town Malindi, Kenyan police spokesman, Jasper Ombati told *Xinhua* by telephone.

"This is the largest haul we have ever had in the history of Africa, we want to send a message

out to drug traffickers that they cannot hold this country to ransom," Ombati said, adding that no arrests have been made.

The police spokesman said security forces raided a godown in Nairobi's residential estate, Embakasi, and seized 53 packets of cocaine sealed in a refrigerated container.

MNA/Xinhua

One-third of former breast cancer patients found to have tumour cells

WASHINGTON, 16 Dec—Tumour cells found in the blood of breast cancer patients up to 20 years after surgery suggest that the body may have ways of keeping a dormant cancer in check, US researchers said on Wednesday.

One third of 36 former breast cancer patients were found to have the cells, according to the team at the University of Texas Southwestern at Dallas.

The study, published in the journal *Clinical Cancer Research*, seems to show the body can maintain a balance between tumour cell proliferation and cell death. People who stay cancer-free may have a system for keeping a tumour under control, the researchers said.

Some of the patients had undergone mastectomies 20 years before. Such people have a low rate of cancer recurrence, but after about 20 years the risk rises sharply to 20 per cent — a condition called dormancy that doctors do not understand.

"Dormancy is a mysterious phenomenon that oc-

curs in certain types of cancer," said Dr. Jonathan Uhr, who led the study.

His team collected blood from 36 patients who had been free of cancer for at least seven years. Thirteen were found to have circulating tumour cells. Because these cells do not live long, Uhr said there must be tiny, unseen tumours somewhere in the body producing them. Understanding how the body controls these tumours may offer new ways to treat and prevent cancer, he said.

"It is also important to determine what changes are responsible for relapse," Uhr said. "If patients at risk for impending relapse can be identified, it may be possible to prevent recurrence with appropriate therapy."—MNA/Reuters

"Lord of the Rings" actress Liv Tyler has baby boy

LOS ANGELES, 16 Dec—Hollywood actress Liv Tyler, who played the elf princess Arwen in "The Lord of the Rings" trilogy, had given birth to a son, *US Weekly* magazine reported Wednesday.

Tyler, daughter of the

Aerosmith band's lead singer Steven Tyler and model Bebe Buell, gave birth to her son in New York on Tuesday.

Both Tyler and her son, who was not named yet, were doing great, according to Tyler's publicist

Stephen Huvane.

Tyler, 27, is married to Royston Langdon of the band Spacehog in March 2003.

Her screen credits also included "Jersey Girl" and "Armageddon".

MNA/Xinhua

Researchers use nano-sensor to monitor glucose levels in diabetics

WASHINGTON, 16 Dec—Researchers in the United States have demonstrated a tiny, implantable detector that could one day allow diabetics to monitor their glucose levels continuously without ever having to draw a blood sample.

The device, developed by researchers at the University of Illinois, is the first application of a whole new class of biological sensors based on single-walled carbon nanotubes, said Michael Strano Professor of chemical and biomolecular engineering at the University and prin-

cipal investigator of the project.

"The idea is to exploit the nanotubes ability to fluoresce, or glow, when illuminated by certain wavelengths of infrared light—a region of the spectrum where human tissue and biological fluids are particularly transparent,"

he said.

The researchers load the coated nanotubes into a needle-thin capillary tube that can safely be implanted into the body. The capillary keeps the nanotubes from directly touching living cells but still allows glucose to enter.—MNA/PTI

US commercial oil inventories down last week

WASHINGTON, 16 Dec—The US Energy Department reported on Wednesday that commercial inventories of crude oil and heating oil declined last week and the report resulted in the rising of oil prices in the New York market.

The report showed that commercial inventories of crude oil in the United States dropped by 100,000 barrels to 293.8 million in the week ending on 10 December.

Stockpiles of distillates—mostly heating oil and diesel—were unchanged at 119.3 million barrels but were below average level in last year. Inventories of heating oil,

a major concern with the onset of winter, also eased by 100,000 barrels to 49.9 million while diesel rose 500,000 barrels to 68.3 million.

MNA/Xinhua



The Sage Gateshead, a newly built concert hall is seen through the Millennium Bridge which spans the River Tyne in Gateshead, on 16 Dec, 2004. The concert hall, which forms part of the multi-million pound regeneration scheme for the region is due to open tomorrow.—INTERNET

SPORTS

David O'Leary signs new contract with Aston Villa

LONDON, 17 Dec — Manager David O'Leary has signed a new contract with Aston Villa until 2008, the Premier League club said on Thursday.

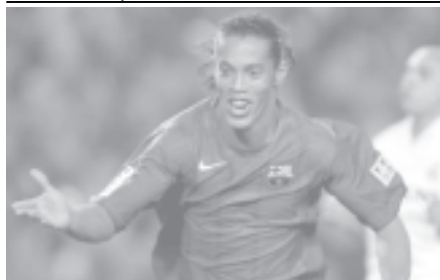
O'Leary, 46, joined the Midlands side in 2003 and guided them to a sixth place finish last season, a year after they had flirted with relegation under Graham Taylor.

Villa are currently seventh in the table. O'Leary is hoping to strengthen his squad during the January transfer window to support their bid for European football next season.

"I'm here for the long haul," the Irishman told the club's website. "We now want to move the club forward."

"I think it's going to be a long process and that's not me talking it down, I'm just being realistic."

O'Leary is best known for his spell at Leeds United from 1998-2002 when he turned a midtable club into 2001 Champions League semifinalists and Premier League title challengers. —MNA/Reuters



Barcelona striker Ronaldinho

Ronaldinho wins cybersquatting case against US

GENEVA, 17 Dec — Brazilian midfielder Ronaldinho of FC Barcelona, edged out for European Footballer of the Year, won a cybersquatting case against a US web site operator in a ruling by an international arbitrator on Thursday.

Ronaldo de Assis Moreira proved that he has common law trademark rights on his professional name Ronaldinho Gaucho, according to Argentine arbitrator Miguel O'Farrell.

The ruling was announced by the World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO), a United Nations agency which offers a fast-track lowcost procedure to resolve domain name disputes. The disputed domain name, <ronaldinhogaucho.com>, was registered last July by the US-based Goldmark-CD Webb. Its domain name hosts a web page offering commercial pay-per-click links to third party websites, under such listings as Ronaldinho Gaucho's videos and Barcelona, according to the ruling.

O'Farrell found that Goldmark-CD Webb had no rights or legitimate interest in the domain name, which it had used to attract Internet users to the website for commercial gain "by creating a likelihood of confusion in users' minds." — MNA/Reuters

Ronaldinho ready to play against Valencia

MADRID, 17 Dec — Barcelona striker Ronaldinho said on Thursday that he is fit to play in Saturday's match against Valencia, while defender Rafael Marquez said he is not certain to play due to muscle problems.

While Ronaldinho asserted he is "a lot better" and that for sure will play Saturday in the home match at Camp Nou Stadium, Mexico's Marquez said his injury makes him doubtful for the match as he does not want to take risks.

Brazilian Juliano Belletti is also doubtful for the league match. Other players set to miss the game include French midfielder Ludovic Giuly and Sweden forward Henrik Larsson, who just returned to Barcelona on Thursday after undergoing knee surgery in the United States. —MNA/Xinhua

Parma to give Pietro Carmignani a winning start

LONDON, 17 Dec — Parma rescued a desperate season by securing a place in the last 32 of the UEFA Cup on Thursday to give new manager Pietro Carmignani a winning start.

The Serie A strugglers, who appointed Carmignani on Wednesday after sacking Silvio Baldini at the weekend, came from a goal down to defeat Besiktas 3-2 to progress from Group B along with Athletic Bilbao and Steaua Bucharest.

Santi Ezquerro hit a hat-trick for Bilbao who produced the performance of the night in demolishing Standard Liege 7-1 away from home to win the group.

Joining them in Friday's draw for the first knockout round were Basel, Sporting, Sochaux, Austria Vienna and Real Zaragoza who all sealed their passage on Thursday.

Parma, UEFA Cup winners in 1995 and 1999 but now struggling to cope with financial hardship, started the night bottom of the tightly-bunched group, and had to defeat Turkey's Besiktas to keep their European campaign alive.

The home side were dealt an early blow when keeper Gianluca Berti palmed the ball invitingly into the path of midfielder Okan Buruk to fire the visitors ahead after just six minutes.

Italy international Alberto Gilardino equalized shortly after but then had a penalty easily saved by Ramazan Kursunlu.

Defender Giuseppe Cardone headed home from a corner to hand Parma a 2-1 interval lead and Daniele Degano added a third on the hour with a long-range effort. A goal two minutes from time from midfielder Tumer Metin set up a tense finale but Parma held on.

Athletic Bilbao, who had not won an away match all season except in the Spanish Cup, went goal crazy in the pouring rain in Liege.

The Spaniards made a flying start with Ezquerro scoring twice in the first nine minutes. In a frantic opening, Oguchi Onyewu pulled a goal back before Liege keeper Vedran Runje superbly saved Andoni Iraola's penalty.

Fran Yeste made it 3-1 at the break and in a one-sided second half further

goals followed for Ezquerro, Andoni Iraola, Asier Del Horno and Joseba Etxeberria.



Parma's Andrea Pisanu (L) jumps for the ball with Seren Yalin of Besiktas during their UEFA Cup Group B soccer match at Tardini Stadium in Parma, northern Italy, on 16 Dec, 2004. — INTERNET

Switzerland's Basel secured the win they needed to go through thanks to a 53rd-minute header from Argentine Cesar Carignano which was enough to overcome 2002 winners Feyenoord 1-0.

The Dutch side, along with Schalke 04, had already qualified and the defeat still sent them through as Group A winners on goal difference as the top three sides finished on seven points.

Ferencváros' 1-0 win away at Hearts lifted the Hungarians above the Scottish club into fourth place but both teams were eliminated.

In Friday's draw the group winners will play a team that finished third in a different UEFA Cup group while the runners-up will meet one of the eight clubs dropping down from the Champions League.

The UEFA Cup final is at the Jose Alvalade Stadium in Lisbon on May 18.

MNA/Xinhua

Gronkjaer about to join Atletico Madrid

LONDON, 17 Dec — Birmingham City have agreed to sell Denmark winger Jesper Gronkjaer to Spanish side Atletico Madrid, the Premier League club said on Thursday.

"Atletico and us have agreed terms," a Birmingham spokesman said, adding that Gronkjaer was now cleared to discuss personal terms with the Spanish club pending a move in the January transfer window.

The spokesman could not confirm Spanish media reports putting the transfer fee at two million euros (2.67 million US dollars), following a meeting in Madrid on Wednesday night.

"The agreement between the two clubs has been confirmed," said Birmingham City managing director Karren Brady as she left Madrid on Thursday. "All that remains is for the player to agree personal terms with Atletico and undergo a

medical."

The 27-year-old winger joined Birmingham from Chelsea for 2.2 million pounds (4.26 million US dollars) last July, but has failed to settle at St. Andrews and manager Steve Bruce has given the all-clear for the player to leave.

Atletico coach Cesar Ferrando has made no secret of the fact that he has been searching for an out-and-out winger and is reported to have made a specific request for the club to sign the Dane.

Atletico are in seventh place in the Primera Liga, 16 points behind leaders Barcelona. Birmingham are 15th in the Premier League after only three wins in 17 games. —MNA/Reuters



Former Argentine soccer star Diego Maradona (R) jokes with his compatriot soccer player Gabriel Batistuta, currently playing for Qatar's Al-Arabi, as they attend the first round of the Copa Argentina tennis tournament, in Buenos Aires, on 16 Dec, 2004. Maradona, who is undergoing a medical treatment in Cuba, is in the country to spend Christmas at home. —INTERNET

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

24 bridges constructed in Yangon Division to ensure better and secure network of transport

Ngamoeyeik project being implemented to supply water to Yangon



Yangon Division Union Solidarity and Development Association holds meeting to implement the seven objectives and nine future work programmes adopted by the USDA Annual General Meeting (2004) and to carry out the plans adopted by itself at the Myanmar Convention Centre. — MNA



YANGON, 17 Dec — The Yangon Division Union Solidarity and Development Association organized the meeting to implement the seven objectives and nine future tasks laid down at the USDA Annual General Meeting (2004) and to carry out the plans in

Yangon Division by Yangon Division USDA at the Myanmar Convention Centre on Mindhamma Road in Mayangon Township this morning.

Present at the meeting were members of USDA, Myanmar War Veterans Organization,

Myanmar Women's Affairs Federation, Myanmar Maternal and Child Welfare Association, Red Cross and Auxiliary Fire Brigades, townselders and outstanding youths.

(See page 7)

INSIDE

The entire people of Myanmar and the international community have welcomed the news on the release of prisoners.

Page (6)

HEIN MYINT

Myanmar soccer team accorded rousing welcome

YANGON, 17 Dec — The Myanmar football team returned home by air this afternoon, after contending in the group matches of the fifth ASEAN Tiger Trophy Soccer Tournament (2004) held in Malaysia. The national footballers led by Vice-President of the Myanmar Football Federation Lt-Col Maung Ko were accorded a rousing welcome at Yangon International Airport by Chairman of Myanmar Olympic Committee Minister for Sports Brig-Gen Thura Aye

Myint, officials of the Ministry, the secretary and members of the Leading Panel of Patrons of Women's Sports Federation, and officials of the MFF.

The team took the lead with 10 points from four games in the Group (B). It beat the Philippines 1-0, held 1-1 draw with defending champions Thailand, edged the local rivals Malaysia 1-0 and trounced East Timor 3-1.

Myanmar will play against Singapore in the semi-final match. — MNA



Minister Brig-Gen Thura Aye Myint welcomes back Myanmar football team at the airport. — MNA