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Senior General Than Shwe and wife Daw Kyaing Kyaing attend graduation dinner of 47th Intake of DSA.—MNA

Senior General Than Shwe and wife Daw Kyaing Kyaing attend graduation dinner of 47th Intake of DSA

YANGON, 18 Dec — Chairman of the State Peace and Development Council Commander-in-Chief of Defence Services Senior General Than Shwe and wife Daw Kyaing Kyaing attended the dinner to mark the graduation of the 47th Intake of the Defence Services Academy at the parade ground of Anawrahta Battalion of the DSA in PyinOoLwin, Mandalay Division, at 6 pm on 17 December.

Also present at the dinner were Member of

the State Peace and Development Council General Thura Shwe Mann, Secretary-1 of the State Peace and Development Council Lt-Gen Thein Sein, Members of the State Peace and Development Council Lt-Gen Ye Myint and Lt-Gen Kyaw Win, Commander-in-Chief (Navy) Rear-Admiral Soe Thein, Commander-in-Chief (Air) Lt-Gen Myat Hein, Chairman of Mandalay Division Peace and Development Council Commander of Central Command

Maj-Gen Ye Myint, the ministers, senior military officers of the Ministry of Defence, the Mandalay mayor, the Commander of PyinOoLwin Station, senior military officers of PyinOoLwin Station and the DSA, the Academic Director, the Chief Instructor, commanding officers of cadet battalions, faculty members, graduating officers and their parents and relatives.

MNA

Development of the country depends on increased productivity Senior General Than Shwe tours PyinOoLwin

YANGON, 18 Dec — Chairman of State Peace and Development Council Commander-in-Chief of

Defence Services Senior General Than Shwe, accompanied by members of the State Peace and Development

Council General Thura Shwe Mann and Lt-Gen Ye Myint, Commander-in-Chief (Navy)

Rear Admiral Soe Thein, Commander-in-Chief (Air) Lt-Gen Myat Hein, the ministers, senior military officers

of the Ministry of Defence, responsible officials of the SPDC Office and departmental heads,

left here by Tatmadaw aircraft for Mandalay on 15 December.

Senior General Than Shwe and party arrived at Mandalay International Airport at 11 am. Senior General Than Shwe and party, accompanied by Mandalay Division PDC Chairman Central Command Commander Maj-Gen Ye Myint, flew on to PyinOoLwin. On arrival there, Senior General Than Shwe and party were welcomed by SPDC member and Chief of Armed Forces Training Lt-Gen Kyaw Win, senior military officers of the Ministry of Defence, Commander of PyinOoLwin Station and Rector of Defence Services Technological Academy Brig-Gen Win Myint and senior military officers.

(See page 8)



Senior General Than Shwe hears reports on matters related to PyinOoLwin District Hospital (100-bed) presented by Minister for Health Dr Kyaw Myint.—MNA

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

PERSPECTIVES

Sunday, 19 December, 2004

Uphold fine traditions and enhance the role of the Tatmadaw

The Graduation Parade of the 47th Intake of the Defence Services Academy took place in PyinOoLwin on 17 December, with an address by Commander-in-Chief of Defence Services Senior General Than Shwe.

The Senior General in his speech said "You comrades must therefore practise the sixteen characteristics of leadership. You must continually strive throughout your life for self important. You must build up the mindset of wanting to lead the units under your supervision for the greater glory of the Tatmadaw". The Tatmadaw is a patriotic force, which has long preserved the fine tradition of safeguarding and protecting the motherland, the people and the Sasana at risk to their lives. Since Tatmadaw members, born of the people, regard the people across the nation, with whom they deal, as their parents, the people and the Tatmadaw have always been of oneness.

While preserving the Tatmadaw's noble traditions, the Tatmadawmen are to inherit the good legacy of the nation's history. Besides, they are to love and cherish their motherland and people, to be fully equipped with patriotism and to be loyal to the nation and the people.

Now, the Tatmadaw, enlisting the mighty strength of the people, is doing its utmost for the transition to a peaceful, modern and developed nation, while transforming itself into a strong and modern one.

The newly-qualified cadets are indeed human resources capable of building up a strong and highly capable modern Tatmadaw as well as the people's invaluable sons who have to collectively shape the future of the nation. The junior officers are thus to act according to the motto of the Defence Services Academy — The Triumphant Elite of the Future. In any nation, political power, economic power and defence power are interdependent. Economic might is mainly the central focus and it helps to sustain both political and military might.

Absolutely upholding Our Three Main National Causes as the national policy, the Tatmadaw is translating the political, economic and social objectives into reality. The united efforts of the Government, the people and the Tatmadaw have yielded fruitful results in diversified fields. Now, the seven-point Road Map is in the process to put the nation on the path towards a peaceful, modern and developed state with flourishing democracy.

It is believed that the graduates, new generation of Tatmadaw members, will always be capable of serving the interests of the State and the people with nationalist fervour, while discharging duties steadfastly for enhancing the role of the Tatmadaw.

Use Natural Gas Vehicles and save fuel oil

- In automobiles, natural gas can be used in place of petrol and diesel.
- The use of natural gas can not only save fuel oil but also extend engine life.
- Natural gas exploited at home can be used effectively and safely.
- Natural gas burns cent per cent and is environment-friendly.
- Adequate supply of natural gas helps facilitate passenger and cargo transport.

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

Sayadaws leave for India, Nepal

YANGON, 18 Dec — Members of the State Sangha Maha Nayaka Committee led by Joint-Secretary Sayadaw Abhidhaja Maha Rattha Guru Agga Maha Pandita Bhaddanta Osadhabhivamsa left here by air this morning to make a pilgrimage to India and Nepal.

They were seen off at Yangon International Airport by Minister for Religious Affairs Brig-Gen Thura Myint Maung, Deputy Minister Brig-Gen Thura Aung Ko, departmental heads under the ministry, officials and lay persons. — MNA



Joint-Secretary of SSMNC Sayadaw Bhaddanta Osadhabhivamsa and pilgrims being seen off at the airport on their departure for India and Nepal. — MNA



Prof Dr Daw Than Nwe discusses on Convention on Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women. — MNA

Talks on CEDAW given

YANGON, 18 Dec — Talks in commemoration of the approval of the 25th anniversary of Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women

(CEDAW) organized under the aegis of Myanmar Women's Affairs Federation were held at Myanmar Education Research Bureau this morning. Deputy leader of Legal

and Advisory Group Professor Dr Daw Than Nwe gave talks on CEDAW and the Secretary of Work Group on legal rights enjoyed by Myanmar Women. Present were lo-

cal organizers of MWAFF, the General Secretary, members of the Secretariat, heads of organizational department, deputy leaders, officials of social organizations and guests. — MNA

Educational undertakings inspected in Kayan township

YANGON, 18 Dec — Minister for Education U Than Aung and Minister for Livestock and Fisheries Brig-Gen Maung Maung Thein, accompanied by officials of the Ministry of Education, offered robes and provisions to Agga Maha Ganthavacaka Pandita Bhaddanta Kesarabhivamsa, Presiding Sayadaw of Masoyein Monastery in Mandalay, at the Dhammayon in Kwanmodein model village, Kayan Township, yesterday.

The Sayadaw, the ministers and party viewed around the clinic and library constructed under the patronage of the Sayadaw. Next, U Than Aung met with school heads and teachers at BEMS of the village. The minister heard reports on sector-wise development Daepauk Village BEHS (Branch) before he explained the educational campaigns launched under the auspices of the government. Later, Brig-Gen Maung Maung Thein explained assistance being rendered to the township's educational tasks. The two ministers donated teaching aids and stationery to the school through the school head. The ministers also visited BEHS (Branch) at Nyaungpinkwin village, and they inspected the school and attended to the requirements for construction of new school buildings. U Than Aung donated teaching aids and stationery to the school. — MNA

Myeik Open Golf Championship continues

YANGON, 18 Dec — Myeik Open Golf Championship 2004 jointly organised by Coastal Region Command, Myanmar Professional Golfers Association and Myanmar Golf Federation and mainly sponsored by Rothmans of Pall Mall Myanmar Pte Ltd continued at Myeik Golf Club this morning, attended by Deputy Commander of Coastal Region Command Brig-Gen Hon Ngai, senior military officers and others.

After the second round, Min Naing (Srixon) is taking the lead

with 142 strokes in the Professional Golfer event, followed by Aung Win, Zaw Zaw Latt and Soe Kyaw Naing second, third and fourth respectively. In the amateur event, Bo Bo is at the top with 144 strokes.

Co-Sponsors of the championship are Air Mandalay, Myanmar Brewery Ltd, Alpine Purified Drinking Water, KM Golf Centre, Maruman, Tour Stage, Wilson, Srixon, Grand Slam, Canon, Sun Far Travels and Tours and Myeik Golf Club.

The championship which continues tomorrow is organised by Han Event Management.

MNA

Mekong nations to seek balanced development

BANGKOK, 18 Dec—Six countries in the Mekong basin region have agreed to seek balance between infrastructure development and environment protection, local Press reported on Friday.

Following a ministerial meeting in Vientiane Thursday, ministers of the six-nation Greater Mekong Subregion (GMS) agreed to set up a "biodiversity conservation" corridor as they begin planning infrastructure investment over the next five years.

Under the investment plan, physical connections between the countries would be built to facilitate cross-border transport. According to Liquin Jin, vice-president of the Asian Development Bank (ADB), environmental protection featured prominently at the meeting with a number of ministers regarding protecting the region's rich natural and biological diversity as an important issue.

"In this region, we should avoid making the same mistakes. We should learn

from the lessons and we should have a better approach," *Bangkok Post* newspaper quoted Jin as saying.

The GMS ministers want to make sure that construction of the economic corridor would not harm the environment, said Rajat M Nag, director of the ADB's Mekong project.

Four agreements were also signed at the meeting to support easier transport within the region by establishing a common standard in line with the United Nations.

Since 1992, the GMS, consisted of Myanmar, Cambodia, Laos, Thailand, Vietnam and China's Yunnan province, has paid great efforts to construction of infrastructure project to boost economic growth. — *MNA/Xinhua*

Singapore to crack down on pirated movies

SINGAPORE, 17 Dec—Singapore has launched an operation to crack down selling and buying of pirated movies in major shopping areas, including central Orchard Road.

According to local media reports on Friday, investigators are conducting surveillance in areas such as underpasses, subway stations and bus interchanges, trying to spot mobile hawker operations.

During the campaign code-named Operation Eradicate, the police and Singapore's Media Development Authority (MDA) will arrest those who are found selling pirated movies in the street.

For those buyers, they will be sent to the MDA

with their purchases confiscated, or will be summoned to court if the films are found to be uncensored or obscene.

Under Singapore's Films Act, it is an offense to possess uncensored films. Offenders can be fined at least 100 Singapore dollars (about 61 US dollars) per film, and they might be sentenced a 500-Singapore-dollar fine (about 305 US dollars) and/or six-month jail term per obscene film.

Operation Eradicate,

which will last until the end of next January, is part of a campaign by the Motion Picture Association (MPA) against illegal sales of copyrighted materials, which covers 13 countries including Australia, China, India, Indonesia and Malaysia. The MPA estimates that piracy in Singapore has cost its members like Warner Brothers and Sony Pictures Entertainment 40 million US dollars in the past five years.

MNA/Xinhua

Foreigners killed in ambush in Iraq's Mosul

MOSUL, 18 Dec—Guerillas attacked a car in the northern Iraqi city of Mosul yesterday, killing three people who appeared to be foreigners and their Iraqi driver and cutting off the head of one of the victims, witnesses said.

The white, American-made sedan was attacked by insurgents firing assault rifles as it drove through western Mosul, witnesses said. After the attack it was set on fire.

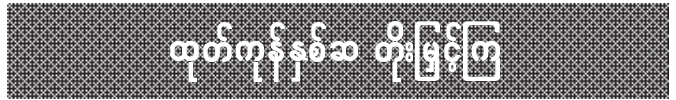
A photographer for Reuters saw four bodies lying on the street close to the blazing vehicle, three of them apparently foreigners.

Witnesses said one of the men appeared to be Turkish and two others looked fair-skinned and European. One of them

had been beheaded. Two of the men looked to be in their 20s and 30s and were dressed in jeans and windbreaker tops.

A fourth person, apparently an Arab, could be seen lying near the burning wreckage, his body partly consumed by flames.

A US military spokesman based in Mosul said soldiers recovered three male bodies from western Mosul. He said they all appeared to be Middle Eastern. — *Internet*



Samsung SDI develops world largest 102-inch PDP

SEOUL, 18 Dec—Samsung SDI Co, the world's famous producer of plasma display panels (PDP), announced Thursday it has successfully developed the world's largest high density (HD) 102-inch PDP.

"A PDP larger than 100-inch had been regarded as technically impossible, but we have done it, succeeding in both size and brightness," said Samsung SDI Co in a news release.

The display is larger than anything on the market including cathode ray tubes (CRT), liquid crystal displays (LCD) and projection displays. Previously, Samsung SDI developed the 80-inch PDP in this January.

The 102-inch full HD PDP has a resolution of 1920 x 1080 offering a brightness level of 1000 candelas per square metre, which in lay terms is equivalent to the amount of light thrown off by 1000 candles burning in a single square metre, according to the release.

The screen also has a contrast ratio of 2000 to 1, meaning it can produce 2000 shades of a colour to produce natural verisimilitude.

Samsung will introduce the 102-inch PDP product in January 2005, with production scheduled to start at its factory in Cheonan, South Chungcheong Province, some 80 kilometres south to Seoul, from the first half of next year, the company said. Large PDPs are most often used for commercial displays in office lobbies, shopping malls and other public buildings, the company said. — *MNA/Xinhua*



A worker inspects a row of newly made cars on a production line in Shanghai on 18 Dec, 2004. — *INTERNET*

Chinese CPPCC Chairman meets Pakistani PM

BEIJING, 17 Dec—Top Chinese adviser Jia Qinglin said here Thursday that China will "enhance traditional friendship, further cooperation, boost trade and economic cooperation and expand personnel exchange" with Pakistan.

Jia, chairman of the National Committee of the Chinese People's Political Consultative Conference (CPPCC), made the remarks during his meeting with visiting Pakistani Prime Minister Shaukat Aziz. Jia said China and Pakistan share a thousand-year-over friendship. The two countries abide by "the five principles of peaceful coexistence", as well as support, under-

stand and trust each other since they forged diplomatic ties 53 years ago and have become "all-weather" friends, he said. China appreciates Pakistan's valuable supports on key issues which concern China's core interests such as "the Taiwan question", he said.

"It's China's set policy to solidify and enhance the Sino-Pakistan comprehensive cooperative partnership," Jia noted.

"The CPPCC attaches importance to the exchange with the Pakistan Parliament and will continuously contribute to the friendly exchange between the two peoples," he said. — *MNA/Xinhua*

Tourists to Egypt expected to exceed 8 million in 2004

CAIRO, 17 Dec—Some 7.5 million tourists visited Egypt from January to November and the number may exceed eight million by the end of December, the official *MENA* news agency reported Thursday.

Chairman of the Egyptian Tourism Authority Ahmad Khadem was quoted as saying Italian tourists led the list with 967,000 coming to Egypt so far this year and Germans followed with 927,000.

The number of Russian tourists visiting Egypt reached 635,000, British, 494,000 and French, 429,000, Khadem added. Tourism, one of the country's major sources of state revenues, brings some six billion US dollars to Egypt annually. — *MNA/Xinhua*

A man covers his face as he stands near a burning car in the northern Iraqi city of Mosul on 17 Dec, 2004. — *INTERNET*

Singapore airport's passenger volume sets record in November

SINGAPORE, 18 Dec—For the first time in history, the daily passenger traffic volume in Singapore's Changi Airport exceeded 100,000 in November.

According to a statement issued by the Civil Aviation Authority of Singapore (CAAS) on Friday, the record-breaking number was crossed three days in November while the traditional peak season for air travel is December.

This greatly contributed to the rise of the airport's passenger traffic to 2.71 million in November, an increase of 12.8 per cent from a year ago.

The total passenger volume the airport handled in the first 11 months of this year jumped to 27.4

million, up 24.7 per cent over the corresponding period of last year.

Meanwhile, the airport's airfreight volume in November also increased by 3.8 per cent over last year to reach 149,297 tons.

MNA/Xinhua



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Pakistan expects strategic partnership with India in "IT" sector

ISLAMABAD, 17 Dec—Pakistani Information Technology Minister Awaits Ahmad Khan Leghari on Thursday called for a strategic partnership between India and Pakistan that could benefit the two countries' IT (information technology) industries.

"It is the spirit of competition alongside the spirit of cooperation that can help further this relationship," the official Associated Press of Pakistan on Thursday quoted the minister as saying at a Pakistan-India IT summit in Islamabad.

Leghari said Pakistan

and India could benefit much from a healthy and mutually beneficial interaction as some three million to four million jobs in business process outsourcing in the West were set to move offshore in the next few years and the number was much more than Pakistan and India together could absorb within their IT sectors.

He said Pakistan would stand firmly behind any effort to bring together IT industries in Pakistan and India to ensure mutual benefit to the people and IT sectors of the countries.

"We recognize Indian successes in the IT sector

and would like to make maximum use of the Indian experience and the strategy India adopted to become a leading IT player in the world," the minister said.

Time had changed since Pakistan suffered at the hands of bad perceptions as an increasing number of businessmen from abroad were coming to Pakistan to see how "perceptions are much worse than the reality", he said. "We have a thriving economy and a political will to accelerate the process of growth that has been witnessed in all key sectors of the economy," Awaits said.

MNA/Xinhua

Malaysian budget carrier Air Asia signed a deal to buy 40 A320 jets valued at 2.5 billion dollars from Europe's Airbus, which beat out aerospace giant Boeing for the contract.

INTERNET

US helicopter crashes in Afghanistan

KABUL, 17 Dec — A US military helicopter crashed in west Afghanistan Thursday, after suffering mechanical failure, the US military said in a statement.

The military OH-58 helicopter crashed just north of Shindand District in Herat Province, injuring both pilots on board, the statement said.

The crash was not the result of any hostile action and the pilots were evacuated to a nearby US medical facility for treatment, it said.

An investigation is to be conducted to determine the cause of the accident.

MNA/Xinhua

Soldier shoots himself to avoid Iraq duty

PHILADELPHIA, 17 Dec — A soldier who allegedly had a relative shoot him so he wouldn't have to return to Iraq could face military discipline.

Army Spc Marquise J Roberts, of Hinesville, Georgia, suffered a minor wound Tuesday to his left leg from a .22-caliber pistol, police said. He was treated at a hospital, then arrested after he and a rela-

tive allegedly admitted making up a story about the shooting.

After giving differing accounts, "they just broke down and confessed that they concocted the whole story so he didn't have to

go back to the war," police Lt James Clark said Thursday.

Police charged Roberts with filing a false report and charged a cousin, Roland Fuller, with aggravated assault and other charges. Roberts could face military discipline if the charges prove true, said Lt Col Cliff Kent, said a military spokesman.

Roberts, who was visiting family in Philadelphia, initially claimed he was shot during an attempted robbery, but Fuller had said the incident occurred at another location during an argument, according to Clark.—Internet

Chinese foreign policy experts support India's bid for UNSC

ISLAMABAD, 17 Dec — Underlining the need to reform the UN, Chinese foreign policy experts have supported India's bid to secure a seat in the expanded Security Council provided it assured that it would ensure stability in South Asia and have friendly ties with neighbours.

"India is a country of over one billion people. We have to admit that India has some claim to a permanent seat in the UN Security Council. China has actually said that it understands the Indian wish for a permanent seat in the Security Council," Li Shaoxian, vice-president of a Chinese think-tank told Pakistani journalists covering Premier Shaukat Aziz's visit to China.

Another Chinese expert Li Wei was quoted by Pakistani daily *The Dawn* as saying that India required to fulfil "three requirements before putting forward its claim. India should ensure stability in South Asia, have friendly relations with its neighbours and should contribute towards world peace".

The UN reforms figured prominently in the talks between Aziz and Chinese Premier Wen Jiabao Wednesday, reports here said.

Chinese officials were also quoted by the media here as saying that for its part Beijing would not use fast increasing trade volume with India as a "tool to resolve disputes between New Delhi and Islamabad". China's trade volume with India is nearly four times as high as its trade with Pakistan.—MNA/PTI

Arab world needs 100 million new jobs by 2020

ABU DHABI, 17 Dec — The Arab world has to create a minimum of 100 million new jobs by 2020 as three million young Arabs join the labour market every year, the *Gulf News* daily reported here Thursday.

Director of the Arab Labour Organization Ebrahim Quwaider made the remarks at the end of the three-day Arab Strategy Forum which concluded Wednesday in Dubai, one of the seven emirates in the United Arab Emirates.

He noted that the Arab world will need 100 million new jobs so as to keep up with the growth in population, which is expected to reach 490 million by 2020.

The education system in the Arab countries has also to be revamped with adjusted curriculum in or-

der to effectively address the crucial issue of unemployment, Quwaider added.

The growing unemployment rate and the changes in the labour market will lead to the emergence of a large number of trade unions in the region, the official was quoted as saying. Participates at the forum also mentioned the low presence of women in the workforce in the Arab world.

Only 17 per cent of the labor force in the region are women while the global average is 50 per cent. —MNA/Xinhua

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A US Marine adjusts his gun on the top of Hamvee inside his camp at the edge of Fallujah, on 17 Dec, 2004.—INTERNET

Pakistani PM invites Chinese entrepreneurs to invest

SHANGHAI, 18 Dec— Pakistani Prime Minister Shaukat Aziz on Friday extended a warm invitation to Chinese entrepreneurs, saying that his country has framed favourable policies for Chinese investors.

In a meeting with Chinese entrepreneurs, Aziz said Pakistan has set up investment industrial zones for Chinese investors in key economic metropolises including Karachi, Lahore, Peshawar and Faisalabad.

Aziz arrived in Shanghai Thursday night after meeting Chinese President Hu Jintao, Premier Wen Jiabao and other senior leaders in Beijing.

During his short stay in Shanghai, Aziz highlighted his country's in-

tention of encouraging economic and trade cooperation with China.

Aziz told Chinese businessmen that Pakistan is a good place to put their money because of its strong political ties with China, steadily growing economy and expanding market demands.

Pakistan hopes Chinese enterprises, especially those from the private sector, will join Pakistan's telecommunication, textile, manufacturing, tourism and real estate in-

dustries, he said.

The contract value of Chinese business investment in Pakistan has reached four billion US dollars, he said.

On Friday, Pakistan officially started constructing the building of its consulate-general in Shanghai. Aziz attended the foundation stone laying ceremony. The Pakistani consulate-general launched on 9 December as the 51st foreign consulate in Shanghai.

MNA/Xinhua

Asian ministers pledge to stamp out human trafficking

BANGKOK, 18 Dec—Ministers from the Association of South-East Asian Nation (ASEAN) and the three other Asian countries have pledged here to root out human trafficking in the region.

At the opening ceremony of the 5th ASEAN Ministerial Meeting on Social Welfare and Development on Thursday, Thai Social Development and Human Security Minister Sora-at Klinpratoom said the conference represented an important opportunity for Asian countries to develop regional peace and security.

Sora-at said that an agreement on fighting human trafficking would be signed and strategic plans would be drawn up in a bid to solve social welfare problems in the region, the official *Thai News Agency* reported on Friday. Thailand has already signed agreements on

fighting human trafficking with Laos, Vietnam, Cambodia, Myanmar and China.

"ASEAN cooperation in social welfare and development must include the easing of hardship caused by poverty, disease and social inequality," said Sora-at, taking into consideration of the members' vast disparities in wealth.

Other issues such as migrant labour, the changing nature of family life and the spread of AIDS were also discussed at the meeting. It is the first time ministers from South Korea, China and Japan joined in the two-day conference, which concluded on Friday.—MNA/Xinhua

YUKOS files for bankruptcy protection

MOSCOW, 17 Dec— The embattled Russian oil company YUKOS has filed for bankruptcy protection in the United States to prevent the auction of its main asset Yuganskneftegaz, the *Interfax* reported on Wednesday.

A statement posted in the company's web site said YUKOS filed for bankruptcy under Chapter 11 in Houston on Tuesday. It said that the impending auction of its

main production subsidiary on Sunday "will cause the company to suffer immediate and irreparable harm."

"YUKOS is asking the court for a temporary

restraining order halting the planned Sunday auction of its Yuganskneftegaz subsidiary by Russian authorities," the statement added.

MNA/Xinhua



Two US soldiers guard a blindfold Iraq detainee in Tikrit recently.

INTERNET



Vietnamese sales woman talks to a customer at an electronic shop in Hanoi, on 16 Dec, 2004. —INTERNET

Japan, S Korea agree to increase flights

IBUSUKI (Japan), 18 Dec— Japanese Prime Minister Junichiro Koizumi said Friday that Japan will consider doubling the number of shuttle flights between Tokyo's Haneda Airport and Seoul's Gimpo Airport to eight per day.

"Shuttle flights between Haneda and Gimpo are very popular. We will give positive consideration to boosting the number of flights from four to eight," he told a news conference with South Korean President Roh Moo-hyun after their one-day talks.

Koizumi said he has been informed that the total number of visits by Japanese and South Koreans to each other's country will exceed 4 million this year, up from the 3.6 million recorded for last year.

He then said Japan expects the number to hit 5 million next year, citing the 2005 World Exposition to be held in Aichi Prefecture in central Japan from March to September.

"The increase in shut-

tle flights would be an effective measure" to further promote exchanges of people between the two countries and reach the 5 million target, Koizumi said.

During the Press conference, the Japanese Premier also said he and the South Korean President reaffirmed a plan to conclude negotiations for a bilateral free trade agreement by the end of next year.

Japan and South Korea have been holding FTA talks for about one year.

Koizumi and Roh said they agreed to reciprocate visits on an annual basis, just as they did this year, with the meeting on South Korea's Cheju Island in July, and this time at the spa resort.

MNA/Xinhua

Chinese Mainland, HK join hands in science cooperation

BEIJING, 18 Dec— Officials from the Chinese Mainland and Hong Kong met for the first session of a joint committee on science and technology cooperation here Friday.

Thirty-eight committee members and concerned officials from both the Mainland and the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region (SAR) attended the session.

According to intents of cooperation agreed by the two sides at the session Friday, they will focus on research and commercialization of information technology, auto parts, integrated circuit designs and traditional Chinese medicines. Meanwhile, the two sides will enhance cooperation in drafting science and technology strategies, analyzing research resources and setting up technical standards.

MNA/Xinhua

Iraq fears put pressure on Rumsfeld to quit

BAGHDAD, 18 Dec— Donald Rumsfeld is at the centre of a Republican firestorm over his handling of the war in Iraq, with pressure appearing to mount in Washington for him to quit as defence secretary.

Although Republicans have publicly stood by George Bush's decision to go to war throughout the growing death toll among US troops and spiralling violence on the ground, the acerbic Pentagon chief has become a focus of anxieties about the conduct of the war and about the future of Iraq. Unease about Mr Rumsfeld reached critical proportions when the former Senate majority leader, Trent Lott, told businessmen in Mississippi that the defence secretary should be replaced in the new year.

Mr Lott is from the centre of the Republican party, and was a powerful figure until forced to step down as Senate leader in 2002. "I'm not a fan of Secretary Rumsfeld," he told the Biloxi

chamber of commerce. "I don't think he listens enough to his uniformed officers." He added: "I would like to see a change in that slot in the next year or so."

Earlier this week, Mr Rumsfeld was the object of a withering attack by the editor of the *Weekly Standard*, the in-house organ of the neo-conservative movement, accusing him of "arrogant" buckpassing. "Surely Don Rumsfeld is not the defence secretary Bush should want to have for the remainder of his second term," said William Kristol.

Last spring, at the height of the scandal over the Abu Ghraib prison abuse, President Bush resisted calls for Mr Rumsfeld to stand down.

Internet

Implementation of seven objectives and nine future tasks adopted by USDA Annual General Meeting (2004) discussed in Bago Division

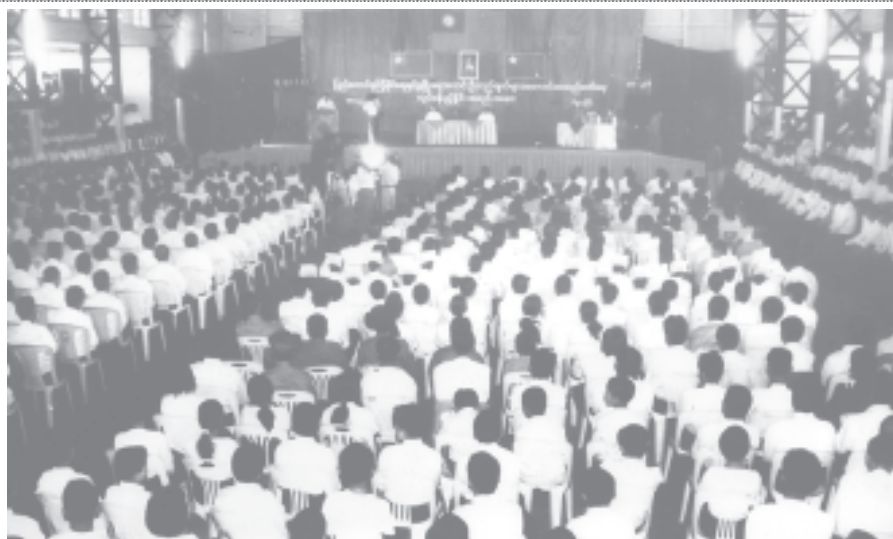


YANGON, 18 Dec—The Bago Division Union Solidarity and Development Association held a meeting at the gymnasium in Bago this morning on implementation of the seven objectives and nine future tasks laid down by the USDA Annual General Meeting (2004), and to carry out the plans in

Bago Division by Bago Division USDA.

Present on the occasion were executives of Bago Division USDA, district and township USDAs, members of the township USDAs of the division, members of Myanmar War Veterans Organization, women's affairs organizations, Myanmar Maternal and Child Welfare Association, Red Cross Society, Auxiliary Fire Brigade, nurses, students and outstanding youths.

First, those present saluted the Flag of the Union of Myanmar, and the USDA member students of No 3 BEHS sang songs to hail the meeting.



The meeting on implementation of seven objectives and nine future tasks and carrying out the plans in Bago Division in progress at Bago Division Gymnasium.—MNA

Division USDA Secretary U Saw Maw Tun chaired the meeting together with Joint-Secretary U Nyi Nyi Myint and Executive Dr Kyaw Oo.

Executive Daw Lin Lin Thant acted as MC and Bago Township USDA Executive Daw Moe Moe Khaing as co-MC.

The Chairman an-

nounced the start of the meeting. Next, U Saw Maw Tun delivered a speech. He spoke at length on the seven objectives of the USDA Annual

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 association — and the nine future tasks of the association. Next, Bago Division USDA Executive Daw Moe Thuza Kyaw tabled a motion calling for successful implementation of the seven objectives. Bago Division USDA Executive U Than Htay tabled a motion on successful implementation of the nine future tasks laid down by the USDA AGM (2004) and

(See page 7)



Delegates and outstanding students salute the State Flag at the meeting of Bago Division USDA at Bago sports grounds.—MNA



The Bago Division USDA Secretary discussed the seven objectives of the USDA Annual General Meeting—Upholding of the national policy 'Our Three Main National Causes; Successful implementation of State's political, economic and social objectives; Successful implementation of the State 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 association — and the nine future tasks of the association.

General Meeting—upholding of the national policy 'Our Three Main National Causes; Successful implementation of State's political, economic and social objectives; Successful implementation of



Secretary of Bago Division USDA U Saw Maw Tun addresses the meeting to implement the seven objectives and nine future tasks and to carry out the plans in Bago Division.—MNA



Joint-Secretary of Bago Division USDA Dr Tin Tin Win presents prize to an outstanding student.—MNA



Minister for NPED U Soe Tha arrives back from Vientiane, Lao PDR.—MNA

NPED Minister returns back from Laos

YANGON, 18 Dec—Minister for National Planning and Economic Development U Soe Tha returned here after attending the 13th Ministers' Meeting of Mekong Region Economic Cooperation Programme held in Vientiane, Lao People's Democratic Republic, from 14 to 16 December.

Minister U Soe Tha was welcomed back at the airport by Minister for Religious Affairs Brig-

Gen Thura Myint Maung, Minister at the Prime Minister's Office U Than Shwe, Laos Ambassador to Myanmar Mr Chanthavy Bohdisane and officials.

Director-General of Directorate of Trade U Nyunt Aye, Director-General of Electric Power Department Dr Thein Tun, Director-General of Directorate of Hotels and Tourism U Htay Aung, Director-General of Foreign Economic

Relations Department Daw Myo Nwe, acting Managing Director of Myanmar Cotton and Sericulture Enterprise Dr Pyay Tin, Director of Road Administration Department U Aung Myint and Director of FERD U Maung Maung Khin also arrived back after attending the second meeting of the work group on holding of the Second Mekong Summit and Senior Official Meeting.—MNA

Implementation of seven objectives ...

(from page 6)

Executive Daw Cho Nwe Ootabled a motion on successful undertaking of the plans in Bago Division by Bago Division USDA.

Naing and Dr Soe Soe of Bago Township MCWA seconded the motions.

Member of Bago Division Organization for women's affairs Daw

to winners of the essay, poster, quizz, painting and chess to hail the occasions such as the 59th Armed Forces Day, World Population Day, International



Bago Division USDA Executive U Thura Myo Khin presents K 40 million to be used in rural development to Bago District USDA Secretary U Aung Soe. MNA

Taungoo District USDA Executive Daw Theint Aung, Bago District USDA Joint-Secretary U Kyaw Kyaw

Theingi Myint Yi and Joint-Secretary of Bago Division MCW Supervisory Committee Dr Tin Tin Win presented prizes

Year of the Rice and those of the performing arts competitions.

Bago Division USDA executive U Thura Myo



Dr Soe Soe of Bago Township MCWA. MNA



Taungoo District Executive Daw Theint Aung.—MNA



Bago District USDA Joint-Secretary U Kyaw Naing.—MNA

Objectives of 57th Anniversary Independence Day

- 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 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
- All the national people to make concerted efforts for building of a new discipline-flourishing democratic nation

SWRR Minister attends Ministerial Meetings on Social Welfare and Development

YANGON, 18 Dec—The Myanmar delegation led by Minister for Social Welfare, Relief and Resettlement Maj-Gen Sein Htwa attended the 5th Ministerial Meeting on Social Welfare and Development in Bangkok, Thailand, on 16 and 17 December.

On 16 December, the meeting was held at Four Seasons Hotel present were ministers for social welfare and development from ASEAN countries, officials of ASEAN Secretariat and senior officials. Minister of Social Development and Human Security of Thailand delivered an opening address. Minister Maj-Gen Sein Htwa posed for documentary

photos with other participant ministers.

Minister Maj-Gen Sein Htwa delivered an address at the meeting. Next, all the participants approved the Joint Communiqué. Next, Minister Maj-Gen Sein Htwa and party together with other participant ministers attended the dinner hosted by the Minister of Social Development and Human Security of Thailand.

On 17 December, The First ASEAN Plus Three Ministerial Meeting for Social Welfare and Development was held. The Thai Minister of Social Development and Human Security delivered an address. All the participants discussed cooperation in disabled,

aged and families affairs and they approved the Joint Statement. In the evening, Maj-Gen Sein Htwa attended the dinner hosted by Thai Minister of Social Development and Human Security.

The Myanmar delegation led by Minister Maj-Gen Sein Htwa arrived back here by air this morning. They were welcomed back at the airport by Minister for Education U Than Aung, Minister at the Prime Minister's Office Brig-Gen Pyi Sone, Deputy Minister for Immigration and Population U Maung Aung, Officer on Special Duty Brig-Gen Thura Sein Thauang of the ministry and departmental officials.

MNA



Minister for SWRR Maj-Gen Sein Htwa addresses 5th ASEAN Ministerial Meeting for Social Welfare and Development.—SWD

Khin presented K 14 million for rural development tasks donated by the division USDA to Secretary U

Aung Soe. Later, the meeting chairman announced the resolutions of successful implementation of the seven

objectives and the nine future tasks of the association. The meeting ended with slogans chanting.—MNA



Bago Division USDA Executive Daw Moe Thuza Kyaw.—MNA



Bago Division USDA Executive U Than Htay.—MNA



Bago Division USDA Executive Daw Cho Nwe Oo.—MNA



Senior General Than Shwe inspects PyinOoLwin District General Hospital (100-bed).

MNA



Senior General Than Shwe gives guidance to Minister for Mines Brig-Gen Ohn Myint and officials after inspecting production chart of No 1 Iron and Steel Mill in PyinOoLwin.—MNA

Development of the country...

(from page 1)

Senior General Than Shwe and party arrived at No 1 Steel Mill of No 3 Mining Enterprise under the Ministry of Mines. On arrival, they were welcomed by Minister for Mines Brig-Gen Ohn Myint and officials.

In his reports at the briefing hall, Minister Brig-Gen Ohn Myint said the Senior General gave guidance on production of steel at a rate of up to 25,000 tons a year as of December during his visit to the mill on 11-4-2004.

Plans were drawn up, he continued, in accord with the guidance, and preparatory measures were also taken from June through November. Arrangements had been made to exploit iron ore and pro-

duce steel as targeted from December, he said.

Tin Htut reported on measures being taken for supply of electricity for the factory. Minister for Industry-1 U Aung Thaung, Minister for Transport Maj-Gen Thein Swe, and Minister for Science and Technology U Thaung reported on the role they could play in enhancing the mill's productivity.

In response, Senior General Than Shwe gave

for officials concerned to keep the factory in proper order and to take innovative measures for the long-term operation of the mill.

Next, Senior General Than Shwe looked into production charts of the mill and gave necessary instructions.

Later, Senior General Than Shwe inspected condition of No 1 Steel Mill and stockpiling of raw

In upgrading the hospital into a 200-bed one, more special units are to be established. As efforts are being made to turn PyinOoLwin into a hill resort, it is necessary to build the hospital into the one where patients can undergo treatment with peace of mind.



Senior General Than Shwe cordially meets with specialists, doctors and nurses at PyinOoLwin District General Hospital (100-bed).—MNA

duce steel as targeted from December, he said.

The minister also said arrangements had been made for sale of iron ore to Mandalay, Monywa and Taunggyi industrial zones in line with the Senior General's guidance. Next, he gave an account of tasks carried out for repair to machinery to boost the productivity of the factory, purchase of raw materials for the mill, measures for immediate supply of electricity and diesel, and the strength of skilled workers.

Later, Minister for Electric Power Maj-Gen

guidance, saying that efforts were to be made to increase productivity as the development of the country depended on it. Necessary assistance had been provided for No 1 Steel Mill to enhance its productive capacity, he continued. It was necessary for related ministries to supply raw materials for the mill, he pointed out.

Efforts were to be made to produce steel essential for nation-building tasks, he added, calling

materials.

In the afternoon, Senior General Than Shwe and party arrived at the 100-bed PyinOoLwin District people's hospital, where they were welcomed by Minister for Health Dr Kyaw Myint, specialists, doctors and nurses.

At the briefing hall of the hospital, Minister Dr Kyaw Myint reported on matters related to the history of the hospital and other salient points to Senior General Than Shwe and party.

Afterwards, Head of the District Health Department Dr Khin Saw Win reported on matters related to the buildings of the hospital, wards and staff quarters to Senior General Than Shwe.

In response to the reports, Senior General Than Shwe gave guidance, saying that in upgrading the hospital into a 200-bed one, more special units are to be established.

As efforts are being made to turn PyinOoLwin into a hill resort, it is necessary to build the hospital into the one where patients can undergo treatments with peace of mind.

Next, Senior General Than Shwe greeted medical specialists, doctors and nurses.

After that, Senior General Than Shwe viewed the hospital buildings and the sites chosen for construction of more buildings.

Next, Senior General Than Shwe and party inspected development of PyinOoLwin.

MNA



PyinOoLwin District General Hospital.—MNA

Myanmar, using efforts...

(from page 16)

Societies of Brunei, Cambodia, Indonesia, Laos, Malaysia, Myanmar, Philippines, Singapore, Thailand and Vietnam and delegates from Australia, Canada, India, Republic of Korea, Japan, Britain and the United States, resource persons, general secretary of Myanmar Engineering Society and executives, officials of Myanmar Foreign Correspondents Club and guests.

Before the ceremony, vocalist Yadana Oo sang a song, Si-lone-hmu-aung-bwe-khan-Myanmar-hnint-Arsiyan (From unity to victory— Myanmar and ASEAN). Next, chairmen of the respective engineering societies and officials took the designated places.

Next, artistes per-

Myint extended greetings. He thanked the government for its necessary assistance to host the conference. He said he pledged to make efforts in nation-building tasks.

At the conference 134 papers will be submitted.

Next, General Secretary of MES U Than Myint announced the agenda. Alternate Chairman of ASEAN Federation of Engineering Organizations Chairman of MES Professor Dr Sein Myint presented AFEO Distinguished Honorary Fellowship and gift to Prime Minister Lt-Gen Soe Win.

Professor Dr Sein Myint presented AFEO Honorary Fellowships to Minister Maj-Gen Saw Tun and Minister Brig-

conference as an Honorary member. As Chairman of the Myanmar Industrial



Prime Minister Lt-Gen Soe Win and party pose for documentary photo with participants to 22nd Conference of ASEAN Federation of Engineering Organizations.— MNA



Artistes entertain ASEAN friendship dance to participants of CAFEO-22.— NLM

formed dances by young girls in national costumes of ASEAN members in commemoration of the conference.

Professor Dr Sein

Gen Lun Thi. Prime Minister Lt-Gen Soe Win delivered an address. He said:

I am pleased to have privilege of addressing the

Development Committee, I am responsible for the Industrial and Technological developments of Myanmar through the effective manpower plan-

The guests will take the opportunity of their visit to Myanmar to observe peace and development in the country and experience the friendliness and hospitality of the Myanmar people.

ning of engineering experts and specialists. I have thus been informed the developments of CAFEO and Myanmar Engineering Society.

Also I wish to warmly welcome the more than 300 delegates from 18 countries who have come together for this important gathering. I hope you will

take the opportunity of your visit to Myanmar to observe peace and development in the country and experience the friendliness and hospitality of the Myanmar people.

Although Myanmar is basically an agricultural country, relying on its own efforts, we are now striving to build an agro-based industrial country and ultimately an industrial state.

At the same time, we have been striving to fulfill, step by step, the fundamental needs for the development of the country, such as roads, bridges, dams, hydro-power projects and civil engineering works. These endeavours are being implemented throughout the urban and rural areas, including remote border areas.

There is an unavoidable need for development of human resources to ably manage the development activities. As a consequence, efforts have had to be made for human resource development of engineers, doctors, scientists, computer experts and other

specialists. Human resources development is being earnestly implemented through the expansion of universities, colleges and technical schools in various regions of the country.

To turn quantity into quality, post-graduate and doctorate level courses are being offered at these institutes. With the efforts of the Myanmar Engineering Society, one can see united, outstanding and well-qualified engineers, architects and technicians.

Myanmar, using the efforts of these trained engineering experts, has successfully built 168 dams, 271 water pumping stations, 190 major bridges, 12 new airports and other civil engineering projects in cities such as Yangon and Mandalay.

The accomplishments of Myanmar engineers are all the more notable as the projects were not only numerous and sophisticated but carried out within a short span of one and a half decade.

(See page 10)



Prime Minister Lt-Gen Soe Win views technological booths of ASEAN engineering societies.— MNA

Prime Minister Lt-Gen Soe Win receives Chairman of World Federation of Engineering Organizations



Prime Minister Lt-Gen Soe Win receives Chairman of World Federation of Engineering Organizations Dato' Ir Lee Yee Chong and party. — MNA

YANGON, 18 Dec — Prime Minister of the Union of Myanmar Lt-Gen Soe Win received Chairman of the World Federation of Engineering Organizations Dato' Ir Lee Yee Chong and chairmen and leaders of engineering associations of ASEAN countries and officials of CAFEO attending the 22nd Conference of ASEAN Federation of Engineering Organization hosted by the Union of Myanmar at Executive Club at Sedona Hotel on Kaba Aye Pa-

goda Road, here, at 7.30 am today.

Also present at the call were Minister for Industry-2 Maj-Gen Saw Lwin, Minister for Construction Maj-Gen Saw Tun, Minister for Foreign Affairs U Nyan Win, Minister for Energy Brig-Gen Lun Thi, Deputy Minister for Industry-2 Lt-Col Khin Maung Kyaw, Deputy Minister for Progress of Border Areas and National Races and Development Affairs Col Tin Ngwe, Deputy Minister for Science

and Technology Dr Chan Nyein, Director-General U Soe Tint at the Prime Minister's Office, Director-General Thura U Aung Htet of the Protocol Department, Director-General U Aung Bwa of the ASEAN Affairs Department, Alternate President of ASEAN Engineering Federation Chairman of Myanmar Engineering Society Prof Dr Sein Myint and General Secretary U Than Myint.

MNA

Myanmar, using efforts...

(from page 9)

For example, the Tha Phan Seik Dam which irrigates a vast area of more than 200,000 hectares is the longest dam in Southeast Asia. The Mone Multi-purpose dam had to be constructed using and extremely exacting design and state of the art techniques. The 3,528 metre-long Mawlamyine Bridge

trial and civil engineering projects the country must undertake. On the other hand, as science and technology is developing beyond imagination, it is imperative that we continue to exert utmost efforts. In this regard, I firmly believe that the Myanmar Engineering Association will stand us in good stead.

We also hope that AFEO will assist us in our efforts.

I appreciate the call of the World Engineering Conference (WEC 2004) action plan to step up utilization of our engineering expertise and skills in cooperation with the international community in implementing development tasks such as poverty alleviation, sustainable development of the socio-economic of the people, and the narrowing of the opportunity gap between rich and poor countries.

In conclusion, I would like to once again express my thanks to AFEO and its members for conferring upon me the Distinguished Honorary Fellowship. While expressing my conviction that this conference will be fruitful, I take this opportunity to wish the Distinguished Delegates a pleasant stay in Myanmar.

The Prime Minister and

party posed for a documentary photo together with the chairmen and members of the World Federation of Engineering Organizations and the ASEAN Federation of Engineering Organizations.

After the ceremony, the Prime Minister viewed the booths of the organizations staged to mark the Conference.

The 22nd Conference of the ASEAN Federation of Engineering Organizations will be held in con-



General Secretary of Myanmar Engineering Society U Than Myint.

MNA

junction with the 2nd All ASEAN Academy of Engineering and Technology-AAET Meeting, AFEO Governing Board Meeting, AER Committee Meeting and ASEAN Engineering Awards Selection Committee Meeting, Forum for AFEO Code of Practice and YEAFEO Programs.

MNA

Dinner hosted to chairmen, representatives of engineering societies from ASEAN countries

YANGON, 18 Dec — Dinner was hosted to Chairmen and representatives of engineering societies from ASEAN countries attending the 22nd Conference of ASEAN Federation of Engineering Organizations by Myanmar Engineering Society at Sedona Hotel on Kaba Aye Pagoda Road at 7 pm today.

Present at the dinner were Deputy Minister for Industry-2 Lt-Col Khin Maung Kyaw, Deputy Ministers for Rail Transportation Thura U Thauung Lwin and U Pe Than, Deputy Minister for Information U Thein Sein, Deputy Minister for Progress of Border Areas and National Races and Development Affairs Col Tin Ngwe, Deputy Minister for Science and Technology Dr Chan Nyein, senior military officers, Chair-

man of the World Federation of Engineering Organizations Dato' Ir Lee Yee Chong and the advisers, Chairman of ASEAN Engineering Commission Dr Gue See Sew, Alternate Chairman of ASEAN FEO Professor Chairman of Myanmar Engineering Society Dr Sein Myint, chairmen and representatives of engineering societies from ASEAN countries, engineers from Australia, Canada, India, the Republic of Korea, Japan, the UK and the US, the General Secretary, the Executives and the engineers of MES and others.

Before and during the dinner, the artistes of Takhainglonshwe troupe entertained those present with Myanmar traditional dances.

MNA

22nd Conference of ASEAN Federation of Engineering Organization commences

YANGON, 18 Dec — The 22nd Conference of ASEAN Federation of Engineering Organization hosted by the Union of Myanmar and organized by Myanmar Engineering Society was held at Sedona Hotel on Kaba Aye Road at 10.10 am today.

Present on the occasion were Chairman of the World Federation of Engineering Organizations Dato' Ir Lee Yee Chong, Chairman of ASEAN Engineering Commission Dr Gue See Sew, Advisers to the ASEAN Federation of Engineering Organization Ir Choo Oko Beng and Ir Chitr Lilavivat, chairmen of engineering organizations and delegation leaders and delegates of Brunei Darussalam, Cambodia, Indonesia, Lao PDR, Malaysia, the Philippines, Singapore, Thailand and Vietnam, representatives of Canada, Australia, the UK and the US, resource engineers who will

submit papers to the conference and observers.

Alternate chairman of ASEAN Engineering Federation Chairman of Myanmar Engineering Society Prof Dr Sein Myint presided over the conference. Chairman of the World Federation of Engineering Organizations Dato' Ir Lee Yee Chong extended greetings.

The chairmen and delegation leaders of respective countries submitted the annual country reports. In the afternoon, six groups of the participants presented 48 papers. Similarly, the meeting for new generation engineers of AFEO, the ASEAN Engineering Registration Committee, the ASEAN Engineer Award Scrutinization Committee and the Second ASEAN Engineering and Technology Academy Meeting were held at Sedona Hotel. The conference continues tomorrow. — MNA



AFEO Chairman (cum) CAFEO-22 Organizing Committee Chairman Prof Dr Sein Myint.

NLM

was built with great difficulty over the confluence of three river channels and cross currents of sea tides. We have also constructed Suspension-type and Cablestay-type bridges. These achievements demonstrate the expertise and capabilities of Myanmar engineers.

We cannot, however, rest on our laurels. We have to continue training engineering experts. There remain many indus-

Deputy Chief of PLA General Logistics Department Lt-Gen Sun Zhiqiang and party visit Inlay Lake, Taunggyi

YANGON, 18 Dec — Visiting Deputy Chief of General Logistics Department of the People's Liberation Army of China Lieutenant-General Sun Zhiqiang and party, accompanied by Col San Aye Hla of the Ministry of Defence, Chinese Military Attaché Col Ma Shoudong and officials, left here by Tatmadaw aircraft on 17 December and arrived at Heho Airport.

They were welcomed by Chairman of Shan State Peace and Development Council Commander of Eastern Command Maj-Gen Khin Maung Myint, Deputy Commander Brig-Gen Win Myint and senior military officers.

Accompanied by Deputy Commander Brig-Gen Win Myint, Lt-Gen Sun Zhiqiang and party proceeded to Golden Island Cottage Hotel at Inlay Lake in Nyaungshwe. In the afternoon, the guests went to Inlay PhaungdawU Pagoda where they were welcomed by members of the pagoda board of trustees and officials.

Lt-Gen Sun Zhiqiang and party paid homage to the Buddha images, made



Deputy Chief of General Logistics Department of PLA Lt-Gen Sun Zhiqiang offers gold foils to Buddha images of Inlay PhaungdawU Pagoda. —MNA

donations and offered gold foils to the images. Lt-Gen Sun Zhiqiang signed in the visitors' book and presented cash donations to the Chairman of the pagoda board of trustees U Hla Kyaw. Lt-Gen Sun Zhiqiang viewed local-made textiles and handiwork at the precinct of the pagoda.

On arrival at Alodawpauk Pagoda in Nanpan Village, they paid homage at the pagoda. U KhunZaw Pyan presented a Buddha image to Lt-Gen Sun Zhiqiang. Afterwards, Lt-Gen Sun Zhiqiang signed in the visitors' book.

In Inpawkhon Village, they observed production process of silk textile at Mya Sekkya Silk Textile Industry.

They visited vegetable patches on the floating islands in the Lake by boat. At Ngaphechaung Monastery, the guests paid homage to the ancient Buddha image. At the Golden Floating Hotel, the guests together with Deputy Commander Brig-Gen Win Myint had dinner.

After visiting Nanpan Market in Nanpan Village this morning, the guests proceeded to Taunggyi. Commander Maj-Gen

Khin Maung Myint hosted a luncheon in honour of Lt-Gen Sun Zhiqiang and party at Mount Pleasant Hotel in Taunggyi. Before the luncheon, Maj-Gen Khin Maung Myint and Lt-Gen Sun Zhiqiang exchanged gifts. After the luncheon, the guests went to Shwephonepint Pagoda and Çulamuni Lawkachantha Pagoda. Next, they visited Myoma Market in Taunggyi. At Heho Airport, they were seen off by Deputy Commander Brig-Gen Win Myint and officials. At 2.45 pm, the Chinese guests arrived back here.

MNA

Traditional medicine practitioners visit Yangon

YANGON, 18 Dec — The delegates to the fifth Myanmar Traditional Medicine Practitioners' Conference dividing themselves into two groups toured Yangon today. The group-1 delegates, accompanied by Director of the Traditional Medicine Department Dr Sein Win and officials, visited the Shwedagon Pagoda and offered lights, flowers and water there.

On arrival at Yangon Traditional Medicine Hospital on Ngahtetkyi Pagoda Road in Bahan Township, they were conducted round the medical facility and herbal plantations. They also visited the Research and Development Division of the Traditional Medicine De-

partment.

The delegates of the group-2, together with officials of the TMD, visited the FAME pharmaceutical factory in the Industrial Zone (3), Hlinethaya City. Managing Director Dr Khin Maung Lwin and officials conducted them round the factory.

Next, they proceeded to the Lawka Chantha Abhaya Labha Muni Buddha Image on Mindhamma Hill in Insein Township. The chairman of the pagoda board of trustees briefed them on the background history of the image. The delegates made cash donations to the image. In addition, they visited the white elephant shed on Mindhamma Hill.

MNA

Traditional Medicines and Medical Equipment Exhibition continues

YANGON, 18 Dec — The Fifth Traditional Medicines and Medical Equipment Exhibition continued for the third day at Tatmadaw Convention Centre on U Wisara Road today. Minister for Education U Than Aung visited the exhibition this morning.

It is being held with the aim of promoting the

research work on traditional medicines and enabling the people to buy traditional medicines at one stop. With a total of 134 booths of private medical houses and ministries, the exhibition attracted over 20,000 people from all walks of life including monks. The exhibition continues tomorrow.

MNA

Victorious Myanmar footballers honoured in Malaysia

YANGON, 18 Dec — A ceremony to honour Myanmar National Soccer Team that took the lead with 10 points from four games in the Group-B of the fifth ASEAN Tiger Cup Football Championship (2004) by embassy staff and Myanmar businessmen in Malaysia led by Myanmar Ambassador to Malaysia U Hla Muang was held at the residence

of the Myanmar ambassador in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia, on 13 December evening.

The Myanmar ambassador, on the occasion, extended greetings.

Next, the Myanmar ambassador presented a 21-inch Sony TV each to Myanmar footballers including two coaches, Ringgit 1,000 each to two foreign coaches and a Sony DVD Player

each to the managers, the medical officers and six interpreters.

Later, Vice-President of Myanmar Football Federation Lt-Col Maung Ko spoke words of thanks. Next, Striker Myo Hlaing Win, on behalf of Myanmar footballers, expressed thanks. Afterwards, a dinner was hosted to those present.

MNA



Myanmar Ambassador to Malaysia U Hla Muang awards Malaysian Ringgit 1,000 to Myanmar soccer team coach Mr Ivan Venkov Kolev. —

MNA



Public visit 5th Traditional Medicine and Medical Equipment Exhibition. —MNA

The booth of Shwe Mann Taung traditional medicine production industry established since 1933 sells various kinds of potent medicine to the public. — (H)



All this needs to be known

- * Do not be frightened whenever intimidated
- * Do not be bolstered whenever flattered
- * Do not be softened whenever appeased

NOTICE

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- (a) Aircraft/Engines/parts sent for repairs and overhauling.
- (b) Purchase of required materials and parts for the aircraft.
- (c) Purchase of spare parts and accessories.

2. Companies concerned, wishing to carry out the required services detailed above, are requested to contact the undermentioned address at earliest convenience for registration and payment of required cash deposit.

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No. 363/421 Merchant Street
Botataung Township, Yangon.
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A ferry passes the Zlatni Rat beach on Croatia's Adriatic coast on 17 Dec, 2004.—INTERNET

Russians entitle Putin "politician of the year"

Moscow, 18 Dec—The Russian people have again named their President Vladimir Putin "politician of the year," *Interfax* news agency reported Thursday.

According to a public opinion poll carried out by the Public Opinion fund on 10 December, 26 per cent of the 1,500 respondents from 44 Russian regions chose Putin for the title, a traditional end-of-year pick.

The leader of the Liberal-Democratic Party Vladimir Zhirinovskiy came

second following Putin with people's approving rate of 5 per cent and was followed by Emergency Situations Minister Sergei Shoigu with the rate of 2 per cent.

No other Russian politicians won over 1 per cent support from the respondents in the poll.

However, the results of

the poll show that 54 per cent of the respondents were undecided about who they would name politician of the year.

Putin has kept the "politician of the year" since 1999, when he was named Prime Minister of Russia by his predecessor Boris Yeltsin.—MNA/Xinhua

Designers present updated plans for WTC memorial

NEW YORK, 18 Dec—The architectural team designing the World Trade Center (WTC) memorial presented an update on its plans Thursday afternoon.

Governor George Pataki and Mayor Michael Bloomberg joined the team of architects to present a more detailed description of what visitors will experience at the memorial and the surrounding plaza.

The updated design will not include any changes to the random listing of the victims' names. The families of some rescue workers wanted their loved ones listed separately, though police officers, firefighters and paramedics will be identifiable by the insignia of their respective agencies.

"We have to have a memorial that really allows us to connect the sheer enormity of the Twin

Towers, to the individuals that were taken from us," said Bloomberg.

Pataki praised designers for creating a fitting memorial to those who lost their lives at the WTC site. He said the memorial will help tell the story of September 11 and the lost lives, so that future generations will understand the enormity of what happened here.

The new schematic design features a vast landscaped civic plaza, cascading voids with deeply recessed pools and an area for those lost but never identified.

"The primary responsibility that we have is to those who lost so much on that terrible day," said memorial designer

Michael Arad. "We want to show, to make clear, what a great loss we all suffered."

In January, 2004, a 13-member jury selected "Reflecting Absence" by Michael Arad and Peter Walker as the design for the WTC memorial. Over the past months, the design team, with associate architect Max Bond, embarked on the schematic design process to develop the physical and programmatic elements of the memorial.

The memorial, which will commemorate the nearly 3,000 victims of the September 11 terror attacks and the 1993 bombing, is expected to be completed by 2009.

MNA/Xinhua

Suez Canal revenues to exceed \$3b in 2004

ISMAILIA (Egypt), 17 Dec—Egypt's Suez Canal revenues are expected to exceed some 3 billion US dollars this year as more vessels opt for the strategic waterway, Canal Authority Chairman Ahmed Ali Fadel said Tuesday.

"The revenues for this year are expected to be over 3 billion US dollars, compared to some 2.5 billion US dollars in the year of 2003," he told a Press conference.

"The revenue increase is a result of the combination of several factors, such as better navigation services and higher oil prices," he added.

Oil prices witnessed sharp rises this year, making alternate sea journeys

more expensive via the Cape of Good Hope in South Africa.

Fadel said the Canal Authority has made great efforts to make the canal become a major waterway in the world, including measures taken to deepen and expand the canal so that it could take larger vessels.

He also said Egypt will raise transit fees for ships passing through the canal by an average of 3

per cent next year, but he played down its impact on the number of ships using the waterway.

"We only raise the fees after a series of careful studies so that our clients will not be scared away," he said.

Some 7 per cent of sea transported world trade passes through the Suez Canal, bringing billions of dollars in revenues to Egypt every year.

MNA/Xinhua

"Sideways" leads Critics' Choice Awards nominations

LOS ANGELES, 17 Dec—Fox Searchlight's romantic comedy "Sideways" dominated the nominations of the 10th annual Critics' Choice Awards with eight nods, the *Hollywood Reporter* reported Thursday.

This came one day after the film led the Golden Globe nominations with seven mentions.

Miramax Films' "Finding Neverland", a portrait of "Peter Pan" creator JM Barrie, followed with seven nominations. And Martin Scorsese's Howard Hughes biopic "The Aviator" scored six nominations, the report said.

The Critics' Choice Awards, organized by the Broadcast Film Critics Association, a group composed of 194 critics from around the country, has a

good record of foreshadowing the Academy Awards. Earlier this year, its picks for Picture, Director and the four main acting categories who all won Oscars too.

Winners will be announced during a January 10 ceremony at the Wilshire Theatre.

The group nominated 10 films for best picture, with "Collateral," "Eternal Sunshine of the Spotless Mind," "Hotel Rwanda," "Kinsey," "Million Dollar Baby," "The Phantom of the Opera" and "Ray"

rounding out the list.

In the acting categories, Jamie Foxx picked up two nominations—a best actor mention for his work as Ray Charles in "Ray" and a best supporting actor nomination for his taxi driver in "Collateral".

Kate Winslet also emerged as a double nominee, as she was nominated as best actress for her romantic turn in "Eternal Sunshine" and as best supporting actress for her consumptive mother in "Finding Neverland".

MNA/Xinhua

မညာရေးဖြင့် ခေတ်မီပွဲပြီးတိုးတက်သော နိုင်ငံတော်ကြီး တည်ဆောက်မှု

Australian surfer killed by white sharks

SYDNEY, 18 Dec— A young Australian surfer was killed in a horrifying attack by two great white sharks at a popular Adelaide beach on Thursday, the second fatal attack in five days, rescue officials and witnesses said.

Witnesses reported seeing the two sharks — one up to five metres (16 feet) long — attack the teenager while he was being towed behind a boat on his surfboard.

"It got his left arm and took him around the boat and then another shark has come in and they just took him to pieces," an unidentified woman told Nine Network television.

Police and emergency officials said they had been unable to find any sign of the surfer or the sharks since the mid-afternoon attack off West Beach in the South Australian state capital of Adelaide.

They said the attack happened after the surfer, described as an 18-year-old, fell from his surfboard which was being towed by three friends in a small boat about 300 metres (980 feet) from shore.

A 38-year-old died after he was mauled by a shark while spearfishing off the far northeast coast of tropi-

cal Queensland State on Saturday. The species of the shark which attacked him was not known, police said at the time.

In July, another surfer died in Western Australia State when he was attacked by a shark described as being "as big as a car".

Australia has a reputation for shark attacks but there are relatively few each year. International Shark File figures show most attacks occur in North American waters.

The first documented attack in Australian waters was in 1791 and there have been more than 625 attacks in the past 200 years, about 190 of them fatal.

Great white sharks are highly migratory and travel thousands of kilometres in search of food. Despite being one of the fiercest of predators, they are also extremely vulnerable and are a protected species in Australian waters.—MNA/Reuters



A 4.2-metre great white shark leaps from the sea at the appropriately named Dangerous Reef off the northeast coast of Australia, on 15 Dec, 2004.
INTERNET

2007 to be observed as SAARC Media Year

KATHMANDU, 18 Dec — Information ministers of the South Asian Association for Regional Co-operation (SAARC) adopted Friday an 11-point plan of action that calls for observing 2007 as SAARC Media Year.

The Media Year will enhance multilateral media cooperation and ensure a free flow of information among the member states, the SAARC Secretariat based here said.

"The agenda recommends all member countries to reduce postal and telecommunication rates for media transmission and information materials and hold annual meetings of heads of national radio, TV and news agencies of the SAARC nations," the secretariat said in a Press release.

MNA/Xinhua

Arctic Ocean was once as warm as the Mediterranean

LONDON, 17 Dec— It may be freezing cold and covered in ice now but 70 million years ago the Arctic Ocean was as tepid as the Mediterranean.

In a past greenhouse world, the frigid north would have been balmy, judging from evidence in a core drilled in an ice island drifting over a ridge on the ocean floor.

Hugh Jenkyns, of the University of Oxford in England, and scientists from the Royal Netherlands Institute for Sea Research analysed organic material in mud in the core and calculated that the mean sea surface temperature of the Arctic Ocean was 15 degrees Centigrade (59 Fahrenheit) about 70 million years ago.

"Further back in time if would have been even warmer, so it would have been a good place to swim," said Jenkyns, who reported the findings in the journal *Nature* on Wednesday.

Twenty million years

earlier it could have reached 20 degrees Centigrade (68 Fahrenheit).

"It was certainly very much a greenhouse world," he told *Reuters*. Although the scientists do not know why it was so warm, they suspect it may have been due to high concentrations of atmospheric carbon dioxide, the greenhouse gas blamed for contributing to current global warming.

In a commentary in the journal, Christopher Poulsen, of the University of Michigan in the United States, said the levels of carbon dioxide were probably three to six times what they are today which contributed to a "super-greenhouse climate".

"For a region blanketed in darkness for half of the year, the Arctic Ocean was astoundingly warm," said Poulsen. —MNA/Reuters

Germany says developed nations responsible for climate change

BUENOS AIRES, 17 Dec — Developed countries "have the maximum responsibility" for the emission of greenhouse gases, German Environment Minister Juergen Trittin said here Thursday.

"The most powerful nations have to pay attention to the demands of developing countries," Trittin said at the closing of the UN conference on climate change with participation of environment ministers from about 80 countries.

He said agreement will be reached on a second period of commitments by 2012, when the Kyoto Protocol expires.

The Kyoto deal aims to reduce the six major heat-trapping gases including carbon dioxide by 5 per cent, a first small step in the fight against global warming. Under the protocol, industrialized countries together must reduce man-made emissions by 5 per cent by 2012 versus 1990 levels.

Spain said it will have difficulties in meeting the targets for the control of greenhouse gas emissions

because it increased 40 per cent of them since 1990.

Arturo Aizpiri, Spanish Minister for Pollution and Climate Change Prevention, recognized that the excess in gas emission has to be reduced through suitable mechanisms. On its part, Argentina proposed to hold two informal meetings in 2005 to discuss new measures to control the global climate warming.

The United States, the biggest polluter in the world with 25 per cent of heat-trapping greenhouse gas emissions, has refused to ratify the Kyoto protocol on cutting emissions of six key gases, which comes into effect in February. US President George W. Bush rejected the protocol after he took office in 2001 saying it would cost US industry too much to meet the gas emission cuts under the accord.—MNA/Xinhua

169 injured in Turkish shopping centre fire

ANKARA, 17 Dec— A total of 169 people were injured in a fire which broke out in a shopping centre in Istanbul, Turkish Prime Ministry's emergency management office said in a statement Wednesday.

The injured were receiving treatment at hospital, and the wounds were not life-threatening, the statement said.

The fire broke out at a movie theatre in G-MALL Culture and Shopping Centre in Dolmabahce District of Istanbul later Tuesday.

It seemed the fire was caused by burning decoration candles in the mall.

MNA/Xinhua

BMW, Honda drop opposition to F1 engine changes

LONDON, 17 Dec — BMW and Honda have withdrawn their opposition to Formula One's 2006 engine regulations after deciding a legal challenge would be bad for motor racing.

"The BMW Williams F1 team has decided, in accord with BAR Honda, not to appeal against the engine regulations... scheduled for 2006," BMW motorsport director Mario Theissen said on Thursday.

"A legal challenge to the content and form of the modified regulations would take up too much time — time in which all manufacturers would be forced to undertake costly parallel developments.—MNA/Xinhua



Traffic begins to cross the newly-opened Millau bridge, in southern France, on 16 Dec, 2004, as private cars, trucks and motorcycles were able for the first time to take a drive through the sky, 270 metres (891 feet) about the Tran River valley for a 2.5 kilometres (1.6 mile) stretch through France's Massif Central mountains. — INTERNET

SPORTS

Gerrard not leaving Anfield

NYON (Switzerland), 18 Dec—England midfielder Steven Gerrard will not be leaving Anfield, Liverpool's chief executive Rick Parry reiterated on Friday.

"He ain't for sale," Parry retorted sharply to a question after his team drew Bayer Leverkusen in the last 16 of the Champions League. "I don't know how many times we have to say it. We are actually getting rather bored with this now. It does not need re-stating."

Gerrard recently questioned whether his future remained at Anfield, just months after making a U-turn on a decision to join Chelsea.

His public doubt attracted much interest from Europe's major clubs.

Rather than off-loading players, however, Parry says Liverpool are likely to add to Rafael Benitez' squad.

"Losing a striker at the beginning of the season was clearly a blow," he said, referring to Djibril Cisse who broke his leg in October. "We are looking all over the place."—MNA/Reuters

Real Madrid may need to appoint British-style manager

MADRID, 18 Dec—Real Madrid may need to appoint a British-style manager to help get the best out of the team's collection of world-class players, according to coach Mariano Garcia Remon.

"A manager is a very important figure and Real Madrid and all the big clubs need one," Garcia Remon told Radio Marca.

"At the moment it's very difficult for Madrid, but a club like this needs a public face that can make decisions about sporting matters. It's very important.

"We have examples like Manchester United and Arsenal who have people who not only train the team but also make decisions about the planning of the side." Spanish media have reported that Real are searching for an experienced figure to work alongside Garcia Remon in an attempt to bring about a change in fortunes at the club.

Real failed to win a trophy last season and have made a disappointing start to the present campaign, lying 12 points

behind Primera Liga leaders Barcelona but having played a game less.

Garcia Remon only took charge of the team after Jose Antonio Camacho made the shock decision to quit his post after just three games of the season.

Coaches at Real have traditionally had little input in the planning of the team and president Florentino Perez has taken personal control of making most of the club's signings since he was elected to the post in 2000.

England manager Sven-Goran Eriksson, Arsenal boss Arsene Wenger, Portugal coach Luiz Felipe Scolari and former AC Milan coach Arrigo Sacchi, who is now technical director at Parma, are the main candidates for the new post according to reports in the Spanish media.

MNA/Reuters

Mourinho welcomes Chelsea's Champions League tie against Barca

COBHAM (England), 18 Dec—Jose Mourinho welcomed Chelsea's high-profile Champions League tie against Barcelona on Friday, saying the match would be spectacular and close but Chelsea could shade it.

The Portuguese manager, who worked as assistant at Barcelona under Bobby Robson and Louis van Gaal, said Barcelona were a big club with a fine team, racing away at the top of the Spanish League.

"But as a football team they are not better than us," Mourinho said after a session at Chelsea's new training ground southwest of London.

"Nobody is the underdog. It is 51-49 to us," he said.

Mourinho was in lighthearted mood after watching the draw on television with his team, who he said whooped with enthusiasm at the prospect of meeting the Catalans in February.

"We always want to play the biggest games against the biggest clubs," he said.

Mourinho recalled the last time the two sides met in a Champions League quarterfinal in 2000 when he was on the Barcelona bench and Gianluca Vialli in charge at Chelsea, the atmosphere had been electric and the standard of football high.

Barcelona won the tie 6-4 on aggregate after losing 3-1 at Stamford Bridge and winning 5-1 after extra time at the Nou Camp.

He said the difference between that Chelsea side and his own, who qualified from the first stage of the Champions League with two games to spare and are four points clear in the Premier League, was, perhaps, extra mental strength and self belief.

Chelsea, however, have a tougher build-up to the tie with League Cup, FA Cup and a packed Premier League schedule over the next two months, while Barcelona were clear favourites in La Liga, he said.



Chelsea boss Jose Mourinho is set to stand by the same side for Saturday's match at home to Norwich that drew 2-2 with champions Arsenal last week.—INTERNET

"Maybe that's an advantage for them."

Mourinho said that after four years in Barcelona, where his son was born, he felt he was partly Catalan.—MNA/Reuters

Nistelrooy to undergo scan later on Friday

LONDON, 18 Dec—Manchester United striker Ruud van Nistelrooy will undergo a scan later on Friday as concern over his calf injury deepens at Old Trafford.

The Dutchman, United's top scorer with 12 goals this season, has missed the last four matches.

"Ruud isn't any better and we are having to reassess what we are going

to do about it," United manager Alex Ferguson told a news conference.

"The danger is with calf injuries they start to move down to the Achilles. That is our concern.

"He will go for a scan today and then we will wait and see what to do next."

Van Nistelrooy last played in United's 3-0 victory at West Bromwich Albion three weeks ago.

"It's a bit of a concern because he's the best striker in the business and we want him back, particularly for the European campaign coming."

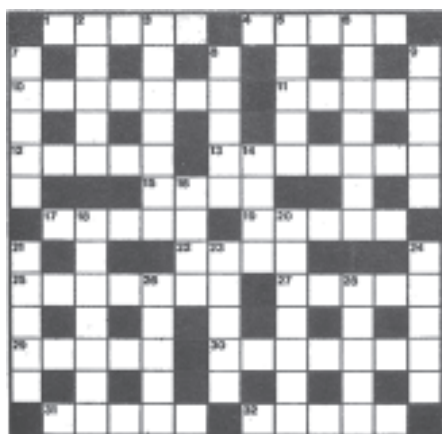
With van Nistelrooy out and Louis Saha also set to miss the Christmas programme with a knee injury, United are left with just two experienced strikers in Wayne Rooney and Alan Smith.

Smith scored his seventh goal of the season in Monday's 1-1 draw at Fulham.

"He's been terrific since he joined us," Ferguson said. "I can't speak more highly of what Alan's done. He's the old-fashioned type of centre-forward in many ways, but he's also a modern striker too. He's been a real hero for us."

MNA/Reuters

CROSSWORD PUZZLE



ACROSS

- 1 During that time
- 4 Is infatuated
- 10 Unlawful
- 11 Barrels
- 12 Severe
- 13 Put in order
- 15 Container
- 17 Measuring device
- 19 Senior
- 22 Lazy
- 25 Coast
- 27 Timepiece
- 29 Performed
- 30 Traveller
- 31 Great sea
- 32 Existing

DOWN

- 2 Divide by two
- 3 Permit
- 5 Happen
- 6 Distilled extract
- 7 Befuddled with alcohol
- 8 Book of maps
- 9 Crooked
- 14 Scottish dance
- 16 Parched
- 18 Stretchable
- 20 Instructive discourse
- 21 Attempt
- 23 Deepness
- 24 Large sea fish
- 26 Sub-continent
- 28 Vegetable

Champions League draw offers Arsenal chance to revenge

LONDON COLNEY (England), 18 Dec—Arsene Wenger says Friday's Champions League draw offers Arsenal a chance to exact revenge for one of their worst displays in Europe.



The English Football Association (FA) found Arsenal manager Arsene Wenger guilty of improper conduct and fined him 15,000 pounds (29,000 dollars).—INTERNET

Recalling their 1-0 defeat by Bayern Munich at the Olympic stadium in the second group stage in 2001, Wenger said: "It was one of our worst European performances.

"It was a non-existent performance, I feel, and therefore it's good for us to have a chance to put that right," he told reporters after the draw for the last 16 pitted his London club against Bayern again.

Arsenal, who had drawn 2-2 with Bayern at home after squandering a two-goal lead in the second half, still squeezed into a quarterfinal with Valencia despite

the loss in Germany.

Wenger believes Arsenal are a better side now and he played down their disappointing record in the Champions League. The club have yet to progress beyond the last eight.

"We know we are not as dreadful as everybody says we are in Europe," he said.

"I concede that we have not won it, but when I saw the (draw) announcement it said only three teams have not lost a game -- Inter Milan, Juventus and who? Arsenal."

Wenger also took heart from a draw which has thrown together many of the favourites for next May's final in Istanbul, ensuring there will be a few heavyweight casualties.

"It's a massive game, but what's interesting this year is that with Real Madrid versus Juventus, Barcelona versus Chelsea, Manchester United versus AC Milan and Arsenal versus Bayern Munich in the last 16...that's four big teams who are going to be out.

"The guys who survive that round will be in a very good position. If we get through the last 16 we have a good opportunity."—MNA/Reuters

Russia to go ahead with auction to sell YUKOS' key asset

Moscow, 18 Dec — Russia said on Friday it would go ahead with an auction to sell the key asset of embattled oil company YUKOS despite a US bankruptcy court decision to block it for several days.

"We are selling Yugansk by order of a bailiff and so far we haven't received any order to cancel the auction (on Sunday). Therefore, we are still planning to continue," a spokesman for the Federal Property Fund said.

Russia has said the US court, where YUKOS made a surprise bankruptcy protection filing on Tuesday, has no jurisdiction over the sale.

The government has ordered the auction of Yuganskneftegaz, YUKOS' main production unit, to repay some of the 27.5 billion US dollars it says YUKOS owes in back taxes.

Russia's state-controlled gas monopoly Gazprom, expected to win the auction whose starting price is 8.5 billion US dollars, said it would participate despite the US court decision to block it for 10 days.

"Nobody has so far annulled the decision of our main shareholder (Gazprom) to participate in the auction," Alexander Stepanenko, a spokesman for Gazprom's oil subsidiary Gazpromneft, which will participate in the sale, said. The US court in Houston said the ruling applied to Gazprom and a syndicate of Western banks that was to finance the purchase.

The banks involved are Deutsche Bank, ABN Amro, BNP Paribas, Calyon, Dresdner Kleinwort Wasserstein and JP Morgan. Gazprom must have a signed loan agreement to place the bid, bankers have told Reuters.

YUKOS' woes are widely seen to be part of the Kremlin's wish to crush the political ambitions of the company's key shareholder Mikhail Khodorkovsky, who is on trial for fraud and tax evasion.

YUKOS, citing the opening bid price set by the government, had argued the sale of Yugansk would destroy shareholder value.

Appraisal reports prepared by Dresdner Kleinwort Wasserstein and JP Morgan had put the value of Yugansk between 18 billion US dollars and 25 billion US dollars. — MNA/Reuters

New Zealand company develops drugs for cancer treatment

WELLINGTON, 18 Dec — New Zealand cancer drug development company Proacta has developed a cancer drug which will be taken forward to human trials, local daily *The Dominion Post* reported Friday.

The paper reported that the company had developed several dozen chemical compounds, but had narrowed its list to four in recent months. It has decided which of those will undergo further testing for its suitability for use in humans, paving the way for clinical trials as early as the end of 2005.

Joint leader of Proacta's science team Bill Denny was quoted as saying that the decision was the culmination of 15 years of work and would allow the team to work toward human trials in New Zealand or New Zealand and Australia.

He said it was a rarity for locally developed drugs to make it to clinical trials, and with international pharmaceutical companies usually involved in the development it was even rarer to conduct human trials in New Zealand.

One advantage of doing it all in New Zealand was the possibility that local patients could be treated during trials, years earlier than would be possible if they waited for a drug to go to market, he said.

The yet-to-be-named compound is a "prodrug," a treatment which remains inactive unless triggered by a specific factor.

Proacta Chief Executive Paul Cossum said there would be pre-clinical trials for toxicity and to make sure the company could produce enough of the compound for human trials.

Proacta is a cooperative venture between University of Auckland and Stanford University in the United States. This year the company raised about nine million US dollars from New Zealand and overseas investors to fund development of its compounds.

MNA/Xinhua

Uganda committed to rid poverty in country

KAMPALA, 18 Dec — The Ugandan Government has expressed support for people organized in income generating activities to rid poverty, saying such activities can ensure income and food security in the country, according to the government on Thursday.

Ugandan Vice-President Gilbert Bukenya made the remarks on Wednesday when addressing a public rally at Nkoma sub-county headquarters in Kamwenge District, southwestern part of the East African country, according to a Press release issued by the Vice-President's Press unit on Thursday.

About 38 per cent of Uganda's population are currently living under poverty line.

Bukenya, who is on countrywide poverty eradication campaign, advised the people of Kamwenge District to engage in diversified and modern agriculture of dairy and upland rice production to improve their purchasing power and better their standard of living.

MNA/Xinhua



WEATHER

Saturday, 18 December, 2004

Summary of observations recorded at 09:30 hours MST: During the past 24 hours, weather has been fair in the whole country. Night temperatures were (3°C) to (4°C) above normal in Kachin and Northern Shan States, (3°C) to (4°C) below normal in Kachin State, Bago and Taninthayi Divisions, (5°C) below normal in Chin State and Yangon Division about normal in the remaining areas. The significant night temperatures were Namsam and PyinOoLwin (4°C) each, Mindat (5°C), Moekok (7°C).

Maximum temperature on 17-12-2004 was 90°F. Minimum temperature on 18-12-2004 was 55°F. Relative humidity at 9:30 hrs MST on 18-12-2004 was 73%. Total sunshine hours on 17-12-2004 was (4.0) hours approx. Rainfalls on 18-12-2004 were nil at Yangon Airport, Kaba-Aye and central Yangon. Total rainfalls since 1-1-2004 were 112.28 inches at Yangon Airport, 106.77 inches at Kaba-Aye and 109.68 inches at central Yangon. Maximum wind speed at Yangon (Kaba-Aye) was 5 mph from Southeast at (12:30) hours MST on 17-12-2004.

Bay inference: According to the observation at (09:30) hours MST today, the low pressure area over southwest Bay persist. Weather is partly cloudy in the South Bay and generally fair elsewhere in the Bay of Bengal.

Forecast valid until evening of 19-12-2004: Likelihood of isolated light rain in Kachin State, upper Sagaing and Taninthayi Divisions and weather will be generally fair in the remaining areas. Degree of certainty is (60%).

State of the sea: Seas will be moderate in Myanmar waters.

Outlook for subsequent two days: Likelihood of isolated light rain in extreme Southern Myanmar areas.

Forecast for Yangon and neighbouring area for 19-12-2004: Partly cloudy.

Forecast for Mandalay and neighbouring area for 19-12-2004: Partly cloudy.



Sunday, 19 December
View on today:

- 7:00 am
1. Recitation of Parittas
by Missionary Sayadaw
- 7:25 am
2. To be healthy exercise
- 7:30 am
3. Morning News
- 7:40 am
4. Nice and sweet song
- 7:55 am
5. ယဉ်ကျေးလိမ္မော် (သုတေသန) ပြောပြပေး
- 8:10 am
6. အချစ်မြင့်မိုး
- 8:20 am
7. ရန်ကုန်မြို့နေထိုင်သူများ၏ အကြံပြုချက်
- 8:30 am
8. International News
- 8:45 am
9. Say it in English

- 11:00 am
1. Martial song
- 11:05 am
2. Round-up of the Week's International news
- 11:10 am
3. နိုင်ငံခြားသတင်းထုတ်
"အာရှစုံစုံနီ" (အပိုင်း-၅၃)
- 11:50 am
4. Myanmar Video Feature
"ရန်ကုန်မြို့နေထိုင်သူများ၏ အကြံပြုချက်" (အပိုင်း-၅၃)
မြတ်ဗောဓိသီအာရုံ၊ မြို့စနီကျော်
ခါရုတ်တော-ဟိန်းထက်နိုင်
- 2:50 pm
1. ၂၀၀၄ ခုနှစ် (၄၃) ကြိမ်မြောက်
တပ်မတော်ကာကွယ်ရေးဦးစီးချုပ်
ဗလားတပ်မတော် (ကြည်း၊ ရေ၊ လေ)
ဘောလုံးပြိုင်ပွဲတိုက်ပွဲတိုက်လွှဲအ
စီအစဉ် (ဒုတိယအကြိမ်လွှဲ)
- 4:45 pm
2. Song to uphold National Spirit
- 5:00 pm
3. အစောင့်အရှောက်သို့လှူဒါန်း
ရန်ပြန်သံကြား သင်ခန်းစာ
-ဒုတိယနှစ် (သမ္မာ)၊ ဓာတုဗေဒ၊
ရူပဗေဒအထူးပြုများ (သမ္မာ)
- 5:15 pm
4. Dance of National races

- 5:30 pm
5. Agricultural Source Country's Development
- 5:45 pm
6. Sing and Enjoy
- 6:30 pm
7. Evening News
- 7:00 pm
8. Weather report
- 7:05 pm
9. နိုင်ငံခြားသတင်းထုတ်
"ရန်ကုန်မြို့နေထိုင်သူများ၏ အကြံပြုချက်" (အပိုင်း-၅၃)
- 7:35 pm
10. အတုလမ်းပတ် မဟာမုနိသမ္မတ
ကိုယ်တိုင်တရား
- 8:00 pm
11. News
12. International News
13. Weather report
14. ဗုဒ္ဓဓာတ်ကြီး တိုင်းရင်းသားနှင့်
သောဗုဒ္ဓညီငြမ်း (အပိုင်း-၃)
15. နိုင်ငံခြားသတင်းထုတ်
"အချစ်သံသရာ" (အပိုင်း-၃)
16. ကျေးဇူးရှင်မင်းထွန်းအရာတော်
တရားကြီး ဦးစီးဦးစီးသော
စီအစဉ်သို့လှူဒါန်းသော
ဗုဒ္ဓဓာတ်ကြီးတရားတော်
17. The next day's programme



Sunday, 19 December
Tune in today:

- 8:30 am Brief news
8:35 am Music: Merry X'mas everybody
8:40 am Perspectives
8:45 am Music: Another rock & roll X'mas
8:55 am National news/Slogan
9:05 am Music: Merry X'mas everyone
9:10 am International news
9:15 am Cultural Images of Myanmar
-Myanmar & Ivory Sculpture
1:30 pm News/Slogan
1:40 pm Story for Children
-The King and beggars
1:50 pm Songs for Children
9:00 pm Weekly news review
9:10 pm Music
9:15 pm Article
9:25 pm What child is this
-Have yourself a merry little X'mas
9:45 pm News/Slogan
10:00 pm PEL

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



General Thura Shwe Mann meets with officers, other ranks and families of PyinOoLwin Station. — MNA

General Thura Shwe Mann meets officers and other ranks of PyinOoLwin Station

YANGON, 18 Dec — Member of the State Peace and Development Council General Thura Shwe Mann of the Ministry of Defence met officers and other ranks and their families of PyinOoLwin Station at the hall of the Station on 16 December morning.

On the occasion, General Thura Shwe Mann

gave instructions, saying that unprecedented progress has been made in building a peaceful modern and developed nation due to concerted efforts of the Tatmadaw, the people and the government; that likewise, the seven-point Road Map has been laid down and is being implemented for the emergence of a discipline-

flourishing democratic nation; and that the Tatmadawmen are to strive together with the people for successful realization of the seven-point future policy programme of the State. Next, General Thura Shwe Mann cordially greeted officers and other ranks and their families who were present on the occasion. — MNA

Myanmar, using efforts of trained engineering experts, successfully built 168 dams, 271 water pumping stations, 190 major bridges, 12 new airports and other civil engineering projects

YANGON, 18 Dec — The opening ceremony of the 22nd Conference of the ASEAN Federation of Engineering Organizations organized by Myanmar Engineering Society was held at Sedona Hotel here this morning, with an address by Prime Minister Lt-Gen Soe Win.

Also present were Chairman of Yangon Division Peace and Development Council Commander

of Yangon Command Maj-Gen Myint Swe, ministers, the Yangon mayor, deputy ministers, ambassadors, senior military officers, officials of the State Peace and Development Council Office heads of department and President of World Federation of Engineering Organizations Dato Ir Lee Yee Chong, Alternate President of ASEAN Federation of Engi-

neering Organizations Chairman of Myanmar Engineering Society Professor Dr Sein Myint and members, chairmen and delegates of Engineering

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The accomplishments of Myanmar engineers are all the more notable as the projects were not only numerous and sophisticated but carried out within a short span of one and a half decade.

INSIDE

In any nation, political power, economic power and defence power are interdependent. Economic might is mainly the central focus and it helps to sustain both political and military might.

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PERSPECTIVE



Prime Minister Lt-Gen Soe Win addresses 22nd Conference of ASEAN Federation of Engineering Organization at the Sedona Hotel. — NLM