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Monsoon paddy is to be grown at least once a year without fail in all areas covered by river water pumping projects

Senior General Than Shwe inspects water supply stations in NyaungU Township

YANGON, 20 Dec

— Chairman of the State Peace and Development Council Commander-in-Chief of Defence Services Senior General Than Shwe inspected river water pumping stations in NyaungU Township on 18 December.

Accompanied by 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, Member of the State Peace and Development Council Lt-Gen Ye Myint, 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 Com-



Chairman of State Peace and Development Council Commander-in-Chief of Defence Services Senior General Than Shwe inspects samples of concrete slabs to be used in Kyaukku river water pumping project in NyaungU. —MNA

A number of river water pumping projects have been implemented on both banks of the Ayeyawady with the aim of greening the regions, ensuring food sufficiency and improving the living standard in the long run. In NyaungU Township, the Government has been implementing Letpanchipaw, Ngathayauk and Thukaungti projects in addition to the Lawkananda and the Kyaukku.

mand Maj-Gen Ye Myint, the ministers, senior military officers of the Ministry of Defence, officials of the State Peace and Development Council Office, and departmental heads, the Senior General arrived at Bagan-

NyaungU Airport from Mandalay at 3 pm.

At the airport, the Senior General and party were welcomed by Minister for Cooperatives Col Zaw Min, Commander of No 88 Light Infantry Division Brig-Gen Aug

Than Htut, Brig-Gen Than Tun of Kyaukpadaung Station, Chairman of Magway Division Peace and Development Council Col Phone Maw Shwe and officials.

(See page 8)



Commander-in-Chief of Defence Services Senior General Than Shwe inspects the site for Lawkananda river water pumping project in NyaungU.

MNA

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

PERSPECTIVES

Tuesday, 21 December, 2004

Strive for timely completion of Yeywa hydel power plant

Electrical power plays a crucial role in our drive for economic and social development of the nation. It is necessary for the power sector to contribute a lot to economic development and to meet power demand of the nation. Therefore, the Ministry of Electric Power is currently constructing twelve medium and heavy electric power plants in the third five-year short-term plan and the Yeywa hydel power project is one of them.

Chairman of the State Peace and Development Council Commander-in-Chief of Defence Services Senior General Than Shwe, together with responsible officials, on 18 December inspected the Yeywa hydel power plant being constructed in Mandalay Division. Head of State Senior General Than Shwe inspected the progress of work and, in his meeting with those responsible, said that concerted efforts would have to be made to complete all the stages of project ahead of schedule and in accordance with the set standard.

The Yeywa hydel power plant is being constructed across the Myitnge river 31 miles south-east of Mandalay. Thirty-one per cent of the project has been completed up to now. The roller compacted concrete dam of the project is going to be 2264 feet long and 433 feet high and it will be among the biggest concrete dams in the world. The plant will be installed with four generators, each with a capacity of producing 179.5 megawatt. Therefore, on completion, the plant will be able to generate a total of 790 megawatt. Sub-power stations will also be built at Shwesayan, Bailin and Meiktila and they will be connected with the national grid.

A hydel power project calls for a lot of time as well as an astronomical amount of money. The construction of the Yeywa hydel power plant is a huge project and great care should be taken in implementing each and every stage of the project.

We would like to urge all those responsible for the project to bear in mind the guidance given by the Head of State and try their best to complete the project in time and in accordance with the set standard.

Foreign Affairs Deputy Minister leaves for Vientiane

YANGON, 20 Dec—Deputy Minister for Foreign Affairs U Kyaw Thu left here by air this evening to participate in the sixth Ministerial Meeting of the ASEAN-Mekong Basin Development Cooperation to be held in Vientiane, Lao People's Democratic Republic, from 21 to 22 December 2004.

The deputy minister was seen off at the Yangon International Airport by heads of department, responsible officials from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Ambassador of Lao PDR to Myanmar Mr Chanthavy Bodhisane.—MNA

Special Refresher Course for Myanmar police officers opens

YANGON, 20 Dec—The Special Refresher Course No 1/2004 for Myanmar police officers was opened at the Ministry of Home Affairs at 8 am today, with an address by Police Chief of Staff of Myanmar Police Force Police Brig-Gen Win Mying.

The two-week course is being attended by 30 trainees from MPF.—MNA

People's Desire

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

Ministry of PBANRDA offers 'soon' to members of the Sangha

YANGON, 20 Dec—Service personnel of the Ministry of Progress of Border Areas and National Races and Development Affairs offered 'soon' to members of the Sangha of the State Pariyatti Sasana University (Yangon) at the refectory of the university on Thiri Mingala Kaba Aye Hill this morning. Present were Minister for Progress of Border Areas and National Races and Development Affairs Col Thein Nyunt, Deputy Minister Col Tin Ngwe, the directors-general and managing directors and officials.

The congregation received the Five Precepts from Chief Patron Sayadaw of the State Pariyatti Sasana University (Yangon) Agga Maha Pandita Agga Maha Gandhavacaka Pandita Bhaddanta Panditabhivamsa. The minister, the deputy minister and guests presented offertories to the members of the Sangha.



Minister Col Thein Nyunt offers a day's Soon to members of Sangha in State Pariyatti Sasana University (Yangon) this morning.—NLM

Next, Managing Director of Sabinthayay Bank Ltd U Myo Win presented K 270,000 donated by the staff of the ministry for a day-meal to Assistant Director of Promotion and Propagation of the

Sasana Daw Aye Myint Kyi. The Chief Patron Sayadaw delivered a sermon and the minister, the deputy minister and guests offered 'soon' to members of the Sangha.

MNA

Prizes presented to schools with hygienic foodstalls

YANGON, 20 Dec — A ceremony to present prizes to basic education schools with hygienic foodstalls and high class restaurants in the area of Yangon City Development Committee Mayor Brig-Gen Aung Thein Lin, Vice-Mayor Col Maung Pa and members,

heads of departments, officials of Education and Health Departments, township education officers, the schoolheads of prize-winning schools, restaurateurs and guests.

First, Mayor Brig-Gen Aung Thein Lin delivered

an address on the occasion. Next, the Mayor, Deputy Minister for Education Brig-Gen Aung Myo Min, the Vice-Mayor, Secretary Col Myint Aung, Joint-Secretary U Aung Soe, committee member Col Tin Soe, Director of No 3 Basic Education Department U Win Kyi and Head of Health Department of YCDC Dr Tin Maung Win presented prizes to the schoolheads and restaurateurs. Instead of the prize-winning schools, school-head of No 1 Basic Education High School, Dagon Township U Kyaw Kyaw and on behalf of the restaurateurs, Manager Daw Saw Nan Yu of Oylmpic Hotel expressed thanks.—MNA



Mayor Brig-Gen Aung Thein Lin presents a prize to the schoolhead of No 1 BEHS Dagon.—H

Golden jubilee ceremony of Pantanaw BEHS held

YANGON, 20 Dec — Deputy Minister for Information U Thein Sein attended a ceremony to mark golden jubilee of Pantanaw Basic Education High School in Ayeyawady Division and delivered an address on the occasion.

Also present on the occasion were directors-general of No 1 Basic Education Department and Myanmar Education Research Department, the Chairman of Myanmar Board of Examinations, the Division Education Officer, the Chairman of Pantanaw Township

Peace and Development Council, departmental officials, social organizations, old students, townsenders and guests. Next, U Tin Nyo of No 1 Basic Education Department discussed matters related to promotion of education standard. Afterwards, Director-General of No 1 BED U Tin Nyo, Chairman of MBE Thura U Aung Tun, Director-General of MERD and Deputy Director-General of No 1 BED U Myo Nyunt presented computers and accessories, stationery, tapes and guide books on matriculation ex-

amination to schoolhead U Tun Aung.

After that, the school-head expressed thanks and

the deputy minister and party viewed booth of golden jubilee.

MNA



Deputy Minister for Information U Thein Sein visits the booths of the golden jubilee ceremony of Pantanaw BEHS.—MNA

US officials accused of treating Africans like guinea pigs

JOHANNESBURG, 20 Dec— South Africa's ruling party has accused top US officials of treating Africans like guinea pigs amid questions over testing of a key HIV/AIDS drug before a US-backed roll-out of the treatment across the continent.

The African National Congress (ANC) said on its web site US health officials had "conspired" with German drug firm Boehringer Ingelheim to hide adverse effects of nevirapine when used to try to prevent mother-to-child HIV transmission.

Media reports have suggested tests on the drug's use with pregnant women in Uganda were flawed and that single-dose treatments of nevirapine could result in future drug resistance. The United States has denied the charges and said while there were some procedural problems with the tests the results pointing to a dramatic reduction of HIV transmission were sound.

But the ANC issued a strong response late on Friday saying US President George W. Bush and his government, which distributed the drug across Africa in a high-profile gesture of support for the AIDS-ravaged continent, must be "held accountable" for inaction.

"(US officials) entered into a conspiracy with a pharmaceutical company to tell lies to promote the sales of nevirapine in Africa, with absolutely no con-

sideration of the health impact of those lies on the lives of millions of Africans," the ANC said in its weekly newsletter. Quoting reports by the news agency *Associated Press*, which broke the story, the ANC said top officials at the US National Institutes of Health (NIH) and the US Food and Drug Administration (FDA) had arranged to pull a US application for the drug once concerns were raised.

The ANC quoted the report as saying the NIH knew about problems with the drug but did not tell the White House before Bush launched a plan to distribute the drug throughout Africa. There was no immediate response from the US Government to the ANC charges.

But the US National Institute for Allergy and Infectious Diseases (NIAID), a unit of the US National Institutes of Health and which funded the study, said in a statement on its web site dated December 17 there was no truth to the report NIH officials chose not to inform the White House about safety issues concerning the drug.—*MNA/Reuters*

High level of racist abuse by prison officers exists in Britain

LONDON, 20 Dec — A high level of racist abuse and discrimination by prison officers at a young offenders' institution in Britain has come to light, according to a report.

The *Guardian* newspaper quoting documents released to Zahid Mubarek inquiry in central London, reveal ethnic minority inmates were stereo-typed as "violent and aggressive" and made up nearly 80 per cent of those in the segregation unit, despite only accounting for half the population of Feltham Young Offenders Institution.

They also reveal some White officers would frequently hurl racial abuse at Black inmates, calling them "monkeys" and "Black bastards", and harass them with frequent drug testing.

A second document shows that non-White inmates were twice as likely to be subjected to control and restraint procedures as White inmates.

The reports came to light at the inquiry into the death of an Asian, Zahid Mubarek. Mubarek, then 19, was bludgeoned to death with a table leg in March 2000, hours before he was due to be released.

MNA/PTI

Thailand draws national plan to promote health

BANGKOK, 20 Dec— Thai Prime Minister Thaksin Shinawatra has declared as a national agenda a long-term plan to boost physical and mental health and the intelligence quotient of the public.

The scheme, named as "Health Thailand", would run from 2004 to 2017 under the operation of the Public Health Ministry. Under the plan, which comprises 17 measures, the public will have better access to health-care services, hygienic and healthy food and live in a society free of crime, drugs and vice.

The scheme will also cope with disease such as HIV/AIDS, cancer, heart disease, high blood pressure, dengue

fever and diabetes, Thaksin was quoted by *Bangkok Post* newspaper as saying on Sunday.

The government is aimed at prolonging the life expectancy of its citizens to 81 years. Currently, Thai men have an average life expectancy of 69.9 years, up from 59.9 in 1965, while Thai women have a life expectancy of 74.9 years, compared with 62 in 1965.

MNA/Xinhua

China, Nigeria sign oil development agreement

ABUJA, 19 Dec— China and Nigeria have signed an agreement to develop Oil Mining Lease (OML) 64 and 66 located in the deep waters of the oil rich Niger Delta, south Nigeria, the latest edition of the Nigerian state oil

company publication *NPDC News* said on Friday.

According to the publication, the agreement was signed by the managing directors of the China Petrochemical Corporation (SINOPEC) and the

Nigerian Petroleum Development Company (NPDC), the exploration and production arm of the state-owned Nigeria National Petroleum Corporation.

Under the agreement, SINOPEC promises to drill the first barrel of oil from the OMLs in the next eight months.

"The agreement is an important building block to future opportunities aimed at fostering greater cooperation between the two companies," it said.

It added the initiative would go a long way to improve petroleum development in Nigeria which in turn would boost the nation's economic base.

The publication stated that five exploration wells have been drilled in OML 64, and one well encountered hydrocarbon resources.

In OML 66, 18 exploration wells have been drilled with 12 encountering hydrocarbon reservoirs.

MNA/Xinhua



Japan's Finance Ministry, seen here on 19 Dec, 2004, has issued an austere 788 billion-dollar draft budget for the year to March 2006.—INTERNET

Blasts kill at least 64 in Najaf and Karbala

NAJAF, 19 Dec — Explosives packed in vehicles tore through crowds gathered in Iraq's two most sacred Shiite cities on Sunday, killing at least 64 people and wounding scores more in what many Iraqis fear may be a harbinger of the carnage promised by guerillas ahead of the country's 30 Jan elections.

The bombings in Najaf and Karbala appeared designed to inflict the greatest number of civilian casualties possible, the explosives detonating within walking distance of the tombs of Shiite Islam's most revered saints.

With macabre effect, the blasts demonstrated yet again that guerillas, usually operating in Baghdad and Sunni regions in central Iraq, could extend their deadly reach into the heartland of Iraq's Shiite

majority.

Iraqis crowd into a central square in Najaf after a car bomb exploded during a funeral procession for a tribal sheikh about an hour after another blast rocked the city of Karbala.

The scenes that ensued have become all too familiar in Iraq: Streets were strewn with the twisted and charred wreckage of cars, as crowds wandered along the destruction with dazed, uncomprehending looks. Chunks of concrete were ripped

from buildings and hurled onto ground soaked in rain, blood and cinder, framed in gray, stormy skies.

The blasts in Najaf and Karbala occurred about an hour apart. The first tore through a crowded bus station in Karbala at 130 pm, burning at least seven minibuses and shattering windows along the street. At least 14 people were killed and 50 were wounded, said Ali Hussein, a doctor at the city's Hussein Hospital.—*Internet*



Sergeant Patrick Jacobson of Walton, N Y, a paratrooper with the 82nd Airborne Division, frisks an Iraqi civilian at a checkpoint in Baghdad on 18 Dec, 2004.—INTERNET

Heavy snow blankets N-E China provinces, traffic affected

SHENYANG, 20 Dec — Heavy snow has haunted most part of northeast China's Liaoning since Saturday night, causing major airport and expressways in the province to close for the time being.

According to the provincial expressway administration, major expressways in Liaoning has been closed since 5:00 Sunday morning. But the expressway from Shenyang, the provincial capital, to Dalian, an open coastal city, and the section of the Shenyang-Dandong expressway are still open to traffic. Thanks to the timely closure, no road accident has been reported on these expressways upon the snowfalls, the administration added.

Also closed was the Taoxian

International Airport in the provincial capital of Shenyang on Sunday morning. The snow has continued by Press time, with poor visibility, local sources said.

It is the heaviest snowfall in Liaoning since winter began this year, which interrupted a continuous warm weather, local meteorologists said.

A total of 7,000 environmental sanitation workers have been dispatched to remove the thick layer of snow on major streets of Shenyang.

MNA/Xinhua

Hit-and-run incident kills 2 US soldiers in Kuwait

KUWAIT, 20 Dec — Two US soldiers were killed and two injured on Sunday in a hit-and-run incident in southern Kuwait, the US Army and Kuwaiti security sources said.

The Kuwaiti sources said an Egyptian national had driven into a parked

US truck as the soldiers were fixing a flat tyre on the road to Nuwaiseeb.

"The Egyptian man then drove off, left his car in a roadside ditch and turned himself into Ahmadi police station," one security source said.

One soldier died immediately and another

died after arriving at hospital, the US military said.

A Kuwaiti security source said the incident was being treated as an accident and was not considered terror related following questioning of the Egyptian man.

MNA/Reuters

Iraq's oil network suffers five attacks in 24 hours

BAGHDAD, 20 Dec — Iraq's oil infrastructure suffered five attacks in 24 hours after a voice identified as al-Qaeda leader Osama bin Laden ordered followers to sabotage the West's key supplies.

Bombers also targeted a US patrol in Mosul, killing one Iraqi and wounding eight, just 24 hours after four Turkish security guards were mown down in an ambush in the main northern city.

There were two blasts on pipelines on Saturday and three late on Friday, all of them in restive Sunni Arab areas around the capital or in north-central Iraq, officials said.

The saboteurs struck pipelines serving both Iraq's northern and southern oil fields and halted the flow of crude to Baghdad's Daura refinery, interrupting the production of refined fuel, the oil ministry said.

A pipeline carrying refined products from Iraq's main northern refinery at Baiji to storage reservoirs in the capital was also hit, further reducing supplies, officials said.

One of Friday evening's attacks was claimed by an Islamic militant group loyal to bin Laden, the Al-Qaeda Organization of Mesopotamia, in a leaflet distributed in Baiji.—Internet

Anti-drug police seizes 100 kilos of morphine in eastern Iran

TEHERAN, 20 Dec — Iranian anti-drug police seized 100 kilos of morphine in the eastern province of South Khorassan Saturday, the official IRNA news agency reported.

IRNA quoted a police official as saying that the haul was confiscated from a car and its two passengers had been arrested.

Drug addiction and transportation has been a serious social problem in Iran, a country sitting in the crossroad linking drug producing Afghanistan and Pakistan and markets in the Persian Gulf states, Central Asia, western Europe and other regions.

According to official statistics, there are at least two million drug addicts in Iran. The country also accounts for 80 per cent of the opium and 90 per cent of the morphine intercepted worldwide, according to the International Narcotics Control Board.

The Islamic Republic spends five billion US dollars annually on anti-drug programmes, and over 3,100 police have lost their lives in conflict with drug smugglers during the past two decades.

MNA/Xinhua

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China chooses first Miss Artificial Beauty

BEIJING, 19 Dec — China chose its first Miss Artificial Beauty on Saturday, giving the crown to a 22-year-old from the northeastern city of Jilin who could not have done it without the help of her plastic surgeon.

Twenty contestants aged 17 to 62 competed in the final round of the "man-made beauty" pageant at a Beijing Opera House, all having gone under the knife to improve their appearance.

When the result was announced, it was a buoyant Feng Qian who had doctors to thank for four procedures that added a fold to her eyelids, liposuctioned fat from her belly, reshaped her cheeks, and injected botox to alter facial muscles.

Feng, wearing a flowing gold evening gown and a bright smile on her resculpted face, said she hoped the event would remove some of the stigma associated with plastic surgery.

"I hope this pageant will give a positive sign to the public," she said,

adding that the secret of her victory was confidence.

Rising urban incomes have made extreme makeovers fashionable in China, and many women are going under the knife in search of movie-star looks — raising concern about the nation's rapidly growing, but unregulated plastic surgery business.

The first runner up, Zhang Shuang, also 22, from the southern city of Changsha, underwent 10 procedures — more than any other contestant — including fixing her eyelids, nose, ears, breasts and upper and lower jaw as well as softening her skin and removing body hair. Shanghai's Cheng Lili, also 22, second runner up, had six procedures including nose and breast augmentations.—MNA/Reuters



Feng Qian, China Miss Artificial Beauty winner, holds her trophy at the country's first beauty pageant for the surgically enhanced in Beijing, on 18 Dec, 2004.—INTERNET

Cargo train linking N China, Germany to open next year

HOHHOT, 20 Dec — A special container train transport between Hohhot, capital city of north China's Inner Mongolia Autonomous Region, and Frankfurt, Germany is expected to open early 2005, according to an agreement signed here on Saturday.

The agreement was reached between Hohhot railway bureau and railgate enterprises from Mongolia, Russia, Belarussia and Germany.

The special train will run twice a month 9,814 kilometres via Mongolia, Russia, Belarussia, and Poland, said Wang Youhui, deputy director of the bureau.

The train, which is to provide an international channel between north China and Western Europe, will shorten

the transportation cycle from two months to 18 days.

The container train with an annual capacity of about 50,000 tons will be used mainly to carry electric appliances, textiles and foodstuff between China and other nations along the railroad, said Zheng Mingli, director of the bureau.

"We are hurrying up to prepare for opening," he said.

MNA/Xinhua



US Marines in Iraq sort through a mail shipment from the United States, at Hurricane Point, a Marine base, in Ramadi, Iraq, on 19 Dec, 2004.—INTERNET

Indian PM inaugurates first underground Metro rail

NEW DELHI, 20 Dec — Prime Minister Manmohan Singh on Sunday inaugurated the first underground section of the Metro rail.

Singh pulled a lever giving a green signal to the first train to roll down the four-kilometre stretch from Delhi University to Kashmere Gate in North Delhi.

A number of dignitaries including Federal Urban Development Minister Ghulam Nabi, Delhi's Lieutenant Governor B. L. Joshi and Chief Minister Sheila Dikshit were present on the occasion. Terming the start of underground Metro operations as a "red letter day" for the national capital, the Prime Minister said development of public transport would have to be a national priority in the 21st Century.

"I am convinced that India's cities cannot continue to develop in the present way.... we will have to invest in public infrastructure," he said.

Singh said cities would have to become "more moveable and people-friendly" and the new service "will inspire us to think big for future of the city and the country".

He said the centre had proposed a national urban renewal mission which

would ensure that poor people could travel in cities at affordable rates.

The Prime Minister, who travelled on the underground section from Kashmere Gate to Delhi University prior to the formal inauguration, said all its users would have to make sure that it was maintained well and run efficiently.

Singh thanked the Japanese Government for its cooperation in the construction of the Delhi Metro and hoped this would be "the harbinger of increased cooperation between India and Japan on infrastructure development".

He said the Metro would go a long way in making Delhi ready to host the Commonwealth Games in 2010 and hopefully the Olympics in 2016.

Reminiscing the days when he taught in Delhi University, Singh said "this is a sentimental day for me as I have travelled many hours on buses on these streets."

"However, population has grown at a faster pace than public transport since then," he added.

MNA/PTI



Bollywood actress and India Parliamentarian Hema Malini (R) and her daughter Ahaana perform a classical dance during a show in the northern India city of Lucknow in this picture taken on 19

Dec, 2004.

INTERNET

Foreign trade in Tianjin tops \$60b

TIANJIN, 20 Dec — Foreign trade in Tianjin, the largest port city in north China, soared 47.2 per cent year-on-year in the first 11 months of 2004, amounting to 60.74 billion US dollars, local Customs statistics show.

The city maintained a robust 45.5-per-cent growth rate in imports, which added up to 26.34 billion dollars.

In the same period, Tianjin's exports climbed by 48.6 per cent to 34.4 billion dollars.

Imports and exports conducted through general trade reached 35.7 billion dollars during the 11-month period, up 50 per cent year-on-year, about 58.8 per cent of the city's total foreign trade, according to local Customs.

The trade volume handled by local foreign-funded businesses rose 42 per cent year-on-year to 28.44 billion dollars, accounting for 46.8 per

cent of the total foreign trade, followed by that conducted by state-owned businesses at 24 billion dollars and collectively owned, private and other businesses at 8.28 billion dollars.

Mechanical and electronic products continued to dominate the foreign trade market of Tianjin, with a year-on-year growth of 52.1 per cent in exports during the first 11 months of this year, amounting to 13.17 billion dollars. Imports of resources surged greatly during the same period.

Japan, the European Union, the United States and South Korea are among the major trade partners of Tianjin. Trade

with the four partners totalled 39.11 billion dollars in the 11-month period, or 65 per cent of its total foreign trade.

Sources from the General Administration of Customs said that China's total foreign trade volume in the first 11 months of this year passed one trillion dollars, which is a "milestone" in China's foreign trade.

The deal to put China's foreign trade turnover over one trillion dollars was an 890,000-dollar coal shipment exported to South Korea, handled at Tianjin port on November 19, said the General Administration of Customs.

MNA/Xinhua

Chinese President arrives Macao for 5th anniversary celebrations

MACAO, 20 Dec — President Hu Jintao arrived here at around 11.30 am (local time) on Sunday to attend a celebration gathering to mark the 5th anniversary of Macao's return to the Motherland.

He was greeted at the airport by Edmund Ho Hau Wah, Chief Executive of the Macao Special Administrative Region (SAR). Hu conveyed at the airport the congratulations and greetings to Macao people on behalf of the Central Government and people of the various ethnic groups of the country.

He said that since Macao returned to the Motherland five years ago, Macao has been achieving great success in the economic, social and other sectors.

Macao people are delighted at these achievements and so are the Cen-

tral Government and people of the various ethnic groups of the country, he said. The President expressed confidence that Macao's tomorrow will be more beautiful as long as the Macao people continue to make concerted efforts under the leadership of the Macao SAR Government led by Chief Executive Edmund Ho Hau Wah.

Hu, also General Secretary of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of China (CPC) and chairman of the CPC Central Military Commission, will attend the inauguration of the second-term government of the Macao

SAR. This is the first time for President Hu to come to the Macao SAR.

During his two-day stay in Macao, Hu will meet with principal officials of the Macao SAR Government and well-known personages from all walks of life in Macao, and inspect troops of the Chinese People's Liberation Army (PLA) Garrison in the Macao SAR.

President Hu will also visit Macao's major sites of historic interest, learn more about the construction and development process of Macao since its return to the Motherland.

MNA/Xinhua

Five Jordanian drivers released in Iraq

AMMAN, 19 Dec — Five Jordanian drivers were released by the coalition forces in Iraq, the Arabic-language newspaper *Ad-Dustour* reported Sunday.

The coalition forces released them after finding that they did not illegally carry arms to Iraq. Abdurahem Jamal, an official of Jordanian Drivers Union was quoted as saying.

The five drivers were transporting cars and food supplies to the war-torn country when they were arrested by the coalition forces on 2 December, he added.

More than 20 Jordanians have been kidnapped by militants in Iraq during recent months, but most of them were released safely after their employers pulled out of Iraq or ransoms were paid. — Internet

China to build Asia's biggest organic silicon project

NANCHANG, 20 Dec — China National Bluestar Corporation has started construction of a new organic silicon project, the biggest of its kind in Asia, in east China's Jiangxi Province.

With an investment of 1.036 billion yuan (about 125 million US dollars), the project has an annual output of 100,000 tons of organic silicon, an important chemical that is widely used in various industries.

The project, to be built in Jiujiang City of the province, is expected to go into operation in May 2006.

The corporation has already had two organic silicon production plants in Jiangxi, with annual outputs of 20,000 and 50,000 tons respectively. — MNA/Xinhua

Argentina signs agreements on green-house gas reduction

BUENOS AIRES, 20 Dec — Argentina signed agreements with seven countries on reducing green-house gas emissions during a United Nations climate conference in Buenos Aires, Argentine authorities said on Saturday.

The Argentine delegation signed the agreements Friday with representatives from Spain, Austria, Canada, France, Netherlands, Italy and Denmark. The documents were signed under

the Mechanism for Clean Development within the framework of the Kyoto Protocol, which will become effective in February 2005 and expire in 2012.

MNA/Xinhua



Iraqi commandos patrol an area in northern Iraqi city of Mosul on 19 Dec, 2004. — INTERNET

UN talks on climate change ends

BUENOS AIRES (Argentina), 20 Dec—UN talks on climate change ended early Saturday with few steps forward as the United States, oil producers and developing giants slammed the brakes on the European Union's drive for deeper emissions cuts to stop global warming.

Although negotiators said they brokered an 11th-hour agreement on two items, the EU made it clear that the deal fell short of its goal to get talks rolling for after 2012, when the Kyoto Protocol to cut greenhouse gases runs out.

"A lot of people are afraid of discussing the future," said EU head delegate Pieter van Geel, the Dutch environment secretary.

The meeting of nearly 200 nations and 6,000 participants started on a high note 12 days ago after Russia's ratification of the Kyoto Protocol last month, allowing the treaty to take effect in February with a seven-year delay.

Kyoto will cut emissions in industrialized countries by 5 percent from 1990 levels, a first small step. The EU believes it will have to reduce its emissions by at least half by mid-century and manda-

tory cuts are the preferred method.

The EU came to Buenos Aires wanting to narrow differences with the United States, the source of 25 percent of the world's heat-trapping gases, and the large developing economies excluded from Kyoto like China and India.

But it soon became clear that Washington was sticking to its 2001 decision to bow out of Kyoto for fear of the impact that mandatory emissions curbs would have on economic growth. Moreover, the delegation reiterated that it would be "premature" to negotiate for after 2012.

The Argentine hosts and the EU found a compromise in the form of a seminar for 2005 for an informal exchange of information rather than talks on a post-Kyoto regime.

Some negotiators said, however, that the seminar will surely touch on the

future, and that would be positive for a UN effort that languished in recent years.

"To agree to participate in a process of exchanging information is a good start," said Argentine head delegate Raul Estrada-Oyuela.

While the United States remained intransigent on future talks, the oil-producing nations and Saudi Arabia in particular also thwarted the EU agenda.

It would be a big mistake to put this all down to the United States. Not for the first time, the oil-producing countries play a far bigger role than anyone ever gives them credit for," said British Environment Secretary Margaret Beckett.

Negotiators had to overcome OPEC resistance to push through a partial climate aid package for developing countries, the most hurt by the rise in world temperatures linked to man-made emissions like carbon dioxide.—MNA/Reuters



Ueno Zoo employees in Santa Claus outfits show salmon before feeding them to polar bears in Tokyo on 19 Dec, 2004.—INTERNET

Tanzanian national park to usher in night safaris of wildlife

DAR-ES-SALAAM, 20 Dec—One national park in Tanzania has offered night tours so as to allow tourists from both home and abroad to view the elusive nocturnal animals and birds, local Press reported on Sunday.

The *Sunday News* quoted Gerald Bigurube, director-general of the Tanzania National Parks (TANAPA), as saying that the nightly adventures would be introduced in the Lake Manyara National Park in northern Tanzania.

The aim of such night

game safaris is for tourists to view such elusive nocturnal animals and birds as leopards, crested porcupines, genet cats, civet, white-tailed mongoose, verreauxs eagle owl, spotted eagle owl and slender-tailed night jar.

So far, 24 species of animals and five bird species have been identified as to be showcased in the forthcoming nightly tours of the country's national parks including the Lake Manyara National Park which is well known for its tree-climbing lions and

millions of minor flamingoes.

David Amnaay, TANAPA's tourism assistant at the Lake Manyara National Park, promised animal lovers and environmentalists that night game safaris would be conducted in such a manner that the tranquillity the wildlife has known to enjoy would not be disturbed and the habitat of the wildlife would not be damaged to put animals to unnecessary dangers of their predators.

MNA/Xinhua

မြို့ခြံချွေတာ၊ မိန်းပါလေလွင်၊ ထုတ်ကုန်မြင့်

BMCCI leaders call for free trade agreement

DHAKA, 20 Dec—Leaders of the Bangladesh-Malaysia Chamber of Commerce and Industries (BMCCI) Sunday called on their respective governments to work for a free trade agreement with a view to enhance bilateral business and investments between the two countries.

In a joint declaration announced here at the end of the two-day meeting of the Bangladesh-Malaysia Business Forum (BMBF) concomitant with former Malaysian prime minister Mahathir Mohamad's tour of Bangladesh, the BMCCI leaders identified a number of areas for economic cooperation between the two countries and urged for joint actions from both sides.

The forum was organized by BMCCI with the participation of top leaders from both the public and private sectors.

On bilateral issues, they agreed that Malaysian business firms may relocate industries in Bangladesh in labour intensive areas like textiles, white goods and information and communication technology (ICT) sectors.

With a view to achieving the objective, they stressed for further development of investment promotion policies on both sides including technology sharing and transfer.

Both sides also called for integrated actions to develop infrastructure facilities, particularly in Bangladesh, and develop industries to create jobs.

In case of infrastructure development, particularly in Bangladesh, the chamber leaders underscored that private companies specialized in ports, highways and railways, oil and gas need to get boost.

They urged the Malaysian multimedia development corporation to help Bangladesh develop its ICT sector and in finding outsourcing contracts. Both sides also urged

the Malaysian public and private sectors to develop Bangladesh tourism sector and make investment in such projects.

Presenting a keynote speech titled "Malaysia 2020—from Vision to Reality" at the opening session of BMBF here Saturday, Mahathir Mohamad, who left here Sunday after three-day tour of Bangladesh, stressed that "economic growth and development in a country can only take place in a stable and peaceful political environment with corruption reduced to a minimum level from top-notch of the administration."

MNA/Xinhua

Global tourism receipts approach \$600b yearly

ABU DHABI, 20 Dec—Receipts from global tourist arrivals are close to 600 billion US dollars every year, according to a report released by the World Tourism Organization (WTO).

The international movements generate annual receipts approaching 500 billion dollars, plus an estimated 100 billion dollars in international transport fare receipts, the UAE's WAM news agency cited the WTO date on Saturday.

MNA/Xinhua

French mily surveillance satellite launched

KOUROU (French Guiana), 20 Dec—A European Ariane rocket launched a military surveillance satellite on Saturday, the third in a French-led drive for a European "spy in the sky" independent of the United States.

The Ariane-5 rocket blasted off at 1.26 p.m. (1626 GMT) from the European Space Agency (ESA) launch site in French Guiana on the northeast coast of South America. Aboard the rocket was the 4.2-ton Helios 2A satellite, the first of a new generation of spy satellites.

Earlier generation Helios 1 satellites were launched aboard Ariane rockets in 1995 and 1999.

"This satellite is more precise (than Helios 1)," Lieutenant Colonel Inaky Garcia Brotons of the French Air Force told Reuters before the launch.

"The infrared system permits detection of human activity. It can tell whether a truck convoy is moving or halted. Whether a nuclear reactor is operational or not," he said.—MNA/Reuters



A Sony employee shows off a high definition plasma television of Sony Corp on 19 Dec, 2004.—INTERNET

In prospect is the glory of the Sasana

*Maung Arnt
{MA (Bombay)}*

The World Buddhist Summit was held successfully on a grand scale. True to its title, the Summit was attended by monks of Theravada Buddhism and Mahayana Buddhism, and leaders of Buddhist sects from 38 countries from such continents as Asia, Europe, America (South and North), Australia and Africa.

Moreover, Presiding Sayadaws of Buddhist sects also graced the Summit. Senior General Than Shwe, Chairman of the State Peace and Development Council of the Union of Myanmar, himself appeared at the Summit, paid obeisance and offered Buddha images to the Sayadaws. On the occasion, Lt-Gen Soe Win, Prime Minister of the Union of Myanmar, delivered the opening and closing addresses. The prime ministers of Thailand, Laos and Sri Lanka, and the Cambodian deputy prime minister themselves graced the Summit and read out the congratulatory messages.

The delegates to the Summit submitted 11 papers on propagation and promotion of the Buddha Sasana. As regards those papers, the delegates fell into four groups and discussed them in four categories.

On the morning of the third day of the Summit, the discussion group

comprising over 300 delegates ratified the outcome of the group-wise discussions and released it as a joint statement containing the following nine objectives:

1. We are determined to preserve the Buddha Dhamma in its pristine purity;
2. We will endeavour to promote and propagate the Teachings of the Buddha;
3. We will strive for the protection, preservation and restoration of historic Buddhist monuments;
4. We will contribute to bring about peace and prosperity in the world by spreading the Buddha's sublime message of loving-kindness, compassion and equanimity;
5. We will endeavour to promote Buddhist unity and strive for friendship and mutual understanding among Buddhists all over the world;
6. We will endeavour to promote Buddhist education, employing modern methods and technology;
7. We will endeavour to hold the Buddhist Conferences frequently to exchange ideas and promote understanding;

8. We will endeavour to share the knowledge of Buddhist meditation with the people of the world for the sake of individual as well as world peace; and
9. We believe that more Buddhist centres should be established around the world to disseminate the original Teachings of the Buddha more effectively.

It is an encouraging sign for the Buddhist Sasana. In a sense, the prime of the Sasana is in prospect. It is safe to assume that the topographical features and the significant character of Myanmar nationals played a large part in the success of the World Buddhist Summit.

In retrospect, Tapussa and Bhallika, merchant brothers from Pukkharawati Town of Okkalapa City in Myanmar, paid obeisance and offered honey food to the Buddha on the 49th day after the Buddha had attained the Enlightenment. It is delightful to know that the earliest human beings who had ever received Dwevacika Saranaguna from the Buddha and become Buddhists were Myanmar nationals. They also received the Eight Strands of Hair Relic from the Buddha. They

enshrined them in the Shwedagon Pagoda, the first and foremost pagoda ever built in human abode.

Eight years into the Enlightenment, the Lord Buddha, flanked by twenty-thousand disciples, visited Bilin of Thaton (then known as Suvannabhumi) by means of levitation at the request of Ashin Gavampati, an arahat. The Lord Buddha also gave hair relics to Ashin Gavampati, who later built pagodas, namely Kyaikhtyoe, Kelatha, Myathabeik, and Zwegabin.

In the twentieth year after attaining the Enlightenment, the Lord Buddha accepted 'Sandalwood Monastery' donated by merchant Sulaponna of Minbu, at the request of Ashin Ponnathara.

On His trip there, the Lord Buddha left a foot print at the top of Mount Thitsabanda, and another foot print on the shore of Nammada River at the foot of the mount. These foot prints and 'Sandalwood Monastery' can still be seen up to this day. At the place where the Lord Buddha slept was built a pagoda named 'Shinpinsetkeinte'. And the couch on which the Lord Buddha lied was conveyed to the eastern bank of the Ayeyawady River, and enshrined in a pagoda, called Myathalon Pagoda, which still exists to this day.

After the Third Buddhist Synod, arahats were dispatched to nine countries for missionary purpose. Two arahats, named Ashin Sona and Ashin Ottara, arrived Bilin of

Thaton in Myanmar. Of Six Buddhist Synods, the first to third ones were held in India.

The fourth synod was held in Sri Lanka, and the Pali Pitaka Treatises were inscribed on palm leaves. And they were stone-inscribed at the fifth synod held in Mandalay City of Myanmar. It was at the six synod held in Yangon of Myanmar that the treatises were printed.

Since its start, the Buddhist Sasana has been preserved and encouraged in Myanmar for years close to 2600. As a result, Myanmar remains a prime

reflected from the robes of the monks going round for alms. Therefore, Myanmar is known as Golden Land since the reflection of golden rays from gilded monasteries and pagodas spreads across the country. It can also be said the Land of Pagodas, for there are at least one pagoda or stupa wherever you point your finger at. In other words, the country is under the umbrella of the Lord Buddha, His Teachings and His Sasana. In such a world where the dark cloud of greed, anger and delusion looms large, Myanmar is a country covered with lov-

Since its start, the Buddhist Sasana has been preserved and encouraged in Myanmar for years close to 2600. As a result, Myanmar remains a prime source of precise and complete texts of Pitakas, Pali treatises and other Theravada Pariyatti literature.

source of precise and complete texts of Pitakas, Pali treatises and other Theravada Pariyatti literature. When it comes to the practice of meditation, books on such topics written by such popular Sayadaws as Ledi Sayadaw, Kani Sayadaw, Mahasi Sayadaw, Mogok Sayadaw, Waibu Sayadaw, Taungpulu Sayadaw, Sunlungu Sayadaw, Theingu Sayadaw, Hpa-auk Sayadaw, and so on are living proof.

The number of the members of the Sangha in Myanmar totals nearly 500,000. In the morning, the whole country is covered with the golden rays

ing-kindness, compassion, and the four cardinal principles flourish.

With the splendid history of Pariyatti Sasana and Patipatti Sasana, and with the strength of Buddhist monks and devotees, the success of the World Buddhist Summit on a grand scale in the Union of Myanmar was accounted for the government's unprecedented encouragement offered to the Sasana, bringing with it an opportune time for the Sasana to flourish. All in all, the time has come for the Buddhist Sasana to be in glory.

(Translation: KTY)
Myanma Alin, Kyemon:
20-12-2004

Yangon Div swimming team emerges champion

YANGON, 20 Dec—Prize-distribution ceremony for the first Inter-State and Division Swimming Competition was held at the National Swimming Pool here at 2 pm today.

Director-General U

Than Zaw of the Sports and Physical Education Department and officials of Myanmar Swimming Federation under the Ministry of Sports presented the first, second and third prizes to the winners who participated

in 14 events.

Afterwards, Vice-President of Myanmar Swimming Federation U Tin Maung Win presented prizes to swimmer Aung Myo Oo (Yangon Division) and swimmer Hnin Hnin Ei (Yangon Division) who emerged the best players. Next, Deputy Director-General of SPED U Thein Aung presented the championship shields to Yangon Division (men's teams) and Yangon Division (women's teams).

Yangon Division (men's teams) and Yangon Division (women's team) emerged champions with 138 points and 139 points respectively.— NLM



Secretary of Myanmar Swimming Federation U Cho Maung presents a prize to a winner. — NLM



Chairman of Myanmar Engineers Association Prof Dr Sein Myint presents a prize to Managing Director of Myanma Oil and Gas Enterprise U San Lwin, prize winner of AFEO Honorary Fellowship. — NLM

Monsoon paddy is to be grown at least...

(from page 1)

At the briefing hall of Lawkananda river water pumping project, the Senior General and party heard reports on progress in implementing the project, monsoon cultivation in the region, and the current of Ayeyawady River, presented by Minister for Agriculture and Irrigation Maj-Gen Htay Oo.

Director-General of Water Resources Utilization Department U Win Shwe explained the seven stages of the project, completion of the main canal and 12 tributary canals, and installation of 42 pumps, and Director-General of Directorate of Water Resources and Improve-

ment of River Systems U Chit Khin, the current changes of the river.

Lt-Gen Ye Myint and Minister for Electric Power Maj-Gen Tin Htut briefed the Senior General and party on power supply for the river water pumping projects.

In his guidance at the meeting, the Senior General said that the river water pumping stations have been erected to irrigate farmland, to help increase income of local people and to green the environment. The stations help people living along the both banks of Ayeyawady River overcome the many difficulties they face to get access to adequate water



Commander-in-Chief of Defence Services Senior General Than Shwe gives guidance to officials concerned at the briefing hall of Kyaukku river water pumping project in NyaungU. — MNA

supply. All will have to understand the fact the river water pumping projects have been given priority to serving the

The Water Resources Utilization Department of the Ministry of Agriculture and Irrigation has been implement-

They were conducted round the project by Minister Maj-Gen Htay Oo and officials.

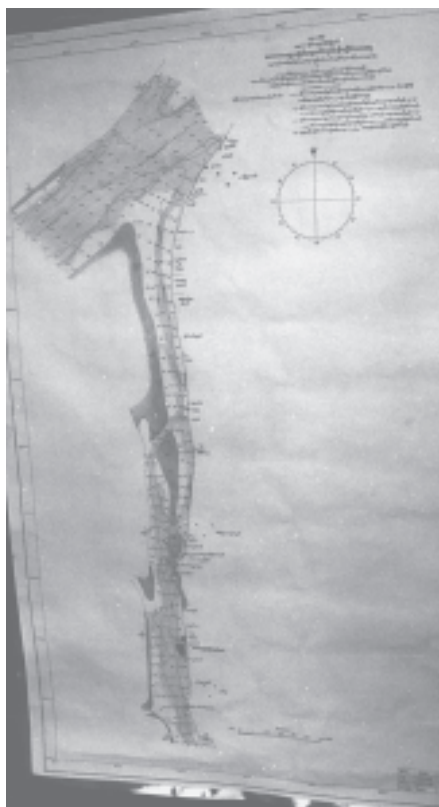
The project has

acres of crops year-round.

A number of water pumping projects have been implemented on



Chairman of State Peace and Development Council Commander-in-Chief of Defence Services Senior General Than Shwe hears reports on salient points of Lawkananda river water pumping project by Minister for A & I Maj-Gen Htay Oo. — MNA



Blueprint of Lawkananda river water pumping project in NyaungU. — MNA

farmers' interest and should strive in all seriousness to implement

ing the project to irrigate 11,000 acres of crops in the western sector of

been targeted to complete in October 2005 and to irrigate 3,000

both banks of the Ayeyawady River with the aim of greening the regions, ensuring food sufficiency and improving the living standard of local people in the long run. In NyaungU Township, the Government has been

(See page 9)

The Government has been implementing Hsimigon-2 extension project and Hseiknyan projects in Myingyan Township, Kyawzi project in Taungtha Township and Ywathit and Nganhmya projects in Nganzun Township.

them successfully.

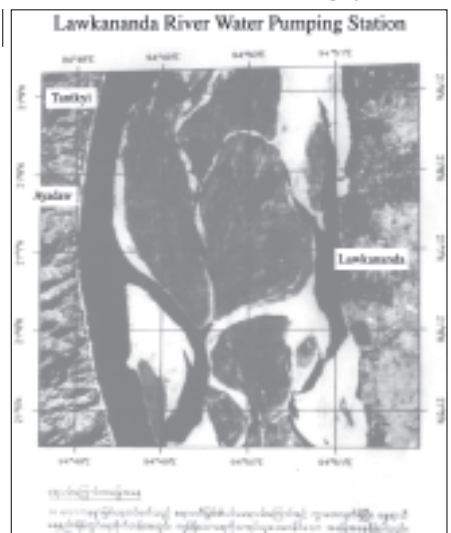
For the region to actually enjoy rice sufficiency and increase in the per capita income, all should strive without fail to grow monsoon paddy at least once a year in all the areas covered by river water pumping projects, using river water and rain water, and to cultivate the desired crop, including cotton and edible oil crops, that grow well in the region during the remaining seasons.

The Senior General and party observed the main pump of Lawkananda river water pumping project, and the control room.

NyaungU Township the whole year.

At Kyaukku river water pumping project to irrigate crops in the area lying east of NyaungU Airport, the Senior General and party heard reports on salient points of the project, presented by Minister Maj-Gen Htay Oo and Director-General U Win Shwe. The Senior General gave guidance for effectiveness and success of the project.

The Senior General and party inspected the place to erect the main pump, the current of the river and concrete slabs to be used in building irrigation canals.



Blueprint of Lawkananda river water pumping project in NyaungU. — MNA

Vice-Senior General Maung Aye...

(from page 16)

heads, members of the Leading Committee for Organizing the fifth Myanmar Traditional Medicine Practitioners' Conference and the work committee, traditional medicine producers and others.

Next, Vice-Senior General Maung Aye and party viewed round the central booth, booth of Traditional Medicines Department, booth of Myanmar Traditional Medicine Practitioners Association, booth of Medical Research Department (Lower Myanmar), booth of Forest Department under the Ministry of Forestry and booth of the Ministry of Industry-1.

Afterwards, Vice-Senior General Maung Aye and party inspected the booths of traditional medicine producers and traders, where they were conducted round by officials concerned and the medicine producers.

After viewing the medicines and medical equipment, Vice-Senior General Maung Aye and party left the exhibition.

MNA



Vice-Senior General Maung Aye visits a booth at the Fifth Traditional Medicines and Medical Equipment Exhibition. — MNA

Local people need to understand...



General Thura Shwe Mann cordially greets departmental officials in NyaungU, Mandalay Division. — MNA

(from page 16)

supply of electricity for rural areas, education and health tasks, the formation of social organizations, and rural development tasks.

District Manager of Myanmar Agriculture Service U Thein Zaw reported on cultivation of monsoon and summer paddy with the help of river-water-pumping projects, cultivation of edible oil crops and beans and pulses, and condition of local food sufficiency.

General Thura Shwe Mann also heard reports on the strength of hotels, motels and inns in Bagan-NyaungU, and the arrival of tourists at the region. Next, SPDC member Lt-Gen Ye Myint gave a supplementary report.

On the occasion, Secretary-1 Lt-Gen Thein Sein said NyaungU District has a population of over 300,000. As the rice sufficiency of the region is only 4.68 percent, efforts are to be made for boosting the cultivation

of rice. The development of the country depends on the economic growth. This being the case, projects are under way to reach the goal: the emergence of a peaceful, modern, developed nation.

The seven-point Road Map has been made public, and it will be implemented to transform the country into a democracy. Later, the Secretary-1 called for active participation of service personnel of with strong belief in the seven-point Road Map.

Next, General Thura Shwe Mann, explained the

purpose of their visit to the region and the reason of meeting with local people. He also said tangible success has been seen in the development measures of the region. The greening projects being implemented in Bagan in line with the guidance of the Head of State are now gaining speed. Moreover, progress has also been made in preservation and renovation tasks. With the development of domestic and foreign tourism industry, hotel industry is also booming. As the glory of Bagan spreads across the world, the growing hotel industry brings with it social advancement to local people.

(See page 10)



Secretary-1 Lt-Gen Thein Sein meets with departmental officials in NyaungU. — MNA

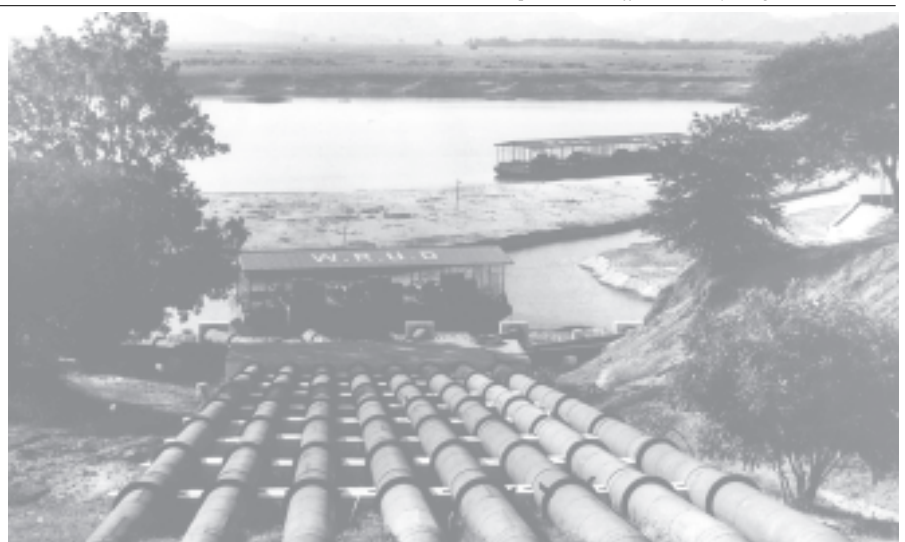
Monsoon paddy is to be grown at least...

(from page 8)

implementing Letpanchipaw, Ngathayauk and Thukaungti projects in addition to the Lawkananda and the Kyaukku.

Moreover, it has been implementing Hsimigon-2 extension project and Hseiknyan projects in Myingyan Township, Kyawzi project in Taungtha Township and Ywathit and Nganhmya projects in Nganzun Township.

MNA



Lawkananda river water pumping project. —NLM

Compilation of documentary on national development coordinated



Minister for Information Brig-Gen Kyaw Hsan delivers an address at the coordination meeting on publishing the documentary on development of the Union of Myanmar. — MNA

YANGON, 20 Dec — A coordination meeting was held at the meeting hall of the Ministry of Information this afternoon to discuss publishing of a documentary on the development of the Union of Myanmar.

The meeting was attended by Minister for Information Brig-Gen Kyaw Hsan, Minister for National Planning and Economic Development U Soe Tha, deputy ministers, departmental heads and officials, authorities of states and divisions, and others. Speaking to the meeting, U Soe Tha said the Head of State had given guidance to the two ministries as regards putting on record the achievements gained in the time of the Tatmadaw Government since its assumption of the State's responsibility. He quoted the Head of State as saying that as development undertakings were being carried out in all states and divisions including border areas, it was therefore necessary to take

systematic measures to compile the book with correct figures and statistics as a source of public information and to make it a reference to the comparison of national

there might be differences in terminology among ministries. He called for concentration on correcting those terms and adding the facts which should be known. Efforts were to

concerned to send their statistics not later than 20-1-2005, calling for their active participation and cooperation in timely completion of the task for the compilation of the documentary in line with the guidance of the Head of State.

Next, Col Soe Win, Managing Director of News and Periodicals Enterprise under the Ministry of Information, gave a detailed account of providing development data to be included in the book. The deputy ministers, departmental heads and responsible personnel of states and divisions gave their suggestions concerning the book and raised queries, to which the ministers replied. The meeting came to an end after the two ministers had added necessary points to the suggestions. — MNA

It is necessary to take systematic measures to compile the book with correct figures and statistics as a source of public information and to make it a reference to the comparison of national progress between 1988 and 12-2-2005.

progress between 1988 and 12-2-2005. Later, he pledged to provide necessary assistance for the compilation of the book. Minister for Information Brig-Gen Kyaw Hsan, in his speech, said it was necessary to take steps to release necessary news reports as regards the compilation of the documentary with complete date of sectorwise progress. He continued his ministry had made initial collection of statistics, and they, however, should be regarded as suggestions. He also said that

be made to include all projects, both those under implementation and those in planning stage, in the book, he urged.

He also spoke of the need of the ministries to work in coordination to compare the statistics collected by the respective states and divisions.

He added it was necessary for the ministries, states and divisions

Yangon, Mandalay State Schools of Fine Arts to open evening courses

YANGON, 20 Dec — Yangon and Mandalay State Schools of Fine Arts of the Fine Arts Department under the Ministry of Culture will open evening courses— Myanmar Gita, Donmin and Mandolin on 3rd January 2005. Applicants, aged 12 can enquire detailed qualification and get

application forms. The period of the course is from 4 pm to 5.30 pm. Those who wish to attend the course are to send application forms to Director of Research and Training Division of the Fine Arts Department at No 131, Kaba Aye Pagoda Road not later than 31st December. — MNA

Basis Diplomatic Skills Course opened

YANGON, 20 Dec — The inauguration ceremony of the Certificate Course in Basis Diplomatic Skills (BDS 12/2004) conducted by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs was held at Wundwin Minyazar Hall of the Ministry this afternoon, with a keynote address delivered by Minister for Foreign Affairs U Nyan Win.

Also present at the occasion were directors-general of the departments under the ministry, officials, Myanmar Ambassadors, senior diplomats, a rector and professors of universities and institutes concerned and trainees. Various subjects including International Conferencing, International Etiquette, Protocol, International Correspondence, International Law, Negotiation Techniques are included in the course. A total of 160 trainees are attending the 12-week course. — MNA

Education Deputy Minister inspects schools and colleges

YANGON, 20 Dec — Deputy Minister for Education Brig-Gen Aung Myo Min, accompanied by officials concerned, on 16 December evening met the rector and lecturers of Pyay University, the principal of Education College (Pyay) and faculty members, township education officer and the heads and teachers of basic education schools at No 1 Basic Education High School, Pyay and gave necessary instructions. On 17 December morning, the deputy minister inspected multimedia classrooms of No 1 BEHS and No 3 BEHS and gave instructions. He also inspected school libraries and presented stationery for students.

In the evening, the deputy minister met officials, at Magway No 1 BEHS and instructed them to observe teachers' code of conduct and promote the education standard. Next, the deputy minister offered stationery for children of school-age in Magway Township to the township education officer. On 18 December morning, he inspected multimedia classrooms and library of No 1 BEHS of Magway. Next, the deputy minister pro-

ceeded to Magway Education College. After hearing reports by officials, he fulfilled the requirements.

Yesterday morning, the deputy minister met the principal and faculty members of Pyay Education College and gave instructions to them and offered stationery for students.

MNA

Traditional Medicines and Medical Equipment Exhibition continues

YANGON, 20 Dec — The ongoing Fifth Traditional Medicines and Medical Equipment Exhibition, organized by the Ministry of Health, continued for the fifth day at the Tatmadaw Convention Hall on U Wisara Road today.

On display at the exhibition with booths close to 134 are a variety of traditional medicines produced by ministries and private medical houses. At the Traditional Medicine Department booth, use of herbal plants to be free from six major diseases and practice of GMP method are on display. Various medical houses sell traditional medicines.

The exhibition will be kept open to the public till 25 December. — MNA

18th gems and jade sales of MEHL in late Jan

YANGON, 21 Dec — The 18th gems and jade sales of Myanmar Economic Holdings Ltd will take place at Myanmar Gems Mart on Kaba Aye Pagoda Road here from 24 to 27 January 2005. Gems and jade can be previewed from 24 to 26 January, and they will be put on sale on 27 January on the basis of bargain and auction. Those wishing to purchase the gems and jade may pay the registration fees, K 4,000 for nationals and Euro 20 for foreigners, as of 21 January.

Private merchants may keep their gems and jade at the mart for sale from 3 to 14 January, and they are to pay 0.4 per cent of the value of their gems and jade for service fees. Three per cent commission will be charged by the MEHL after the sale. Tax on gems will be levied in accord with the rules and regulations issued by the Ministry of Mines.

For further information, contact Myanmar Ruby Enterprise, No 24/26, Sule Pagoda Road, Kyauktada Township (Ph 371053 and 370561) and Myanmar Imperial Jade, No 24/26, Sule Pagoda Road, Kyauktada Township (Ph 371027 and 370564) during office hours. — MNA



2004 ASEAN Open Optimist Championship in progress on Chaungtha beach on 19th December. — NLM

NOTICE

1. Government of the Union of Myanmar, Ministry of Transport, requires the undermentioned services for ATR and FOKKER 27/28 aircraft under utilization by Myanma Airways.

- Aircraft/Engines/parts sent for repairs and overhauling.
- Purchase of required materials and parts for the aircraft.
- 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.

Ministry of Transport
No. 363/421 Merchant Street
Botataung Township, Yangon.
Tel: 95-1-296815
95-1-294431
95-1-296818
Fax: 95-1-299415
E-mail: minotran@mptmail.net.mm

INVITATION TO TENDER

(TENDER NO. 12(T) MPE/HSD (11)/2004-2005)

- Sealed Tenders are invited by the Myanma Petrochemical Enterprise, the Ministry of Energy for the supply of (6,000±10%) Metric Tons H.S.D (Gas Oil Regular 0.5%).
- Tender closing Date: (29-12-2004) at (12:00) noon.
- Tender Documents and detail information are available at the Department of Finance, Myanma Petrochemical Enterprise, No. (23), Min-Ye-Kyaw-Zwa Road, Yangon, during office hours commencing (21-12-2004) on payment of one hundred (100) FEC per set.
- Only bid from tenderer who has purchased tender documents officially from Myanma Petrochemical Enterprise will be accepted for evaluation.

Managing Director,
Myanma Petrochemical Enterprise

Maldives to hold parliamentary elections on 31 December

COLOMBO, 19 Dec—

The Maldives is due to hold parliamentary elections on 31 December, Sri Lanka's official newspaper *Daily News* reported Saturday.

The government of Maldives has promised that the upcoming parliamentary elections will be free and fair, and be conducted in accordance with the country's electoral laws and regulations, said the report.

It has invited the Commonwealth Secretariat and the European Commission to field election observer groups.

MNA/Xinhua

Nigeria's external reserve hits \$16.1b

LAGOS, 19 Dec — Nigeria's foreign reserve has hit a record high of 16.1 billion US dollars, local newspaper *This Day* reported on Friday.

Finance Minister Ngozi Okonjo-Iweala was quoted as saying that the current reserve can cover 11 months of import.

Okonjo-Iweala said that the Nigerian federal government has been able to save about 691 billion naira (about 5.2 billion US dollars) which accrued as excess crude proceeds for the year 2004.

This, she noted, translated to an increase of 13.5

per cent over the projection of 609 billion naira (about 4.6 billion US dollars) for the fiscal year ending December 2004.

She restated that the government will provide a kerosene subsidy amounting to two billion naira per month (about 150 million US dollars) to cushion the impact of the recent price increase of petroleum products in the country.

"The inflation rate is going down from a moving average of 19.1 per cent for 2004," she said, adding that the exchange rate of the Nigerian cur-

rency naira to the US dollar has remained largely stable at 132 naira to a dollar as traded at the Dutch Auction System (DAS) of the foreign exchange market.

On external debt, she said the country's external debt still stood at 34 billion dollars as at June 2004, adding that the external debt burden was clearly unsustainable.

Okonjo-Iweala assured that the Nigerian Government would maintain its debt service of one billion dollars to the Paris Club in the year 2005.

MNA/Xinhua

Los Angeles attracts record number of visitors

LOS ANGELES, 18 Dec — Los Angeles, a US coastal city, is expected to attract a record number of visitors this year, the *Los Angeles Times* reported Friday.

LA Inc, the city's convention and visitors bureau, projects that 24.3 million tourists will visit Los Angeles County in 2004. That is an increase of 4.1 per cent over last year and tops the previous record of 24.2 million set in 2000.

The trend is likely to continue next year, as the slumping greenback continues to lure bargain-hunting foreigners, hoteliers and travel agents told the *Times*.

"It's phenomenal," Mark Liberman, President

of LA Inc, told the *Times*. "This is the best year in terms of number of visitors in the city's history. We've added attractions. The city has a new look, a new feel."

Liberman and others cited a spruced-up Hollywood area, the new Walt Disney Concert Hall in downtown Los Angeles and new attractions at local theme parks as big draws.

Through October, ho-

tel occupancy rates in Los Angeles are averaging 73.2 per cent this year compared with 68.1 per cent in 2003, according to LA Inc, with Hollywood and Beverly Hills posting the biggest gains. Average daily room rates are up 5.7 per cent.

In the Los Angeles area, visitor spending is expected to hit 12 billion US dollars, a gain of 7.8 per cent from last year and the first time there has been

a year-to-year increase since the 2000 record high of 13.3 billion dollars, the *Times* reported.

Orange County, bordering Los Angeles County as part of the Greater Los Angeles area, also expects to set a tourism record this year with 43.6 million visitors, up 2 per cent from last year and higher than the previous record of 40.2 million in 2000, according to the *Times*.—MNA/Xinhua

Uganda collects more revenue in first five months of 2004/05

KAMPALA, 19 Dec — Uganda Revenue Authority collected a total of 741 billion shillings (about 423.4 million US dollars) in the first five months of the 2004/05 financial year starting from July, representing a 0.46-per-cent improvement, according to a report on Friday from the Ugandan Financial Ministry.

The revenue constituted a surplus of 3.42 billion shillings (about 1.9

million dollars) compared with the 737.62 billion shillings (about 421.5 million dollars) targeted for the period from July to November.

The report attributed the good performance to improved efficiency in tax administration and the recent policy on government contracts.

The report said the shortfalls registered in September and October were offset by revenues from growth in fuel sales

and non-fuel imports.

On a month to month basis, there is a clear surplus in revenues in the months of July, August and November, which offset the shortfalls in the September and October.

MNA/Xinhua

South Africa destroys over 20,500 firearms

JOHANNESBURG, 19 Dec — The South African police destroyed more than 20,500 firearms in Kempton Park, southeast of Johannesburg, on Fri-

day in a bid to fight the proliferation of guns in the country.

"The police are winning the war on the proliferation of illegal firearms," Gauteng police's acting spokeswoman Senior Superintendent Mary Martins-Engelbrecht said.

She said the weapons included sub-machine guns, shotguns, rifles, handguns and gas pistols.

Most of the guns had been used in crimes such as cash-in-transit heists, murder and robberies, Martins-Engelbrecht said in a statement.

She said the rest of the firearms belonged to persons declared unfit to own a gun, and legal owners who no longer deemed it necessary to own one.

"All firearms forfeited to the state as well as all

firearms seized by the police have to be destroyed," she said.

Rampant firearms, ranging from three million to four million, is the one of the major causes for high crime rate in the country. More than 10,000 people were victimized by armed robbery, murder, rape and cash-in-transit heists every year.

MNA/Xinhua

*The best time to plant a tree was
twenty years ago.
The second best time is now.*



Kittens look out from their enclosure at a pet shop in Amman, on 18 Dec, 2004, during the holiday seasons in the kingdom.—INTERNET

မညာရေးဖြင့် ခေတ်မီပွဲပြီးတိုးတက်သော နိုင်ငံတော်ကြီး တည်ဆောက်အံ့

Germany to stop offering immigration to Jews from Russia

BERLIN, 19 Dec— Germany is to stop offering unlimited immigration to Jews from Russia and eastern Europe from 1, January 2006, ending a policy it launched with the collapse of the Soviet bloc, German newspapers reported on Saturday.

Germany began offering Jews from the former Soviet bloc the right to settle in the country in 1991 to help rebuild its own Jewish communities, devastated by the country's Nazi regime. Some 190,000 Jews had taken up the offer by the end of 2003.

But the fact the number of ex-Soviet Jews coming to Germany has in recent years been higher than the number going to Israel had led to a policy rethink, the newspapers said.

Berliner Zeitung re-

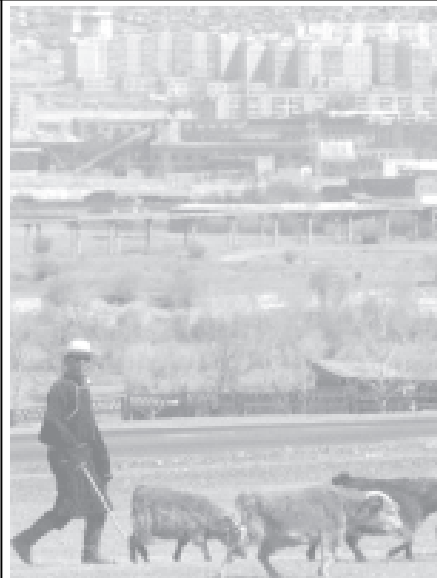
ported around 9,400 ex-Soviet Jews were expected to come to Germany this year, exceeding the number settling in Israel by more than 1,000 for the first time.

The newspaper also said Berlin's Jewish Community was under financial pressure because more than three-quarters of immigrant Jews were reliant on welfare payments.

Germany's Interior Ministry was not immediately available for comment.

New rules will mean

those applying to come to Germany will have to show knowledge of German and be under 45 years old. They will also not be eligible for social aid, the paper said. *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung* cited a ministry officials saying Germany's 16 states and federal government agreed on Thursday to draw up new rules for Jewish immigrants. The ministry declined to say if the new rules would restrict immigration, the newspaper said. —MNA/Reuters



A Mongolian herder outside Ulan Bator on 19 Dec, 2004.—INTERNET

China to increase judges, clerks by 10%

BEIJING, 20 Dec— The number of judges will increase by 10 per cent in China over the next few years in an effort to make up the country's inadequate trial force, said Xiao Yang, president of the Chinese Supreme Court, at an on-going national court work meeting.

A national higher court presidents' meeting held here from December 16-18 released statistics showing that Chinese courts dealt with 8.08 million criminal, civil and administrative cases in 2003, 4.59 million more than in 1993.

The number and variety of cases has risen remarkably in China in recent years, but the number of judges and clerks remains unchanged, causing difficulties for courts to ensure timely trials.

Jiang Yunchang, vice-president of the Supreme People's Court said Saturday that 12,782 judges and clerks will be recruited for local courts, especially for local courts at the grassroots levels.

MNA/Xinhua

Jeevika Shah crowned Mrs India-World

MUMBAI, 20 Dec — Jeevika Shah was crowned Mrs India-World at a beauty pageant here. Arunima Datta emerged the first runner-up while Sapna Sharma was the second runner-up at the contest. The event was aimed at providing a platform for married women to showcase their grace, charm, beauty and family values, organizers said. Jeevika Shah, a homemaker and mother of two, would participate in the Mrs World pageant to be held at Amby Valley in February, 2005 where participants from 50 countries would compete for the title.

MNA/PTI

US Govt accuses cigarette makers of targeting teens

WASHINGTON, 19 Dec— Is the Marlboro Man really a kid at heart?

Government lawyers claim the tobacco industry has been using the classic advertising symbol and others like him to appeal to children. Cigarette companies say they're only trying to attract adult smokers.

The dispute is the focus of a civil racketeering trial now in its third month. The government is seeking 280 billion US dollars — a record amount for such a case.

US District Judge Gladys Kessler, who is presiding over the bench trial, scheduled a break beginning Friday. The trial will resume January 6.

The Justice Department contends the industry engaged in a five-decade conspiracy to deceive the public about the health hazards of cigarettes. To win, the government must show the

industry acted improperly in the past and is still acting fraudulently or is likely to do so in the future.

Though it is illegal to sell cigarettes to anyone under 18 in all states, with some requiring teens to be 19, teens younger than that still manage to buy cigarettes or get others to do it for them.

Government lawyers say cigarette companies know that and seek to attract children to their brands by using ads that portray smoking as attractive, sophisticated and rebellious — appealing fea-

tures for kids — and placing them in magazines popular with young people. The Campaign for Tobacco-Free Kids estimates 22 per cent of high schoolers smoke. Justice lawyers, who have declined to speak publicly about the case outside court,

have produced documents showing the industry has tracked youth smoking over the years. One internal Philip Morris document from 1975 discussed young people's allowances and how that might affect cigarette sales.

MNA/AP

Illicit brew kills 11 in central Kenya

NAIROBI, 20 Dec — At least 11 Kenyans have been killed and several others are hospitalized in central Kenya after drinking illicit home-brewed alcohol mixed with methanol, police said here Saturday.

The tragedy started late Thursday night and those who were admitted to local hospitals are in critical condition, Kenyan police spokesman Jaspher Ombati told *Xinhua* by telephone.

"It is very serious, and more unconscious people are being picked up. The problem was caused by failure to report the incident. After the first three

victims died, the residents did not report to us (police)," Ombati said.

The spokesman said nobody has been arrested for selling the banned brew, and police have started investigations to establish the cause of the deaths.

Home brew is popular among Kenyans because it is cheap and extremely strong. Traditionally, the

ingredients range from fermented corn and sorghum meal to coconut or sugarcane juice. In recent years, however, high-octane fuel and mentholated spirit are added to enhance the potency.

A glass of home brew costs 10 shillings (13 US cents) while a bottle of beer costs at least 60 shillings (75 US cents).

MNA/Xinhua



Contestants parade on stage during the final of China's first ever beauty pageant for women who have had plastic surgery, in Beijing on 18 Dec, 2004.

INTERNET

Gaza coastal road named after late Yasser Arafat

GAZA, 20 Dec — A main Gaza City coastal road would be named after late Palestinian leader Yasser Arafat who died last month, a municipality statement said on Saturday.

The decision was approved by Gazan mayor that the al Rasheed Street, extending from Arafat's Gaza headquarters to the Jewish settlement of

Nitzarim along the beach of Gaza City, would be renamed Yasser Arafat's Street, the statement said.

The statement said the move aimed to commemo-

rate Arafat as a leader of the Palestinian people.

Arafat died at a French military hospital on 11 November.

MNA/Xinhua

SPORTS

Celtic stretch lead in Scottish Premier League

LONDON, 20 Dec — Celtic stretched their lead in the Scottish Premier League to four points after Chris Sutton's goal gave them a 1-0 home win over Dundee United on Saturday.

Sutton headed home an Alan Thompson corner after 18 minutes for his eighth goal of the season to put Celtic on 47 points.

Second-placed Rangers have 43, although they can close the gap on Sunday when they play away to Kilmarnock.

It was a bad day for third-placed Aberdeen who had Steven Craig sent off in the 1-0 defeat at Dundee for whom Neil Barrett scored the winner. Elsewhere, Inverness Caledonian Thistle won their first league match under new manager Craig Brewster when they beat Motherwell 2-1 at Fir Park.

Richie Hart put Thistle ahead before Graham Bayne made it 2-0. Dave Clarkson pulled one back for Motherwell, but was sent off for two bookings in the second half.

Hibernian's Derek Riordan grabbed a late winner to give his side a 2-1 home victory against Dunfermline. Stephen Glass opened the scoring after 65 minutes but Dunfermline levelled two minutes later through Andy Tod.—MNA/Reuters

Arsenal beat Portsmouth 1-0 to trim Chelsea's lead

LONDON, 20 Dec — Sol Campbell was the unlikely match-winner for Arsenal on Sunday as they beat Portsmouth 1-0 to trim Chelsea's Premier League lead to five points.

The England defender thumped a 25-metre shot past Pompey keeper Jamie Ashdown after 75 minutes to revive the champions who had been largely

outplayed by the home side.

Campbell's goal, his first for Arsenal since August 2003, leapfrogged the Londoners over

Everton into second place with 38 points from 18 matches. Chelsea have 43 points after a 4-0 home win over Norwich City the previous day.

Earlier sixth-placed Liverpool produced an impressive comeback to beat Newcastle United 3-1 at Anfield.

Dutch forward Patrick Kluivert shot a weakened Newcastle in front after 32 minutes but within six minutes a Titus Bramble own goal and Neil Mellor's well-taken goal swung the game in Liverpool's favour. Milan Baros' 11th goal of the season sealed the points for Liverpool on the hour before Newcastle midfielder Lee Bowyer was sent off for a second caution.

Liverpool stay sixth with 28 points from 18 matches while Newcastle languish in the bottom half of the table with just one win in their last eight league matches.

MNA/Reuters



Arsenal's Thierry Henry (L) is challenged by Linvoy Primus of Portsmouth. Arsenal manager Arsene Wenger cranked up the pressure on his rivals by insisting the busy Christmas period will go a long way to deciding who really has the stomach for a gruelling Premiership race.—INTERNET

Espanyol reclaim second place in Primera Liga

MADRID, 20 Dec — Espanyol reclaimed second place in the Primera Liga with a 0-0 draw against basement side Numancia on Sunday.

The draw leaves Espanyol with 30 points, nine behind leaders Barcelona, who drew 1-1 with Valencia on Saturday, while Real Madrid and Valencia have 29 points.

Strugglers Real Mallorca were beaten 2-1 at home by Osasuna and are now just one point ahead of Numancia at the bottom of the table.

Valdo put the visitors ahead in the first half, scoring twice from the edge of the area in the space of eight minutes.

Although Jesus Perera found the net in the 81st minute, Mallorca never looked capable of taking anything from the match.

Athletic Bilbao notched up their first

away league victory of the season with a 2-0 win over Zaragoza, who found it hard to create opportunities in the face of the Basque side's efficient attack.

Santiago Ezquerro led the onslaught, scoring twice in the second half before a shoulder problem forced him to leave the pitch.

Villarreal, fresh from a crushing 4-0 UEFA Cup victory over Egaleo, demolished a nervous-looking Malaga 3-0.

In form Argentine Juan Roman Riquelme set up goals for Juan Manuel Pena and Diego Martin Forlan as well as scoring one himself.

MNA/Reuters

AS Roma crush Parma 5-1

MILAN, 20 Dec — Two goals to Francesco Totti in AS Roma's 5-1 crushing of Parma on Sunday made him the club's all-time top scorer while third-placed Udinese beat Lazio 3-0 to close the gap on leading pair Juventus and AC Milan.

Juve's goalless draw at home to champions Milan on Saturday leaves them on 39 points with Milan four behind and Udinese now on 31 points.

A first-half free-kick from Sinisa Mihajlovic gave fourth-placed Inter Milana 1-0 home win over Brescia and only their fourth victory of the season.

Totti's strikes for Roma took him to 108 Serie A goals, two more than Roberto Pruzzo's previous club record, on a day when he threatened in a newspaper interview to quit the club.

"All I can say is that it is like winning the title — an unforgettable moment. I hope I can continue and get many more goals," said Totti, who was mobbed by ball boys wearing his number 10 shirts after his first goal.

Totti set up Antonio Cassano for Roma's opening goal in the 10th minute and then made it 2-0 himself with the record-breaking goal.

Parma pulled a goal back through former Roma defender Cesare Bovo before the break but then Totti set up Cassano again to make it 3-1 five minutes into the second half.

Vincenzo Montella made it 4-1 with a fine solo goal and then Totti



Roma's Philippe Mexes, left, of France, and Vincenzo Montella celebrate after their teammate Antonio Cassano, center, scored during the Serie A Italian top league soccer match between Roma and Parma, in Rome's Olympic stadium, Sunday, Dec 19, 2004.—INTERNET

completed the rout with a thundering drive from over 20 metres out.

Parma had forward Andrea Pisanu sent off 15 minutes from the end of the game.

Lazio coach Domenico Caso's position looks bleak after the defeat at Udinese left his team just a point away from the relegation zone.

Sebastiano Siviglia was sent off in just the eighth minute and then goals from David Pizarro (penalty), David Di Michele and Vincenzo Iaquinta wrapped the game up before the break.

The victory was Udinese's eighth in nine games and coach Luciano Spalletti said: "The way the team are working at the moment and the way

they are performing really pleases me. I'd never have expected us to have so many points at this stage".

Inter struggled against Brescia and had it not been for Mihajlovic's trademark drive, Roberto Mancini's side could easily have ended up with a 13th draw.

"It was hard work to win that one but we had three or four chances. They kept it very tight at the back and it was hard to find space but we won. That will do," said striker Christian Vieri.

Francesco Flachi scored twice for Sampdoria as they won 4-1 at Lecce, who had defender Souleymane Diamoutene sent off in the 37th minute.

MNA/Reuters

Federer named swiss sportsman of the year

GENEVA, 20 Dec — World tennis number one Roger Federer was named Swiss Sportsman of the Year for his remarkable performance in 2004.

It completed a hat-trick of honours within the space of a week for the 23-year-old, who was also named Overseas Sports Personality by the BBC and European Sportsman of the Year by the European Sports Journalists Association.

Federer who is already in Australia preparing for the start of the next tennis season, thanked his home supporters via a satellite broadcast.

"It's a great honour for me at the end of a fantastic year," he said, after picking up the Swiss title for the second time in a row.

"I would rather be in Switzerland with you all now but I have to be here for professional reasons."

Federer did not comment on media reports that he has been busy in Australia securing the services of coach Tony Roche.

One of the most impressive aspects of Federer's year was that he was so successful without a coach.

After parting from Peter Lundgren at the end of 2003, the Swiss coached himself to triumphs at the Australian

Open, Wimbledon and the US Open, becoming the first man since Mats Wilander in 1988 to win three Grand Slam events in a calendar year.

MNA/Xinhua



Roger Federer of Switzerland holds the trophy after winning the Indisat ATP 2004 race during the Tennis Masters Cup 16 November, 2004.—INTERNET

Russia reaffirms opposition to "Taiwan independence"

MOSCOW, 20 Dec — The Russian Foreign Ministry on Saturday reiterated that it is against "Taiwan independence", confirming its consistent support for the one-China policy.

"Russia is against Taiwan's independence in any possible form," Foreign Ministry spokesman Alexander Yakovenko said in a statement posted on the ministry's official web site.

Yakovenko made the statement in connection with the upcoming deliberation of a draft anti-secession law by China's top legislature National People's Congress Standing Committee scheduled for December 25 to 29.

"There is only one China existing in the world. The Government of the People's Republic of China is the only legitimate government representing the entire China, and Taiwan is China's inseparable part," the statement said. "We do not accept the concept of 'two Chinas' or 'one China and one Taiwan'. Russia consistently supports China's efforts towards peaceful resolution of the Taiwan problem," Yakovenko reaffirmed. — MNA/Xinhua

President Hu visits school, family in Macao

MACAO, 20 Dec — Chinese President Hu Jintao on Sunday viewed a school and visited a local family in Macao to know about ordinary people's life in a place that he has set foot on for the first time.

Hu, who arrived here Sunday morning on a two-day trip to attend a celebration gathering marking the 5th anniversary of Macao's return to the Motherland and the inauguration of the second-term government of the Macao Special Administrative Region (SAR).

Hu was warmly welcomed during his visit to the High School for Workers' Children, a half-a-century-old learning facility founded originally to help underprivileged local workers' offspring.

Hu, also General Secretary of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of China (CPC) and chairman of the CPC Central Military Commission, encouraged the students to study harder for Macao's development, and donated books and pianos to the school. The President then paid a visit to the home of a local bus driver, chatted casually with the family, and wished the best for the family's future.

Earlier in the day, Hu also attended the inauguration ceremony of a local bridge and toured several sites of historical interest in the city. — MNA/Xinhua

Drills designed to warn US against repeating Vietnam mistake

HAVANA, 20 Dec — Cuba's First Vice-President and Minister of the Revolutionary Armed Forces, Raul Castro, said Saturday the country's ongoing military drills are designed to warn the United States against repeating mistakes in the Vietnam War.

In the Vietnam War, local militias caused 60-70 per cent of the casualties of invading troops, said Castro, younger brother of Cuban leader Fidel Castro.

The seven-day military exercises, which started Monday, has come to the final stage with civilian participation based on a concept of an all-out war. Four million civilians will join the regular troops and reservists Saturday and Sunday, called "the national defence days" of the drills.

The final stage was designed for combat mobilization and also a test of the country's civil-defence measures and its preparation for a war economy.

Cuba has an All-People's War defence strategy, which requires that every Cuban has the means and place to combat the enemy should the country be invaded and even occupied. Cuba has repeatedly warned its population of the danger of being next in line for a US invasion after Iraq. President Castro has accused the Bush Administration of planning to invade Cuba.

Cuba said earlier the exercises will be a show of preparedness so that Washington does not underestimate Cuba's defence capability. The military-civilian exercises, dubbed Bastion 2004, is the latest annual mass drill based on a guerilla strategy designed to resist an invasion force. This year's operation is more extensive than last year's. — MNA/Xinhua

UN official applauds reproductive health advances in Cuba

HAVANA, 20 Dec — Executive Director of the United Nations Population Fund, Thoraya Obaid, praised Cuba on Saturday for advances made in sexual and reproductive health.

"What I have seen in the island nation in terms of sanitary conditions, reproductive and sexual health, as well as education is something I have not observed in any other country I visited in the past," said Obaid, of Saudi Arabia, who is on a three-day visit to the island.

She noted that nearly all Cuban children are in school, the health services have a universal character, and the dangerous pandemic of HIV/AIDS is kept at a low rate of incidence, thanks to a correct government strategy. — MNA/Xinhua

Asleep in Jesus

U Myint Wai @ Mr Michael Paul (La Salle)

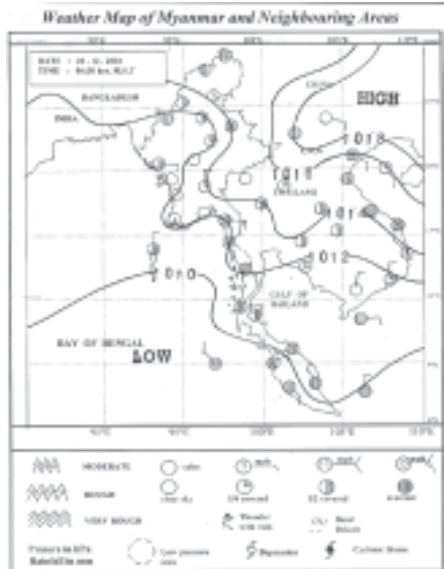
Age (69) years

Inland Water Transport (IWT) (Retd)

Beloved husband of Mrs. Louisa Paul, residing at No 74/5, Min Din Street, Thuwunna, Thingangyun Township, Yangon, expired on 20-12-04 at 5:25 am at Shin Parku Special Hospital. Funeral Service will be held on 21-12-04 at 3:00 pm at Yayway Cemetery.

(Bus will leave from home at 2:00 pm)

Bereaved Family



WEATHER

Monday, 20 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) below normal in Shan, Rakhine, Kayah, Chin, Kayin States and Taninthayi Division, (6°C) below normal in Yangon Division and about normal in the remaining areas. The significant night temperatures were Hakha (1°C), Pinlong (3°C), Mindat, PyinOoLwin, Moekok and Heho (4°C) each and Namsam (5°C).

Maximum temperature on 19-12-2004 was 92°F. Minimum temperature on 20-12-2004 was 54°F. Relative humidity at 9:30 hrs MST on 20-12-2004 was 82%. Total sunshine hours on 19-12-2004 was (8.0) hours approx. Rainfalls on 20-12-2004 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 East at (15:00) hours MST on 19-12-2004.

Bay inference: According to the observation at (12:30) hours MST today, yesterday's low pressure area over southwest Bay has become unimportant. Weather is partly cloudy to cloudy in the South Bay and Andaman Sea and generally fair elsewhere in the Bay of Bengal.

Forecast valid until evening of 21-12-2004: Possibility of isolated light rain in Taninthayi Division and weather will be partly cloudy in Ayeyawady and Yangon Divisions and generally fair in the remaining areas. Degree of certainty is (40%).

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

Outlook for subsequent two days: Slight decrease of night temperature are likely in lower Myanmar areas.

Forecast for Yangon and neighbouring area for 21-12-2004: Partly cloudy.

Forecast for Mandalay and neighbouring area for 21-12-2004: Fair weather.



Tuesday, 21 December View on today:

- 7:00 am**
1. Recitation of Parittas by Missionary Sayadaw U Ottamathara
- 7:25 am**
2. To be healthy exercise
- 7:30 am**
3. Morning News
- 7:40 am**
4. Nice and sweet song
- 7:50 am**
5. ကဗျာနိဗ္ဗာန်
- 8:00 am**
6. အကပြိုင်ပွဲ
- 8:10 am**
7. Songs of Yesteryear

- 8:20 am**
8. ကျေးဇူးအကရေလှောင်တံခွန်
- 8:30 am**
9. International News
- 8:45 am**
10. Let's go
- 4:00 pm**
1. Martial song
- 4:15 pm**
2. Song to uphold National Spirit
- 4:30 pm**
3. English for Everyday Use
- 4:45 pm**
4. Musical Programme
- 5:00 pm**
5. အခင်းသစ်ကဏ္ဍသို့ ပညာရေးရရှိခြင်းသင်တန်း (သတ္တဗောဓိ)
- 5:15 pm**
6. Dance of National races
- 5:30 pm**
7. ခံစားနားထောင်စားစာတံခွန်

- 5:45 pm**
8. Sing and Enjoy
- 6:10 pm**
9. မိုးကြိုးကလေးနဲ့အတူလမ်းထဲ "ဗျာဏ်ပန်းစုန်း" (အပိုင်း-၅)
- 6:30 pm**
10. Evening News
- 7:00 pm**
11. Weather report
- 7:05 pm**
12. Musical Programme
- 7:20 pm**
13. သားငါးဖွဲ့ပြိုင်ပွဲအကျိုး
- 7:30 pm**
14. The Mirror Images of Musical Oldies
- 8:00 pm**
15. News
- 8:10 pm**
16. International News
- 8:20 pm**
17. Weather report
- 8:30 pm**
18. ပဉ္စမအကြိမ် တိုင်းရင်းဆေးရုံနှင့်ဆေးပစ္စည်းပြပွဲ (အပိုင်း-၅)
- 8:45 pm**
19. မိုးကြိုးကလေးနဲ့အတူလမ်းထဲ "သမင်္ဃာနိဗ္ဗာန်" (အပိုင်း-၂၃)
- 9:00 pm**
20. The next day's programme



Tuesday, 21 December Tune in today:

- 8.30 am** Brief news
8.35 am Music:
-Mar'y boy child
8.40 am Perspectives
8.45 am Music:
-X'mas wish
8.50 am National news/Slogan
9.00 am Music:
-Happy X'mas
9.05 am International news
9.10 am Music:
-I wish it could be X'mas everyday
9.15 pm News/Slogan
9.25 pm Lunch time music
-Home for X'mas
-X'mas songs
-Silent Night
-Blue X'mas
9.35 pm English Speaking Course Level-II Unit-(15)
Article/music
9.45 pm Weekly sport reel
Music for your listening pleasure
-Non-Stop Disco
X'mas songs
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

Vice-Senior General Maung Aye inspects Traditional Medicines and Medical Equipment Exhibition

YANGON, 20 Dec— Vice-Chairman of the State Peace and Development Council Deputy Commander-in-Chief of Defence Services Commander-in-Chief (Army) Vice-Senior General Maung Aye, accompanied by Prime Minister Lt-Gen Soe Win, inspected the Fifth Traditional Medicines and Medical Equipment Exhibition at the Tatmadaw Convention Hall on U Wisara Road here this morning.

On arrival at the Tatmadaw Convention Hall at 9 am, Vice-Senior General Maung Aye was welcomed by members of the State Peace and Development Council Lt-Gen Aung Htwe, Lt-Gen Khin Maung Than and Lt-Gen Maung Bo of the Ministry of Defence,



Deputy Commander-in-Chief of Defence Services Commander-in-Chief (Army) Vice-Senior General Maung Aye inspects the Fifth Traditional Medicines and Medical Equipment Exhibition. — MNA

Chairman of Yangon Division Peace and Development Council Commander of Yangon Command Maj-Gen Myint Swe, ministers, the Auditor-General, the Chairman of Civil Service Selection and Training Board, the Yangon Mayor, deputy ministers, the Director-General of the State Peace and Development Council Office and departmental (See page 9)

Local people need to understand genuine goodwill of government and duly reciprocate

General Thura Shwe Mann meets departmental officials in NyaungU

YANGON, 20 Dec — Member of the State Peace and Development Council General Thura Shwe Mann met with departmental officials of NyaungU District and NyaungU Township at Tatmadaw Guest House in NyaungU, Mandalay Division, yesterday morning.

Present on the occasion were State Peace and Development Council Secretary-1 Lt-Gen Thein Sein, SPDC member Lt-Gen Ye Myint, Mandalay Division PDC Chairman and Central Command Commander Maj-Gen Ye Myint, ministers, Magway Division PDC

Chairman Col Phone Maw Shwe, responsible officials of the SPDC Office, departmental heads, local authorities, and others.

NyaungU District PDC Chairman Lt-Col Teza reported on location and area of the district and the township, its population, condition of regional stability, tasks for preservation of ancient cultural zone, arrival of tourists, sown acreage, agricultural undertakings, plantations of fuelwood, measures for (See page 9)

INSIDE

Since its start, the Buddhist Sasana has been preserved and encouraged in Myanmar for years close to 2600. As a result, Myanmar remains a prime source of precise and complete texts of Pitakas, Pali treatises and other Theravada Pariyatti literature.

Page (7)

MAUNG ARNT {MA (BOMBAY)}



General Thura Shwe Mann meets with departmental officials in NyaungU. — MNA