

The NEW LIGHT OF MYANMAR

Volume XII, Number 250

11th Waxing of Nadaw 1366 ME

Wednesday, 22 December 2004



Senior General Than Shwe inspects the site chosen for Manipura Multipurpose Dam Project in Falam Township, Chin State. — MNA

Speedy completion of Manipura Multipurpose Dam Project urged

**The dam will benefit Kalay, Kalaywa, Gangaw Regions
Senior General Than Shwe inspects irrigation projects
in Chin State and Magway Division**

YANGON, 21 Dec—Chairman of the State Peace and Development Council Commander-in-Chief of Defence Services Senior General Than Shwe, 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 Command Maj-Gen Ye Myint, ministers, senior military officers of the Ministry of Defence, Chairman of Magway Division Peace and Development Council Col Phone Maw Shwe, officials of the State Peace and Development Council Office and heads of department, arrived in Kalay, Sagaing Division by Tatmadaw aircraft from Bagan-NyaungU on 19 December afternoon.

They were welcomed at Kalay Airport

by Chairman of Sagaing Division Peace and Development Council Commander of North-West Command Maj-Gen Tha Aye, Brig-Gen Khin Maung Aye of Kalay Station, No 33 LID Commander Brig-Gen Tin Tun Aung, Brig-Gen Nyi Tun of Kyigon Station and senior military officers and departmental

heads.

Accompanied by Commander Maj-Gen Tha Aye and officials, Senior General Than Shwe and party arrived at Manipura Multipurpose Dam Project to be implemented by the Irrigation Department in Falam Township, Chin State by helicopter.

They were wel-

comed there by Deputy Minister for Agriculture and Irrigation U Ohn

Myint and officials.

At the briefing hall, Senior General Than

Shwe heard a report presented by Minister for (See page 8)

Annual average flow of water in Manipura River is 7 million acre-feet and feasibility study for construction of Manipura Dam is being conducted; the dam will not only benefit about 100,000 acres of farmland but also prevent annual floods in the lower part of Kalay. Moreover, the dam will be able to generate 540 megawatt.



Senior General Than Shwe and party being welcomed by local authorities, departmental personnel, locals and students in Gangaw, Magway Division. — MNA

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

PERSPECTIVES

Wednesday, 22 December, 2004

Strive for speedy completion of river water pumping stations

Sufficient water supply for the agriculture is the key to our efforts to build an agro-based industrialized nation. Therefore, the government is implementing water supply projects with the intention of ensuring regional development, greening dry and arid regions and raising the living standard of the people.

For the development of agriculture, dams and river water pumping stations are being built with the use of huge sums of money and manpower. A total of 168 dams and 271 river water pumping stations have been built so far and 21 million acres of farmland can now be irrigated. In Mandalay Division, Lawkananda, Kyaukku, Ngathayauk and Thukaungti river water pumping stations are under construction.

In his meeting with responsible officials at the project site of the Lawkananda river water pumping station in NyaungU Township, Mandalay Division, on 18 December, Chairman of the State Peace and Development Council Commander-in-Chief of Defence Services Senior General Than Shwe said that, in the areas that rely on rain and river water for agricultural purposes, it should be a must for farmers to grow rice in the rainy season and other crops such as cotton and edible oil crops in the other seasons. Only in this way, can self-sufficiency in rice and generation of income be ensured, the Head of State added.

Some farmers, though living along the Ayeyawady river, find it very hard to get enough water. River water pumping stations are the only way to solve this problem. Therefore, all those responsible should strictly follow the guidance given by the Head of State and try their level best to complete river water pumping stations under construction according to the schedule.

The Water Resources Utilization Department under the Ministry of Agriculture and Irrigation is constructing the Lawkananda river water pumping station so that farmers in the region west of NyaungU Township can engage in agriculture all the year round. The Kyaukku river water pumping station is to be finished in October, 2005 and, on completion, it will be able to irrigate 3,000 acres of farmland all the year round. Moreover, river water pumping stations are being built in Myingyan Township, Taungtha Township and Ngazun Township.

We would like to call on all those responsible to try their best to ensure the speedy success of the projects they are in charge of so that local people will be able to enjoy the benefits sooner.

Traditional Medicines and Medical Equipment Exhibition continues

YANGON, 21 Dec — The Fifth Traditional Medicines and Medical Equipment Exhibition continued for the sixth day today at the Tatmadaw Convention Hall here.

A variety of traditional medicines are displayed at 134 booths of ministries and private medical houses.

Myanmar Traditional Medicine Practitioners' Association-MTMAP and Medical Research Department (Lower Myanmar) participated in the exhibition. The exhibition will be kept open till 25 December.

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

Commander inspects construction of bridges in Myaungmya District

YANGON, 21 Dec — Chairman of Ayeyawady Division Peace and Development Council Commander of South-West Command Maj-Gen Soe Naing on 19 December inspected construction of Pammawady River crossing bridge (Myinkaseik) on Patheingyi-Myaungmya Road in Myaungmya Township and attended to the needs.

Now, local people have been traveling 68 miles from Patheingyi to Myaungmya via Patheingyi-Einme Road. However,

on completion of the bridge, the distance of the route between Patheingyi and Myaungmya will be 34 miles.

On completion, the bridge will be 1,260 ft long.

Commander Maj-Gen Soe Naing also inspected Einme Creek Bridge construction site near Kwinkalay Village and the 240 ft long and 24 ft wide reinforced bridge is on Myaungmya-Einme Road in Einme Township.

MNA

Information Minister receives guests

YANGON, 21 Dec — Minister for Information Brig-Gen Kyaw Hsan received Mr Larvy C.L. Ng, Sale Director of Coates Brothers Malaysia SDN BHD, Malaysia, and party at his office this afternoon.

Also present during the call were Deputy Minister for Information Brig-Gen Aung Thein, Managing Director of News and Periodicals is Enterprise Col Soe Win, General Manager of Printing and Publishing Enterprise U Thet Soe and officials.

MNA



Minister Brig-Gen Kyaw Hsan receives Sales Director of Coates Brothers (Malaysia) SDN BHD Mr Larvy C.L. Ng. — MNA

Myeik Open Golf Championship concludes



YANGON, 21 Dec — Myeik Open Golf Championship, organized by the Coastal Region Command, Myanmar PGA and Myanmar Golf Federation, mainly sponsored by Rothmans of Pall Myanmar Pte Ltd, concluded and its prize presentation ceremony was held at Myeik Golf Club yesterday evening.

After the 18-hole event, in amateur level, Joint-Secretary of MGFU Ye Htet Doe presented a prize of Longest Drive to Aung Myint Soe and a prize of Nearest Pin to

Kyaw Kyaw Win and Executive of the MGFU Ko Ko Lay, a prize of Most Par to U Myo Nyunt, a prize of Birdies to Kyaw Kyaw Win and a prize of Eagle to Aung Myint Soe. In professional level, resident representative of Myanmar U Aung Hla Han presented consolation prizes to Soe Kyaw Naing (Srixon), Aung Win and Min Naing.

Next, Manager U Kyaw Soe Lwin of Rothmans of Pall Myanmar Pte Ltd presented prizes to Daily Best winners in amateur level and Col Han Ngwe of the Coastal Region Command, to Daily Best winners in professional level.

Afterwards, Brig-Gen Zin Yaw of Myeik Golf Club presented prizes to Tun Myat Oo, Aung Myint Soe and Kyaw Kyaw Win, Yan Lin and Myo Nyunt in the handicap 13-24 amateur level and the Deputy Commander of Coastal Region Command, to Bo Bo, Nay Lin Tun and Zaw Zin Win in the handicap 0-12 amateur level.

After that, Commander of Coastal Region Command Maj-Gen Ohn Myint presented first prize with cheque to Soe Kyaw Naing (Srixon), second to Aung Win (Srixon) and third to Min Naing (Srixon) in professional golfers level.

Next, Manager U Kyaw Soe Lwin presented souvenirs to Brig-Gen Zin Yaw of Myeik Golf Club. The Commander extended greetings on the occasion and a dinner was hosted to those present.

Co-sponsors of the championship are Air Manalay, Myanmar Brewery Ltd, Alpine Purified Drinking Water, KM Golf Centre, Maruman, Tour Stage, Wilson, Srixon, Grand Slam (Munsing Wear), Accel International Co Ltd (Canon), Sun Far Travels and Tours (Hole-In-One Sponsor) and Myeik Golf Club and main sponsor, Han Event Management.

MNA

Vietnam focuses on all-people national defence

HANOI, 21 Dec—Vietnam will continue to attach special importance to building up the all-people national defence more strongly to meet the demand for the country's protection in the new period, Vietnamese President Tran Duc Luong has stressed.

"Building up the all-people national defence, the people's Armed Forces and the people's Army towards professionalism and modernization to act as a core for all people to well fulfill national defence tasks is an objective requirement of the national construction and protection," the President said when addressing the ceremony of the 60th founding anniversary of the Vietnam People's Army held here on Monday.

The country will develop the national defence industry, gradually meeting demand for weapons and equipment of its Armed Forces.

To do this, it is necessary to "mobilize civil industries to serve national

defence... and pay attention to researching on war types and applying advanced military technologies and techniques flexibly," he said.

At the ceremony, Vietnamese Defence Minister Pham Van Tra said the people's Armed Forces attach great importance to reinforcing ties with people, helping them in all fronts, including poverty reduction, illiteracy removal and disaster prevention.

"The Armed Forces continue to reinforce and develop economic and national defense zones in strategic localities, and help local residents deal with social issues," he said.

MNA/Xinhua

CPC willing to promote development of China-Venezuela relations

BEIJING, 21 Dec—The Communist Party of China (CPC) will actively develop good party-to-party relations with the Movement Fifth Republic (MFR) of Venezuela in a bid to promote constant and stable development of the China-Venezuela relations, said a senior official here on Monday.

Wang Jiarui, head of the International Department of the CPC Central Committee, made the remark when meeting with a delegation of the MFR led by Nicolas Maduro.

Wang spoke highly of the current progress of the China-Venezuela relations and said the CPC is willing to develop good relations with the MFR in the spirit of enhancing understanding,

learning from each other, developing friendship and promoting cooperation.

Nicolas Maduro said the success of the Chinese people in national construction, led by the CPC, is of great importance to Venezuela. The MFR will strengthen friendly relations with the CPC and deepen exchanges between the two sides on managing state affairs.

MNA/Xinhua

S Korea's Kia Motors to buy stake in Malaysia auto assembler

KUALA LUMPUR, 21 Dec — South Korean automaker Kia Motors is buying a stake of at least 15 per cent in Malaysia auto assembler Naza Automotive Manufacturing in a bid to develop a regional auto hub in Malaysia, a news report said Monday.

The planned purchase

probe finalized next year, Kia Motors Corp.'s Kuala Lumpur-based Asia-Pacific managing director, Young S Koh, told the *Business Times* daily.

Naza Automotive Manufacturing Sdn. Bhd., a unit of privately owned conglomerate Naza Group, operates a 300-million-ringgit (80-mil-

lion-US-dollar) auto assembly plant in Malaysia's northern Kedah State.

"The factory will eventually be used as a regional hub for Kia," Koh was quoted as saying. "Kia has big plans with Naza for Malaysia and the region."

MNA/AP



India, Malaysia sign three agreements

NEW DELHI, 21 Dec — Giving a major boost to their ties, India and Malaysia on Monday signed three agreements on cooperation in satellite sector and for development of 13.85 billion rupees Hyderabad International Airport project.

The agreements were signed in the presence of Prime Minister Manmohan Singh and his visiting Malaysian counterpart Abdullah Ahmad Badawi after the two leaders held wide-ranging discussions on a host of bilateral, regional and international issues of mutual concern.

In addition, 12 business-to-business agreements were signed at a luncheon meeting Badawi had with CII and FICCI, two major amalgams of Indian industries, here.

The accord on pooling their satellite capacities was inked by the Antrix Corporation Limited, the commercial arm of the Indian Space Research Organization (ISRO) and MEASAT Global Bhd.

The joint venture company, proposed to be formed under the agreement, is seen as a major move to develop a satellite neighbourhood for millions of broadcasting and telecommunications customers across the wider Asia

Pacific Region.

It will be equally owned by the two companies and represents a significant breakthrough and a major step in the ongoing cooperation between the Indian and Malaysian satellite sectors.

It will leverage capacity from both the high-powered Indian INSAT and Malaysian MEASAT satellite fleet to provide commercial satellite service across the wider Asia-Pacific Region.— MNA/PTI



Vietnamese performers reenact a war scene during the 60th anniversary ceremonies of the People's Army at Ba Dinh Hall in Hanoi, Vietnam on 20 Dec, 2004.— INTERNET

Iraq bombers 'are having an effect', says Bush

WASHINGTON, 21 Dec—In a sobering assessment of the Iraq war, President Bush acknowledged Monday that Americans' resolve has been shaken by grisly scenes of death and destruction and he pointedly criticized the performance of US-trained Iraqi troops. "No question about it," he said. "The bombers are having an effect."

At a year-end news conference, the president also refused to say whether

his strategy for overhauling Social Security would entail cutting benefits, raising the retirement age or limiting benefits for wealthier workers. "Don't bother to ask me," Bush said, adding that he would not tip his hand until he starts negotiating with Congress next year.

For 53 minutes, Bush fielded questions on international and domestic affairs. It was his 17th formal news conference, held one day before he flies to the presidential retreat at Camp David for a vacation that will stretch into early next year and include a stay at his Texas ranch.

A US Marine takes a photo of damage from the powerful car bomb attack in the holy city of Najaf on 20 Dec, 2004.—INTERNET

Turkey condemns killing of five Turks in Iraq

ANKARA, 20 Dec—The Turkish Foreign Ministry condemned on Sunday the attack in which five Turkish security officers were killed in the northern Iraqi city of Mosul.

The ministry said that the Turkish convoy carrying eight security officers who would take over the mission in the Turkish Embassy in Baghdad were attacked by gunmen last Friday.

Five Turkish security officers and two Iraqi drivers were killed in the attack, the ministry said.

Internet

MNA/Xinhua

Malaysia puts importance to widening ties with India

NEW DELHI, 21 Dec — Seeking deepening of his country's relations with India, visiting Malaysian Prime Minister Abdullah Ahmad Badawi said here Monday he expected his visit to help widen the area of bilateral ties between the two countries.

"We want to deepen diversified areas.

and expand our relations with India covering all areas," the *Press Trust of India* quoted Badawi as saying after being presented ceremonial reception at the Presidential Palace.

Badawi said he hoped his visit would help widen ties between the two nations and make them more comprehensive.

The Malaysian Premier arrived here Sunday on a five-day state visit that is expected to give a boost to bilateral economic cooperation in

Badawi, who is on his first visit to India after assuming office in October last year, will hold wide ranging talks with Prime Minister Manmohan Singh on a host of important bilateral, regional and international issues of mutual concern.

Threats posed by terrorism, UN reforms and Iraq situation are among the issues expected to figure during the parleys.

Badawi will call on President A P J Abdul Kalam, Vice-President

Bhairon Singh Shekhawat and hold meetings with Cabinet ministers during his stay here.

Badawi is accompanied by a high-level delegation, including Foreign Minister Syed Hamid Albar, Works Minister S. Samy Vellu, and Energy and Minister of Higher Education Shafie Mohd Salleh.

Malaysia is India's largest trading partner among ASEAN (Association of South-East Asian Nations) countries.

MNA/Xinhua

Obscure Russian bidder buys YUKOS subsidiary

MOSCOW, 20 Dec — An obscure Russian bidder — Baikal Finance Group — on Sunday won an auction for a 76.79 per cent stake in oil giant YUKOS' core production subsidiary Yuganskneftegaz with 260.75 billion roubles (9.35 billion US dollars).

The auction kicked off at 3:59 pm Moscow Time (1259 GMT) Sunday, the *Interfax* news agency reported.

A five-member auction commission conducted the auction, in which two bidders were allowed to take part, *Interfax* said.

Another bidder, the state-controlled Gazprom, had widely been expected to be the winner of the Yuganskneftegaz.

Yuganskneftegaz, which produces 60 per cent of YUKOS' oil output, was auctioned at a starting price of 246.75 billion roubles (about 8.63 billion dollars), less than half the company's true estimated value.

MNA/Xinhua

Thai PM reiterates commitment against drugs

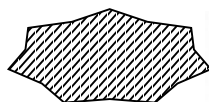
BANGKOK, 21 Dec — Thai Prime Minister Thaksin Shinawatra has reiterated his commitment to removing all drugs from Thailand, saying that the government would continue to seize the assets of narcotics dealers, the *Thai News Agency* reported on Monday.

Statistics from the Anti Money Laundering Office (AMLO) show that during the government's "war on drugs" campaign from 26 February, 2001 to 30 November, 2004, the government has seized assets worth 2.634 billion baht (66.68 million US dollars) in 320 drug-related cases.

Warning that there would be no let-up in assets seizures, Thaksin said Sunday on that drug traffickers had to learn that their trade was ultimately not worthwhile in terms of financial gains. At the same time, drug dealers could face the death penalty, making them both poor and dead, he said.

MNA/Xinhua

ဝက်ပွင့်အား ခေတ်ကျော်လွှား



Part of the

Jakarta skyline on

19 Dec, 2004.

INTERNET



Hu Jintao urges Macao to beef up education

MACAO, 21 Dec — Chinese President Hu Jintao said here Monday the Macao Special Administrative Region (SAR) government should take a long-term view and step up personnel training for Macao's future development.

Hu made the remarks while attending 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 SAR.

"Competition in the world today boils down to competition in talent," Hu

told the gathering. "Investment in education should, therefore, be increased to raise the overall level of education in Macao."

He also advised that policies should be geared to developing various on-the-job training programmes catering to the genuine needs of Macao's economic and social development.

"Attention should be given to training more personnel for political participation to ensure that the patriotic forces in Macao will have more successors and enjoy lasting vigour and vitality," he said. — MNA/Xinhua

Last Hungarian soldiers leave Iraq

BUDAPEST, 20 Dec — The last of Hungary's 300 soldiers serving in a transportation unit south of Baghdad left Iraq on Monday and will be home in a few days, a Defence Ministry spokesman said.

"The soldiers are now in Kuwait and all will return home by Christmas," ministry spokesman Istvan Bocskai said.

Hungary's parliament last year authorized the soldiers' mission, but restricted their activities to non-combat duties and set an end date of 31 December, 2004.

The Hungarian unit was based in the city of Hillah and mostly provided transportation services for coalition troops.

The Socialist-led government's

plan to extend the mission by three months — until 31 March, 2005 — was voted down in parliament last month by the centre-right opposition.

Prime Minister Ferenc Gyurcsany had backed the extension, saying it was important for Hungary to be present in Iraq during the elections set to be held there at the end of January.

One Hungarian soldier died in Iraq, killed in June when a roadside bomb exploded by the convoy he was guarding. — Internet

Earth tremor felt in Sri Lanka's western province

COLOMBO, 20 Dec — A minor earth tremor was felt in part of Sri Lanka's western province, local residents said Sunday.

Residents living in rural areas north of the capital Colombo such as Mirigama, Minuwangoda, and Seeduwa said that they experienced the tremor around 11:45 am local time (0545 GMT). Udeni Bandara Aluthgama, a geologist

at the University of Peradeniya in the central province of Kandy, described the tremor as a micro earthquake which is not capable of making a heavy impact.

MNA/Xinhua



Two refugees eat their lunch in their camp in Baghdad, on 19 Dec, 2004.

INTERNET

The best time to plant a tree was 20 years ago.

The second best time is now.

One SEAL acquitted, second put on probation in Abu Graib abuse cases

SAN DIEGO, 21 Dec — A Navy SEAL has been acquitted of charges that he beat a handcuffed and hooded terror suspect who later died, while a second commando received probation for assaulting another prisoner, attorneys for the men said.

The first SEAL, a first-class petty officer, was found not guilty of assault and dereliction of duty Thursday in a nonjudicial proceeding known as a captain's mast, his attorney, Jeremiah Sullivan, said Monday.

The other commando, a second-class petty officer, was convicted Friday of assault and received six months probation, said his attorney, Milt Silverman.

Both hearings, closed to the public, were held before SEAL Captain James O'Connell at Naval Special Warfare Command in Coronado, outside San Diego.

The Navy has not released the names of the accused SEALs and a Navy spokesman said privacy laws prevented him from commenting. The two were members of SEAL Team Seven, based in Coronado, and were involved in joint CIA-special forces missions.

The first SEAL was accused of punching and kicking prisoner Manadel

al-Jamadi and appearing in a photo in which the hooded and handcuffed detainee was allegedly humiliated.

Al-Jamadi, a suspect in the bombing of a Red Cross facility, was captured during a CIA-special forces mission in November 2003 and died a short time later in Abu Ghraib Prison outside Baghdad.

The second SEAL was accused of trying to subdue a detainee during a CIA interrogation by putting him in a headlock. The detainee was suspected of supplying explosives and weapons to guerillas attacking US troops in Iraq.

The SEAL was cleared of charges of appearing in a photo taken in December 2003 in which another hooded and handcuffed terror suspect was allegedly humiliated.

Silverman said his client was satisfied to get probation on the assault charge, but the attorney objected to the Navy's prosecution of the commandos in the first place. — MNA/AP

Tourism in Thailand expected to expand next year

BANGKOK, 21 Dec — The local tourism industry in Thailand is expected to expand next year the Tourism Authority of Thailand (TAT) has said.

The agency is aimed at achieving a total of 13.4 million international arrivals in Thailand in 2005, generating 450 billion (10.7 billion US dollars) compared with an estimated 12 million international arrivals generating 380 billion baht (9,048 million US dollars) this year.

Thailand has become the "hot" spot in the region, not only for its main markets of Asia-Pacific and Europe but also for emerging markets including the Middle East and North America, TAT governor Juthamas

Siriwan was quoted by Bangkok Post newspaper as saying on Monday.

The growth is being driven by increased seat capacity contributed by new airlines flying to the country from the Middle East, Brazil and the United States and the boom in budget carriers, which mostly benefits the domestic market.

The main markets next year will be countries in the Asia-Pacific Region, said Pornsiri Manoharn, the TAT deputy governor for international marketing. Statistics shows that

in the past 11 months of the year, tourists from East Asia arriving at Bangkok's Don Muang International Airport accounted for 51 per cent of the total tourist arrivals.

Meanwhile, tourists from Europe went up 18 per cent, the United States 23 per cent, the Middle East 48 per cent and Oceania 29.6 per cent. — MNA/Xinhua

S-W China city sees growth in motorcycle exports

CHONGQING, 21 Dec — Southwest China's Chongqing Municipality registered a rapid growth in its motorcycle exports during the first ten months of this year, according to local Customs.

Customs officials said the city's motorcycle exports to the United States totalled 22.84 million US dollars, an increase of 240 per cent over the same period of last year. Exports to Britain, Germany and Sweden were valued at 5.13 million, 1.39 million and 1.28 million dollars, respectively.

According to Customs, the price of motorcycles from January to October this year rose to 342.9 US dollars, up from 309.2 dollars in 2002.

Customs said the exporting motorcycle's cylinder capacity is mainly below 50 CC mini-power or above 150 CC high-power, and the price remains between 313.4-966.4 US dollars.

MNA/Xinhua

MNA/Xinhua

Annan urges closer development cooperation among poor states

UNITED NATIONS, 21 Dec — UN Secretary-General Kofi Annan on Sunday called for closer cooperation among developing countries to ensure millennium development goals, including halving extreme poverty by 2015, to be reached on time.

Without a partnership between the industrialized and developing countries, also known as the North and the South, the development goals

will not be reached, "but deeper South-South cooperation is also vital," Annan said in a message marking the first Day for South-South Cooperation on Sunday.

"Political solidarity within the developing world over the past several decades has helped put development at the heart of the global agenda," he said.

"Today we need policies and other steps that will give more practical expression to that solidarity, so that people in all countries can benefit from globalization and improve their standards of living."

In developing countries, which form the ma-

jority of the UN membership, "some of the leading challenges of our time — such as poverty, environmental degradation and the spread of infectious disease — are most acute," he said.

In preparing next September's UN summit to review global progress towards meeting the millennium development goals, he called for recognition that "the role of South-South cooperation has never been more critical".

"And let us all pledge to do our utmost to harness that great power in our shared battle against poverty and insecurity," he added.

A man pushes his bicycle along a street during a foggy morning in New Delhi on 18 Dec, 2004. — INTERNET

Warm winter brings Beijing's ski fields "cold" business

BEIJING, 21 Dec — The warm winter in China's capital Beijing this year has resulted in the postponed opening of its many ski fields, which experts said will cut almost 20 per cent income for these ski fields.

As the lowest temperature in Beijing dropped to under zero due to recent freezing air, many ski fields located in suburb Beijing opened business around this week, but the opening came almost two weeks later than last year.

China's weather forecast centre said the country is experiencing the 19th warm winter this year, with the average temperature in the north about 2-4 Centigrade higher than that of the same period last year. "We opened our ski field last week, already 15 days later than last year, but the machines' speed in making snow is even lower than the snow's

thaw speed in case of the warm weather," said Wang Wenqin, general manager of Yunfo Mount Ski Field in Miyun county of Beijing.

"I hope the temperature at night may keep lower than two Centigrade under zero," said Wang Shitong, general manager of Jundu Mount Ski Field. According to Wang, if the night temperature is higher than two Centigrade under zero, the snow-making machine will fail to work.

Experts said every year there are only three-month period proper for the running of ski fields in Beijing. The two-week delay for

opening means a reduction of one-sixth clients for these ski fields, amounting to 20 per cent of their total income in a year.

To reduce the losses, many ski fields in Beijing have raised the prices for skiing this winter, while still four ski fields had to close down recently for high costs of running.

MNA/Xinhua

People flash victory signs as they stand around what is left of a car bomb that targeted a US military convoy in the northern Iraqi town of Mosul, on 19 Dec, 2004.

INTERNET



APR conf on cultures, civilizations opens in Vietnam

HANOI, 21 Dec — Representatives from the Asia-Pacific Region have gathered here to explore ways of using dialogues on cultures and civilizations to bolster peace and security and advance sustainable development.

"We must strengthen our efforts to promote among nations and peoples a better knowledge and appreciation of their different cultures. Education remains a key tool," said by Koichiro Matsuura, director general of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO). The speech was made on his behalf by Hans d'Orville, director of the organization's Bureau of Strategic Planning, at a conference here.

In an era of growing regional, ethnic and religious tension, education is needed more than ever to promote a dialogue that

advances mutual understanding, tolerance, said Koichiro Matsuura in his speech.

At the two-day conference entitled "Dialogue Among Cultures and Civilizations for Peace and Sustainable Development" which opened on Monday, some 200 politicians, scientists, educators, researchers and social activities from such countries as India, the Philippines, Japan and Australia, are to share experience and views on the potential of the dialogue in the region, the role of culture and inter-cultural education as vector for dialogue, and the role of networking in

the promotion of dialogue at all levels.

The conference, jointly organized by UNESCO and Vietnam, is expected to raise awareness among broader sections of society of the importance of dialogue among cultures and civilizations, prepare preliminary input for a future collection of regional and inter-regional good practices of the dialogue, identify key activities for education and culture, and co-formulate forward-looking strategies which will enable countries in the region to boost their active participation in promoting the dialogue.

MNA/Xinhua

HK universities enhance high-tech cooperation with Mainland

HONG KONG, 21 Dec — In the past year, Hong Kong tertiary institutes have played an active role in enhancing ties with the Chinese Mainland in the research and development of high technology.

Hong Kong universities have collaborated with tertiary education, business and government sectors of the Mainland to run training programmes and research centres to promote research commercialization and technology transfer.

In June, Hong Kong Polytechnic University (PolyU) took the lead in joining National University Science and Technology Park of the Virtual University Park in Shenzhen and became the first local tertiary institution to set up research centres and training facilities there.

President of PolyU Poon Chung-kwong said both public and private sectors in Hong Kong today are strengthening their ties with the Mainland in various areas.

Poon believed cooperation between Hong Kong and the Mainland will facilitate universities to more effectively promote technology transfer and human resources development in the Mainland, so as to create a win-win situation for both Hong Kong and the Motherland.

City University of Hong Kong (CityU) and the University of Science

and Technology of China (USTC) in Anhui Province, a university established by the Chinese Academy of Sciences (CAS), signed an agreement in June to jointly establish a high level joint research centre in Suzhou.

The agreement is based on the principle of mutually beneficial collaboration with which both universities complement each other's strengths, to work together on joint research projects, supervision and teaching of research students, and to furnish professional training opportunities.

MNA/Xinhua



In this photo provided by the Zoological Society of San Diego, Kalluk, a 780-pound polar bear, frolics with a snowman toy on 18 Dec, 2004, at the San Diego Zoo in San Diego, Calif.—INTRTNET

မြိုင်ရွှေတာ၊ ထိန်းပါလေလွင်၊ ထုတ်ကုန်မြိုင်

President Hu tours Macao's historical sites

MACAO, 20 Dec — President Hu Jintao on Sunday toured several sites of historical interest during his first trip to Macao.

Hu, who arrived here Sunday morning, is here on a two-day visit to attend a celebration gathering to mark 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, also general secretary of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of China (CPC) and chairman of the CPC Central Military Commission, first stopped over at the Ruins of St Paul Church, a landmark architecture in Macao which has a history dating back to the Year 1637.

Hu admired the exquisite relief sculpture on the ruins and listened intently to the briefing on its past.

Seeing many tourists and local residents around, Hu reached out and waved greetings to them, who responded with warm applause.

The President then went to the Macao Museum and had a close look at its rich displays.

He also stepped onto the top of the museum, where another historical site, Monte Fort, is seated. The fortifications were built in the 17th Century and once protected Macao from Dutch invasions.—MNA/Xinhua

Head of Kazakhstan's second largest bank dies in hunting accident

ALMATY, 20 Dec — The head of Kazakhstan's second largest bank TuranAlem, Yerzhan Tatishev, died on Sunday in a shooting accident while hunting wolves, the government spokesman said.

Government spokesman Murat Buldekbayev said Tatishev had died on a hunting expedition in the Central Asian state's southern region near the border with Kyrgyzstan.

MNA/Reuters



Night view of the Eiffel tower in Paris on 19 Dec, 2004.—INTRTNET

New Zealand signs emissions deal with Austria

WELLINGTON, 21 Dec — The governments of New Zealand and Austria have signed a cooperation arrangement on the implementation of emission reduction projects and for the trading of Kyoto Protocol emissions units.

According to a government statement released here on Monday, the arrangement was signed by senior government officials from both countries on Saturday during the 10th meeting of the Conference to the Parties of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change that is being held in Buenos Aires.

The Austrian Government recently called for expressions of interest in the second tender round of its programme to accrue tradable emission

reduction units.

The signing of this arrangement signals the New Zealand and Austrian governments' commitment to encouraging Kiwi business to get involved in Joint Implementation projects with Austria.

"This agreement demonstrates the determination of both governments to tackle climate change," New Zealand Convenor of Ministerial Group on Climate Change, Pete Hodgson, who signed the deal, said.

"New Zealand's pro-

active, pro-business approach to climate change is good news for the economy and the environment.

Participation in the Projects to Reduce Emissions programme and this arrangement are innovative examples of how businesses can gain a real competitive advantage from tackling climate change," Hodgson said.

The governments of New Zealand and the Netherlands signed an emissions trading co-operation arrangement in August.—MNA/Xinhua

A world-class recreation centre

Thaung Win Bo

The implementation of the project to add modern facilities and gardens to Yangon in creating an international level city is in progress at present, and the all-round development of Kandawgyi Garden and its environment including the Zoological Gardens in the city is also gaining ground on its aims.

The world-class garden covering a large lake and a large stretch of land will be a nice place attracting local as well as foreign visitors as a park where they can refresh their mind and body, watch various species of animals and birds living safely in their

and the Ministry of Livestock and Fisheries, and Zay Kaba Company, a local-owned enterprise, respectively.

The Recreation Zone or the Karaweik-Kandawgyi Natural Park includes a man-made waterfall, where a stream flowing from Tank Hillock is falling from a cliff of rocks. Artistic creation of the falls together with beds of flowers and a small rock garden lying on an unlevelled land covered by large trees is a marvellous view for any visitor.

As soon as a visitor enters the zone, he will be welcomed by

where rare black goose swim, a jetty for pleasure-boats and a floating platform for kite-flyers of any age.

A mini zoo is located in front of Karaweik Palace, where a vacationer can see the birds including the rare species of the states and divisions of Myanmar. "If a tourist wants to take a photo of him together with tigers, it will be possible when two tamed tigers arrive here under the arrangement of Thai-Myanmar Friendship Association", explained Managing Director Daw May Zin Latt of Zay Kaba company.

"At a small natural



A man-made waterfall near the entrance to Karaweik-Kandawgyi Natural Garden.

There will be open-air stage performances of vocalists and music bands every evening. Every weekend, the place will be more lively with a market festival, where youths can freely stroll and enjoy a buying spree. At the play ground, children may find games that will help enhance their intellectual power", she added.

"In addition to the market festival, there will also be magic shows, circus, anyient shows, stage shows, variety dance shows of nationalities and traditional dances in the evenings on every weekend. The aim of our Recreation Zone is to attract tourists visiting Karaweik Palace for Myanmar food and traditional dances every evening", she said.

The total investment in the zone is over K 900 million, and the objective is to build a world-class park that will exist as a pride for Myanmar. There are

souvenir shops selling handicraft of the national races, restaurants serving traditional foods, and other shops where traditional toys, snacks and costumes are available.

The zone is a perfect place for Yangonites to escape

Madaya in Mandalay Division, have been added to beautify the zone.

Moreover, as the zone is built in accord with the Myanmar designs and also the place where traditional dance shows and traditional festivals are presented,

At a small natural park named "Picture with Animals", a visitor may freely and closely watch bears, peacocks, dears, tortoises and ostriches or stay together with birds. For souvenir photos, get to the shop run by Lwin Moe, a celebrity who has won two Motion Picture Academy Awards.



View Deck offers a breathtaking view for all visitors.

compounds and their children playing happily and sit under the shade of a tree enjoying a perfect picnic.

When King Alaungphaya founded Yangon in 1755, Kandawgyi was just a small lake lying in an isolated place in the middle of a number of low-lying hills. Only after 1812 when Bodawphaya ruled the nation, it had become a garden with a large lake for recreation.

At present, work is under way to develop Kandawgyi in four sectors — the Relaxation Zone, the Central Forest Zone, the Education Zone, and the Recreation Zone — being built by the Yangon City Development Committee, the Ministry of Forestry, the Ministry of Agriculture and Irrigation

the View Deck, which is a stage-like platform from which tourists can enjoy a cool breeze from the lake and watching and taking photos or taping videos of the

park named "Picture with Animals", a visitor may freely and closely watch bears, peacocks, deers, tortoises and ostriches or stay together with birds. For souvenir photos, get

As soon as a visitor enters the zone, he will be welcomed by the View Deck, which is a stage-like platform from which tourists can enjoy a cool breeze from the lake and watching and taking photos or taping videos of the Shwedagon Pagoda and the Karaweik Palace.

Shwedagon Pagoda and the Karaweik Palace. The platform made of pyingado, a kind of hardwood species, is located at the place where regatta festivals were held.

From there, he will find a beautiful pond

to the shop run by Lwin Moe, a celebrity who has won two Motion Picture Academy Awards", she said.

"As I am responsible for the whole project, I have added some separate programmes for youths.

from their daily lives of living in a big city and where they can breathe fresh air and refresh their mind and body. In addition to the existing trees, many new creations including a rock garden built with stones from Myitkyina in Kachin State and

and traditional goods are available. Hence, we can say that the Karaweik-Kandawgyi Natural Park is not only a world-class recreation centre, but also a place serving as a tourist destination.

(Translation: TMT)
Myanma Alin+Kyemon:
21.12.2004.



A shop serving traditional foods.



Senior General Than Shwe inspects Myittha Dam Project near Pyntha Village in Gangaw Township. — MNA

Speedy completion of Manipura Multipurpose Dam...

(from page 1)

Agriculture and Irrigation Maj-Gen Htay Oo. Maj-Gen Htay Oo said that the annual average flow of water in Manipura River is 7 million acre-feet and feasibility study for construction of Manipura Dam is being conducted; that the dam will not only benefit about 100,000 acres of farmland but also prevent annual floods in the lower part of Kalay. Moreover, the dam will be able to generate 540 megawatt, he added.

Myittha Dam project will be implemented by the Construction Group-8 of Irrigation Department. On completion, it will benefit to not only 12,000 acres of farmland but also generate 40 megawatt.

Next, Deputy Minister U Ohn Myint reported to Senior General Than Shwe on conducting feasibility study and prospects to irrigate 100,000 acres of farmland on completion of the dam.

Later, Minister for Construction Maj-Gen Saw Tun reported on matters related to the project area and Manipura Bridge (Bar Bridge) to Senior General Than Shwe and party.

Afterwards, Minister for Energy Brig-Gen Lun Thi reported on supply of fuel for the project.

Next, Minister for Electric Power Maj-Gen Tin Htut reported on arrangements for power plant and installation of power lines in the project.

After hearing the reports, Senior General Than Shwe attended to the needs and urged officials concerned to complete the project as soon as possible for it will be beneficial to Kalay, Kalewa and Gangaw regions.

Next, Senior General Than Shwe inspected charts of the project, current of Manipura river and the site for implementing the project.

Next, Senior General Than Shwe and party arrived in Gangaw, Magaway Division, where they were welcomed by Tactical Operations Commander Col Hla Ngwe, Chairman of Gangaw District Peace and Development Council Lt-Col Hla Swe and departmental officials, local people and students.

Next, Senior General Than Shwe and party inspected Gangaw Township People's Hospital, Myitha suspension bridge and development of Gangaw.

At 4.15 pm, Senior General Than Shwe and

arrangements for supply of fuel to the project.

In response to the reports, Senior General Than Shwe gave guidance, calling on officials concerned to fulfil the needs including fuel since Manipura Multipurpose Dam project and Myittha Dam project are the huge ones, and the Irrigation Department, on its part, is to complete the tasks as soon as possible.

Afterwards, Senior General Than Shwe and party inspected the site chosen for construction of the main embankment.

Myittha Dam project will be implemented by



Senior General Than Shwe giving guidance on Myittha Dam Project located near Pyntha Village in Gangaw Township. — MNA

party project left Gawgaw by car and arrived at the site of Myittha Dam to be implemented near Pyntha Village in Gangaw Township.

At the briefing hall, Senior General Than Shwe and party heard a report presented by Minister Maj-Gen Htay Oo on the salient points of the dam.

Next, Deputy Director-General of Irrigation Department U Khin Zaw reported on other salient points of the project.

Later, Minister Brig-Gen Lun Thi reported on

the Construction Group-8 of the Irrigation Department.

On completion, it will benefit not only 12,000 acres of farmland but also generate 40 megawatt.

After inspecting Myittha Dam project, Senior General Than Shwe and party left for Kyaukthu in Hsaw Township by helicopter.

Next, Senior General Than Shwe and party arrived back in Bagan-NyaungU at 6 pm.

MNA



Senior General Than Shwe hears a report on Manipura Multipurpose Dam Project in Falam Township, Chin State, presented by Minister Maj-Gen Htay Oo. — MNA

Objectives of 57th Anniversary Independence Day

- All the national people to collectively safeguard the national independence and sovereignty of the State and ensure non-disintegration of the Union and national unity
- All the national people to unitedly strive with might and main for emergence of an enduring State Constitution and for building a new modern and developed nation
- All the national people to work in concert for success of the seven-point Road Map of the State with Union Spirit and nationalist spirit
- All the national people to make concerted efforts for building of a new discipline-flourishing democratic nation

Promotion of efficiency of USDA ...

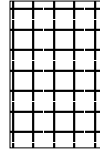


(from page 16)
speedy implementation
of tasks boosting the

State's social and economic development, guarding against the danger of internal and external destructive elements through the might of the unity of the people, promotion of the efficiency of members and extension of organisational measures across the nation and cementing the constitution of the association — and

the nine future tasks of the association. Next, Kayah State USDA Executive U Kyaw Myint tabled a motion calling for successful implementation of the seven objectives.

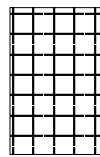
Executive U Tin Oo also tabled a motion calling for successful implementation of the nine future tasks laid down by the USDA AGM



Prime
Minister
Lt-Gen Soe
Win greets
Mr Chen
Haosu at
Zeyathiri
Beikman on
Konmyinthar.

(News on
page 16)

MNA



Members of the panel of chairmen at the meeting. — MNA



Kayah State USDA Joint-Secretary U Lurail Bo Lu presents K 1 million to Bawlake District USDA Secretary U Bo Rai. — MNA

(2004). Executive of Kayah State Union Solidarity and Development Association U Maw Rai presented a work programme of the state.

Daw Aye Aye Myaing, Executive of Loikaw Township USDA, discussed salient points in support of the seven objectives of the association.

U Soe Rai, Executive of Bawlake District USDA, presented a discussion supporting the nine future work pro-

grammes of the association.

Daw Ku Myar, Executive of Loikaw USDA, supported the task to implement the work programmes of the state.

Executive of Kayah State USDA U Lu Rai, Maj Tin Win (Retd) of Kayah State War Veterans Organization and Patron of Kayah State Committee for Women's Affairs Daw Than presented gifts to outstanding youths.

Joint Secretary of Kayah State USDA U Bo Lurail Bo Lu presented K 1 million for schools in Loikaw District to Division USDA Secretary U Myint Thein. Secretary of Bawlake District USDA U Bo Rai accepted K 1 million for schools in Bawlake District.

The meeting laid down a resolution to materialize the seven objectives and nine future work programmes, and come to a close with chanting of slogans.

MNA



Kayah State USDA Joint-Secretary U Lurail Bo Lu presents K 1 million to Loikaw District USDA Secretary U Myint Thein. — MNA



Kayah State Organization for Women's Affairs Patron Daw Than presents prize to an outstanding youth. — MNA



Bawlake District USDA Executive U Soe Rai.
MNA



Loikaw District USDA Executive Daw Ku Myar.
MNA



Kayah State USDA Executive U Tin Oo.
MNA



Kayah State USDA Executive U Kyaw Myint. — MNA



Loikaw Township USDA Executive Daw Aye Aye Myaing. — MNA



Kayah State USDA Executive U Maw Rai.
MNA

Minister inspects printing presses

YANGON, 21 Dec—Minister for Information Brig-Gen Kyaw Hsan, together with Deputy Minister Brig-Gen Aung Thein and officials, inspected printing presses under the Ministry this afternoon. The minister first inspected the power control room of the Central Printing Press on Theinbyu Road in Botahtaung Township. Officials concerned conducted the minister round the room. He gave instructions on preventive measures against electricity-related dangers in conformity with the directives, educating the staff how to use fire extinguishers and replacing of old fire extinguishers with new ones if needed.

Next, the minister inspected the administration division, computer section, risograph section and printing work and gave instructions on constant maintenance of the machines, innovative measures



Minister Brig-Gen Kyaw Hsan inspects the Central Printing Press under the Printing and Publishing Enterprise. — MNA

ures for production of spare parts, systematic storage of accessories and constantly conducting training courses. The minister also inspected the store room and binding room and left instructions on fire preventive measures. On arrival at Photolitho Printing Press on Ngahtetkyi Pagoda

Road in Bahan Township, the minister heard a report by Head of the press U Han Sein on printing of school textbooks and publications, strength of the staff and condition of the printing machines. The minister gave instructions on timely completion of

printing work, replacement of old spare parts with locally-made ones and fire preventive measures.

Next, the minister inspected binding machines, printing of textbooks for 2005-2006 academic year and precautionary steps against fire. — MNA

ASEAN Open Optimist C'ship concludes

YANGON, 21 Dec—The prize-presentation for the 2004 ASEAN Open Optimist Championship took place at the MAX Hotel on Chaungtha Beach in Ayeeyawady Division yesterday.

Present on the occasion were Chairman of Division Peace and Development Council Commander of South-West Command Maj-Gen Soe Naing, Chairman of Myanmar Olympic Committee Minister for Sports Brig-Gen Thura Aye Myint, officials, President of the Myanmar Yachting Federation U Thein Tun, MOC Member MYF General Secretary U Moe Myint, wellwishers and guests.

The minister gave a speech. The commander presented first prize (individual) to Ms Griselda Khng (Singapore), second prize to Mr Alvin Yeow Jian Shing (Malaysia) and third prize to Ma Su Sandar Wai (Myanmar), fourth prize to Mr Ku Anas Bin Ku Zamil (Malaysia), fifth prize to Mr Sherman Cheng Feng Yuan (Singapore), sixth prize to Ms Rufina Tan Hong Mui (Malaysia), seventh prize to Mr Sean Lee Teik Ren (Singapore), eighth prize to Mr Faizam Bin Yahaya (Malaysia), ninth prize to Ms Rachel Lee Qing (Singapore) and tenth prize to Maung Ye Lin Htoo (Myanmar).

The minister presented the best athlete award (women) to Ms Griselda Khng (Singapore), the second to Ma Su Sandar Wai (Myanmar), and third to Ms Rufina Tan Hong Mui (Malaysia).

The first prize (team-wise) went to Malaysia, the second to Singapore and the third to Myanmar. Officials and the Alpine Purified Drinking Water Co also added gifts to the prize winners.

In the evening, the commander and the minister hosted a dinner to the athletes. — MNA

Explosion in restaurant

YANGON, 21 Dec—An explosion occurred at Zawgyi House restaurant on Bogyoke Aung San Street in Pabedan Township at 2 pm today, wounding a worker of the restaurant. There were no other casualties.

At about 11 am, two men—one in his fifties and the other aged about 35—came to the restaurant and ordered foods. They left a paper box there and it exploded. The case is under investigation in order to expose unscrupulous persons who committed the destructive act. — MNA

Yangon Mayor receives Chinese guests

YANGON, 21 Dec—Chairman of Yangon City Development Committee Mayor Brig-Gen Aung Thein Lin received a four-member Chinese goodwill delegation led by President of Chinese People's Association for Friendship with Foreign Countries Mr Chen Haosu and accompanied by Chinese Ambassador to Myanmar Mr Li Jinjun, at his office at 10 am today.

Also present on the occasion were Vice-Chairman of YCDC Vice-Mayor Col Maung Pa, Joint Secretary U Aung Soe, committee member Col Tin Soe and heads of the departments concerned.

In the evening, the Mayor hosted a dinner in honour of the Chinese guests at the Grand Plaza Park royal Hotel.

The Chinese goodwill delegation arrived here yesterday evening, and they were welcomed at Yangon International Airport by Vice-Mayor Col Maung Pa and committee members, heads of departments concerned, Chinese Ambassador to Myanmar Mr Li Jinjun and officials. — MNA

Myanmar-China Border Trade Fair-2004 opens

YANGON, 21 Dec—Myanmar-China Border Trade Fair-2004 was opened on 18 December in Muse. Deputy Minister for Commerce Brig-Gen Aung Tun and a Chinese official formally opened the fair. It was held with the aim of boosting bilateral trade, enhancing economic cooperation, creating economic opportunities and strengthening existing friendship.

Agricultural produce, finished wood products, handicrafts, jewels, medicines and medical equipment, autos and motor cycles are on display at the fair.

After the opening ceremony, officials of the two sides viewed the

booths around the fair. Moreover, the two sides also discussed matters related to economy, trade and transportation between the two countries. — MNA

Appointment of Ambassador agreed on

YANGON, 22 Dec — The Government of the Union of Myanmar has agreed to the proposed appointment of Mr Lars Backstrom as Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the Republic of Finland to the Union of Myanmar, in succession to Mr Heikki Tuunanen.

Mr Lars Backstrom was born in 1955. He obtained a Master's degree in social sciences in 1980. He joined the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in 1982 and served in various capacities at the Ministry for Foreign Affairs and the Finnish diplomatic missions in Mexico City, Ankara, Lagos, New York and Brussels from 1982 to 1997. He has been the director of the Unit for Humanitarian Assistance at the Ministry for Foreign Affairs since 1997. Mr Lars Backstrom will be concurrently accredited as the ambassador of Finland to the Union of Myanmar, with residence in Bangkok. He is married. — MNA

USDA CEC Member tours Kayah State

YANGON, 21 Dec — CEC Member of the Union Solidarity and Development Association Brig-Gen Thein Aung, accompanied by Chairman of Kayah State Peace and Development Council Lt-Col Kyaw Swa Min, inspected the primary school in Phayani village, Dawpawkaile village-tract, Loikaw Township, and provided assistance for repairing of the facility on 19 December.

At the meeting with the villagers at the village monastery, the CEC member briefed them on the achievement in carrying out the five rural development tasks. The CEC member and party attended the inauguration of Dawnoku-Dawtama Bilu Creek Bridge in Loikaw. Officials reported on facts about the bridge. The CEC member held discussions on the government's drive for balanced progress of all parts of the nation.

Executive of Township Development Affairs Committee U Tin Win, Secretary of Kayah State USDA U Kyaw Swe and senior citizen U Hla Pe formally opened the facility. The CEC member and the chairman of the Kayah State PDC and officials viewed the 220-foot-long and 15-foot-wide all-weather bridge, taking a walk on it. On 20 December, The CEC member and the Kayah State SPDC met townsmen and USDA members at Sasana Beikman in the town. The CEC member discussed stage-wise implementation of tasks for development of Kayah State and provided assistance for regional progress. They also viewed the condition of the road under repair by the members in Kontha village.

Minister for Forestry Brig-Gen Thein Aung inspected the model teak plantation in the village. — MNA

Chinese delegation arrives

YANGON, 21 Dec — Chinese goodwill delegation led by Mr Liang Zhaoming, Senior Procurator at Level II of Law Office in Guong Dong Province, China, arrived here yesterday.

Deputy Attorney-General Dr Tun Shin, Director-General of the Attorney-General's Office U Mya Nyein and officials welcomed them at Yangon International Airport. — MNA



CONFERENCE HELD: The 11th conference of the ASEAN new generation youths federation of engineering organization took place at the Sedona Hotel on 21-12-2004, attended by representatives from ASEAN nations, Japan and China (Hong Kong). U Ye Myat Htoo of Myanmar presides over the conference. — MNA

ROAD UPGRADING INSPECTED: *Chairman of Yangon Division Peace and Development Council Commander of Yangon Command Maj-Gen Myint Swe and Chairman of Yangon City Development Committee Mayor Brig-Gen Aung Thein Lin inspect upgrading of Bayinnaung Road in Insein Township on 21-12-2004.*

YANGON COMMAND



YMCA hosts X'mas dinner

YANGON, 21 Dec — The Yangon YMCA hosted a Thanksgiving dinner at M3 Food Centre here this evening to mark the Christmas, with an address delivered by Minister for Re-

ligious Affairs Brig-Gen Thura Myint Maung.

Also present were Managing Director of News and Periodicals Enterprise Col Soe Win, heads of department of

the Ministry of Religious Affairs, the chairman of Myanmar Christian Council of Churches and members, YMCA President and members, YMCA General Secretary U Tha

Nyan, officials and invited guests.

YMCA President Archbishop Dr Andrea U Mya Han extended greetings.

Next, a dinner was hosted. — MNA



Minister Brig-Gen Thura Myint Maung delivers a speech at the x' mas dinner. — MNA

Workshop on Development of National Chemical Profile held

YANGON, 21 Dec — The Workshop on Development of National Chemical Profile jointly organized by Health Department and WHO was held at Grand Plaza Parkroyal Hotel this morning. Deputy Minister for Health Dr Mya Oo delivered an address. He said chemicals are widely used in social, industrial and agricultural sectors in the nations of the world including Myanmar. They are

also used in medical treatment and boosting production in industry and agriculture for raising the standard of living. Improper use of chemicals can be harmful to public health and pollution of environment. Therefore, it is necessary to know detailed facts regarding chemicals used in the country, he said. He said the workshop was held with the aims of collecting data on chemicals

used in the country and formulating arrangements to prevent danger among the people. The Ministry of Health, related ministries and social organizations will compile National Chemical Profile with the help of scholars, he added. Next, WHO Resident Representative Dr Ago-stino Borra reported on WHO's measures taken on chemicals.

Participants from the Ministry of Health, re-

lated ministries and social organizations, Yangon City Development Committee, the Union of Myanmar Federation of Chambers of Commerce and Industry, Myanmar Chemical Engineers Association, USDA, Myanmar Maternal and Child Welfare Association and Myanmar Women's Affairs Federation took part in compilation of National Chemical Profile.

MNA

School buildings handed over

YANGON, 21 Dec — Newly-built school buildings for No 3 Post-Primary School and No 14 Basic Education Primary School in Mingalataungnyunt Township and No 2 BEPS in Tamwe Township were inaugurated and handed over this morning in the presence of Minister for Education U Than Aung, Deputy Minister Brig-Gen Aung Myo Min and Deputy Minister for Con-

struction Brig-Gen Myint Thein.

Minister U Than Aung and the deputy ministers also unveiled the signboards of the buildings and inspected the buildings. Director-General of the Department of Human Settlement and Housing Development Col Aung Win handed over the documents relating to the buildings to Director-General of the No 3 Ba-

sic Education Department at a ceremony to hand over the buildings held at No 14 BEPS. At the ceremony, well-wishers also contributed cash and teaching aids to the schools through the minister and deputy ministers. — MNA

**Donate
blood**

District News

Station hospital privately funded

GANGAW, 5 Dec — With the aim of raising the funds of the station hospital in Kyaw Village, Gagaw Township, a wellwisher on 10 November contributed K 1 million to the funds of the hospital.

An official concerned accepted the donation. Thanks to the valuable contribution, the hospital can be able to provide better medical care.

MYANMA ALIN

Water supply tasks launched in Pyapon

PYAPON, 8 Dec — As part of implementing the drinking water supply project, Pyapon Township Development Affairs Department has laid the water-pipes and launched the construction of lakes recently. On 5 December, officials of the township DAD closely supervised the tasks.

According to the township DAD, it is learnt that 11,660-ft long water pipes will be laid and 20 lakes will be constructed during 2004-2005 fiscal year. Moreover, water treatment station also includes in the project. — MYANMA ALIN

Article competition marking World AIDS Day held

PYINMANA, 6 Dec — Pyinmana Township Writers and Journalists Association and Pyinmana Township Association for Propagation of Theravada Buddhism has organized the article competition marking the World AIDS Day recently.

Prize winners of the competition were awarded on 1 December. At the prize presentation ceremony, officials presented cash awards to the winners.

MYANMA ALIN

Wellwisher provide cash and publications for libraries in rural area

NWAHTOGYI, 15 Dec — With the assistance of the State and contribution of wellwishers, the Information and Public Relations Department under the Ministry of Information has established 10,791 libraries in rural area up to 14 December.

On 24 November, a self-reliant library was opened in YwaGyi Model Village in Natogyi Township. The building of the library was built at a cost of K 400,000 provided by wellwishers U Myint Thein and Daw Ohn Mar of Yadana Myint MoU Co. Besides, they also provided books on general knowledge including novels, journals and magazines worth K 900,000 and furniture for the library. Moreover, locals also contributed cash to the funds of the library.

Similarly, a self-reliant library was inaugurated in BoneTaLok Model Village in Thazi Township on 18 November. Wellwishers provided cash and books on general knowledge for the library.

MYANMA ALIN



NIKON MICROSCOPE INTRODUCED: *Myanmar Yutani Co Ltd and Nikon Singapore Pte Ltd demonstrated the use of Nikon microscope for infectious disease control at the Traders Hotel on 21-12-2004. Mr Yoshinori Komaru, Managing Director of Myanmar Yutani Co Ltd extends greetings and Mr Masahiro Tsuji, Regional Manager, Nikon Singapore Pte Ltd gives presentation on the device. — NLM*

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US spraying of Agent Orange causes deadly cancers to veterans

WASHINGTON, 21 Dec — The United States sprayed more than 19 million gallons (72 million litres) of defoliant over the jungles of Vietnam, a tactic designed to kill the forests and deny cover to American troops' enemies.

The chemical worked. Miles of vegetation withered and died. It also exposed an estimated 3 million US troops and millions more Vietnamese to dioxin.

Mark A Brown, a toxicologist who heads the environmental agents service of the Veterans Affairs Department, said it is uncertain just how much dioxin that US troops absorbed from their exposure to dioxin-contaminated Agent Orange in Vietnam.

A study years after the war ended suggested that US ground forces probably had blood levels of dioxin in the range of five parts to 10 parts per trillion.

Troops handling the herbicide — named Agent Orange for the colour of a

stripe on 55-gallon (208-litre) shipping drums — may have developed blood levels of about 20 parts per trillion. It was enough, according to some studies, to cause cancer, diabetes, nerve damage and other diseases in susceptible individuals. Studies also linked the toxin to a birth defect, spina bifida, in children of troops who served in Vietnam.

Based on these studies, Congress instructed the department to assume that any of a long list of diseases developed by Vietnam veterans could be considered as caused by Agent Orange.

In effect, the government decided that the diseases were at least as likely to have been caused by di-

oxin in Agent Orange as they were to have been caused by anything else. Therefore, veterans were entitled to compensation and medical care without having to prove their disorder was caused by the herbicide.

At first, the diseases were relatively rare cancers, Brown said. Over time, new disorders were added. Today, the list includes 23 types of soft tissue cancer, four respiratory cancers, multiple myeloma, Hodgkin's disease, prostate cancer and a nerve disorder. Children with spina bifida were also born to Vietnam veterans and some veterans have been disabled because of their contact with Agent Orange. —MNA/AP

SADC meeting to discuss African Standby Force

JOHANNESBURG, 20 Dec — Foreign affairs and defence officials from southern African countries will discuss the establishment of a troubleshooting African Standby Force (ASF) at a meeting in Pretoria on Tuesday, a South African official said on Sunday.

The meeting of the Southern African Development Community (SADC) Organ on Politics, Defence and Security Cooperation will discuss the establishment of the African Standby Force "with particular reference to the SADC Regional Brigade," said Foreign Affairs spokesman Ronnie Mamoepa.

Issues on the agenda of the meeting will also include the establishment of an Early Warning Centre and the progress of the regional peacekeeping centre, the spokesman said. South African Foreign Minister Nkosazana Dlamini

Zuma will chair the meeting.

Her delegation includes Defence Minister Mosiuoa Lekota and Deputy Foreign Minister Aziz Pahad. Other participants will include foreign ministers of Namibia and Lesotho.

The African Union's Peace and Security Council, with South Africa as one of five three-year-term members, has been fully operational since it was launched in May and regularly holds deliberations on ways to resolve ongoing conflicts.

The establishment of the ASF is considered

necessary in intervening in African conflicts in a timely manner. Each of the five regions of the continent is supposed to contribute a brigade to the standby force.

South Africa is actively participating in the establishment of an SADC Brigade, according to the country's defence ministry.

The ministry said South Africa has also been asked to assist the African Union Commission and SADC in developing the continental Early Warning System that is expected to be operational in two years.

MNA/Xinhua

520 pounds of cocaine found in west Virginia plane wreckage

WHEELING (West Virginia), 21 Dec — Authorities called to the scene of a weekend plane crash found no people—dead or alive—but they did find 24 million US dollars worth of cocaine.

Federal authorities were seeking the pilot, identified as Eugene N Cobbs, on a charge of possession with intent to distribute cocaine, US Attorney Thomas E Johnston said Monday.

The Piper Aerostar twin-engine plane crashed in a wooded area around midnight Saturday near the Wheeling-Ohio County Airport, said James Peters, a spokesman for the Federal Aviation Administration.

Authorities found about

327 pounds (147.15 kilos) of cocaine packaged in blocks and another 193 pounds (86.85 kilos) turned up Monday in the plane's nose compartment, Johnston said. He estimated the street value at about 24 million US dollars.

Authorities were searching for a man believed to be Cobbs who was picked up by a motorist near the airport's front entrance. His forehead was cut and he asked for a ride to a hotel. —MNA/AP



An orangutan sits in Malaysia's National Zoo in Kuala Lumpur on 19 Dec, 2004. — INTERNET

Suez Canal oil spill under control

CAIRO, 21 Dec — Egypt's Suez Canal authorities on Monday brought under control the oil spill from a damaged Kuwaiti tanker in the waterway and stopped it from moving toward the Mediterranean city of Port Said, the official MENA news agency reported.

The slick, which now stretches some five kilometres, was contained around five kilometres from Port Said, MENA said, adding that the Suez Canal's clean-up teams have started pumping out polluted water.

Suez Canal authorities said last Wednesday that a Kuwaiti oil tanker had spilled 10,000 cubic metres of oil in the canal after it collided with a dredger.

The spill from the damaged 161,000-ton tanker named *Al-Samidoun*, which was bound for Europe, polluted a 16-kilometre stretch of the Suez Canal, northeast of Cairo, said the canal authorities. The Suez Canal, which connects the Mediterranean and the Red Sea, is one of the busiest waterways in the world. It receives an average of 50 ships a day, bringing Egypt some three billion US dollars in revenues this year. —MNA/Xinhua

Turkish PM to visit Syria

DAMASCUS, 20 Dec — Turkish Prime Minister Recep Tayyip Erdogan is scheduled to visit Syria on December 22 at an invitation from his Syrian counterpart Mohammed Naji Otri, the state-run SANA news agency reported Sunday.

Erdogan, on his two-day official visit, is going to discuss ways to boost bilateral cooperations and the latest developments in the region with Syrian officials, SANA said.

An association agreement was expected to be signed during the visit, which was to complement the recently initiated Syr-

ian-EU association agreement, the official *Tishrin* newspaper announced in an early November report.

In January this year, Syrian President Bashar al-Assad paid a historical visit to Ankara, which has improved bilateral ties and cooperations of the two countries.

MNA/Xinhua

A suspected meteor falls into Indonesia

JAKARTA, 21 Dec — Two powerful blasts were heard in Western district of Jakarta and West Java Province early Sunday, suspected from an object fell from the sky, local media reported.

Witnesses said that the object might have been a meteor seen flashing across the sky above the capital.

Local Metro TV station said that the blasts took place at Jakarta satellite town of Tangerang and also in Serang District of West Java Province.

Witnesses said that a noise sounded like an explosion at around 7.30 am local time.

Local TV station re-

ported a large object, believed to be a meteor, was seen falling toward the Earth to the west of the city.

The Indonesian police said that they were investigating it, but there was no detail information available.

"It was still not clear where the exact location was and we were still contacting local police," said Jakarta Police spokesman named only Tjptiono.

MNA/Xinhua

Germany to help Afghanistan rebuild sugar plant

KABUL, 20 Dec — Germany in cooperation with a UN agency would help the postwar Afghanistan rebuild its only sugar factory, acting UN spokesman said Sunday.

"Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) is to help Afghanistan to resume sugar production through a project financed by Germany," Ariane Quentiere told reporters here at a news briefing.

The only Afghan sugar factory, located in Baghlan Province 250

kilometres north of Kabul and built by Germany in 1930s, was badly damaged and ceased operation due to over a quarter century of war and civil strife.

At present, Afghanistan imports 300,000 tons of sugar annually mostly from the neighbouring countries, Pakistan in particular. —MNA/Xinhua

SPORTS

Man Utd rules out holding new talks over possible bid

LONDON, 21 Dec — English soccer club Manchester United has ruled out holding new talks over a possible bid for the club by US tycoon Malcolm Glazer, the *Financial Times* reported on Monday.

Citing a source close to the club, the paper said Manchester United may issue an official stock exchange statement that will demand Glazer "Put up or shut up".

"We are not going to enter into any negotiations (with Mr. Glazer)," the unnamed source was quoted as saying. "If there is a formal offer, we will look at it."

Glazer has told the club's board he plans a new 800-million-pound (1.56 billion US dollars) takeover offer, a source familiar with the matter said on Sunday.

The source said representatives of the billionaire owner of the Tampa Bay Buccaneers American football team had said the new offer would consist of more cash and less borrowing than his previous proposal. His last offer was rejected by Manchester United because it would have left the football club deeply in debt.

No one at Manchester United was immediately available to comment. — *MNA/Xinhua*

Man United receive new bid approach from Glazer

LONDON, 21 Dec — Manchester United has received a new bid approach from Malcolm Glazer, boosting its shares, but the world's richest soccer club said on Monday it would only talk to the US financier if he made a firm offer.

A source familiar with the situation told *Reuters* on Sunday that Glazer, owner of the Tampa Bay Buccaneers American football team, was planning an 800 million pound (1.56 billion US dollars) takeover offer for the English Premier League team.

"The board of Manchester United confirms that at a shareholder meeting Glazer has indicated, on a very preliminary basis, potential revisions to its previous proposal," the 15 times English soccer champions said in a statement. "The board does not intend to open discussions on this matter unless it receives a definitive proposal from Glazer."

At 1430 GMT, Manchester United shares were 3.4 per cent higher at 275 pence, having touched 282-3/4p earlier.

Glazer, who has had two previous approaches for the club rebuffed, met with Manchester United Chief Executive David Gill last week in Tampa, Florida,

the source said. The new offer would consist of more cash and less debt than his previous proposal, he added.

United's board has said previously it would not back an offer that left the football club deeply in debt. A debt-free business with one of the best-known brands globally, United has a huge marketing potential.

Glazer's fresh attempt to win control of the 126-year-old club comes a month after his bankers resigned after the US tycoon used his 28 per cent stake in United to oust three of its board members during the club's annual general meeting.

Glazer had made the strike in retribution for the board not giving him access to the club's books for his 300 pence a share takeover approach, which valued United at about 787 million pounds at the time.

Regardless of whether United backs Glazer's bid this time, the American will still need the support of the club's two key Irish shareholders — horseracing magnates J.P. McManus and John Magnier who between them own nearly 29 per cent of the club.

It was the failure to get the Irish on board that led to Glazer's last bid attempt falling apart, causing United to end the takeover talks.

A spokesman for Cubic Expression, the investment vehicle of McManus and Magnier, was not immediately available to comment. — *MNA/Reuters*

Germany face Thailand in soccer friendly

BANGKOK, 21 Dec — Three-time World Cup champions Germany will take on Thailand in an international soccer friendly on Tuesday but a few German players are going to miss the match.

Goalkeeper Jens Lehmann of Arsenal, Thomas Hitzlsperger of Aston Villa and Moritz Volz of Fulham did not join the team on the three-leg tour because of Premier League club commitments.

However, German stars including Bayern Munich midfielder Michael Ballack, veteran goalkeeper Oliver Kahn and Torsten Frings will play in the evening match at Rajamangala National Stadium. — *MNA/Xinhua*

Ronaldinho named FIFA World Player of the Year

ZURICH, 21 Dec — Barcelona's Brazilian playmaker Ronaldinho was named FIFA World Player of the Year on Monday.

Ronaldinho, 24, totalled 620 points followed by Thierry Henry of Arsenal and France on 552. Newly-crowned European Footballer of the Year Andriy Shevchenko of AC Milan and Ukraine was third on 253.

"For me just to be selected and to be here was already an honour," Ronaldinho told the FIFA gala awards ceremony. "Of course I have to thank my Barcelona colleagues because I could not have won it without them."

"I am very happy at Barcelona, I want to be part of a new winning era at the club and I have no plans to go anywhere else," he added, dismissing suggestions he might be interested in a move to Chelsea.

It was the second successive year that Henry has finished as runner-up in the poll based on the verdict of 157 international coaches and, for the first time this year, 145 national team captains.

Five points were awarded for a first place nomination, three for second and one for third. Ronaldinho gained 89 first place votes, Henry 79 and Shevchenko 34.

Last year's winner Zinedine Zidane, who announced his international retirement from the France team after

Euro 2004, came fourth. Last year's European Footballer of the Year Pavel Nedved of the Czech Republic was fifth.

Ronaldinho has transformed Barcelona since arriving from Paris St Germain in 2003 and they lead the Primera Liga by nine points. Unlike his rivals for the award, organized by world soccer's governing body FIFA, Ronaldinho did not win a major club trophy this year. — *MNA/Reuters*

Charlton beat Fulham 2-1

LONDON, 21 Dec — Charlton Athletic beat London rivals Fulham 2-1 to move up to seventh in the Premier League standings on Monday.

Goals by winger Jerome Thomas and defender Talal El Karkouri sealed victory for Alan Curbishley's side. Fulham remained 15th in the 20-team standings.

Thomas put the hosts ahead in the 27th minute when he controlled a cross and lashed the ball into the net.

El Karkouri headed the second in the 66th minute, rising to nod in a Danny Murphy free kick.

Fulham striker Tomasz Radzinski pulled one back with eight minutes remaining but it was not enough for the visitors. — *MNA/Reuters*

IOC's president says 2004 was positive year in fight against drugs

PARIS, 21 Dec — International Olympic Committee (IOC) president Jacques Rogge believes 2004 marked a breakthrough in the fight to rid sport of drug cheats despite the doping scandals that blighted the Athens Olympics.

"It's a positive year, if I dare say, for the fight against doping," he told French sports daily *L'Equipe* in an interview published on Monday.

Rogge said the increasing influence of the World Anti-Doping Agency (WADA) and the change of attitude by US anti-doping authorities had been the main improvements.

"This changing position has led to its first results," Rogge said.

Federer, Myskina named 2004 ITF World Champs

LONDON, 21 Dec — Switzerland's Roger Federer and Russian Anastasia Myskina were named 2004 International Tennis Federation World Champions on Monday.

The 23-year-old Federer dominated the men's game this year, winning 11 titles including three Grand Slams and the Masters Cup.

Russian Myskina, the French Open champion, pipped France's Amelie Mauresmo after impressive performances in the Grand Slams, the Olympics and the Fed Cup. — *MNA/Reuters*

"We also made major scientific breakthroughs. From the detection of (the blood-boosting drug) EPO... to blood testing in Athens, we've made constant progress," he said.

The Athens Olympics, Rogge's first summer Games as IOC president, were rocked by a doping saga involving Greek sprinters Katerina Thanou and Costas Kenteris who have been charged over missed drugs tests on the eve of the Games. Both deny any wrongdoing.

"I considered it as a breakthrough," said Rogge, who added he had also been pleased in 1988 in Seoul when he was woken up and told about Canadian sprinter Ben Johnson's positive dope test.

"My first reaction was 'Great!' — to me it was a victory," he said.

"We are tracking down cheaters wherever they are, regardless of political implications that we should keep a blind eye on the host country," he said.

— *MNA/Xinhua*

Chelsea's Parker suffers broken foot

LONDON, 21 Dec — Chelsea midfielder Scott Parker has to be sidelined into the New Year after he broke his foot, the Premiership leaders said on its official web site on Monday.

Parker sustained his injury after coming on as a substitute in Saturday's 4-0 home win against Norwich. "Scott Parker has suffered an injury that will keep him out of action into the New Year," said the club in a statement.

"The midfielder was examined straight after Saturday's win over Norwich in which he came on as a substitute after 76 minutes. An X-ray showed he had suffered a broken metatarsal bone in his foot.

"The damage was sustained when Parker advanced into the Norwich penalty area towards the end of the game. A likely date for his return is not yet known."

Parker signed in January from Charlton for 10 million pounds.

— *MNA/Xinhua*

Bayern warns players that salaries may fall

FRANKFURT, 21 Dec — Bayern Munich are warning their players that salaries are more likely to fall than rise, even as they cut costs by reducing the size of their first team squad.

"One thing is clear: the market has changed, and not in the players' favour," Bayern president Karl-Heinz Rummenigge told Bayern's web site.

"The days of permanently increasing salaries are over. It's much more likely that wages will go down."

Bayern plan to reduce their squad from 26 to 22 before the start of next season.

"We currently have a squad of 26, but we reckon 22 is the right size, because we want to make room for the best players from our youth section," Rummenigge said.

"I don't believe we need many new players... We don't need four new signings every year. Sometimes we'll only need one or two. However, it all depends on whether we've hit our targets, and we won't know that until April and May." — *MNA/Reuters*

DOD interrogators impersonate FBI agents at Guantanamo prison

WASHINGTON, 21 Dec — US Defence Department interrogators impersonated FBI agents at the Guantanamo Bay prison to avoid being held accountable when they used "torture techniques" on a prisoner held there in the US war on terrorism, according to FBI e-mails made public on Monday.

Another FBI e-mail made available in the same package said that President George W. Bush had issued an executive order authorizing a series of harsh methods for interrogations. The White House said no such directive existed and Justice Department and FBI officials echoed the denial.

The documents were made public by the American Civil Liberties Union which obtained them under the Freedom of Information Act.

The Bush Administration has been accused of abusing prisoners in Iraq and Afghanistan and in the prison at the Naval base at Guantanamo Bay, Cuba. A number of military personnel have been charged.

FBI e-mails dated from December 2003 and January 2004 complained of "DOD (Department of Defence) interrogators impersonating Supervisory Special Agents of the FBI" at Guantanamo.

A December 5, 2003, e-mail said that "these tactics have produced no intelligence of a threat neutralization nature" and that the "techniques have destroyed any chance of prosecuting this detainee."

"If this detainee is ever released or his story made public in any way, DOD interrogators will not be held accountable because these torture techniques were done (by) the 'FBI' interrogators. The FBI will (be) left holding the bag before the public," the e-mail said.

The impersonation "was approved by the Dep Sec Def," a January 21, 2004, e-mail stated, referring to Deputy Defence Secretary Paul Wolfowitz, the Pentagon's No. 2 official.

Pentagon spokesman Bryan Whitman said Wolfowitz "did not approve interrogation techniques." Whitman added, "It is difficult to determine from the second-hand description whether the technique in this e-mail (impersonating the FBI) was permissible or not."

A May 22, 2004, e-mail, sent by an FBI agent in Iraq to senior FBI officials, referred repeatedly to what it said was an executive order signed by Bush, listing some of the methods the order authorized.

MNA/Reuters

Australia signs refuelling aircraft deal with Spanish com

CANBERRA, 21 Dec — The Australian Government signed on Monday a contract with a Spanish company to provide the Royal Australian Air Force with five new air-to-air refuelling aircraft.

The Australian Department of Defence's 1.4 billion-dollar (1.06 billion US dollars) contract was signed with Spanish company European Aeronautic Defence and Space Construcciones Aeronauticas S.A. (EADS-CASA). Announcing the contract, Australian Defence Minister Robert Hill said on Monday "The new aircraft, to be known as *Multi Role Tanker Transports* (MRTT), will be capable of refuelling *F/A-18, F-111, Airborne Early Warning and Control, and Joint Strike Fighter* aircraft as well as having a significant strategic airlift capability." The new aircraft, which will be fitted with electronic warfare self protection equipment, will replace the Royal Australian Air Force's ageing *Boeing 707* aircraft. The new refuelling aircraft will be based on the Airbus commercial *A330* aircraft, Hill said, adding the basic *A330* aircraft will be produced in Europe with four of the five being modified and converted into *MRTT* aircraft in Australia.

The new aircraft are scheduled to enter service in 2009. EADS-CASA is the military aircraft division of EADS, the largest aerospace company in Europe and the second largest in the world. — MNA/Xinhua

Kidnapped Filipino in Iraq to be released soon

MANILA, 21 Dec — The kidnapped Filipino accountant Robert Tarongoy may be freed by his Iraqi captors this month, the Philippine Department of Foreign Affairs (DFA) said on Monday.

The Iraqi Government is still in talks with the militant group that seized Tarongoy on November 1, DFA spokesman Gilbert Asuque told reporters.

Asuque added that he remained confident Tarongoy will return to the country before the end of the month.

Earlier, President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo gave Filipino negotiators the time until the second week of December to secure Tarongoy's release.

Tarongoy, American contractor Roy Hallums, Nepali worker Inus Dewari, and three Iraqis were kidnapped by Iraqi militants inside the compound of the Saudi Arabian Trading and Construction Company, that does catering for the US and Iraqi armies.

MNA/Xinhua

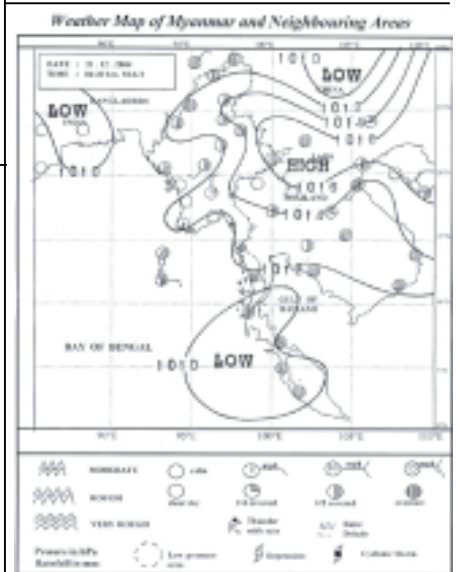
Myanmar to host ASEAN Tourism Forum 2006

YANGON, 21 Dec—Myanmar Travel Committee explained holding of Travel Exposition to Myanmar tour operators at Traders Hotel yesterday.

Myanmar will host the ASEAN Tourism Forum 2006. The Travel Exposition will be held in the ASEAN Tourism Forum.

Deputy Minister for Hotels and Tourism Brig-Gen Aye Myint Kyu thanked private tour operators for their cooperation in holding the travel exposition in ASEAN Tourism Forum 2006. Arrangements are being made for the forum, he said.

Chief Operating Officer Mr Jason Ng of Navitas Management Pte Ltd reported on ASEAN travel exposition and Chairman of Market Promotion Committee Mr Raymond Bragg on Beautiful Myanmar Night programme in ASEAN travel exposition to be held in Langkawi Island, Malaysia, in January 2005.—MNA



WEATHER

Tuesday, 21 December, 2004

Summary of observations recorded at 09:30 hours MST: During the past 24 hours, except for the isolated light rain in Kachin State, weather has been generally fair in the whole country. The noteworthy amount of rainfall recorded was Putao (0.08) inch. Night temperatures were (3°C) to (4°C) below normal in Shan, Rakhine, Kayin and Mon States, Bago and Taninthayi Divisions, (5°C) below normal in Chin State and Yangon Division (3°C) to (4°C) above normal in Kachin State, Sagaing and Mandalay Divisions and about normal in the remaining States and Divisions. The significant night temperatures were Heho and Pinlong (3°C) each, Namhsam (4°C) and Mindat (5°C).

Maximum temperature on 20-12-2004 was 91°F. Minimum temperature on 20-12-2004 was 55°F. Relative humidity at 9:30 hrs MST on 21-12-2004 was 82%. Total sunshine hours on 20-12-2004 was (8.3) hours approx. Rainfalls on 21-12-2004 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 Southwest at (16:00) hours MST on 20-12-2004.

Bay inference: Weather is cloudy in the South Bay and generally fair elsewhere in the Bay of Bengal.

Forecast valid until evening of 22-12-2004: Weather will be partly cloudy in Taninthayi Division and generally fair in the remaining States and Divisions.

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

Outlook for subsequent two days: Likelihood of slight decrease of night temperatures in the whole country.

Forecast for Yangon and neighbouring area for 22-12-2004: Fair weather.

Forecast for Mandalay and neighbouring area for 22-12-2004: Fair weather.



Wednesday, 22 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
- 7:55 am**
5. မြန်မာ့ဗုဒ္ဓ ယဉ်ကျေးမှုအက
- 8:05 am**
6. အတိအကျ
- 8:15 am**
7. ထပ်ဆင့်အသံ ဓမ္မဇာတ်တော် (ဒေသဒေ)
- 8:30 am**
8. International News

8:45 am

9. Let's go

4:00 pm

1. Martial song

4:15 pm

2. Song to uphold National Spirit

4:30 pm

3. Practice in Reading

4:45 pm

4. Musical Programme

5:00 pm

5. အစောင့်အရှောက် သီချင်းစာ ဂုဏ်ထူးဆောင် (ဘုရားအလှူ)

5:15 pm

6. Song of National races

5:30 pm

7. ဂီတဟောပြော

5:50 pm

8. ဂုဏ်ထူးဆောင် အသံအစီအစဉ်

6:05 pm

9. Discovery

6:15 pm

10. ဂုဏ်ထူးဆောင် သီချင်းစာ

6:30 pm

11. Evening News

7:00 pm

12. Weather report

7:05 pm

13. မြန်မာ့အသံ၊ မြန်မာ့အသံ

7:20 pm

14. Musical Programme

7:35 pm

15. Strong and Healthy Myanmar

8:00 pm

16. News

17. International News

18. Weather report

19. ဂုဏ်ထူးဆောင် တိုင်းရင်းသားနှင့်

ဆေးဝါးနှင့် (အပိုင်း-၆)

20. ဓမ္မဇာတ်အသံ (အပိုင်း-၇)

21. ဓမ္မဇာတ်အသံ (အပိုင်း-၇)

"ဘာဝန်ဆောင်"

ဇိုးသားကြွ၊ မျိုးစေ့၊

ရတနာပိုင်၊ ဓမ္မဇာတ်၊

ဓမ္မဇာတ်၊ အဂ္ဂဗျူ

ဒါရိုက်တာ- သတိတင်

22. The next day's programme



Wednesday, 22 December
Tune in today:

- 8.30 am** Brief news
8.35 am Music: I guess it - X'mas time
8.40 am Perspectives
8.45 am Music: Oh come all ye faithful
8.50 am National news/Slogan
9.00 am Music: Do they know its X'mas
9.05 am International news
9.10 am Music: Ho! Ho! who'd be a turkey at X'mas
1.30 pm News/Slogan
1.40 pm Lunch time music - I believe in father X'mas
-Thank's God its - X'mas
-Oh holy night
Variations on a tune
-White X'mas
Article/music
Music at your request
-When a child is born
-Jingle bells
-Wonderful X'mas time
News/Slogan
9.45 pm PEL
10.00 pm

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



Prime Minister Lt-Gen Soe Win receives Mr Chen Haosu and party. — MNA

PM receives Chinese guests

YANGON, 21 Dec—Prime Minister of the Union of Myanmar Lt-Gen Soe Win this afternoon received the President of the Chinese People's Association for Friendship with Foreign Countries Mr Chen Haosu and

party here. Also present during the call were Minister for Foreign Affairs U Nyan Win, Mayor of Yangon Brig-Gen Aung Thein Linn, Director-General of the Prime Minister's Office U Soe Tint, Director-General

of the Protocol Department Thura U Aung Htet and Member of the Yangon City Development Committee Col Tin Soe, Chinese Ambassador to Myanmar Mr Li Jinjun and embassy staff. — MNA

Promotion of efficiency of USDA members and cementing the constitution of the association discussed in Kayah State



Women's Affairs Organizations, Myanmar Maternal and Child Welfare Association, Red Cross Society, Auxiliary Fire Brigade, nurses, students and outstanding youths.

First, those present saluted the Flag of the Union of Myanmar, and USDA youths sang songs

to hail the meeting.

Kayah State USDA Secretary U Kyaw Swe chaired the meeting together with Executives U Hla Myo Swe and U Aung San.

First, the master of ceremonies read out the agenda and announced the start of the meeting.

Next, U Kyaw Swe, the meeting chairman, delivered a speech.

He discussed the successful implementation of the seven objectives of the USDA Annual General Meeting—upholding of the national policy 'Our Three Main National Causes,

successful implementation of the State's political, economic and social objectives, Suc-

cessful implementation of the State's seven-point Road Map, (See page 9)

INSIDE

At a small natural park named "Picture with Animals", a visitor may freely and closely watch bears, peacocks, deers, tortoises and ostrich or stay together with birds.

Page (7)

THAUNG WIN BO

YANGON, 21 Dec—The Kayah State Union Solidarity and Development Association held a meeting at the city hall of Loikaw in Kayah State, on yesterday morning on the implementation of the seven objectives and nine future tasks laid down by the USDA Annual General Meeting (2004), and for Kayah State USDA to carry out the plans in Kayah State.

Present on the occasion were executives of Kayah State, district and township USDAs, members of the township USDAs of the state, members of Myanmar War Veterans Organization,



Kayah State Union Solidarity and Development Association holds meeting to implement seven objectives and nine future work programmes adopted by USDA Annual General Meeting (2004) and to carry out plans by itself. — MNA