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True patriotism

* It is very important for every one of the nation regardless of the place he lives to have strong Union Spirit.

* Only Union Spirit is the true patriotism all the nationalities will have to safeguard.

Vice-President Dr Sai Mauk Kham attends opening of 2011-2012 Academic Year Inter-BES Sports Competitions

NAY PYI TAW, 25 Dec—The 2011-2012 academic year inter-basic education school sports competitions organized by the Ministry of Education commenced today here for the first time.

The opening ceremony of the inter-basic education school sports competitions was held at Nay Pyi Taw FC Football Stadium in Nay Pyi Taw Pynmana Township this morning, attended by Vice-President of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar Dr Sai Mauk Kham.

Union Minister for Information and for Culture U Kyaw Hsan, Union Minister for Hotels and Tourism and for Sports U Tint Hsan, deputy ministers, members of National Education Committee, members of sports competitions central organizing committee, personnel of sports federations, staff families of the Ministry of Education, team managers, coaches and participants were also present on the occasion.

Participants took their positions and saluted Chairman of Sports Competitions Central Organizing Committee Deputy Minister for Education U Aye Kyu.

Speaking on the occasion, Deputy Minister U Aye Kyu said inter-basic education school sports competitions could be held yearly from 1990-1991 academic year to 1997-1998 academic year and only region/state level BES sports competitions could be held since then. To promote the sports standard of the nation, students sports competitions at zone level and department level in higher and basic education sectors were launched since 2008-2009 academic year.

(See page 8)



Vice-President of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar Dr Sai Mauk Kham attends opening ceremony of inter-basic education school sports competitions for 2011-2012 academic year.—MNA



Contending teams seen at opening ceremony of inter-basic education school sports competitions for 2011-2012 academic year of Ministry of Education.—MNA

Significant night temperature (25-12-2011)

Pinlaung	(3° C)
Heho	(6° C)
Haka	(6° C)

Healthy and strong people guarantee future of the nation: Union Health Minister



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Union Commerce Minister attends car sales centre opening ceremony



PAGE 8

Excellent skills plus never say die attitude promises victory: Union Sports Minister

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PERSPECTIVES

Monday, 26 December, 2011

Yangon-Mandalay Expressway saves time

The concrete expressway linking Yangon and Mandalay has already completed. Saga-in-TadaU-Tagundaing section, the last section of the expressway, was commissioned on 23 December morning. As a result, vehicles can drive between Yangon and Mandalay along the expressway in a short time.

The Yangon-Mandalay Expressway was constructed in three sections. The first section was constructed between Yangon and Nay Pyi Taw, starting from the junction of No. 3 Highway in Htaukkyant of Yangon to Nay Pyi Taw Thabyegon junction. It is a 202 miles and one furlong long facility that was inaugurated on 25 March 2009. At present, vehicles smoothly drive between Yangon and Nay Pyi Taw. The old highway from Yangon to Nay Pyi Taw took at least 10 hours for travelling in the past, the expressway saves six hours.

The second section was built from Nay Pyi Taw Thabyegon junction to Saga-in roundabout. It is a 150 miles and five furlongs long section opened on 29 December 2010. Thanks to the expressway, the regions that had faced poor transport in the past can enjoy fruits of better transport.

The third and last section is Saga-in-TadaU-Tagundaing (Mandalay) section. The route from Saga-in roundabout and Mandalay is 13 miles and five furlongs long. The facility was opened on 23 December 2011. Due to opening the road sections, people have easy access to Yangon and Mandalay in a short time.

The Yangon-Mandalay Expressway, two-way and two-lane facility, is 366 miles and three furlongs long. The new road lies through Yangon, Bago and Mandalay regions.

The expressway connects the lower Myanmar and the upper Myanmar with a shortest route. As a result, the people can get easy access to regions of lower Myanmar via Yangon and Shan State, Kachin State and Sagaing Region via Mandalay.

The State has spent a large sum of money on construction of the Yangon-Mandalay Expressway. It is important that the road user people on their part are to systematically abide by traffic rules for durability of the expressway.

UMFCCI officials meet Chinese guests

YANGON, 25 Dec—Vice-Presidents of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar Federation of Chambers of Commerce and Industry U Zaw Min Win and U Aung Lwin, Joint General Secretary U Aye Lwin and officials met a 13-member delegation led by Deputy Secretary General Ms Quyang Xiaoming of All-China Federation of Industry and Commerce of China at the UMFCCI Office, here, on 21 December.

They discussed cooperation between entrepreneurs of two countries.

MNA

Healthy and strong people guarantee future of the nation: Union Health Minister



YANGON, 25 Dec—Only when people are healthy and strong, can they pay full attention to own professions and responsibilities of the State and only then, respective places of the State can see social and economic progress thereby contributing to rural development and poverty alleviation works, said Union Minister for Health Dr Pe Thet Khin on 23 December while speaking to fresher doctor trainees attending Basic Course for Pre Civil Servants Officers No. (35) at Central Institute of Civil Service (Phaunggyi).

The Union Minister added that like lectures at

universities of medicine are vital, lectures at the institute is also instrumental for those who will be working as civil servants and thus, trainees are to learn rules and regulations for a civil servant well.

Also present on the occasion were directors-general, rectors, deputy directors-general, medical superintendents of the Ministry of Health, Rector U Win Maung of Central Institute of Civil Service (Phaunggyi) and personnel, course instructors, guests and 488 fresher doctor trainees attending the course.

MNA

Japanese delegation arrives

YANGON, 25 Dec – A delegation led by Japanese Foreign Affairs Minister Mr Koichiro Gemba arrived here by air this evening at the invitation of Union Minister for Foreign Affairs U Wunna Maung Lwin.

The delegation was welcomed at Yangon International Airport by Director-General Daw Yin Yin Myint of Training, Research and Foreign Languages Department of the Foreign Affairs Ministry, Deputy Director-General of the Protocol Department U Maung Maung, Japanese Ambassador to Myanmar Mr Takashi Saito and officials.

MNA



Eaindawya fire brigade members inspected kitchens of every home in Thiriheyamar east ward in Chanayethazan Township in Mandalay Region as a fire preventive measure on 15 November. The team included Brigade Commander Aye Ko, Ward Administrator U San Lin and officials.

NLM

Victorious disabled athletes honoured

YANGON, 25 Dec—Myanmar Parasports Federation held a ceremony to honour the disabled athletes, who won medals in the 6th Asean Para Games, at M3 Food Centre in Bahan Township, here, yesterday evening. MPF President Maj-Gen Nay Lin and Vice-President Col Myo Myint (Retd) gave honorary speeches.

U Than Tun Oo of 777 Artificial Limbs Group and Dr U Khin Maung Aye of Network Marketing donated K 300,000 each.

Then, K 6.3 million was presented as cash awards to the 11 gold medalists, 9 silver medalists and 14 bronze medalists.

MNA

Take Fire Preventive Measures



Children decorate a Christmas tree at a language school in Binzhou, east China's Shandong Province, on 24 Dec, 2011 as they celebrate the upcoming Christmas.

XINHUA

Iran begins 10-day drill in Strait of Hormuz

BEIJING, 25 Dec—Iran has kicked off 10 days of naval exercises in the Strait of Hormuz. Concerns are now being raised over a possible closure of the world's most strategic oil transit channel in the event of an outbreak of military conflict between Tehran and the West. Drills on one of the busiest straits in the world.

The military drills, dubbed "Velayat-e 90", comes as tension between the West and Iran is escalating over Iran's nuclear programme. Israel and the United States have not ruled out

military action if diplomacy and sanctions fail to rein in Iran's nuclear ambitions.

Some diplomats believe the Islamic Republic could attempt to block the strait in the event of a war with the West over suspicions it is seeking to build atom bombs.

Iranian Navy Commander Habibollah Sayyari says enforcement of the decision to close the Strait of Hormuz is certainly within the capability of Iran's armed forces. The middle-east nation has said in the past that it would respond to any attack by targeting Israel and

also US interests in the region. Iran has also threatened to close the strait, which is the only access channel for eight US-aligned, Gulf Arab states to foreign markets. Located between the Arabian Peninsula and Iran, the Strait of Hormuz is the only sea passage to the open ocean in the Persian Gulf. About 40 percent of the world's traded oil leaves the Gulf region through it. According to the US Energy Information Administration, an average of 13 million barrels of crude oil passed through the strait in 2009.—Xinhua



Iraqi security forces gather the scene of a car bomb attack in the Karrada neighbourhood of Baghdad recently.—INTERNET

Arrests made in deadly Iraqi explosions

BAGHDAD, 25 Dec—Four Iraqi security officers were arrested in the bombings that claimed dozens of lives in Baghdad this week. Prime Minister Nouri al-Maliki said Saturday. "We captured four security officers related to the last set of bombings," Maliki told a gathering of tribal leaders from mostly Sunni Salahuddin province.

McClatchy Newspapers reported Maliki did not say which ministry employed the four security personnel taken into custody.

In this file picture, obtained from Iran's ISNA news agency, Iranian troops prepare rockets on a launcher during a military drill near the Strait of Hormuz, the narrow strategically located waterway through which 40 percent of world's seaborne oil supplies passes.

XINHUA

At least 68 people died and about 200 were injured in the string of car bombings Thursday in Baghdad that analysts say are further evidence there are forces at work intent on fomenting sectarian violence between the country's majority Shiites, who dominate the Maliki government, and its minority Sunnis.

Maliki has ordered the arrest of Iraqi Vice President Tariq al-Hashemi, alleging he used his security forces to carry out terrorist attacks. Al-

Hashemi has moved to the largely autonomous Kurdistan province.

"I'm here as vice president," McClatchy reported al-Hashemi said during an interview with al-Jazeera Saturday evening. "I moved from Baghdad to Suleimaniyah at the invitation by the president [Jalal Talabani, a Kurd]. I am performing my duties as always." Al-Hashemi said he would return to Baghdad if assured his freedom would be protected.—Xinhua

Beheaded bodies found in Mexico

MEXICO CITY, 25 Dec—At least 10 bodies, some of them decapitated, have been found in a Mexican town, officials said.

The bodies were found Friday in the northern part of the Mexican Gulf coast state of Veracruz, said the state attorney general's office.

Sources said the bodies bore signs of torture and some had been decapitated.

The Gulf, Los Zetas, and the Jalisco Nueva Generacion cartels, as well as the La Familia Michoacana crime syndicate, are fueling the violence in Veracruz, where more than 500 people have been killed this year.

On 20 Sep, at least 35 bodies were found dumped on a busy thoroughfare in Veracruz city. A week later, 32 bodies were found at three drug-gang houses in the Veracruz-Boca del Rio metro area.

The violence prompted the federal government to deploy the military to the state in October.

Internet

Gunman kills three aid workers in south-central Somalia

NEW YORK, 25 Dec—The United Nations (UN) World Food Programme (WFP) on Friday confirmed that two of its staff members and a colleague from a partner organization were killed by a gunman in south-central Somalia.

The three men were on a mission to monitor food aid distribution in the town of Mataban, which is located in the south-central administrative region of Hirran, when a gunman suddenly opened fire at them.

"The gunman who shot the three aid workers reportedly gave himself up after committing the crime and was taken into custody by

local authorities," the agency said in a statement. "WFP operations are temporarily suspended in Mataban while the incident is being investigated." UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon condemned the killing and expressed condolences to the families of the three humanitarian workers.

"The Secretary-General calls on the authorities to ensure the safety of humanitarian workers," his spokesperson, Martin Nesirky, said in a statement. "He expects those responsible to be swiftly brought to justice." WFP also condemned the attack, adding that it "illustrates the

risks that relief workers face in one of the world's most dangerous places."

The agency was in the area to provide food to internally displaced people after it was badly affected by this year's drought-induced food shortages.—Internet

Afghan policemen investigate at the site of an explosion in Kunduz province recently. A bicycle bomb exploded in the centre of Kunduz city on Saturday, killing two people including former jihadi commander and peace council member Sher Mohammad Arab, and injuring 16 civilians, said Sayed Sarwar Hosseini, spokesman for the Kunduz police chief.—REUTERS



Two killed, nine wounded in attacks in Iraq

BAGHDAD, 25 Dec—Two people were killed and nine others wounded in separate bomb attacks in northern and central Iraq on Saturday, the police said.

In Iraq's northern province of Kirkuk, a roadside bomb went off near a police patrol in the city of Hawijah, some 200 km north of the capital of Baghdad, killing two policemen and injuring four others, a local police source told Xinhua on condition of anonymity.

Also in the province, a civilian was wounded when a sticky bomb attached to his car detonated in the provincial capital of Kirkuk city, some 250 km north of Baghdad, the source added. Near Baghdad, a roadside bomb struck a train locomotive near the city of Dujail, some 60 km north of the capital, wounding the train driver, a local police source anonymously told Xinhua.

In another incident, a roadside bomb exploded near a group of construction workers in the town of Garmah some 50 km west of Baghdad, injuring three workers, a local police source told Xinhua on condition of anonymity.

Violence is still common in the Iraqi cities despite the dramatic decrease since its peak in 2006 and 2007 when the country was engulfed in sectarian killings.—Xinhua

Health

Health Tip: Prevent falls during holiday decorating

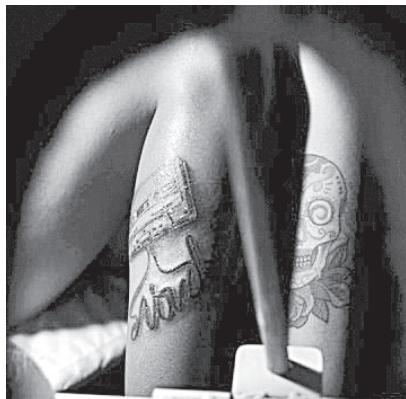
Whether you're decorating your home or climbing to stash holiday packages, take care to avoid falls.

Falls are a leading cause of injury among older people. The American Academy of Orthopaedic Surgeons suggests how you can help prevent them:

- * If you use a ladder, make sure it's of the correct type and height for the job.
- * Check out the ladder before use to make sure there is no damage and nothing is broken.
- * Carry the ladder carefully.
- * Place the ladder in a stable, safe position before you start climbing.
- * Take care to hold onto the rails, avoid standing on the top rung and don't reach too far to the side.
- * Do not climb a ladder if you feel tired or dizzy, or have been drinking alcohol.

Internet

Australia says Bali tattoo likely gave patient HIV



Tattoos can be seen on the legs of a festival goer during a tattoo festival at Legian Kuta on Indonesia's resort island of Bali. Australian health authorities have said a patient diagnosed with HIV likely caught the virus while having a tattoo done in Bali.

INTERNET

BALI, 25 Dec—Australian health authorities have said a patient diagnosed with HIV likely caught the virus while having a tattoo done on the Indonesian resort island of Bali.

They recommended that people who had recently been tattooed on the island, known for its white, sandy beaches, partying and nightlife, should consider being tested for HIV and other blood-borne viruses.

Authorities did not reveal any details of the patient concerned.

"All the evidence points to a tattoo received recently in Bali as being the source of the infection," Western Australia's Department of Health said in a statement dated Friday.

"This case demonstrates the very real health risk in having this type of procedure done overseas," said Paul Armstrong, the department's director of communicable disease control.

The department highlighted the risk not only of tattoos but also of body piercings, saying that besides HIV, patients were also potentially exposing themselves to Hepatitis B and C as well as bacterial infections.

Indonesian officials said last year that the number of known HIV/AIDS cases on Bali was soaring, with one in four prostitutes reported to be HIV-positive and the number of infections jumping almost 19 percent from the year before.

Internet



In this Saturday, 26 Nov, 2011 photo shows lists of menu prices as Julio Cesar Hidalgo works at his newly opened Baldoquin's Cafeteria which he runs from his home in Havana, Cuba.—INTERNET

"I think my expectations were met because in Cuba today I couldn't have hoped for anything more," he said one recent December afternoon as his girlfriend, Giselle de la Noval, served customers. "We survived."

Hidalgo's story is mirrored by many of the entrepreneurs *The Associated Press* has followed since January in a yearlong effort to document Communist Cuba's awkward embrace of free-market reforms.

Their experiences — like the reforms themselves — cannot be described as an unmitigated success. Of the dozen fledgling business owners, including restaurateurs, a DVD salesman, two cafe owners, a seamstress, a manicurist and a gymnasium operator, three have closed down or begun working for someone else, and one has been harassed by her former state employers. None could be considered successful by non-Cuban standards.

But despite their struggles, many tell of lives transformed, dreams realized, attitudes changed, and doors opened that had been closed for more than half a century.—Internet

Consumer, business spending point to slower growth

WASHINGTON, 25 Dec—Consumer spending was tepid in November and a gauge of business investment fell for a second straight month, suggesting the economy lost some of its recent momentum.

Some analysts trimmed fourth-quarter growth forecasts after the weak consumption and factory data on Friday. But many still expected output to expand at an annual pace of more than 3 percent, faster than the 1.8 percent in the July-September period.

"The economy got off to a solid start this quarter, but it seems to have cooled a little bit in November. Growth is still going to be strong this quarter, but it's going to slow in the first half of 2012 because of Europe," said Ryan Sweet, a senior economist at Moody's Analytics in West Chester, Pennsylvania.

Consumer spending ticked up 0.1 percent last month, the Commerce Department said, after rising by the same margin in October. Economists had expected spending, which accounts for two-thirds of US economic activity, to rise 0.3 percent.

When adjusted for inflation, spending rose 0.2 percent last month after a similar gain in October.

In another report, the department said non-defense capital goods orders excluding aircraft, a closely watched proxy for business spending, fell 1.2 percent last month after declining 0.9 percent in October.

Shipments of these so-called core capital goods, which

Cuba wraps up dramatic year of economic change

HAVANA, 25 Dec—A year at the vanguard of Cuba's economic revival has not brought Julio Cesar Hidalgo riches. The fledgling pizzeria owner has had his good months, but the restaurant he opened with his girlfriend often runs at a loss. At times, they can't afford to buy basic ingredients.

Yet the wide-faced 31-year-old says he is grateful to be in business at all. A year ago, Hidalgo was concocting chalky pastries in a Spartan state-run bakery where employees and managers competed to pilfer eggs, flour and olive oil, the only way to make ends meet on salaries of just \$15 a month. Today, he is his own boss, a taxpayer, employer and entrepreneur.

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But despite their struggles, many tell of lives transformed, dreams realized, attitudes changed, and doors opened that had been closed for more than half a century.—Internet



A worker does quality checks on razor blades manufactured at Gillette's factory in Boston, Massachusetts on 5 Dec, 2011.—REUTERS

go into calculations of US gross domestic product, dropped for a third straight month.

This suggests that business spending, which has been robust since the start of the recovery in mid-2009, could slow considerably from the third-quarter's 15.7 growth percent pace.

Economists said uncertainty about fiscal policy at home and the debt crisis in Europe were causing businesses to become more cautious about spending.

The ability of US consumers to keep on spending while incomes remain weak is also a potential drag on growth in early 2012.

Reuters

ECB's Visco hints at lower rates if economy worsens



Ignazio Visco in Rome on 26 October, 2011. REUTERS

MILAN, 25 Dec—European Central Bank Governing Council Member Ignazio Visco said in a newspaper interview on Saturday that the bank will be attentive to the economic cycle when setting monetary policy, suggesting rates could fall more if the euro zone economy worsens.

The ECB has cut interest rates for two months in a row and this month unveiled a raft of measures to support Europe's cash-starved banks to counter a forecast recession brought on by widespread austerity measures. "Monetary policy will be attentive to the (economic) cycle. It is thus that we defend monetary stability in the medium-term," the governor of the Bank of Italy, said in the interview in Italian business daily *Il Sole 24 Ore*. Visco also said the upward trend in Italian bond yields has been stopped and turned

around, even if financial markets remain very volatile.

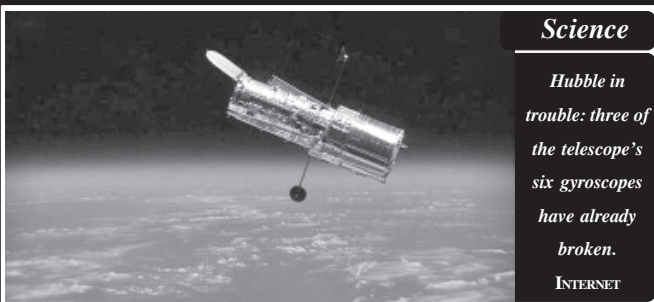
On Friday, the yield on the 10-year Italian government bond rose above 7 percent, the highest since 16 December, and the spread over the equivalent German Bund was more than 500 basis points on worries about the euro zone in 2012. "All the same the trend for higher yields is stopped and turned around, and today we are well below the highs registered in the last few months," Visco said in the interview in Italian business daily *Il Sole 24 Ore*.

"Certainly there is a lot of volatility, but we know that confidence on the markets is lost quickly and regained only slowly and with a constant and continuous commitment," said Visco, who is also governor of the Bank of Italy.

Visco said that the Italian government's 33 billion euro (\$43 billion) austerity package, approved definitively by the Senate on Thursday, was "indispensable," but he added that structural measures to boost growth and create jobs and wealth should be accelerated.

"It is with policies that sustain growth in a credible way that it will be possible to convince the rest of the world that - as our analyses clearly confirm - our public debt is sustainable," he said.—Reuters

Business



Science

Hubble in trouble: three of the telescope's six gyroscopes have already broken.

INTERNET

Hubble telescope finds hints of 'building blocks of life' on Pluto

Moscow, 25 Dec—The Hubble telescope has detected hints of complex hydrocarbon molecules, crucial to the first life on Earth, on the surface of Pluto.

The Cosmic Origins Spectrograph on the Hubble space telescope has discovered a strong "absorber" of ultraviolet light on the dwarf planet's rocky, icy surface - suggesting hydrocarbons are lying there.

They might have been produced by sunlight or cosmic rays reacting with methane, carbon monoxide and nitrogen held in the ice on the surface of Pluto. Scientists believe the presence of the chemicals would explain the body's red hue. "This is an exciting finding. Plutonian hydrocarbons may be responsible for giving Pluto its ruddy colour," said the Alan Stern of the Southwest Research Institute. The scientists also found evidence of changes to Pluto's atmosphere, with differences in the ultraviolet spectrum compared to Hubble measurements from the 1990s. These could be due to changes in the pressure of the atmosphere, or caused by looking at different terrains.

"The discovery we made with Hubble reminds us that even more exciting discoveries about Pluto's composition and surface evolution are likely to be in store when NASA's New Horizons spacecraft arrives at Pluto in 2015," Stern added.—*Internet*

Southampton Varsity research reveals new ways to treat blood cancers

SOUTHAMPTON, 25 Dec— Researchers from the University of Southampton have been awarded 115,000-pounds by the blood cancer charity Leukaemia and Lymphoma Research for a project looking for new ways to treat the most common form of leukaemia.

The Southampton team, led by Professor Graham Packham, is investigating the biology of chronic lymphocytic leukaemia (CLL), which is diagnosed in around 3,300 people in the UK every year.

By understanding completely how the cancer cells proliferate, new drugs can be designed to treat future patients.

CLL is a type of leukaemia in which the bone marrow produces abnormal white blood cells, causing a range of problems with the

immune system.

It develops slowly, often over many years and it remains incurable.

The scientists are focusing their research on the MYC protein, which studies have shown to increase the division of cancer cells and their accumulation in the body.

Professor Packham is investigating whether this protein also plays an important role in the development of CLL.

It is thought that a special characteristic of the surface of CLL cells could allow them to activate the MYC protein, driving the expansion of the cancer in the blood.

If the MYC protein is found to be important in the development of the leukaemia, the Southampton team will test drugs that disable the protein.

If they can block the protein from functioning in CLL cells, they may have found a new way of preventing the cancer from progressing in patients.

Professor Packham who is running the project said "Our view of CLL has changed drastically over the last few years and we now know that cell division can play a major role in the accumulation of the malignant cells in this disease.

Increased understanding of how MYC works within leukaemia cells may provide opportunities to develop new drugs. We are delighted to have received support from Leukaemia and Lymphoma Research, which is essential for us to continue this work".

Internet

The three best gadgets of 2011

It's not easy to pick a gadget of the year for 2011 but Matt Warman has managed to come up with his top three.

1. Samsung Galaxy S2

The *Daily Telegraph's* Gadget of the Year may not be the single most innovative piece of kit to emerge in the past 12 months, nor was it even unexpected; but the Samsung Galaxy S2 mobile phone is an object of desire for millions of Britons simply because it's the most complete mobile phone on the market.

Relatively inexpensive, unlike the iPhone, the S2 remains one of the most powerful phones available. No wonder that Google's own product manager for mobile, Hugo Barra, told me simply: "I want this phone" when we tested some of Google's latest mobile features earlier in the year.

Indeed, the S2 wouldn't be what it is without Google – the company's globally successful Android platform is key to Samsung's best mobile phones, and its rise in 2011 has been pivotal. While Apple continues to offer the best mainstream user experience, Google is winning the numbers game. With more than half of all mobile phones now sold running on Android, and in excess of 10 billion apps downloaded in more than 190 countries, it is



only a matter of time before the best phones, such as the S2, offer really premium experiences at far lower prices than Apple currently charges. And price is a crucial factor in the S2's win as well: it's currently available for free on some £25-per-month mobile phone contracts.

The truth of those claims can be debated, but the S2 certainly offers some very powerful features: its 1.2GHz processor and 1GB of memory are combined with an 8-megapixel camera that remains class-leading. Even the newer Galaxy Nexus offers only a 5Mp camera, and has a higher price tag.

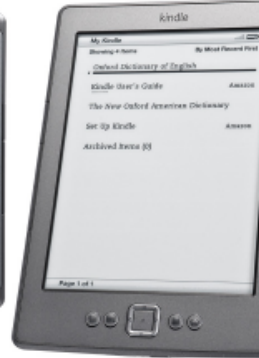
The S2 has also made users aware that Android can look and feel as slick as any phone on the market - at just 8.5mm thin, this device is clearly a premium product and yet it is

2. Amazon Kindle 4

Amazon's earlier Kindle e-reader won Gadget of the Year 2010, and at the new, lower price of £89 the improved model is, in the eyes of many consumers, "a no-brainer". Rival models such as that made by Kobo may be impressive, but consumers are showing remarkable loyalty to Amazon's existing shop. Any avid reader will appreciate the lighter weight of a Kindle versus a book, and the technology has now reached a point where it's churlish indeed to suggest page turns are distractingly slow. Replicating the feel of a real book, though, is admittedly a way off. With full access to the wealth of Amazon's catalogue, which existing Kindle users already feel comfortable using, this lighter, faster model offers not only books but also subscriptions to newspapers, access to a dictionary and other, surprisingly useful features. Such versatility is making it an increasingly essential gadget.



Amazon Kindle 4



also inexpensive. However, the reason for naming the S2 Gadget of the Year is as much about what it and Samsung in general have done for the Google operating system. This has been crucial in encouraging app developers to build more programs for Android and it has also, gradually, persuaded more users that larger screens really are the way forward - compared to the 3.5in screen of many phones, the S2's 4.3in expanse feels luxurious. Once you've tried it, it's difficult to go back to another device.

So it's not one single feature that has made the S2 Gadget of the Year, it's the overall package. And, surprisingly, this device, which was launched in May, remains among the best mobiles to buy this Christmas. Nokia may be on the rise, but Samsung is now the single name to beat and the S2 is its most influential device so far.

3. iPad 2



Powerful and beautiful, the iPad 2 has established itself as the tablet of 2011.

Although it was not a major upgrade, the new version did enough to ensure that Apple's position in the tablet market is secure for some time to come, and it offers capabilities that app developers have still to use

to their full extent.

The iPad 2 is deservedly ubiquitous, and car manufacturers have quickly caught on, making special holsters to attach iPads to the back of headrests.

Using one still feels futuristically satisfying every day.

Fire up the iBook store and roll your finger over the screen to turn the pages; you can't fail to appreciate the perfect animation.

That's just one reason why the iPad, and its library of new apps, has raised the bar higher than ever in 2011.

The device lives up to every bit of Steve Jobs's promise that using it should be "magical". The downside is that every manufacturer is chasing the same goal.—*Internet*

Technology



Japanese Prime Minister Yoshihiko Noda.
INTERNET

Japanese PM seeks to boost ties with China

BEIJING, 25 Dec—Japanese Prime Minister Yoshihiko Noda says he is seeking to discuss ways to boost strategic ties with China. His remarks come just ahead of his two-day official visit to China on Sunday.

Noda noted that the two countries are main players in maintaining regional and global peace, stability and prosperity. He also said that Sino-Japanese relations have made great progress over the past 40 years since the normalization of relations between the two countries.

Noda expressed hopes of consolidating bilateral ties by promoting political mutual trust, economic cooperation and cultural exchange.

The Japanese prime minister also said he is seeking consensus with China on the world economy, regional cooperation, anti-piracy measures in the Gulf of Aden, and the Korean peninsula issue.—Xinhua

ASEAN countries invest \$535m in Cambodia in 10 months

PHNOM PENH, 25 Dec—Cambodia had attracted a total fixed asset investment of 535 million US dollars from its ASEAN member countries in the first ten months this year, according to the government reports on Saturday.

The reports of the Council for the Development of Cambodia (CDC) showed that from January to October this year, ASEAN countries investing in Cambodia are only Vietnam, Malaysia and Singapore. During the period, Cambodia had granted licenses to 9 investment projects from Vietnam worth 285 million US dollars, 4 projects from Malaysia worth 230 million US dollars, and one project from Singapore worth 20 million US dollars.

It said that the Malaysia's projects are in telecommunication towers development and maintenance, garment manufacturing and tourism, the Vietnam's projects in rubber plantation, exploitation of metal ore and banking sector, whilst the Singapore's project in hotel development.—MNA/Xinhua

Ban Ki-moon hails approval of tough UN budget

BEIJING, 25 Dec—The UN General Assembly has approved a budget of 5.15 billion US dollars for the period of 2012-2013. UN Secretary-general Ban Ki-moon welcomed the move as "doing more and better with less".

The budget made a 3.2-percent cut in the current financial plan, a move at a time of global financial austerity.

Xinhua

A man dressed as Santa Claus dives in a fish tank aquarium at the Guadalajara Zoo in Guadalajara City, Jalisco, Mexico, 24 Dec, 2011. Thousands of children and adults visited the Guadalajara Zoo to look at the "Acua Claus", a man dressed as Santa Claus snorkeling in the aquarium as part of Christmas celebrations.
XINHUA



Zimbabwe poised to be world's third largest diamond producer

HARARE, 25 Dec—Zimbabwe is poised to become the world's third largest diamond producer by the end of this decade as production continues to soar, state media *New Ziana* reported on Saturday.

The country which is currently the seventh largest producer in the world has potential to supply 25 percent of global demand.

Currently the country has got four diamond mining firms operating in the Chiadzwa fields namely Marange Resources, Mbada Diamonds, Anjin and Diamond Mining Corporation.

The Kimberly Process Certification System recently rated Anjin was recently certified as the biggest diamond mining firm in the world.

Western countries led by the United States have

been battling to block Zimbabwe from selling its diamonds in order to sustain effects of illegal economic sanctions that they imposed on the country in retribution for expropriating land from former white commercial farmers.

The country stands to earn more than 2 billion US dollars per year from the three Marange mines that have been permitted to sell so far.

According to the Diamond Industry Report for 2011, Zimbabwe's diamond output would continue to grow. "In the last three years, Zimbabwe has become a significant diamond producer and is forecast to become a top-three producer by the end of this decade," the report said.

"With the changing environment in Zimbabwe, the international community

is slowly beginning to accept Zimbabwe back into the fold.

Diamonds from Zimbabwe which had been excluded from the markets in the last two years are slowly making a comeback."

The report said despite efforts to stop Zimbabwe from marketing her gems production continued to grow.

"Exclusion from the international diamond markets has not deterred Zimbabwe from producing diamonds and production has been increasing exponentially after formalization of diamond mining in the Marange area," said the report.

Currently Botswana is the top diamond producing nation in the world by value followed by Russia and Canada.

Xinhua

Gas leak kills 2, injures 23 in east China factory

NANJING, 25 Dec—A gas leak left two workers dead and poisoned 23 others in east China's Jiangsu Province on Sunday, local government said.

The accident happened around 9 am at a wire factory in the city of Jiangyin, when gas leaked from a malfunctioning stove, poisoning 25 workers at the site, the city government said in a statement. Two workers died in hospital after treatment failed, while others are still being treated, it said. An investigation into the cause of the accident is under way.

MNA/Xinhua

A Chinese soldier trains a dog at a military base in Nanjing, east China's Jiangsu province on 28 Jan, 2006. Picture taken on 28 Jan, 2006.
INTERNET



Palestinian girls dressed in traditional garb pose in Manger Square outside the Church of the Nativity, as Christians gather for Christmas celebrations in the West Bank City of Bethlehem.—INTERNET

Sudan's army announces killing of Darfur's rebel leader

KHARTOUM, 25 Dec—Khalil Ibrahim, leader of the rebel Justice and Equality Movement in the restive western region of Darfur, was killed Sunday morning, the Sudanese military announced.

"Khalil Ibrahim was killed today morning at the Wad Banda area in the North Kordofan State" in central Sudan, the Sudanese Armed Forces (SAF) said in a statement, without elaborating the circumstances of the killing.—Xinhua

Central China province aims for biggest smart phone production base

ZHENGZHOU, 25 Dec—Central China's Henan Province plans to build the world's largest manufacturing base for smart phones starting next year, local authorities said on Saturday. The base will be centered on the Foxconn Science Park in Zhengzhou, provincial capital of Henan, increasing its current production lines to 95, said the Henan provincial development and reform commission during a conference.

The expansion plan, costing 7 billion yuan (1.1 billion US dollars), is expected to bring 20 billion US dollars in sales revenue in 2012, the commission said.

Foxconn, the world's largest contractor of electronic components and principal supplier to Apple, opened new factories in Henan and Sichuan last year, targeting low labor costs and rising markets in the inland provinces.

The new plant in Zhengzhou has reached a daily production of 200,000 Apple iPhones and employed 130,000 people, said Guo Gengmao, governor of Henan Province. The company currently employs 1.2 million people, with about 1 million of them based on the Chinese mainland.—Xinhua



The faithful attend the Christmas Eve midnight mass at the Cathedral of St. Michael and St. Gudula in Brussels, capital of Belgium, 25 Dec, 2011.—XINHUA

American robbed, killed on Christmas eve in Philippines: police

MANILA, 25 Dec—A 61-year old American national was killed after he was robbed by unidentified suspects on Christmas eve in northern Philippines, police said Sunday.

Philippine National Police spokesman Chief Superintendent Agrimero Cruz Jr identified the victim as James Thomas Kakara, who was robbed in his residence at Kaybagal South village, Tagaytay City in Cavite province.

The robbers allegedly carted away a black shoulder bag containing around 206,000 pesos (4,716 US dollars), a mobile phone and a laptop computer, Cruz said, adding an investigation into the incident was ongoing.—Xinhua

Boy, 5, killed by boy, 3; man arrested

LAKEWOOD, 25 Dec—A Kansas man appeared in court Saturday to face charges in the death of a 5-year-old boy who was fatally shot by a 3-year-old boy in Colorado, police said.

The *Denver Post* reported Adam Laham, 23, was arrested on suspicion of child abuse resulting in death and criminal negligence.

Police said Laham had visited a family at an apartment in Lakewood, west of Denver, where the shooting occurred Friday night, the newspaper said.

Lakewood police spokeswoman Bonnie Martin could not confirm if Laham was at the apartment when the shooting took place.

Laham is not related to the boys, who both lived at

the home, Martin said. The boys' names had not been released.

It appeared the shooting was accidental, police said. *Internet*

Insurgents fire at NATO helicopter in southern Afghanistan

KABUL, 25 Dec—Afghan insurgents fired at a helicopter belonging to the NATO-led International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) on late Friday evening, the multinational alliance confirmed on Saturday. There were no casualties.

The attack happened in Helmand province when insurgents opened fire at an ISAF helicopter, forcing it to land near an Afghan National Security Forces (ANSF) checkpoint in the Nahr-e Saraj district. "The helicopter was assessed to have received small arms fire," ISAF said.

According to the alliance, the helicopter landed without incident and the aircrew was recovered unharmed. "The helicopter was recovered to a nearby coalition base," an ISAF spokesperson said, without disclosing the nationality or nationalities of the troops on board the aircraft.

Taleban spokesman Qari Yousuf Ahmadi claimed responsibility for the attack and said its fighters had fired a rocket-propelled grenade (RPG) at the aircraft while it was flying at a low altitude. "Witnesses from the area say that the helicopter caught fire in mid-air before crashing to the ground," he claimed. "It is said that all the invaders and crew on board

were killed on impact. The wreckage is still lying in the area this morning whereas the area has been cordoned off by enemy troops." It was not possible to confirm whether Taleban fighters were in fact behind the attack, as the group regularly claims responsibility for attacks carried out by affiliated groups such as the Haqqani Network. Taleban spokesmen usually also fabricate claims of casualties, and no other source indicated casualties as a result of Friday's incident.

On 6 August, a total of 30 US and 8 Afghan service members were killed when a CH-47 Chinook helicopter crashed in the Tangi Valley of Wardak Province. A report released by US Central Command in mid-October showed the crash was caused by an insurgent-fired rocket-propelled grenade which struck the CH-47's aft rotor-blade as the aircraft approached its landing zone. The incident represented the highest number of US forces killed during a single event since the US-led war began in late 2001. There are currently more than 130,000 ISAF troops in Afghanistan, including some 90,000 US troops and 9,500 British soldiers. —*Internet*



Tourists visit the Ice and Snow World in Harbin, capital of northeast China's Heilongjiang Province, on the first trial opening day of 24 Dec, 2011. The 13th Harbin Ice and Snow World prepared magnificent ice and snow sculptures and wonderful performances to visitors. *XINHUA*

Police officer charged with aid to mobster

NAPLES, 25 Dec—A senior police officer in Naples, Italy, is facing trial on charges of helping a restaurant owner with alleged ties to the mob. A judge ruled Friday there is enough evidence to hold Vittorio Pisani, the former head of the flying squad, for trial, the Italian news agency ANSA reported. The trial is scheduled for late January.

Prosecutors say Pisani warned restaurant owner Marco Iorio of a money-laundering investigation and helped him transfer funds to Switzerland. Iorio is an alleged member of the Camorra, the powerful Neapolitan criminal organization. Pisani used to be sought out for commentary on the mob. *Internet*

250 tonnes of drug-making chemicals seized in Mexico

MEXICO CITY, 25 Dec—At least 252 tonnes of synthetic drug-making chemicals have been seized at a Mexican port in one of biggest seizures of such substances in the country.

The monomethylamine chemical, used to make illegal synthetic drugs such as crystal meth, were seized at the Pacific port of Lazaro Cardenas.

The shipment, was destined for Puerto Quetzal in Guatemala, said the navy secretariat, the federal attorney general's office and the internal revenue service in a joint statement. The drug precursors were found by customs officials inside 1,160 barrels at the port, located in the western state of Michoacan.

The seizure came on the heels of two other cases this month at the same port. Both the earlier shipments, of 205 tonnes and 100 tonnes of monomethylamine, were destined for the same Guatemalan port. Mexico's biggest-ever seizure of drug precursor chemicals was the confiscation of 839 tonnes in July in Queretaro, which topped the previous record of 200 tonnes discovered last year in Manzanillo.—*Internet*

Two killed, one injured in US small plane crash

WASHINGTON, 25 Dec—Two people were killed and another injured after a small plane crashed on Saturday in the US state of Ohio, local media reported.

The crash occurred around 2 pm Saturday near the Vinton County Airport, about 50 miles southeast of Columbus, local news outlet WSAZ reported, citing a press release from the Vinton

County Sheriff's Office.

Two passengers were confirmed dead, according to the report. The pilot was severely injured and taken to Grant Medical Centre in Columbus for treatment.

Identities of the victims were not released. Authorities are investigating the incident with no word so far on the cause of the crash. *Xinhua*



A pianist plays a piano with hand-painted Thangkas, a kind of Tibetan-style painting, made by Beijing Xinghai Piano Group Limited during an exhibition of luxuries in the China World Trade Center in Beijing, capital of China, 23 Dec, 2011. The four-day 2011 Beijing International Top Personal Goods and Advanced Life Exhibition opened in Beijing on Friday, which attracted some 500 domestic and foreign top brands and jewelry manufacturers.—XINHUA

19 feared dead in Congo River wreckage

KINSHASA, 25 Dec—At least 19 people went missing and are feared dead in a wreckage on the River Congo, witnesses reported on Saturday.

A motorboat sailing from the port of Dingi to Kisangani in the northeastern province of Orientale sank over night between Wednesday and Thursday.

The vessel had more than 30 people on board when it capsized in the strong wind of a storm, survivors told reporters.

The 11 survivors were taken to hospital in Kisangani for proper treatment after the wreckage.

Maritime accidents are frequently reported on the 4,700-km Congo River, notably due to overloading and poor conditions of safety.

Statistics from the Congolese Ministry of Transports and Communication show that more than 2,000 people lost their lives in accidents on the River Congo, other rivers and lakes in 2009 alone.—*Xinhua*



Photo taken on 23 Dec, 2011 shows a Rolls-Royce car at an exhibition of luxuries in the China World Trade Center in Beijing, capital of China, 23 Dec, 2011. The four-day 2011 Beijing International Top Personal Goods and Advanced Life Exhibition opened in Beijing on Friday, which attracted some 500 domestic and foreign top brands and jewelry manufacturers.—XINHUA

Vice-President Dr Sai Mauk Kham attends opening of 2011-2012 Academic Year...

(from page 1)

Students from Myanmar universities participated in 8 sports categories in the 15th ASEAN University Games held in Chiang Mai of Thailand in December, 2010. Further efforts would be made to be able to take part in ASEAN University Games which is held ever two years.

So, students should be nurtured from basic education level to be able to produce State-representing athletes. If only basic education level sports competitions athletes can turn out prospective athletes, can they become brilliant athletes at higher education level and can represent the nation and clinch international titles.

The deputy minister then urged the participants to vie hard to enhance the image of home region/state playing fair in the competitions based own skills, efforts and friendship.

The opening ceremony came to an end with entertainment of students from basic education schools in Nay Pyi Taw with dances and songs.

The Vice-President and party then enjoyed the men's football match between Ayeyawady Region Team and Shan State (B) Team and cordially greeted member students of



Deputy Minister U Aye Kyu gives a speech at opening of 2011-2012 Academic Year Inter-Basic Education School Sports Competitions.—MNA



entertainment team.

A total of 3064 team managers, coaches and participants from Nay Pyi Taw and regions and states participated in 2011-2012 Academic Year inter-BES sports competitions which completes on 1 January, 2012.

The competitions include such events as football, volleyball, basketball, Sepak Takraw, traditional cane ball, badminton, table tennis, tennis, Taekwondo, Wushu, Karatedo, swimming, track and field, and golf which will be held at designated sports grounds here.

MNA

Cheerleaders at 2011-2012 Academic Year Inter-Basic Education School Sports Competitions.—MNA

Union Commerce Minister attends car sales centre opening ceremony

YANGON, 25 Dec—Union Minister for Commerce U Win Myint attended opening ceremony of Automobile Sales Centre of Sakura Technical Services Co Ltd in South Okkalapa Township here this morning.

Officials and responsible persons of the company conducted him around the sales centre.

The Union minister visited similar sales centres of Sandar Services Co Ltd

and of Diamond Auto Services Co Ltd in Mayangon and Bahan Townships.

He called for meeting satisfaction of customers and adhering to rules and regulations set by Automobile Importation Supervisory Committee.

Under automobile replacement scheme, car sales centres have been opened in Nay Pyi Taw, Yangon and Mandalay and there are now nine centres.

Applications for opening the sales centre are under scrutiny, with the possibility of seeing more auto showrooms.—MNA

Union Minister for Commerce U Win Myint at Car Sales Centre of Sakura Technical Services Co Ltd in South Okkalapa Township.

MNA



Shan State Chief Minister attends opening of Billion Gain Co

NAY PYI TAW, 25 Dec—Billion Gain Manufacturing Co Ltd in Taunggyi of Shan State was opened on 23 December morning, attended by Shan State Chief Minister U Sao Aung Myat.

Shan State Minister for Electric Power and Industry U Sai Tun Yin, Billion Gain Co personnel U Tin Htut and Daw Ohnmar formally opened the company and the State chief minister unveiled the signboard of the company.

The Shan State Chief Minister and guests then viewed electronic products of the company.—MNA

Winners awarded in football and tennis tournaments

YANGON, 25 Dec—The prize presentation for the Chin State Chief Minister's Trophy Inter-Township (Open) Football Tournament and the Tennis Tournament was held at Vamthumong Sports Ground on 11 December.

Chin State level authorities and officials concerned presented cash awards to the winners in the tennis and football tournaments. State Chief Minister U Hong Ngai awarded K 500,000 and duplicate trophy to first prize winning Haka Township and K 400,000 to Matupi Township in the football tournament.—MNA

LOCAL SPORTS

TEO's Shield Football Tourney concludes



YANGON, 25 Dec—The final match of Dala Township Education Officer's Shield U-12 Inter-Primary School Football Tournament took place at the school sports ground of Basic Education Primary School No. 12 on 19 December.

Group-2 team emerged champion by winning a 3-1 victory over Thabyegon team in the final match. Township Administrator U Tun Tun Win, Township Education Officer U Than Soe and officials awarded the winners.—Myanma Alin

Mass walk activities organized in third week of December

YANGON, 25 Dec—The mass walk activities for the third week of December was organized in Hlinethaya Township on 17 December morning.

The local authorities at different levels, members of social organizations, students and local people took part in the activities that started in front of Hlinethaya Township Administrator's Office and finished on Aungzeya suspension bridge. Later, they took physical exercises on the bridge.

Myanma Alin



Fishery entrepreneurs to emphasize prevention against depletion of fish resources

NAY PYI TAW, 25 Dec—Union Minister for Cooperatives and for Livestock and Fisheries U Ohn Myint looked into processing for sales of seawater fish and prawn to domestic and foreign markets at Nyaungdan fish auction market being undertaken by Annawa Fisheries Co Ltd at Nyaungdan fish jetty this morning.

He also visited the 2000-ton cold storage of Annawa Fisheries Co Ltd.

In meeting with officials and offshore fishery

entrepreneurs, the Union Minister said that only when the entrepreneurs submit current situations frankly, can rules, regulations and directives be amended and relaxed. He urged them to carry out their tasks with patriotic spirit. He noted that offshore and onshore fishery entrepreneurs are to place emphasis on environmental conservation and prevention against depletion of fish resources, and they are to take responsible for protection of mangrove plantations. If fish brokerage

sells fish to the consumers directly, the price of fish will decline; and thus, the Ministry of Cooperatives and Ministry of Livestock and Fisheries will coordinate with Yangon Region government and YCDC for sales of fish. The Central Cooperative Union is to manage direct distribution of marine products to the people, he said.

Later, the Union Minister viewed sales of seawater fish through auction for domestic consumption.

MNA



Myanmar disabled athletes seen at Yangon International Airport on their return from Indonesia after participating in 6th ASEAN Para Games in Solo of Indonesia in which they bagged 11 gold, nine silver and 14 bronze. (News reported)—MNA

Functions of Myaukpyin Main Power Station inspected

NAY PYI TAW, 25 Dec—Union Minister for Electric Power No. 2 U Khin Maung Soe on 23 December afternoon inspected control room, switch gear room and battery room of 230-KV Myaukpyin main power station in Patheingyi Township.

At the meeting hall, the

Union Minister heard reports on progress of project tasks and construction of the power station presented by the project manager. The director of Power Supply Project (North) gave a supplementary report.

The Mandalay Region Electrical Engineer reported

on preparation for better supply of electricity in Mandalay Region and District and efforts to reduce unit losses.

The Union Minister inspected installation of two 230/33/11 KV 100 MVA transformers and construction of 230 KV switch yard.—MNA

Excellent skills plus never say die attitude promises victory: Union Sports Minister

NAY PYI TAW, 25 Dec—Chairman of Myanmar National Sports Committee Union Minister for Sports U Tint Hsan, accompanied by Deputy Minister U Aye Myint Kyu, Director-General U Thaug Htaik and personnel, inspected progress in renovation of synthetic track and in construction of new stadium and gyms in Nay Pyi Taw Lewe Sports Ground for selected Myanmar players this morning.

The Union Minister then visited the office of Organizing and Winning XXVII SEA Games Supporting Group opened at the guesthouse of Nay Pyi Taw Development Committee. While speaking to senior officials of the Ministry of Sports,

personnel of sports training camps, and personnel and staff of the ministry, the Union Minister said the purpose of opening sports training camp was to train brilliant athletes from domestic sports competitions collectively at one place to become outstanding athletes who can bring honour to the nation. It needed not only to train athletes to be skillful but also to equip them with never say die spirit. The Union Minister called for systematic training schedule and selection of right players.

Deputy Minister U Aye Myint Kyu gave instructions on rules of the training camp and Director-General U Thaug Htaik recruitment of new blood. The Union Minister then inspected the mess.—MNA

Better transport facilities stretching all regions length and breadth of nation

Article: *Kayan Soe Myint*; Photos: *Moe Myint Hlaing*

Public Works of the Ministry of Construction has so far built over 24,000 miles long roads in the entire nation. Moreover, over 59,000 miles long roads in total have been constructed by the Ministry of Border Affairs, the development committees under Yangon and Mandalay Region governments, Nay Pyi Taw Special Development Project, Directorate of Military Engineers, Ministry of Electric Power No. 1 and No. 2 in addition to rural roads.

Public Works under the Ministry of Construction allowed 30 companies to construct 70 road section stretching 4217 miles long through BOT system. Of them, Shwe Than Lwin Highway Co Ltd is taking

responsibilities for construction of 48-mile Bago-Nyaunglebin section of Yangon-Mandalay Union Highway, 56 miles and three furlongs long Phayagyi-Kyaikto section, eight miles long Nyaungkhashe-Sittoung (Moppalin) section, 71 miles and six furlongs long Kyaikto-Thaton-Mawlamyine section and 26 miles and two furlongs long Thaton-Myaingale section, totalling 210 miles and three furlongs through BOT system.

On 11 December, we, the news crew of Kyemon Daily left Shwe Than Lwin Co in Hlinethaya Township by car to make a trip for writing bylines on progress of 210 miles and three furlongs long advanced asphalt concrete roads. We had the opportunities to



Photo shows Kyaikto-Thaton-Mawlamyine road section upgraded with advanced asphalt concrete.



Bago-Nyaunglebin section of Yangon-Mandalay Union Highway being upgraded with asphalt concrete by Shwe Than Lwin Co through BOT system.

observe placing of asphalt concrete near Shwe Than Lwin Toll Gate on Bago-Nyaunglebin section of Yangon-Mandalay Union Highway with the use of heavy machinery. We left the Union Highway and continued the trip along Phayagyi-Kyaikto-Thaton-Mawlamyine Road. Along the road section, we saw placing of asphalt concrete with the use of heavy machinery. Kyaikto-Thaton-Mawlamyine Road becomes a better transport facility.

We took photos on upgrading of road sections. Shwe Than Lwin Highway Co Ltd has so far built 666 reinforced concrete bridges along its all road sections.

Myanmar located in southeast area of Asia, is sharing border with the People's Republic of China, Thailand, Laos, Bangladesh and India. It has 260,000 square miles of area.

Transport section is being operated through railroads, aviation and waterway transportation facilities.

At present, the government is building roads and bridges one after another for development of transport and production and ensuring enhancement of socio-economic life of all citizens. In the past, the transport route linking Upper Myanmar and Lower Myanmar mainly stretched along the east bank of Ayeyawady River. Nowadays, the transport routes are linking all regions the length and breadth of the nation. In fact, such fruitful results depend on better transport.

Translation: TTA
Kyemon: 23-12-2011



Cargo ships go through a ship lock at the Three Gorges Dam in Yichang, central China's Hubei Province, on 25 Dec, 2011. The freight that went through the Three Gorges Dam exceeded 100 million tonnes this year.—XINHUA

Indonesia's Sriwijaya Air plane makes emergency landing

JAKARTA, 25 Dec—Indonesia's Sriwijaya Air plane made an emergency landing due to a problem in its hydraulic system, the country's largest news portal detik.com reported here on Sunday.

The aircraft was flying from Pekanbaru of Riau province to Jakarta when the problem occurred at 20:14 local time on Saturday (14:14 GMT), forcing it to land in Sultan Mahmud Badaruddin II Airport in Palembang of South Sumatra province.

However, when it landed on the airport, the plane could not brake, forcing an overrun.

Consequently, the front wheels crossed the runway border of about 5-10 meters while the rear wheels stayed on the runway.

Yon Sugiono, general manager of PT Angkasa Pura II Palembang, the airport operator, said that all passengers are safe.

Xinhua

Passenger plane unable to open front wheels makes successful landing in Karachi of Pakistan

ISLAMABAD, 25 Dec—A Saudi passenger plane unable to open its front wheels made a successful emergency landing at the Karachi International Airport on Sunday morning, reported local media.

The front part of the plane had minor damage during the emergency landing, *Geo television* reported.

The plane, which was flying with 72 passengers and several crew members

Submarine has near miss with cargo ship

WASHINGTON, 25 Dec—The US Navy fired a submarine commander after a near-miss encounter with a merchant ship in the Strait of San Juan de Fuca.

Commander Joseph Nosse was transferred from the USS Kentucky a week after the 12 Oct incident, the *Navy Times* reported. The newspaper obtained reports on the incident under the Freedom of Information Act. The Kentucky and the MV Midnight Sun, an 839-foot cargo ship, came within 900

yards of each other with the submarine traveling at periscope depth.

The report said a series of miscommunications and lapses in attention while the submarine was changing course led to the near miss in the Strait of Juan de Fuca between British Columbia and Washington state. The Kentucky was apparently unaware the Midnight Sun was in her path until the merchant vessel alerted her.

A former submarine commander who looked at

the report told *the Times* the situation was very dangerous. "When you look at this, you say, 'If the guy on the merchant hadn't been playing heads-up ball, he could've slammed into this guy carrying a boatload of nuclear weapons,'" the former commander said.

The Kentucky is based in Bangor, Wash. The Midnight Sun, owned by Totem Ocean, makes regular runs between Tacoma, Wash, and Anchorage, Alaska.—Internet



Pieces of a plane that crashed on the highway are seen on a flatbed truck on 21 Dec, 2011, in Morris Township, NJ. The high-performance Socata TBM-700 turboprop spun out of control and crashed, killing all five people aboard and narrowly avoiding dozens of cars and trucks on Highway 287 in New Jersey on 20 Dec. Federal investigators are searching for debris, which were scattered over at least a half-mile, with one section found lodged in a tree a quarter-mile away.—INTERNET

Man escapes as satellite piece crashes through roof

MOSCOW, 25 Dec—A Siberian resident miraculously escaped serious injury or even death when a fragment of a Russian communication satellite crashed through the roof of his house.

A Meridian satellite that was launched Friday from the Plesetsk space centre in northern Russia on board a Soyuz-2 carrier rocket crashed near the Siberian city of Tobolsk minutes after lift-off.

Eight satellite fragments

were found in an area some 100 km from the city of Novosibirsk.

A titanium ball of about five kg fell on to the roof of a house in Ordyn district.

The house owner, Andrei Krivorukov, had gone out to the yard to fetch firewood minutes before the crash.

The village administration has promised to repair the house at its expense.

The Meridian-series of communication satellites are used for both civilian and

military purposes. They are designed to provide communication between vessels, airplanes and coastal stations on the ground, as well as to expand a network of satellite communications in the northern regions of Siberia and the Russian Far East.

The Soyuz-2 is an upgraded version of the Soyuz rocket, which has been a workhorse of Russia's manned and unmanned space programmes since the 1960s.—Internet

had a sigh of relief after the plane landed without any disaster.

Civil Aviation Authorities said that the pilot was allowed to land at third attempt after he had informed the control tower about the problem.

Xinhua

Three bodies found in possible shipwreck in Russia's Far East

VLADIVOSTOK, 25 Dec—Three bodies have been found in the sea since distress signals were received from a ship at La Perouse Strait, Russia media quoted emergency authorities as saying Sunday.—Xinhua



A model presents a car at the 19th Taipei auto show in Taipei, southeast China's Taiwan, on 24 Dec, 2011. The nine-day auto show, a biennial event which is the largest in Taiwan, kicked off here on Saturday, attracting 34 exhibitors to show more than 200 vehicles.—XINHUA

Shanghai port is world's busiest

SHANGHAI, 25 Dec—The Shanghai port has handled a record 30 million containers this year and is set to retain the world's busiest port title after overtaking Singapore in 2010, a media report said Saturday.

The port saw its container traffic volume surpass 30 million 20-foot equivalent units (TEU) Friday. It is an unprecedented number in the world's port history and marks a new beginning in its endeavour to become a global shipping centre by 2020, the *Shanghai Times* reported.

China's remarkable trade boom is reflected in the Shanghai port numbers, which rose 7,951 TEUs in 1978 to 29.05 million TEUs in 2010, it said.

The customs oversaw a USD 790 billion worth of imports and exports in the first three quarters of this year - a 19.3 percent year-on-year increase.

The Shanghai port handled 23.9 million TEUs over the first 10 months - more than that of Singapore's 23.56 million TEUs.

The Shanghai International Port (Group)

Co, the port operator, predicted the port's container throughput to reach 31.5 million TEUs by the end of the year, the daily said.

Singapore's annual container traffic figure will be released in January.

"As the world's shipping industry ... faces economic uncertainties, Shanghai port, with its container traffic already at such high level, has to stick to its innovation-driven model to blaze out a path toward sustainable growth," the Shanghai government said on its website.—Internet



An office building of local government is demolished in directional blasting in Kunming, capital of southwest China's Yunnan Province, on 25 Dec, 2011. After the directional blasting, a business center will be constructed in the area. The new office building of Kunming municipal government will be built in a new district of the city.—XINHUA

Bird nest delicacy could cause cancer

BEIJING, 24 Dec—A delicacy made from the nest of cave swift, a species of bird that builds its nest from its saliva, may cause cancer, China's quality watchdog has said.

Cancer causing chemicals were recently detected in consignments of bird nests from Malaysia.

This is the latest in a string of controversies involving the expensive delicacy made from cave swifts' saliva.

Nine batches, weighing

73 kg, imported in September and October contained toxic nitrite and golden staph bacteria—both of which can cause blood poisoning and cancer, the General Administration of Quality Supervision, Inspection and Quarantine said.

The tainted birds' nests were intercepted and returned before they could enter the domestic market, the *Shanghai Daily* reported Saturday quoting the administration.

The birds' nests, produced by six Malaysian companies, were discovered in ports in Guangdong and Fujian provinces.

Earlier this year, birds' nests—used in Chinese cooking for hundreds of years—were at the centre of a scandal involving the rare red form, known as red cubilose, a variety comes from nests built on rock cliffs rich in iron.

The iron permeates into nests, giving them a distinctive red colour and

making them much sought after, the daily said.

But Malaysian authorities said products labelled as cubilose are sometimes dyed red by unscrupulous sellers.

Many contain excessive levels of nitrite. In September, edible birds' nests on sale in Hong Kong were found to contain nitrite levels 31 times the limit in meat. These consignments also came from Malaysia.

Internet



People take pictures of ice statues of Nisse, a model of Norwegian Santa Claus, at a hotel in Tokyo on 24 Dec.—INTERNET



Water skiers dressed themselves up as reindeer while skiing on the Potomac River during a celebration for Christmas called "The WATER-SKIING SANTA" in Washington DC, capital of the United States, on 24 Dec, 2011.—XINHUA

Fog to blanket south China while snow to hit north

BEIJING, 25 Dec—Fog and haze will blanket most parts of China's southern regions on Sunday, while snow will hit some areas of north China, the country's meteorological authorities said.

Fog will reduce visibility to less than 1,000 metres in parts of Sichuan, Hubei and Hunan provinces and Chongqing Municipality

Sunday morning, while some areas of Guangxi Zhuang Autonomous Region, Guangdong and Jiangsu provinces will be shrouded in haze during the day, the National Meteorological Centre said in a statement on its website.

Light snow or snow flurries are forecast for some parts of Gansu and Heilongjiang provinces as

well as Shandong peninsula, the statement said.

Meanwhile, rains are expected to fall on Sichuan, Guizhou, Yunnan and Hainan provinces over the next 24 hours.

The centre suggested people keep warm as temperatures will remain low in recent days, the statement said.

Xinhua

32-year bell-ringing tradition ends

DENVER, 25 Dec—A Colorado man said Saturday his 32-year, Christmas Eve bell-ringing gig in Denver was coming to an end for lack of a "low E" bell.

Robert Gift told The Denver Post he wouldn't be playing holiday carols at the City and County Building because one of the 10 bells in the building's tower wasn't working.

Gift said he suspected a blown circuit in the chime's electrical system was to blame. He said it didn't make sense for him to drive in from Arapahoe County for his 45-minute performance when most of his repertoire required he play the missing key.

"No need for this to be a Gong Show," said Gift, a firefighter, chimney sweep and organist who had played the bells every year since 1979.

Mayoral spokeswoman Amber Miller said the city was trying to fix the problem, and noted other players performed. A disappointed Gift said he hoped to perform again in the future.

"Maybe I'll play again, if I don't get fired from my volunteer job," he said.

Xinhua



A child cries as other evacuees queue up to receive relief goods at an evacuation centre in Cagayan de Oro after floods caused by a storm displaced thousands.—INTERNET

Huge wave sweeps away houses in southern Thailand, people evacuated

BANGKOK, 25 Dec—Five metre waves hit three districts in Thailand's southern Chumpon province on Sunday noon, destroying several houses, bungalows and restaurants as well as forcing local residents to flee their homes.

Xinhua

Seven injured as blast hits N Kenya

WAJIR, 25 Dec—At least seven people have been injured after unknown attackers threw grenade on a nightspot in Wajir town in northeastern Kenya. North Eastern Provincial Commissioner James Ole Serian confirmed the incident on Saturday night which he said took place at Ngamia Club in Wajir.

"Unknown attackers threw a grenade on Ngamia nightclub and so far seven people have been injured from the attack. We have not established the identities of those injured nor the attackers," Ole Serian told *Xinhua* by telephone.

He said the police have launched investigations to establish the motive behind the attack which came amid heightened security around the country.

The country's security agencies are at an unprecedented state of alert

amid the latest reports that Al-Shabaab have planned attacks against Kenya and US interests in the country.

Kenyan forces are hunting down the Al-Shabaab militants inside Somalia to stop further incursions into Kenya. The east African nation blames a series of grenade attacks and kidnappings on Somali Al-Shabaab. The militia group, which is aligned to al-Qaeda network, has said before that it would attack Kenya. Kenya has in the recent admitted that the threat of terror attacks targeting the country remains real but has moved to assure that security personnel are on high alert.

The last few weeks have seen Kenya suffer incursions by the Al-Shabaab militia from neighboring Somalia with heavy fighting reported near the border town of Mandera. Kenya's border with Somalia has been officially closed since January 2007,

but civilians fleeing the upsurge in fighting between the Transitional Federal government of Somalia and the Al-Shabaab militia in south-central Somalia have been arriving in Kenya in rising numbers.

The enhanced security comes amid reports that Al-Shabaab, blamed for a series of abductions on Kenyan soil, has dispatched bomb makers and assassins to eliminate Defence Minister Yusuf Haji and National Assembly Deputy Speaker Farah Maalim. Since the Kenya military incursion into Somalia, several attacks believed to have been carried out by Al-Shabaab have occurred in Mandera, Wajir, and Garissa and Dadaab districts of northern Kenya even as the military reports gains against the group by capturing their military bases and killing scores of them.

Xinhua



A Nigerian peasant works at his farm in a village of Koni, southern city of Niger, 2008. More than half of Niger's farming villages face food shortages in the next few months after poor harvests, Agriculture Minister Oua Seydou told parliament Saturday.

INTERNET

Food crisis threatens more than half Niger villages

KONI, 25 Dec—More than half of Niger's farming villages face food shortages in the next few months after poor harvests, Agriculture Minister Oua Seydou told parliament Saturday. Residents of 6,981 villages, or 58 percent of the total, could have trouble feeding themselves after a 27 percent fall in grain production over last year.

At 3.8 million tonnes, the harvest was also 11 percent down on the average for the past five years, he said.

Taking into account wastage and seed grain for next season, there would be an estimated 3,239,825 tonnes available for consumption, compared with 3,759,464 tonnes required, a shortfall of 14 percent, Seydou added.

He blamed the poor harvest on drought and attacks by locusts and caterpillars.

Internet



A worker throws a cup from a ball of clay at a porcelain workshop in "Porcelain Capital" Jingdezhen City, east China's Jiangxi Province, on 21 Dec, 2011. Jingdezhen's porcelain has been famous not only in China but in time it became known internationally for being "as thin as paper, as white as jade, as bright as a mirror, and as sound as a bell."—XINHUA

Music student reunited with \$170,000 rare violin

NEW YORK, 25 Dec — A violin student has heard news that was music to her ears after the discovery of her \$170,000 (£108,000) instrument, which she left on a bus in Philadelphia. Muchen Hsieh said she only later realised she left the 176-year-old violin in an overhead compartment.



The violin (not pictured here) was made in 1835 by Vincenzo Jorio in Naples.

INTERNET

The 18-year-old boarded the Megabus coach in Boston with the Naples-made instrument on Tuesday, police said. The bus company found it in a holding area.

A cultural foundation in her native Taiwan had loaned her the instrument. "She contacted us about a half hour after she

got off, but by then [the bus] had moved on," Megabus US director Bryony Chamberlain told MSNBC. "We couldn't trace down the luggage immediately. It was found by our cleaners yesterday. I'm very relieved. We're very lucky."

Philadelphia police said earlier they believed someone could have picked up the item without realising its value. Ms Hsieh had told a local television station: "I'm a violin major, so I really hope that the person that took it can give it back to me so I can continue my studies because right now I can't do anything."

Internet



Vivid animal portraits on hands.—XINHUA

Sinopec unit completes takeover of Canada's Daylight Energy

BEIJING, 25 Dec — A subsidiary of China's energy giant Sinopec said Friday it has completed the final step to buy Canadian oil and gas explorer Daylight Energy Ltd.. The takeover will give Sinopec access to Daylight Energy's 69 oil and natural gas assets in Canada's northeastern British Columbia and northwestern Alberta.

According to the deal that was signed in October, Sinopec will pay 10.08 Canadian dollars per Daylight Energy share through its wholly-owned subsidiary International Exploration and Production Corporation in exchange for a 100-percent stake in Daylight Energy.

The 2.2-billion-Canadian-dollar deal is the second such takeover of a Canadian energy company by a Chinese refiner this year, following oil giant CNOOC's acquisition of Canadian oil sands developer OPTI in July.—Xinhua

Air Jordan release sparks stampedes at stores across US

NEW YORK, 25 Dec — Rowdy scenes have broken out at stores across the US as shoppers jostled to lay their hands on Nike's new shoe. There was disorder from California to Georgia as shoppers vied to buy a retro version of a classic Air Jordan model. A new pair costs about \$180 (£115), but they are already being listed on eBay for as much as \$605.

The ugly scenes recalled the violence that broke out in the early 1990s on streets across America as the shoes became popular targets for thieves. In the early hours of Friday, police used pepper spray on about 20 customers who started fighting at a mall in suburban Seattle, Washington state, as they waited in line to buy the black-and-white Air Jordan 11 Retro Concorde.

One man was arrested for allegedly punching a police officer. "He did not get his shoes. He went to jail," Of-

ficer Mike Murphy said. In other disturbances:

* At least four people were arrested after customers broke down a door at a store selling the shoes in Lithonia, Georgia

* There was an attempted robbery on a victim who was mistakenly believed to have just bought the shoes in Stockton, California

* About 100 shoppers forced their way into a shopping centre in Taylor, Michigan

* A gunshot rang out as shoppers queued in Richmond, California, although no injuries were reported

* Disorder was also reported in Charlotte, North Carolina; Indianapolis, Indiana; and Omaha, Nebraska

A spokesperson for Nike was not immediately available to comment. The original Air Jordan created a subculture of collectors who rarely wore the sneaker but were willing to wait hours to buy the latest pair.—Internet



Police officers were called in to break up fights and restore order at the Carolina Place Mall in North Carolina.—INTERNET

Crocodiles found in tax raid on Belgium villa

LONDON, 25 Dec — A Belgian tax investigation turned into an animal rescue mission when Flanders police found 11 Nile crocodiles and an alligator hidden in a smart villa. An animal welfare centre is now looking after the reptiles.

They had been left behind concealed doors. The villa's owner, a 51-year-old German man, is in police custody and has been charged with animal neglect. Suspected tax fraud prompted the raid in Damme, north-



Rescuers wrapped the crocodiles in blankets at the villa before taking them away.—INTERNET

west Belgium. Two sports cars were also found there. The suspect was not in the villa at the time.

The young reptiles are expected to survive, though they had been kept in very bad conditions, a biologist at the welfare centre, Natuurhulpcentrum Opglabbeek, told BBC News. Frederik Thoelen said five were found on top of each other in a small, dirty shower, five others were in a very dirty aquarium and two were in an ordinary room with a wooden barrier next to the door to stop them escaping.

He said the crocodiles measure just over a metre (yard) and may be shorter than normal for their age because of neglect.

"They're still in intensive care, a vet has to check them thoroughly," he said. The welfare centre has prepared a new cage with a pool for them, he said, and the German man has signed a paper handing over ownership to the centre.

Internet

France urges breast implant removal over cancer risks

PARIS, 25 Dec — French health authorities on Friday urged 30,000 women to remove the local-made breast implant, pledging that relevant expenses would be covered by the state.

The health ministry said in a statement that they spot "no increased risk of cancer currently in women wearing the PIP (Poly Implant Prothese) brand compared with other implants."

"However, well-established risks associated with these prostheses are rupture and irritant gel may lead to inflammatory reactions, making it difficult to explant," the statement added.

French Health Minister

Xavier Bertrand advised French women who have the PIP implants to get them taken out "as a preventive measure but not of an urgent nature." The removal of the implant will be at the state's expense.

The recommendation came after eight cases, mainly breast cancer, were reported recently among women with PIP implants.

The involved implant was produced by the French company PIP, once the world's third-largest producer of silicone implants who sold its products to tens of thousands of women in more than 65 countries, mainly in South America and western Europe.—Xinhua

Mexico's military takes over police duties in Veracruz

MEXICO CITY, 24 Dec — Authorities disbanded the police force in the port city of Veracruz on Wednesday and handed patrol duties to the military in a bid to clean up corruption. The Mexican navy and state police took over enforcement after Veracruz state officials laid off 900 officers and 46 administrative workers. Veracruz becomes the latest city where the military is on patrol. State spokeswoman Gina Dominguez said the move aimed to "create a new police model" that will demand officers who are better trained and "more committed to the public security function." The fired officers can apply to the new force but will face tougher standards, she said.

The coastal state of Veracruz has seen growing drug violence, especially around the port city. The state has been dominated by the Zetas, one of the country's most violent gangs. In September, assassins dumped 35 bodies on a boulevard in the Boca del Rio suburb, a popular destination for Mexicans. The discovery was shocking even by the standards of the violence that has convulsed Mexico since President Felipe Calderon declared war on the drug cartels after taking office in 2006. A



Municipal policemen in Veracruz walk past members of the Mexican navy after the city's entire police force was disbanded in a bid to clean up corruption.—INTERNET

group called the Zeta-killers posted a video online saying the slayings were part of a campaign to rid the state of the Zetas. The video raised fears that death squads were emerging. Under Calderon's crackdown, thousands of municipal police officers — in some cases, entire departments — have been dismissed in a bid to tackle extensive corruption.

Poorly paid, undertrained officers often moonlight for criminal groups, and Calderon has proposed reforms to tighten screening.

Internet

WHAT ARE THE RISKS?



- * The silicone inside the implants is not medical grade — but was intended for use in mattresses
- * Tests have not shown any increased risk of toxicity from this filler compared to normal implants
- * But mechanical testing has shown the implant covers have an increased risk of rupturing
- * The gel inside can be irritative, increasing the risk of inflammation reaction - making removal more difficult
- * There is no increased breast cancer risk
- * One case of a rare form of cancer called anaplastic large cell lymphoma (ALCL) was recently reported in France
- * French and US experts suggest there is a small but increased risk of this cancer for women with breast implants in general

Italy cracks down on fireworks

Police in Rome say they seized more than 3 tons of illegal fireworks along with Christmas lights, toys and fish that had passed its sell-by date.

Four people were cited in Friday's crackdown for allegedly trying to sell Christmas items carrying European Union safety labels. The crackdown was part of the Italian government's attempt to prevent injuries inflicted by powerful and illegal fireworks, the Italian news agency ANSA reported.

New Year's Eve is traditionally a time of explosive mayhem, with burns and mutilations commonplace in cities around Italy. In the last two years, the Campania region around Naples was the worst-hit area, with residents racking up several hundred injuries including parts of hands blown off. Many



Police in Rome say they seized more than 3 tons of illegal fireworks along with Christmas lights, toys and fish that had passed its sell-by date. UPI/John Angelillo

illegal fireworks sold in Italy are actually simple ordnance, ANSA said.

Police say there's a mortar on the black market that can cause serious damage to people and objects within

a "very wide" radius. There's also "The Pope Bomb," "The Maradona Bomb," and this year's entry, "The Monti Bomb," named after Premier Mario Monti's austerity package, ANSA said.

Queen's Christmas getaway by public train

Queen Elizabeth traveled to her country house Tuesday by the 10:45 am express train from London to King's Lynn. The queen, or a member of her staff, purchased a first class ticket for 47.20 pounds (about \$75), Cambridge First reported. The operator of the First Class Connect service said the only royal perk was that the queen got a compartment to herself.

While Elizabeth has a private train, she has made the 100-mile journey by public conveyance at least twice before. The queen boarded the train Tuesday at King's Cross Station, the same station the fictional Harry Potter uses to travel to Hogwarts School of Witchcraft and Wizardry.

The royal family spends the Christmas season at

Sandringham House, an estate in Norfolk bought by Queen Victoria for her son, the future King Edward VII. This year, after the weddings of two of the queen's grandchildren, an unusually large group is expected.

The *Daily Telegraph* reported Monday space is so short the son and daughter of the late Princess Margaret and their families have been assigned to a corridor that normally houses servants. The servants are having to double up.

The queen wore one of her trademark headscarves and carried a handbag as she left the train at King's Lynn, escorted by royal protection officers. She was met by a caravan of Land Rovers.

Boy wins \$9,400 mince pie in raffle

A 6-year-old British boy won a \$9,400 mince pie, made with a high-grade platinum leaf, from a raffle at a London business. Mukund Soni, 6, was chosen as the recipient of the food item, believed to be the world's most expensive mince pie, when his parents took him to the Marvelous Mince Pie Manufactory at The Exchange shopping center in London, the *Daily Mail* reported Tuesday.

"Winning the world's most expensive mince pie has been a big surprise this Christmas," said the boy's father, Mahendra Soni. "Mukund loves watching MasterChef so when we heard about the Mince Pie Manufactory we had to come and take part."

Luxury food designer Andrew Stellitano, 25, said it took him 10 days to create the mince pie using a Victorian recipe and modern technology. "I recreated the techniques used in the Victorian era with modern day technology," he said. "The precision Victorians couldn't get with a knife, I can with a laser."

The pie's ingredients include a high-grade platinum leaf, ambrigris sugar, holy water from Lourdes and a platinum coin at the centre worth \$940.

Christmas gift arrives a year late

An Arkansas woman said the Christmas gift she sent to her mother in Florida finally arrived — a year and six days after it was mailed.

Mary Beth Mauldin, 53, said she mailed a package containing a flannel nightgown to her mother, Mary Lou Shelton of Winter Beach, 10 Dec of last year and it arrived 16 Dec of this year, TCPalm.com reported Thursday.

"I laughed," Shelton said. However, Mauldin said she is upset because the package also contained a gift card which is now expired. She said the card she sent her mother Friday arrived Monday at Shelton's box office in Wabasso. "We apologize," Postal Service spokeswoman Enola Rice said. "It is not the type of service we try to provide. 'This is highly irregular. It shouldn't have happened.' But since the problem was found after delivery, it would be very difficult to say what occurred," Rice said.

NewsAlbum

Ivanka Trump denies copying shoe design



Ivanka Trump attends the third annual Veve Clicquot Polo Classic match which Prince Harry of Wales will be participating in on Governors Island on 27 June, 2010 in New York. INTERNET

NEW YORK, 25 Dec — Ivanka Trump is denying she lifted the design of one shoe style in her new footwear line from popular US designer Derek Lam.

Lam reportedly sent a cease-and-desist letter to Trump, claiming she ripped off the design for her \$150 Cadie wedge from his own Ayami wedge, which retails at nearly \$800, *People* magazine said Saturday.

But Trump fired back through her lawyer, claiming a wedge is a wedge and Lam is overstepping his bounds by claiming she was poaching his design. A written statement from Ivanka Trump

Footwear Collection said: "The Lam wedge sandals are of a popular design type that has been used by numerous manu-facturers for many decades. There is nothing iconic about the appearance of the Lam sandal." But, the company added, there shouldn't be any confusion among consumers since the Trump shoe has Ivanka's name prominently displayed on each shoe.—Internet



"The X Factor" judges Paula Abdul, Simon Cowell and Nicole Scherzinger (L-R) pose following "The X Factor" news conference at CBS Television City in Los Angeles on December 19, 2011.

Simon Cowell made \$42 million with Sony

LONDON, 25 Dec—Simon Cowell's venture with Sony Music brought the television impresario \$42 million this year, British financial documents revealed. The *Guardian* said Saturday the most-recent financial filings from Syco Entertainment showed Cowell earned nearly 27 million pounds (\$42 million) in its first year.

Cowell holds 50 percent of Syco. As part of the deal he got back a stake in the television hit "The X Factor" and the "Got Talent" franchise. The newspaper said Syco lists itself as a non-trading holding company with four entertainment subsidiaries.

Kendra Wilkinson tries home for holidays

BEVERLYHILLS, 25 Dec—Actress Kendra Wilkinson says spending Christmas at home with her family in Southern California will be something new this year. The star of E!'s "Girls Next Door" told *People* magazine in Beverly Hills she and husband Hank Baskett will be fussing over 2-year-old son, Hank IV, in their own home for the first time.

"We haven't had our own house before, so this will be the first time we get to spend the holiday season as a family in our brand new home," Wilkinson, 26, said. "That's the best thing ever."

Wilkinson said previous holidays were more spontaneous. "Before I was being a little selfish," she said. "I was saying, 'Forget Christmas — let's go to Hawaii.'" "But then I woke up and I realized that this is going

to be baby Hank's first year to really know what's going on," she added. "It's not really about me anymore — it's about him now."—Internet



Kendra Wilkinson arrives on the red carpet for the premiere of *The Bounty Hunter at the Ziegfeld Theater in New York City on 16 March, 2010.* INTERNET



American actor Harrison Ford attends the premiere of "Cowboys And Aliens" at O2 Arena in London on 11 August, 2011. INTERNET

Ford joins sci-fi picture 'Ender's Game'

LOS ANGELES, 25 Dec Harrison Ford has signed up for a role in "Ender's Game," a science-fiction film based on Orson Scott Card's novel, *The Hollywood Reporter* said. Set to start shooting in February, the movie also will co-star Abigail Breslin and Hailee Steinfeld, as well as "Hugo" cast-mates Asa Butterfield and Ben Kingsley.

The entertainment industry trade newspaper said Gavin Hood wrote the screenplay for and is to direct the futuristic "Ender's Game," which is about a battle school that trains people how to fight an insect-like race attacking the Earth. Ford is best known for his work in the *Star Wars* and *Indiana Jones* blockbusters.—Internet

Vince Neil mulling Motley Crue departure

LAS VEGAS, 25 Dec—Rocker Vince Neil says he is "thinking seriously" about leaving Motley Crue after the band finishes a string of Las Vegas shows planned for February. The 30-year-old group is scheduled to perform at the Hard Rock Hotel 3-19 Feb. "It's not definite, but I am thinking seriously about it," Neil told the *Las Vegas Sun*. He went on to say he is "contemplating my future, and I'm not sure it will be with Motley Crue after Las Vegas."

"Great things are coming up and pushing me in another direction," he told *the Sun*.

"This is all about me thinking about the second half of my life, thinking about my future, and that future might not include Motley Crue after Vegas. "There are so many



Vince Neil of Motley Crue attends press conference to announce their "Crue Fest 2" line up at Fuse Studios in New York on 16 March, 2009.—INTERNET

opportunities that are in front of me that I'm really excited about. I just don't want to look back later in life and regret that I didn't pursue them. I'm just not sure I can give these opportunities the time and effort I'll need to and continue with the band. It's been a great ride, and I've enjoyed every second of it."—Internet



Aaron Mooy and Paul McGowan score for St Mirren as nine-man Rangers slip to defeat in Paisley.—INTERNET

St Mirren shock nine-man Rangers with 2-1

GLASGOW, 25 Dec—Christmas came a day early for St Mirren as they celebrated a victory over a Rangers side that ended a feisty game with nine men. Lee Wallace prodded the visitors in front before Lee McCulloch was red carded for elbowing Graham Carey. St Mirren levelled when Aaron Mooy cracked home a terrific strike and Paul McGowan shot the Buddies ahead. The home side defended stoutly in the second half and Dorin Goian was sent off late on after a second booking.

Ally McCoist's team remain top of the Scottish Premier League but their lead over Celtic, which was 12 points not so long ago, looks like being cut to just one. The Glasgow rivals meet at Celtic Park on Wednesday, with McCulloch and Goian now suspended for the key clash. Rangers made a positive start and Kyle Lafferty shot narrowly wide after racing clear of the home defence.—*Internet*

Adriano Galliani: It's Manchester City's Carlos Tevez or no one for AC Milan

MILAN, 25 Dec — AC Milan vice president Adriano Galliani has stated that if the Serie A giants fail to sign Carlos Tevez from Manchester City during January, it will not make further additions to its striking unit over the course of the month.

The Rossoneri are prepared to play a waiting game with the Argentine striker, as Galliani indicated that they are willing to wait for the 27-year-old until January 31, the

final day of the transfer window, despite interest from Paris Saint-Germain. Additionally, he confessed that the move is being made to provide cover for Antonio Cassano, who is presently recovering from illness suffered in the autumn. "It's a difficult time economically, but we'll try to give our fans a Christmas gift," he told Sky Sport 24, before stating that such a present will not be forward Maxi Lopez of Catania.

"Maxi Lopez? I told Tevez to wait until the end of the market. So if he does not arrive we will remain the same. I think Tevez will suffice, because if Cassano had not had his problems, we would not be in the market." Galliano also spoke of coach Massimiliano Allegri, whose present deal runs out at the end of the campaign. Nevertheless, the director is confident 44-year-old will sign an extension.—*Internet*

China defeats Greece in women's chess team worlds

ANKARA, 25 Dec—China on Saturday defeated Greece 3-1 in the sixth round of the 2011 World Women Chess Championship (WWTC) in Mardin province of southeastern Turkey. World champion Hou Yifan and Zhao Xue won their games while Ju Wenjun and Tan Zhongyi were drawn by their opponents.

"Our players maintained good performance," said Chinese coach Yu Shaoteng. "Hou Yifan and Zhao Xue did a good job to put China in a favorable position as India was beaten by Russia in the same day." "I played an aggressive game today," said the 17-year-old Hou. In other matchups, Ukraine drew Georgia, Armenia beat South Africa, Russia edged India, and Vietnam defeated Turkey.—*Xinhua*

Primera Division 2011-2012 Standings (Spain)

Team	GP	W	D	L	Pts	GF	GA	GD
Real Madrid	16	13	1	2	40	56	15	41
Barcelona	16	11	4	1	37	50	8	42
Valencia	16	10	3	3	33	26	16	10
Levante	16	9	2	5	29	25	19	6
Osasuna	16	6	7	3	25	21	28	-7
Sevilla	16	6	6	4	24	18	17	1
Málaga	16	7	3	6	24	20	22	-2
Espanyol Barcelona	16	7	2	7	23	17	20	-3
Athletic Bilbao	16	5	7	4	22	23	19	4
Atlético Madrid	16	5	4	7	19	23	27	-4
Real Betis	16	6	1	9	19	17	22	-5
Getafe	16	5	4	7	19	17	23	-6
Granada	16	5	4	7	19	10	16	-6
Mallorca	16	4	6	6	18	15	22	-7
Real Sociedad	16	4	5	7	17	16	23	-7
Rayo Vallecano	16	4	4	8	16	17	25	-8
Villarreal	16	3	6	7	15	13	23	-10
Sporting de Gijón	16	4	3	9	15	16	27	-11
Racing Santander	16	2	8	6	14	11	21	-10
Zaragoza	16	2	4	10	10	13	31	-18

Vick, Eagles beat Cowboys 20-7 in snoozer

ARLINGTON, 25 Dec — Michael Vick scored on his first drive, and Tony Romo didn't. Hardly anything mattered after that.

Vick threw another touchdown pass just before halftime and the Philadelphia Eagles beat the Dallas Cowboys 20-7 Saturday in a game that had all the intensity of a preseason dress rehearsal. It was rendered almost meaningless midway through the first quarter, when the Giants won their game.

New York's victory over the Jets eliminated the Eagles from the playoffs and turned the Dallas-New York game next weekend into a showdown to decide the NFC East title. The Cowboys could've still been playing for a wild-card backup plan, but they clearly were more concerned about getting ready for the "win and you're in" route to the playoffs — especially with Romo hurting his passing hand during that opening series.

While Romo was getting X-rays on the right hand, team owner Jerry Jones went to the sideline and spoke with coach Jason Garrett. Romo, who had no break, just a bruise and some swelling, didn't return, and oft-injured running back Felix Jones lasted just one more series. Dallas wound up getting within 7 seconds of being shut out.

"We need to be as healthy as we can be next week," Garrett said.

Garrett said the club decided earlier in the week who would and wouldn't play if the Giants won. Garrett said Romo's injury added a new wrinkle.

"These are decisions made by Jason, ultimately," Jones said.

Philadelphia (7-8) won its third straight, giving the preseason "Dream Team" and midseason nightmare the chance to break even if it can beat the Redskins at home in its finale next weekend. The Eagles also swept the season series against the Cowboys for the first time since 2006, having clobbered

Man Utd boss Ferguson says we'd only buy top quality

MANCHESTER, 25 Dec — Manchester United manager Sir Alex Ferguson insists he is not prepared to buy in the January transfer window unless a top player becomes available.

Ferguson, 69, has seen his squad beset by injuries, with winger Ashley Young the latest casualty. But Ferguson said: "I am perfectly happy with the strength of our squad in terms of depth, quality and age range." "I will not be swayed by endless tweets and blogs urging the club to get busy in the transfer market next month."

Although Phil Jones is set to be fit for the Boxing Day clash with Wigan, Young (knee) is on an injury list that includes the likes of Nemanja Vidic, Anderson, Michael Owen and Tom Cleverley, while Darren Fletcher is also

sidelined with a bowel condition. United have made forays into the January market before — most notably signing Louis Saha, Vidic and Patrice Evra — but Ferguson is confident his squad can cope. Writing in his programme notes for the Wigan game, Ferguson said: "As far as I am concerned I am marching perfectly in step, true to my beliefs and principles."

Internet



Ferguson is confident his squad can cope with their current injuries



Dallas Cowboys quarterback Stephen McGee hits the turf as Philadelphia Eagles outside linebacker Brian Rolle closes in during the second half of an NFL football game, Saturday, Dec. 24, 2011, in Arlington, Texas.—*Internet*

Dallas 34-7 in October.

"If we had gotten into the playoffs we would have definitely done some damage," Vick said. "It's unfortunate we didn't. That's the game of football. We made some mistakes early (this season) and got behind in the win-loss column. But we're just happy we're finishing strong."

The defence sure is. Philadelphia has allowed just 36 points and 683 yards over the last three games, with 16 sacks.—*Internet*

International Sports

Roma's Francesco Totti: I would like to play under Real Madrid's Jose Mourinho

ROME, 25 Dec—Roma captain Francesco Totti has confessed that he would like to play under Real Madrid coach Jose Mourinho. The 48-year-old trainer plied his trade in the Serie A from 2008 to 2010 as he guided Inter to two league titles and one Champions League crown. Totti said he is well familiar with Mourinho's work and believes that working with the Portuguese coach would be an enriching

experience.

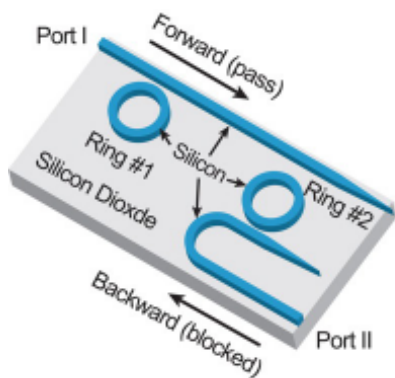
"I would like to work with him," he told Sky Sport Italia in an interview which will be aired on Christmas Day. "I know players who have worked with him and they told me is very professional. He is a coach one can learn a lot from." Earlier in the month, Totti insisted he would not leave Roma despite previously admitting he considered leaving his hometown club.—*Internet*



Messi named "Champion of the Champions 2011"

A file picture taken on 18 Dec, 2011 in Yokohama, shows Barcelona player Lionel Messi holding the Adidas Gold Ball trophy during the awarding ceremony after the final football match against Santos FC at the FIFA Club World Cup. Messi was elected "Champion of the Champions 2011" by French daily sports newspaper L'Equipe on 24 Dec, 2011, ahead of Serbian tennis player Novak Djokovic, world number one and German Formula 1 driver Sebastian Vettel.—*Xinhua*

New device to catalyse faster data processing



This illustration shows a new "all-silicon passive optical diode," a device small enough to fit millions on a computer chip that could lead to faster, more powerful information processing and supercomputers. The device has been developed by Purdue University researchers.—INTERNET

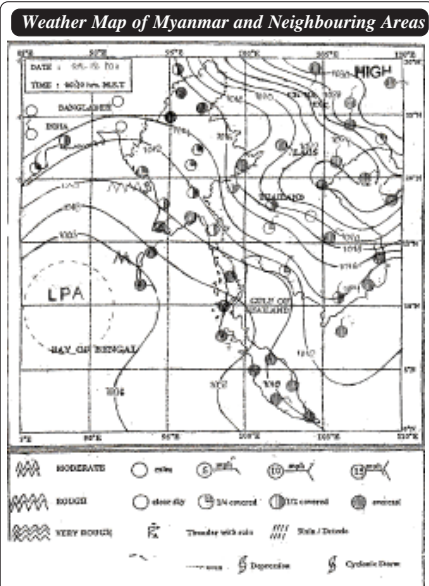
WASHINGTON, 25 Dec—A new optical device, tiny enough to fit millions on a computer chip, could catalyse faster, more powerful information processing and supercomputers.

The "passive optical diode" is made from two tiny silicon rings measuring 10 microns across, or about a 10th the width of human hair.

Unlike other optical diodes, it does not require external assistance to transmit signals and can be readily integrated into computer chips.

The diode is capable of "non-reciprocal transmission", meaning it transmits signals in only one direction, making it capable of information processing, said Minghao Qi, associate professor of electrical and computer engineering at Purdue, the journal *Science* reports. "This one-way transmission is the most fundamental part of a logic circuit, so our diodes open the door to optical information processing," said Qi, working with a team also led by Andrew Weiner, Purdue professor of electrical and computer engineering, according to a statement.

Although fibre optic cables transmit staggering amounts of data across oceans and continents, information processing is slowed and the data are susceptible to cyber attack when optical signals must be translated into electronic signals for use in computers, and vice versa. "This translation requires expensive equipment," study co-author Jian Wang said. "What you'd rather be able to do is plug the fibre directly into computers with no translation needed, and then you get a lot of bandwidth and security."—Internet



Weather forecast for 26th December, 2011

Sr. No.	Regions/States	Temperature (°C/F)		For Tomorrow	
		Maximum	Minimum	Forecast	Percent
1	Kachin	29/84	14/57	Likelihood of isolated rain	(60%)
2	Kayah	27/81	13/55	Partly cloudy	
3	Kayin	35/95	19/66	Partly cloudy	
4	Chin	16/61	08/46	Likelihood of isolated rain	(60%)
5	Upper Sagaing	28/82	17/63	Likelihood of isolated rain	(60%)
6	Lower Sagaing	29/84	18/64	Likelihood of isolated rain	(60%)
7	Taninthayi	34/93	21/72	Likelihood of isolated rain	(60%)
8	Bago	30/86	19/66	Partly cloudy	
9	Magway	31/88	19/66	Likelihood of isolated rain	(60%)
10	Mandalay	30/86	18/64	Likelihood of isolated rain	(60%)
11	Mon	34/93	20/68	Partly cloudy	
12	Yangon	34/93	21/70	Likelihood of isolated rain	(60%)
13	Rakhine	30/86	19/66	Likelihood of isolated rain	(60%)
14	Southern Shan	26/79	13/55	Likelihood of isolated rain	(60%)
15	Northern Shan	27/81	10/50	Likelihood of isolated rain	(60%)
16	Eastern Shan	26/79	16/61	Likelihood of isolated rain	(60%)
17	Ayeyawady	31/88	22/72	Likelihood of isolated rain	(60%)
18	Neighbouring Nay Pyi Taw	33/91	17/63	Likelihood of isolated rain	(60%)
19	Neighbouring Yangon	34/93	21/70	Likelihood of isolated rain	(60%)
20	Neighbouring Mandalay	30/86	18/64	Likelihood of isolated rain	(60%)

During the past (24) hours, light rain has been isolated in Taninthayi Region, weather has been partly cloudy in the remaining Regions and States. Night temperatures were (3°C) to (4°C) above December averages temperatures in Mandalay, Magway, Yangon, Ayeyawady and Taninthayi Regions, Kachin, Shan (Southern and Eastern), Rakhine and Mon States and about December average temperatures in the remaining Regions and States. The significant night temperature were Patheingyi (3°C), Heho and Hakha (6°C) each. The noteworthy amount of rainfall recorded were Kawthung (0.25) inch.

According to the observation at (13:30) hrs MST today, the low pressure area over Southeast Bay of Bengal still persist. Weather is Partly cloudy to cloudy in the Andaman sea and Bay of Bengal.

State of the Sea: Slightly with moderate to rough seas are likely at times off and along Myanmar Coasts. Surface wind speed in squalls may reach (35) to (40) mph.

Outlook for subsequent two days: Likelihood of isolated rain in the Upper Myanmar areas.

Focus Myanmar TV Programme

MYANMAR INTERNATIONAL	MYANMAR TV
(26-12-11 09:30 am ~ 27-12-11 09:30 am) MST	(26-12-2011)(Monday)
Oversea Transmission	7:00 am
* News	1. Paritta by Venerable Mingun Sayadaw
* Hiker's Journey (Taunggyi City) (Episode-3)	7:30 am
* News	2. Morning News
* Recent Climate Changes in Myanmar	7:40 am
* News	3. Nice and Sweet Song
* Donate Blood, Safe Life	7:50 am
* News	4. Health Programme
* Products of Myanmar "Velvet Slipper"	8:00 am
* News	5. Dance of National Races
* A Pristine Paradise in Inle	8:25 am
* News	6. Documentary
* Versatile Toddy Palms Myanmar Movie Impact "The Alchemist is Dancing"	8:40 am
* News	7. International News
* Music Gallery	4:00 pm
* News	8. Martial Song
* Myanmar Orchestra "Gentle and Graceful Angel"	4:25 pm
* Kyeik Paw Law Pagoda Oath by Than Lwin River"	4:50 pm
	9. Teleplay (Industry)
	5:10 pm
	10. Songs for Upholding National Spirit
	5:00 pm
	11. Myanmar Language
	7:00 pm
	12. TV Drama Series
	8:00 pm
	13. News
	14. World's Stars
	15. TV Drama Series
	16. India Drama Series

DISTRICT NEWS

Outstanding students awarded

MAUKMAI, 25 Dec—The Basic Education High School in Maukmai Township held the prize presentation ceremony for 2011-2012 academic year on 6 December morning.

Township level officials and the headmistress explained the future tasks of the school and awarded the outstanding students.—*Myanma Alin*

Traditional medicine kids distributed



KAWTHUNG, 25 Dec—A ceremony to hand over emergency traditional medicine kids to village-tracts of Kawthung Township was held at the township General Administration Department on 14 December morning.

The Head of Township Traditional Medicine Department explained the use of the traditional medicine kids. Next, the kids were distributed to 24 villages from nine village-tracts.—*Township IPRD*

Surface layer of road tarmacked

LANKHO, 25 Dec—The tarmacking of surface layer on Namsang-Mongnai-Mongton-Monghsat Road is in progress for 2011-2012 fiscal year.

Public Works of Lankho Township is undertaking the tasks of surfacing on 1 mile and five furlongs long road. On 18 December, district and township officials supervised the tarmacking works.—*District IPRD*

Pakistan beat China in friendly

FAISALABAD, 25 Dec—Pakistan on Saturday emerged victorious in a four-match series with China, the first international hockey in the troubled country since 2004.

Pakistan notched up a 3-1 victory after taking the first two meetings in the port city Karachi earlier this week by 3-0 and 5-3.

Their final match will be played in Lahore on Sunday, but Saturday's win gives Pakistan the series' title.

Before a home crowd in the city of Faisalabad, Pakistani forward Ali Shan struck in the second minute of the match, scoring a field goal to give the hosts an early lead in the series' third encounter.

Vice-captain Shakeel Abbasi doubled Pakistan's lead with another field goal in the 21st minute.

Chinese Liu Yixian converted a penalty corner in the 61st minute to give the visitors their only goal of the match. Pakistan's Waqas Sharif drew another field goal in the 64th minute to help his side cap their victory.

A campaign of Taleban and Al-Qaeda linked attacks across Pakistan, including an attack on the Sri Lankan cricket team in 2009, made Pakistan a virtual "no go" zone



Pakistan on Saturday emerged victorious in a four-match series with China, the first international hockey in the troubled country since 2004.—INTERNET

for international sport. Pakistan, which last hosted an international hockey game seven years ago, hopes the Chinese tour will help convince other foreign teams to visit. The country is also working to resume a bilateral hockey series with arch-rivals India, after they were suspended following the Mumbai attacks in 2008.—*Internet*

Union Ministers, Yangon Region Chief Minister look into special agriculture zones in modern mechanized farm

YANGON, 25 Dec—Union Minister for Agriculture and Irrigation U Myint Hlaing, Union Minister for Commerce U Win Myint, Yangon Region Chief Minister U Myint Swe and Yangon and Bago region ministers for Agriculture and Livestock Breeding met responsible persons of agro-based companies engaging in 10000-acre modern mechanized farm project at the hall of Shwenagamin agriculture company in model farming special zone-2 in Dagon Myothit (South) Township yesterday afternoon.

Director-General U Soe Hlaing of Agricultural Mechanization Department and Director-General of Irrigation Department U Kyaw Myint Hlaing reported on assistance for entrepreneurs with farming equipment and matters related to transformation into mechanized farming.

Union Minister U Win Myint discussed extension of paddy market and development of paddy crops.

Chief Minister U Myint Swe gave instructions on systematic implementation of mechanized farming for serving interests of farmers, entrepreneurs, companies and the State.

Union Minister U Myint Hlaing stressed



Union Minister U Myint Hlaing meets officials of agro-based companies in 10000-acre modern mechanized farm project in Dagon Myothit (South) Township.—MNA

the need to strive for achieving cent per cent implementation of mechanized farming process on 10,000 acres of special zone in 2011-2012 fiscal year.

They viewed Paethwe paddy plantations of Green Asia Co in Dagon Myothit (Seikkan) Township.

The Union ministers and party looked into land

preparations and reclamations, dredging of drains and construction of dryers and silos.

They viewed farming equipment, paddy dryers and silos of Myint Zeyar family agriculture company in special agriculture zone-1 in Dagon Myothit (East) Township.

MNA

Sir Alex Ferguson feels ban for Luis Suarez was right

LONDON, 25 Dec —Sir Alex Ferguson believes the Football Association made "the right decision" in banning Luis Suarez for eight games after he racially abused Patrice Evra. Forward Suarez was also handed a £40,000 fine after he used "insulting words in reference to Manchester United defender Evra's colour". Liverpool criticised the FA's verdict in a strongly worded statement.

But United boss Ferguson said: "We're satisfied they [the FA's independent commission]

made the right decision." Liverpool claimed Evra should also face charges after he admitted insulting Suarez during the altercation at Anfield in October. Ferguson, speaking about Suarez's for the first time, added: "Our support of Patrice was obvious right from the word go and that's still the same.

"This wasn't about Manchester United and Liverpool. It was nothing to do with that. This was an individual situation where one person was racially abused.

Internet



Wenger ponders loan deal for Henry



Thierry Henry's new MLS season with New York Red Bulls begins in March 2012.

LONDON, 25 Dec—Arsenal manager Arsene Wenger says he will use the Christmas period to consider whether to re-sign former favourite Thierry Henry on a loan deal. The Gunners will be without strikers Marouane Chamakh and Gervinho when the duo depart for the Africa Cup of Nations in January, leaving Wenger short of attacking options. Meanwhile, New York Red Bulls striker Henry, the Gunners' all-time leading

goalscorer with 226, has been training with the north London club since the close of the Major Soccer League in November.

The new MLS season begins in March 2012, opening up the possibility for Henry to return to the Emirates on a short-term loan deal. However, Wenger has yet to make his mind up about a proposed move. "That's why I have Christmas Day off - I have to think about that," said the Frenchman. "Short-term is ideal for us, but I haven't made any enquiry yet. Thierry is not here at the moment. It has never come up in conversation!"

"The first of January is the vital date for us. We have seven days to make decisions and I will make a decision in the next seven days on players."

Internet

Weather Report

NAY PYI TAW, 25 Dec—According to the observations at (17:30) hrs MST today, the low pressure area over South Bay and adjoining Central Bay of Bengal has still persists and it is likely to intensify into a depression within next (24) hours.

Under the influence of low pressure area, squalls with moderate to rough seas are likely at times off and along Myanmar Coasts. Surface wind speed in squalls may reach (35) to (40) mph, announced Department of Meteorology and Hydrology today.—MNA

Micro-credit Coop societies formed

MONGYAWNG, 25 Dec—With the aim of ensuring rural development and poverty alleviation, a ceremony to form the Township Employees' Micro-credit Cooperative Society and the Township War Veterans' Micro-credit Cooperative Society was held at the hall in Mongyawng on 15 December.

Departmental officials explained purpose of formation and tasks of the societies in detail.

District IPRD

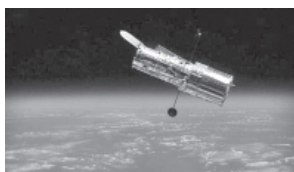
Mass walk activities organized for fourth week of December

NAY PYI TAW, 25 Dec—The mass walk activities for the fourth week of December was organized in Bago Region yesterday morning.

A total of 75,703 people participated in the mass walk that started from the gathering point of Region Sports and Physical Education Department on Shwemawdaw Pagoda Road and finished in front of Sasana Beikman.

Similar activities were held in Magway of Magway Region and Sittway of Rakhine State. The people led by the local authorities took part in the mass walk activities and they took physical exercises.—MNA

Hubble telescope finds hints of 'building blocks of life' on Pluto



PAGE 5



Japanese PM seeks to boost ties with China

PAGE 6

Cuba wraps up dramatic year of economic change

PAGE 4