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.

**Academic years of science and arts subjects will be added one more year in the coming year**

Vice-President Dr Sai Mauk Kham on tour of Shan State (North)

NAY PYI TAW, 17 Dec—Vice-President of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar Dr Sai Mauk Kham, accompanied by Union ministers, the Chief Minister of Shan State, deputy ministers, departmental heads and national race entrepreneurs, visited Technological University (Lashio) yesterday morning.

At the meeting hall, the Vice-President met the acting principal and faculty members.

The acting principal reported on matters related to the university.

Professor/Dean Dr Nyan Myint Kyaw reported on process of recruitment for Technological Universities.

Speaking on the occasion, the Vice-President said that technological universities are the venue to turn out technicians and engineers as well as the centre of human resources. The development tasks and construction works of the State can be carried out with the strength of human resources, he said.

He pointed out that technological weak points can be seen in construction tasks. He added that weakness in theory will cause same action in practical work automatically. Therefore, he said that only when emphasis is to be placed on construction meeting set standards and prescribed rules and regulations, can the buildings be safe and durable.

He said that a total of 70% population of the nation residing in the rural areas is engaged in agriculture task. Although they are enjoying sufficiency in food, clothing and shelter, only with industrialization can a modern nation be build, he said. He noted that there are many scientists, intellectuals and technicians in the nations with high GDP growth, and the nations with least number of technicians can be seen with low grade of GDP.

It is obvious that it depends much on qualification of technicians for industrialization of the nation, he said. He stressed that a total of 61 technological (See page 8)

**Significant night temperature**

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Meeting (1/2011) of National Level Population and Development Commission held

Union Minister U Khin Yi addresses National Level Population and Development Commission Meeting (1/2011).—MNA

YANGON, 17 Dec—Meeting (1/2011) of National Level Population and Development Commission took place at the Ministry of Immigration and population here yesterday afternoon. Speaking on the occasion, Union Minister for Immigration and Population U Khin Yi said Asian Forum of Parliamentarians on Population and Development (AFPPD) was founded in Beijing of China in 1981 and it is now based in Bangkok of Thailand. For Myanmar to join the forum, Mr Shiv Khare, executive director of AFPPD paid a visit to the country and discussed with Hluttaw officials last month. In the Hluttaw, a social development committee has been formed and National Level Population and Development Commission was formed on 24 November this year. The commission was founded with the aim of implementing population and development tasks in Myanmar and cooperating with international population organizations, added the Union Minister.

Then, the commission members explained the structure of the commission, duties and responsibilities and future tasks. Later, commission members held discussions.—MNA

Yatanarpon Teleport Call Center launched

Union CPT Minister U Thein Tun and Yangon Region Chief Minister U Myint Swe look round newly-opened Yatanarpon Teleport Call Center.—MNA

YANGON, 17 Dec—Yangan Region Chief Minister U Myint Swe and wife, together with Deputy Minister Sports U Aye Myint Kyu and wife, the regional ministers and wives, officials concerned from Sports and Physical Education Department, regional level departmental heads, residents and students, participated in the December mass-walk activity for the third week taken place in front of Thwannana Sports Ground in Thimgaygun Township here this morning.

Afterwards, the Chief Minister enjoyed the final match of the 2nd South-East Asia Cup Men’s Hockey Tournament at Theinbyu Hockey Turf in Mingalar Taungnyunt Township here this evening.—MNA

Yangon Region Chief Minister attends South-East Asia Men’s Horkey Tournament at Theinbyu Horkey Turf

YANGON, 17 Dec—Yangon Region Chief Minister U Myint Swe and wife, together with Deputy Minister Sports U Aye Myint Kyu and wife, the regional ministers and wives, attended South-East Asia Men’s Horkey Tournament at Theinbyu Horkey Turf.—MNA

Mass walk activity celebrated in Zeyathiri Township

NAV PYI TAW, 17 Dec—December third week mass walk activity was held in Zeyathiri Township of Nay Pyi Taw Council Area. Township Administrator U Myint Thein Tun and the township police force commander together with departmental heads, ward/village level administrators, students and locals took part in the activity. The participants went for a walk from Shwetwingon Village junction to National Landmarks Gardens in front of which they took exercises.—MNA

MWAF donates cash and kind to Mental Health Hospital

YANGON, 17 Dec—Myanmar Women’s Affairs Federation donates cash and kind to the patients of Mental Health Hospital in Ywahtahyi of Yangon Region this morning.

The donation ceremony took place at the hospital attended by Patron of MWAF Daw Mya Theingi and members. The donations included K 970,000 for a day’s meals, 400 blankets, 300 pairs of men’s slippers, 100 pairs of women’s slippers, 300 men’s warm cloths, 100 women’s warm cloths worth K 1,564,000 and K 72,000 for 100 pairs of women’s slippers, 300 men’s warm cloths, 100 women’s slippers totalling K 3,781,000. Assistant medical superintendent Dr Aung Zaw Myint accepted the donations of men’s slippers worth K 3,781,000, Assistant medical superintendent Dr Aung Zaw Myint accepted the donations and returned certificates of honour.

Then, the donors spoke words of encouragement to the patients.—MNA

Make a change through self-control

The 21st Century is an era of development. Businessmen of many countries across the world are gaining remarkable progress through competitiveness. Factories, workshops and buildings are mushrooming in the global metropolitans one after another.

Despite development in metropolitans, disciplines are still weak. Failure to abide by disciplines tarnishes the images of the cities. Progress often goes with disciplines. Changes and developments simply call for nothing but disciplines.

By-products of factories and workshops harm the environment. Smoke, chemicals and garbage of factories not only fade out the images of cities but also hazard the health of people. Some people systematically throw wastage but some do not.

Yangon and Mandalay are model cities of us. They are the most densely populated areas. However, some persons with lack of discipline are tarnishing their images. Such indiscriminate activities as spitting and discarding garbage are not the behaviour of good citizen.

Nowadays, the nation is in the process of democratization, which demands good disciplines. Democracy goes together with discipline. To be a modern and developed democratic nation, all are to follow disciplines.

Good disciplines can develop the nation.

There has been great news that Yangon will be modernized soon. In the process, physical changes should go together with spiritual changes.

To achieve progress, people need to show good behaviour of good citizen. All the people across the nation are to copy good ideals to be able to catch up with development momentum.

If you really love democracy follow the rules.
‘Dirty bomb’ nuclear exercise conducted

WASHINGTON, 17 Dec—An international nuclear emergency response exercise has been successfully completed in the Bahamas, the US National Nuclear Security Administration said. The two-day exercise was a response to the mock discovery of radiological material that could be fabricated into a “dirty bomb,” said a NNSA release Friday.

“The exercise was critical in strengthening the capabilities of our international partners to respond effectively to the detection of nuclear or radiological materials,” said NNSA Associate Administrator for Emergency Operations Joseph Krol. “NNSA’s response capabilities highlight our efforts to leverage NNSA’s resources to support our international partners while implementing President Obama’s nuclear security agenda,” Krol said. The overall purpose of the drill was to work out the plans for how to detect radiological material that could be fabricated into a “dirty bomb.”

US hands prisoner over to Iraq

BAGHDAD, 17 Dec—The Obama administration says it’s turned over the last remaining prisoner being held by American forces in Iraq to the Iraqi government. The prisoner, Ali Musa Daqduq, a Lebanese suspected of being a Hezbollah operative, is accused of helping orchestrate a January 2007 raid by Shiite militants that killed five American soldiers. The New York Times reported. One of the soldiers was killed immediately, and four others were kidnapped and later shot and dumped beside the road. This Newpaper said. Families of those victims were notified Daqduq was being transferred to the Iraqi police, the administration said. “We have sought and received assurances that he will be tried for his crimes,” Tommy Vietor, a spokesman for the White House’s National Security Council said. “We’ve worked this at the highest levels of the US and Iraqi government, and we continued to discuss with the Iraqis the best way to ensure that he faces justice.”

Barack Obama names Nancy Powell as India envoy

WASHINGTON, 17 Dec—US President Barack Obama has named Nancy Powell, a career diplomat who has served as ambassador to Pakistan and to Nepal, to be the next ambassador to India and fill a half-year vacancy.

Powell, who holds the rank of career ambassador, a prestigious title given only to select career diplomats based on their service, takes the place of Timothy Roemer, a political appointee who resigned in June. In a statement announcing Powell’s appointment and a separate opinion, Obama said: “These fine public servants both bring a depth of experience and tremendous dedication to their new roles.

“Our nation will be well-served by these individuals, and I look forward to working with them in the months and years to come.” Apart from Pakistan and Nepal, Powell, who joined the foreign service in 1977 after teaching school in Dayton, Iowa, has also served as ambassador to Ghana and Uganda.

Her stint in Pakistan between 2002-2004 came as the US was first seeking United Nations cooperation in fighting Al-Qaeda and the Taliban after the 11 Sep. 2001, attacks. Her other overseas assignments included service in New Delhi, Calcutta, Ottawa, Kathmandu, Islamabad, Lome, and Dhaka. Her Washington assignments have included: Refugee Assistance Officer, Principal Deputy Assistant Secretary for African Affairs, Acting Assistant Secretary for International Narcotics and Law Enforcement Activities, and the National Intelligence Officer for South Asia at the National Intelligence Council. She’s currently serving as director general of the foreign service and director of human resources at the State Department. She has a bachelor’s degree from the University of Northern Iowa. The Senate must confirm Powell’s appointment.—Internet

Kabul police station attacked

KABUL, 17 Dec—A police station in the Afghan capital came under militant attack Friday, with at least one explosion and several bursts of gunfire heard, officials said.

A man lobbed grenades at the fifth district police station in west Kabul before fleeing but the situation was soon brought under control, Kabul police spokesman HashmatStanikzai said. The Taleban have claimed responsibility. “An unidentified man threw two or three grenades at the police station in the fifth district. Nobody has been injured and police are searching to find the attacker. The area is now under control,” Stanikzai said.

A spokesman for the interior ministry confirmed the attack but said there was just one grenade thrown and nobody had been injured. “An unidentified man threw a grenade at the police station and then fled. Security forces are searching for him. Luckily nobody has been injured,” said Sediq Sediriq.

Taliban spokesman Zabihullah Mujahid said a group of suicide bombers had carried out the attack and there were several casualties. The Taleban are known to routinely exaggerate and distort their claims in relation to attacks. An AFP photographer in the area said he had heard several bursts of gunfire.

He said the power in the area had been temporarily cut and roads had been blocked, with a heavy police cordon put up.

Kabul is under high security but there have been several spectacular Taleban attacks in the capital this year including in September when a barrage of gunfire and suicide blasts targeted the US embassy and the neighbouring NATO headquarters, leaving several dead.

A suicide bombing at a Shiite shrine in Kabul on December 6 killed at least 80 people although the Taleban denied responsibility for that incident.—Internet

Typhoon hits Philippines killing more than 400

CAGAYAN DE ORO, 17 Dec—A typhoon hit the southern Philippines triggering flash floods and landslides that killed more than 400 people and forced about 100,000 from their homes. Typhoon Washi, with winds gusting up to 90km/h, hit the resource-rich island of Mindanao late yesterday, bringing heavy rain that also grounded some domestic flights and left wide areas without power.

Five miners were killed in a landslide in Monkayo in Mindanao and another 21 people drowned on the central island of Negros, the PNRC said. The national disaster agency said five miners were also buried in a landside.

“I can’t explain how these things happened, entire villages were swept to the sea by flash floods,” Galon told Reuters, saying the death toll could rise as hundreds of people were unaccounted for.

Bigan City Mayor Lawrence Cruz said many people were caught by surprise when water rose a metre high in less than an hour, forcing people onto roofs. The national disaster agency said it could not estimate crop and property damage because emergency workers, including soldiers and police officers, were evacuating families and recovering casualties. The social welfare department said about 100,000 people were displaced and brought to more than a dozen shelters in the two cities.—MNA/Reuters

India, Russia sign five agreements; no pact for Kudankulam 3, 4

MOSCOW, 17 Dec—India and Russia today signed five agreements including on defence, health and education, and resolved to carry forward bilateral cooperation to strengthen their strategic partnership for meeting future global challenges. No agreement on Kudankulam nuclear power reactors 3 and 4 was signed, as anticipated.

Prime Minister Manmohan Singh and Russian President Dmitry Medvedev who led their respective sides at the 12th India-Russia Summit, signed a Joint Statement on strengthening the strategic partnership between the two countries for meeting future global challenges including economic and political. The talks at the Kremlin, lasted for nearly three hours with a one-on-one first for two hours. The two leaders were later joined by their respective delegations.—Internet

Police rescue trapped residents following a flash flood that inundated Cagayan de Oro city, Philippines, on 17 Dec, 2011.—Internet
NYC tops in child obesity improvement

Overall obesity rates among New York City public elementary and middle school students dropped during the past five years, federal health officials say.

INTERNET

ATLANTA, 17 Dec—Overall obesity rates among New York City public elementary and middle school students dropped during the past five years, federal health officials say.

A report published in the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention’s Morbidity and Mortality Weekly Report said the weight loss was across all racial and ethnic groups.

“The findings mark the biggest decline in childhood obesity reported by any large municipality in the country,” the report said. “Obesity rates among kindergartners fell from 16 percent in the year of 2006-2007 to 20.7 percent in 2010-2011.”

The report said that one-in-five children in the US are obese and that obesity rates among kindergartners were the sharpest decline was among children ages 5-6, and that one-in-five children in the US are obese and that obesity rates among kindergartners were the sharpest decline was among children ages 5-6.

That makes it the largest Internet-related IPO since Google Inc. went public in 2004, raising $1.4 billion.

The corporate logo for Zynga, center, is shown on an electronic billboard at the Nasdaq MarketSite, on Friday, Dec. 17, 2011, in New York.

Zynga to begin trading on Nasdaq after $10 IPO

NEW YORK, 17 Dec—Investors will get the chance to reap “Farmville”’s harvest on Friday, as shares of online game developer Zynga Inc. start trading on the Nasdaq Stock Market.

The San Francisco company, which specializes in Facebook games, priced its initial public offering late Thursday at $10 per share, raising $1 billion.

That makes it the largest Internet-related IPO since Google Inc. went public in 2004, raising $1.4 billion.

The price was at the top of its expected range, a sign that investors are eager to dive into a latest in a series of high-profile technology IPOs this year.

It values the company at about $7 billion.

Zynga charges small amounts of money — a few cents, sometimes a couple of dollars — for virtual items in online games. The games are free to play.

Players can acquire items that range from crops in “Farmville” to buildings in “CityVille,” its most popular Facebook game.

With its huge player base and a few loyal spenders, Zynga earned net income of $90.6 million in 2010, an unusual pre-IPO money maker in the sector. Cowen & Co. analyst Doug Creutz, however, initiated coverage Monday, as shares of online game developer Zynga Inc. start trading on the Nasdaq Stock Market.

The campaign, known as Know Your Status and Win, may become a regular feature in the province, said Zille. To encourage more people to take part in the campaign, the province offers awards to several winners by drawing, ranging from 10,000 rand (about 1,250 US dollars) to 50,000 rand (about 6,250 dollars).

“The bottom line is that people respond to incentives,” said Zille, who hailed the campaign a success.

She said the reality was that those who stubbornly did not want to get tested, were those crucially in need of doing so.

While the data still had to be audited, preliminary results indicated a spike in the number of people who were tested. —Xinhua

Health Tip: Keep diabetes in check during the holidays

Holiday parties, desserts and buffets can throw your diabetes meal plan way off track.

The US Centers for Disease Control and Prevention suggests how to enjoy the holidays if you’re diabetic:

- Enjoy a healthy snack before you go to a party, or pack one along.
- Have small portions from the holiday buffet, and make your table far away from the food.
- Stick to low-calorie drinks, and limit alcohol to one drink a day for women, or two drinks a day for men.
- Skip poultry with skin, ham with a honey glaze, and creamy side dishes and sauces.
- Opt for vegetable-based, light side dishes, especially fresh vegetables.
- Enjoy fresh fruit, instead of a piece of pie.
- Make socializing with friends and family the focus of the season, rather than food.—Internet

173 polio cases reported in Pakistan this year

ISLAMABAD, 17 Dec—A total of 173 polio cases have been reported in Pakistan this year, the most in five years, according to official media reported on Friday.

Quoting health officials, Geo TV reported that 144 polio cases had been reported across Pakistan last year.

Southwestern Balochistan province has been the most affected area with 68 cases reported there, said sources in the National Institute of Health, Islamabad.

The insurgency-hit tribal regions listed second with 50 cases reported this year while 30 cases have been reported in southern Sindh province. Geo TV reported that only five cases have been reported in the most populous Punjab province while only one has been reported in northern Gilgit-Baltistan areas. A total of 19 cases have been reported in the northwestern Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KPK) province.

Health officials said that activities of the militants, military operations, poor security situation and a negative propaganda in tribal areas and KPK and Balochistan that polio drops can destroy people from children, have affected the anti-polio campaign.—Xinhua

Models pose with the Samsung Galaxy Nexus, the first smartphone to feature Android 4.0 Ice Cream Sandwich and a HD Super AMOLED display, during a news conference in Hong Kong on 19 Oct, 2011. REUTERS

Galaxy and iPhone to top smartphone holiday sales

HONG KONG, 17 Dec—Apple’s long-awaited iPhone 4S and Samsung Electronics’ fresh, broadening are likely to stand out in this holiday season’s smartphone sales which will otherwise be clouded by global economic uncertainty.

Apple, which lost its position as the world’s largest smartphone maker to Samsung last quarter, could regain top spot as consumers rush to buy the latest iPhone after waiting 16 months since the previous model went on sale.

Like millions elsewhere, 36-year-old Vanessa Pigeon last week took up an offer from her telecom operator and replaced her aging Blackberry with the latest iPhone.

“I liked the design and I wanted to change for a long time,” said Pigeon, a recruitment official in Paris.

In neighboring Britain, which is often seen as the indicator for the rest of the European market, the iPhone took a whopping 43 percent market share in October, overtaking phones using Google Inc’s Android platform, according to research firm Kantar Worldpanel ComTech.

“It’s really only the iPhone family and the (Samsung) Galaxy family flying off the shelves. Everyone else is just picking up the leftovers,” said Neil Mawston, analyst at research firm Strategy Analytics in Milton Keynes, Britain.

“However, we have seen that the Google ecosystem has benefited from the success of the iPhone, and Samsung and HTC have both gained some ground,” Mawston said.

HIV test campaign gets boost in South Africa’s W Cape Province

CAPE TOWN, 17 Dec—More people voluntarily get HIV tests in the Western Cape province, an indication of people’s rising awareness of the epidemic, authorities said on Thursday.

Nearly 11,000 people in the province have been tested over the past 10 days as authorities stepped efforts to halve the number of HIV transmissions over the next few years, according to official figures.

Authorities expect more people to be tested when the monthly campaign ends by the end of December.

In December last year, 67,111 people were tested.

This year’s figure is expected to be higher than that of last year, said Western Cape Premier Helen Zille.

The campaign, known as Know Your Status and Win, may become a regular feature in the province, said Zille.

To encourage more people to take part in the campaign, the province offers awards to several winners by drawing, ranging from 10,000 rand (about 1,250 US dollars) to 50,000 rand (about 6,250 dollars).

“The bottom line is that people respond to incentives,” said Zille, who hailed the campaign a success.

She said the reality was that those who stubbornly did not want to get tested, were those crucially in need of doing so.

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**Bacteria can live in Mars-like conditions**

**Corvallis, 17 Dec—** Microbes found in a lava tube in Oregon are thriving in Mars-like conditions—near freezing temperatures and low levels of oxygen, US researchers say.

Oregon State University researchers say the microbes can grow in the absence of organic food, with their metabolism driven by oxidation of iron from olivine, a common volcanic mineral. These factors make the microbes capable of living in the subsurface of Mars and other planetary bodies, the scientists say. "This microbe is from one of the most common genera of bacteria on Earth," OSU doctoral student Amy Smith said in a university release Thursday. "You can find its cousins in caves, on your skin, at the bottom of the ocean and just about anywhere. What is different, in this case, is its unique qualities that allow it to grow in Mars-like conditions." The microbes were collected from a lava tube near Newberry Crater in Oregon's Cascades Mountains at an elevation of about 5,000 feet. "We know from direct examination, as well as satellite imagery, that olivine is in Martian rocks," study author Martin Fisk said. "And now we know that olivine can sustain microbial life. "Although this study does not exactly duplicate what you would find on Mars, it does show that bacteria can live in similar conditions," he said.

**Comet shows you can get really close to sun and survive**

**WASHINGTON, 17 Dec—** A small comet survived what astronomers figured would be a sure death when it danced uncomfortably close to the broiling sun Thursday night.

Comet Lovejoy was only discovered a couple of weeks ago. It was supposed to melt as it came so close to the sun that the temperatures would hit several million degrees. But astronomers watching live with NASA telescopes were shocked when a bright spot emerged on the sun's other side. Lovejoy lived. The comet came within 75,000 miles (121,000 kilometres) of the sun. For a small object often described as a dirty snowball, that brush with the sun should have been fatal.

Astronomers say it probably was not deadly because the comet was larger than they thought.
Japan may ban raw liver over E coli

Japan’s Health Ministry says the detection of E Coli in beef liver may result in the banning of raw liver from the country’s dining menus. — Internet

The Health, Labour and Welfare Ministry will consider a ban on selling raw beef liver following food poisoning deaths from raw beef served at barbecue restaurants earlier this year, Kyodo News reported Friday. Live E coli was detected in the livers of two of about 150 cattle it examined at meat inspection centres nationwide since summer, the ministry said. Restaurants had already been asked by the government to refrain from serving raw beef liver while the ministry conducted the examinations. Food poisoning from E coli can be fatal, and thorough heating is necessary to kill the bacteria in the liver, health officials said.

Twenty of the 116 cases of food poisoning from eating raw beef liver confirmed between 1998 and 2010 were caused by E coli, the ministry said. — Internet

Russia working on new long-range missile

Moscow, 17 Dec.—A liquid-propellant intercontinental ballistic missile capable of breaching a proposed NATO missile defense system is being developed in Russia, a general said. Lt Gen Sergei Karakayev, Russia’s Strategic Missile Forces chief, said the 100-ton silo-launched heavy missile will have “enhanced capabilities.” He said the missile would replace Russia’s solid-propellant ICBMs.

Karakayev said the Strategic Missile Forces will test-launch 11 ICBMs next year. Russia is opposed to US-led NATO plans to build a missile defense system in Europe to protect against a possible attack from Iran. Karakayev said Iran has neither the technology nor the industrial potential to build ballistic missiles. RIA Novosti reported.

United Nations takes Haiti choler claims “very seriously”: spokesman

The United Nations takes seriously the accusation that it may have caused a 2010 cholera outbreak in Haiti, UN spokesman Farhan Haq said here Friday. “The United Nations has taken this matter very seriously,” Haq said at a daily news briefing in response to a reporter’s question about a legal claim brought about on behalf of choler victims in Haiti.

“The claim has been received and is currently being studied,” he said.

A cholera outbreak in Haiti in October 2010 cost the lives of more than 6,700 Haitians just months after a devastating earthquake struck the island country.

There have been accusations that the cholera outbreak originated with Nepalese peacekeepers working for the UN Stabilization Mission in Haiti (MINUSTAH).

In January 2011, the secretary-general appointed a panel of independent scientific experts to study all available evidence in order to determine the cause of the cholera outbreak and epidemic, “Haq noted.

The panel of four medical experts, led by Alejandro Cravioto of Mexico, concluded in a report that the bacteria that caused the cholera did not originate in Haiti but could not say definitively how it arrived there.

“The panel determined it was not possible to be conclusive about how cholera was introduced into Haiti,” said Haq. — Internet

AUSTRALIA

Spending bill nixes light bulb standards

WASHINGTON, 17 Dec.—Among the provisions in the omnibus spending bill developed by US House and Senate negotiators is language to block light bulb efficiency standards.

The legislation, which would avoid a government shutdown, would block funding for implementing some of the Energy Department’s light bulb standards that were to begin phasing in next year, The Hill reported Thursday.

House Republicans have sought for months to repeal provisions in a 2007 energy law that require incandescent light bulbs to be 30 percent more efficient starting in 2012.

Republicans, describing the standards as a “light bulb ban,” argue that the rules restrict consumer choice by demanding traditional incandescent bulbs in favor of light-emitting diode and compact fluorescent light bulbs, both more expensive but more efficient, The Hill said.

Environmental and energy-efficiency groups said the standards don’t ban incandescent bulbs, but require the bulbs be more efficient.

Even with the added expense, experts say more efficient light bulbs are money-savers because they save consumers money on their electricity bills. — Internet

AUSTRALIA

Australia jails three for army base terror plot

SYDNEY, 17 Dec.—Three men who plotted a suicide attack against an army base in the Australian city of Sydney were sentenced on Friday to 18 years in prison, the Australian Associated Press reported.

The three men planned to kill as many people as possible during a mass shooting at the Holsworthy Barracks, which is located in the outer south-western Sydney suburb of Holsworthy. They were ordered to serve non-parole periods of 13-5 years after they were found guilty of conspiring to prepare for or plan a terrorist act between February and August 2009.

One of the defendants, 35-year-old Wissam Mahmoud Fattal, had to be removed from the court after he began ranting about Palestine and Afghanistan, APP reported. The other defendants were identified as 28-year-old Saney Edow Aweys and 27-year-old Nayef El Sayed.

Supreme Court Justice Betty King said it would have been “totally horrific event” if their planning had come to pass. She said all three showed no remorse and had not renounced their extremist beliefs, the news report said.

During a three-month trial in 2010, the court heard the men wanted to advance Islam, which they believe is under attack from the West, including Australia. Most of the prosecution case relied on transcripts of secretly recorded telephone conversations. The men were arrested in pre-dawn raids across Melbourne in August 2009. Two other Melbourne men were cleared by a jury over their alleged roles in the plot. — Internet

ASSANGE

Assange extradition case goes to British supreme court

LONDON, 17 Dec.—The British supreme court Friday said it would consider an appeal by WikiLeaks founder Julian Assange against his extradition to Sweden. Seven judges would hear the case in February, BBC reported.

The 40-year-old Assange, who remains on conditional bail in Britain, is wanted by Sweden over allegations of sexual assault.

The Australian national had denied the allegations, saying they are politically motivated.

The high court earlier approved his extradition but Assange termed the decision unlawful.

Swedish authorities are seeking to put him on trial for the alleged rape of a woman and “sexually molesting and coercing” another in Stockholm in August 2010. The WikiLeaks website published a mass of material from leaked US diplomatic cables, embarrassing several governments.

Bradley Manning, a US army analyst suspected of leaking the documents, faces 22 charges of obtaining and distributing government secrets. — Internet

WikiLeaks founder Julian Assange speaks to the media outside the High Court in London in this 5 December, 2011 file photo. Britain’s Supreme Court, the country’s highest judicial body, said on 16 December, 2011, it had granted permission for Assange to appeal against extradition to Sweden over alleged sex crimes. — Internet
Ayeyawady Bridge, 8th facility in time of government of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar

Multi-coloured pennants with the logos of Special Project Construction Group (5) of Public Works were fluttering in the breeze hoisted around Ayeyawady Bridge (Nyaungdon). Lovely songs were on the air at the pavilion on Nyaungdon bank of Ayeyawady on 27 November.

It was a scene to inaugurate the Ayeyawady Bridge (Nyaungdon) which was the eighth facility of its kind in the time of the government of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar.

In the past, the local people in Ayeyawady Region had to rely mainly on waterways as major transport service some parts of motor roads. Now, the country has ushered in a new era. About 435 miles of motor roads and 57 bridges of above 180 feet long are comprised in the road network of 11 highways. Moreover, a total of 33 bridges and railroads are under construction. As such, Ayeyawady Region is gathering momentum in greater development day by day.

The local people totalling over 10000 who had already heard that President U Thein Sein will attend the ceremony to open the bridge arrived at the venue of bridge inauguration ceremony not only on Nyaungdon bank but also on the approach road and main bridge on Yangon bank.

At 8 am, President U Thein Sein delivered an address and then unveiled the stone plaque.

On the occasion, President U Thein Sein said that today was the red letter day for him and Ayeyawady dwellers because the government could build the 57th large bridge for Ayeyawady Region.

He said that it was a wonderful award to Ayeyawady residents who have to cross rivers and creeks in going to one place from another to have such a large bridge with both motor road and railroad.

He said that the government was planning to set up a deep sea port and an industrial zone in Ayeyawady Region. He noted that motor roads, railroads, river- and creek-crossing bridges and deep sea ports were instrumental for the nation to distribute domestic products locally and internationally, for which the government was spending a large sum of money, adding that it was doing so not only for a particular place or region but for the entire nation.

Blessed with fertile soil, rivers, creeks, and lakes abundant of fish, and adequate rainfall for agriculture, Ayeyawady Region could eradicate poverty and would even become developed region if Ayeyawady dwellers worked hard utilizing those resources, he said.

Ayeyawady dwellers could serve the interests of their home region and the country with strength like the white elephant, which had emerged from the region, he said.

Afterwards, Union Minister for Construction U Khan Maung Pyi said that the already inaugurated Ayeyawady Bridge (Nyaungdon) is located between mile post No. 4805 on Yangon-Pathein Road and mile post No. 1/6 on Kyenshpinse-Sekkawi-Danubyu-Zalun-Hinthada Road in Ayeyawady Region, 8000 upstream of Bo Myat Tun Bridge. It was a two-way motor road-cum-railroad facility made of steel frames, he added.

As there was no railroad linking Ayeyawady and Yangon regions, the former relied on motor roads and waterways only in the past, he said.

With the aim of ensuring swift flow of passengers and commodities, he said that the government constructed Yangon (Hlinethaya)-Pathein and Yangon (Hlinethaya)-Zalun-Hinthada railroads, and then built Ayeyawady Bridge (Nyaungdon) to be able to link the railroads.

The government with farsightedness constructed the rail-cum-road bridge for serving the interest of the local people without building a railroad separately, he said.

The newly inaugurated bridge is of bored pile RC type and its upper structure is of steel frame. The main bridge is 7402 feet long, approach bridge road 3412 feet long, approach bridge railroad 13343 feet long, and the whole bridge is 10814 feet long for main bridge and approach road bridge and 20545 feet long for the main bridge and approach bridge railroad. The facility has 28 feet wide two-way motor road, 14 feet wide railroad, three feet wide pedestrian way on either side, and 262 feet wide and 57 feet high clearance.

At present, local people of Hinthada and Zalun can grasp the opportunity to have easier access to Pathen and Yangon (Hlinethaya) through Ayeyawady Bridge (Nyaungdon) by train. Moreover, they can travel to Kalay of Sagaing Region from Pathen along 700 feet long route by train by linkng Pakokku-Kyangan-Hinthada railroad section.

Translation: TTA

LOCALSPORTS

Dinner hosted to hockey teams

YANGON, 17 Dec—A welcoming dinner was hosted to members of the 2nd SEA Men’s Hockey Tournament 2011 at Karaweik Palace in Mingala Taungnyunt on 15 December.

President of Myanmar Hockey Federation U Hnin Zaw Win extended greetings and presented gifts to tournament officials Director Mr. Ryuichi Koshiko and Umpire Manager Mr. Reshad Mahmood Butt.

Vice-President of the federation U Kayaw Kyaw Hlaing and U Zaw Win gave gifts to the managers of the hockey teams. Later, they were served with dinner.

National Badminton Championship kicks off

YANGON, 17 Dec—A ceremony to open the National Badminton Championship (Great Wall) 2011 was held at the National Badminton Gymnasium in Lanmadaw Township, Yangon Region, yesterday morning.

President of Myanmar Badminton Federation U Maung Maung Swe delivered a speech and opened the championship.—MNA

Rakhine traditional wrestling held

YANGON, 17 Dec—In commemoration of the Rakhine State Day 2011, the Rakhine traditional wrestling contest was held at Phayaigyi Wingabar sports ground in Sittway on 13 December.

Altogether 13 athletes participated in the golden gong class and 299 in the silver gong class.

The Chief Minister of Rakhine State and wife presented one tical of gold to the first prize winner in the gold gong class and 0.75 tical of gold to the first prize winner in the silver gong class.—MNA

Thayawady District emerges champion in Bago Region Football Tournament

YANGON, 17 Dec—The prize distribution for the Bago Region Football Tournament was held at the district sports ground in Tawngoung on 12 December afternoon.

In the final match, Thayawady District secured championship with a 3-1 win over Pyay District.

Next, Regional level authorities and region ministers concerned presented prizes to best players in respective places.

The Bago Region Chief Minister awarded K 300,000 as cash award to second prize winning Pyay District team and K 500,000 and championship shield to Thayawady District team.—MNA

DISTRIBUTION

World AIDS Day marked

YANGON, 17 Dec—A ceremony to mark the World AIDS Day, organized by Hmawby Township Health Department, was held at Basic Education High School No. 1 in Hmawby Township on 14 December.

Township level officials explained AIDS combating programmes, tasks of township in AIDS disease and infection of HIV virus.—township IPRD

Model plot of paddy harvested

YEDASHE, 17 Dec—Monsoon paddy on 0.10 acres of land was harvested in Nyaungbintha Village-tract of Yedashe Township on 28 November.

Bago regional level officials, township agricultural supervisory committee and local farmers took part in the paddy harvesting.

The model plot 72.17 baskets of dried paddy per acre.—township IPRD

K 6 million loans disbursed to vendors

MOGOUNG, 17 Dec—As part of efforts to alleviate poverty of the people, Mogoung Township Development Affairs Committee disbursed loans to vendors at Myoma Market in the township on 12 December.

The executive committee officer of Township DAC explained the purpose of disbursing loans and presented K 6 million to 60 vendors.—Kyemon
Academic years of science and arts subjects...

(from page 1)

The Union Minister for Health Dr U Aye Kyaw Kyu, Deputy Minister for Border Affairs Maj-Gen Zaw Kyi, Deputy Minister for Border Affairs U Thein Aung and Border Affairs Maj-Gen Zaw Kyi attended the supplementary reports.

Next, ward and village administrators and town elders reported on their respective requirements.

The Vice-President then visited Tangyan, the site of the hospital. He also visited the Mongyal Township Administration Office and gave a talk.

At donation ceremony, the Shan State Chief Minister presented K 1 million to the medical fund of the hospital, Shwe Than Lwin Co, Asia World Co, Loi Hein Co, United Amara Bank, Tameoeny Chantha Co and Shwe Than Lwin Co contributed K 30 million and Shwe Than Lwin Co gave two sets of Sky Net TV receiver.

Next, the Shan State Chief Minister visited the hospital. He then visited the hospital and Shwe Than Lwin Co donated K 1 million to the medical fund of the hospital. The Shan State Chief Minister visited the hospital.

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Plywood and glue factories opened in Singaing Tsp


The Union Minister called for supply of high quality products to international market by modernizing wood-based industry, production of low-priced quality plywood for domestic use, increasing manufacturing of import-substituted products, systematic waste disposal, wider awareness of environmental conservation, establishment of forests to ensure long-term availability of raw materials, recovery of waste residues and waste safety.

Next, responsible persons opened the plywood factory and glue factory. The Union Minister then looked round the factory. —MNA

Vice-President Dr Sai Mauk Kham visits Tangyan Basic Education High School.—MNA
Myanmar Sarsodaw Day, respect paying...

(from page 16)

U Tint Swe (Tint Swe-Paypon), Dr Khin Maung Nyunt, U Chat Swe (Naung Sinh), U Myo Nyunt (La Gen Myo Nyunt-Rtd), U Khin Maung, Thaung (Momotaron), U Ba Thun (MA), U Kyi Aye (Hsintaykin Aung Thien), Daw Khin Kyi (Tekkatho Kyi Mar), Daw Tin Tin Win (May Tin Tin-Han) and Daw Khin Than Shein (Khin Than Sin-ye).

The Chief Minister also presented K 200,000 each and gifts to U Thant Oo (Pay-Soe Min), U Maung Maung Khin (Tekkatho Maung Maung Khin), U Hla Myaung (Ko Hsung), Col Khin Maung Aye (Rtd) (Khin Maung Aye-Mandalay), U Tint Aung (Bogale Tint Aung), U Maung Gale (Thankkyu U Maung Gale), U Hein Lin (CE), U Kyaw Win (101 Kyaw Win Maung), U Chit Hlaing (Ko Maung Gyi), Thakhin Tin Oo (Bo Thakin Saye), U Tun Shein (Mortar Tun Shein), U Ohn Maung (Yama U Ohn Maung), U Aung Thant (retired ambassador), Thakin Aung Gyi (Paungdye), U P Kyaw Han (P Kyaw Han), U Tin Myat (Thakin Tin Myat), U Htay Maung (Htay Maung) and U Win Maung (Min Yu Wai).

The region ministers, departmental heads, the chairman and vice-chairmen of MWJA CEC members and officials gave cash assistance and gifts to the doyen literati. On behalf of the doyen literati, Dr Khin Maung Nyunt presented K 200,000 each and gifts to the doyen literati.

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At least five shot, killed, at Illinois home

KANKAKEE, 17 Dec—Authorities said a man, a woman and her three children — two girls and a boy — were found shot to death Friday at their home in Emington, Ill. near Kankakee.

One of the girls was an infant less than a year old, Debbie Delaney, whose husband is mayor of Emington, said. The other girl was in second grade and the boy was in kindergarten, the Chicago Tribune reported.

The two girls were found in the back yard with their mother, while the boy and the man were found elsewhere on the property, the newspaper said.

Delaney said police were not searching for any suspects but she did not know what led to the shooting.

“I have no idea,” she said. “No clue, no clue.” Neighbours told the newspaper the family had kept to themselves for the most part since moving into the neighbourhood during the summer.

Two arrested in $6 million Fla Ponzi scheme

FORT LAUDERDALE, 17 Dec—Police in Florida say two men were arrested in connection with an alleged Ponzi scheme that defrauded more than a dozen investors out of more than $6 million.

Victor Brown, 54, and Roger Green, 78, were detained Wednesday at Broward’s Main Jail on racketeering charges with bail set at $150,000, the South Florida Sun Sentinel reported. Brown was released on bond Thursday night but Green remained in custody.

The Florida Department of Law Enforcement began an investigation of the men and the business dealings of their Fort Lauderdale company, Military Air Parts International, after several alleged victims came forward with complaints, a probable cause affidavit said. Investigators allege from 2004 to 2007, Brown and Green racked up millions of dollars by promising potential investors 18 percent returns on the resale of parts for military transport aircraft, the newspaper reported.

Brown, chairman of the private company, and Green, whose position with the company is unclear, were in control of company bank accounts and made out checks to themselves withdrawing a total of $1.7 million, and used debit cards to make other “extensive cash withdrawals,” the FDLE said.

Brown and Green allegedly kept the Ponzi scheme running by paying off some investors with monies raised from other investors, the Sentinel said.

Thomas Scalfani, Brown’s attorney, said he questioned whether the case could even make it to court because the alleged crime occurred beyond its statute of limitations.

“I have a serious question about whether this case can ever go forward,” Scalfani said.

“Even if it does, my client’s innocence will be established in court.”

Moscow airports fined over facilities for disabled

MOG, 17 Dec—Moscow’s three airports have been fined a total of 190,000 rubles (about USD 6,000) for failing to provide facilities for the disabled, the General Prosecutor of the Russia Federation office’s website reported.

The terminals of Sheremetyevo, Domodedovo and Vnukovo airports didn’t have specially-adapted rest rooms, wheelchair ramps, special telephone booths for the partially-sighted and hard of hearing and other essentials for disabled passengers, the air transportation division of the General Prosecutor’s office found.

Moreover, not all airport car parks had designated the required 10 percent of parking spaces for the disabled.

“It should be noted that the fines do not relieve businesses and officials of the obligation to correct those violations,” the prosecutor’s statement reads.

Bangkok police dismantle six bombs

BANGKOK, 17 Dec—Six homemade bombs were dismantled Friday in eastern Bangkok after a suspect revealed their location to police, Thai security officials said.

The bombs were similar to explosive devices found in front of the Government Lottery Office on 6 Dec, the Bangkok Post reported.

One bomb found Friday had been placed in the wall of Bangkok Bank’s Sukhumvit 77 branch, two were found at the entrance to Soi Kanchanaapisek, 39 and three were under a bridge across Khlong Nong Prue.

Jirawat Chanpeng, a native of Sakon Nakhon province, was arrested at the entrance to Soi Kanchanaapisek.

Police officials said it is unclear if Jirawat was backed by any political group.

Investigators said the devices were made by an experienced bomb maker, the newspaper reported.

Although Jirawat told where the latest bombs could be found, he denied any involvement in the earlier case, officials said.

Colombians sentenced in visa fraud case

MIAMI, 17 Dec—Guilty verdicts have been handed down in visa fraud charges in a Florida human-smuggling case involving Colombian nationals posing as visiting cheerleaders.

Investigators said the group of 16 Colombians traveled to Miami International Airport on 30 Sept using fraudulent documents to enter the country illegally, pretending to be a cheerleading team going to a competition in South Florida, the newspaper reported.

“They become visa overstays and they never leave the country,” Yglesias said.

At least three shot, killed, in Calif

IRWINDALE, 17 Dec—At least three people are dead after a gunman started shooting a rifle Friday at a Southern California Edison office in Irwindale, Calif., police said.

The gunman killed two employees of the utility and wounded two others at around 2 pm PST, before taking his own life, the Los Angeles Times reported.

Baldwin Hills (Calif) Police Department Capt Michael Taylor said the condition of the two wounded victims was not immediately known, the newspaper said.

Citing a source, the Times reported the shooter was an Edison employee who worked as a systems analyst in the building where the shooting occurred, and some of the victims were supervisors at the utility.
Drug-resistant bacteria seen in Florida

**Fort Lauderdale, 17 Dec**—Doctors in Florida say infections from a relatively mild variety of drug-resistant bacteria are causing painful and ugly wounds that can linger for weeks.

The bacterium is methicillin-resistant Staphylococcus aureus, or MRSA, but infectious disease experts said it’s not the dangerous “killer bacteria” strain that kills thousands of hospital patients annually.

Some infectious disease doctors and emergency rooms said they were seeing more cases and suggested patients take precautions.

“It’s more disfiguring than anything else,” Dr. Latha Srinath, a specialist in Boynton Beach, told the South Florida Sun Sentinel. “These are young people coming in with multiple abscesses and infections that don’t go away after repeated treatments with antibiotics. At any given day at my offices, I have two or three new referrals, which is a lot.”

The infections are being recognized as a community-acquired MRSA that lives on the skin and nasal passages, spread through skin-to-skin contact and fluids such as sweat, Srinath said.

Patients rarely need to be hospitalized but many require second or third doctor visits when drugs do not clear up the infection, experts said.

The rise in community-acquired MRSA cases may be the result of more people and doctors becoming aware of it and looking for it, Dr. Larry Bush, an infectious disease expert in Atlanta, said.

“It’s a problem. It’s not life-threatening,” Bush said.

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**Cold wave kills three in Nepal**

KATHMANDU, 17 Dec—Cold wave, a relatively new weather phenomenon for Nepal, has swept across the Terai belt of the country, claiming the lives of at least three persons as of Friday, according to Saturday’s Republica daily.

A 23-year-old college student from Gouvindpur village of Siraha district, reportedly died of cold hypothermia resulting from extreme cold in Rajbiraj Thursday night. Two more persons had already died of extreme cold the previous night.

Weather experts said it had been almost one week since cold wave started engulfing the Terai plains in southern Nepal. “Cold wave will not recede soon,” Rajendra Shrestha, a senior meteorologist, was quoted by the daily as saying. “It is here to stay all through this winter — albeit only in some parts of the Terai occasionally.”

What is being referred to as cold wave by the general people, and of course the media, is actually a stagnant blanket of thick smog — a mixture of smoke and fog — covering the plains of Nepal.

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**Moscow, 17 Dec—**Russia’s Federal Customs Service on Friday said it has seized radioactive material from the luggage of a man who was preparing to take a commercial flight from Moscow to Teheran. His whereabouts are unknown.

A statement issued by the customs service said it discovered 18 pieces of radioactive metal which were packaged in individual steel castings.

The material was found in the luggage of an Iranian citizen who was planning to fly from Sheremetyevo International Airport in the Russian capital of Moscow to the Iranian capital of Teheran.

The agency said the radiation levels of the material, Sodium-22, were 20 times higher than normal background radiation. But nuclear experts and Russia’s atomic agency Rosatom said the radioactive isotope of sodium is primarily used for medical equipment and scientific research, and cannot be used as a weapon.

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**Moscow lands cars in Israel; two people die**

** Modi'in, (Israel), 17 Dec—A small airplane crashed onto moving cars near a central Israeli city Friday, killing at least two people and injuring others, officials said. The plane hit the cars on a road near Modi'in, Haaretz reported.**

Emergency response officials arrived on the scene to administer care to an undetermined number of people who were injured.

Earlier this year, four people were killed in a plane crash near the Haifa airport in northern Israel.

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**Plane lands cars in Israel; two people die**

**Brussels, 17 Dec—**Ahead of upcoming days of heavy snow, the European airports have made several preparations this time to prevent any chaotic situation and inconvenience to air-passengers, said a senior official.

According to Siim Kallas, vice-president of the European Commission and the Commissioner for Transport, the Commission convinced a number of meetings during last 12 months to avoid chaos in airports in Europe as witnessed during last winter due to heavy snow, Xinhua reported.

“I am pleased to say that their response has been positive. Serious deficiencies and weak links have been identified and are being addressed,” Kallas said.

Last Christmas, over 35,000 flights across Europe Union (EU) countries were cancelled — more than in the whole of 2009 while tens of thousands of passengers were stranded.

Noting the efforts made by the airports as well, Kallas pledged to keep monitoring the situation closely and reiterated that contingency planning should be a normal business practice in winter.

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**Photo shows site of plane crash near Modi’in, 16 Dec, 2011.**

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**European airports prepare for upcoming heavy snow**

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**Moscow airport**

In addition, Sodium-22 can be produced in a particle accelerator and is available to medical and educational institutions across Russia. Rosatom said the material seized at the airport is not highly radioactive.

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**The US flag, Iraq flag, and the US Forces-Iraq colours are carried during ceremonies marking the end of US military mission in Baghdad.**

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**The NEW LIGHT OF MYANMAR Sunday, 18 December, 2011 11**

**A man struggles with his umbrella during high winds in the central German City of Frankfurt amid a storm raging over Germany.**

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**European airports prepare for upcoming heavy snow**

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**Workers process plastic Christmas tree branches at the King Tree Handicrafts Company’s factory in Shenzhen, Guangdong province, on 2 Dec.—Internet**

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**Cold wave kills three in Nepal**

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**Drug-resistant bacteria seen in Florida**

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**Pilot killed as small plane crashes in Papua, Indonesia**

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CLAIMS DAY NOTICE
MV CIP FORTUNE VOY NO (0031)

Consignees of cargo carried on MV CIP FORTUNE VOY NO (0031) are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on 18.12.2011 and cargo will be discharged into the premises of A.W.P.T where it will lie at the consignee’s risk and expenses and subject to the byelaws and conditions of the Port of Yangon.

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

SHIPPING AGENCY DEPARTMENT
MYANMA PORT AUTHORITY
AGENT FOR: MN SAMUDERA SHIPPING LINES

Phone No: 256068/378316/376797

CLAIMS DAY NOTICE
MV BIENDONG TRADER VOY NO (1160)

Consignees of cargo carried on MV BIENDONG TRADER VOY NO (1160) are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on 18.12.2011 and cargo will be discharged into the premises of A.W.P.T where it will lie at the consignee’s risk and expenses and subject to the byelaws and conditions of the Port of Yangon.

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

SHIPPING AGENCY DEPARTMENT
MYANMA PORT AUTHORITY
AGENT FOR: MS CHINA SHIPPING (MALAYSIA) SDN BHD

Phone No: 256068/378316/376797

Hong Kong school closed in bird flu scare

Two parrots sit on a bar in a bird market in Hong Kong in 2010. A Hong Kong school was closed on Friday after a dead bird found in the southern Chinese city was tested positive for the deadly H5 strain of the bird flu virus, health officials said.—Internet

Hong Kong, 17 Dec — A Hong Kong school was closed on Friday after a dead bird found in the southern Chinese city was tested positive for the deadly H5 strain of the bird flu virus, health officials said.

The closures came after the school clerk, a 48-year-old woman, picked up the sick black-and-gaped dead bird found at school on Tuesday, which died the next day and was tested positive for the H5 strain, health department spokesman told AFP.

She picked up the bird — a common wild bird in southern China — and the school was told to develop a fever, sore throat and diarrhoea but has tested negative for Influenza A (H5), a variant of bird flu.

“She has been cleared in the medical results we received today but tests on her 11-year-old son are still ongoing, with results expected to be released later Friday,” said the

Many rare species make their homes in the nature reserves.—INTERNET

Researchers had an unprecedented encounter with rare robins. —INTERNET

Baby seal sneaks into NZ home, naps on couch

Sydney, 17 Dec — A sea pup had a risky adventure and gave Welcome Bay, New Zealand homeowner Annette Swofford a scare on Thursday. According to New Zealand’s Department of Conservation, the animal, nicknamed Lucky, broke into Swofford’s home through a cat door and decided to take a nap on her sofa.

Swofford told the Sydney Morning Herald that she first encountered the seal in her kitchen. After sniffing around and not finding anything to its liking — including her confused dog and cats — Lucky proceeded to waddle up the stairs, jump on her couch and take a nap. He was there 45 minutes later when a DOC ranger came to send him back home.

A baby seal entered Annette Swofford’s home on 14 Dec, 2011. —INTERNET

Ancient disease mutation identified

COLUMBUS, 17 Dec — US researchers say they’ve identified the second-oldest human disease mutation yet discovered, dating back to 11,600 BC Researchers at Ohio State University estimate the mutation, which causes a rare, inherited vitia- min B12 deficiency called Imerslund-Grasbeck syn- drome, arose in the Middle East some 13,600 years ago.

Only a mutation seen in cystic fibrosis that arose between 11,000 and 52,000 years ago is believed to be older, a university release said on Thursday. The mutation is found mostly in people of Arabic, Turkish and Jewish ancestry, researchers said. “Our findings permit reliable genetic diagnostics in suspected cases of IGS in which this mutation should be considered first when genetically-strapping disease ‘runs across these populations,’” OSU re- searcher Stephen M. Tanner said.—Internet

Private Jessica Lynch to become a teacher

LOS ANGELES, 17 Dec — Private Jessica Lynch, the young soldier rescued by US forces after being captured in Iraq in 2003, is to become a teacher. Miss Lynch, who was 19 at the time of the Iraq invasion, will get her educa- tion degree from West Vir- ginia University on Friday. She completed her training as a student teacher at an elementary school in Wirt County, West Virginia, the same one she attended as a child.

Miss Lynch, who spent nine days as a prisoner of war, still suffers from leg injuries sustained in Iraq. She said: “It’s tough to walk but I look at it as at least I’m walk- ing. At least I have my legs. They may not work. I have no feeling in the left one. But it’s attached, at least.”

“I miss Lynch, now a 28-year-old woman, was captured along with five oth- ers after her 507th Mainte- nance Company unit took a wrong turn and came under attack in Nasiriyah on March 23, 2003. Eleven of her fel- low soldiers died.

Following her rescue the US government publicised an exaggerated version of events which made the teen- age prisoner seem heroic and rallied public support for the war. She has repeatedly worked to set the record straight and in 2007 told Congress: —Internet

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**Don King’s turkey truck ‘hijacked’**

A spokesman said boxing promoter Don King is canceling his annual turkey giveaway in Florida because the truck carrying the poultry was “hijacked.”

Robert Weneck, a spokesman for King, said the promoter canceled plans to distribute the turkeys to needy families in Mangonia Park, Deerfield Beach and Miami because the truck was “hijacked.”

The Palm Beach Post reported Friday that the truck was recovered but King is uncertain whether the turkeys are still safe to eat.

“We don’t want to make people sick,” Weneck said.

**Oregon man arrested in light saber attack**

Police in Oregon said they arrested a man accused of assaulting fans of pop band The Beach Boys with a toy light saber.

Portland police said officers responded to the store at 9:51 p.m. Wednesday on a report of a man attacking customers with the “Star Wars” toy, and they arrived to find the man swinging the light saber around in the parking lot and shouting incoherent statements.

An officer used a Taser on the man, but he was able to use the light saber to break one of the wires, police said. They said the man was tackled to the ground and continued to struggle while being taken into custody.

The man, identified as David Allen Canterbury, 33, was taken to a local hospital for a mental evaluation. Police said he is being charged with three counts of assault in the fourth degree, one count of disorderly conduct in the second degree, one count of theft in the third degree, one count of resisting arrest and one count of interfering with a police officer.

**Reese Witherspoon to star in ‘Devil’s Knot’**

Reese Witherspoon has landed a role in crime drama ‘Devil’s Knot’.

According to Variety, the Oscar-winning actress has signed up to appear in the movie, which is to be directed by Atom Egoyan and is based on reporter Mara Levitt’s 2003 book, ‘Devil’s Knot: The True Story of the West Memphis Three’. Contactmusic reported.

In the book, Levitt followed the prolonged murder trial of Damien Echols, Jason Baldwin and Jessie Misskelley Jr, who served 17 years in prison before being released this past August.

They were accused of killing three eight-year-old cub scouts found in a wooded area of Arkansas called Robin Hood Hills.

Witherspoon will play Pam Hobbs, the mother of one of the victims.

The production of the movie is expected to begin next summer.

**China’s oldest couple hit 90th anniversary**

A Chinese couple who celebrated their 90th wedding anniversary said they have rarely exchanged angry words.

Yang Shengzhong, 109, and Jin Jifen, 106, of Guiyang, Guizhou Province, who were recognized by the Gerontological Society of China as the country’s oldest living couple, said they mostly communicate via gestures and eye contact these days due to their failing hearing, but even when they were young they rarely argued.

China’s state-run Xinhua news agency reported Friday.

“I was married to Yang at 16, and he has been nice to me, so I said to myself, ‘This was the man I’ll spend my whole life with,’” Jin said.

The couple said their longevity can be attributed to working on their farm every day, having a happy family and having “inner peace and a grateful heart.”

**Beach Boys announce new CD, tour**

LOS ANGELES, 17 Dec—The Beach Boys say they plan to reunite for a new album and concert tour to mark the American band’s 50th anniversary.

Brian Wilson, Mike Love, Al Jardine, Bruce Johnston, and David Marks are recording a new, as-yet-untitled studio album and commemorative catalog releases with Capitol/EMI. Their 50-date international tour is to begin in April with a headlining performance at the New Orleans Jazz & Heritage Festival.

“This anniversary is special to me because I lost the boys and it will be a thrill for me to make a new record and be on stage with them again,” Wilson said in a statement. “It was a thrill to be around a piano again with Brian, Alan and Bruce and experience firsthand the brilliance of cousin Brian’s gift for vocal arrangements.”

Love said: “I am very much looking forward to David Marks joining us and thrilling with his surf guitar licks. Music has been the unifying and harmonizing root of life in our family since childhood. It has been a huge blessing that we have been able to share with the world. Wouldn’t it be nice to do it again? Absolutely!”

**Spears and Trawick get engaged**

LOS ANGELES, 17 Dec—American pop star Britney Spears has accepted a marriage proposal from her longtime beau, talent agent Jason Trawick.

The 30-year-old singer and Trawick met in 2006 and have been dating since 2009.

“This is something they’ve both wanted for a long time,” the insider told the celebrity news Web site. “It’s a way to cement their family. They’re both extremely happy and can’t wait to become man and wife.”

Spears hinted the news was true by posting this Twitter message Friday morning: “OMG. Last night Jason surprised me with the one gift I’ve been waiting for. Can’t wait to show you! SO SORRY!Excited!!!XXo”

UsMagazine.com said Trawick proposed Thursday night at a private dinner celebrating his 40th birthday.

Spears has two young sons with her ex-husband Kevin Federline. —Internet

**New Madonna album due out in March**

American actress/singer director Madonna attends the premiere of ‘WE’ at BFI London Film Festival at Empire, Leicester Square in London on 23 Oct, 2011. —Internet

LOS ANGELES, 17 Dec— US pop star Madonna has completed a new album, which is set for release in late March, Interscope Records confirmed Thursday. The CD will be her first in five years.

It is part of a three-album deal the recording star’s long-time manager Guy Oseary and Live Nation Entertainment negotiated with the record label. “Gimme All Your Lovin’, the first single from the album, will be released the last week in January, prior to her Bridgestone HalfTime Super Bowl appearance 5 Feb.

“WE,” a film Madonna directed and co-wrote, is scheduled for a wide theatrical release 3 Feb. —Internet
LNM-ner Joke

0 to 200 in 6 seconds

Bob was in trouble. He forgot his wedding anniversary. His wife was really pissed.

She told him “Tomorrow morning, I expect to find a gift in the driveway that goes from 0 to 200 in 6 seconds AND IT BETTER BE THERE!!”

The next morning he got up early and left for work. When his wife woke up, she looked out the window and

sure enough there was a box gift-wrapped in the middle of

the driveway.

Confused, the wife put on her robe and ran out to the

driveway, brought the box back in the house.

“I’ve never heard of a gift that goes from 0 to 200 in 6 seconds for my 6th anniversary. What’s going on?”

“Who gave it to you?”

“Who else would have given me a dancing duck?”

“I don’t know. But let’s open it. It could be a surprise”

As the wife opened the box, a small toy mold of a duck

jumped out. The duck ran around the house, chirping

worldwide.

She opened it and found a brand new bathroom

scale. Bob has been missing since Friday.

I have a magical dancing duck

A circus owner walked into a bar to see everyone

crowded about a table watching a little show. On the

table was an upside down pot and a duck tap dancing on

the table.

“A magic dancing duck,” said the owner.

“Sure,” said the bartender. “But what does it do?”

“Just watch,” said the owner.

Three days later the circus owner runs back to the bar

ing “Your duck is a ripoff! I put him on the pot before

the show opened.”

The owner said “That’s not my duck! I bought the duck from its owner. After some wheeling and

bargaining, the owner gave him to me.”

“Tell me more,” said the owner. “How did you get

him?”

“His name is Eto’o,” said the owner. “And this is his

world-renowned dance.”

“Eto’o banned for 15 matches by

Cameron

Lions’ for more than a decade.

But the striker has fre-

equently disagreed with offi-

cials and took the brunt of

the blame when a strike pre-

vented the friendly match

going ahead. Eto’o and his

team-mates claimed they

were not paid money and the

fixure had to be cancelled with

Algeria, claiming one mil-

lion dollars compensation for

lost revenue. The star has

two weeks to appeal the ban

which would rule him out of

a 2013 Africa Cup of Na-

tions tie in Guinea Bissau on

February 25th.

Jump out of the plane

As an Englishman, Frenchman, Mexican, and Texan

were flying across country on a small plane when the

plot comes on the loud speaker and says “we’re having

mechanical problems and the only way we can make it
to the next airport is for 3 of you to open the door and

jump, at least one of you can survive”

The four open the door and look out below. The

Englishman takes a deep breath andholders “God Save The Queen” and jumps.

The Frenchman gets really inspired and hollers

“I love France” and he also jumps.

This really pumps up the Texas so he hollers “Remember the Alamo” and he grabs the Mexican and

throws him out of the plane.

After six-year break, Thorpe

swims 16th fastest

Route: 17 Dec — Five-

time Olympic champion Ian

Thorpe of Australia swam the

16th fastest in the 100m

freestyle at the Italian Win-

ter Open meet on Friday in

his first long course outing in

six years.

Thorpe clocked 50.84

seconds in the event which was won by Italian Luca

Dottolo in 48.78 seconds at Riccione. Thorpe, 29, who

retired in November 2006 after collecting five Olympic

golds and 11 world titles, announced in February this

year that he was returning to the pool, hoping to make

the 2012 London Olympics. He returned to action in

November and competed in the World Cup short course

championships in Singa-

pore, Beijing and Tokyo.

Thorpetrains in Switzer-

land with Ommad Toure.<n

South Africa’s Ian Thorpe.

November and competed in

the World Cup short course

championships in Singa-

pore, Beijing and Tokyo.

Thorpetrains in Switzer-

land with Ommad Toure.<n

Tricky Europa League ties

for English clubs

Man City play Porto, Man Utd take on Ajax and Stoke face Valencia

LONDON, 17 Dec — England’s representatives in the UEFA

Europa League have been drawn against big-name opposi-

tion in the last-32 draw. Manchester City will play holders

Porto, three-time European champions Manchester United have been drawn against Dutch giants Ajax, while Stoke City will face Valencia. Both Manchester clubs entered the Europa League draw for the first time following their exits from the UEFA Champions League, while Stoke City finished second in Group E of the qualifying stages. The two-legged matches will be played on 16/17 February 2012. The draw was also held for the last 16 of the competition. If Manchester City go through they will play the winners of the Legia v Sporting tie, while Manchester United will face Lokomotiv or Athletic Madrid and Stoke will meet Trabzonspor or PSV Eindhoven.

Round of 32 draw

Porto v MANCHESTER CITY

Ajax v MANCHESTER UNITED

Lokomotiv Moscow v Athletic Bilbao

Salzburg v Metalist Kharkiv

STOKE v Valencia

Rubin Kazan v Olympiacos

AZ Alkmaar v Anderlecht

Lazio v Athletic Madrid

Steaua Bucharest v FC Twente

Viktoria Plzen v Schalke

Wolfsburg v Standard Liege

Braga v Besiktas

Udinese v PAOK

Trabzonspor v PSV Eindhoven

Hannover v Club Brugge

Legia Warsaw v Sporting Lisbon

Parks legs to be played on 16 February, second legs on 23 February.

Round of 16

Salzburg/Metalist Kharkiv v Rubin Kazan/Olympiacos

Legia Warsaw/Sporting Lisbon v Porto/MANCHESTER CITY

Steaua Bucharest/FC Twente v Viktoria Plzen/Schalke

Wolfsburg v Standard Liege/Hannover/Club Brugge

AZ Alkmaar/Anderlecht v Udinese/PAOK

Lazio/ Athletic Madrid/Vlraga/Besiktas

Auch/MANCHESTER UNITED v Lokomotiv Moscow/Ath-

letic Bilbao

First legs to be played on 8 March, second legs on 15 March... Internet

Italian opposition for Chelsea

and Arsenal

Gunners draw AC Milan while Blues take on Napoli in

Champions League last 16

LONDON, 17 Dec — Arsenal and Chelsea have been drawn against

difficult Italian opposition in the last 16 phase of the UEFA

Champions League. The Gunners will face seven-

time European champions AC Milan while Chelsea will

play Napoli, who beat Manchester City in the group stages

of the competition. Arsenal have an excellent history against

Italian clubs in the Champions League and their previous

last-16 match-up against Milan in the 2007/08 season saw

them claim a 2-0 aggregate victory.

Milan’s home ground of the San Siro was also the stage for

one of Arsenal’s most famous wins in 2003, when they beat

Inter 5-1 in the Champions League. Italian champions AC

Milan have been knocked out by Barclays Premier League

clubs in three of their previous four appearances in the UEFA

Champions League last 16 — they lost to Arsenal’s north

London rivals Tottenham last season following a 1-0 aggre-

gate defeat. Chelsea have never played Napoli, the former

cup of ex-Blues favourite Gianfranco Zola — in a European

competition. Both teams will travel to Italy for the first

legs, which will be held either on 14/15 or 21/22 February

before playing the return home matches on 6/7 or 13/14 March.

Last-16 draw

Lyon v APOEL

Napoli v CHELSEA

AC Milan v ARSENAL

Basel v Bayern Munich

Bayer Leverkusen v Barcelona

CSKA Moscow v Real Madrid

Zenit St Petersburg v Benfica

Marseille v Inter Milan

Italian clubs have never played Napoli in a European competi-

tion

Defending Europe League champions Porto will be tough opposition for Man City

First legs to be played on 8 March, second legs on 15 March... Internet

Results on Saturday, 18 Dec, 2011.

Blackburn 1-2 West Brom

Everton 1-1 Norwich

Fulham 2-0 Bolton

Newcastle 0-0 Swansea

Wolves 1-2 Stoke

Wigan 1-1 Chelsea

Wolverhampton 1-2 Stoke

Crouch completed a fine Stoke turnaround as Wolves’s

relentless gains increased after blowing the lead.

Crouch’s Jonathan

Walters (l) battles with Karl

Henry during a dramatic

game at Molineux. Internet

LONDON, 17 Dec — Stephen Hunt’s penalty put the

home side ahead after Jonathan Woodgate fouled Matt

Jarvis.

But Stoke stunned Molineux with two goals in 12

second half minutes to secure a fourth successive top-

flight win for the first time since 1981.

Robert Huth’s free-kick deflected off Kevin Doyle to

make it 1-1 before Crouch sealed the points with a

header... Internet

Blackburn 1-2 WBA

Goals from James Morrison and Peter

Odemwingie earned West Brom three points at

Blackburn and piled more pressure on

Rovers boss Steve Kean.

Blackburn lost for the 10th time this season

LONDON, 17 Dec — Morrison gave the

visitors a well deserved lead, with an excellent

volley which gave Paul Robinson no chance.

Rovers hit back when Scott Dann scored from

close range, before Odemwingie fired home from

the edge of the box.

The result leaves Rovers with just two

points and seven since Kean took

charge 12 months ago... Internet

Fulham 2-0 Bolton

Dempsey scored his

eighth goal of the

season to give

Fulham the lead.

LONDON, 17 Dec — Dimitar Berbatov’s 83rd

minute effort sealed a comfortable

1-0 victory for Fulham against

Bolton.

The Bulgarian, who

made his mark in the Premier

League at Tottenham, is

beginning to build a

relationship with

Fulham playmaker

Mickael Morgan.

Fulham are

down to

four

defenders

after

Serbian

Zdenko

Terzic

was sent off.

Fulham used

Thomas Ince’s

enormous shot to

reach 2-0 in the 37th minute.

Bolton could only

come up with a brace from

Sam Ricketts, both

occurring in the second

half.

Fulham’s

goal

pushed

Bolton

down

into

the

relegation

zone.

Fulham have

lost just one

of their

last eight

matches.

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WEATHER Saturday, 17 December, 2011

Summary of observations recorded at 09:30 hr MST: During the past (24) hours, isolated light rain in Taninthayi Region, weather has been partly cloudy in Sagaing, Bago, Yangon Regions, Kachin, Shan, Chin, Rakhine and Kayah States and generally fair in the remaining Regions and States. Night temperatures were (3°C) to (4°C) above December average temperatures in Taninthayi Region, Kachin and Eastern Shan States, (6°C) above December average temperatures in Mon State, (3°C) to (4°C) below December average temperatures in Mandalay and Bago Regions, Rakhine State, (5°C) to (6°C) below December average temperatures in Upper Sagaing Region and Chin State and about December average temperatures in Mandalay, Bago Regions, Rakhine State, (5°C) to (6°C) above December average temperatures in Mon State, (3°C) to (4°C) above December average temperatures in Taninthayi Region, Kachin and Eastern Shan States. Night temperatures were (3°C) to (4°C) above December average temperatures in Mandalay and Bago Regions, Rakhine State, (5°C) to (6°C) below December average temperatures in Upper Sagaing Region and Chin State and about December average temperatures in Mandalay, Bago Regions, Rakhine State, (5°C) to (6°C) above December average temperatures in Mon State, (3°C) to (4°C) above December average temperatures in Taninthayi Region, Kachin and Eastern Shan States. The significant night temperatures were Haka (-1°C), Heho (3°C), Pinlaing (4°C), Putao and Mogok (5°C) each and Katha andPyinOلوwin (6°C).

Bay inference: Weather is generally fair in the North Bay and partly cloudy in the Andaman Sea and elsewhere in the Bay of Bengal.

Nay Pyi Taw weather: Maximum temperature on 16-12-2011 was 89°F. Minimum temperature on 17-12-2011 was 58°F. Relative humidity at (09:30) hours MST on 17-12-2011 was 82%. Total rainfall hours on 17-12-2011 was (Nil).

Nay Pyi Taw (Airport) weather: Maximum temperature on 16-12-2011 was 88°F. Minimum temperature on 17-12-2011 was 56°F. Relative humidity at (09:30) hours MST on 17-12-2011 was 73%. Total rainfall hours on 17-12-2011 was (Nil).

Rainfall on 17-12-2011 was (Nil) at Nay Pyi Taw, Yangon(Kaba-Aye) and Mandalay each. Total rainfall since 1-1-2011 was (59.88) inches at Nay Pyi Taw, (128.19) inches at Yangon (Kaba-Aye) and (48.54) inches at Mandalay. Maximum wind speed at Nay Pyi Taw was (3) mph from West at (12:30) hours MST on 17-12-2011.

Forecast valid until evening of 18th December 2011: Light rain are likely to be isolated in Taninthayi Region and weather will be partly cloudy in Upper Sagaing, Bago, Yangon and Ayeawady Regions, Kachin, Shan, Kayah, Kayin, and Mon States and generally fair in the remaining Regions and States. Degree of certainty is (60%).

State of the sea: Strong easterly winds with moderate to rough seas are likely to be strong at Gulf of Mottama, off and along Mon-Taninthayi Coasts. Surface wind speed in strong wind may reach (35) mph. Seas will be slight to moderate in Myanmar waters.

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

Forecast for Nay Pyi Taw and neighbouring area for 18-12-2011: Generally fair weather.

Forecast for Mandalay and neighbouring area for 18-12-2011: Partly cloudy.

Forecast for Mandalay and neighbouring area for 18-12-2011: Generally fair weather.

Barclays Premier League awaits 20,000th goal

Which player will score the landmark goal in the competition’s history?

LONDON, 17 Dec—The BarclaysPremier League will commemorate the 20,000th goal in the competition by awarding the scorer of the landmark figure a cheque for £20,000 to donate to a charity of their choice, courtesy of Barclays.

Since the competition’s inception, 19,964 goals have been scored since Brian Deane netted the first ever Premier League goal in the fifth minute to put Sheffield United 1-0 up against Manchester United at Bramall Lane on 15 August 1992. Only 36 more are needed until the magic 20,000 figure is reached — but who will score the historic goal? To mark the occasion, Barclays are giving fans the opportunity to guess the identity of the player by logging on to Facebook.com/BarclaysFootball, with great prizes on offer for those who are correct. Overseas fans can win a VIP trip to see a Barclays Premier League team of their choice while British fans have the opportunity to claim a VIP trip for six to see their favourite team, as well as 10 footballs signed by Deane as well Les Ferdinand, scorer of the 10,000th goal. Former Sheffield United, Leeds, Middlesbrough, Leicester City and West Ham striker Deane thinks Arsenal’s prolific Robin van Persie will score the 20,000th goal. “If played with Jermain Defoe at West Ham and I would like to thank Robin van Persie but something tells me it will be Robin van Persie who will score the 20,000th goal in the Barclays Premier League,” Deane told premierleague.com.

INTERNET
Deputy Commander-in-Chief of Defence Services Lt-Gen Soe Win attends graduation dinner of 14th Intake of DSTA

NAY PYI TAW, 17 Dec — The graduation dinner of the 14th Intake of the Defence Services Technological Academy was held at the parade ground of DSTA in PyinOoLwin yesterday evening, attended by Deputy Commander-in-Chief of Defence Services Commander-in-Chief (Army) Lt-Gen Soe Win, on behalf of the Commander-in-Chief of Defence Services.

Also present at the dinner were senior military officers of the Commander-in-Chief’s Office, the commander of Central Command, the PyinOoLwin Station commander, the commandant of DSTA, senior military officers of PyinOoLwin Station, guests and parents and relatives of the graduate officers.

First, Deputy Commander-in-Chief of Defence Services Commander-in-Chief (Army) Lt-Gen Soe Win greeted the graduate officers individually.

The Deputy Commander-in-Chief of Defence Services had dinner together with graduate officers, their parents and relatives. After the dinner, they enjoyed entertainments of No. 1 Defence Services TV Broadcasting Unit and Myawady Anyeint troupe under control of the Directorate of Public Relations and Psychological Warfare.

Deputy Commander-in-Chief of Defence Services Commander-in-Chief (Army) Lt-Gen Soe Win attends the graduation dinner of the 14th Intake of DSTA. — MNA

Myanmar Sarsodaw Day, respect paying ceremony to doyen literati observed

YANGON, 17 Dec — The Myanmar Sarsodaw Day and the respect paying ceremony to doyen literati were held at the city hall, here, this morning.

Union Minister for Information and for Culture U Kyaw Hsan and Yangon Region Chief Minister U Myint Swe presented cash assistance and gifts to doyen literati. Joint-Secretary-3 of Myanmar Writers and Journalists Association U Aung Thein Win (Maung Khaing Khant) acted as MC Chairman of MWJA U Tin Hliang (Ledwintha Saw Chat) extended greetings.

Secretary U Ko Ko (Ko Ko Sethmu Tekkatho) read the message of MWJA for the Sarsodaw Day. Joint-Secretary-1 U Myat Khaing (Myat Khaing) introduced the doyen literati to the audiences. Chairman of the fund-raising work committee Daw Nan Kalya Win (Ngwe Thawda) read the list of donors for the ceremony.

Union Minister U Kyaw Hsan, Chief Minister U Myint Swe and those present paid respects to the doyen literati.

After six-year break, Thorpe swims 16th fastest

Blackburn 1 - 2 WBA

Plywood and glue factories opened in Singaing Tsp

Comet shows you can get really close to sun and survive