President meets professors, faculty members, students at Mawlamyine University calling for overcoming challenges and obstacles

NAY PYI TAW, 15 Dec—President of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar U Thein Sein met with professors, faculty members and students of the Mawlamyine University today.

Before the meeting, the President viewed thesis papers for doctorate courses including marine science for master's degrees displayed at the university.

He also called for keeping on conducting under and postgraduate courses at the university.

Speaking at the meeting on his first ever visit to the university, the President thanked the professors and faculty members for their teaching at the university and their contributions so that new generation students have morality and the patriotic spirit.

He also stressed the need for giving training to the students to improve their individual capacity and skill and expressed his hope that the students would have creativity.

In his speech, the president also praised the historic dignity of the university which produced medical practitioners, writers, leaders, senior military officers.

He told the students that Myanmar lagged behind in development though the country sits on natural resources including forests, minerals, aquatic and terrestrial resources.

He highlighted the need for human resources who could utilize natural resources and tasked the education sector with it.

He guaranteed that the government’s measures would not be irreversible, calling for preparations for overcoming challenges and obstacles. He said the entire society of the country had the fine tradition of solving any issues with united efforts. The future of the country relies on the graduates, he said. He called for constant learning and continuing education even after receiving first degree. He urged the faculty members and the university students to help prevent the backsliding of the democratic reforms.

MNA

Zaygaba contributes to farming development

YANGON, 15 Dec—Union Minister for Agriculture and Irrigation U Myint Hlaing inspected construction of Kungyangon sluice gate and supply of water to farmlands yesterday.

At the briefing hall of the sluice gate, Director-General U Kyaw Myint Hlaing of Irrigation Department and irrigation superintending engineer of Yangon Region U Myint Swe reported the minister on preventive measures against floods and summer and monsoon paddy growing in Twantay, Kawhmu and Kungyangon townships and extension of creeks in Kawhmu and Kungyangon townships.

Amyotha Hluttaw representative Dr Khin Shwe presented Zaygaba Co’s aids programme for development of farm sector in the region and rural development and the requirements of machineries and technicians and works. U Maung Kyae of Green Asia Co also discussed aids programme for farm sector development and transformation to mechanized farming.

After that, the Union Minister expressed his thanks for assistances to be provided by Zaygaba Co and Green Asia Co. He said that farm sector could help the ordinary people generate higher income and better social status. For farm sector development, cooperation was to be made by the State, Hluttaw representatives and the people. Region government was to ask for government funds for maintenance of canals, creeks and sluice gate. Efforts were to be made for implementation of all in the open season. Modern rice mills were to be built with the assistances of local and foreign investments.

Afterwards, the Union Minister and party looked into plantations and canals along the village-to-village road and construction site of Tarpyat Theinzayat sluice gate in Kungyangon township.

MNA
**Group stage draw for AFC Challenge Cup 2014**

PAKOKKU, 15 Dec —

The Home for the Aged in Pakokku was founded by Daw Oo Zunn in 1299. Now the Home turns 60. “Plans are underway to celebrate the diamond jubilee of the Home on a grand scale”, a responsible person said. Up to date, eight old men and 16 old women have lived there, Daw Khan San Myaung, the oldest at the Home, is 94 years old and she is in good health. “Donation for the breakfast of the elderly costs K 15000 and the lunch and dinner K 2500 each”, U Thaung Shwe of the Home said.

The Homes for the Aged established by Daw Oo Zunn are Hninzigon Home for the Aged in Yangon, Paungde, Thaton, Mingung and Pakokku Homes for the Aged. Pakokku Home for the Aged is situated near Thanbokk Nunnery in Ward-3 of Pakokku.

Kyemon

**Paungde sees free clinic**

PAUNGDE, 15 Dec — An opening of free clinic founded by a group of people who are working together for a common purpose was held at the clinic on Shwedagon road in Paungde of Pyay District, Bago Region on 12 December.

Free health care service will be given to everyone regardless of race and religion at the clinic. — Kyemon

**Globetrotters throng places of interest in Mandalay, Bagan, NyaungU, PyinOoLwin, Amarapura, Sagaing, Mingung regions**

Mandalay, 15 Dec —

Mandalay sees daily arrival of tourists who visit Maha Muni Buddha Image, Mya Nann Sankyaw Shwe Nammaw, Mandalay Hill, Sanda Muni Buddha Image, Kyauandawgyi Pagoda and Shwekyaung in groups.

Locally-produced bunches of bananas, watermelons and tomatoes and Myanmar thanakha trading at fruit stalls near Zaygyo market attract globetrotters. They also make a study tour of gold embroidery and gold leaf-making businesses. During their tours, they visit Amarapura, U Pein bridge, Sagaing, PyinOoLwin and Bagan-NyaungU regions where souvenir shops are doing a brisk trade. As tourists love beauty of nature and are interested in ancient cultural heritages, Mandalay, Bagan-NyaungU, PyinOoLwin, Amarapura, Sagaing and Mingung regions have become popular tourist destinations with momentum, successful implementation of the tasks with momentum, excellent facilities. Aimed at ensuring transparency and effective implementation of the tasks with momentum, a leading committee for implementation of hotel zone in Inlay region was formed together with work committees on 22 November.

Kyemon

**New hotel accommodation for Inlay region**

Press release regarding the implementation of hotel zone will be issued frequently. There are two four-star hotels, seven three-star hotels, nine two-star hotels, 13 one-star hotels and 13 hotels with no star in the region. — Kyemon

**Prado knocks down old woman on Pathein-Ngwehsaung road**

PATEIN, 15 Dec — A Prado with the vehicle with the number plate No.1C/... driving from Pathein to Ngwehsaung hit an old woman who was crossing Pathein-Ngwehsaung road at a place between mile post No. (5/1) and (5/2) in Pathein Township of Ayeyawady Region at about 5:30 pm on 11 December.

Daw Toe Lay (72 years) of Wardawgyi village in the township was knocked down by the vehicle while she was crossing over the road. She died on the spot in the road accident.

The name of the driver is under investigation. Thinhawgyin Police Station filed a lawsuit against the driver for his reckless driving. — Kyemon

Photo shows 22-wheeled container truck which was plunging down the embankment at the top of Chinsu Plywood factory street on Yangon-Mandalay motorway in Bago on 12 December. — Kyemon

**Ayeyawady forming alluvial soil for cultivation**

MAGWAY, 15 Dec —

River water in Ayeyawady River has been receding when the winter comes. Alluvial soils have naturally formed in the centre of the river running beside Magway.

As onion and other cold season crops thrive on these alluvial islands annually, farmers temporarily reside on the islands are busy with ploughing and cultivation works.

The ships lay at their anchors beside the islands and goods are being transported to the bank by boat.

The River Ayeyawady offers nature-given alluvial land with fertile soils to locals to grow various kinds of crops on them. — Kyemon

**New Light of Myanmar**

**LOCAL NEWS**

**Yangon, 15 Dec —**

Organized by Asian Football Confederation (AFC), the group stage draw for the AFC Challenge Cup 2014 took place at the office of AFC in Kuala Lumpur of Malaysia on 11 December.

Myanmar falls in group A together with India, China Taipei and Guam. Group B is formed with Kirgyzstan, Turkmenis-tan, Cambodia and Brunei. The group stage will start during the month of March in 2013. From the group stage matches, top five football teams with highest marks and the best two group stage teams will emerge as AFC Challenge CUP qualifiers. Those AFC qualifiers will take part in final stage together with the host Maldives football team.

Myanmar will host group stage matches of Group A at Thuwunna Stadium from 2 to 6 March. This year is the fourth time for Myanmar football team that competed in the AFC Challenge Cup since 2008. Myanmar stood fourth place in 2008 and 2010, but the team failed to qualify for AFC Challenge Cup 2012.

From the group stage matches, Myanmar will play against Fiji, Philippines, Turkmenis-tan, Cambodia and Brunei.

From the group stage matches.

Pakokku Home for the Aged turns 60

KYEMON

Fire victims provided with cash assistance

KYEMON

Photo shows a 900-acre Hsinhwelet, Hsin Thakha and Yezin (special) paddy plantation which is being harvested by farmers near Chanthagyhi, Chinsu and Thayarkon villages of Sipaing village-tract in Lewe Township of Nay Pyi Taw Council Area recently.

KYEMON

Pakokku Home for the Aged turns 60

KYEMON

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KYEMON

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KYEMON

New hotel accommodation for Inlay region

KYEMON

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KYEMON

TRUCK PLUNGES INTO ROAD SIDE: Photo shows 22-wheeled container truck which was plunging down the embankment at the top of Chinsu Plywood factory street on Yangon-Mandalay motorway in Bago on 12 December. — KYEMON

**New Light of Myanmar**

**LOCAL NEWS**

**Yangon, 15 Dec —**

Cash assistance presented by the Bago region government to the fire victims amounted to K 8 million. — Kyemon

**Fire victims provided with cash assistance**

KYEMON

**Yangon, 15 Dec —**

Bago Region Chief Minister U Nyaw Win comforted victims of fire which broke out at about 7:45 pm at the market of Nat-than-kwin village in Kyaukkyi Township of Bago Region, and provided them with cash assistance.

The chief minister presented K 150,000 each to owners of fire-ravaged shops, the secretary of Region government, K 50000 each to vendors, and the region development affairs minister, K 2.9 million for region development affairs. — Kyemon

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**Italy**

Defiant leader of Cayman Islands under pressure to resign

McLaughlin said in a televised address on Thursday night, “It is untenable that for the foreseeable future, business people will have to explain to any foreign investor or person doing business in Cayman how it is that the premier of the Cayman Islands continues in office after having been arrested and bailed out of suspicion of having committed serious offenses,” he said. Bush, 57, was arrested on Tuesday by members of the Financial Crime Unit of the Royal Cayman Islands Police Service. He was released on police bail until February, pending the possible filling of criminal charges against him. Authorities have declined to give specific details of the probe targeting Bush, saying it is an ongoing investigation of alleged theft and misuse of a government credit card. — Reuters

**Connecticut**

Connecticut gun rampage: 28 dead, including 20 schoolchildren

Twenty schoolchildren were slaughtered by a heavily armed gunman who opened fire at a suburban elementary school in Connecticut on Friday, killing at least 27 people including himself in the one of the worst mass shootings in US history.

The 20-year-old gunman, who law enforcement sources identified as Adam Lanza, opened fire on a classroom at Sandy Hook Elementary School in Newtown, Connecticut, which serves children from ages 5 to 10. Authorities found 18 children and seven adults, including the gunman, dead at the school, and two children were missing and later discovered taking a shot to a hospital. Another adult was found dead at a related crime scene in Newtown, bringing the toll to 28, state police Lieutenant Paul Vance said. As reports of the shooting spread, panicked parents rushed to the school searching for their children as students covered in blood were being carried out of the building.

President Barack Obama, wiping away tears and pausing to collect his emotions in an address to the nation earlier that day, said, “Our hearts are broken for the parents of the survivors as well, for as blessed as they are to have their children home tonight, they know that their children’s innocence has been torn away from them too early and there are no words that will ease their pain,” said Obama, who has two young daughters. “Evil visited this community today,” Connecticut Governor Danell Malloy told reporters.

**SACP condemns murder of ANC official**

The South African Communist Party (SACP) on Friday condemned the murder of a provincial secretary of the ruling African National Congress (ANC), saying the killing “want to remove you,” Mantashe said at a breakfast briefing hosted by the New Age newspaper in Johannesburg.

The SACP said the ANC as a movement in the North West has attracted too many criminal elements into its ranks, which unfortunatley masquerade as political factions.

There is also too much money from proceeds of corruption in Municipalities and Departments that is used to continue destabilising the province.” As the ANC is gearing for its conference scheduled for 16-20 Dec to elect the party’s top leadership and adopt development policies for the next five years, there have been reports of disruptions, violence and internal fighting in events leading up to the conference. The murder of Chaka happened within weeks after the car of SACP Provincial Secretary Madoda Sambtha was torched at his home.

“Unidentified gunmen had previously tried to murder ANC Provincial Secretary Ka-Belo Mabato and COSATU (Congress of South African Trade Unions) Provincial Secretary Solly Phetoce continously received death threats. The developments “dem-
**Science**

**NASA moon-mapping mission to come to a crashing end**

**Reuters**

Cape Canaveral, 15 Dec—NASA plans to crash a pair of small robotic science probes into the moon next week after a successful year-long mission to learn what lies beneath the lunar surface, officials said on Thursday.

The twin Gravity Recovery and Interior Laboratory, or GRAIL, spacecraft will make suicidal plunges on Monday into a moon crater near the moon’s north pole, a site selected to avoid the chance of hitting any of the Apollo or other lunar relics.

The impacts, which are not expected to be visible from Earth, will take place about 20 seconds apart at 5:28 pm EST (2228 GMT) on Monday.

“They’re going to be completely blown apart,” GRAIL project manager David Lehmkuhl, with NASA’s Jet Propulsion Laboratory in Pasadena, California, told reporters on a conference call.

Almost out of fuel and currently flying just 7 miles above the lunar surface, the probes will make a final steering maneuver on Friday,ずっと the two craft, each about the size of a small washing machine, have been flying in close formation around the moon for nearly a year to map the lunar gravity. Scientists precisely measure the distance between the probes by using radio waves and a technique called laser ranging.

“We know that the moon had been bombarded by impacts but what we found is just how broken up and fractured the crust of the moon is,” said lead scientist Maria Zuber, with the Massachusetts Institute of Technology.

Similar bombardments happened on all the solid bodies of the inner solar system, including the Earth. The evidence on Earth has been erased by erosion, plate tectonics and other phenomena.

With Mars, there’s a question about where did the water that we think was on the surface go,” Zuber said. “These fractures provide a pathway deep inside the planet and now how a possible ocean on the surface could have found its way deep into the crust.”

Scientists also discovered lava-filled subterranean cracks inside the moon, evidence that the body expanded early in its history.

In addition to planetary science, the gravity maps, along with detailed images of the lunar surface, should help engineers pick landing sites for future robotic and human expeditions to the moon, Zuber said.

**Human link to climate change stronger than ever**

** Reuters**

LONDON, 15 Dec—International climate scientists are more certain than ever that humans are responsible for global warming, rising sea levels and extreme weather events, according to a leaked draft report from an influential panel of experts.

The early draft, which is still subject to change before a final version is released in late 2013, showed that a rise in global average temperatures since pre-industrial times was set to exceed 2 degrees Celsius by 2100, and may reach 4.8 Celsuis.

“It is extremely likely that human activities have caused more than half of the observed increase in global average surface temperatures since the 1950s,” the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) draft report said.

“Extremely likely” in the IPCC’s language means a level of certainty at least 95 percent. The next level is “virtually certain,” or 99 percent certainty, the scientists said.

The IPCC’s previous report, in 2007, said it was at least 90 percent certain that human activities, led by burning fossil fuels, were the cause of rising temperatures. The draft was shown on a climate change skeptic blog.

The IPCC said the unauthorized, premature posting of the draft could lead to confusion because the report was still work in progress and was likely to change before it is released.

A United Nations conference last week aimed at curbing emissions of greenhouse gases blamed for global warming yielded no progress and three countries — Canada, Russia and Japan — have abandoned the Kyoto Protocol on climate change.

**Apple falls on lower shipment forecasts, muted China debut**

**Reuters**

SAN FRANCISCO, 15 Dec—Apple Inc shares fell 3.9 percent on Friday after the iPhone 5 debuted in China to a cool reception and two analysts cut shipment forecasts.

An analyst at Bank of America Merrill Lynch, said that he expected lower iPhone 5 sales in China due to weaker than expected pre-orders. The threshold is the 95 percent. The next level is “virtually certain,” or 99 percent certainty, the scientists said.

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The brokerage said it was modeling more conservative growth for the world’s biggest technology company after making supply chain checks that showed fewer iPads being built.

“Some of our Chinese sources do not expect the iPhone 5 to do as well as the iPhone 4S,” UBS analyst Steven Milunovich wrote in a note to clients.

Apple launched the iPhone on Friday, a move widely expected to bring the Cupertino-based company some reprieve from a recent slide in market share in China, but early returns indicated that demand may not be as great as expected. Apple sold 6.75 million iPhones in the quarter ended Sept. 30, up 48 million from a year earlier but below analyst expectations.

**Apple is also in Sprint’s interest, which has agreed to buy 70 million to the cash-strapped service firm, said on Thursday, as some shareholders want more money while Softbank declined to comment on the details of these negotiations.**

**New York, 15 Dec—**Sprint Nextel Corp’s $2.1 billion offer to buy Clearwire Corp appeared to be running into trouble on Thursday, as some shareholders said they wanted more money while Softbank Corp set a cap on how much Sprint could pay.

Sprint, which owns 50.45 percent of Clearwire, offered $2.90 per share for less than 2 percent of the rest of the company and said it would also provide interim financing of $800 million to the cash-strapped company. Some deal would need approval by Softbank, which has agreed to buy 70 million to $2 billion for about $2 billion.

Clearwire shareholders, who together hold about 7.6 percent of the company, criticized the Sprint offer on Thursday, with some saying that the No 3 US wireless carrier should raise its bid to at least $5 per share. Holders of at least 24.8 percent of Clearwire’s outstanding stock, other than Sprint, need to approve the deal.

Clearwire, which is reviewing the Sprint offer, saw its shares jump almost 15 percent on Thursday to $3.16, suggesting investors expected a higher price.

But Softbank has told Sprint that it would not consent to any Clearwire bid higher than $2.97 per share, two sources close to the matter said.

The threshold is the same price that Sprint recently paid to buy a small stake from Clearwire founder Craig McCaw, Eagle River Holdings LLC.

Sprint and Clearwire employees of Indian software company Infosys walk past Infosys logos at their campus in the Electronic City area in Bangalore on 4 Sept, 2012.—Reuters

**Apple is also in Sprint’s interest, which has agreed to buy 70 million to the cash-strapped service firm, said on Thursday, as some shareholders want more money while Softbank declined to comment on the details of these negotiations.**

**Bangalore, 15 Dec—**Infosys, India’s No 2 software services firm, said on Friday it settled a lawsuit filed by former employee Satya Dev Tripathani.

The lawsuit filed against the company has been withdrawn following successful mediation, the company said in a statement on its website. An amicable settlement has been reached without any admission of liability, Infosys said. Tripathani, an American ex-employee, said he was harassed by his supervisor after he accused Infosys of visa fraud, accord-
Lundbeck’s alcohol dependency drug wins EU green light

LONDON, 15 Dec—A novel drug to fight alcohol dependency was given a green light by European regulators on Friday, providing a boost to Danish drugmaker Lundbeck at a time when its top product faces a big drop in sales.

The European Medicines Agency (EMA) said on Friday it recommended approval of Selincro in conjunction with counseling for the reduction of alcohol consumption in adults dependent on drink.

Recommendations from the EMA are normally endorsed by the European Commission within two or three months, implying the drug could be launched in Europe early next year.

That is good news for Lundbeck, which needs new drugs to replace lost sales from antidepressant Cipralex, sold as Lexapro in the United States. Lundbeck rose around 4 percent.

An estimated 150 billion Swiss francs ($161 billion) in losses are expected this year from pricing-in significant competition from generics.

Alcohol abuse is theoretically a vast market, although it is unclear whether doctors will be ready to prescribe a drug as a treatment and whether Lundbeck has the marketing muscle to make a big impact.

Lundbeck Chief Executive Ulf Winneborg told Reuters last week that Selincro was “a bit of a joker in our portfolio” because of uncertainty as to how it will be used in practice.

The drug, which blocks the action of opioid receptors in the brain, was licensed to Lundbeck from Finland’s Biotie Therapies and shares in Biotie jumped as much as 16 percent on the news, while Lundbeck rose around 1 percent.

“Clearly, the news is a much-needed boost to sentiment for the (Lundbeck) shares,” said Deutsche Bank analyst Tim Race.

“However, we suspect the market will refrain from pricing-in significant upside from the drug given uncertainties in reimbursement and Lundbeck’s ability to penetrate this market without a major partner.”

Race said current consensus forecasts suggested modest sales of $40 million Danish crowns ($55 million) in 2016.

More important for Lundbeck will be the verdict from regulators in North America and Europe late next year on a new antidepressant drug developmentally linked to Japanese Takeda Pharmaceutical that analysts see as a potential $12 billion-a-year seller.

Developing new treatments for depression has proved an uphill battle for drugmakers in recent times but vortioxetine has produced encouraging clinical trial results and its unique mode of action and flexible dosing could make it a winner.

Swiss banks face more pressure after German setback

ZURICH, 15 Dec—Swiss banks have suffered a major setback in their fight to maintain client secrecy after Germany rejected a key tax pact to sweep Swiss accounts clean of tax dodgers.

Switzerland is trying to protect its $2 trillion (1.23 trillion pounds) last year, as an offshore banking industry by striking deals with European neighbours that allow their citizens to pay tax on secret Swiss accounts without revealing their identity.

The German deal’s failure — even as others with Britain and Austria go ahead — is a big blow to the Swiss government because the northern neighbour has traditionally been the biggest foreign market for Swiss private banks, which hold an estimated 150 billion Swiss francs ($161 billion) in German assets.

Chevron nears settlement in Brazil spill case

RIO DE JANEIRO, 15 Dec—Chevron Corp is willing to pay about 300 million reais ($90 million) to settle lawsuits in Brazil over an oil spill last year, a senior executive and a federal prosecutor said, to improve the safety of offshore oil operations.

The talks over a possible settlement reinforce expectations of a swift resolution for Chevron (CVX.N), the No 2 US oil company, and its drilling contractor Transocean Ltd.

Related moves by Brazil’s oil regulator, the ANP, could also lead to a quick restart of output at Chevron’s Frade field, the location of the spill, which has been shut since March. “We could have an agreement before Christmas,” Giselle Porto, the prosecutor responsible for the case, said after a public hearing. “The amount is reasonable, and I don’t think I could get a judge to sign off on more.”

She said Chevron and Brazil’s oil regulator, the ANP, suggested modest sales of 540 million Danish crowns ($55 million) in 2016.

While Fiat has ample cash on hand, he added, it could raise additional money if needed by selling assets, including Magneti Marelli, which had revenue of 5.8 billion euros ($4.6 billion pounds) last year, as an operation that could be sold.

In the current weak economic environment, Marchionne said, “the availability of cash is crucial. It’s better to be safe than sorry.”

In Italy, Fiat commented on an unsourced report in Il Messaggero that said Fiat was sounding out UniCredit (CRDI.MI), Morgan Stanley (MS.N), Bank of America (BAC.N) and Goldman Sachs (GS.N) about the possibility of raising between 1 and 2 billion euros.

Fiat states there is no specific project in such respect, and believes that there is no need for a capital increase,” the company said in a statement on Friday. Fiat is entitled to 30 percent of total sales of Kynamro once the drug reaches the market, rising to 50 percent for sales over $2 billion.
Blast targets oil well in southeast Yemen

Aden, (Yemen), 15 Dec—A powerful explosion on Friday hit an oil well in Yemen’s southeastern Province of Hadramout, a government official told Xinhua. Several groups of masked gunmen attacked an oil well located in the area of Hadaba in Hadramout Province, causing a powerful explosion and spills of oil, the local government official said on condition of anonymity.

“The huge blast targeted an oil well at Block 9 operated by Canada’s Calvalley Petroleum company,” the source said. “The actual damage on the oil line is yet to be assessed by the technicians there,” he added.

Militants of the Yemen-based al-Qaeda offshoot are believed to be behind the pipeline bombing, according to the official.

Local leaders of the al-Qaeda terrorist group were not available for comments.

The country’s transitional government, which depends on oil exports for up to 70 percent of its budget, is struggling to launch a UN-backed reconciliation national dialogue by the end of this month to reunite the divided nation.—Xinhua

Tearful Obama calls for “meaningful action” after shooting school

Washington, 15 Dec—Choking up and wiping away tears, President Barack Obama said on Friday “our hearts are broken” for the victims of a deadly shooting rampage at a Connecticut elementary school and called for “meaningful action” to prevent such violence.

“We’ve endured too many of these tragedies in the past few years,” Obama said during a televised appearance in the White House briefing room just hours after one of the worst mass shootings in US history. Posing to collect himself as he expressed “overwhelming grief” as a parent, Obama deplored the “heinous” attack by a heavily armed gunman at a school in Newtown, Connecticut that killed 26 people, including 20 children. The shooter is also dead, police said.

Obama, who has responded to previous shooting massacres by citing the need for a national conversation about gun violence, again stopped short of calling for tougher gun-control laws, considered a politically risky in a country known for its flourishing gun culture.

“As a country, we have been through this too many times,” Obama said, ticking off a list of recent shootings.

“And we’re going to have to come together and take meaningful action to prevent more tragedies like this, regardless of the politics,” he said, in an apparent reference to the influence of the National Rifle Association, a powerful pro-gun lobby, over members of Congress.

“Our hearts are broken today, for the parents, and grandparents, sisters and brothers of these little children and for the families of the adults who were lost,” Obama said, his voice cracking with emotion.

“Our hearts are broken for the parents of the survivors as well, for as blessed as they are to have their children home tonight, they know that their children’s innocence has been torn away from them, and there are no words that will ease their pain,” he said.—Reuters

Israel’s Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu has promised to work with the US on pushing for “meaningful action.”

Obama’s call for action comes as a series of gun-related attacks, including at schools, over the past few years have sparked a heated debate among gun-control advocates and gun rights supporters in the US.

The shooting, which took place at Sandy Hook Elementary School in Newtown, Connecticut, has reignited the debate over the issue of gun control in the US. A high-speed train runs on a bridge during its trial trip from Zhengzhou, capital of central China’s Henan Province to Beijing, capital of China, on 14 Dec, 2012. China is set to open the world’s longest high-speed railway on 26 Dec, linking Beijing and the southern economic centre of Guangzhou, the Ministry of Railways (MOR) announced on Friday.—Xinhua

Mediation expert urges better handling of post-election impasse in Ghana

Temaa, 15 Dec—A conflict mediation expert in Ghana, Austin Gaamey, Friday called for a better handling of the country’s post-election impasse, saying the manner matters had been managed was not the best.

There has been rising tension between supporters of the ruling National Democratic Congress (NDC) and the main opposition New Patriotic Party (NPP), with the latter accusing its opponents of having the rigged presidential election won by incumbent President John Dramani Mahama.

Maahama polled 50.70 percent of the total valid votes cast as compared to 47.7 percent by his closest challenger and candidate of the NPP, Nana Addo Dankwah Akuffo-Addo.

Gaamey, Chief Executive Officer of Gamey and Gamey Academy of Mediation (GGAM), warned that the situation, if not properly handled, could worsen, considering the growing tension between supporters of the two main political parties.

Gaamey, who is also Executive Consultant for Pulse Africa Incorporated, an associate of Pulse Institute, a mediation group in Canada, made this observation when he addressed the media here, 38 km east of the Ghanaian capital, Accra.

Middle East

Kenyan police nab five terror suspects in Mombasa

Nairobi, 15 Dec—Kenya’s anti-terrorism police officers on Friday thwarted another terror plot and arrested five suspects who were planning to carry out a major terrorism attack in the coastal City of Mombasa over the weekend.

Regional deputy police commander Robert Kitur said the five suspects who are on the terror radar by both local and foreign security agencies were arrested from a bus while enroute to the Coastal city and recovered a pistol from them.

Kitur said the detectives had intelligence information the suspects were part wide terrorism network planning attack in Mombasa. “Our officers are operating on highly placed intelligence reports of impending terror attacks in Mombasa and we have arrested suspects who are assisting us with investigation,” Kitur told Xinhua by telephone.

Mombasa, the country’s second largest city and a major tourist spot is one of various cities targeted by a series of grenade attacks and abduction of foreigners in recent months.

Kenya’s tourism has suffered a decline in tourist arrivals since September 2011 after the Somali militant group Al-Shabaab kidnapped tourists in the Lamu archipelago and Spanish volunteers.

Kenyan authorities have enhanced security in major cities and all entry points and called on residents to be vigilant and report any suspicious individuals in their midst to security personnel.

There has been a string of attacks by Al-Shabaab militants and their sympathizers since Kenya sent troops to Somalia on October 2011 to subdue the insurgents who were blamed for a series of murders and kidnappings on the Kenya soil with Daadab District which hosts the refugee camps being one of the worst hit by the attacks.—Xinhua

Israeli foreign minister quits after indictment

Jerusalem, 15 Dec—Israeli Foreign Minister Avigdor Lieberman resigned on Friday following being charged with fraud and breach of trust, a move that could impact on January’s election which his party, merged with Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu’s Likud, was tipped to win.

Israeli Justice Ministry said on Thursday it would charge Lieberman over alleged irregularities tied to the promotion of an Israeli diplomat who had leaked him privileged information about a police probe into his activities. More serious allegations, including money-laundering and bribery, were dropped, but even the lesser charges cast a cloud over his political future and within 24 hours of receiving the ministry report, he stood down.

“I have decided to resign my post as foreign minister and deputy prime minister and ... also to remove my (parliamentary) immunity forthwith so I can end this matter quickly, without delay and clear my name absolutely,” Lieberman said in an emailed statement.

Netanyahu will serve as acting foreign minister until the 22 January election, an official said. Lieberman is not prohibited by law to run in the election, but it was unclear whether he would choose to do so.

On his Facebook page, Lieberman wrote that he hoped the case would be settled before the vote and that he would return to public office.

Lieberman’s right-wing party Yisrael Beiteinu (Our Home is Israel) and Netanyahu’s Likud group have formed an electoral pact ahead of the ballot and opinion polls had predicted they would win.

Lieberman is second on the party list after Netanyahu and before his indictment he was widely expected to retain a top cabinet position in the case of victory.

“I am also doing this because I believe the citizens of Israel are entitled to go to the ballot after the matter has been resolved, meaning after a legal decision has been made before the election and I will be able to continue to serve the state of Israel,” Lieberman wrote on his Facebook page.

Reuters

US President Barack Obama wipes a tear as he speaks about the shooting at Sandy Hook Elementary School in Newtown, Connecticut, during a Press briefing at the White House in Washington on 14 Dec, 2012.—Reuters
**ITF Officiating National Course kicks off**

Yangon, 15 Dec—The opening ceremony of ITF Officiating National Course, organized by Myanmar Tennis Federation, was held at Theinbyu Tennis Court in Mingala Taungnyunt Township on 10 December morning.

The course was purposed to train umpires for Davis Cup Grades IV and III and the XXVII SEA Games and for enabling Myanmar umpires to discharge duties as umpires in the international tennis tournaments, said President of Myanmar Tennis Federation U Aung Maw Thein. Coach Mr Ntinn Kanawmar of Asian Tennis Federation provides training to the trainees.

Myanma Alinn

**Yangon offering Five Star accommodation for tourists**

Yangon, 15 Dec—As Myanmar has opened its door to the world arrival of tourists is increasing day by day in Myanmar. For their visits they set with economic, political, social and other travelling purposes, there are five Five star hotels in Yangon, the economic hub of the nation, according to the facts and figures of Myanmar Hotels and Tourism Services.

The internationally recognized five star hotels are Sedona Hotel on Kaba Aye Pagoda Road in Yankin Township, Kandawgyi Palace Hotel on Kamayiktha Road in Mingala Taungnyunt Township, Park Royal Hotel on Alanpy Pagoda Road in Dagon Township, Chatrium Hotel at the corner of Po Sein and Natmauk Roads in Tamway Township and the Strand Hotel in Kyauktada Township.

Among these five hotels, Sedona Hotel is constituted with 366 rooms which are the largest number. Parkroyal Hotel has 359 rooms that stood second in the room number. Chatrium Hotel is formed with 303 rooms. Kandawgyi Palace Hotel has 208 rooms, and the Strand Hotel with 32 only. This being so, Yangon can accommodate guests at 1259 rooms at the five-star hotels.

Likewise, six four star hotels are located in Yangon. Of them, Traders Hotel has 496 rooms as largest number. Summit Parkview has 250 rooms. Inya Lake Hotel is formed with 239 rooms.

Moreover, Yangon City has 13 three-star hotels. Of them, Excel Treasure Hotel constituted with 141 rooms on Kaba Aye Pagoda Road in Bahan Township has the largest number of rooms.

Hotel Yangon at the corner of Kaba Aye Pagoda Road and Pyay Road in Mayangon Township is formed with 112 rooms as the second largest room number. Yangon International Hotel stood third in the room number with 111 located on Alton Road of Dagon Township.

In addition, there are 21 two-star hotels and 28 one star hotels in Yangon. With the aim of accommodating the guests from the global countries, plans are underway to build more five star, four star and three star hotels meeting international standards in Yangon.

With the international standard hotels, foreign investment will flow into the industry so as to contribute much to development of tourism industry and State economy.

Myanma Alinn

**Penwegon, 15 Dec—** Under the auspices of 11th Tipitaka Dhama- bhandagarika Sayadaw Bhaddanta Indapala and arrangements of the Ministry of Health, an eye specialist team led by eye specialist Dr U Aye Tun gave free eye examinations in Penwegon of Bago Region on 8 and 9 December.

The specialists provided eye care to 586 eye patients and 148 cataract patients from Penwegon and its surrounding areas free of charge. Moreover, the specialists donated optical glasses to needy patients.

Myanma Alinn

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**Tennis Federation provides training to umpires**

Yangon, 15 Dec— The Federation provides training to umpires in the international tennis and for enabling Myanmar to the ITF Officiating National Course.

Myanma Alinn

**Nay Pyi Taw, Mandalay people get access to e-payment for meter bill**

Yangon, 15 Dec— Yatanaaron Teleport in cooperation with private banks and the Central Bank of Myanmar launched the ITF Online Payment Gateway (Y pay) under the permission of Central Bank of Myanmar.

Electric meter bills can be paid in Nay Pyi Taw and Mandalay Region from 15 to 24 every month through the website www.ebilling.ypay.com.mm. Soon, Yangonites will apply e-payment.

Myanma Alinn

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**Mawlamyine says no to gambling**

Mawlamyine, 15 Dec— Under the arrangements of the Commander of Mon State Police Force, Mawlamyine District and Township Police Forces as part of implementing the crime reduction project, a squad led by IP Khun Than, SIP Thein Soe and SIP Khin Maung Zaw together with witnesses, acting on information, searched the house of Ma Nilar San, 39 on Thiri Myaung 2nd Street in Mupon Ward of Mawlamyine on 1 December and seized documents used in gambling, one GSM telephone, one CDMA telephone and over K50,000 of gambling money.

Likewise, the authorities searched Lin Lin Aung (a) A Yu, 35 of 10th Street in Thiri Mingala Ward, at Thamadi 3rd Street on 30 November and seized vouchers used in gambling and K50500.

Mupon and Myoma police station filed lawsuits against the gamblers under the law.

Myanma Alinn

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**Malaysian athletes receive training for Myanmar chess**

Nay Pyi Taw, 15 Dec— At the invitation of Myanmar Chess Federation, a six-man comprising selected Malaysian chess players including one international master took training on Myanmar traditional chess that will be included in the XXVII SEA Games, at the hall of Myanmar Chess Federation from 4 to 6 December.

Myanma Alinn

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**Sports trials for traditional cane-ball event on 26 Jan**

Nay Pyi Taw, 15 Dec— With the aim of securing gold medals in the XXVII SEA Games, the sports trial of Myanmar traditional cane-ball event will be held at Aung San Stadium in Yangon on 26 January. Not only the selected players from the 2011-2012 season but also any athletes in individuals or in groups may take part in the sports trials free of charge.

Men players are to take part in the events 1-6 and women in the events 1-4 drawn in line with the international sports rules.

Those wishing to participate in the sports trials may get registered at Myanmar Cannon-Ball Federation, not later than 31 December. The selected players will be provided training in Nay Pyi Taw Sports Camp. For further information, dial 01-393420 of the federation.

Myanma Alinn

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**Free eye care for patients in Penwegon**

Penwegon, 15 Dec— Under the auspices of 11th Tipitaka Dhama-bhandagarika Sayadaw Bhaddanta Indapala and the Ministry of Health, an eye specialist team led by eye specialist Dr U Aye Tun gave free eye examinations in Penwegon of Bago Region on 8 and 9 December.

The specialists provided eye care to 586 eye patients and 148 cataract patients from Penwegon and its surrounding areas free of charge. Moreover, the specialists donated optical glasses to needy patients.

Myanma Alinn
The Teddy palm and the coconut palm are tall stately twin beauties which grace the Myanmar landscape. Coconut palm is a pinnate-leaved tropical tree known the world over for its sweet refreshing juice and delicious white kernel. It is found plentifully in sea beaches.

The palmyra palm or toddy palm grows abundantly in the Central plains of Myanmar stretching endlessly on the vast flat lands. The toddy palm is a tall shapely beauty likened to a dainty damsel, usually addressed as 'she'. Toddly palm is an idyllic model for shuttubgers and artists.

It is an oasis offering a shady haven to weary travelers crossing the plains or working in the sun from unendarably scorching heat. She is also an interesting theme for prose and poetry to enrich our literature and poetic renditions.

One wonderful similarity of the coconut and toddy palm trees is its immense height tapering high up to the reach of many like species, near to the abode of the Gods in heaven, swaying in the high winds and savouring pristine ambrosia amblicked down from heavenly abode. Another unique feature is the pure juice enecond inside the kernel of the coconut.

Just imagine the pure juice running its way from the roots to the trunk to the top and spilling into the kernel, sealed by the blessing of the gods, untouched by soiled human hands.

Again imagine the juice of the toddy palm also travelling from the roots down below the earth pumping up through the trunk to the stem and then down to the udders ready to be milked into exhilarating juice to stimulate the palate of mortal humans.

The toddy palm grove is said to be 'a paradise' offering many a weary thirsty traveler who seeks her cool sweet solace. One can only wonder at the magnitude of the production and desolations sheoffers to mankind to fulfill man's economic, social, educational, gastronomic and aesthetic needs. In fact in this humble palm of the plains, nothing is ever wasted, from the roots to the trunk of the coconuts. Its toddy udders (h//an), the juice-producing shoot offers toddy, the delicious nectar from heaven.

Milkling toddy juice is an excellent capital rich product, calling for skill, dexterity, cool confidence especially in scaling the sixty plus meter trunk from the ground to the pinnacle. And it is a vocation handed down by generation from father to son, a family affair indeed. A cursory tour to the toddly villages will reveal many pathetic cripples caused by falling from trees, not to say of those who lost their lives.

At first streak of dawn we see the lowly climber enjoying a bountiful of simple breakfast of left-over rice and pehyoke steaming boiled pea. Then he prepares the essential tools of trade which consist of a razor-sharp short knife, a cluster of earthen pots blackened with soot in open fire and tucks a longyi tight around his slim waist. Now a day he wears a short trunk because the longyi may tend to slip away at grave danger to life and limb. He also carries an extra longyi to use as loop to transport up and down the high tapering trunk.

On ground at the foot of the tree trunk, the climber hangs most lovingly to the tree, mutters sottovoce his mantras for safety, tucks his spare longyi across the trunk in a loop and fastens it to his two feet. In a fleeting moment he is up and away, crawling most dexterously, a tiny spick peering up from ground to the high and mighty trunk, tens of feet nearer to heaven, swaying to the rhythm of the tree teared by the clear winds high above.

As he nears the top where the palm fronds spread like a giant fan, a slender but strong short ladder is attached to the tapering trunk leading to the sliced udder where the nectar trickles down into the blackened earthen pots tied the day before. Ropes tied to around the rim of the pots are firmly wound to the stems to withstand strong winds sixty feet above.

The toddly climber is careful man, for a slight slip means certain death, a precarious profession indeed.

Up and above, the toddly climber stands astride the pots to check the pots and unties the ones full to the brim with milky bubbling frothy juice. He trims the shoot with his knife for smooth flow, replaces with the empty principal pots with cool nectar for the next day’s collection. Then hanging the full pots around his waist, he begins his careful descent. Alighting on the earth he delivers the frothing pots to his awaiting wife or family.

Then taking another cluster of empty pots at the ready, he climbs the next tree and the next cluster. Up and down, up and down he toils scaling the majestic trees till he completes the quota for the day. Meanwhile the wife and family empty the contents into larger camisters and carries to the market centre to sell out to the waiting customers.

There are many products made from toddy juice, the principal fare being the toddy nectar (h//an yai). Jaggery the natural sweetener is also made from toddy juice, a thriving commercial business of Central Myanmar. The rural people prefer jaggery to sugar, because it has many products and derivatives of medicinal value according to indigenous traditional medical system.

As has been said earlier, the toddy palm grove amidst the parched plains of Central Myanmar is an oasis providing employment for the rural people to live in a better fare. The frugal youths and adults weary or not just do not enter the solace of the palm grove only to rest. The better fare lies in wait, to soothe the searing heat and also to quench the parched palate.

Hereat the foot of the salley grove sheltered by natural verdant green of shrubs lie the nectar, drink of the God’s pristine bounty of nature, most cievously milky by skilled hands to be transformed into larger camisters and prepared by most guarded formula to serve the thirsty who take all the trouble to enjoy the first juice from source. How it becoms mankind to hoard the pot’s cool lingering tang to sit down on Mother Earth’s emerald green carpet amidst like minded friends to enjoy to one’s heart content.

The morning pot is ideally the nectar of the first water sparkling with frothy wing’s wings, bubbles popping like frisky shrimps, pure milky juice fresh sizzling with the crest of white foaming froth. So tempting was its exotic flavor that in the days of the Myanmar kings certain choice palm groves were reserved exclusively for the royalty and the noblered.

Food tastes best at source, so the saying goes. Ripe durians bring forth its true pungent and dizzyingly sweet aroma and flavor when ripened in the plantations in Mawlamyine. Beer tastes best in the Brewery reliving the memory of my visit to Scultz Brewery in Milwaukee USA during my post-graduate tour in 1961. Dyer Meakin Brewery in Mandalay also renders equally exotic taste in fresh brew, when was their guest in 1951. Teddy juice also tastes supreme in the choicest palm grove, from the morning product, fresh, bubbling, in pristine form not yet commercially adulterated.

Like-minded friends forming good company (depending on one’s interpretation of ‘good’) make him yai taste best. The majestic foot covered earthen pot of the nectar of the gods in the centre stage on a makeshift brick pedestal, the majesty of the unival nectar, tantalizing teasers like roast rabbit, fowl, fish, fresh salad of onions, roasted peanuts, chill and slices of lime it is a feast fit for kings for that one speck of time.

Such feast is also topic for poets, writers to commemorate for future generations to admire at the feast as well as the wit and humour of the compositions. King Tapinshwde Hti a fearless teenage King who performed Novitiation ceremony at Shwedagon, was reserved exclusively for the treachery of the foreign friends and their booze.

In my younger days, at the blood lettering line and literature sessions taught by the late Guru Dr. Htin Aung, The Rukhstay composed by the Persian Poet Omar (See page 10).
President meets professors, faculty members, students...

(from page 1) University of Computer Sciences (Thatmon) and the Technological University (Mawlamyine) and attended the needs.

He also urged them to turn their universities into centres of excellence and to establish connectivity with international universities for academic cooperation.

It is required to teach them to be able to serve the interest of the State practically. Student-centered approach would facilitate self-study. They are to be equipped with necessary knowledge so that they would be able to take post-graduate and doctorate courses after undergraduate courses. Knowledge they are given would be used to overcome difficulties in real world. The outputs of that university are to be equipped with nationalistic fervor and the well-disciplined graduates are to discharge duties efficiently and effectively while they are in the workplace. The President called for more efforts to preserve own cultures and literatures of national races.

After the meeting, the President cordially greeted those present.

Next, the President and party viewed round the development of Mawlamyine and progress of strand road in a motorcade.

In meeting with state/district level departmental officials at Aung San Hall of the office of Mon State government, Union Minister at President Office U Tin Naing Thein, first, made clarifications on ongoing political and economic reforms in the country, seminars and workshops on investment being held in coordination with international organizations and field trips being made to know the real situation while making investments.

Union Minister at President Office U Soe Thein explained progress of formulation of laws and bylaws, implementation of four foreign investment policies, tasks of inspection groups comprising outside scholars for ensuring transparency and plans for investment procedures for 2013.

The President said that now is the time when reform processes are being implemented including system changes. The purpose of the change is and which the points to be changed are necessary to be known. National goal should be synonymous with the desires of the people who inspire peace and stability and the rule of law and socio-economic development.

The government is moving towards emergence of a peaceful and developed democratic nation. Liberalization was made for all-inclusiveness in the drive for political stability and national development. Amnesties were granted. Now the nation sees peace and stability to a certain extent. The new government inherited the issue of armed conflicts that broke out since 60 years ago.

In an attempt to ensure non-disintegration of the Union, Our Three Main National Causes is of great importance. To reach the eternal peace, it needs to work as blue color workers there. The reason why they are working there is that they get much more income than that in the country. To create more job opportunities factories and workshops are under implementation. In doing so, it needs to have capital, investment and human resources.

Without these three inputs, it is impossible to establish factories and workshops. Foreign investments are being invited while efforts for removal of economic sanctions are being made. Foreign Direct Investment has been approved, which is essential for foreign investment. Establishments of factories and workshops in rural areas, which can create more job opportunities for the majority of the people are being invited while striving for assimilation of industrial zones. The government is striving for ensuring higher socio-economic status of people.

Now the nation sees peace and stability.

Seventy percent of the country’s population live in rural areas, the majority of whom are the poor. Eight poverty alleviation and rural development tasks are being implemented. Microfinance societies have been set up to provide capitals to the poor. Due to the less employment opportunities that were formed with Daw Aung San Suu Kyi as leader in order to seek the most appropriate answer to the incident, and only when there is an assistance of the people and members of the Sangha will the investigation commission be able to deal with the problem in a free and right manner. And he humbly requested the Sayadaws to give a helping hand in line with the Dhamma so that the incident can be prevented from bad.

After receiving the Five Precepts from Deputy Chief Rector Sayadaw of Mahagandayon Monastery in Amarapura Bhaddanta Innobhasabhivamsa, the Union Minister made apology. He said that he was deeply pained by the plight of members of the Sangha who sustained burns in Lapadaungtaung incident, and pledged to fulfill the requirement of the warded monks. He continued that being a Buddhist, he felt every unhappy to see the injured members of the Sangha, and accordingly on behalf of the government humbly made apology in the presence of the Sayadaws who are present on the occasion. He added that the investigation commission was formed with Daw Aung San Suu Kyi as leader in order to seek the most appropriate answer to the incident, and only when there is an assistance of the people and members of the Sangha will the investigation commission be able to deal with the problem in a free and right manner. And he humbly requested the Sayadaws to give a helping hand in line with the Dhamma so that the incident can be prevented from bad.

After the meeting, the President cordially greeted those present. Afterwards, the President and party arrived in Mudon by cars and looked round Kantawgyi near Mudon Lake pagoda.

The President and party visited private Rubber societies and fruit farm in Mudon. They arrived back in Mawlamyine.

Union Minister U Hla Tun makes apology to monks

NAY PYI TAW, 15 Dec—Union Minister at the President Office U Hla Tun and Union Minister for Health Dr Pe Thein Khin, accompanied by Chief Minister of Mandalay Region U Theib, Chief Minister of Sagaing Region U Tha Aye, Deputy Minister for Home Affairs Police Maj- Gen Kyaw Kyaw Tun and departmental heads, visited hospitals in Mandalay that are providing medical treatment to members of the Sangha who sustained injuries in Lapadaungtaung Copper Mining Project incident in Salangyi Township, Sagaing Region this morning and made cash donations.

First, the Union Minister and party paid respects to members of the Sangha who received treatment at the general hospital (1000-bed) in Chanyethazan Township and enquired after the health of the monks. On arrival at the operation ward-1 and operation ward-2 of the hospital, they paid respects to members of the Sangha and lay persons receiving medical treatment and were briefed by the acting medical superintendent on provision of health care services. They then attended to the needs. There are 15 members of the Sangha and four lay persons receiving medical treatment at the hospital.

The Union Minister and party proceeded to Kandaw Nadi hospital in Channaythazan Township and paid respects to warded members of the Sangha and attended to their needs. Altogether eight members of the Sangha are still at the hospital.

In the afternoon, the Union Minister on behalf of the government apologized the wounded members of the Sangha at Mahat Atulawaiyan monastery, and the ceremony was continued by members of working committee of the Sangha of Mandalay Region, members of the Sangha of Jotikayon Monastery in Monywa of Sagaing Region and members of the Sangha who got injuries in the protest.

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Myanmar Airways makes emergency landing at Dawei due to engine failure

NAY PYI TAW, 15 Dec—A Myanmar Airways’ XY-AGA 316-J flight bound for Yangon from Myeik landed at Dawei Airport safely due to engine failure 10 minutes after taking off on 13 December morning.

The left engine of the aircraft was noticed to be burning before it was forced to land at Dawei airport.

The aircraft was noticed to be burning before it was forced to land at Dawei airport.
Buddhist Cultural Heritage seminar...

Vice-President Dr Sai Mauk Kham suppedications on religious affairs at International Seminar on Buddhist Cultural Heritage to members of the Sangha.—MNA

The Vice-President said he believed that it would be great help for the friendly relationship between the two countries. In the 6th Century BC, the noble instructions and timeless teachings of the Buddha manifested itself in India by the name of Buddhism, spreading many parts of the world and creating tremendous influence on human society, up to the 21st Century. It has also prevented the decline of moral values and contributed to peace and harmony with the embellishing of patience, loving-kindness, compassions and selflessness. Out of two requirements of humankind, physical and spiritual, science and technology may be able to fulfill the physical needs. But, in the end, only the teachings of the Buddha can satisfy the spiritual needs. Hence, the sublime teachings of peace and harmony, promulgated by the Buddha, are the unique cultural heritage of Buddhism.

It is believed that the seminar, on the basis of the preservation of Buddhist Cultural Heritage, not only will bring peace, harmony and prosperity will also bring the cultural values and guiding principles to all of us. It is highly appreciated that the Republic of India, the birth-place of the Buddha and the seat of the Buddhist Culture, together with Myanmar, which is a leading Theravada Buddhist country, preserving Buddha’s original teachings in its pristine purity convenes these special events to commemorate the 2600th anniversary of the Buddha’s Enlightenment.

The Vice-President concluded that it was his wish that the teachings of the omniscient Buddha be like unto the luminescence of the sun and the moon and be long lasting and the teaching of the omniscient Buddha be propagated throughout the world.

External Affairs Minister Mr. Salman Khurshid of the Republic of India made an inaugural address.

Then, Joint-President Navi Nanisara delivered a welcome address.

Myanmar Historical Commission Member Retired Director-General Dr Khin Maung Nyunt of Archaeological Department gave a keynote speech and Retired Director-General Dr Myo Myint from Sasana Affairs Department and Secretary of the Organizing Committee supplicated on report of the organizing committee.

Sitagu Sayadaw Dr. Ashin Nanisara presented Buddha Images to Vice-President Dr Sai Mauk Kham.

India presented university commemorative gift to Vice-President Dr Sai Mauk Kham.

A Book of Verses underneath the Bough A Jug of Wine, a Loaf of Bread, and Thou Beside me singing in the Wilderness, Oh, Wilderness were Paradise now!”

If Omar Khayyam had been to Bagan Kingdom in the 11th Century in the days of King Anawrahta, the mighty emperor, and in the company of the Ari Heretic Rahans had tasted the toddy juice, Nectar of the Gods, the author is as sure as the sun rises in the East, that Poet Omar might have eulogized it in his Rubayats, bringing enduring fame to Bagan, its toddy groves and like buddies “the Art”, don’t you agree?

Yangon, 15 Dec.—The signing of technical transfer agreement and investment on memorandum of understanding between Asia General Electric Co Ltd (AGE) of Myanmar and Meidensha Corporation (MEIDEN) and Metal One Corporation from Japan took place at MIndon Hall of Sedona Hotel here this morning.

AGE managing director and Meidensha Corporation Executive Officer Mr Kazumi Ikarashi inked technical transfer agreement, AGE chairman and Meidensha Corporation Vice President Mr Kojo Masaki and Metal One Corporation Chief Regional Officer Mr Takehiro Honda investment on MoU and exchanged the notes. Then, AGE chairman spoke words of thank.

The purpose of the ceremony is to manufacture power transformer in Myanmar and to develop experiences and techniques for local staff, to create job opportunities, to reduce foreign currency expense and to repair materials purchased from foreign countries.—MNA
India and Pakistan seal accord to ease visa restrictions

Despite thousands of years of shared heritage, India and Pakistan have tense relations—a legacy of three wars since their independence from Britain in 1947.

The two governments agreed to relax visa rules in principle in September, when former Indian foreign minister SM Krishna visited Islamabad.

India is likely to issue up to 3,000 multi-city visas to Pakistani cricket fans and an additional 300 to VIPs for the cricket series that starts on Christmas Day,allowing Pakistanis to cheer on their national team on Indian turf.

“This is a baby step towards reducing tension between India and Pakistan,” said Ashok Mehta, a former major general of the Indian army. “But it’s still significant, especially because nothing is happening on big-ticket items like border management and terrorism – the real ice-breakers.”

Malik promised India that Pakistan would convict those responsible for the 2008 attacks. “I assure the Indian authorities that we will not leave any stone unturned and the day is not far when you will see the conviction and you will see the justice done,” he said.

ASEAN mobilizes relief to aid typhoon-hit areas in Philippines

Jakarta, 15 Dec— Relief aids to victims of Bopha Typhoon in the Philippines is being closely coordinated by the Indonesian government’s mission in Jakarta under the ASEAN Secretariat led by Ambassador Bagas Hapsoro, the former AHA Centre team has been deployed in Cagayan de Oro. The delivery of mobile storages to apply for nationality verification, say reports.

ASEAN Deputy Secretary-General Alicia dela Rosa Bala said that all of those measured showed that humanitarian assistance in ASEAN is now institutionalized. “ASEAN now responds as a group,” Alicia said.

According to the data issued by the AHA Centre, over five million people have been affected by Typhoon Bopha that hit Mindanao regions in the Philippines since 3 Dec.

As of Friday, the regional disaster mitigation agency recorded 906 people killed, 2,660 injured and 932 others were still missing from the typhoon. A total of 5,516,181 persons were affected in the affected regions with 60,823 houses partially damaged and 88,925 totally damaged.

Final rush for migrant workers to register in Thailand

BANGKOK, 15 Dec— Migrant workers crowded into the Thai government labour office in central Provice of Samut Sakhon in this seaboard province to apply for nationality verification as the government insisted Friday’s deadline will not be extended, Thai News Agency reported.

Those who fail to have their nationality verified by Friday will be repatriated, said Labour Minister Padermich Sasomsap.

Indonesian capital poised to become ASEAN diplomatic hub

Jakarta, 15 Dec— With the Association of South East Asian Nations (ASEAN) Secretariat head-quartered in Indonesian capital of Jakarta, city governor Joko Widodo vowed to make the city the diplomatic capital of ASEAN, local media reported on Friday.

“My city will always be ready to receive the ASEAN Secretariat as a team from the ASEAN Secretariat led by Ambassador Bagas Hapsoro, the former AHA Centre Executive Director and Chairperson, Faisal Shamsuddin, ASEAN’s former Deputy Secretary General, has said what is needed through our assistance on disaster management (AHA Centre) to assist the relief work,” Faisal said.

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ASEAN Deputy Secretary General Alicia dela Rosa Bala said that all of those measured showed that humanitarian assistance in ASEAN is now institutionalized. “ASEAN now responds as a group,” Alicia said.

According to the data issued by the AHA Centre, over five million people have been affected by Typhoon Bopha that hit Mindanao regions in the Philippines since 3 Dec.

As of Friday, the regional disaster mitigation agency recorded 906 people killed, 2,660 injured and 932 others were still missing from the typhoon. A total of 5,516,181 persons were affected in the affected regions with 60,823 houses partially damaged and 88,925 totally damaged.
MINISTRY OF RAIL TRANSPORTATION
MYANMA RAILWAYS
INVITATION TO OPEN TENDER

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Havana, 15 Dec—Cuba has planned to press ahead with new programmes in 2013 to boost the use of renewable and clean energy sources such as wind, sun and sugarcane, Minister of Energy and Mines Alfredo Lopez Valdes said on Tuesday.

The government has set up a committee to outline a strategy and guide investment in the field, Lopez Valdes said during a meeting of Cuban parliament’s Committee on Energy and Environment intended to discuss energy policies for the coming year.

It has decided to expand clean energy production in the country following a feasibility study and a decision to curb spending on fuel imports, he added. Cuba already has several wind farms, and plans to open another one next year in northern Las Tunas Province with a designed power-generating capacity of 51,000 kilowatts. Also in the pipeline are solar farms in different parts of the country, which are expected to have a combined capacity of 10,000 kilowatts. A 1,000-kilowatt solar farm is currently being built in the central province of Cienfuegos. Officials also have approved a plan to build two power plants that will use residual sugarcane as raw materials.

One plant will be located in western Matanzas with a capacity of 20,000 kilowatts, and the other will be set up in central Ciego de Avila with a capacity of 30,000 kilowatts. Cuba meets 50 percent of its energy needs through domestic oil production, with the rest supplemented by imports from its political and economically ally Venezuela.

Havana, 15 Dec—Cuba could double its beef exports to Russia, its biggest buyer, after banning a controversial feed additive that promotes muscle growth in animals such as pigs and cattle, Russia’s food safety watchdog said on Thursday.

Russia stepped up tests on US and Canadian meat imports for traces of the additive, a beta blocker called ractopamine, on Monday, and demanded both nations certify their meat as ractopamine-free.

PORTO, 15 Dec—Former South African president Nelson Mandela was still in hospital on Friday afternoon, the Presidency said, amid reports that the anti-apartheid icon might be discharged.

The doctors attending to former president Nelson Mandela report that he has had a comfortable 24 hours and that he remains under treatment in hospital,” said Presidency spokesperson Mac Maharaj.

Three military vehicles with police lights and sirens were seen entering and then leaving the Mediclinic Heart Hospital in Pretoria, where Mandela was believed to be staying earlier in the day, prompting media speculations that Mandela may be released from hospital.

Mandela was suffering from the recurrence of a previous lung infection and was responding to treatment, the Presidency said.

The whereabouts of Mandela have puzzled the media which are scrambling to get word on his conditions. Since Mandela was hospitalized on 8 Dec, crowds of journalists had camped outside the 1 Military Hospital in Pretoria, where Mandela was believed to be treated.

The Presidency hinted on Thursday Mandela was not treated at that hospital.

This prompted journalists to change camping sites. This time they shifted their attention to the Mediclinic Heart Hospital in Pretoria. Since early Friday, groups of journalists have been streaming to the hospital to set up their camps outside.

Mandela reportedly had been admitted to the hospital under a pseudonym.
White House TV comedy aims for laughs, not politics

Los Angeles, 15 Dec—There is a crazy family living at the White House, but it’s not the Obamas. It’s the Gilchrists, whose never-ending follies pulse and push upcoming TV comedy romp “1600 Penn.”

Starring Bill Pullman as US President Dale Gilchrist and Jenna Elfman as his first lady, the show’s co-creator Josh Gad said on Friday that there is plenty of precedent for family madness at the Oval Office.

“You can look as far back as Mary Todd Lincoln ... and you can see dysfunction in the halls of Lincoln ... and you can see far back as Mary Todd at the Oval Office. There is a crazy family in Washington, DC,” Elfman said, referring to the wife of the 16th US president, other step-children and fights the leader to abandon the White House,” Gad told reporters on a conference call, referring to the wife of Civil War President Abraham Lincoln.

Gad, who shot to prominence in the Tony-winning musical “The Book of Mormon,” also plays the error-prone, good-intentioned son Skip, who with his three youngersblings back the earnestness of his father and step-mother.

“We really wanted to dissect what it meant to be a family in the most extraordinary of circumstances—and what’s more extraordinary than being the first family?” Gad said. The show, which takes its title from the 1600 Pennsylvania Avenue street address of the White House, debuts on 10 January on NBC.

It sees Skip crashing a Latin American trade meeting at the White House and helping convince the region’s leaders to abandon the arm-twisting Brazilian president and cut a deal instead with his father—summoning their courage with booze.

“It is all part of Skip’s plan to redeem himself after causing a public relations embarrassment by burning down a fraternity house at his college. “It’s like a drop of a political thing that will spark a family problem,” Elfman said, whose character struggles to win the trust of her step-children and fights the media’s trophy-wife label.

Greta Garbo’s dresses, caps fetch high prices at auction

Los Angeles, 15 Dec—An auction of film legend Greta Garbo’s belongings got off to a roaring start on Friday, with her clothing, jewels and other memorabilia fetching more than ten times pre-sale estimates in many cases.

Bidding was brisk and high as more than 800 items belonging to the reclusive Swedish actress, including the bed she slept in, went up for sale over two days at Julien’s Auctions in Beverly Hills, Calif. A 1930s black velvet evening dress with an estimated value of about $1,200 (742 pounds) sold on Friday.

Greta Garbo, whose great-nephew Derek Reisfeld told Reuters when the auction was announced in August that the family had kept her belongings in storage before deciding to sell them.

The collection includes vintage and designer dresses, shoes, furniture and photos from Garbo’s Hollywood heyday, as well as the platform bed she designed to showcase the actress’ incredible height.

The bed, due to be sold later in the auction, carries an estimate of $600-$1,200.

Among other early items sold on Friday was a single page Swedish summary bank statement from 1956 that fetched $11,125, a Swedish military jacket ($4,062), and a 1960s silk brocade evening coat ($12,800). The buyers for many of the various items were not immediately known.

Garbo started her Hollywood career in silent films in 1927’s “Flesh and the Devil” and was among the few actors to successfully transition to talkies, becoming iconic not only for her beauty, but for her brains and the streak of independence she displayed on film and in her personal life. She earned four Academy Award nominations, her first for 1929’s “Anna Christie,” and was finally given an honorary award for unforgettable performances by the Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences in 1945.

A black and pink two piece ensemble that belonged to actress Greta Garbo is shown in this publicity photo released to Reuters on 14 Dec. 2012.—Reuters

Adele’s “21” is top-selling US iTunes album of 2012

Los Angeles, 15 Dec—Singer Adele notched another accolade on Thursday as iTunes announced that her Grammy-winning album “21” was the top-selling record of 2012 in its US store, extending the disc’s successful run almost two years after it was released.

Adele, 24, who last year became the first artist to secure three iTunes milestones with top-selling album, single and artist of the year, came ahead of country-pop star Taylor Swift’s “Red” and British folk band Mumford & Sons’ “Babel.”

iTunes did not reveal its sales or download figures. British boy band One Direction’s debut album “Up All Night” and current Grammy nominees fun.’s debut “Some Nights” rounded out the five top-selling albums on iTunes in the United States.

“21” released in February 2011, has performed strongly in the US music charts this year following the singer’s Grammy-winning sweep in six categories in February 2012.

Adele speaks as she holds her award for best British female solo artist during the BRIT Music Awards at the O2 Arena in London on 21 Feb, 2012. Reuters

US “X Factor” judge LA Reid quitting TV talent show

Los Angeles, 15 Dec—LA Reid, “The X Factor” judge, says he is leaving the TV talent show next season after two years on the panel.

Reid, 56, chairman and chief executive of Epic Records, told “Access Hollywood,” the television programme and website, he has decided to leave the Fox reality singing show to return to the record label full time.

“I have decided that I will not return to ‘The X Factor’ next year,” Reid told “Access Hollywood” late Thursday. “I have to go back and I have a company to run that I’ve kind of neglected, and it saddens me a little bit, but only a little bit.”

He added that the show was “a nice break, it was a nice departure from what I’ve done for the past 20 years, but now I gotta go back to work.”

Fox declined to comment on Reid’s departure on Friday.

Judge LA Reid poses at the party for the television series “The X Factor” finalists in Los Angeles, California on 5 November, 2012.—Reuters

“Lincoln,” others qualify in 85th Academy Awards best picture race

Los Angeles, 15 Dec—The awards season frontunner “Lincoln” finished among the 28 feature films which were qualified as possible contenders in the race for best picture honor in the 85th Academy Awards, the Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences announced on Friday.

In addition to the Steven Spielberg bio-pic about the 16th US president, other films which have been well-reviewed or well-received at box office have also won a pass to the next stage of race. Tentpoles including the romantic drama “Silver Linings Playbook,” “Lincoln,” “The Twilight Saga: Breaking Dawn Part 2,” French-language romantic drama “Amour” and the British drama “Anna Karenina.”

This year’s number of eligible films is 17 more than the last year. To be eligible for the consideration, feature films must open in a commercial motion picture theater in Los Angeles County by midnight of 31 Dec, with a minimum run of seven consecutive days.

Movies such as Peter Jackson’s latest fantasy film, “The Hobbit: An Unexpected Journey” which premiers this week, and films such as box office hit “Taken 2” starring Liam Neeson, Walt Disney Animation’s “Wreck It Ralph,” Quentin Tarantino’s western “Django Unchained” and indie film “Beasts Of The Southern Wild” also made the list.

Xinhua
Shaqiri’s first Bundesliga goal saves Bayern

Bayern Munich’s Xherdan Shaqiri (L) celebrates with David Alaba after scoring a goal during their German first division soccer match on 14 Dec, 2012.—Reuters

BERLIN, 15 Dec—Substitute Xherdan Shaqiri’s first Bundesliga goal for Bayern Munich rescued a 1-1 home draw for the runaway leaders on Friday after Borussia Mönchengladbach had taken a surprise first-half lead.

Bayern enjoyed almost total dominance but were shaken when Thorgan Hazard converted a harassing-awarded penalty for Gladbach midway through the first half. Marx went from hero to villain when his misplaced pass fell to Shaqiri, who joined from Basel at the start of the season, and the 21-year-old Kosovan international fired the equaliser in the 59th minute.

“We dictated the game and we hardly had a scoring chance,” Bayern coach Jupp Heynckes told reporters.

“(Goalkeeper keeper Marc-Andre) Ter Stegen made an outstanding save at full stretch to stop Schweinsteiger’s low shot from finding the bottom corner.”

Dante also went close with a header and Franck Ribery was foiled by a borderline offside decision as he was poised to put the finishing touch to a counter-attack.—Reuters

Spurs duo Parker and Assou-Ekotto near return

LONDON, 15 Dec—Tottenham Hotspur’s Scott Parker and Benoit Assou-Ekotto have returned to training and could take part in Sunday’s home Premier League clash with Swansea City (13:30 BST).

Midfielder Parker has not played this season due to an Achilles’ injury he picked up while playing for England at Euro 2012, while attack-minded left back Assou-Ekotto—Tottenham Hotspur’s Scott Parker reacts during their English Premier League soccer match against Liverpool at Anfield in Liverpool, northern England on 6 February, 2012.—Reuters

Aston Villa striker Bent out with thigh strain

LONDON, 15 Dec—Aston Villa striker Darren Bent is expected to be unavailable for “a few weeks” after the out-of-favour forward injured his thigh in a midweek cup tie against Norwich City, manager Paul Lambert said.

The injury occurred 35 minutes into Bent’s first start since October, having been replaced as the side’s striking spearhead by Belgian international Christian Benteke.

“He’s had a scan and we’ve got to wait to see how it settles down,” Lambert told a news conference.

The injury means the former England player is likely to miss the busy Christmas period. Captain Ron Vlaar will also miss Saturday’s Premier League trip to Liverpool with a calf strain.

The Dutch defender has not played since his side’s goal-less draw against Arsenal on 24 November.
Price of orange falls in Sittway market

SITTWAY, 15 Dec—Orange from Paletwa Township flows into the market in Sittway of Rakhine State as of early November. In the second week of December, a large number of orange from Paletwa enter the market, so price of orange transported from Yangon in Sittway went down.

At Sittway market, shoppers sell one orange of Paletwa per K 120-K 150 and that of Yangon per K 70-K 80.

A Russian-led coalition at International Telecommunication Union meeting led by Russia and China over ITU?

A diplomatic wish, a development engine and a fall of proposed internet regulation were revealed this week.

“As with anybody who is suffering what he is suffering, we do.”

Victoria Nuland

Spokeswoman of US Department of State

When asked about the comment of the US government on ailing Venezuelan President Hugo Chavez, the spokesman wished “a speedy recovery”, but declined the possibility of resuming ambassadorial-level diplomatic relations between US and Venezuela. Chavez returned to Cuba for fourth time in his battle against cancer Monday for an emergency surgery.

“A lever for development”

Irina Bokova

UNESCO Director-General

The UNESCO chief said at “Stand up for Malala: girls’ education is a right” event co-organized by UNESCO and Pakistan government the girls’ education is “a lever for development that profits the whole of society”. Malala is now being recovered from her serious injury the activist for the education for girls sustained when Taliban shot her at head.

“Russians and Chinese overplayed their hands.”

ITU spokesman

A Russian-led coalition at International Telecommunication Union meeting in Dubai proposed tighter regulation on internet which would give the governments more power to censor WWW contents. The plan of the group led by Russia and China was rejected by representatives of the western countries at the meeting attended by representatives from about 150 ITU members. Did they overestimate their influence over ITU?

Unified Chelsea continue to improve under Benitez

YOKOHAMA, 15 Dec—

After taking four games to register a victory under Rafael Benitez, the Chelsea squad appears to be warming to the Spaniard’s meticulous methods with a run of three consecutive wins. By racking up 12 goals in the process, five of them scored by a resurgent Fernando Torres, Chelsea's 3-1 win over Monterrey at the Club World Cup on Sunday provided the latest evidence of a marked progression under their interim manager.

“We have improved as a team under Benitez,” Torres, so prolific for his Spanish compatriot while they were together at Liverpool, told reporters in Yokohama.

“We are more compact and difficult to break down,” added Spain’s World Cup and European championship winner. “I think we are better in all departments.”

Benitez again refused to take the credit for Torres’s resurgence after the striker scored in their semi-final in Japan, but midfielder Frank Lampard called for Chelsea fans to show patience.

The Stamford Bridge faithful have jeered Benitez since he took over from Italian Roberto Di Matteo last month following last weekend’s 3-2 defeat by United when Manchester United’s Rio Ferdinand was hit in the face by a coin thrown from the crowd.

“Maybe that doesn’t help us quite so much. But as players we have to concentrate on our game regardless.”

Lampard, whose future at Chelsea is unclear with his contract expiring at the end of the season, said Blues supporters had the right to express their feelings.

Word!

A Russian-led coalition at International Telecommunication Union meeting in Dubai proposed tighter regulation on internet which would give the governments more power to censor WWW contents. The plan of the group led by Russia and China was rejected by representatives of the western countries at the meeting attended by representatives from about 150 ITU members. Did they overestimate their influence over ITU?

Kompany rejects calls for stadium netting

LONDON, 15 Dec—

Manchester City captain Vincent Kompany does not believe netting should be used at stadiums to protect players, the defender saying fans should not be treated like “animals”.

England’s Professional Footballers’ Association made the suggestion following last weekend’s derby when Manchester United’s Rio Ferdinand was hit in the face by a coin thrown from the crowd.

“I would definitely say we need action on prevention but keep treating fans as human beings and not animals that have to be behind cages,” Kompany, who was taken off injured during the match and is unable to play against Newcastle United on Saturday, told the BBC in an interview to be shown on the Football Focus programme.

“One patient application against these incidents and I have heard lots of suggestions about putting up nets and everything.”

But the fact we are able to put people outside of cages is something that makes the English game so much more special,” the Belgian international said.

Nine people were charged following trouble at the match which United won 3-2. Manchester City goalkeeper Joe Hart had to restrain a fan who ran on the pitch towards Ferdinand.

“It is never a good thing to happen, not just for Manchester City or Manchester United, but for football.”

Kompany added.

The defender suffered a groin injury in the derby game and has only a “two percent chance” of playing against Newcastle, City manager Roberto Mancini told a news conference on Friday.

Italian Mancini agreed with Kompany’s views on the introduction of netting at stadiums, saying: “I think football here is beautiful football because the people are very close to the players. I’m very sorry for what happened in the derby. Usually every game is OK we don’t have any problems. I don’t think for this situation we need to change everything.”

The 3-2 defeat by United last Sunday meant second-place City dropped six points behind their rivals.

They next travel to a Newcastle side that have lost five of their last six league matches and are two points above the relegation zone.

OMAN International

(16-12-12 09:30 am ~ 17-12-12 09:30 am) MST

* News
* How to Practice Vipassana Meditation (Part-I)
* Vietnam-Myanmar Business Forum
* News
* 85th Birthday Anniversary His Majesty King Bhumibol Adulyadej
* News
* A Famous Pagoda in the Sea
* News
* A Helping and to Enlighten for the Blind
* News
* MI People’s Celebrities “Magnetic Songs”
* Face of Myanmar Asia
* New Star Model 2013
* News
* “Precept”
* News
* Traffic Jam
* Myanmar Movie “Po Pyone Cho”

ReuteRs
International Seminar on Buddhist Cultural Heritage opens

YANGON, 15 Dec—
Opening ceremony of International Seminar on Buddhist Cultural Heritage, which is jointly organized by the Indian Council for Cultural Relations (ICCR) and Sitagu International Buddhist Academy (SIBA), was held at Santipata Assembly Hall of SIBA (Yangon) on Pinlong road in Dagon Myothit (North) Township, here, this morning.

Vice-President Dr Sai Mauk Kham attended it and supplicated on religious affairs on the occasion. It was also attended by SIBA Chancellor Agga Maha Pandita Dr Bhaddanta Ñanissara, Tipitaka Sayadaws, Sayadaws from the State Pariyatti Sasana Universities (Yangon and Mandalay), International Theravada Buddhist Missionary University, Sitagu International Buddhist Academies (Sagaing, Yangon and Mandalay), the monks from the US, Singapore, UK, Thailand, India, Vietnam, Sri Lanka, China, Australia, the Republic of Korea, Laos and Cambodia, Union Minister for Religious Affairs Thura U Myint Maung, Union Minister for Sports U Tint Hsan, Indian Minister of External Affairs Mr Salman Khurshid and wife, Yangon Region Chief Minister U Myint Swe, deputy minister, Region ministers, ambassadors and diplomats, departmental heads, members of the Central Committee for holding the seminar and guests.

Dr Dhammasami of Oxford University acted as a master of ceremonies. The ceremony was opened with the recitation of Namo Tasa three times.

After that, Sitagu Sayadaw Dr Bhaddanta Nanissara, Vice-President Dr Sai Mauk Kham and the Indian External Affairs Minister lit candles. Next, Co-Chairman of the Central Committee Indian Ambassador to Myanmar Dr Vilur Sundararajen Sheshadri supplicated the greeting.

In his supplication, the Vice-President said that a decision was taken by both sides of Myanmar and India during the State visit of President U Thein Sein to the Republic of India in October, 2011. The joint statement, concerning this conference, in the paragraph 38 was issued during the State visit of Prime Minister of the Republic of India. The paragraph 39 mentioned that “The two Leaders welcomed the preparations that have been made towards organizing the International Seminar on Preservation of Buddhist Cultural Heritage” in Myanmar with the cooperation of the Indian Council of Culture Relations, Ministry of Religious Affairs of Myanmar and Sitagu International Buddhist Academy.

He continued that Buddhist scholars would share their views and perspectives on the name of Buddhist Cultural Heritage by presenting their erudite papers at the international Seminar.

The unveiling ceremony of Sand-Stone Buddha Image about 16 ft in height would be convened on the platform of Shwedagon Singuttara Hillock in a grand ceremony on that evening.

A Buddhist Exhibition, Buddhist Film Festival, and Cultural Programme where a joint India-Myanmar cultural troupe’s performance and a play on the life of the Buddha would also be staged.

(See page 10)

“The New Light of Soccer”

Here comes the new light for Myanmar Soccer.

Thousand lights in absolute glitter.
Lo! Where they shine from.
Which last for ever and ever more.
Enjoy the game under these glow.
Stadium field lighting 356 sets of 1500 watts each
And 20 sets for Auditorium.
Then with Quarts light 1000 watts 108 sets for Emergency
Complete with Automatic Programming switch board
According to FIFA standard
Back up by 1000KVA Generator each at Indoor substation to illuminate the soccer field.
It’s lovely.
Train Here. Move faster and Play harder.
You’ve enough power of brightness as broad daylight.
See the Goal.
Don’t ever look back whatever happened.
Win-Win-Win.
Keep up the spirit of Myanmar.
Now you are under the New Light of Soccer already in Great Nay Pyi Taw.

Hla Min
Chief Engineer (MMCC)