**Four political objectives**
- Stability of the State, community peace and tranquillity, prevalence of law and order
- National reconsolidation
- Emergence of a new enduring State Constitution
- Building of a new modern developed nation in accord with the new State Constitution

**Four economic objectives**
- Development of agriculture as the base and all-round development of other sectors of the economy as well
- Proper evolution of the market-oriented economic system
- Development of the economy inviting participation in terms of technical know-how and investments from sources inside the country and abroad
- The initiative to shape the national economy must be kept in the hands of the State and the national peoples

**Four social objectives**
- Uplift of the morale and morality of the entire nation
- Uplift of national prestige and integrity and preservation and safeguarding of cultural heritage and national character
- Uplift of dynamism of patriotic spirit
- Uplift of health, fitness and education standards of the entire nation

---

**Lt-Gen Myint Swe opens Best Paintings of 2008 Show and Contest**

YANGON, 15 Dec — Lt-Gen Myint Swe of the Ministry of Defence attended the opening ceremony of Best Painting of 2008 Show and Contest organized by Tun Foundation Bank with the assistance of Myanmar Traditional Artists and Artisans Asiayon (Central) at Zabuyitshwesin Hall of Myanmar Banks’ Association in Yankin Township, here, this morning. Lt-Gen Myint Swe, Mayor Brig-Gen Aung Thein Lin and party enjoyed the artistic works displayed there.

The exhibition was aimed at ensuring the emergence of Myanmar fine arts in world contemporary art activities with creative arts and the emergence of new generation artists. The exhibition will be on show daily from today up to 20 December between 9 a.m. and 5 p.m. The show is free to all and altogether 389 artistic works of famous artists are on display.

MNA

---

**7th Myanmar ICT Week 2008 in PyinOoLwin**

Chairman of E-National Task Force Minister Brig-Gen Thein Zaw and Ministers view advanced hi-tech IT products and electronics displayed at Myanmar ICT Week 2008.

MNA

The opening ceremony of 7th Myanmar ICT Week 2008 at Yatanarpon Teleport Building in Yatanarpon Myothit, PyinOoLwin. — MNA

---

NAY PYI TAW, 15 Dec — The opening ceremony to mark the 7th Myanmar ICT Week of 2008 was held in the compound of Yatanarpon Teleport Building of Yatanarpon Myothit in PyinOoLwin Township on 12 December.

Present on the occasion were Minister for Agriculture and Irrigation Maj-Gen Htay Oo, Minister for Industry-U Aung Thaung, Minister for Energy Brig-Gen Lun Thi, Minister for Science and Technology-U Thaung, Minister for Electric Power No.1 Col Zaw Min, Minister for Education Dr Chan Nyein, Minister for Forestry Brig-Gen Thein Aung, Chairman of Mandalay City Development (See page 9)
Nurture citizens on whom the State can rely

Teachers of the education sector are a strong national force capable of nurturing and training human resources that are required in various sectors in the process of building a new modern developed discipline-flourishing democratic nation.

Realizing the history of the State, efforts of the government in building a new nation and the national objectives, all the teachers will have to be fully equipped with national outlooks and nationalistic fervour.

The government has paved the way for building a new modern developed discipline-flourishing democratic nation by building a large number of infrastructures.

As efforts are being made to effectively utilize natural resources in agriculture and manufacturing sectors while striving for development of human resources, the education standard of the entire nation has enhanced both in form and essence during the period of two decades.

There are a series of socio-economic challenges in the 21st century. The teachers are capable of guiding the youths to the respective fields in line with their bent and good prospects are to produce intellectuals and intelligentsia required in building a new nation.

Meanwhile, teachers who are helping shape the future of the State should possess political, economic and social outlooks, nationalistic fervour and upright morale.

As dutiful citizens with strong convictions are the strength of the nation, all the teachers are to try their best to produce citizens on whom the State can rely and for the development of human resources.
Iran boycotts Paris conference on Afghanistan

PARIS, 15 Dec — Iran boycotted a major conference in Paris on Sunday aimed at persuading Afghanistan’s neighbours to play a greater role in restoring stability in the war-torn state apparently in response to a recent row between France and Teheran, a diplomatic source said. French officials said delegates would urge the states around Afghanistan, in particular Iran and Pakistan, to play a more positive role in supporting Kabul’s attempts to regain control over its territory.

Teheran had promised to send its Foreign Minister Manou-chehr Mottaki, according to French officials. But he failed to make the trip and the Iranian ambassador also failed to show up, a diplomatic source said. The French politician said it was “impossible for me to shake hands with someone who has dared to say that Israel should be wiped off the map,” and that he would not “sit at the same table [as President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad].”

Karzai says Afghanistan, Britain facing common threat

LONDON, 15 Dec — Afghan President Hamid Karzai expressed his thanks in a newspaper article Monday for British support in Afghanistan and said the two countries were facing the same “disease” of violent extremism.

Writing in the Times three days after four British troops were killed in southern Afghanistan, Karzai expressed his “profound gratitude” for their presence and sought to highlight the ties between the two countries. As Prime Minister Gordon Brown—who was in Kabul at the weekend—nulls his response to an expected US request to send more troops to Afghanistan next year, the Afghan president urged the British public not to waver.

“Ask for your continuing understanding and support as my country struggles to treat a disease that has infected not just our Afghan lands but... much of the region too: violence fed by uncompromising religious extremism,” he wrote. —Internet

Gunmen wound Iraqi university dean

Mosul, 15 Dec — The dean of Iraq’s Mosul University’s School of Medicine was wounded Sunday when gunmen fired on him in Mosul, a source says.

An anonymous police source said Dr Mazahem al-Khayyat was wounded when the unidentified gunman fired on the scholar from a vehicle, KUNA reported. The exact medical condition of al-Khayyat was not reported, the Kuwait News Agency said.

Meanwhile, there was a report—refuted by US military officials—that Baghdad’s Green Zone area was hit with a rocket attack Sunday as US President George W. Bush was visiting Iraq. An unidentified security official told KUNA a Katyusha missile struck the area, but details concerning any possible casualties or damage had not been released.—Internet

NATO looks to Afghanistan’s north for supplies

KABUL, 14 Dec — NATO is in talks with Afghanistan’s northern neighbours to allow the shipment of more supplies to troops, the force’s commander said on Sunday, after Taleban attacks destroyed hundreds of trucks coming from Pakistan.

NATO has been looking for alternatives to the main supply route through Pakistan where Taleban militants have torched some 300 trucks laden with supplies, including military vehicles, in five attacks in the last week alone. General David McKiernan, commander of Nato-led troops in Afghanistan, said most fuel for foreign forces comes from Uzbekistan and Turkmenistan and the US military confirmed it receives 350,000 gallons (1.6 million litres) of fuel via Afghanistan’s northern neighbours. “There are certainly ongoing political discussions between Nato and countries to increase the throughput of material coming in from highways on the north side of Afghanistan,” McKiernan told a news conference, adding “most of our fuel actually comes from the north”. —Internet

Iraqi reporter throws shoes at Bush in Baghdad

BAGHDAD, 15 Dec — An Iraqi reporter threw his shoes at visiting US President George W. Bush and called him a “dog” in Arabic during a news conference with Iraqi Prime Minister Nuri al-Maliki in Baghdad on Sunday.

Muntadhar al-Zaidi, reporter of Baghdadiya television jumped and threw his two shoes one by one at the president, who ducked and thus narrowly missed being struck, raising chaos in the hall in Baghdad’s heavily fortified green zone.

“This is a farewell kiss, dog,” said Zaidi. Several security members wrestled the man to the floor and then dragged him out of the hall as he was screaming. However, Bush tried to show himself calm and said “all I can report is that it is a size 10.” “I didn’t feel the least threatened by it,” Bush also said, adding that “it doesn’t bother me” before he and Maliki leave the conference room.—Internet
Pakistan, India speak of improving relations

ISLAMABAD, 15 Dec—Pakistan and India talked hopefully about improving relations Sunday as the nuclear-armed rivals appeared to be searching for a path away from confrontation following the Mumbai terror attacks.

Pakistan President Asif Ali Zardari downplayed reported violations of his country’s airspace by Indian aircraft a day earlier. Indian Prime Minister Manmohan Singh said he hopes relations can be “normalized” — but not until “our neighbor stops allowing its territory to be used for acts of terrorism against India.”

Israeli FM says truce meaningless if rocket attacks continue

JERUSALEM, 15 Dec—Israeli Foreign Minister Tzipi Livni Sunday said that a truce constantly disturbed by rocket attacks was meaningless, while reiterating that her country should respond militarily to the continuous firing by Palestinian militants in the Hamas-ruled Gaza Strip.

“As long as Hamas continues to operate with terror from Gaza, Israel will operate with its own means,” local daily Ha’aretz quoted Livni as saying at a meeting with her visiting Austrian counterpart Michael Spindelegger. “It needs and must respond to terror through military means.”

The strong contender for Israel’s next premiership, who earlier this month urged the government to re-open talks with the Palestinians, together with a repeated call to topple Hamas, attacks from the Palestinian enclave, made the latest remarks, according to the ministry.

Meanwhile, Jordan’s Foreign Minister Salaeddin al-Bashir stressed Sunday reiterated the importance of solving the Palestinian-Israeli conflict through the two-state solution, according to the Royal Hashemite Court.

Jordan’s King stresses two-state solution to Palestinian-Israeli conflict

AMMAN, 15 Dec—Jordan’s King Abdullah II on Sunday reiterated the importance of solving the Palestinian-Israeli conflict during the two-state solution, according to the Royal Hashemite Court.

The king made the remarks when meeting with a visiting US congress delegation led by Senator Byron Dorgan, head of Energy Subcommittees and member of the Senate Appropriations Committee.

He also called for a timely involvement of the new US administration led by Barack Obama in the peace process.

Meanwhile, Jordan’s Foreign Minister Salaeddin al-Bashir stressed in a separate talks with the delegation that the Palestinian-Israeli issue is the core of the conflict in the region and the world, according to the ministry.

The minister urged the international community to support the peace efforts between Palestinians and Israelis, underlining the importance of the US support for a just and lasting peace agreement involving the final status issues.

Home values to lose well over $2 trillion during 2008

NEW YORK, 15 Dec—Homes in the United States have lost trillions of dollars in value during 2008, with nearly 11.7 million American households now owning more on their mortgage than their homes are worth, real estate website Zillow.com said on Monday.

US homes are set to lose well over $2 trillion in value during 2008, according to an analysis of recent Zillow Real Estate Market Reports.

Home values declined 8.4 percent year-over-year during the first three quarters of this year, compared to the same period in 2007, the report showed.

Oil rises to $47 as OPEC prepares production cut

SINGAPORE, 15 Dec—Oil prices rose to above $47 a barrel Monday in Asia as investors anticipated OPEC will announce a large production cut at its meeting this week.

Light, sweet crude for January delivery was up 92 cents to $47.20 a barrel in electronic trading on the New York Mercantile Exchange by midday in Singapore. The contract Friday fell $1.70 to settle at $46.28.

The Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries, which accounts for 40 percent of global supply, has signaled it plans to announce a substantial reduction of output quotas at its meeting Wednesday in Algeria. Iranian Oil Minister Gholam Hossein Nozari was quoted Sunday on his ministry’s web site saying that Iran would push for a production cut of 1.5 to 2 million barrels per day.

Two Hong Kong Airlines pilots have been sacked after trying to take off from a taxiway rather than the main runway at the city’s airport, according to a report.

The pair, an Indonesian captain and Argentinian co-pilot, were only stopped by an alert air traffic controller who saw them speeding on the taxiway and warned them to stop, wrote the Sunday Morning Post.
Chinese President addresses conference marking Sci-Tech association’s 50th anniversary

BEIJING, 15 Dec—Chinese President Hu Jintao on Monday delivered a speech at a conference marking the 50th founding anniversary of the China Association for Science and Technology (CAST).

Top leaders also present at the conference’s opening ceremony were Wu Bangguo, Wen Jiabao, Jia Qinglin, Li Changchun, Xi Jinping, Li Keqiang, He Guoqiang and Zhou Yongkang.

CAST President Han Qide and Minister of Science and Technology Wan Gang also addressed the event.

CAST is the country’s biggest non-governmental organization for scientists, engineers and others working in the fields of science and technology. It was founded in September 1958.

China launches Yaogan V remote-sensing satellite

TAIYUAN, 15 Dec—China on Monday launched a remote-sensing satellite, “Yaogan V,” from the Taiyuan Satellite Launch Center in north Shanxi Province.

The satellite was launched with a Long March-4B carrier rocket at 11:22 am, the center said.

The satellite will be used for data collection and transmission involving land resources surveys, environmental surveillance and protection, urban planning, crop yield estimates, disaster prevention and reduction and space science experiments.

Its predecessor, “Yaogan IV,” was launched from the Jiuquan Satellite Launch Center in northwestern Gansu Province earlier this month. “Yaogan III” was launched from Taiyuan on 12 Nov, 2007. The “Yaogan I” and “Yaogan II” satellites were launched in April 2006 and May 2007, respectively. The satellite was developed by the China Aerospace Science and Technology Corp., while the rocket was designed by the Shanghai Academy of Space flight Technology, which is under the corporation. The flight was the 114th of the Long March series of carrier rockets.

Death toll rises to 57 in Egypt road accident

CAIRO, 15 Dec—The death toll of a road accident in southern Egypt has risen to 57, the state MENA news agency reported on Sunday, citing a senior official.

Minya Governor Ahmed Diaaeddin said the bus carrying 70 passengers was traveling to Beni Sueif when the accident occurred. On Sunday morning, the coach overturned some 200 km south of Cairo on the way from the southern city of Minya to Beni Sueif, said MENA.

The bus plunged into Al-Ibrahimia canal as the driver was trying to avoid a speedy truck coming from the opposition direction, Diaaeddin was quoted as saying. Earlier reports said most of the victims drowned in the canal before rescuers can reach them.—Xinhua

Nepali constitution-drafting process to begin Tuesday

KATHMANDU, 15 Dec—The Constituent Assembly (CA) will initiate the process of writing a new Nepali constitution on Tuesday, The Himalayan Times reported on Monday. According to the daily, as the CA’s 14 committees, which will handle drafting the contents of the new constitution, will be announced Tuesday in the CA meeting, the CA will be ready to move on with its business of drafting the constitution.

All political parties and CA members, except Bishendra Paswan of Dalit Janajati Party and independent CA member Sadarul Miya Hak, have submitted their names to the CA secretariat for the 14 committees.

All items from Xinhua News Agency

ASEAN charter comes into force

JAKARTA, 15 Dec — A charter of the Association of South-East Asian Nations (ASEAN) was formalized here on Jakarta on Monday.

Nine foreign minister and one communication minister of the group were present at the formalization at the ASEAN secretariat here.

ASEAN signed the charter in November 2007, which sets out rules of membership, aiming to transform ASEAN into a legal entity in the region by 2015.

The formalization was initially scheduled at the 14th ASEAN summit meeting on December 15-18 in Chiang Mai, Thailand, but the political unrest in the country led to the postponement of the schedule.

A consensus of the meeting of the ministers on Sunday night said that the summit would be held in February in Thailand, said ASEAN Secretary General Surin Pitsuwan.

The Association of South-East Asian Nations (ASEAN) groups Brunet, Cambodia, Indonesia, Laos, Malaysia, Myanmar, the Philippines, Singapore, Thailand and Vietnam. Thailand currently holds the rotating chairmanship.

Death toll rises to 57 in Egypt road accident

CAIRO, 15 Dec—The death toll of a road accident in southern Egypt has risen to 57, the state MENA news agency reported on Sunday, citing a senior official.

Minya Governor Ahmed Diaaeddin said the bus carrying 70 passengers was traveling to Beni Sueif when the accident occurred. On Sunday morning, the coach overturned some 200 km south of Cairo on the way from the southern city of Minya to Beni Sueif, said MENA.

The bus plunged into Al-Ibrahimia canal as the driver was trying to avoid a speedy truck coming from the opposition direction, Diaaeddin was quoted as saying. Earlier reports said most of the victims drowned in the canal before rescuers can reach them.—Xinhua

Nepali constitution-drafting process to begin Tuesday

KATHMANDU, 15 Dec—The Constituent Assembly (CA) will initiate the process of writing a new Nepali constitution on Tuesday, The Himalayan Times reported on Monday. According to the daily, as the CA’s 14 committees, which will handle drafting the contents of the new constitution, will be announced Tuesday in the CA meeting, the CA will be ready to move on with its business of drafting the constitution.

All political parties and CA members, except Bishendra Paswan of Dalit Janajati Party and independent CA member Sadarul Miya Hak, have submitted their names to the CA secretariat for the 14 committees.

All items from Xinhua News Agency

ASEAN charter comes into force

JAKARTA, 15 Dec — A charter of the Association of South-East Asian Nations (ASEAN) was formalized here on Jakarta on Monday.

Nine foreign minister and one communication minister of the group were present at the formalization at the ASEAN secretariat here.

ASEAN signed the charter in November 2007, which sets out rules of membership, aiming to transform ASEAN into a legal entity in the region by 2015.

The formalization was initially scheduled at the 14th ASEAN summit meeting on December 15-18 in Chiang Mai, Thailand, but the political unrest in the country led to the postponement of the schedule.

A consensus of the meeting of the ministers on Sunday night said that the summit would be held in February in Thailand, said ASEAN Secretary General Surin Pitsuwan.

The Association of South-East Asian Nations (ASEAN) groups Brunet, Cambodia, Indonesia, Laos, Malaysia, Myanmar, the Philippines, Singapore, Thailand and Vietnam. Thailand currently holds the rotating chairmanship.

Death toll rises to 57 in Egypt road accident

CAIRO, 15 Dec—The death toll of a road accident in southern Egypt has risen to 57, the state MENA news agency reported on Sunday, citing a senior official.

Minya Governor Ahmed Diaaeddin said the bus carrying 70 passengers was traveling to Beni Sueif when the accident occurred. On Sunday morning, the coach overturned some 200 km south of Cairo on the way from the southern city of Minya to Beni Sueif, said MENA.

The bus plunged into Al-Ibrahimia canal as the driver was trying to avoid a speedy truck coming from the opposition direction, Diaaeddin was quoted as saying. Earlier reports said most of the victims drowned in the canal before rescuers can reach them.—Xinhua

Nepali constitution-drafting process to begin Tuesday

KATHMANDU, 15 Dec—The Constituent Assembly (CA) will initiate the process of writing a new Nepali constitution on Tuesday, The Himalayan Times reported on Monday. According to the daily, as the CA’s 14 committees, which will handle drafting the contents of the new constitution, will be announced Tuesday in the CA meeting, the CA will be ready to move on with its business of drafting the constitution.

All political parties and CA members, except Bishendra Paswan of Dalit Janajati Party and independent CA member Sadarul Miya Hak, have submitted their names to the CA secretariat for the 14 committees.
Volkswagen not to suspend production in China

BEIJING, 15 Dec—Spokesmen of Volkswagen’s two joint-venture auto plants in China on Sunday denied recent reports that they were suspending production.

There were reports that two auto plants, FAW-Volkswagen Automobile Co, based in northeastern Jilin Province, and Shanghai Volkswagen Automobile Co, were planning to partly suspend production lines to conduct maintenance work.

A public relations manager of the Shanghai company told Xinhua in a telephone interview the company had accomplished its 2008 sales goal in November and postponed the maintenance work to the end of the year as the production lines had been operating at full capacity to meet market demand. During the maintenance period, workers would take turns on vacation.—Internet

China confirms new gas reserve find

URUMQI, 15 Dec—China National Mineral Resources Committee disclosed Sunday that it found a major gas field with a proven reserve of 100 billion cubic meters in northern Xinjiang.

It is the first reserve of this size ever discovered around the Junggar basin, according to Chen Xinfa, general manager of Xinjiang Oilfield Company, a subsidiary of China National Petroleum Corporation.

“Kameli gas field is also our company’s first complete gas field ever found. Its exploitation will alleviate the gas shortage in northern Xinjiang,” said Chen.

Kuang Lichun, deputy general manager of Xinjiang Oilfield Company, which is in charge of prospecting, admitted the reserve, about 250 km away from Karamay city, was actually found in 2006. The positive results were obtained from a test well occurred in September of 2006.—Internet

Science show aims to stop brain drain

RUSSIA has a world-renowned reputation for science - and now more than 2,000 of its brightest young boffins have gathered in Moscow to show off their work. It’s hoped the country’s first ever Innovation Convention will attract vital sponsorship and funding.

The main message of Russia’s first Innovation Convention is that Russia is ready to support and create the necessary conditions for young scientists to prosper.

The head of the Federal Agency for Youth Affairs, Vasily Yakemenko, says the convention aims to show that ‘there is no need to leave Russia now.’ He says ‘the country is ready to create all necessary bases for innovative activities.’

More than 2,000 people registered to attend the convention, including many children. Thirteen-year-old Dmitry is one of them. He started writing computer programs at the age of six and is now a regular at scientific conferences. This time he has brought his latest creation - a computer program which he controls through another device.

Thai opposition Democrats win PM vote

BANGKOK, 15 Dec — Thailand’s opposition Democrat Party leader, Abhisit Vejajiva, won a thin majority in a parliamentary vote on Monday to become Prime Minister as the economy teeters on the brink of recession.

According to a Reuters tally of votes, the Oxford-educated economist won the support of 234 MPs from a range of parties, including a breakaway faction of the Puea Thai party that had supported ousted and exiled leader Thaksin Shinawatra.

Abhisit needed 219 to become prime minister. Immediately after the vote, a crowd of 200 Thaksin supporters tried to block MPs from leaving the compound. They shouted “Abhisit, the Army nominee” and denounced him as a frontman for the military, which ousted Thaksin in a 2006 coup.

The vote came two weeks after the courts sacked PM Somchai Wongsawat, Thaksin’s brother-in-law, as his People Power Party (PPP) was found guilty of fraud in the December 2007 election that brought it to power. — MNA/Reuters

Thai opposition Democrats win PM vote

BANGKOK, 15 Dec — Thailand’s opposition Democrat Party leader, Abhisit Vejajiva, won a thin majority in a parliamentary vote on Monday to become Prime Minister as the economy teeters on the brink of recession.

According to a Reuters tally of votes, the Oxford-educated economist won the support of 234 MPs from a range of parties, including a breakaway faction of the Puea Thai party that had supported ousted and exiled leader Thaksin Shinawatra. Abhisit needed 219 to become prime minister. Immediately after the vote, a crowd of 200 Thaksin supporters tried to block MPs from leaving the compound. They shouted “Abhisit, the Army nominee” and denounced him as a frontman for the military, which ousted Thaksin in a 2006 coup.

The vote came two weeks after the courts sacked PM Somchai Wongsawat, Thaksin’s brother-in-law, as his People Power Party (PPP) was found guilty of fraud in the December 2007 election that brought it to power. — MNA/Reuters

Malaysia burglar stuck for 3 days in haunted house

A news report says a burglar who broke into a house claims he was held captive by a “supernatural figure” for three days without food and water.

Police official Abdul Marlik Hakim Johar told The Star newspaper the house’s owners found the 36-year-old man fatigued and dehydrated when they returned from vacation Thursday. He says they called an ambulance to take him to a hospital.

The man told police that every time he tried to escape, a “supernatural figure” showed him to the ground.

Abdul Marlik could not immediately be reached and other police officials declined to comment.

A replica 18th century wooden square rigger sails as ‘The Zong,’ past Tower Bridge on the Thames in London. The voyage was part of recognition of the 200th anniversary of the abolition of the slave trade act. The Zong was at the center of a court case in 1783 after 133 slaves were thrown overboard in an insurance scam. The resulting public outrage led to the rise of the Abolitionist movement.

Hungary’s Florian Richter, front, and six other members of his horse acrobatic team ride a single horse together while performing at the FEI Show Jumping and Driving World Cup Indoor horse show in Budapest, Hungary.

A man called police on Wednesday night after he came home from work and spotted an intoxicated woman drinking a beer on the roof of his home. The 28-year-old woman was taken into custody after she refused to get down and leave. The police report said the woman agreed to leave only if the man agreed to give her more beer.

The woman, who faces a disorderly intoxication charge, has been in trouble before.

Activist Romulo Araujo jumps inside a large inflatable bubble to promote HIV awareness during a protest marking World AIDS Day in Brasilia. The bubble reads in Portuguese “The prejudice isolates ...”

Vietnam to build new key industrial port city

HANOI, 15 Dec—Vietnam planned to transform the PhuMy new urban area in southern Ba Ria-Vung Tau province of Vietnam into a key industrial port city, the local newspaper Vietnam News reported Monday.

Under the plan approved by Vietnamese Prime Minister Nguyen Tan Dung, the 33,000-hectare port city will serve as an important gateway to commerce between the southern key economic zone of Vietnam, Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) countries, and the world.

The port city will include areas for urban development, resorts and ecological tourism sites, park systems, open spaces and area for protecting the natural ecosystem and landscape...
Urban and rural areas enjoying development in parallel in Meiktila Township

Article: Win Naing (Kyemon); Photos: Htay Aung (Kyemon)

A pleasant view of Meiktila Lake with a bridge over it and a flower patch.

In the past, the road was not available even for bicycles and trishaws in the rainy season. But, now it is serviceable all-year round.

(U Khin Maung Yee and wife, Ywagongyi Village)

Kantaung and Monbinse villages. In an interview about Monbinse Village, a village elder U Tin Nyunt told the Mirror Daily, “Ours is a model village. The Township Development Affairs Committee has sunk a tube-well and upgraded the laterite road into a gravel one. Now, we are on our way home from Wetkyauk Village. In the past, the road was not serviceable even for bicycles and trishaws in the rainy season. But, now it is serviceable all-year round. Smooth transport and economic growth are interrelated, so I thank the Township Development Affairs Committee for the road.”

The committee also upgraded the three miles and four furlongs long laterite road that links Kantaung Village on Yangon-Mandalay Highway and Tebingon Village into a gravel one. The gravel road goes to Kantaung, Nyaungbingon, Aungkan, Ywathikyi, Nyaungbinhla, Khintha, Padeingon and Magyeegon villages. The one-mile-long gravel road constructed by the committee links Magyeegon Road (Aungsitthe Road), a feeder of Meiktila-Kyaupadaung Road, used to be a gravel one. The road section between Magyeegon and Kya-in Village is a tarred one, and the gravel road goes from Kya-in Village to Thedaw, Myintha, Shwesitthe, Thalingon, Chanthagy, Aungtha, Kattukan, Wetkyauk and Kyigon villages.

When asked about Magyeegon Road (Shwesitthe Road), U Khin Maung Yee said, “We are from Ywagongyi Village. Now, we are on our way home from Wetkyauk Village. In the past, the road was not serviceable even for bicycles and trishaws in the rainy season. But, now it is serviceable all-year round. Smooth transport and economic growth are interrelated, so I thank the Township Development Affairs Committee for the road.”

The government has opened Meiktila University, University of Nursing, University of Economics and Myanmar Aerospace Engineering University in Meiktila Township for development of human resources. And the departments concerned are taking steps for raising the living standard of local people.

Therefore, local people have been enjoying cumulative development due to the results of effective implementation of the motto “Townships and villages must develop rapidly”.

Translation: MS Kyemon: 15-12-2008
National Kandawgyi Gardens in PyinOoLwin beautified with multiple floral decorations
Yangon, 15 Dec —
Chairman of Yangon City Development Committee Mayor Brig-Gen Aung Thein Lin inspected Nature Park Housing Development Project on Mindhamma Road in Mayangon Township today. The project was jointly implemented by YCDC and Fortune International Limited. Two-storey buildings and four-storey buildings will be constructed in the project.—MNA

Yangon Mayor inspects nature park housing development project

KTK Trading Co Ltd opened

Yangon, 15 Dec — The opening ceremony of Kaung Thu Kha Trading Co Ltd was held at the company in Shwe Phone Nyet Yeik Mon Housing on Bayintnaung road today.

President of the company U San Nyein and Manager Mr Teo Tiong Heng of NTN Bearing, Singapore opened the company. Managing Director U Khin Maung Myat extended greetings. Next, the president and the managing director to the company presented gift to Mr Teo Tiong Heng.

KTK distributes various kind of NTN Bearing, HCH and TR Bearing made in Japan to Myanmar as a sole agent. Engineers of the company will give advises to customers about the bearing technic. More information are available at the company. MNA

The opening of Kaung Thu Kha Trading Co.Ltd in progress. MNA

Myanmar ICT Week in PyinOoLwin crowded with a large number of visitors

MTEA AGM postponed

Yangon, 15 Dec — The Myanmar Timber Entrepreneurs Association has already announced that it will hold the 15th Annual General Meeting at International Business Centre (IBC) on 27 December. However, it is unable to hold the meeting on the set date for various reasons, and it will announce the date of the meeting later. MNA

7th Myanmar ICT Week...
(from page 1)
Committee Mayor Brig-Gen Phone Zaw Han, senior military officer, professionals form home and abroad, domestic and foreign entrepreneurs, locals from PyinOoLwin district of Mandalay Division, members of social organizations, teachers, students, pom pom troupes and guests. Chairman of E-National Task Force Minister for Communications, Posts and Telegraphs Brig-Gen Thein Zaw officially opened the 2008 7th Myanmar ICT Week. Next, ministers and officials viewed displayed advanced hi-tech IT products and electronics of companies from home and abroad. The 2008 7th Myanmar ICT Week will be held from 12 Dec to tomorrow with seminars and workshops at Yatanarpon Teleport main building during the ICT Week.—MNA

The 7th Myanmar ICT Week 2008 crowded with visitors.—MNA

The 15th Myanmar Timber Entrepreneurs Association has already announced that it will hold the 15th
Coord meeting on production of quality farm equipment held

NAY PYI TAW, 15 Dec—A coordination meeting on manufacturing quality farm equipment was held at No.2 Farm Equipment Factory (Malun) yesterday, attended by Minister for Industry-2 Vice-Admiral Soe Thein, officials of Myanmar Agricultural Machinery Industries, general managers and officials of No.1 Farm Equipment Factory (Sinde) and No.2 Farm Equipment Factory (Malun).

The Minister gave emphasis on production of nozzle injection pumps and indents from outside departments, harmonious coordination of No.1 Farm Equipment Factory and No.2 Farm Equipment Factory to increase production, active performance in remaining months of the fiscal year.

The minister coordinated essentials.

Energy Deputy Minister inspects Natural Gas Condensation factory in Pyay Oil Field

NAY PYI TAW, 15 Dec—Deputy Minister for Energy Brig-Gen Than Htay on 13 December inspected the sale and storage of fuel at Filling Station No.1977 of MPPE in Pyay, Bago Division.

On 14 December morning, the deputy minister looked into the distribution of natural gas and acquisition of spare machines at Natural Gas Condensation factory in Pyay Oil Field and production of gas at Well No. PSC-2.

Next, the deputy minister stressed the need for technicians to make feasibility study for further drilling at the respective oil fields making better use of advanced technology and machinery provided by the government.

After that, he proceeded to No.3 Fertilizer Factory (Kyawswa) of Myanmar Petrochemical Enterprise and viewed the production line of the factory. At the briefing hall, the deputy minister heard a report presented by the factory manager on production of fertilizer and storage of spare parts and gave necessary instructions.

Tipitakadhara Tipitakakovida Selection Examination opened

YANGON, 15 Dec—A ceremony to open the 61st Tipitakadhara Tipitakakovida Selection Examination sponsored by the Religious Affairs Department was held at Wizaya Mingalar Dhammakathikaba Hall, 2nd dressings of Thirimmalar Kaba Aye Hill in Mayangon Township yesterday morning.

The congregation received the Five Precepts from Chairmain of Tipitakadhara Selection Ovadacariya Committee Presiding Sayadaw of Mandalay Paukmyang Kyaungtaik Agga Maha Pandita Bhaddanta Agyavamsabhibhamsa. And Chairman of State Sangha Maha Nayaka Committee Presiding Sayadaw of Magway Mahavisutarama Taikthit Abhidhajha Maharatha Guru Abhidhajha Agga Maha Saddhammajojita Bhaddanta Kumara gave Ovadakathaka.

Afterwards, Chairman of Yangon Division Peace and Development Council Commander of Yangon Command Brig-Gen Win Myint and Minister for Religious Affairs Brig-Gen Thura Myint Maung supplicated on religious affairs.

Next, 19 well-wishers presented K13,360,000 for holding the Tipitakadhara Tipitakakovida Selection Examination. After the ceremony, well-wishers presented robes and offerings to members of the Sangha, followed by the oral section of the exam at Maha Pasana Cave.

MCEA meeting 28 Dec

YANGON, 15 Dec—The Myanmar Crab Entrepreneurs Association will hold the Second Annual General Meeting at Thiri Annawa Hall of the Myanmar Fisheries Federation on Bayintnaung Street, Gygone, Insein Township here on 28 December (Sunday). All the members of the association are invited to attend the meeting without fail.

Tailoring course opens

YANGON, 15 Dec—A tailoring course organized by the Working Group for Protection and Rehabilitation of Women of Myanmar Women’s Affairs Federation and Social Welfare Department was opened Mingalar Ward in Nay Pyi Taw Maymyana on 11 December.

The course opening ceremony was attended by leader of the working group Daw Tin Tin Nwe, leader of the Working Group (Branch) for Prevention of Trafficking in Persons Daw Khin May Soe, the chairperson of Nay Pyi Taw Pyinnmana Township Women’s Affairs Organization and members of Mingalar Ward Peace and Development Council.

Altogether 30 trainees are attending the one-month course.

MWAF organizes educative talks on health

YANGON, 15 Dec—Working Group for National Races Affairs of Myanmar Women’s Affairs Federation conducted educative talks at National Races Village in Thakayta Township today. The educative talks on health were held at the Mon Traditional House in the village and Leader of the working group Daw Kyin Khaing delivered an opening address. Vice-Leader of the working group Prof Dr Daw May Win Aung Khin gave educative talks on health for women. Dannals of national races attended the talks. Daw Kyin Khaing and responsible personnel cordially greeted those who attended the talks and presented gifts to them.

Development tasks in Thanlyin Township inspected

YANGON, 15 Dec—Deputy Minister for Progress of Border Areas and Development Affairs Col Tin Ngwe inspected the nursery of DAD. During his tour, the deputy minister inspected repaving of Dhammazadei street in Yonetaw Ward to a tarred one.

MWAF organizes educative talks on health
Russian navy: Russian warships to visit Cuba

MOSCOW, 15 Dec—Russian warships will visit US foe Cuba for the first time since the Soviet era, the navy said Monday.

The destroyer Admiral Chabanenko and two support ships from a squadron that has been on a lengthy visit to Latin America will put in at Havana on Friday for a five-day stay, navy spokesman Capt Igor Dygalo said.

It will be the first visit by Russian warships to the Communist-ruled island just 90 miles (145 kilometers) from the United States since the 1991 Soviet collapse, Dygalo said.

The Admiral Chabanenko, the nuclear-powered cruiser Peter the Great and support ships arrived in the Caribbean last month in a deployment also unprecedented since Soviet times.

The voyage is widely close to US shores and a response to the US use of warships to deliver humanitarian aid to Russia’s neighbor Georgia after their war in August.

The ships’ visit coincided with a Latin American tour by Russian President Dmitry Medvedev, who raised Russia’s profile in the region and met with former Cuban leader Fidel Castro.

French banks suffer from Madoff fraud

PARIS, 15 Dec—French banks are suffering indirect but significant losses of nearly 1 billion euros (1.33 billion US dollars) in potential as a result of the 50 billion dollar securities fraud allegedly perpetrated by Bernard L Madoff Investment Securities LLC.

French investment bank Natixis, a subsidiary of the Caisse d’Epargne and Banque Populaire, estimated on Monday it could lose up to 450 million euros (605 million dollars).

A statement by Natixis said the bank had made no direct investments in hedge funds managed by Madoff, but several of its clients had entrusted Madoff with securities.

France’s largest bank BNP Paribas on Sunday announced a 350 million euros (466.9 million dollars) potential loss as a result of the Madoff scandal.

According to a statement released Sunday, BNP has no investment of its own in Madoff’s investment funds, but it “does have risk to these funds through its trading business and collateralized lending to funds of hedge funds.”

BNP shares fell 9 percent Monday morning on the Paris Bourse.

The 70-year-old Bernard Madoff, the former Wall Street CEO of the Nasdaq Stock Exchange, was arrested last Thursday on charges of defrauding investors of 50 billion dollars.

World’s first mass-produced plug-in hybrid car on sale in China

SHENZHEN, 15 Dec—The first mass-produced plug-in hybrid car in the world, manufactured by Chinese auto maker BYD, went on sale on Monday in the southern city of Shenzhen.

“The F3DM is the world’s first hybrid car that is not reliant on specialized electric charging stations. It is the cutting-edge product to the global green auto industry,” said president of BYD Wang Chuanfu of the new car.

The car can run up to 100 kilometers on its electric engine and shift to a gasoline engine when it runs low on power. It has beaten hybrid cars by Toyota and General Motors that could run just 25 km before recharging.

The car’s battery can be charged in nine hours from a regular electrical outlet or within an hour at BYD’s charging stations. The battery can be recharged up to 4,000 times.

The new model’s retail price was less than 150,000 yuan (about 21,428 US dollars), about the same as many home-made mid-sized sedans.

Storm Dolphin intensifies into typhoon near Philippines

MANILA, 15 Dec—Tropical storm Dolphin has become a typhoon as it gained strength on its way to the Philippines, the country’s weather forecast bureau said Monday.

In a bulletin issued late Monday, the Philippine Atmospheric, Geophysical, and Astronomical Services Administration said the typhoon was forecast to move west-northwest at nine kilometers per hour.

Packing maximum sustained winds of 120 kilometers per hour near the center and gusts of up to 150 kilometers per hour, the typhoon is expected to arrive at 530 kilometers east northeast of Virac, Catanduanes region.

DPRK launches 3G cellphone service

PYONGYANG, 15 Dec—The Democratic People’s Republic of Korea (DPRK) launched a third-generation (3G) mobile phone service on Monday.

The 3G cellphone service provides subscribers with services of voice calling, SMS, call conference, voice mail and interactive voice response.

The service will operate only in Pyongyang in the initial phase of the project and its subscriber capacity is now 126,000. The service will be provided by Koryo Link, a joint venture of the state-owned Korea Post and Telecommunications Corp (KPTC) and Egypt’s Orascom Telecom, which currently operates GSM networks in the Middle East, Africa and South Asia.

Yemen: 3 Germans kidnapped

SAN’A’, (Yemen), 15 Dec—Tribesmen kidnapped a German aid worker and her parents in southern Yemen early Monday and are holding them hostage, demanding the government release imprisoned clan members, Yemeni officials said.

The aid worker, who is based in Yemen, and her visiting mother and father were snatched by Bani Thabyan tribesmen in Dhamar province, 100 kilometers (65 miles) south of the capital, San’a, a Yemeni security official said.

A group of Russian warships including the Admiral Chabanenko, seen here participating in joint naval maneuvers in Venezuelan waters earlier this month, will later this month visit the Communist island of Cuba, a long-time adversary of the United States and Moscow’s ally in the Cold War, the Russian navy has said.—INTERNET.
CLAIMS DAY NOTICE
MV SIRI BHUM VOY NO (314)

Consignees of cargo carried on MV SIRI BHUM VOY NO (314) are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on 15.12.08 and cargo will be discharged into the premises of M.I.P where it will lie at the consignee’s risk and expenses and subject to the byelaws and conditions of the Port of Yangon.

Damaged cargo will be surveyed daily from 8 am to 11:20 am and 12 noon to 4 pm up to Claims Day now declared as the third day after final discharge of cargo from the vessel.

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

SHIPPING AGENCY DEPARTMENT
MYANMA PORT AUTHORITY
AGENT FOR: M/S REGIONAL CONTAINER LINES

Phone No: 256908/37316/376797

CLAIMS DAY NOTICE
MV VASCO DA GAMA VOY NO (135)

Consignees of cargo carried on MV VASCO DA GAMA VOY NO (135) are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on 15.12.08 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.

Damaged cargo will be surveyed daily from 8 am to 11:20 am and 12 noon to 4 pm up to Claims Day now declared as the third day after final discharge of cargo from the vessel.

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

SHIPPING AGENCY DEPARTMENT
MYANMA PORT AUTHORITY
AGENT FOR: M/S INTERASIA LINES

Phone No: 256908/378316/376797

CLAIMS DAY NOTICE
MV GATI PRESTIGE VOY NO (31509)

Consignees of cargo carried on MV GATI PRESTIGE VOY NO (31509) are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on 16.12.08 and cargo will be discharged into the premises of M.I.T.T where it will lie at the consignee’s risk and expenses and subject to the byelaws and conditions of the Port of Yangon.

Damaged cargo will be surveyed daily from 8 am to 11:20 am and 12 noon to 4 pm up to Claims Day now declared as the third day after final discharge of cargo from the vessel.

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

SHIPPING AGENCY DEPARTMENT
MYANMA PORT AUTHORITY
AGENT FOR: M/S GATI COAST TO COAST

Phone No: 256908/37316/376797

Teenager completes
UK coast walk

LONDON, 15 Dec — A teenager who sparked a land and air rescue operation after stealing a boat has completed a sponsored walk around Britain to make amends.

Seb Green was 15 when he and a friend sparked a search costing £20,000 when they got stranded near Weymouth Harbour, Dorset, in May 2004.

He has spent nearly a year walking 5,821 miles (9,367km) around Britain with his border collie, Flash.

Mr Green, 19, of Weymouth, set off on 1 February and arrived home on Sunday.

He said he was delighted to be back in Preston, near Weymouth. “I have given up almost a year of my life and it has been an extremely worthwhile sacrifice,” Mr Green said.

Mr Green has raised more than £20,000 for the Dorset and Somerset Air Ambulance and Starlight Children’s Foundation, a charity which grants wishes for seriously and terminally ill children and provides hospital entertainment.

Japanese firms to invest in LCD TV plant in Malaysia

KUALA LUMPUR, 15 Dec — Japan’s IPS Alpha Technology Ltd and Panasonic Group will invest more than 65 million ringgit (18.26 million US dollars) in a Malaysian facility to produce liquid crystal display (LCD) television, Malaysian media reported on Monday.

The new entity, known as IPS Alpha Technology Malaysia Sdn Bhd, will start operation by February 2009 with an initial output of 50,000 units a month. This can be raised to 3 million units a year at full capacity.

The company will operate as a subsidiary of IPS Alpha Technology Himeji which is building a mass production hub for latest LCD panels in Japan.—Internet

Some German regions fatter than others

MUNICH, 15 Dec—Researchers say people in the federal state of Saxony-Anhalt suffer more from obesity than those in any other part of Germany.

They also have the greatest waist circumference.

The people of Brandenburg are the second-fattest in Germany, the researchers say.

The study, published in Deutsches Arzteblatt International, found that the mean prevalence of obesity was 22.8 percent, with a maximum in Saxony-Anhalt at 28.3 percent and a minimum in Bremen at 19.8 percent.—Internet
**Australia sets new climate target**

**SYDNEY, 15 Dec** — Australia has said it will start a carbon trading scheme by the middle of 2010, despite appeals from the business community for a delay.

The plan will cover 75% of the country’s emissions.

It has also announced that it will cut greenhouse gas emissions by between 5% and 15% by 2020, from the 2000 levels.

Australia has the highest per capita levels of greenhouse gas emissions in the developed world, due to its heavy use of coal for generating electricity.

On Saturday, a UN climate change conference wrapped up in the Polish city of Poznan, the halfway point in a two-year process aimed at reaching a deal in Copenhagen by the end of 2009.

That agreement is supposed to have two major elements — an expanded Kyoto Protocol-style deal committing industrialised countries to deeper emission cuts in the mid-term, possibly by 2020, and a longer-term agreement encompassing all countries.

The Australian carbon trading scheme will be the most extensive outside Europe, and will see industrial polluters bid for government licences to emit carbon.

Australia, which has been suffering a series of droughts in recent years, is expected to be one of the countries’ hardest hit by global warming.  

**Belgian mother accused of selling newborn twins for cosmetic surgery**

**AMSTERDAM, 15 Dec** — A mother in the Belgian tourist haven of Ghent has been accused by her estranged husband of selling her newborn twin boys for more than $13,000 to pay for cosmetic surgery.

Marc Poppe, 48, told an undercover reporter for Dutch television that Sonia Ringoir, 31, had sold the babies to a friend to fund liposuction, the fat removal procedure. He said the couple had searched the Internet to find a quick way to make money: “It was financially attractive to us. Of course we wouldn’t do it for nothing.”

Since Belgium has no law banning the sale of children, Ringoir was charged with “degrading treatment” of the twins. She was also charged with fraud after a Dutch couple alleged she had conned them by falsely offering to be a surrogate mother. If convicted, she could face between one month and five years in jail.

After spending five months and five years in jail, Ringoir was released last Wednesday to await the results of the police investigation. She denied the allegations, claiming she gave her babies away for free last March to a friend who could not have her own child because of a weak heart.

**Links between breast density and cancer**

**SAN ANTONIO, 15 Dec** — Dense breast tissue contains more cells believed to give rise to breast cancer, compared to non-dense tissue, US researchers said. Dr Karthik Ghosh, a Mayo Clinic breast cancer researcher, said researchers found a dramatic difference in tissue composition between dense and non-dense tissue in the breast.

In a second study, Celine Vachon, also of the Mayo Clinic, found that dense breast tissue has more aromatase enzyme than non-dense tissue.

This is significant because aromatase helps convert androgen hormones into estrogen, and estrogen is important in breast cancer development, Vachon said.

"If aromatase is differentially expressed in dense and non-dense breast tissue, this could provide one mechanism by which density may increase breast cancer risk," Vachon said in a statement. Sixty women, ages 40 to 85, allowed Mayo Clinic researchers to take eight core-needle biopsies from their breasts — none had a history of breast cancer.

"These are initial findings from one of the first attempts to study breast density at the level of healthy tissue. It doesn’t explain everything yet, but is providing really valuable insights," Ghosh said.

The two studies were presented simultaneously at the Cancer Therapy & Research Center-Ameri can Association for Cancer Research in San Antonio Breast Cancer Symposium.

**New England shivers without power after ice storm**

**MAINE, 15 Dec** — At least 800,000 customers in New England are still without electricity on Sunday after an ice storm ravaged the region, officials say.

President Bush has authorized federal aid by declaring a state of emergency in New Hampshire and Massachusetts.

State officials have asked FEMA for costs for 70 shelters, where 1,800 people slept in shelters on Saturday night, said Massachusetts Emergency Management Agency spokesman Peter Judge. It may take two days to restore power to all the affected homes.

"The problem is there is so much debris on the roads from the storm that our crews cannot get to some places," Judge said. It may also take two days to return power to homes in Maine, officials said.

He said 750 National Guard troops have been sent to help.

Although much of the ice melted Saturday, it froze again Saturday night.

**Fla nuclear plant a refuge for crocodiles**

**HOMESTEAD, (Fla), 15 Dec** — A crocodile colony at the Turkey Point nuclear power plant in Homestead, Fla, has grown to about 400 of the big reptiles.

The National Wildlife Federation calls the sanctuary, which emerged about three decades ago, a “crocodile Eden.” The Miami Herald reported on Sunday.

The crocodiles use a 6,800-acre system of canals used to cool the power plant — which the crocodiles are only too happy to use.

The Herald reported that Florida Power & Light established a monitoring program and began studying the movements, nesting habits, genetic makeup and growth of the animals.

The National Wildlife Federation praised the Turkey Point in its October/November magazine issue, crediting the nuclear plant for helping to save the once endangered reptiles.

**Mom delivers baby along roadside**

**CORUM, (NY), 15 Dec** — Rosshelle Ross of Center Moriches, NY, says she let nature take its course when she began delivering her baby in the front seat of the family car. “I said to my husband, ‘What do you mean, cross my legs?’ I said, ‘This baby is coming if I cross my legs or not.’” Ross, 25, said on Saturday from St Charles Hospital after the birth of her first child.

Johnell McKinley Xavier Moore, Newsday reported.

Johnell arrived on Friday the day after his father waved down Suffolk Police Officer Steven Nasso. “The driver was screaming and waving out the window, ‘My wife is having a baby,’ “ Nasso said. “He was in a panic and obviously in a rush.”
Sports

Giggs rates continental competition hardest of all

TOKYO, 15 Dec—Ryan Giggs can count 10 Premier League titles and two Champions League trophies among his vast haul of medals but he rates the 1999 Intercontinental Cup as the most difficult of all to win.—INTERNET

The comments by the Manchester United veteran give an insight into just how seriously the club are taking the Club World Cup here this week, which replaced the Intercontinental Cup showdown between European and South American champions.

With a new name, the tournament has been broadened to include the winners of all six continental competitions, making United's task that much more difficult.

Giggs, the most decorated footballer in British history, said he was relishing the challenge, and believes the competition will be harder to win than the Intercontinental Cup.

"The Intercontinental Cup has been the toughest to win," he told FIFA.com when asked about his most satisfying achievements.—INTERNET

Rooney says we're relishing fixture pile-up

WAYNE ROONEY, insists Manchester United are relishing the fixture congestion that the Club World Cup has brought the Old Trafford side.—INTERNET

TOKYO, 15 Dec—Wayne Rooney insists Manchester United are relishing the fixture congestion that the Club World Cup has brought the Old Trafford side.

But despite the task of making up two Premier League matches on main rivals Liverpool and Chelsea on their return from Japan, Rooney says he would not have it any other way, "I think we're prepared," he said before United's departure for Japan.

United, who play their opening game here on Thursday against Japan's Gamba Osaka, qualified for the tournament of continental champions by winning the Champions League last season.

Having played in Japan on pre-season tours before, Rooney, facing disciplinary action from UEFA for an incident in last week's Champions League clash with Aalborg, said there was a special atmosphere in the country.

"The fans in Japan are brilliant towards all the players and obviously it's a tournament that we want to win," Rooney is also determined to follow the advice of experienced teammate Ryan Giggs and make the most of experiences such as the Club World Cup. United last played in the competition in 2000.—INTERNET

Scolari mystified by Stamford Bridge slump

LONDON, 15 Dec—Luiz Felipe Scolari is at a loss to explain Chelsea's dismal home form and fears that if it does not improve they can forget about winning the English Premier League title.

The Blues have claimed victory in just three of their nine home league games this season, while winning all eight of their matches on the road.

Chelsea manager Scolari is mystified as to why his side are finding it so hard to conquer opponents at Stamford Bridge, where they have won just two of their last seven games.

"It's difficult to explain what's happened. I am frustrated," the Blues boss said. "It's important for us to win at home but now we're playing better away than at home and I need to change this idea.—INTERNET

Spain to host Serbia in Davis Cup clash

MADRID, 15 Dec—Defending champions Spain will host Serbia in Benidorm in the Davis Cup first round next March, the Spanish Tennis Federation announced on Saturday.

A 16,000 seater stadium will have to be erected in the Spanish coastal town for the tie which could well see world number one Rafael Nadal - who missed the final victory over Argentina - face off against world number three Novak Djokovic in the clash that takes place from March 6-8.

The Federation, though, were unable to reach agreement on who would be the next non-playing captain of the team after Emilio Sanchez Vicario stepped down following the win over Argentina.—INTERNET

Real haven't thrown in towel says Puyol

MADRID, 15 Dec—Barcelona captain Carles Puyol admitted Saturday's 2-0 win over Real Madrid in 'El Clasico' at Camp Nou was a major step in the title race but said there was no way reigning champions Real would throw in the towel despite being 12 points adrift of the leaders.

Barcelona scored twice in the final seven minutes in a sensational finale with Samuel Eto'o netting on 83 minutes before Lionel Messi scored with a 91st minute chip to secure a first Clasico win since November 2005.

Sevilla and Valencia are now Barca's closest rivals lying eight points behind them in the standings with Villarreal and Real, last season's top two, both struggling.—INTERNET

Scolari mystified by Stamford Bridge slump

LONDON, 15 Dec—Luiz Felipe Scolari is at a loss to explain Chelsea's dismal home form and fears that if it does not improve they can forget about winning the English Premier League title.

The Blues have claimed victory in just three of their nine home league games this season, while winning all eight of their matches on the road.

Chelsea manager Scolari is mystified as to why his side are finding it so hard to conquer opponents at Stamford Bridge, where they have won just two of their last seven games.

"It's difficult to explain what's happened. I am frustrated," the Blues boss said. "It's important for us to win at home but now we're playing better away than at home and I need to change this idea.—INTERNET

Spain to host Serbia in Davis Cup clash

MADRID, 15 Dec—Defending champions Spain will host Serbia in Benidorm in the Davis Cup first round next March, the Spanish Tennis Federation announced on Saturday.

A 16,000 seater stadium will have to be erected in the Spanish coastal town for the tie which could well see world number one Rafael Nadal - who missed the final victory over Argentina - face off against world number three Novak Djokovic in the clash that takes place from March 6-8.

The Federation, though, were unable to reach agreement on who would be the next non-playing captain of the team after Emilio Sanchez Vicario stepped down following the win over Argentina.—INTERNET

Real haven't thrown in towel says Puyol

MADRID, 15 Dec—Barcelona captain Carles Puyol admitted Saturday's 2-0 win over Real Madrid in 'El Clasico' at Camp Nou was a major step in the title race but said there was no way reigning champions Real would throw in the towel despite being 12 points adrift of the leaders.

Barcelona scored twice in the final seven minutes in a sensational finale with Samuel Eto'o netting on 83 minutes before Lionel Messi scored with a 91st minute chip to secure a first Clasico win since November 2005.

Sevilla and Valencia are now Barca's closest rivals lying eight points behind them in the standings with Villarreal and Real, last season's top two, both struggling.—INTERNET

Sorenstam ends career with birdie at Dubai Ladies Masters golf — 71 on Sunday at the Dubai Ladies Masters, finishing eight points behind winner Anja Monke after an eight-foot birdie at No 18 drew a standing ovation from the packed gallery.

Sorenstam raised her putter to acknowledge the crowd and then hugged caddie Terry McNamara.

"I felt at peace. I really felt very content," she said. "I walked up to hit my third shot on the 18th, and I felt the breeze coming in, and it was just a really comfortable feeling. I saw some players standing behind the 18th green, that gave me a tear. I saw my parents and my family and that give me a tear."—INTERNET
UN condemns using children as suicide bomber

KARUL, 15 Dec—The special envoy of the United Nations Secretary General to Afghanistan Kai Eide has denounced the reported use of children by Taliban insurgents as suicide bombers in Afghanistan, a UN statement released here Sunday said. “I strongly condemn the attack where a young boy was allegedly used as a suicide bomber against British forces in Sangan district of Helmand,” the statement quoted Kai Eide as saying. Taliban militants, according to media reports, used a young boy as a suicide bomber against the NATO-led ISAF peacekeeping force in Afghanistan’s southern Helmand province on Friday. Three soldiers were killed in the attack. The killing of marines by a 13-year old boy again demonstrates the Taliban’s total disrespect for human rights, the statement added. In the statement the UN envoy stressed that the “Taliban and all others who use children in war must cease doing so. The rights of children in Afghanistan must be fully protected”. Taliban insurgents, who have claimed preparing hundreds of suicide bombers, have yet to admit using children as suicide attackers in wartorn Afghanistan.

BudAirport talks collapse, more flights grounded

BUDAPEST, 15 Dec—Talks between striking unions and Budapest Airport broke down on Wednesday over flight cancellations at the airport operator, which unions said they saw no respect for human rights, the statement added. In the statement the UN envoy stressed that the “Taliban and all others who use children in war must cease doing so. The rights of children in Afghanistan must be fully protected”. Talks to resolve the standoff collapsed on Wednesday. In a statement the unions said they saw no chance for a resolution with the airport operator, which failed to adequately address either of their demands. Budapest Airport said on its website it had agreed to continue talks with unions at 1000 GMT on Monday. Hungarian airline Malév said on its website it had cancelled 10 flights scheduled for Sunday. Low-cost carriers EasyJet and Wizz Air cancelled two afternoon flights scheduled for Berlin and Brussels, respectively, the airport said.

Four killed, 5 injured in accident in Malaysia

KUALA LUMPUR, 15 Dec—Three members of a family and a van driver were killed and five injured in a crash between a car, a van and a chemical tanker on Sunday morning at the Pasir Gudang highway in Johor Baru, capital of Malaysian southern Johor state, local media reported on Monday. In the incident which involved nine victims, three persons, who travelled together in the car were killed on the spot. The van driver died on the operating table at the hospital. All were believed to have died from severe head and body injuries, the New Straits Times reported. The injured were Abdul Razak’s brother Ulil Azmi, 18, sister Ruziah, 35, and her other son, three-year-old Adib Raqi. They were on their way to Muar to attend a wedding. Two of Kucheran’s colleagues in the van with him also sustained injuries. The tanker driver, who was in his 30s, was currently being held for alleged reckless driving. Seri Alam district police chief Roslan Zainuddin said.

WEATHER

Monday, 15 December, 2008

Summary of observations recorded at 09:30 hr MST: During the past 24 hours, weather has been partly cloudy in Kachin and Shan States, upper Sagraing, Yangon and Taninthayi Divisions and generally fair in the remaining areas. Night temperatures were (3°C) to (4°C) below December average temperatures in Mon State, lower Sagraing and Magway Divisions, (6°C) below December average temperatures in Chin State, (3°C) to (4°C) above December average temperatures in Kachin and Shan States, Bago Division, (5°C) above December average temperatures in upper Sagraing Division and about December average temperatures in the remaining States and Divisions. The significant night temperatures were Hakha (1°C), Loelum (3°C).

Maximum temperature on 14-12-2008 was 91°F. Minimum temperature on 15-12-2008 was 63°F. Relative humidity at (09:30) hours MST on 15-12-2008 was 82%. Total sunshine hours on 14-12-2008 was (9.1) hrs approx.

Rainfall on 15-12-2008 was (Nil) at Mingaladon, Kaba-Aye and Central Yangon. Total rainfall since 1-1-2008 was (110.31) inches at Mingaladon, (120.95) inches at Kaba-Aye and (140.94) inches at Central Yangon. Maximum wind speed at Yangon (Kaba-Aye) was (4) mph from North at (9:30) hours MST on 15-12-2008.

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

Forecast valid until evening of 16th December 2008: Weather will be partly cloudy in Kachin, Shan and Rakhine States, upper Sagraing, Yangon and Taninthayi Divisions and generally fair in the remaining areas.

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

Outlook for subsequent two days: Likelyhood of slight increase of night temperatures in the Northern Myanmar areas.

Forecast for Nay Pyi Taw and neighbouring area for 16-12-2008: Generally fair weather.

Forecast for Yangon and neighbouring area for 16-12-2008: Partly cloudy.

Forecast for Mandalay and neighbouring area for 16-12-2008: Generally fair weather.
Coord meeting of sub-committee for holding Independence day flag hoisting and saluting ceremony held

Chairman of the sub-committee Commander of Nay Pyi Taw Command Maj-Gen Wai Lwin briefed on holding of the flag hoisting and saluting ceremony on a grand scale.

Secretary of the sub-committee Lt-Col Ye Nyunt of the command reported on the plan to hold the ceremony. Next, officials concerned also reported on their respective tasks. The meeting ended with concluding remarks by the commander.

Urban and rural areas enjoying development in parallel in Meiktila Township

Article: Win Naing (Kyemon); Photos: Htay Aung (Kyemon)

Now, the government has the 24-Region Development Project and the Five Rural Development Programmes on the go with the aim of ensuring equitable development of all parts of the nation. With this lofty goal in view, it has formed rural supporting committees for expediting the tasks.

As part of the drive, Meiktila Township Development Affairs Committee is taking measures for making the township pleasant and green. In the process, the committee, apart from landscaping plants on both sides of the roads in the township, has grown more than 50,000 saplings of see-through flowers and oleanders on both sides along the five major roads—Meiktila-Mandalay, Meiktila-Yangon, Meiktila-Thazi, Meiktila-Mahlaing, and Meiktila-Mandalay roads.

In addition, the committee is working hard to make the township possess all characteristics of a city such as growing flower patches, installing posts of colourful decorated lamps and 130 more sodium lamps, and underground cables.

Arsenal’s Adebayor: Forget ManU, Chelsea, focus on Liverpool

ARSENAL, 15 Dec—Arsenal forward Emmanuel Adebayor is all keyed up for the big showdown against Premiership leaders Liverpool. Arsene Wenger’s men will take on Rafa Benitez’s side at the Emirates Stadium on Sunday and Adebayor has said it is going to be a massive game.

The Gunners have been inconsistent this season as they have shown their quality with wins over Chelsea and Manchester United, but have lost to the likes of Fulham, Hull City and Stoke City.

Mould toxins more prevalent and hazardous than thought

STOCKHOLM, 15 Dec —Mould toxins in buildings damaged by moisture are considerably more prevalent than was previously thought, according to new international research. Erica Bloom from the Division of Medical Microbiology at Lund University in Sweden has contributed to research in this field by analyzing dust and materials samples from buildings damaged by mould. Virtually all of the samples contained toxins from mould.

Previously it was claimed that the occurrence of mould does not necessarily mean that there are toxins present.