True patriotism
* It is very important for everyone of the
nation regardless of the place he lives to
have strong Union Spirit.
* Only Union Spirit is the true patriotism
all the nationalities will have to safe-
guard.

Senior General Than Shwe felicitates King of Bhutan

NAY PYI TAW, 17 Dec— On the occasion of the National Day of Bhutan,
which falls on 17 December 2008, Senior General Than Shwe, Chairman
of the State Peace and Development Council of the Union of Myanmar,
have sent a message of felicitations to His Majesty Jigme Khesar Namgyel Wangchuck,
King of Bhutan.

Integrated farming system to be practised on wider
scale for raising per capita income of farmers

Prime Minister inspects programmes to introduce
mechanized farming (model farming)

YANGON, 16 Dec— Prime Minister General Thein Sein this morning
inspected programmes being implemented jointly by
local farmers and entrepreneurs to introduce mecha-
nized farming (model farming) in Dagon Myothit
(East), Dagon Myothit (South) and Dagon Myothit (Seikkan)
townships.

The Prime Minister together with Lt-Gen Myint Swe of the Ministry
of Defence, Minister for Electric Power (2) Maj-
Gen Khin Maung Myint, the director-general of the
Government Office and heads of department
looked into the model ag-
icultural project of Dagon International Ltd in Block
(1) of Special Zone (1) in
Dagon Myothit (East)
Township. They were wel-
comed there by Chairman
of Yangon Division Peace
and Development Council
Commander of Yangon
Command Brig-Gen Win
Myint, Chairman of
Yangon City Development
Committee Mayor Brig-
Gen Aung Thein Lm, de-
partmental officials and
responsible persons of the
special zones.

The Prime Minister observed educative pam-
phlets published by the
Myanmar Agriculture Serv-
ice and samples of paddy
seeds of high-yielding
strains for the mechanized
farming special zone at the
briefing hall of the project.

In meeting with agri-
cultural entrepreneurs and
those in-charge of the zones,
the Prime Minister said that
Myanmar is blessed with
favourable geographical
features for agriculture, so
the majority of the people
are engaged in the agricul-
tural farming as their main
business.

The government is
seeking better ways and
means for extensive land
reclamation, supply of ad-
equate irrigation water,
boosting per acre yields of
crops, and improving the
quality of the agricultural
produce. However, the ag-
ricultural output has not
met the target yet.

It is needed to focus on
boosting per acre yields and improving quality of
marketable crops. The agricul-
tural produce will be
of high quality and will get
handsome prices if present
crops strains are replaced
with high-yielding quality
strains and advanced agri-
cultural methods are ap-
pied.

(See page 8)

When it comes to countries in
the Asia-Pacific region, developed
countries such as Japan and the
Republic of Korea and Chinese
Taipei and Hong Kong are
suffering financial crisis to an
extent.

INSIDE

PAGES 6+7

KYAW YE MIN
Model villages on the increase, fruits of rural development tasks

The majority of the people live in rural areas. The government is fulfilling the requirements of rural folks in the economic, education, health and social sectors, thereby bridging the development gap between urban and rural areas.

Agricultural farming is the main business of rural areas, so region-wise large dams and dam clusters are being established for sufficient supply of irrigation water. At the same time, tasks for supply of adequate safe water are being carried out on a wider scale. As a result, 78 of the townships of three arid divisions have access to clean water.

In addition, more and more school buildings, village affiliated basic education high schools and self-reliant libraries are being opened. So, the youth of rural areas are now in a position to enjoy better opportunities to pursue education and broaden their horizons.

Thanks to a growing number of station hospitals and rural clinics, better health care is being given to the villages concerned and their surrounding areas. And construction of village-to-village roads, roads linking villages and towns, and river and creek-crossing bridges, and upgrading of roads to gravel and tarred ones have led to facilitating regional development tasks.

The Supporting Committee for Rural Development has been formed to speed up tasks for economic growth, smooth transport, agricultural and livestock farming, and supply of power to rural areas with small-scale hydropower plants, bio-fuel-fired power plants, solar energy plants and windmills.

Well-wishers, local people and social organizations are participating in the rural development tasks being undertaken by the government. Thus, the number of model villages is going upward, that reflects economic development and high education, health and social standards of rural people.

PERSPECTIVES

Wednesday, 17 December, 2008

* Oppose those relying on external elements, acting as stooges, holding negative views
* Oppose those trying to jeopardize stability of the State and progress of the nation
* Oppose foreign nations interfering in internal affairs of the State
* Crush all internal and external destructive elements as the common enemy

Information Minister performs rural development tasks in Pale Township

Minister Brig-Gen Kyaw Hsan meeting with local people in Pale Township. — MNA

NAV PYI TAW, 16 Dec —Minister for Information Brig-Gen Kyaw Hsan on 14 December met with local people from twelve villages in three villages-tracts totaling 1700 at Watkya village in Pale Township, Sagaing Division with the aim of carrying out rural development tasks and durability of self-reliant libraries in the township.

Firstly, officials reported to the minister on rural development works being carried out in the region. Next, the minister gave instructions on supply of electric power with the use of generator for the school children of village Basic Education Primary School (Affiliated), local people.

Well-wishers, local people and social organizations are participating in the rural development tasks being undertaken by the government. Thus, the number of model villages is going upward, that reflects economic development and high education, health and social standards of rural people.
ACROSS MIDEAST, ARABS HAIL SHOE-HURLING JOURNALIST

Baghdad, 16 Dec—Iraqis and other Arabs erupted in glee Monday at the shoe attack on George W. Bush. Far from a joke, many in the Mideast saw the act by an Iraqi journalist as heroic, expressing the deep, personal contempt many feel for the American leader they blame for years of bloodshed, chaos and the suffering of civilians. Images of Bush ducking the fast-flying shoes at a Baghdad press conference, aired repeatedly on Arab satellite TV networks, were cathartic for many in the Middle East, who have for years felt their own leaders kowtow to the American president. So the sight of an average Arab standing up and making a public show of resentment was stunning. The pride, joy and bitterness it uncorked showed how many Arabs place their anger on Bush personally for what they see as a litany of crimes—chief among them the turmoil in Iraq and tens of thousands of Iraqi deaths since the 2003 US invasion.

A Saudi man reads a newspaper published on 15 Dec, 2008, in Riyadh as newspapers are fronted by pictures showing US President George W Bush and the angry Iraqi reporter who hurled his shoes at Bush during a press conference with Iraqi Prime Minister Nouri al-Maliki in Baghdad, Iraq, on 14 Dec. 

INTERNET

18 KILLED IN IRAQ ATTACKS AFTER BUSH VISIT

Mosul, 16 Dec—Seven members of a single family from the ancient Yazidi religious sect were gunned down in their home as violence killed 18 people in Iraq on Monday in the wake of US President George W. Bush’s farewell visit. Police in Sinjar, a town near the Syrian border, said the three women and four men who died were killed by a group of armed men, though the mayor said there was a single attacker, “apparently bent on tribal vengeance.”

Eight Iraqi police officers were also killed and 10 police and soldiers wounded by an explosion west of Baghdad, the US military said in a statement. “Eight Iraqi policemen were killed in an attack by a suicide vehicle-borne improvised explosive device in Nasir Was Salam,” it said, adding that the wounded were two Iraqi soldiers and eight police.

Earlier the interior ministry said three civilians had died and 31 were injured in the suicide car bombing in Abu Ghraib west of the city.

At Tarmiya, 40 kilometres (25 miles) north of Baghdad, a suicide bomber detonated an explosives belt killing one civilian and wounding three more, the US military said.

Elsewhere police in Ash-Shura 50 kilometres (30 miles) south of Mosul said two Iraqis were killed when a homemade bomb exploded.

Four Iraqi soldiers were also wounded by suicide car bomber at Rabia 460 kilometres (285 miles) northwest of the capital near the Syrian border, police said.—INTERNET

POLL FINDS SUPPORT FOR OBAMA’S WAR VIEWS

Washington, 16 Dec—Americans are more upbeat about US prospects in Iraq than at any time in the past five years, but nearly two-thirds continue to believe the war is not worth fighting and 70 percent say President-elect Barack Obama should fulfill his campaign promise to withdraw US forces from the country within 16 months, according to a new Washington Post-ABC News poll.

Meanwhile, most Americans support the war in Afghanistan and a slim majority said the conflict there is essential to battling global terrorism, the poll found. Yet, a majority of Americans also believe that the US military action there has been unsuccessful.

Public perceptions of the two wars appear to largely dovetail with the views expressed by Obama, who has promised to begin withdrawing most combat troops from Iraq shortly after he takes office on 20 Jan. Obama has advocated shifting more US troops from Iraq to Afghanistan, where the US-led coalition has been struggling to quell resurgent Taleban and al-Qaeda forces. —INTERNET

17-12-08 NL 7/30/18, 7:16 PM

17-12-08 NL 7/30/18, 7:16 PM
Iran to reform missile production unit

TEHERAN, 16 Dec—A senior Iranian officer has said the military is set to revolutionize its missile production division in an effort to boost the Islamic Republic’s defensive capabilities, local satellite channel Press TV reported on Monday.

Brigadier General Mehdi Farahi, head of the Aerospace Organization in the Defence Ministry, was quoted as saying that “the reforms are intended to promote efficiency and help fulfill the requirements of the country’s armed forces.”

The entire structure of the organization along with its policies will be renewed, he said.

The Aerospace Organization has been actively manufacturing rocket artillery systems to help Iran’s military self-sufficiency campaign aimed at enhancing the country’s defense capabilities in the face of war threats from the US and Israel. The newly-developed surface-to-surface Sejjil missile, the longer-range Shahab-3 ballistic missile which has a range of up to 2000 kilometres, along with Zelzal and Fateh missiles are among the productions of the unit.—Internet

US missile strike suspected in two deaths

ISLAMABAD, 16 Dec—A US missile strike killed two people and wounded three in a northwest Pakistani militant stronghold near the Afghan border, intelligence officials and a witness said Tuesday.

The Monday night strike in Tabi Tolkhel village in the North Waziristan tribal region appears to be the latest in a surge of alleged US missile attacks in Pakistani territory that have raised tensions in a border region beleaguered by al-Qaeda and Taliban militants.

Also Monday, a transporters association said escalating militant attacks on a key supply route for US and NATO troops in Afghan-istan that runs through Pakistan have prompted Pakistani truckers to refuse to haul the vital military-bound supplies.—Internet

US anti-kidnapping expert abducted in Mexico

MEXICO CITY, 16 Dec—A US anti-kidnapping expert was abducted by gunmen in northern Mexico last week, a sign of just how bold this nation’s kidnapping gangs have become.

US security consultant Felix Batista—who claims to have helped resolve nearly 100 kidnapping and ransom cases—was in Saltillo in Coahuila state to offer advice on how to confront abductions for ransom when he himself was seized, local authorities said.

Unknown assailants grabbed him on 10 Dec, said Charlie LeBlanc, the president of the Houston, Texas-based security firm ASI Global LLC, where Batista is a consultant.

“We have notified the FBI and Mexican authorities, and they are working on the case,” LeBlanc said Monday. “What we are doing is we’re offering our support to the family and hoping for the best.”

The US Embassy in Mexico City said it would not comment on the case, and LeBlanc declined to say whether the kidnappers had demanded a ransom.

LeBlanc said Batista had his own security business and that “he was in Mexico for business that wasn’t associated with our company.”—Internet

Calif storm collapses school roof, snarls travel

LOS ANGELES, 16 Dec—California took a pounding Monday from a powerful storm that collapsed the roof of a trade school, made roads treacherous and forced residents from homes out of fear of mudslides from fire-stripped hillsides.

Interstate 15, the main route connecting Southern California and Las Vegas, was closed by heavy snow in a mountain pass east of Los Angeles.

Intestate 5 north of Los Angeles was snarled by snow that forced the California Highway Patrol to shepherd motorists over another pass.

About 20,000 customers lost power across the state, utilities reported.

At its height Monday, the storm triggered hundreds of fender-bender traffic accidents on freeways, highways and surfaces streets across California, Washington and Nevada.

In Anaheim, students and teachers fled a trade school when the roof of a classroom collapsed during heavy rain Monday.

Twelve students and two staff members were hospitalized with mostly minor injuries, and all but one were released by afternoon, said Lynn Porter, assistant superintendent of educational services.—Internet

US, Russia no closer on missile shield, arms

MOSCOW, 16 Dec—Moscow and Washington are no closer to resolving their serious disagreements over missile defense in Europe, arms control treaties and other major issues, a deputy Russian foreign minister said Monday.

Speaking hours after Russian officials met in Moscow with a US delegation, Sergei Ryabkov told reporters the Russian side was satisfied with the current round of talks. “On key moments we didn’t succeed in bringing our approaches any closer.”

Ryabkov said. “But this wasn’t unexpected.”

The United States says its plans for missile shield installations in Poland and the Czech Republic would counter a potential threat from Iran. Russia claims the real aim is to weaken its nuclear deterrent.

Russia is already pressuring the incoming administration of President-elect Barack Obama to scrap the missile defense plan, and has threatened to deploy missiles near the Polish border.

Monday’s talks also dealt with efforts to negotiate a follow-up pact to the 1991 START nuclear arms agreement, which expires next year.—Internet

Illinois House takes first step to impeach governor

CHICAGO, 16 Dec—Illinois House of Representatives took the first step on Monday to impeach Governor Rod Blagojevich, who was charged with corruption.

“We’re going to proceed with all due speed, but we’re going to make sure that what we do is done correctly,” said House Speaker Michael Madigan.

Madigan made the remarks as he established a committee to recommend whether the governor should be removed from office for his involvement in corruption cases, and to allow the full floor to decide whether to file impeachment charges against him based on the recommendation.—Internet
A Palestinian mother reacts after she saw her freed son arriving at Erez crossing point in northern Gaza Strip, on 15 Dec, 2008. —Xinhua

**Canadian diplomat reported missing in Niger**

OTTAWA, 16 Dec—A Canadian diplomat who is working in Niger for the United Nations has gone missing together with two other people, Canadian media reported on Monday.

Sixty-four-year-old Robert Fowler, one of his aides and a driver were found missing late Sunday evening near Niamey, the capital of Niger, UN spokesperson Farhan Haq told Canadian Television.

Niger residents found an abandoned United Nations Development Programme car about 40 kilometres outside of Niamey, which was supposed to be transporting the three people. Haq said authorities in Niger are trying to determine what has happened. Fowler was appointed as a UN special envoy to Niger last July.—Xinhua

**Dynamite found in Paris department store**

PARIS, 16 Dec—Police acting on a warning Tuesday found a bundle of dynamite inside a Paris department store at the height of the Christmas season, and a group demanding that France withdraw from Afghanistan claimed responsibility.

Sticks of dynamite tied together but without a detonator were found in the Printemps department store, a favored shopping destination for tourists, and a Christmas season attraction because of its festive window displays. Interior Minister Michele Alliot-Marie said the explosives appeared "relatively old." Police said they were found in the third floor restroom of the menswear department. Five sticks were found together, officials said.

"There was no risk of explosion," the minister said. French news agency Agence France-Presse said it received a letter Tuesday morning from a group calling itself the Afghan Revolutionary Front saying that several bombs had been planted in the store. Police said they searched the store and found the dynamite because of the warning.—Xinhua

**Released Palestinian prisoners enjoy happiness of family reunion**

RAMALLAH, 16 Dec—Thousands of Palestinians poured into the Presidential headquarters in the West Bank city of Ramallah on Monday, greeting their long-lost family members freed by Israel Monday.

With their release being postponed for about a week than it was originally announced, the prisoners were embraced by waving flags, hugs and tears, enjoying their delayed happiness of reunion.

"I spent six years in Israeli jail and I was supposed to serve for two more years. I'm so glad that I can go home now although our release was put off a bit," Imad Naser el-Deen told Xinhua after hugging his father.

The prisoners' release was first agreed by Israeli Prime Minister Ehud Olmert and the Palestinian National Authority (PNA) President Mahmoud Abbas during their latest meeting in mid-November.—Xinhua

**Plane slides off runway in Canada, causing no injuries**

OTTAWA, 16 Dec—There were no injuries when a small passenger plane slid off the runway and ran into deep snow on Monday at an airport in eastern Canada.

The Air Canada Jazz airplane slid off the runway after touching down at the airport in the city of North Bay in Ontario Province, reports reaching here said.—INTERNET

**Plane photo of a Philippine Coast Guard search and rescue vessel. At least 22 people were killed and 34 others were reported missing after a ferry capsized in the northern Philippines, the coast guard said on Monday.**—INTERNET

**Rescue continues to search three missing Egyptians in shipwreck**

CAIRO, 16 Dec—Rescue efforts are still going on to search three Egyptians who have been missing after a cargo ship sank in the Mediterranean Sea, the Egyptian MENA news agency reported on Monday.

The cargo ship, raising the flag of Maldives, capsized on Sunday off the Cypriot coasts, head of Egypt's maritime transport sector Hisham Sersawi was quoted as saying. Seven of the 10 crew members, who are all Egyptians, were saved and efforts are continuing to search the other three, said Sersawi.

The ship was on the way from the northern Egyptian port city of Alexandria to the Syrian harbor of Latakia when the accident occurred, he added.

According to earlier reports, Egypt's Assistant Foreign Minister for Consular Affairs Ahmed Rizk said the Egyptian embassy in Nicosia was informed by the Cypriot authorities of the accident.

The ship owned by Moro Company capsized mainly due to bad weather, according to the report.—Xinhua

**African water conference opens in Libya**

TUNISIA, 16 Dec—A three-day conference on water for agriculture and energy in Africa opened Monday in the Libyan city of Sirte, 600 km east of the capital Tripoli, according to news reaching here.

The conference has been convened against the backdrop of a water crisis and deteriorating drought in most African nations, said Libyan Secretary of Agriculture, Animal and Water Resources Abu-Bakr Mabruk al-Mansuri.

The water resources, agriculture and energy ministers participating in the conference would assess water conditions, discuss investment and efforts in enhancing management of water resources as well as development of major rivers and water resources in rural areas across Africa for sustainable growth in the continent, al-Mansuri said. He warned that the biggest challenges were rising demand for food and shrinking irrigated area and investment in agriculture.

Food output could slump by 50 percent by 2020 in some African countries as climate change continues, threatening food security in the African continent, he said.—Xinhua

**All items from Xinhua News Agency**

**Singapore, Macao to further enhance healthcare co-op**

SINGAPORE, 16 Dec—Singapore and China's Macao Special Administrative Region Monday renewed a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) to promote closer healthcare cooperation.

The memorandum was signed by Singapore's Minister for Health, Khaw Boon Wan, and his Macao counterpart, Chui Sai On, according to Singapore's Ministry of Healthcare (MOH).

The MOH said the renewed memorandum will accelerate the exchange of information and expertise in medical services, as well as increase opportunities for training attachments in both Singapore and Macao.

In October 2005, Singapore and Macao signed a healthcare accord, including setting up mechanisms to report disease cases and to conduct exchanges of doctors between the two places.

Since 2006, officials from Macao had taken up various training attachments in Singapore. Singapore also sent officials to Macao to study the provision of medical coverage during the Macao Grand Prix.—Xinhua
The latest problem that has attracted the interest of all the media of the world is the global financial crisis. It started in the U.S and all the countries in the world have begun to suffer its adverse effects more or less. Stock and share prices have fallen and there are also many other repercussions. The leaders of the nations are putting their heads together to find out an answer to this problem. It is anybody’s guess how long it will take to weather this problem. It is true that we are also interested in what measures our country will take to control the snowball effect of the crisis.

In this age of globalization, it hardly need be said that our country will also be more or less affected by the global crisis. However, we would like to say its effects will not be as bad for our country as others. You might ask why.

As it has already been said, the problem originated in the U.S. In fact, savings and loan associations have boomed there and their uncontrollable growth itself made their market bust and collapse. Home loan industry sells houses in instalment and buyers mortgage the houses before all the payments have been made. In this way, astronomical amounts of loan money are circulating outside. Being a capitalist nation, the U.S, with a view to only making profit, has placed almost no control on giving loans and sales of houses. Large sums of loans are disbursed to those who mortgage their houses and are not likely to be able to redeem the loans. The financial institutions that finance the home loan industry are also operating without strong insurance cover and sound rules and regulations. Successive administrations have helped the financial institutions to be able to give out loans with low interest rates and sales of houses. Large sums of loans are disbursed to those who mortgage their houses and are not likely to be able to redeem the loans. The financial institutions that finance the home loan industry are also operating without strong insurance cover and sound rules and regulations. Successive administrations have helped the financial institutions to be able to give out loans with low interest rates and sales of houses. Large sums of loans are disbursed to those who mortgage their houses and are not likely to be able to redeem the loans.

Asians are a people who are extravagant and do not hesitate to buy an elephant if it is available on credit. The U.S market economic system places a higher priority on consumerism than on production and trade. It seems to be considered that production and trade will increase if consumption becomes higher. Statistics have shown that in 1994, the number of people who have their own houses stood at 64 per cent of the population and it increased to 69.2 per cent in 2004. To curry favour with the administration and to get financial support, home loan businesses and the financial institutions that finance these businesses organize respective congressmen by providing election funds for them and selling them houses on hire purchase and with low interest rates. The current crisis has popped up largely due to the give-and-take between politicians and businessmen and the uncontrolled mortgage market.

As a result, around 2006, construction of houses was on steep increase and supply became disproportionately larger than demand. Moreover, due to military spending and foreign debt of 10 trillion US dollars, the U.S administration sustained a great budget deficit. Therefore, interest rates had to be raised. This led foreign investors began to withdraw their investments. Thus, foreign investments in the U.S decreased and houses could not be sold out. Moreover, there were millions of mortgaged houses that were not redeemed. No wonder real estate market collapsed and its collapse also led to that of home loan industry.

Financial institutions making investment in mortgages began to feel a decline in business in early 2008 as the latter collapsed. As a result, there were incidents in which J.P Morgan Chase Co bought Bear Stern financial company and the government had urgently provided AIG Insurance Co with an emergency loan of US$ 85 billion. It is safe to say that they tried to solve the problem by themselves. But the situation has become worse, and Lehman Brothers Co, one of the biggest financial companies, went bankrupt on 15 September 2008. Some may have already known this.

Such bankruptcy triggered a great impact on global financial market. There was a sudden fall in Dow Jones and NYSE markets, the greatest stock share markets. Consequently, there was also a fall in stock markets in Europe and Asian-Pacific regions. It can be said that the financial crisis originated in the U.S. At present, the global financial crisis has become a major problem on which even the international community has to keep a watchful eye and is making collective efforts to solve it.

The US government is trying its utmost to win back the trust of international community in the global financial market. It is taking all possible measures for its economy to survive the crisis. It has tried its best to have the right to spend US$ 700 billion on major companies that suffered most in order to save them.

But, it is said that when it gained the approval of spending US$ 700 billion, the demand of the money for such companies has amounted to US$ two trillion as the stock share prices in the global market have fallen. Whatever it is, it is likely that the US government is trying to save the financial institutions in crisis and disbursed loans to major companies and bailed out those hit hard.

(See page 7)
The global financial crisis that rose in the US has now spread to all parts of the world. In that case, there may be a gap of effects between one country and another based on the sizes of their dealings with the US in the economic sector, economic growth, and the strength of finance and natural resources.

At present, European countries suffer the effects of the US financial crisis worse than any other country because they deal a lot with the US according to the market economy, and have made heavy investments in the nation. The economy of all European countries is stronger than that of the US, but it is not possible to lay down a single directive for all European countries in addressing the issue. The situations called for great restrictions on the ways to deal with the problem effectively. For the time being, Britain is nationalizing the banks and investment enterprises that have come under serious effects, to tackle its financial crisis. Nevertheless, its economy of the third quarter fell by 0.8% for the first time in 16 years. Its economy is forecast to fall by 1.7% in 2009. It is said that now, its employment population is 2.8 million, and the number will rise to 2.9 million by 2010.

French government meanwhile is taking measures in this regard such as giving guarantees to those who save money in government banks and investment companies and dissuading the people from withdrawing their stock shares and savings from the banks. The governments of European countries are encouraging declining enterprises to merge with each other, and heavy enterprises to purchase deteriorating enterprises. It is also said that European Union tried to bail out enterprises out of problems in member countries using 500 billion Euros.

Despite the programme, industries and service enterprises in European industrial countries are going to rack and ruin. Many of them have admitted their economic decline. The countries that have been hit hardest in Europe are Iceland, Hungary and Ukraine. They have financial links with the US and other developed European countries, so they have got into troubles. Any developed countries including the US do not extend a helping hand to them, and they are worrying IMF for some help.

There have been severe effects on Middle-East Arabian countries and other oil producing countries such as Venezuela and Russia. It is because the US and European countries are facing economic catastrophes and oil demand has taken a nosedive. And in consequence, the world oil prices have fallen at an unexpected level. Now, they are sitting down together to reduce oil production. In the meantime, the stock markets of oil producing countries have dropped radically.

Moreover, the majority of those countries have got difficulties with their investments in the US and western countries. To my knowledge, some countries that do not make huge investments in western countries such as Iran, Russia and Venezuela are likely to suffer less, and the other countries are sure to encounter economic crises resulting from a drastic fall in oil demand.

When it comes to countries in the Asia-Pacific region, developed countries such as Japan and the Republic of Korea and Chinese Taipei and Hong Kong are suffering financial crisis to an extent. Many foreign investments have withdrawn from the Republic of Korea, and its currency Wan has fallen by as many as 40 per cent. As a consequence, the sales of electronics and industrial companies such as Daewoo and Samsung are going down. In Japan, the value of yen is on the increase, and so Japan-made products have become more expensive. Therefore, some large companies such as Sony, Toshiba and Panasonic are likely to face losses stemming from a big drop in exports. It is said that the governments of the Republic of Korea and Japan are trying to support economic enterprises with the use of State-owned funds.

The sales of electronics and industrial companies such as Daewoo and Samsung are going down. In Japan, the value of yen is on the increase, and so Japan-made products have become more expensive. Therefore, some large companies such as Sony, Toshiba and Panasonic are likely to face losses stemming from a big drop in exports. It is said that the governments of the Republic of Korea and Japan are trying to support economic enterprises with the use of State-owned funds.
Integrated farming system to be practised on wider scale...

(from page 1)

He called on local farmers and entrepreneurs to work hard to materialize the mechanized farming (model farming).

He called on wider-scale practice of integrated farming system for raising per capita income of farmers.

Next, Lt-Gen Myint Swe of the Ministry of Defence reported on assistance provided by the government to model agricultural special zones.

Afterwards, Chairman of Yangon Division Peace and Development Council Commander of Yangon Command Brig-Gen Win Myint reported on stockpiling of machinery and spare parts in the special zones, measures taken for availability of water, progress in land reclamation arrangements for construction of water supply structures, progress in construction of inner roads and drains, collection of quality paddy seeds for summer paddy cultivation, and progress in cultivation of summer paddy.

Next, Director-General of Department for Human Settlement and Housing Development U Aung Win reported on cultivable land.

After that, entrepreneurs of the agricultural special zones reported on progress in cultivation of summer paddy and work to be carried out for development of agriculture to the Prime Minister who fulfilled the requirements.

Later, the Prime Minister and party proceeded to the model agricultural project site of Dagon International Ltd and looked into land preparation for building drains and earth works with the use of heavy machinery and heard a report on work being carried out at the special zone-1 in Dagon Myothit (East) Township.

The Prime Minister and party arrived at Ngamoyeik sluice gate, the special zone-1 and heard a report presented by Chairman of the company U Htay Myint on cultivation of summer paddy, electrification, arrangements for construction of inner roads, drains and live-stock breeding. The Commander made a supplemental report.

After hearing the report, the Prime Minister spoke of the need for reclaiming 5 to 10 acres land on each plot and cultivation of quality paddy strains for export.

At the briefing hall of Pinlekothe Co Ltd at the special zone-2 in Dagon Myothit (Seikkan) Township, the Prime Minister and party heard a report presented by Chairman of the company U Aung Than Oo on cultivation of summer paddy and future tasks. Next, the Prime Minister gave necessary instruction.

MNA

Prime Minister General Thein Sein inspects work at a model farm of Dagon International Ltd in Dagon Myothit (East) Township. —MNA

Transport Minister visits MMU

NAY PYI TAW, 16 Dec — Minister for Transport Maj-Gen Thein Swe met with Rector Dr Charlie Than of Myanmar Maritime University and officials at the meeting hall of the university yesterday. Next, the minister met with the students and urged them to follow the disciplines, try to become good citizens and to enhance the glory of university and the nation. Afterwards, the minister inspected the progress of building of the convocation hall. —MNA

Award winning books published

YANGON, 16 Dec — Printing and Publishing Enterprise under the Ministry of Information has published books which won Sarpay Beikman manuscript awards.

Recently published award winning books are those written by Maung Nwe Than (Information and Public Relations Department), Nyunt Hlaing Chat (Butalan), Pathein Aung Than Oo, Tin Tun (Chauk), Pint-Hine Thant and Myat Myo Myint. Those books are available at Sarpay Beikman Book Store at Thabyagong Market in Nay Pyi Taw, Sarpay Beikman Book Store on Merchant Street in Yangon and agents of Sarpay Beikman in townships. —MNA

MNA
Chosen sites for new post offices, auto exchanges and microwave stations in Mandalay, Magway Divisions inspected

NAY PYI TAW, 16 Dec — Minister for Communications, Posts and Telegraphs Brig-Gen Thein Zaw, who accompanied the Head of State in his inspection tour, together with officials concerned inspected chosen sites for construction of post offices, auto exchanges and microwave stations in Mandalay and Magway Divisions on 14 December. The minister looked into Post office for Hsintgu village-tract in NyaungU Township, NaungU District, Chauk auto exchange, microwave station and installation of fiber cable line linking Chauk and Seikphyu in Magway Division and gave instructions on timely completion of works.

Yesterday, the minister inspected chosen sites for construction of Myitchay auto exchange and Kamma telegraph office and telephone exchange booth and microwave tower in Pauk and Auto Exchange and Telegraph station.—MNA

Progress of reconstruction work in Kawhmu Township inspected

YANGON, 16 Dec — Member of the National Disaster Preparedness Central Committee Minister for Sports Brig-Gen Thura Aye Myint inspected progress of repair work at Htammanaing village Basic Education High School (Branch) and learning of school children at the school in Kawhmu Township yesterday. Next, the minister presented a CDMA telephone donated by Thawdawin Construction Co to Headmistress Daw San San Myint and sport gear for the school. —SPED

F&R Minister inspects offices in Kachin State

NAY PYI TAW, 16 Dec — Minister for Finance and Revenue Maj-Gen Hla Tun, on 13 December, inspected head office of township and Kachin State Internal Revenue Department, Myanma Economic Bank (Kachin State branch), Myanmar Economic Bank and office of township Internal Revenue Department in Mogaung Township. Yesterday, he inspected Township offices of Myanma Economic Bank in Mohnyin Township.

Press meet on IT courses at Myanmar Infotech on 21 Dec

YANGON, 16 Dec — A press meet on double certification IT courses will be given at Myanmar Infotech in Hline Township on 21 December. Myanmar Professionals Education Centre (MPEC) and Singapore-based Beacon School of Technology based in Singapore will jointly conduct the first courses in Myanmar. Certificates will be conferred on those who completed the basic and advanced courses by MPEC and Beacon School of Technology (Singapore).

Those wishing to attend the press meet may contact MPEC at No 112, Room No 11/12, 8-mile, Pyay Road, Mayangon Township, Ph 668779; 668259 and 650124.

Minister Brig-Gen Thura Aye Myint hands over CDMA phone donated by Thawdawin Construction Company to Htammanaing village Basic Education High School (Branch).—SPED
Myanmar Maritime University contributing to human resource development

(from page 16)

From the archway of the university, I found the main building magnificent. At that time, it was too early to attend the ceremony, so I looked around the buildings on the university campus. The convocation hall under construction was nearing completion. Lecture halls are being built in a row with beds of flowers near them.

At the ceremony, Rector Dr U Charlie Than in his speech said that in compliance with the guidance of the Head of State, the Myanmar Education Committee started compiling syllabuses, drawing rules and regulations for the university and appointing faculty members on 14 September 2001 to establish a maritime university, and the first academic year was launched on 1 August 2002; that so far the government had spent more than 10,000 million kyats on the university; that since then, the Myanmar International Thilawa Port Terminal had been providing assistance for the institution yearly; that the construction of the main building was launched on 15 March 2003; and that as a result, a magnificent university had come into being in six years.

At the seventh donation by the M.I.P.T. Assistant General Manager of Myanmar International Port Terminal (Thilawa) U Min Kyi presented reference books and teaching and learning aids worth US$ 9000 to the university and US$ 100 each to 10 students specializing in Port Engineering for 2008. Moreover, it sponsored the programme for three Port Engineer Degree holders to serve as six-month apprentices at the construction site being undertaken by Saigon International Terminal Vietnam (SITV) in Hochi Minh City, the Socialist Republic of Vietnam.

U Min Kyi handed over the donations to the rector, and presented an HPH gold medal and US$ 1000 each to two students who stood first in Port Engineering subject. In an interview, first-prize winner Maung Aung Thu said, “I take great interest in maritime, so I have tried my best in my studies since my youth to join this university. When I was in university, I passed my examinations with distinctions every academic year. Then, I became a port engineer. I pledge I will try my best to become the most outstanding port engineer who is capable of shoulder- ing assigned duties brilliantly”.

Myanmar International Port Terminal (Thilawa) is a branch (Myanmar) of Hong Kong-based Hutchison Port Holdings (HPH). It makes donations to the Myanmar Maritime University every year with the aim of helping improve maritime and port services of Myanmar.

Registrar Daw Mu Mu Win Shein (Examination)

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Robot that cleans—inventor’s ideal woman

An inventor has created his perfect woman, robot, who can do the cleaning, remember his favourite drink and read him the newspaper head-lines. Le Trung, 33, has spent 14,000 dollars creating Aiko, who he describes as “in her 20s” with a 32, 23, 33 figure, shiny hair and delicate features. She can speak English and Japanese and is so accomplished at mathematics she can do Mr Trung’s accounts.

Mr Trung, from Brampton in Ontario, Canada, said he has never had time to find a real partner — so he designed and created his ideal woman using the latest technology. The former software program-mer has taken out credit cards and loans, sold his car and spent his life savings on perfect-ing his “fem-bot”.

Now he is des- perate to find a corporate spon- sor to help him complete and perfect Aiko.

Handy with a Brillo pad — Aiko the robot.

Scientists find 2,000-year-old brain in Britain

British archae-ologists have un-earthed an ancient skull carrying a startling surprise — an unusually well-preserved brain. Scientists said on Friday that the mass of gray matter was more than 2,000 years old — the oldest ever discovered in Britain. One ex-pert un-connected with the find called it “a real freak of preservation.”

The skull was severed from its owner sometime before the Roman invasion of Britain and found in a muddy pit during a dig at the Univer-sity of York in northern England this fall, according to Richard Hall, a director of York Archaeological Trust. Scientists said the remains of a six-month-old baby Jack had a low immune system and was drastically under-weight but had failed to seek medical attention until it was too late. A post-mortem found that Jack had a number of fractures to his arms, legs and ribs, along with small bruises on his face and head.

This image issued by the York Archaeo-logical Trust shows staff from York Ar-chaeological Trust excavating in the general area where a 2,000-year-old skull with unusually well-preserved brain tissue still inside was located.

British Couple guilty over baby’s death

London, 16 Dec.—The parents of a young baby boy, who was found to have suffered a series of broken bones when he died of pneumonia two years ago, were jailed on Monday for child cruelty. Police said Stacey Taylor, 20 and Mark Harron, 21, knew their sixmonth-old baby Jack had a low immune system and was drastically under-weight but had failed to seek medical attention until it was too late. A post-mortem found that Jack had a number of fractures to his arms, legs and ribs, along with small bruises on his face and head.

Attacks kill 4 police in Mexican border city

Ciudad Juarez, 16 Dec—Gunmen staged four attacks on police within a half-hour period, killing four officers in a Mexican border city overrun by drug violence, an official said Monday.

Authorities are investigating whether the attacks Sunday night were coordinated, municipal police spokesman Jaime Torres said.

More than 40 Ciudad Juarez police have been killed this year, many of them in attacks blamed on drug gangs trying to consolidate territory. Many officers have quit out of fear for their lives, often after their names have appeared on hit lists left in public.

Another such list naming 26 officers was found early Monday at a dog racing track near the bodies of four civilian men, Torres said. One of the four had been decapitated, and a Santa Claus hat had been placed on his head. A fifth man who survived was left bound and gagged next to the bodies.

In Sunday night’s violence, two officers were killed at a guard house outside a hospital. Another policeman was killed and a policeman’s woman was injured when gunmen opened fire on a neighbour- hood guard station. The fourth officer was shot and killed while inside his patrol vehicle at a park alongside the Rio Grande.

Internet

Libya slams US draft on Middle East crisis at UN

United Nations, 16 Dec.—Libya, the only Arab member of the UN Security Council, criticized a US draft resolution on Monday that hails progress made in talks between Palestinians and Israelis but mentions no specific problems.

“Ignoring completely what Israel is doing there I think will not help ... support for this draft resolution,” Libya’s UN Ambassador Giadallah Ettalhi told reporters.

Asked if he planned to vote against the text when the Council considers it on Tuesday, Ettalhi said he was awaiting instructions from Tripoli.

MNA/Reuters

Japan begins withdrawing Iraq airlift mission

Tokyo, 16 Dec—Japan withdrew one of three planes involved in airlift operations to Iraq on Monday, as it neared the close of its nearly five-year noncombat mission in the region, the Defense Ministry said.

An Air Self-Defense Forces C-130H cargo plane left the Al Al Salem Air Base in Kuwait and the other two will leave later this month, a ministry official said on condition of anonymity citing department policy.

The Japanese army deployed a 600-strong force to southern Iraq in early 2004 on a humanit-arian mission. When those troops were withdrawn in 2006, the air force began in earnest its operations airlifting equipment and troops in support of the US-led campaign in Iraq.

Last month the govern-ment announced its Iraq operations would be finished before the end of the year, cited improving security and moves toward democracy in the region.

MNA/Reuters

The cargo plane will return to Komaki Air Base in central Japan on Friday, and a separate transport aircraft carrying some of the 210 Japanese troops based in Kuwait will depart on Saturday, the official said. He did not disclose how many troops were returning in the first batch.

Internet

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Scientists preserve the fossil of a dinosaur excavated in Liaoning territory by the Chinese Academy of Sciences in Ruyang County, central China’s Henan Province. Extremely large fossils of dinosaurs were discovered recently by scientists in an area in Ruyang County. The biggest fossil measures 3.3 metres long and 2.3 metres wide.

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Man used pizza to fight robber

Police said a South Florida pizza delivery man escaped an alleged armed robbery by throwing a piping-hot pizza at his attacker. Investigators said a gun-man ordered Eric Lopez Devicetia, 40, to enter a Miramar residence while he was on a delivery call shortly before 1 pm Wednesday, the South Florida Sun-
CLAIMS DAY NOTICE
MV XIANG DA VOY NO (8014)

Consignees of cargo carried on MV XIANG DA VOY NO (8014) are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on 17.12.08 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 CHINA SHIPPING
(MALAYSIA) AGENCY SDN BHD

Phone No: 25690837/38/36/26/97

Toshiba to slash memory chip output due to supply glut

TOKYO, 16 Dec—Japan’s Toshiba Corp said Tuesday that it was slashing its production of NAND flash memory chips—used in iPods and other digital music players—by 30 percent as the economic crisis hits demand.

As well as the cutbacks at its flash memory plant in central Mie Prefecture from January, Toshiba will suspend operations at its other main semiconductor factories for up to 25 days in response to a supply glut.

“Recession in the global economy and the slowdown in consumer spending are having a significant impact on demand for semiconductors,” a company statement said.

“This is particularly notable in NAND flash memories, where decreased demand for applications such as memory cards and MP3 players has generated excess supply,” it added.

Toshiba is a leading manufacturer of the NAND flash memory chips and it has invested heavily in consumer spending are having a significant impact on demand for semiconductors,” a company statement said.

Flooding leaves 20,000 homeless in northern Colombia

BOGOTA, 16 Dec—A swollen river has left more than 20,000 people homeless in Colombia’s northern province of Magdalena, officials said on Sunday.

No flood-related death was registered yet, despite the record-high water level of the Magdalena river, the longest river in Colombia, said Omar Diaz, Governor of the Magdalena Province.

Those rendered homeless were sent to schools and store houses where they received food, hammocks, awnings and plastic sheets and the Army is on patrol to prevent possible looting of abandoned homes.

The second raining season in Colombia this year has left at least 60 people dead and half a million homeless across the country, officials said. —MNA/Xinhua

Indonesia cuts fuel prices further to aid economy

JAKARTA, 16 Dec—Indonesia’s President announced further cuts in fuel prices on Sunday, aiming to soften the blow of a global economic crisis and aid the poor as Southeast Asia’s biggest economy heads toward elections next year.

The 9 and 13 per cent reductions in gasoline and diesel prices, already among the lowest in Asia thanks to state subsidies, should also contribute to an easing of inflationary pressures and allow the central bank to join its global peers in cutting interest rates <BIPG> more aggressively.

While the burden of financing cheap fuel for the world’s fourth most-populous nation has eased significantly thanks to the 100-US-dollar collapse in crude oil prices since July, domestic prices are still low by global standards, and Indonesia has been more aggressive than China or India in keeping them that way. “The global economic recession has decreased crude oil demand and hopefully it is at a stable and favorable price for our economy,” President Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono told a Press conference on Sunday evening.

MNA/Reuters

FBI takes DNA samples of militants involved in Mumbai attacks

MUMBAI, 16 Dec—The FBI and other western investigating agencies have taken DNA samples of all the nine Lashkar-e-Taiba militants killed in the Mumbai attacks to ascertain if they had any Afghan or other terror links as the probe found that the nature of explosive devices used was quite similar to those used in Afghanistan. Sources associated with the investigation into the 26 November terror strikes said the DNA samples had been preserved by Indian as well as western investigators who were ascertaining whether it matched with anyone in their data bank of terrorists or if they were related to militants killed during operations in Afghanistan.

The western investigators have also carried out a detailed examination of the explosive devices used in the attacks that left over 180 people dead and have found some similarities with those used by terrorists in Afghanistan, the sources said.

The FBI team accompanied by investigators from the UK’s Scotland Yard were camping in Mumbai for a fortnight looking into clues including the Internet telephony signatures intercepted by the Indian intelligence agencies when terrorists were receiving calls from their Lashkar masters across the border.

MNA/PTI
**Egypt confirms 23rd bird flu human death**

CAIRO, 16 Dec — An Egyptian girl died of bird flu on Monday, bringing the death toll of the human cases of bird flu in the populous country to 23, the Egyptian MENA news agency reported.

Samiyah Salem, who was from a village in the southern Egyptian governorate of Asyut, died Monday evening, Health Ministry spokesman Abdel-Rahman Shahin was quoted as saying.

The 16-year-old girl, who contracted the fatal disease after exposure to infected household poultry in her house, was the 51st case of human bird flu in the country.

She was sent to hospital for treatment on Saturday after suffering from fever and breathing problems, said the spokesman, adding the death is the first in the past eight months after the 22nd human death on 11 April.

Egypt reported its first H5N1 virus in dead poultry in February 2006 and the first human case in March of the same year. —Internet

**Combined therapy cuts prostate cancer death by half**

BEIJING, 16 Dec — A combination of hormone treatment and radiotherapy can cut by half the death rate from advanced prostate cancer that hasn’t yet spread through the body, according to media reports Tuesday.

Researchers gave half the 800 prostate cancer patients hormone-blocking drugs while the others were treated with radiotherapy combined with the drugs. Ten years later, nearly 24 percent of men who got only standard drugs had died, compared with just under 12 percent of men who also got radiation treatment.

However, among men having radiotherapy, there was a slightly higher rate of long-term side effects of urinary, rectal and sexual problems. “The quality of life and adverse effect profile is acceptable. We therefore suggest that endocrine treatment plus radiotherapy should be the new standard of care for these patients,” said leading researcher Anders Widmark of Umea University in Sweden.

Prostate cancer is the second-leading cancer killer of men in the world. It is easily cured in early stages with surgery or radiation. For prostate cancer that has spread, drugs that interfere with cancer-fueling hormones are prescribed.

Although radiotherapy may be used to kill cancer cells, it is not universal practice.

In the United States, this combination of radiation and hormone therapy is often a first treatment choice for locally advanced prostate cancer while European health agencies does not always provide radiation as the standard of care.

**Immune system strongest at night during sleep**

BEIJING, 16 Dec — New research shows that the immune system works more actively during a good sleep at night than it does during the daytime, according to media reports Tuesday.

The research by Stanford University researchers was done on fruit flies, which have the same circadian rhythms as humans.

Researchers draw the conclusion after their study suggested that the fruit flies infected with two different bacteria during the night survived better than flies infected during the day.

The study aiming at finding a link between innate immunity and circadian rhythm also showed that the fruit flies sick with bacteria lost their circadian rhythm, which means that they were more susceptible to infection.

**GM to suspend work in three Mexican factories**

MEXICO CITY, 16 Dec — General Motors of Mexico says it will temporarily idle three factories because of the worst auto sales slump in a quarter of a century.

A sculpture entitled ‘carbon trader’ by artist Stephen King overlooks Tamarama beach near Sydney, Australia will cut its greenhouse gas emissions by at least five percent compared to 2000 levels by 2020 to help combat climate change, Prime Minister Kevin Rudd said. —Internet

**Bird flu threatens poultry sales in Cambodia at New Year**

PHNOM PENH, 16 Dec — Cambodian poultry vendors feared the latest case of bird flu would once again hit demand for chickens and ducks, just weeks before the Chinese New Year when they traditionally make their biggest sales, national media reported Tuesday.

Vendors in Phnom Penh told the Cambodia Daily that their sales has not yet been affected by the announcement Friday that a 19-year-old man from Kandal province was found to be infected with the H5N1 virus.

But they expressed concern about their business, which has been adversely affected by the seven previous bird flu cases found in humans in Cambodia, all of which were fatal, the newspaper said.

“By business went down for about a month after the bird flu first occurred in Cambodia but after that, it became normal again for Cambodians to buy chickens,” said Huy Soy, who sells ducks and chickens at O’Russei market. He added that a similar pattern has repeated every time after a bird flu case was revealed.

Meanwhile, Cambodian Agriculture Minister Chan Sarun said Monday that people and animals were being tested and that no new infection had yet been found. —Internet

**Solar cells, Australia will bring forward millions of dollars in funding for solar and other renewable energy sources, in part to help boost the economy, Prime Minister Kevin Rudd said on 14 Dec 2008. —Internet**
SPORTS

Capello’s mind games get England back on track

Turning out for England, especially at the team’s Wembley Stadium home ground in London, where the crowd was quick to criticise the side, had become a chore for players who are hero-worshipped at their clubs.

The Italian knew it was essential to erase the fear factor and spent time getting into his stars’ heads to convince them the Northumberland will reproduce their club form for England.

“When we played the first game against Switzerland, during the training the players were fantastic technically and physically. But when we played the match it was a disaster. They were not the same players,” Capello said.

England manager Fabio Capello, pictured in October 2008, admits he had to become a psychologist to rebuild his players’ shattered morale.—INTERNET

No way World Cup moving from South Africa, says Blatter

But he moved to reassure everyone involved that South Africa would host the event, which he described as ‘my baby’.

“There definitely is no plan B or C. The only plan is to make the South African event a success,” he said at a press conference here alongside Danny Jordaan, the head of the 2010 organising committee.

“If there are still doubters, let me say that the 2010 World Cup will be organised in South Africa,” he added from Japan, where he is attending the Club World Cup.

South Africa will become the first African nation to host football’s four-year showpiece event, with FIFA now confident that all necessary facilities will be ready in time.

There had been concern that the 10 World Cup stadiums — nine new, five upgraded — would not be finished, while the country’s crime rate, where 30 murders happen every day, was also a worry.—INTERNET

Portsmouth and agent punished over Benjani transfers

London, 16 Dec—Portsmouth were fined 15,000 pounds (23,000 dollars) while players’ agent Willie McKay received a suspended ban by the Football Association for breaching rules during the transfer to and from the Premier League club of Benjani Mwaruwari.

Under FA rules, agents cannot act for two different clubs in two consecutive transfers involving the same player.

An independent regulatory commission found McKay had represented Auxerre when Benjani moved from the French club to Portsmouth in January 2006 and again when the Zimbabwean left the south coast side for Premier League rivals Manchester City in January this year.

McKay was given a suspended ban on Monday — although if he contravenes FA agents regulations during the next two years he will be banned from involvement in any transactions involving English teams in one transfer window.

Pompey meanwhile face a further 15,000 pounds fine if they fall foul of the rules in the next two years.

“The Football Agents Regulations were introduced as an important method of addressing unacceptable practices in professional football, particularly in the transfer market,” said commission chairman Paul Gilroy.—INTERNET

Woods ‘disappointed’ in caddie’s comments

In this 12 June, 2008, file photo, Tiger Woods, right, and his caddie, Steve Williams, look on as Phil Mickelson takes a drop on the 17th hole during the first round of the US Open golf championship at Torrey Pines Golf Course in San Diego.—INTERNET

TOKYO, 16 Dec—FIFA President Sepp Blatter on Monday insisted there was no way the 2010 World Cup would be moved from South Africa, saying any ‘plan B’ was now firmly dead and buried.—INTERNET

And his caddie, Steve Williams, look on as Phil Mickelson takes a drop on the 17th hole during the first round of the US Open golf championship at Torrey Pines Golf Course in San Diego.—INTERNET

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Rumours have persisted that the tournament could be pulled from South Africa if it failed to meet organisational deadlines after Blatter admitted earlier this year that FIFA had contingency plans.

Van der Sar delighted at soccer contract extension

YOKOHAMA, 16 Dec—Veteran Manchester United goalkeeper Edwin van der Sar says he is delighted to have signed a new contract and didn’t think twice before putting pen to paper.

The contract extension will see the Dutchman remain at Old Trafford until June 2010, taking him up to what is likely to be the end of his epic playing career.

“It was not difficult at all,” van der Sar said. “It’s a great club to be at, with a great atmosphere in the dressing room, the boss is fantastic and we have the best stadium in England.”

Van der Sar was quoted in the Taranaki Daily News as saying he wouldn’t call Mickelson a great player.

“I don’t deny that him and I don’t get along,” Steve Williams told The Associated Press from his home in London. “I shouldn’t have said it, but no harm was meant. I was just having some fun.”

Mickelson was quoted in the Taranaki Daily News as saying he wouldn’t call Mickelson a great player. “Because I think he’s a (expletive).” In an interview the next day with another New Zealand newspaper, the Sunday Star Times, Williams confirmed making the comment and said it was no secret they don’t get along.—INTERNET

S P O R T S

Spurs unveil new stadium design

London, 16 Dec—Tottenham Hotspur gave their fans a glimpse of the future by revealing the first images on Monday of the club’s proposed new 60,000-seater stadium.

The Northumberland Development Project, a large-scale development incorporating leisure facilities, public space and housing as well as the new stadium which is sited near the Premier League club’s existing north London home at White Hart Lane.

Spurs, who have a season-ticket waiting list of around 22,000, are conscious of the need for a larger stadium than White Hart Lane, which holds just over 36,000 but were equally keen to stay close to their roots.—INTERNET

This handout computer generated image obtained from Tottenham Hotspur Football Club (THFC) shows the club’s proposed new 60,000-seater stadium design. The new stadium will benefit from a Club museum, shops and homes, and new facilities for the Tottenham Hotspur Foundation.—INTERNET

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NZ singer breaks world record by singing for 47 hours

Wellington, 15 Dec—New Zealand singer Karen Davy broke a world record on Monday after nearly 48 hours of non-stop singing in Auckland.

She went home for a well-earned sleep, with a world record and a lot of money promised to Kidney Kids, a charity which takes care of children with kidney disease.

Davy began her record attempt on Saturday morning at the Botany Town Centre in southeast Auckland. She ended 47 hours and 29 minutes later, breaking the record by 51 minutes.

She got five minutes break every hour. Every song she sang had to be over three minutes in length and she got a 30-second break between songs to take a sip of water.

Each song was also timed by supporters and a representative of Guinness World Records. She sang a series of songs which lasted three hours and repeated the series over and over for the duration of her 47 hours and 29 minutes on stage.—MNA/Anhua

China to raise payments for one-child families

Beijing, 16 Dec—China will raise the annual payment to rural parents who abide by its population control policies to 720 yuan (105.1 US dollars) next year from 600 yuan currently, the Xinhua news agency said.

Rural parents may have a second child if the first is a girl. Those who reach 60 with either one child, or two daughters, are entitled to the stipend, which has been given to 5.75 million people at a cost so far of 3.6 billion yuan. China, which has 1.3 billion people, credits the one-child policy, which has been modified to accommodate farmers and ethnic groups, with preventing the explosive population growth that has hampered development in other poor countries.

However, it comes at a great emotional cost for many parents who wanted more children, and widespread use of abortion or sterilization.

A monthly stipend of 80-100 yuan is paid to couples whose child is sick, handicapped or has died, once the woman reaches 49 years old. That stipend has cost local governments 170 million yuan, and reaches 157,000 people, Xinhua said, citing the National Population and Family Planning Commission. —MNA/Reuters

Six killed in gang shootout in Vietnam’s Halong Bay

Hanoi, 16 Dec—Six men were killed on Monday in a gang-related shootout in the Vietnamese city of Halong, the jumping off point for scenic Halong Bay, one of the country’s top tourist destinations, state media reported.

The rare gunbattle between two rival gangs took place near a coal port in Halong early on Monday, the newspaper Cong An Nhan Dan (People’s Police) reported on its website.

Investigators’ photos of the scene showed bodies lying by piles of what appeared to be coal and an overturned motorcycle.

Police were investigating the cause of the shootout that killed the men between the ages of 15 and 21, the report said. Halong is about 125 kilometres (78 miles) east of the capital Hanoi.

Each year, tens of thousands of overseas and Vietnamese tourists take boat tours of Halong Bay, known for its striking karst rock formations that jut out of the water. Gun possession is illegal in Vietnam.—MNA/Reuters

WEATHER

Tuesday, 16 December, 2008

Summary of observations recorded at 09:30 hr MST: During the past 24 hours, weather has been partly cloudy in Kachin, Shan and Rakhine States, upper Sagar, Yangon and Taninthyi Divisions and generally fair in the remaining areas. Night temperatures were (5˚C) below December average temperatures in Chin State, (4˚C) below December average temperatures in upper Sagar Division, (6˚C) above December average temperatures in Mon State, (3˚C) to (4˚C) above December average temperatures in Kachin State, Mandalay and Bago Divisions and about December average temperatures in the remaining States and Divisions. The significant nocturnal temperature hawks were Hakha (-1˚C), Loilem (0˚C) and Mogok (5˚C).

Maximum temperature on 15-12-2008 was 91˚F. Minimum temperature on 16-12-2008 was 63˚F. Relative humidity at (09:30) hours MST on 16-12-2008 was 83%. Total sunshine hours on 15-12-2008 was (8:9) hrs approx.

Rainfall on 16-12-2008 was (Nil) at Mingladon, Kaba-Aye and Central Yangon. Total rainfall since 1-1-2008 was (110.31) inches at Mingladon,(120.91) inches at Kaba-Aye and (140.94) inches at Central Yangon. Maximum wind speed at Yangon (Kaba-Aye) was (5) mph from South at (18:30) 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 17th December 2008: Weather will be partly cloudy in Kachin, Chin and Shan States, upper Sagar, Yangon and Taninthyi Divisions and generally fair in the remaining States and Divisions.

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

Forecast for Manhlab and neighbouring area for 17-12-2008: Generally fair weather.

Forecast for Yangon and neighbouring area for 17-12-2008: Partly cloudy
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

Dams along Mone Creek to generate over 1200 million kilowatt hours a year

NAY PYI TAW, 16 Dec—Minister for Agriculture and Irrigation Maj-Gen Htay Oo and Minister for Electric Power (1) Col Zaw Min who accompanied the Head of State on his tour, and Chairman of Magway Division Peace and Development Council Col Phone Maw Shwe on 14 December inspected dam projects along the bank of the Mone Creek in Magway Division.

They viewed Ahtet Buywa Dam Project being undertaken by Construction-8 of the Irrigation Department near Thugaw Kyin Village of Sedoktara Township. Its rock-filled dam is 4000 feet long and 451 feet high. On completion, the facility will be able to store 1,459,400 acre feet of water and generate 534 million kilowatt hours a year.

The team inspected Buywa Dam Project near Bu Village, Sedoktara Township. Its earthen dam is 3200 feet long and 151 feet high with a water storage capacity of 169,446 acre feet, and an annual hydropower generation capacity of 195 million kilowatt hours.

Next, they inspected Kyeeohn-Kyeewa Dam Project on the Mone Creek being implemented by Construction-3 in Pwintbyu Township, Minbu District. The main dam is 3280 feet long and 164 feet high with a water storage capacity of 463,000 acre feet. On completion, it will be able to generate 370 million kilowatt hours a year and benefit about 100,000 acres of farmlands. When the cluster of the dams is completed, Kyeeohn-Kyeewa Dam will be able to generate 120 million more kilowatt hours yearly, and as a whole, the facilities will be able to produce over 1200 million kilowatt hours a year.—MNA

Myanmar Maritime University contributing to human resource development

I received an invitation to cover news about the donating of pedagogical aids along with cash-awarding ceremony by the Myanmar International Thilawa Port Terminal held at the Myanmar Maritime University in Thilawa, Thanlyin Township, Yangon South District, on 11 December. (See page 10)