YANGON, 17 Dec — The Graduation Parade of 47th Intake of Defence Services Academy was held at the parade grounds of DSA in PyinOoLwin at 8 am today, with an address by Commander-in-Chief of Defence Services Senior General Than Shwe. Also present on the occasion were Member of the State Peace and Development Council General Thura Shwe Mann, Secretary-1 of the the State Peace and Development Council Lt-Gen Ye Myint and Chief of Armed Forces Training Lt-Gen Kyaw Win, Commander-in-Chief (Navy) Rear-Adm. Thein Zaw, U Thaung, Maj-Gen Tin Huu and Dr Kyaw Myint, Military Appoint-General Maj-Gen Hsan Hsint, Judge Advocate-General Maj-Gen Soe Maung, Defence Services Inspector-General Maj-Gen Thein Htaik, Vice-Chief of Armed Forces Training Maj-Gen Aung Kyaw, Directors Maj-Gen Mya Win, Maj-Gen Tin Soe, Maj-Gen Thein Tun, Maj-Gen Khin Aung Myint, Maj-Gen Khin Maung Tint, Brig-Gen Than Aung, Maj-Gen Tin Tun, Maj-Gen Than Htay, Maj-Gen Aye Myint and senior military officers of the Ministry of Defence, military attaches of foreign missions, Mandalay Mayor Brig-Gen Yan Thein and departmental officials, members of the Union Solidarity and Development Association, Red Cross and Auxiliary Fire Brigades, parents and relatives of the cadets and guests.

In any nation the three mights are interdependent.
Economic might is mainly the central focus and it helps to sustain both political and military might.
The Tatmadaw is at the same time striving to build, commensurate with the growing economic wealth, a strong and highly capable modern Tatmadaw to defend the emerging state.
Must deeply love own race and own nation based upon the knowledge of the nation’s history and traditions.
Must maintain loyalty to the state and citizens.

Cadet companies seen at the graduation parade of 47th Intake of Defence Services Academy at DSA parade grounds in PyinOoLwin. — MNA

Emergence of the State Constitution is the duty of all citizens of Myanmar Naing-Ngan.
Towards successful realization of USDA future tasks

The Union Solidarity and Development Association is a national organization formed with new generation youths who cherish the State and the people, who want to forge national solidarity, who wish prevalence of law and order and community peace and who are to discharge national duty.

In accord with the fine traditions, the Union Solidarity and Development Association has been holding the annual general meetings since its formation.

Implementation of future tasks in one-year period were discussed at the meeting and future works for the coming year have been laid down and are being implemented.

The Mandalay Division USDA held a meeting to implement the seven objectives and nine future tasks laid down at the USDA Annual General Meeting (2004), and to carry out the plans in Mandalay Division by Mandalay Division USDA at the National Theatre in Mandalay on 15 December.

In his address, Secretary of Mandalay Division USDA U Tin Maung Oo said that those objectives and future tasks are indeed initiatives for the Association as well as national policy of national patriotic forces.

The Association will implement the objectives and tasks with added momentum in cooperation with new generation youths and the people.

Nowadays, the government has laid down and is implementing the seven-point Road Map for the emergence of a peaceful, modern, developed and discipline-flourishing democratic nation. In doing so, national consolidation plays a key role.

Thus, necessary steps will have to be taken for further strengthening national solidarity in the interest of the State and the people.

With this end in view, emphasis is being placed on realization of basic requirements which are stability and peace, strong economy of the State and the people and uplift of national education standard.

At such a time, it is necessary to guard against the dangers of internal and external destructive elements, who do not want to see stability and development of the State, with the united effort of the people.

Seven objectives and nine future tasks laid down at the USDA Annual General Meeting (2004) are the initiatives for works to be implemented by USDA at different levels.

Therefore, we would like to call upon the new generation youths and the people to make integrated and well co-ordinated efforts for successful realization of the objectives and future tasks laid down at the USDA Annual General Meeting (2004).

Representatives to CAFEO arrive

YANGON, 17 Dec — Representatives of engineering societies from ASEAN countries arrived here by air yesterday to attend the 22nd Conference of ASEAN Federation of Engineering Organizations to be organized by Myanmar Engineering Society.

The representatives were welcomed by Chairman of the MES Dr Sein Myint and members.

The conference will be held at Sedona Hotel on 18 and 19 December. Representatives of Japan, the Republic of Korea, Australia, Canada, the UK and the US are scheduled to attend the conference.— MNA

Meeting to review successful completion of World Buddhist Summit held

YANGON, 17 Dec — A meeting to review successful holding of the World Buddhist Summit was held at the Ministry of Religious Affairs on Kaba Aye Pagoda Road here this afternoon, with an address by Minister for Religious Affairs Brig-Gen Thura Aung Maung.

In his address, he said that due to encouragement and assistance of the Head of State and leaders of the State, Ovadas of member Sayadaws of State Sangha Maha Nayaka Committee and Sitagu Sayadaw and harmonious efforts of various organizing committees for the Summit and ministries, the World Buddhist Summit was successfully held on a magnificent scale.

He thanked all ministries, staff at different levels and contributors for their performance in the Summit. And, he urged the participants in the meeting to compile the record books on the summit. Officials of the sub-committees reported on their respective sectors.

Also present on the occasion were Secretary of the Work Committee for Organizing the Summit Deputy Minister for Religious Affairs Brig-Gen Thura Aung Ko, members Deputy Minister for Finance and Revenue Col Hla Thein Swe, Deputy Minister for Immigration Brig-Gen Aung Thein, Deputy Minister for Hotels and Tourism Brig-Gen Aye Myint Kyu and Deputy Minister for Immigration and Population U Maung Aung, departmental heads and officials.— MNA

Myeik Open Golf Championship begins

YANGON, 17 Dec — The Myeik Open Golf Championship, jointly organized by Coastal Region Command, Myanmar PGA and MGF and sponsored by Rothmans of Pall Mall Myanmar Pte Ltd. began at Myeik Golf Club in Myeik this morning.

Chairman of Taninthayi Division Peace and Development Council Commander of Coastal Region Command Maj-Gen Ohn Myint extended greetings.

The Commander, Myeik Golf Club Chairman Brig-Gen Zin Yaw, Executive of MPG and MGF U Ko Ko Lay and Marketing Support Manager Aung Win of Rothmans of Pall Mall Myanmar Pte Ltd tied off the ball to open the championship. After the first round, Min Naing (Srixon) led the professional golfer event firing 69 strokes, followed by Aung Win (YCDC) and Thant Zin with 72 each.

In the men’s amateur golfer event, Bo Bo played 70 strokes to stand first position.

Nay Lin Tun followed behind the leader with 72 strokes, Aung Kyaw Moe with 74 and Khin Maung Myint with 74.

Co-sponsors are Air Myanmar, Myanmar Brewery Ltd, Alpine Purified Drinking Water, KM Golf Centre, Marumun, Tour Stage, Wilson, Srixon, Grand Slam, Accel International Co Ltd, Sun Far Travels and Tours and Myeik Golf Club.

The championship is organized by Han Event Management. The second round matches continue tomorrow.— MNA

Min Naing (Srixon) taking part in Myeik Open Golf Championship in Myeik.— MNA
Chinese Foreign Minister on "diplomacy for the people"  

BEIJING, 16 Dec—"Diplomacy for the people" is an important guideline for China’s diplomatic work, said Chinese Foreign Minister Li Zhaoxing.

In an interview with the People’s Daily published in the newspaper on Wednesday, the Foreign Minister said China’s leaders have showed great concern about the safety and interests of Chinese nationals, including compatriots from Hong Kong, Macao and Taiwan, who stay or travel in foreign countries.

To secure the lives and property of Chinese living abroad, the Foreign Ministry and relevant departments have mapped out a series of measures this year. These include the establishment of an emergency squad and a regular meeting system, Li said.

The Foreign Ministry and Chinese embassies and consulates abroad have enhanced the release of information for Chinese nationals in foreign countries, Li said.

Tough Chinese understanding and experience in the world, the Foreign Ministry doubled its efforts in organizing cultural exchange programmes. For example, “French Culture Year” has had a profound influence across China, especially among the young Chinese.

In 2004, the Foreign Ministry also moved to open its affairs to the general public and sent its staff to communities to speak about its policies and progress. The Foreign Minister said promoting trade and economic cooperation has been viewed as a crucial aspect of China’s foreign affairs as it concerns China’s development.

The administration is clear in its focus: fiscal consolidation, gradual improvement of economic prospects and financial stability, the report said.

Economic growth of 6.5 per cent in the first nine months of the year, higher than expected and likely to result in full-year growth in excess of expectations, the report added.

Addressing the Korea-India Partnership in the Changing Asian Architecture, he said the topic highlighted the importance New Delhi attached to Korea in its foreign policy.

He also spoke of the Indian commitment to play in the emerging prominence of Asia in the global political and economic order.

"Observing that the respective strengths and complementarities of the two countries threw open new opportunities for collaboration, he said: "We are seeking to promote our cooperation in a wide range of areas, including, to name a few, information and communication technology, textiles, petrochemicals, oil and gas field development including third country collaborations, automobiles, ship building and agriculture."

The two countries have also agreed to explore expanding cooperation in science and technology, including in the area of high technology and space, he said.

India, he stressed, was committed to pursuing a comprehensive social and economic development programme.

Philippines should consolidate economic gains  

MANILA, 16 Dec—The Philippines should move toward a firmer economic footing after it showed surprising economic resilience this year, the Asian Development Bank (ADB) said in a report released on Wednesday.

According to ADB’s latest Country Economic Review for the Philippines, the country registered the economic growth of 6.5 per cent in the first nine months of the year, higher than expected and likely to result in full-year growth in excess of expectations.

The ADB said in the report that buoyed by this economic outlook, the country should follow up with actions to reduce the country’s fiscal imbalance, which has the potential to cause economic instability.

"The administration is clear in its focus: fiscal consolidation is primary and urgent," says Tom Crouch, director at ADB’s Philippines Country Office.

"The task is formidable, and demands high quality responses that will cause some economic pain. Concrete actions are needed immediately: delay is the enemy of success," he said.

Crouch noted that the services sector contributed most to growth on the supply side, while the demand side is led by personal consumption expenditure, as well as strong inflows of remittances from the almost 1 million Filipinos working abroad.

1,304 members of US military killed since beginning of Iraq war  

WASHINGTON, 16 Dec—As of Thursday, 16 December, 2004, at least 1,304 members of the US military have died since the beginning of the Iraq war in March 2003, according to an Associated Press count. At least 1,019 died as a result of hostile action, the Defence Department said. The figures include three military civilians.

The AP count is six higher than the Defence Department’s tally, last updated at 10 a.m. EST Thursday.

The British military has reported 74 deaths; Italy; 19; Poland; 13; Spain; 11; Ukraine; nine; Bulgaria; seven; Slovenia; three; Estonia; Thailand and the Netherlands; two each; and Denmark, El Salvador, Hungary and Latvia one each.

Since 1 May, 2003, when President Bush declared that major combat operations in Iraq had ended, 1,166 US military members have died, according to AP’s count. That includes at least 910 deaths resulting from hostile action, according to the military’s numbers.

Legacy in the desert  

Gunmen in Iraq claim to have shot dead an Italian photographer they had taken hostage, reports say.

A blindfolded body — purportedly that of 52-year-old Salvatore Santoro — was shown to a group of Iraqi journalists in the desert near the town of Ramadi.

The militants who led the journalists to the body also showed them a passport and documents in Mr Santoro’s name. Mr Santoro is believed to have been a resident of the UK. Officials in Rome and London cannot confirm the reports. Italian Foreign Minister Gianfranco Fini said reports of Mr Santoro’s killing should be treated with caution.

The blindfold on the body seen in pictures taken by the Iraqi journalists made it difficult to identify the man, Mr Fini said.

According to the Associated Press news agency, the journalists were led to the body by a group of militants that stopped them at a check point near Ramadi in central Iraq. The gunmen told them the Italian photographer was taken prisoner after he tried to drive through an guerrilla roadblock, crashed his vehicle and killed one of their group.

Indian companies should diversify economic interaction and communication technology, Indian External Affairs Minister K Natwar Singh said on Wednesday.

Addressing the Korea-India Partnership in the Changing Asian Architecture, he said the topic highlighted the importance New Delhi attached to Korea in its foreign policy.

According to ADB’s latest Country Economic Review for the Philippines, the country registered the economic growth of 6.5 per cent in the first nine months of the year, higher than expected and likely to result in full-year growth in excess of expectations.

India, he stressed, was committed to pursuing a comprehensive social and economic development programme.

"Noting that this year, the two sides celebrate the 30th anniversary of the establishment of their diplomatic ties, Natwar Singh said "our traditional friendship is developing on the strong foundations of our shared commitment to democratic ideals and the common desire to consolidate and diversify our exchanges."— MNA/PTI

Japanese manufacturers less upbeat, but still confident  

Tokyo, 16 Dec—Japanese companies are less upbeat in December than they were three months ago, amid recent data indicating that the world’s second-largest economy may be losing steam, a key government survey showed Wednesday.

In the Bank of Japan’s quarterly survey of companies, the index for large manufacturers fell to 22 — from 26 for the previous survey in September. It measures the percentage of companies saying business conditions are better, minus the percentage saying they are worse. It was the first time the figure had fallen since March 2003.

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MNA/Reuters
National drug list expanded in Thailand

BANGKOK, 16 Dec—The newly-revised national drug list in Thailand will enable patients to have access to more than 150 additional medications with standard prescriptions, the local Press reported on Wednesday.

The revised list, which is set to take effect on December 27, will comprise 882 drugs, up from the 629 compiled in 1999, said Pakdee Pothisiri, secretary-general of the Food and Drug Administration.

“The new list has been designed to improve patients’ access to drugs and to increase prescription options for infectious diseases, such as AIDS and tuberculosis,” Pakdee was quoted by The Nation newspaper as saying.

Under the list, people living with AIDS can obtain 13 drugs through 26 formulas, while the old catalogue provided only three AIDS medications.

The list also contains a large variety of drugs available for common disease, including asthma, diabetes, heart and vascular diseases, intestinal infections, arthritis, skin disease and cancer.

MNA/Xinhua

China, Pakistan vow to further economic, anti-terrorism cooperation

BEIJING, 16 Dec—China will enhance cooperation with Pakistan in economic and anti-terrorism activities, Premier Wen Jiabao said here on Wednesday, adding that China welcomes the improvement of Pakistan-India ties.

“China and Pakistan have established an all-weather, all-around cooperative partnership despite volatile international changes,” Wen told Pakistani Prime Minister Shaukat Aziz in the Great Hall of the People in downtown Beijing.

Sino-Pakistan trade increased steadily in recent years, and the two countries conducted fruitful cooperation in infrastructure construction, Wen said. He noted that the two economies were complementary and have “great potential”.

Wen suggested the two sides to speed up the study of establishing a free trade area (FTA) and focus on energy, natural resources cooperation and agriculture.

Aziz told Wen that Pakistan recognizes China’s full market economy status, which helps pave the way for the forging of an FTA.

MNA/Xinhua

Thailand bans alcohol and cigarette sale in schools, temples

BANGKOK, 16 Dec—The Thai Government has approved a ban on alcohol and cigarette sales in educational institutions and temples, local Press reported on Wednesday.

“We expect the measures will improve the lives of youths and result in the reduction of alcohol and cigarette consumption as well as boost social order measures,” government spokesman Jakrapob Penkair was quoted by The Nation as saying.

The proposal raised by Finance Minister also prohibits the sale of cigarettes and alcoholic drinks to people aged under 18.

The rules limit sales of alcoholic drinks to 10 hours per day in two periods — from 11:00 am to 2:00 pm and from 5:00 pm to midnight.

Alcoholic drinks have legally been sold for 12 hours per day, until 2:00 am.— MNA/Xinhua

Anti-war New Zealanders protest against US attack on Fallujah

WELLINGTON, 16 Dec—Some anti-war New Zealanders, angered by US-led military attack on Fallujah, held a protesting march to the US Embassy in Wellington Wednesday afternoon to voice opposition to the continued war of aggression in Iraq.

The march, organized by the Peace Action Wellington (PAW), began outside Parliament building and proceeded to the US Embassy via the British High Commission and the Australian Embassy.

PAW Spokesperson Stephen Hay said in a statement that the civilian population in Fallujah had been systematically brutalized by the United States-controlled forces. This assault has been an exercise in cruel collective punishment.

“The people of Fallujah have had their power cut off, and the US denied the Red Cross access to deliver clean water. The first target of the United States forces was to destroy or occupy the hospitals and arrest doctors to deny both guerrillas and civilians access to medical aid,” Hay said.

MNA/Xinhua

China’s cultural industry opens wider

BEIJING, 16 Dec—China’s state-run cultural industry has opened wider to private and overseas capital during the past year.

In early November, the State Administration of Radio Film and Television (SARFT) announced a policy to let foreign investors produce, distribute and screen movies, a milestone for the country’s movie industry.

The Beijing-based China Film Group, the country’s biggest film producer, Time Warner and the Hengdian Group set up the country’s first joint venture film production company in October.

A month later Sony Pictures set up a film/television digital production company with the China Film Group, becoming the first Hollywood studio to do so.

This year’s most popular Chinese movies, “House of Flying Daggers” and “A World without Thieves,” were funded by private producers.

MNA/Xinhua

Gunmen kill senior Iraqi official in Baghdad

BAGHDAD, 17 Dec—A senior official of Iraq’s Communications Ministry was shot dead by armed gunmen as he was heading to work in Baghdad on Thursday, an official at the ministry said.

Qassem Mehawi, regarded as one of the minister’s top aides, was assassinated in a drive-by shooting in Haifa Street in central Baghdad, which has been a scene of frequent insurgent activities, he added.

One of his bodyguards was killed in the incident and two others were seriously wounded, the official added.— MNA/Xinhua

Australia to boost maritime security

CANBERRA, 16 Dec—Australia will carry out new offshore protection command under which the government will monitor thousands of ships approaching Australia’s busiest shipping lanes and intercept suspicious vessels.

A 1000-nautical-mile (1,850-kilometre) security zone around the coastline of Australia will be cast as part of the new plan, The Australian, one of the country’s leading newspapers, reported Wednesday.

The four million-dollar (three-million-US-dollar) revamps arise from a task force which found threats from the sea increase as a result of increased risk of terrorist attacks around the world, according to the paper.

MNA/Xinhua

Men ride bicycles loaded with Christmas trees along a street in Shanghai, China, on 15 Dec. 2004.—INTERNET

A pedestrian walks by a giant sculpture entitled ‘Alpa the Sound of the Mountain’ by Japanese sculptor Takashi Yoshida in a financial district in Tokyo, Japan, on 16 Dec. 2004. Sculptures are on display as part of renovation in the fast changing Tokyo cityscape. —INTERNET

The list also contains a large variety of drugs available for common disease, including asthma, diabetes, heart and vascular diseases, intestinal infections, arthritis, skin disease and cancer.

MNA/Xinhua

The list also contains a large variety of drugs available for common disease, including asthma, diabetes, heart and vascular diseases, intestinal infections, arthritis, skin disease and cancer.
China hails improvement in Indo-Pakistani ties

BEIJING, 17 Dec— China welcomes the improvement in Indo-Pakistani ties and will play an “active” role in promoting peace in South Asia, Premier Wen Jiabao said here Wednesday.

“China will play an active role in promoting peace, stability and development in South Asia,” Wen, who is expected to visit India in March, told his visiting Pakistani counterpart Shaukat Aziz during a meeting. Beijing endeavors to develop friendly and cooperative ties with all neighboring countries, including South Asian nations, was quoted as saying by Xinhua news agency. Responding to Wen’s remarks on the situation in South Asia, Aziz said Pakistan was holding comprehensive dialogue with India and was willing to settle problems on the basis of equality and peaceful coexistence.

Pakistan hopes China will continuously play an active role for peace in the region, he said. “China and Pakistan have established an all-weather, all-around cooperative partnership despite volatile international scenario,” Wen said.

Sino-Pakistani trade increased steadily in recent years, and the two countries conducted fruitful cooperation in infrastructural construction, Wen said. He noted that the two economies were complementary and have “great potential.”—MNA/PI

China to label fridges, air-cons with energy information

BEIJING, 16 Dec—China will label all the refrigerators and air-conditioners manufactured after next March with energy efficiency information, said an official with the National Reform and Development Commission (NRDC) here Tuesday.

The move is the latest of China’s efforts to combat its chronic power short supplies.

According to the report, labels will be pasted on the front of the appliances containing product information about energy efficiency levels, electricity consumption per 24 hours and so on. The energy efficiency level ranges from one to five, one being the highest. “We launch the energy label to improve public awareness of energy-saving and guide consumers’ behavior in buying energy-efficient products,” said an official with NRDC.—MNA/Xinhua

Vietnam Airlines to fly direct route to US next year

HANOI, 17 Dec — Vietnam Airlines, the country’s national flag carrier, has announced that it will open a direct route to the United States late next year.

“United Airlines became the first US carrier to offer Vietnam direct services since 1975, with the inauguration of its first flight from San Francisco to Ho Chi Minh City on December 10. Under the Air Services Agreement approved by Vietnam in December 2003, two US and two Vietnamese passenger airlines can fly between the two countries for the first two years. By 2005, Vietnam Airlines will possess and lease 40 planes, including eight Boeing 777s, four Boeing 767s, ten A320s, seven A321s, four A319s, seven A320s and one A318,” said United Airlines vice president for Asia Pacific Operations.

Vietnam Airlines, which now launches international flights to 25 cities, including Paris, Los Angeles, Sydney, Bangkok, and Guangzhou, is expected to transport over five million passengers, including 2.4 million foreigners, and reap an all-high revenue of more than one billion US dollars this year.—MNA/Xinhua

Macao to issue stamps marking fifth founding anniversary

MACAO, 16 Dec — The Macao Special Administrative Region (SAR) will issue stamps on 20 December to mark the fifth anniversary of the founding of the SAR, the Macao Post Office announced here Tuesday.

Speaking at a Press conference, Director of the Post Office Carlos Roldao Lopes said that Chief Executive Edmund Ho Hau Wah has contributed a special article to be carried on the souvenir sheet stamp, in which he reviewed Macao’s five-year development and the remarkable memory in administering the SAR.

In his article, Ho said the issue of the stamps commemorating the fifth anniversary of the establishment of the SAR is a unique way of keeping an extraordinary memory of the five-year development of Macao. “In the past five years, the Macao SAR Government firmly carried out a new stage of patriotic tradition to the county and Macao and cautiously dealt with the relations of improvement, development and stability,” noted Ho in his article.—MNA/Xinhua

Helicopter crash kills three Polish soldiers in Iraq

WARSAW, 16 Dec— Three Polish soldiers died in a helicopter crash in Iraq on Wednesday, a day after Poland announced it would cut troop numbers there by one-third.

Lieutenant-Colonel Artur Domanski, spokesman for the Polish-led multinational division in Iraq, said the soldiers died after a Polish-made Sokol helicopter made an emergency landing following what was probably engine failure.—MNA/Reuters

Thailand curbs noise pollution at entertainment venues

BANGKOK, 17 Dec — The Thai Government on Wednesday set limit for sound volume at entertainment places in a bid to protect people’s hearing, according to the deputy Health Minister Suchai Wah as reported on Thursday.

Under the newly adopted regulation, entertainment places including bars and restaurants are required to keep noise level down to a maximum of 90 decibels. The decision followed a recent survey that found three quarters of nightlife spots employees had hearing problems, which were caused by loud music played at their working places.

“Studies have found that exposure to noise over 91db for seven hours will have a long-term impact on auditory nerves, while the highest level of noise that humans can tolerate is about 140db,” Deputy Health Minister Suchai Charoenratanakul was quoted by Bangkok Post as saying. However, discoteques in Bangkok pump out music at 90-120db on average, with some reaching as high as 148db, according to the deputy minister.—MNA/Xinhua

Britain warns Iraqi-bound travellers against going to Baghdad

LONDON, 16 Dec— Britain advised Iraqi-bound travellers on Wednesday against going to the Baghdad area because of intensifying violence.

The government advice said all but essential travel to the country should be delayed if possible. “The revised advice takes into account the rise in insurgent activity in and around Baghdad in November and the likelihood of further attacks in the run-up to the elections,” the Foreign Office said in a statement.

It warned against traveling to Baghdad and the neighbouring provinces of Al Anbar, Sala Al Din, Diyala, Wasit and Babil. There are no signs of post-conflict violence in Iraq abating.

In the holy city of Kerbala a bomb which exploded near the offices of a senior Shiite cleric on Wednesday killed eight people and wounded 32.—MNA/Reuters
As there is reaction for every action, persons who are always harbouring evil thoughts and schemes in their minds are sure to meet their tragic end.

...
USDA members, social organizations and outstanding students salute the State Flag at the meeting held at the Myanmar Convention Centre. — MNA

USDA, the strong national force, will see to successful implementation of the State’s seven-point Road Map in collaboration with the people.

Afterwards, Division USDA Executive U Tin Hlaing said that success has been achieved to a certain degree in carrying out the five functions of the USDA. After making pragmatic measures to be adopted by the AGM (2004), and based on the already-gained national unity, the members are also to safeguard the stability and peace and to protect the infrastructures already constructed or under construction in the interests of the nation and the people. The Patron called on the members to be equipped with Union spirit and to adhere to the commitment — to make collective efforts in union for the emergence of a peaceful, modern and developed discipline-flourishing democratic nation. He urged the members to play an active role in the tasks for successful implementation of the seven objectives hand in hand with the people.

First, they saluted the State Flag. USDA member schoolgirls opened the meeting singing the songs titled “Eternal Union” and “The Myanmar Land”. The meeting chairman delivered a speech, saying that the purpose of the meeting was to seek ways and means through discussions so as to accomplish the seven objectives laid down by the Annual General Meeting (2004) of the USDA (Central) — upholding of the national policy “Our Three Main National Causes”, successful implementation of the State’s political, economic and social objectives hand in hand with the people. He pledged that the USDA, a strong national force, will see to successful implementation of the State’s seven-point Road Map in collaboration with the people.

USDA, said that the association would play an active part in regional development tasks, educational campaigns, sport activities and health care programmes. She also said that the association would organize extempore talks and quiz contests in commemoration of the 60th Anniversary Armed Forces Day.

Next, U Aung Kyaw Moe, executive of Yangon East District USDA, said with the success achieved in the implementation of the political, economic and social objectives of the State, the desired goal would be materialized. With this end in view, the government was implementing the four political, four economic, and four social objectives, he said, adding that the participation of the entire national people in that drive was accounted for all-round development.

As part of the efforts to ensure a better and secure network of transport, 24 bridges had been constructed in Yangon Division, where there existed only two bridges, he said.

Daw Thanda Saw, Executive of Yangon West District USDA, seconded the motion, saying the implementation of the project to build high-rise residential buildings for the people living in the huts is under way. In fiscal 2003-2004, the Yangon City Development Committee has spent about K 1,259 million to upgrade roads and drainage system in the city and to beautify it. The kyat-3.5-billion Ngamoeysk project is being implemented to supply water for Yangon. Yangon now has 31 institutions of higher learning, up from only 10 in the past.

U Than Htay, Executive of Yangon South District USDA, seconded (See page 11)
First, Senior General Than Shwe took the salute of the cadet companies. The Commander-in-Chief of Defence Services presented Best Cadet Award to Cadet Tin Maung Latt, Excellence in Training Award to Cadet Aung Naing Lin, Excellence in Study Award (Computer Science) to Cadet Zaw Zaw Naing and Excellence in Study Award (Science) to Cadet Kyaw Thu. Next, the Senior General delivered an address. He said:

"Today marks the graduation ceremony of the 47th intake of the Defence Services Academy and it is also the birth of the new generation that will carry forward the twelve noble traditions of the Tatmadaw. As you are about to be commissioned as junior leaders in the Tatmadaw I will solemnly impart to you what you should know."

A military leader and his subordinates share similar military qualities. They are of one flesh and blood. But the leader must, over and above his subordinates, exercise utmost restraint and be more resourceful, he must always practice to be more proficient in the Five Strengths, he must have excellent qualities of both mind and body, and be full of ability and skill, he must be wise and well-read. Only then will your subordinates reposit their trust in you and you will gain the role of a leader.

Only with the dynamic development of political, economic and defence powers could there be a transition to a disciplined-flourishing democratic state.
Have esprit de corps, in...

from page 8

the sacrifice of one’s life for the country is the best honour of the soldier. The much renowned Defence Services Academy has imparted to you, comrades military training needed by a platoon commander and a modern university education. In addition, the Academy has also imparted to you values that would make you a truly worthy man.

Patriotism is the most decisive factor for you comrades to selflessly shoulder the responsibilities entrusted to you by the State. You must deeply love your race and your nation based upon the knowledge of the nation’s history and traditions. Our cherished nation is made up of river basins, low plains, high mountain ranges and high plateaux, rivers beginning and ending within our land, rich alluvial soil, precious gems and abundance of natural resources, naturally adequate and sincere. These are in fact our national characteristics. In addition, we have our own culture which reflects national pride and pride in our ancestors. Our race has a long historical tradition and throughout history it has shown great courage. Without any territorial ambition our race unify by prowess, heroism and gallantry. With exceptional capability the great kings Anawrahta, Bayinnaung and Alaungphaya established the First, Second and Third Myanmar Naing Ngan Daw respectively. During their reigns, these great kings were able to build the State’s political, economic and military might and thus secure a strong State. But when our military might weakened our people fell prey to outsiders. However, history clearly shows the tradition of brave resistance when our Tatmadaw and people joined hands in the spirit of national pride and not subservient to foreign domination.

You, comrades are the inheritors of history. You must cherish your country and people who possess great tradition and the love for your nation must be ardent. You must maintain loyalty to the state and citizens. This is the spirit of the patriotic Tatmadaw.

As you have accepted the life of a soldier you must also have esprit de corps, in addition to patriotism. This means that you are willing to give up your life to defend the noble traditions of the Tatmadaw. Our Tatmadaw is a patriotic Tatmadaw. Our Tatmadaw is highly disciplined, trustworthy, united, capable, daring, sel-sacrificing for the state, possesses high morale, courage to overcome adversity, to bear hardship, perseverance, determination and diligence. In addition, our Tatmadaw always holds in high esteem the Three Main Causes. Therefore, I would solemnly say that only by having the firm determination to be willing to sacrifice one’s life in shouldering the fine traditions of the Tatmadaw can you be a worthy son of the Tatmadaw.

As you will be starting to shoulder duties as junior leaders, I would like to say a few words on leadership. A military leader and his subordinates share similar military qualities. They are of one flesh and blood. But the leader must, over and above his subordinates, exercise utmost restraint and be more resourceful, he must always practice to be more proficient in the Five Strengths, he must have excellent qualities of both mind and body, and be full of ability and skill, he must be wise and well read. Only then will your subordinates repose their trust in you and you will gain the role of a leader.

(See page 10)
Have esprit de corps, in...

When you have accumulated experience and unceasingly strived to better yourself, you will have developed leadership qualities and when your subordinates are united under your command you will then become a good leader with the ability of successfully discharging all responsibilities. You, comrades must therefore practice the sixteen characteristics of leadership. You must continually strive throughout your life for self improvement. You must build up the mindset of wanting to lead the units under your supervision for the greater glory of the Tatmadaw.

In conclusion, it is essential that every country needs an Armed Forces to protect and defend its independence and sovereignty. This is why I leave with you the message that you must carry on the proud legacy bequeathed by the Tatmadaws of the great kings Anawrahta, Bayinnaung, Alaungphaya U Aung Zeya, and help to build a stronger and more capable modern Tatmadaw.

The Senior General took the salute of the cadet companies and left the parade grounds. After the graduation parade, Senior General Than Shwe met with four outstanding cadets and their parents at the DSA Headquarters.

Fifth Myanmar Traditional Medicine and Medical Equipment Exhibition continues

YANGON, 17 Dec — The Fifth Myanmar Traditional Medicine and Medical Equipment Exhibition organized by the Ministry of Health with the aim of promoting and developing the quality of Myanmar traditional medicine and boosting the uses of Myanmar traditional medicines, continued as second day at Tatmadaw Convention Centre on U Wisara Road here this morning.

Photos of kinds of forest, herbal plants, medicines and their uses, activities of State and Division traditional medicine practitioner associations and MTMAC (central), research theses for PhD and MSc degrees with assistance provided by Medical Research Department (Lower Myanmar) and research works on traditional medicines are put on display in the exhibition of 134 booths of ministries and private traditional medicine booths.

The exhibition will be kept open up to 25 December.

Orbis comes to Myanmar

YANGON, 17 Dec.— Minister for Health Dr Kyaw Myint observed eye surgery on board the Orbis International at Mandalay International Airport on 15 December.

Director of the Orbis International Mrs Suzanne Seber conducted him around the plane.

Dr Alemayehu also lectured on microsurgery techniques and phacoemulsification at wet-lab at the airport building.

Dr Ailliam Basuk and party of Orbis were also conducting eye surgery at Eye, Ear, Nose and Throat Hospital in Mandalay, while Dr Garnham was lecturing on optical problems.

The following day, Orbis physicians continued to conduct eye surgery on patients and gave lectures to medical students. The Orbis International conducted eye surgery on 65 patients from 7 to 16 December.
YANGON, 17 Dec — The Subcommittee for Flag Hoisting and State Flag Saluting on the 57th Anniversary Independence Day held its first coordination meeting at the hall of Pyithu Hluttaw Building on Pyay Road here yesterday afternoon.

Chairman of the Subcommittee, Chairman of Yangon Division Peace and Development Council, and Commander of Yangon Command Maj-Gen Myint Swe addressed the meeting.

Present at the meeting were Yangon City Development Committee Vice-Chairman Vice-Mayor Col Maung Pa and officials, departmental officials, commanders of military regions, local authorities, chairmen of work committees, members of social organizations, and guests.

In his speech, the commander said that efforts were to be made to hold the ceremony on a grand scale like those in previous years. He called upon responsible personnel to carry out their respective roles actively in line with the four National Objectives: all the national people to collectively safeguard the national independence and sovereignty of the State and ensure non-disintegration of the Union and national unity; all the national people to unite and work as a single whole to ensure non-disintegration of the Union and national unity; all the national people to collectively safeguard the national independence and sovereignty of the State; and all the national people to work in concert for building a new and developed nation.

Next, Secretary of the Subcommittee and Yangon Division PDC Secretary Li-Col Myint Kyi reported on arrangements made for celebrating the day on a grand scale.

The chairmen and officials of the respective work committees also reported on the tasks to be carried out by their committees.

After hearing the reports, the commander added some suggestions to the reports and gave concluding remarks. — MNA

Commander Maj-Gen Myint Swe addresses the meeting of the subcommittee for organizing ceremony for Flag Hoisting and State Flag Saluting on the 57th Anniversary Independence Day. — VGN COMMAND

24 bridges constructed in Yangon Division...

(from page 7) the motion, saying that efforts were to be made to hold the ceremony on a grand scale like those in previous years. He called upon responsible personnel to play their respective roles actively in line with the four National Objectives: all the national people to collectively safeguard the national independence and sovereignty of the State and ensure non-disintegration of the Union and national unity; all the national people to unite and work as a single whole to ensure non-disintegration of the Union and national unity; all the national people to collectively safeguard the national independence and sovereignty of the State; and all the national people to work in concert for building a new and developed nation.

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Minister Dr Kyaw Myint views an eye operation on a patient on the aeroplane ORBIS International. (News on page 10) — HEALTH

Those present chanting slogans at the meeting organized by Yangon Division USDA. — MNA

Joint-Secretary of Yangon Division USDA U Tha Win presented prizes to 10 outstanding students; Major Maung Maung (Retd) of Myanmar War Veterans Association to six medalists of performing arts competitions; Chairperson of Yangon Division Organization for Women Affairs Daw Khin Myo Thu and Daw Myint Khin of Yangon Division MCWA to outstanding athletes.

Later, the meeting chairman passed the resolutions of the successful implementation of the seven objectives and nine future tasks of the USDA’s Annual General Meeting (2004) and active participation of association members and the people in the drive. And the meeting concluded at 10.30 am. — MNA

24 bridges constructed in Yangon Division...
Australian FM rejects job as IAEA head

CABRAELE, 16 Dec — Australian Foreign Minister Alexander Downer has dismissed the speculation that he would head up the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA).

Downer, who is in Papua New Guinea (PNG) to attend the 16th Australia-PNG Ministerial Forum, told reporters that he was happy in his present position as Australia’s foreign minister and as MP for his local South Australian electorate of Mayo.

“I’ve not taken up the opportunity to demonstrate a great deal of interest in this job, I’ve not very happy with the job I’ve got,” Australian Broadcasting Corporation radio quoted him as saying Wednesday.

“I am the Foreign Minister of Australia, and I am very happy with what I’ve been doing and I’ve only just been re-elected,” he said. — MNA/Xinhua

WB provides multi-million loan for Nigeria’s mine management

LAGOS, 16 Dec — The World Bank has approved two loans of 260 million US dollars each to help improve sustainable management of Nigeria’s mineral resources, as well as support the West African countries to adopt a region-wide form and governance programme.

A credit of 120 million US dollars will go to the sustainable management of mineral resources project while the Nigerian Government will provide an additional funding of 6.96 million US dollars, the Bank said in two statements made available to Xinhua Wednesday.

“The sustainable management of mineral resources project aims at integrating artisanal and small-scale mining into the formal economy... leaving the operating and implementation roles to the private sector and to communities,” the Bank said.

Over-dependence on oil coupled with the stagnation of the non-oil part of the Nigerian economy over the last two decades has been a principal factor in the persistence of poverty in the country, it said.

Nigeria is Africa’s top gold producer, but 25 per cent of its 130 million people live below the poverty line, less than one US dollar per day.

According to estimates, as many as 500,000 Nigerian households currently depend solely or partly on informal mining for their sustenance.

The other credit of 140 million US dollars is for the economic reform and governance project with the total cost of 179 million US dollars.

Germany urges African nations to develop credit culture

ADDIS ABABA, 16 Dec — German President Horst Koehler Wednesday urged African countries to develop credit culture to get out of the burden of billions of dollars debt.

Addressing an African Union (AU) meeting here, Koehler, who is on a five-day visit to Ethiopia said unless Africa develops credit culture, the continent will face a great challenge to obtain funds to fight the existing poverty in the continent.

“It is in your own interest to develop a credit culture in Africa, that in the long term will enable people here to obtain also personal loans. This means private creditors must be able to have confidence that their money will be paid back,” the President said.

He however said his government will progressively increase its annual development assistance to Africa, and he also asked countries that have so far failed to meet the 0.7 per cent budget support to the Department for International Development of the British Government and the German Government will partially fund the project.

“The project will help adopt financial and economic management systems that are less prone to corruption and begin implementation of the wider civil service reform in a number of pilot government departments or ministries,” said Victoria Kwakwa, the Bank’s task team leader for the project in the statement.

Britain to close nine overseas embassies to cut costs

LONDON, 16 Dec — Britain’s Foreign Secretary Jack Straw said Wednesday nine overseas embassies and high commissions will be closed to cut costs.

The closures will come in Lesotho, Moldova and Madagascar in Africa, Vanuatu, Tonga, East Timor and Kiribati in the Pacific area, and Paraguay and the Bahamas in South America and the Caribbean region.

Nine consulates or consulates-general, mostly in Europe and America, will also be closed, with the British government planning to replace local personal in a further 11 consulates.

The biggest shake-up in the British diplomatic service for years is aimed at saving the government about 100 million pounds between 2005 and 2008.

— MNA/Xinhua

British’s barley outlook looks set for all-time low in 2005

LONDON, 16 Dec — Britain’s barley outlook looks set for an all-time low in 2005 because growers are snabbing the crop in favour of more profitable crops like wheat and rapseseed, agronomists said Wednesday.

Estimates point to a drop of between 10 and 20 per cent in the winter barley area ahead of next year’s harvest, with the spring area also seen contracting, they added.

“There’s an awful lot of growers around the country who are not growing barley any more because prices are not particularly attractive. It’s not a cheap crop to grow so they are dropping it out of their rotation,” grain expert Richard Overthrow of Pert Richard Overthrow of Pert said Wednesday.

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— MNA/Xinhua

Clinams Day Notice

MV QING CHUN MEN VOY NO (105)

Consignees of cargo carried on MV QING CHUN MEN VOY No (105) are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on 19.12.04 and cargo will be discharged, they added.

The vessel will be arriving on 19.12.04 and 12 noon to 4 pm, prior to departure of the vessel.

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

— MNA/Xinhua

Fiji proposes HIV/AIDS penalty

WELLINGTON, 16 Dec— The Fiji Government is considering imposing a penalty on people who intentionally spread HIV to other people, Fiji-based Pacific news reported Wednesday.

Pacific news quoted Fiji’s Attorney-General Qorintini Bale as saying that penalty could be one way of combating the spread of the disease.

Bale was responding to questions on whether the intentional spread of the AIDS virus was a crime. He said there was no specific law, which bordered on the deliberatate intension to spread the disease.

“The need to legislate is a new dimension to our criminal law,” Bale said. “Those who spread the disease intentionally could be charged under the category of act which is designed to cause the prevous bodily harm because, after all, it is an act. However, you will need to verify whether it is not filed.”

Bale said if Parliament decided to enact a legisla- tion, which specifically targeted people who spread AIDS intention- ally, it would have to borrow ideas from other countries or jurisdictions, which had such a frame-work in place.

— MNA/Xinhua
Bulgaria destroys two tons of drugs

SOFIA, 16 Dec— The Bulgarian Government on Tuesday destroyed 2,051 kilos of drugs, which were seized in the past one and a half years, the Bulgarian news agency reported.

The drugs, which were burned in a Sofia Hospital, were worth about 1 billion US dollars, said the report.

Recently, the Bulgarian Government has reinforced measures to fight drug trafficking, including setting up a 1,000-strong anti-drug force to help check vehicles and personnel at the Customs.— MNA/Xinhua

Kenyan police seize $43m worth of cocaine

NAIROBI, 16 Dec— Kenyan police have seized a massive haul of narcotic drugs destined for European markets with an estimated worth of 43 million US dollars in the biggest drugs bust so far in Africa, police sources said here Wednesday.

The drugs, weighing 954 kilos, were seized on Tuesday evening following raids by security forces in Kenyan capital Nairobi and coastal town Malindi, Kenyan police spokesman, Jasper Omubita told by telephone.

“This is the largest haul we have ever had in the history of Africa, we want to send a message out to drug traffickers that they cannot hold this country to ransom,” Omubita said, adding that no arrests have been made.

The police spokesman said security forces raided a godown in Nairobi’s residential estate, Embakasi, and seized 53 packets of cocaine sealed in a refrigerated container.

Wasington, 16 Dec— Tumour cells found in the blood of breast cancer patients up to 20 years after surgery suggest that the body may have ways of keeping a dormant cancer in check, US researchers said on Wednesday.

One-third of former breast cancer patients found to have tumour cells

WASHINGTON, 16 Dec— Tumour cells found in the blood of breast cancer patients up to 20 years after surgery suggest that the body may have ways of keeping a dormant cancer in check, US researchers said on Wednesday.

One-third of former breast cancer patients were found to have the cells, according to the research team at the University of Texas Southwestern at Dallas.

The study, published in the journal Clinical Cancer Research, seems to show the body can maintain a balance between tumour cell proliferation and cell death. People who stay cancer-free may have a system for keeping a dormant cancer under control, the researchers said.

Some of the patients had undergone mastectomies 20 years before. Such people have a low rate of cancer recurrence, but after about 20 years the risk rises sharply to 20 per cent — a condition called dormancy.

“Dormancy is a mysterious phenomenon that occurs in certain types of cancer,” said Dr. Jonathan Uhr, who led the study.

His team collected blood from 36 patients who had been free of cancer for at least seven years. Thirteen were found to have circulating tumour cells. Because these cells do not live long, Uhr said there must be tiny, unseen tumours somewhere in the body producing them. Understanding how the body controls these tumours may offer new ways to treat and prevent cancer, he said.

“It is also important to determine what changes are responsible for relapse,” Uhr said. “If patients at risk for impending relapse can be identified, it may be possible to prevent recurrence with appropriate therapy.”— MNA/Reuters

Czech Republic to build polar station in Antarctic

PRAGUE, 17 Dec—Fifteen Czech explorers will leave for the Antarctic to build up a polar station for scientific purposes on Ross Island at Christmas, Hynek Adamek from Czech National Geographic magazine said Thursday.

A boat with 100 tons of cargo aboard, which is the exact weight of the dismantled station, will pick them up in Punta Arenas port, south Chile, Adamek said, adding that the group will take about six tons of food to the undoubtedly greatest adventure in their life.

Polar explorers expect the construction of the Czech station to take 80 to 90 days. Then they will secure the station for winter and return home. The first scientific team will start working there next Christmas.

Researchers use nano-sensor to monitor glucose levels in diabetics

WASHINGTON, 16 Dec— Researchers in the United States have demonstrated a tiny, implantable detector that could one day allow diabetics to monitor their glucose levels continuously without ever having to draw a blood sample.

The device, developed by researchers at the University of Illinois, is the first application of a whole new class of biological sensors based on single-walled carbon nanotubes, said Michael Strano, a professor of chemical and biomolecular engineering at the University and principal investigator of the project.

The idea is to exploit the nanotubes ability to fluoresce, or glow, when illuminated by certain wavelengths of infrared light — a region of the spectrum where human tissue and biological fluids are particularly transparent, he said.

The researchers load the coated nanotubes into a needle-thin capillary tube that can safely be implanted into the body. The capillary keeps the nanotubes from directly touching living cells but still allows glucose to enter. — MNA/PTI

One of the biggest challenges of diabetes is that doctors do not understand how to monitor glucose levels in diabetics.

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US commercial oil inventories down last week

WASHINGTON, 16 Dec— The US Energy Department reported on Wednesday that commercial inventories of crude oil and heating oil declined last week and the report resulted in the rising of oil prices in the New York market.

The report showed that commercial inventories of crude oil in the United States dropped by 100,000 barrels to 293.8 million in the week ending on 10 December. Inventories of heating oil, a major concern with the onset of winter, also eased by 100,000 barrels to 49.9 million while diesel rose 500,000 barrels to 68.3 million.

The Sage Gateshead, a newly built concert hall is seen through the Millennium Bridge which spans the River Tyne in Gateshead, on 16 Dec, 2004. The concert hall, which forms part of the multi-million pound regeneration scheme for the region is due to open tomorrow.— INTERNET

“The Lord of the Rings” actress Liv Tyler has baby boy

LOS ANGELES, 16 Dec— Hollywood actress Liv Tyler, who played the elf princess Arwen in “The Lord of the Rings” trilogy, had given birth to a son, US Weekly magazine reported Wednesday.

Tyler, daughter of the Aeromist band’s lead singer Steven Tyler and model Bebe Buell, gave birth to her son in New York on Tuesday.

Both Tyler and her son, who was not named yet, were doing great, according to Tyler’s publicist Stephen Huvane.

Tyler, 27, is married to Royston Langdon of the band Spacehog in March 2003.

Her screen credits also included “Jersey Girl” and “Armageddon” — MNA/Xinhua

A Bangladeshi weaver designs a Jamdani Sari on the outskirts of Dhaka.— INTERNET
**David O'Leary signs new contract with Aston Villa**

**LONDON, 17 Dec** — Manager David O'Leary has signed a new contract with Aston Villa until 2008, the Premier League club said on Thursday.

O'Leary, 46, joined the Midlands side in 2003 and guided them to a sixth place finish last season, a year after they had flirted with relegation under Graham Taylor. Villa are currently seventh in the table. O'Leary is hoping to strengthen his squad during the January transfer window to support their bid for European football next season.

"I'm here for the long haul," the Irishman told the club's website. "We now want to move the club forward. I think it's going to be a long process and that's not me talking it down, I'm just being realistic."

O'Leary is best known for his spell at Leeds United from 1998-2002 when he turned a midtable club into 2001 Champions League semifinalists and Premier League title challengers. — MNA/Reuters

**Ronaldinho wins cybersquatting case against US**

**GENEVA, 17 Dec** — Brazilian midfielder Ronaldinho of FC Barcelona, edged out for European Footballer of the Year, won a cybersquatting case against a US website operator in a ruling by an international arbitrator on Thursday. Ronaldaldo de Assis Moreira proved that he has common law trademark rights on his professional name Ronaldinho Gauchó, according to Argentine arbitrator Miguel O'Farrell.

The ruling was announced by the World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO), a United Nations agency which offers a fast-track lowcost procedure to resolve domain name disputes. The disputed domain name, "ronaldinho gauchoo.com", was registered last July by the US-based Goldmark-CD Webb. Its domain name hosts a web page offering commercial pay-per-click links to third party websites, under such listings as Ronaldinho Gauchó's videos and Barcelona, according to the ruling.

O'Farrell found that Goldmark-CD Webb had no rights or legitimate interest in the domain name, which it had used to attract Internet users to the website for commercial gain “by creating a likelihood of confusion in users’ minds.” — MNA/Reuters

**Gronkjaer about to join Atletico Madrid**

**LONDON, 17 Dec** — Birmingham City have agreed to sell Denmark winger Jesper Gronkjaer to Spanish side Atletico Madrid, the Premier League club said on Thursday.

"Atletico and us have agreed terms," a Birmingham spokesman said, adding that Gronkjaer was now cleared to discuss personal terms with the Spanish club pending a move in the January transfer window.

The spokesman could not confirm Spanish media reports putting the transfer fee at two million euros (2.67 million US dollars), following a meeting in Madrid on Wednesday night.

"The agreement between the two clubs has been confirmed," said Birmingham City managing director Karren Brady as she left Madrid on Thursday. "All that remains is for the player to agree personal terms with Atletico and undergo a medical.”

The 27-year-old winger joined Birmingham from Chelsea for 2.2 million pounds (4.26 million US dollars) last July, but has failed to settle at St. Andrews and manager Steve Bruce has given the all-clear for the player to leave.

Atletico Madrid coach César Fernando has made no secret of the fact that he has been searching for an out-and-out winger and is reported to have made a specific request for the club to sign the Dane. Atletico are in seventh place in the Primera Liga, 16 points behind leaders Barcelona. Birmingham are 15th in the Premier League after only three wins in 17 games. — MNA/Reuters

**Parma to give Pietro Carmignani a winning start**

**LONDON, 17 Dec** — Parma rescued a desperate season by securing a place in the last 32 of the UEFA Cup on Thursday to give new manager Pietro Carmignani a winning start.

The Serie A strugglers, who appointed Carmignani on Wednesday after sacking Silvio Baldini at the weekend, came from a goal down to defeat Besiktas 3-2 to progress from Group B along with Athletic Bilbao and Steaua Bucharest.

Santi Ezquerra hit a hat-track for Bilbao who produced the performance of the night in demolishing Standard Liege 7-1 away from home to win the group.

Joining them in Friday’s draw for the first knockout round were Basel, Sporting, Sochaux, Austria Vienna and Real Zaragoza who all sealed their passage on Thursday.

Parma, UEFA Cup winners in 1995 and 1999 but now struggling to cope with financial hardship, started the night bottom of the tightly-bunched group, and had to defeat Turkey’s Besiktas to keep their European campaign alive.

The home side were dealt an early blow when keeper Gianluca Berti palmed the ball invitingly into the path of midfielder Okan Buruk to fire the visitors ahead after just six minutes.

Italy international Alberto Gilardino equalised shortly after but then had a penalty easily saved by Ramazan Kursunlu.

Defender Giuseppe Cardone headed home from a corner to hand Parma a 2-1 interval lead and Daniele Degan added a third on the hour with a long-range effort. A goal two minutes from time from midfielder Tumer Metin set up a tense finale but Parma held on.

Athletic Bilbao, who had not won an away match all season except in the Spanish Cup, went goal crazy in the pouring rain in Liege.

The Spaniards made a flying start with Ezquerra scoring twice in the first nine minutes. In a frantic opening, Oguchi Onyewu pulled a goal back before Liege keeper Vedran Runje superbly saved Andoni Iraola’s penalty.

Fran Yeste made it 3-1 at the break and in a one-sided second half further goals followed for Ezquerra, Andoni Iraola, Asier Del Horno and Joseba Etxeberria.

**Ronaldinho ready to play against Valencia**

**MADRID, 17 Dec** — Barcelona striker Ronaldinho has been ruled out for Spanish side Atletico Madrid, the Premier League club said on Thursday.

While Ronaldinho asserted he is "a lot better" and that for sure will play Saturday in the home match at Camp Nou Stadium, Mexico’s Marquez said his injury makes him doubtful for the match as he does not want to take risks.

Brazilian Juliano Belletti is also doubtful for the league match. Other players set to miss the game include French midfielder Ludovic Giuly and Sweden forward Henrik Larsson, who just returned to Barcelona on Thursday after undergoing knee surgery in the United States.

**Internet**

Switzerland’s Basel secured the win they needed to go through thanks to a 53rd-minute header from Argentine Cesar Carignano which was enough to overcome 2002 winners Feyenoord 1-0. The Dutch side, along with Schalke 04, had already qualified and the defeat still sent them through as Group A winners on goal difference as the top three sides finished on seven points.

Ferencvaros 1-0 win away at Hearts lifted the Hungarians above the Scottish club into fourth place but both teams were eliminated.

In Friday’s draw the group winners will play a team that finished third in a different UEFA Cup group while the runners-up will meet one of the eight clubs dropping down from the Champions League.

The UEFA Cup final is at the Jose Alvalade Stadium in Lisbon on May 18.
Health agencies call for tackling cervical cancer

GENEVA, 17 Dec — Health agencies on Thurs-
day called for tackling cervical cancer which has
taken on epidemic proportions in developing coun-
tries from Brazil to India due to a lack of screening.

An alliance launched a manual to help authori-
ties develop good, low-cost detection and treatment
programmes for the second most common cancer
among women worldwide after breast cancer.

About 80 per cent of the 500,000 new cases of
cervical cancer each year occur in poor countries,
mainly in Latin America, Sub-Saharan Africa and
the Indian Sub-continent. The global caseload is pro-
jected to jump to 750,000 by 2020, it warned.

“You could say it is developing like a major epi-
cemic of cervical cancer,” Peter Boyle, director of the
International Agency for Research on Cancer (IARC),
one of five agencies forming the Alliance for Cervical
Cancer Prevention, told a news briefing.

Cervical cancer, caused by a sexually trans-
mitted virus, is both preventable and treatable as it
takes many years to develop from detectable precancer-
cous lesions. About 230,000 victims die every year,
according to the manual, based on a five-year study
financed by a $50 million US-dollar grant from the
Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation. In rich countries,
women routinely undergo examinations and pap
smears in which a smear of cervical cells is taken
and evaluated at a laboratory to detect any abnor-
malities.

Such screening lowers risk by 50-90 per cent,
but is costly and requires a reliable laboratory for
analysis, according to Sankaranarayanan of the
IARC, which is based in Lyon, France.

“Such a luxury is not possible in low-resource
settings, where we would emphasise that women be-
tween 30 and 49 years be screened at least once or
twice in their lifetime,” he said.

The simplest method is visual inspection, after
acetic acid, basically vinegar, is applied to the cer-
vice, turning precancerous lesions white, or iodine,
which turns them yellow. In wealthy countries,
women have access to a new technology, the HPV
dNA test to detect whether types of cancerous hu-
man papillomavirus (HPV) are present.

MIT team aims to mend broken hearts

NEW DELHI, 17 Dec — Engineers at the Massa-
chusetts Institute of Technology in the United States
are close to mending broken hearts.

A small patch of heart tissue that displays many
of the hallmarks of mature cardiac tissue, including
regular contractions, have been created by them, ac-
cording to a report in the online edition of the Pro-
ceedings of the National Academy of Sciences.

The researchers have been trying to engineer a
patch of tissue that has the same properties as native
heart tissue, or myocardium, that could be attached
over injured myocardium.

The MIT approach involves seeding cardiac cells,
in this case from a rat, onto a 3D polymer scaffold
that slowly biodegrades as the cells develop into a
full tissue. The cell/scaffold constructs, which are
smaller than a dime (US ten cents coin) and
about the same thickness, are bathed in a medium
that supplies nutrients and gases.

In a patent-pending technique, the researchers
then apply electrical signals designed to mimic those
in a native heart. They do so by essentially connect-

ing the constructs to pacemaker. — MNA/PTI

Egypt Air gets EIB loan to buy four Airbus

CAIRO, 17 Dec — The Egyptian national carrier
EgyptAir will be granted a
loan worth 280 million euros (364 million US dol-
ars) by the European In-
vestment Bank (EIB) to buy
four Airbus 330 planes, the official MENA news
agency reported Thursday.

The company’s chair-
man Atef Abdul Hamid
said the new planes will be
equipped with advanced
aviation technology and safety
measures. The planes can fly for 13 hours nonstop to
cover 12,000
kilometres while carrying a maximum cargo, he
added. He said two planes will be delivered next year
and the other two in 2006, and an EgyptAir delega-
tion will head for Paris next week to sign a financing
contract with the EIB.

Established in May
1932, EgyptAir operates
routes to 84 international
domestic destinations.
More than 400 weekly
flights depart from Cairo
and other Egyptian cities
to Africa, Asia, Europe and North America.

MENA/Reuters

WEATHER

Friday, 17 December, 2004

Summary of observations recorded at 09:30
hours MST: During the past 24 hours, rain or thun-
dershower have been widespread in upper Sagraig
Division, scattered in Chin and Shan States, Manda-
lay Division, isolated in lower Sagraig Division and
weather has been generally fair in the remaining ar-
eas. The noteworthy amount of rainfall recorded
was Moekok (0.55) inch. Night temperatures were (3°C)
below normal in Chin and Kayin States, Bago and
Taninthayi Divisions, (5°C) below normal in Yangon
Division, (3°C) to (4°C) above normal in Mandalay and
Magway Divisions (5°C) to (6°C) above normal in
Kachin and Shan States and about normal in the
remaining areas. The significant night tempera-
tures were Namsam (4°C), Punaung (5°C), Kengtung
and Hakha (6°C) each.

Maximum temperature on 16-12-2004 was 90°F.
Minimum temperature on 17-12-2004 was 35°F. Rela-
tive humidity at 9:30 hrs MST on 17-12-2004 was
82%. Total sunshine hours on 16-12-2004 was (5.8)
hours approx. Rainfalls on 17-12-2004 were nil at
Yangon Airport, Kaba-Aye and central Yangon. Total
rainfalls since 1-1-2004 were 112.28 inches at Yangon
Airport, 106.77 inches at Kaba-Aye and 109.68 inches
central Yangon. Maximum wind speed at Yangon
(Kaba-Aye) was 10 mph from Southeast at (12:30)
hours MST on 16-12-2004.

Bay inference: According to the observation at
(09:30) hours MST today, the low pressure area over
southwest Myanmar persist. Weather is cloudy in the
south Bay and generally fair elsewhere in the Bay of
Bengal.

Forecast valid until evening of 18-12-2004: Pos-
sibility of isolated light rain or thundershowers in
Kachin and Shan States and Mandalay Division,
weather will be partly cloudy in Chin State, Taninthayi,
Yangon, Magway and Sagaing Divisions and gener-
ally fair in the remaining areas. Degree of certainty is
(40%).

State of the sea: Seas will be moderate in My-
anmar waters. Outlook for subsequent two days:
Possibility of isolated light rain or thundershowers in
Northern Myanmar areas.

Forecast for Yangon and neighbouring area
for 18-12-2004: Partly cloudy.

Forecast for Mandalay and neighbouring area
for 18-12-2004: Possibility of isolated light rain or
thundershowers. Degree of certainty is (40%).

Weather outlook for third weeked of Decem-
ber 2004: During the coming weekend, will be partly
cloudy in Yangon Division and light rain or thunder-
showers are likely to possible in Mandalay Division.
Four political objectives
- Stability of the State, community peace and tranquility, prevalence of law and order
- National reconsolidation
- Emergence of a new enduring State
- 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

24 bridges constructed in Yangon Division to ensure better and secure network of transport
Nganoeylvik project being implemented to supply water to Yangon

Yangon Division Union Solidarity and Development Association holds meeting to implement the seven objectives and nine future work programmes adopted by the USDA Annual General Meeting (2004) and to carry out the plans adopted by itself at the Myanmar Convention Centre. — MNA

Yangon Division by Yangon Division USDA at the Myanmar Convention Centre on Mindamna Road in Mayangon Township this morning.

The team took the lead with 10 points from four games in the Group (B).

Myanmar Women’s Affairs Federation, Myanmar Maternal and Child Welfare Association, Red Cross and Auxiliary Fire Brigades, townsmen and outstanding youths.

Minister Brig-Gen Thura Aye Myint welcomes back Myanmar football team at the airport. — MNA