Independence

If taken for granted, independence can be lost all of a sudden to alien subjugation. The struggle to regain it, however, may cost much blood, sweat and life.

Senior General Than Shwe
Chairman of the State Peace and Development Council
Commander-in-Chief of Defence Services

(From address delivered at the opening ceremony of the USDA Special Refresher Course No 3, Management Course for USDA Executives No 15, and International Relations Course No 2).

Building of industrialized nation needs large number of highly-qualified human resources

Defence Services Technological Academy holds 7th Intake graduation ceremony

YANGON, 24 Dec — The graduation parade of 7th Intake of Defence Services Technological Academy was held at the parade grounds of DSTA in PyinOoLwin at 8.30 am today, with an address by Commander-in-Chief of Defence Services Senior General Than Shwe.

In his address, Senior General Than Shwe said: At this seventh intake of the DSTA, I would like to impart to you what you should know in all seriousness.

You have already been nurtured and trained by the DSTA to become good sons of the nation to discharge the national defence duties as technicians. From now on, you will have to enter the practical field of your profession from the training field, and discharge your duties as junior engineer military leaders.

The 21st Century sees rapid advancement and progress in science and technology. When compared to other areas, development in science and technology experiences more tests and inventions in military hardware and software. And the fact stands witness to the global powers’ dogmatism practices to dominate and manipulate the world for self-interest.

Soon after the regaining of independence, the national unity faced grave deterioration, and the nation saw the lack of peace and tranquillity. The agro-based national economy fell below the level of food and other necessities for the growing population in all aspects. At a time when other countries entered the industrial age, our nation lost its way, and was in backwardness, without having any capital for progress.

In the end, the political sector of the nation reached beyond the limits of (See page 10)

Emergence of the State Constitution is the duty of all citizens of Myanmar Naing-Ngan.
Harmony in State, people and Tatmadaw will ensure emergence of discipline-flourishing democracy

There has been equitable development across the nation as a result of the development projects aimed at narrowing down the development gap between one region and the other.

The State Peace and Development Council has placed priority on this drive on the assumption that the development infrastructures can only be built through the concerted efforts of the government and the people.

State Peace and Development Council Chairman, Commander-in-Chief of Defence Services Senior General Than Shwe visited Magway Division, where he met with departmental officials, members of social organizations and town elders on 22 December. On that occasion, the Head of State gave guidance, saying that “the development momentum around the country is living proof that unity is success and that it was necessary for the State, the people, and the Tatmadaw to make continued efforts to defend and build the country”.

The country is achieving progress in every sector as a result of united efforts made by the State, the people and the Tatmadaw.

With national outlook, the government is doing all in its capacity to ensure the emergence of a peaceful, modern and developed nation in the interests of the country and the people.

This being the case, the onus is on the government employees as well as on the people to be loyal to the country and to do their share of responsibility in the framework of law.

In the past, the regions in Magway Division and the western part of Ayeyawady Division lagged behind in development. However, the State is implementing development projects by designating Magway and Pakokku regions as development zones.

As a result, irrigation facilities, railroads, motor roads, factories, workshops and airports are growing in number in the respective regions.

Now under implementation is the seven-point Road Map that will help shape a discipline-flourishing democratic nation. In this process, the State and the people are going hand in hand to achieve the goal.

It is absolutely necessary for the State, the people and the Tatmadaw to work closely for the establishment of a discipline-flourishing democracy.

Sayadaws leave for India, Nepal

YANGON, 24 Dec — Twenty-one Sayadaws led by Vice-Chairman of the State Sangha Maha Nayaka Committee Abhidhaja Maha Raththa Guru Dawei Gawthita-ya-ma Monastery Sayadaw Bhaddanta Arjinda-bhavamsa left here by air this morning for four Samevejaniya places in India and Nepal.

The Sayadaws were seen off at Yangon International Airport by Minister for Religious Affairs Brig-Gen Thura Myint Maung, Deputy Minister Brig-Gen Thura Aung Ko, Director-General Dr Myo Myint of the Religious Affairs Department, officials and disciples.

Regional development undertakings inspected in Shan State (North)

YANGON, 24 Dec — Deputy Minister for Progress of Border Areas and National Areas and Development Affairs Brig-Gen Than Tun, together with Director-General of the Progress of Border Areas and National Races Department Col Than Swe, held discussions on regional development with officials at Shan State (North) Development Affairs Committee in Lashio on 20 December.

On 21 December, the deputy minister inspected upgrading of Mongpak-Weinkaung-Panhsan Road being undertaken by the Ministry, and Talar Quarry. On 22 December, he inspected Weinkaung Station Hospital, Weinkaung post office and TV retransmission station and provided assistance for the office.

In the afternoon, he met officials in Panhsan and dealt with upgrading of Mongpak-Weinkaung-Panhsan Road and Kengtung-Mongkhat-Mongyan Road, requirements and tasks for progress of Wa region. — MNA

Academy Award presentation ceremony to be telecast live

YANGON, 24 Dec — The Academy Award presentation ceremony, to be organized by Myanma Motion Picture Enterprise of the Ministry of Information, will be held at the National Indoor Stadium-1 (Thuwunna) at 5.30 pm on 26 December (Sunday).

The TV Myanmar will telecast live the presentation ceremony beginning 5 pm on that day. — MNA

All this needs to be known

* Do not be frightened whenever intimidated
* Do not be bothered whenever flattered
* Do not be softened whenever appeased
Chavez will seek to boost China’s oil investment in his country

BEIJING, 23 Dec—Energy-starved China, forging ahead in its campaign to improve relations with a range of key oil states, this week hosts visits by Venezuelan President Hugo Chavez and Iraqi interim Foreign Minister Hoshyar Zebari.

The world’s seventh-largest economy, number two behind the United States in oil consumption, has awakened to the need for secure energy lifelines to continue its economic prosperity, and its diplomacy increasingly reflects that, analysts say.

“Every time the Chinese leaders go somewhere there’s always bound to be some energy-related deals or discussions,” said a diplomat in Beijing who follows China’s energy policy.

“With the (domestic) energy shortage being one of the priorities, it’s only logical that in all their foreign policy initiatives they would factor in this matter.”

When the year is out China will have met publicly with senior officials from all 11 members of the Organization of Petroleum-Exporting Countries (OPEC). Chavez will seek to significantly boost China’s investment in his country’s oil and gas sector during his five-day visit, Venezuela’s Foreign Minister has said. The President was due in Beijing later on Wednesday.

China National Petroleum Corporation (CNPC) already operates two oil fields in Venezuela and is involved in a joint project with Venezuela’s state oil firm PDVSA to build a plant to produce orimulsion, a boiler fuel manufactured from Venezuelan extra-heavy crude.

Vietnam offers general rank to 72 military officers

HANOI, 23 Dec—Vietnam’s Defence Ministry on Tuesday offered the general rank to 72 officers, the Vietnam News Agency reported.

Among the military officers, four received the senior lieutenant-general rank, 10 lieutenant-general, two vice-admiral, 53 major-general, and 3 rear-admiral. Defence Minister General Pham Van Tra presented the new military ranks to the promoted officers, saying the promotion reflected the special attention of the Communist Party of Vietnam and the State given to the Army.

The promotion ceremony was conducted on the occasion of the 60th founding anniversary of the Vietnam People’s Army which falls on 22 December.

Cambodia’s tourist arrivals in November increase sharply

PHNOM PENH, 23 Dec—Cambodia’s tourist arrivals in November 2004 increased sharply compared with the same month last year, according to the figures of the Ministry of Tourism on Wednesday.

The figures show that 108,719 foreigners visited Cambodia in November, up 38.70 per cent compared with 78,387 last same month. Visitors arrivals from South Korea topped the list with 15,627 visitors, followed by Japan with 13,553 and the United States with 10,946 visitors.

The number of tourists visiting Cambodia has increased to 900,000 in 2004, a 40-per-cent increase from the previous year. That number is projected to increase by a further 25 per cent in 2005, according to Thong Khon, Tourism Ministry secretary of state.

Tourist arrival in the total year of 2003 were only at about 701,000, affected by diseases such as severe acute respiratory syndrome and bird flu as well as the war in Iraq. The World Bank predicted that Cambod-ia’s tourism sector is expected to grow by 15 per cent in 2005, despite the GDP growth will decrease from 4.3 per cent in 2003 to around 3.4 per cent in 2005.

In order to attract more tourists to the capital, Phnom Penh Municipality recently plans to open its first full-service night markets to serve tourists and locals near Phsar Chas and in front of the Royal Palace.

The night markets will offer fruits, food and other goods that are suitable for roadside selling. The new markets will be bigger and have better security.

1,323 US troops killed since beginning of Iraq war

WASHINGTON, 23 Dec—As of Thursday, 23 December, 2004, at least 1,323 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 1034 died as a result of hostile action, the Defence Department said. The figures include three military civilians.

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

The British military has reported 75 deaths; Italy, 19; Poland, 16; Spain, 11; Ukraine, nine; Bulgaria, seven; Slovakia, three; Estonia, Thailand and the Netherlands, two each; and Denmark, El Salvador, Hungary and Latvia one death each.

Since 1 May, 2003, when President Bush declared that major combat operations in Iraq had ended, 1,185 US military members have died, according to AP’s count. That includes at least 925 deaths resulting from hostile action, according to the military’s numbers.

The latest deaths reported by the military: A soldier was killed Thursday by an explosive in western Baghdad, Iraq.

Three Marines were killed Thursday in Iraq’s Anbar Province.

Singapore’s shipping tonnage exceeds one billion tons

SINGAPORE, 23 Dec—The shipping tonnage at Singapore’s port exceeded one billion tons Tuesday with the arrival of the container ship COSCO Shangh hai. At the celebration of the city state’s first billionth vessel arrival in its 185-year history, Minister for Transport Yeo Cheow Tong highlighted the cooperation between China Ocean Shipping (Group) Company (COSCO), and the Port of Singapore Authority (PSA).

COSCO, the biggest shipping company in China, established a joint-venture with PSA in December last year to develop two dedicated berths in Singapore. Yeo said that Singapore will reduce the port dues next year to maintain its position as the world’s busiest port in terms of shipping tonnage and the number one bunkering hub.—MNA/Xinhua

Four US military personnel killed in Iraq as base bombing probed

BAGHDAD, 24 Dec—Three US Marines and a soldier were killed in two attacks in Iraq as the US military investigated how a suicide bomber managed to penetrate an army base in an strike that killed 22 people.

The Marines were killed while conducting security operations in the restive western Al-Anbar Province, home to the former guerilla stronghold of Fallujah, where a few hundred residents entered the war-battered city for the first time since a massive US-led offensive against guerillas in November.

In Baghdad, a roadside bomb claimed the life of a US soldier and wounded two others, while mortar attacks killed three civilians and one policeman.—INTERNET

A US Marine directs truck movement at his base on sunset in the Iraqi town of Fallujah, on 22 Dec, 2004.—INTERNET

Snowy ride : Cyclists ride along a quiet tree-lined street near the east gate of the Forbidden City in Beijing as the first snow of the winter hits the capital. MNA/Reuters
China lowers conviction criteria of IPR violations

BEIJING, 23 Dec — China announced Tuesday stricter criteria for intellectual property right (IPR) violations, intensifying the crackdown on rampant IPR infringements.

The Supreme People’s Court and the Supreme People’s Procuratorate held a joint Press conference Tuesday to announce the judicial interpretation of the Criminal Law application on IPR violations. The new criteria will go into effect on 22 December.

The new interpretation allows for the sentencing of people convicted of producing and selling fake registered trademarks, selling products with counterfeited trademarks and infringing copyright with the economic value of 50,000 yuan and above. Previously, the criteria was 100,000 yuan to 200,000 yuan.

The interpretation also said one is an accomplice if he/she knowingly provides various conveniences or acts as an import/export agent for someone who carried out the crime of IPR infringements.

“Giving ‘help providers’ the same criminal punishment will definitely strengthen the efforts of cracking down on IPR violations,” said Cao Jianming, Vice-President of the Supreme People’s Court.

In the new interpretation online piracy is seen as copyright infringement and those who violate the law will be prosecuted accordingly.

The interpretation also set sentence criteria on CD, VCD and software piracy. Now a person who copies literature, music, music, TV programmes and software in more than 5,000 CDs or VCDs without the permission from the copyright owners will be sentenced in prison for three to seven years.

MNA/Xinhua

Cambodian National Assembly approves state budget for 2005

PHNOM PENH, 23 Dec — Cambodia’s National Assembly on Wednesday approved the 2005 budget submitted by the government.

At the same time, the government plans to spend about 22 million US dollars to pay its foreign debt to other countries. In 2003, the government paid 15 million to its debt.

Moreover, Keat Chhun said the government will make efforts to attract more private sectors to invest in infrastructure construction.

The government would raise civil servants’ salaries by 15 per cent next year and will continue its war against corruption, Keat Chhun said.

MNA/Xinhua

Pakistan favours early restoration of peace in Iraq

ISLAMABAD, 23 Dec — Pakistani Prime Minister Shaukat Aziz Tuesday said Pakistan desires early restoration of peace and harmony in Iraq.

Talking to visiting Iraqi Foreign Minister Hoshyar Zebarvi, the Prime Minister said a successful holding of elections in Iraq will help a great deal in bringing peace to the country, the Associated Press of Pakistan (APP) reported.

Aziz underlined the need for enhancing commercial and trade relations with Iraq, which is rich in natural resources and has very efficient human resource. He expressed the confidence that Iraq will be able to reconstruct itself quickly.

MNA/Xinhua

PIOs, NRI matters to be handled by Overseas Affairs Ministry

NEW DELHI, 23 Dec — All matters relating to Persons of Indian Origin (PIOs) and Non Resident Indians (NRIs) except those specifically allotted to other departments would be dealt with by the Overseas Indian Affairs Ministry headed by Jagdish Tytler, it was officially stated on Tuesday.

Several of the subjects handled by Tytler’s Ministry would be pursued in consultation with the External Affairs, Economic Affairs, Labour and Employment, Human Resource Development, Culture and other ministries, according to an official notification.

MNA/PII

Bangladesh faces crisis in manpower export

DHAKA, 23 Dec — Bangladesh faces a crisis in manpower export as Gulf countries are thinking of limiting the time the expatriate workers can stay there to just five years.

Manpower exporters in Bangladesh urged the government to take diplomatic steps immediately for arranging special options and relaxation of rules from governments of the Middle East countries, the most frequent destination of overseas workers and the largest source of remittance for Bangladesh, according to the New Age Wednesday.

In a summit meeting of the Gulf Cooperation Council in Manama on Sunday, Bahraini Labour Minister Jajeed al-Alawi announced that the council is considering limitation of the number of years expatriate workers can stay in the economic bloc to just five years.

Ministers of council countries — Bahrain, Kuwait, Oman, Qatar, Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates, attended the summit.

Manpower exporters claimed issuance of individual visas had declined by nearly 50 per cent over the last six months as authorities in Saudi Arabia were issuing fewer visas after recently adopting measures to increase the number of Saudi people in different sectors.

MNA/Xinhua

Americans wounded in Iraq blast flown to Germany

LANDSTUHL (Germany), 23 Dec — Many of the 35 Americans flown to a US military hospital in Germany after being wounded in Tuesday’s suicide bomb attack in Iraq are in critical condition, the hospital’s commander said on Thursday.

Colonel Rhonda Cornum, head of the medical center in Landstuhl, said she was confident the death toll would not rise. The blast killed 18 Americans and four other people in a mess tent at a major US military base in Mosul.

“We certainly don’t have anybody that we are not expecting has a reasonable chance of surviving,” Cornum told a news conference in Landstuhl, west of Frankfurt, after the wounded arrived on flights from Iraq on Wednesday and Thursday.

The United States believes the attack at the Marez base was probably the work of a suicide bomber. Thirteen US soldiers and five American civilians were among those killed. Another 69 people were wounded — an extraordinary toll for a single suicide bomber.

Cornum said she could see no evidence as to what had caused the explosion and most of the shrapnel had been removed from victims’ wounds before they were flown to Europe, she said.

A US military vehicle is seen driving off a deserted bridge in the northern city of Mosul, 370 kms from Baghdad recently. —Internet
Senior CPC official calls for more awareness of law, discipline

CHONGQING, 23 Dec — All local party committees should strictly implement law and discipline to prevent possible corruption of officials, said a leading disciplinary official of the Communist Party of China (CPC), the country’s ruling party.

Wu Guanzheng, a member of the Standing Committee of the Political Bureau of the CPC Central Committee and secretary of the CPC Central Commission for Discipline Inspection, made the remarks during his inspection tour of southwest China’s Sichuan Province and Chongqing Municipality from 17 to 21 December.

He said that there are still violations of party discipline in some regions and departments.

The lack of discipline awareness is a major reason why many officials made mistakes.

Malaysian consortium to invest in Bangladesh high-tech park

DHAKA, 24 Dec — A Malaysian consortium is likely to invest in setting up a high-tech park in Bangladesh, the daily New Age reported on Thursday.

The Malaysian Super Corridor Technology Centre, a technology-based global business organization, plans to launch a two-month feasibility study in January 2005 to develop the overall framework outlining the strategic, technological and financial requirements for the implementation of the proposed Bangladesh High-Tech Park.

The park will be located in Gazipur Town, some 40 kilometres north of the capital Dhaka, and the Malaysian consortium will provide strategic and technology assistance in the implementation of the park.

The park will be set up to promote knowledge-based and technology-intensive industries with its main focus on Information and Communication Technology (ICT).

The companies to be set up in the high-tech park will be involved in business including electronics, computer and communications hardware & software, IT-enabled services, human resources development institute, design and consultancy, agro-biotechnology and genomics, engineering, automobiles and metal industries, new and advanced materials, medical supplies and devices, pharmaceuticals and clinical products. The company has also expressed the willingness of Dhaka to act in line with a working paper submitted by the secretariat, the sources said, adding that the secretariat has proposed to enhance the rank of the secretary-general of the SAARC equivalent to a minister, create a post of his deputy and more positions for advisers, technocrats and administrative staff.

Syrian PM urges foreign troops to withdraw from Iraq

DAMASCUS, 23 Dec — Syrian Prime Minister Mohammed Naji Ottri on Wednesday urged foreign troops to withdraw from neighbouring Iraq, the official SANA news agency reported.

Ottri made the remarks while meeting with his visiting Turkish counterpart Recep Tayyip Erdogan, currently on a two-day official visit to Syria.

The US-led war failed to bring peace and stability in the region and freedom and democracy to the Iraqis, Ottri was quoted as saying.

The Premier also called to allow the Iraqi people to play their role in the political process of a unified, free and democratic Iraq.

Erdogan also held talks with Syrian President Bashar al-Assad on Wednesday, which touched on Iraq where elections are scheduled for January 30 despite an upsurge of violence.

Few Filipinos return home after bomb attack in Mosul US camp

MANILA, 23 Dec — Only 15 Filipino workers in Iraq have decided to return home while more than a hundred others still stayed after the bomb attack in Mosul leaving two Filipinos injured, a diplomat said on Thursday.

Charge d’Affaires to Iraq Ricardo Endaya told ABS-CBN News Channel that only those who have already finished their contracts opted to leave Iraq.

The Filipino women are in stable condition after being injured in the attack on a tented dining hall at a US military base, foreign affairs department said.

“The facility that was targeted was a huge tent with a capacity of 1,000 people, where many Filipinos serve meals to US soldiers,” Endaya said.

“Good thing is that the incident happened after meal time. If this happened earlier, more Filipinos might have been injured,” he added.

The Philippine Government has repeatedly urged Filipinos to follow the deployment ban of overseas workers to Iraq in light of Filipinos being injured in latest attacks on US military camps, which as the government put, “should serve as a fair warning to those planning to sneak into Iraq amidst the volatility of the peace and order situation in that country”.

China, Syria stress dialogue between civilizations

DAMASCUS, 23 Dec — China and Syria highlighted on Wednesday the importance of dialogue between civilizations in the current world.

Visiting Chinese Deputy Cultural Minister Zheng Xinmin and Syrian Cultural Minister Mahmoud Sayyed made the emphasis during their meeting.

“Human civilizations are diverse and differences between them should be respected,” said Zheng, who is also the director of China’s famous Museum of the Imperial Palace.

“We can achieve and improve understandings between civilizations through dialogue,” he added.

He hoped that bilateral cultural exchanges could play a proper role in promoting the good relations between China and Syria.
Kachin State USDA approves…

(from page 16)

nation in accord with the wish of the people after taking lessons from internal and external events. The USDA Patron gave guidance to USDAs at all levels at the AGM (2004), saying that stability, peace, national economy and high education stand at various steps to further cement national unity, he said.

The Annual General Meeting annually adopts future tasks, objectives and work programmes that help implement the State’s goals and objectives, he said. He called on the members to give advice and make frank suggestions to be able to seek ways and means to put the seven objectives and nine future tasks into motion. And associations at different levels are to adhere to the resolutions.

Ko presented gifts to outstanding youths. USDA Joint-Secretary U Tin Maung Win tabled a motion on speedy implementation of the seven objectives; Kachin State USDA Executive Daw La Zat Lwan Nywe, a motion on speedy implementation of the nine future tasks; and Kachin State USDA Executive U Soe Thein, a motion on carrying out plans in Kachin State.

Mohnin District USDA Secretary U San Lin, Myitkyina District USDA Executive Daw Shu Zaw Lwan Hlan, Secretary of Bahmo Township USDA in Bahmo District U Aung Hsan Win; and Executive of Machambaw USDA in Putao District Daw Mar Hsan seconded the motions respectively. Kachin State USDA Joint-Secretary U Tin Maung Win, Kachin State Organization for Women’s Affairs Supervisory Committee President Daw Tin Tin Nwe, Kachin State Maternal and Child Welfare Association President Daw Tin Tin Hlay and Myitkyina District War Veterans Organization Supervisory Committee member Captain Saw Aye Ko presented gifts to outstanding youths.

The meeting chairman announced the approval that Kachin State USDA will make continued efforts to implement the seven objectives, nine future tasks and the plans.

The meeting was brought to an end with shouting of slogans later in the morning. — MNA

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The meeting was brought to an end with shouting of slogans later in the morning. — MNA

Our nationals drove the colonialists out of our land

and also drove the fascists out again

Now, we must remove the danger of neo-colonialists.

Cartoonist Ba Chi

Kachin State USDA Joint-Secretary U Tin Maung Win passed by the meeting, he said.

flourishing of democracy. The government is passing the meeting, he said.

doing its utmost round the clock so as to fulfil these requirements. It managed to persuade armed groups to return to the legal fold, and they are participating in the nation-building tasks region-wise. Based on that achievement, it is taking various steps to further cement national unity, he said.

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New tube-wells in Thakayta Township opened

YANGON, 24 Dec—CEC members of the Union Solidarity and Development Association Chairman of Yangon City Development Committee Mayor Brig-Gen Aung Thein Lin and YCDC Vice-Chairman Vice-Mayor Col Maung Pa, accompanied by officials, attended the ceremony to open new tube-wells at Ward 5, Thakayta Township by Thakayta Township USDA to hail the Independence Day and accepted the USDA membership applications this morning.

Mayor Brig-Gen Aung Thein Lin and officials formally opened the new tube-wells. The new tube-wells opened today were dug by the Township USDA led by Secretary U Zaw Win Naing and those facilities will be able to provide 1,070 households with potable water.—MNA

Members of USDA and social organizations, delegates and outstanding youths saluting the State Flag at the meeting of Kachin State USDA in Myitkyina. — MNA

* What’s Our Business
  * You want to know distinctly
  * Please clarify, you asked
  * You, my beloved young brother.

* Myanmar has regained independence
  * Into the long mire of slavery
  * Not to fall again

That’s Our Business.

* Myanmar has become united
  * Thinking together, helping each other
  * Nationals sharing benefits together

In amity with each other

Intimate and not losing solidarity

To prolong amity, that’s Our Business.

* Myanmar has become prosperous
  * From this good earth
  * Rising high, almost reach the clouds
  * Tall buildings ever so gracious
  * Across snaking rivers, bridges are built
  * Lothy mountains pierced by tunnelling
  * The modern buildings of our country
  * Brushwork never to fade

To hike honour, that’s Our Business.

* O, young and tender, my brother
  * Discrimingly, if you think
  * “Myanmar’s Business, is Our Business”
  * “What Myanmar must do is Our Business
  * Because Myanmar is truly patriotic
  * Won’t so to him, won’t be swayed
  * Won’t kow-tow, won’t lose face
  * That’s Our Business, What it is
  * This marching ahead, flag flying
  * This the people’s strength.

Myinmu Maung Naing Moe (Trs)
The following is the table showing 180 feet and above long bridges built in the time of the State Peace and Development Council.

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sr</th>
<th>State/Division</th>
<th>Quantity</th>
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<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>Ayeyawady</td>
<td>40</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Total 190

Note: Altogether 190 bridges including seven built by Military Engineering Units and nine by Myanma Railways.

Pathein bridge across Ngawun river is 2140 feet long. The magnificent bridge seen from the west bank of Ngawun river. — MMAL.

Londawpauk bridge on Yangon-Kyaukpyu highway in Yanbye Township, Rakhine State is 1154 feet long. — MMAL.

With the length of 11575 feet, Thanlwin Bridge (Mawlamyine) in Mawlamyine Township, Mon State will be the longest one in the country. — MMAL.
Invaluable jewel of the nation

As Myanmar has the territory, the population, government and sovereignty, it is a nation having the full characteristics. As all the over 100 national races of the nation equally represent the race Myanmar, our country is called Myanmar. The country is Ywangan Township in Shan State and along the Ayeyawady River basin have proved that Stone Age did exist in Myanmar. The literature, music, ten traditional arts and crafts, and architecture, Myanmaras had invented and developed throughout the Tagaung, phire, jade stone, pearl and other gems of fine quality are found in Myanmar, and they are being kept as national treasures.

Once the proud people of Myanmar with fine traditions and culture had fallen under subjugation of colonialists, who tried to grab other’s territories all over the world to loot the natural riches. The whole nation fell under enslavement in 1885. But the national races in the entire country fought back the occupiers, sacrificing lives, blood and sweat, till the nation regained independence.

According to researchers, people of a single stock having the same culture, customs, language and colour are called the family. When a group of families live in the same area they become a clan. A tribe represents a unit of social organizations consisting of a number of families and clans who share a common ancestry, culture, and when minority groups sharing a common ancestry and culture are living in the same territory, they become nationalities. Normally, a nation is a community of nationalities living together in unity.

As Myanmar has the territory, the population, government and sovereignty, it is a nation having the full characteristics. As all the over 100 national races of the nation equally represent the race Myanmar, our country is called Myanmar. The country is Ywangan Township in Shan State and along the Ayeyawady River basin have proved that Stone Age did exist in Myanmar. The literature, music, ten traditional arts and crafts, and architecture, Myanmaras had invented and developed throughout the Tagaung, phire, jade stone, pearl and other gems of fine quality are found in Myanmar, and they are being kept as national treasures.

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According to researchers, people of a single stock having the same culture, customs, language and colour are called the family. When a group of families live in the same area they become a clan. A tribe represents a unit of social organizations consisting of a number of families and clans who share a common ancestry, culture, and when minority groups sharing a common ancestry and culture are living in the same territory, they become nationalities. Normally, a nation is a community of nationalities living together in unity.

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The entire national people bravely fought against the colonialists as the Union of Myanmar, possessing all the characteristics of a nation — the territory, population, government, and sovereignty — again on 4 January 1948.

Independence is the symbol of sovereignty. And sovereignty guarantees freedom for the nation and the people. The three branches of sovereign power are the legislative power, the administrative power and the judicial power. They are the powers that can ensure peace, security, progress and prosperity for the nation. When the foreigners took away the three branches of power, the nation became a colonized territory, and its people were subject to oppression. So, we will never let our independence fall again into the hands of others. Independence can be lost all of a sudden, but it will take much time to regain it.

They are the powers that can ensure peace, security, progress and prosperity of the nation. When the foreigners took away the three branches of power, the nation became a colonized territory, and its people were subject to oppression. So, we will never let our independence fall again into the hands of others. Independence can be lost all of a sudden, but it will take much time to regain it.

We come to realize the true value of health only when we become sick or unhealthy. If a country falls under foreign enslavement, it will have to suffer a lot of hardships.

The longer we live under subjugation, the greater desire we have for independence. Our ancestors fought back the colonialists for all the future generations to enjoy independence. The people will know the value of independence only if they have the experience of losing it. As the Myanmar people had made great sacrifices to regain independence, they all know its value. Thus, in no way, they will allow others to take away their independence again. Independence is the invaluable jewel of the nation.

(Translation: TMT)
Building of industrialized…

(from page 1)

control resulting from the economic slump.

As the national situation worsened to the uncontrollable degree, the Tatmadaw has to take over the State duties. In its endeavours to build up the national economy, which lacked capital then, the Tatmadaw focused on agriculture that has been the original source for national economic development since the past.

In this regard, the Tatmadaw Government has laid down and implemented the economic objective — Development of agriculture as the base and for all-round development of other sectors of economy as well. Thanks to the collective efforts of the Tatmadaw, the Government and the people, clusters of agricultural infrastructures have already been built in all necessary places. More infrastructures will be built in the future also. Because of the energetic efforts to extend sown acreage, increase per acre yield, and introduce new crops species, the nation now is enjoying surplus rice.

As the nation is able to produce enough food for the people, we will have to establish an industrial nation for the prosperity of the national people. But the setting up of an industrialized nation needs a large number of highly-qualified human resources. Hence, the Government has established 24 development zones, the project covering the task to develop human resources simultaneously in the entire nation. The rural development tasks are being attached to the project for development of all regions of the nation. Now, all the nationalities have the opportunity to get access to science and technological studies in their own regions.

In addition, the Government is giving priority to increased generation of electricity for industrial development. In this situation, you will have to strive as the human resources building a developed nation, while striving to further promote the science and technological sectors of the Tatmadaw. As the saying, which goes, “The taller the person, the longer his shade”, the task to build an industrial nation will be swifter and speedier, only if you try to enhance your ability.

As a result of one innovation after another, every new innovation has been superseded by other one. Therefore, you have to try your best to keep pace with this changing process. In the first place, you have to acquire knowledge, and then imitate the new technology and lastly innovate your own.

You will see that the celebrated scientists were those who had succeeded in their translation of their own ideas into practice. You will also find that they were of great diligence and perseverance. Mysterious inventions are the product of perseverance and diligence rather than of strength. This being the case, you have to make a lot of endeavours for the improvement of science and technology in the country.

(See page 11)
Building of industrialized...
(from page 10)

Now, you have been trained in respect of the military tactics. As a result, you have now become ones ready for battles in defence of the country. This being the case, you have to possess the spirit of willingness to fight and risk your life. Moreover, you have to behave in the manner of leadership. Furthermore, you have to cultivate the spirit of preserving the fine tradition of the 12 novel objectives of the Tatmadaw.

In conclusion, it is incumbent upon all of you to establish yourselves as technocrats responsible for defence of the country, to work hard for the improvement of science and technology of the Tatmadaw and the establishment of a modern armed forces, to establish yourselves as new generation leaders who will preserve the 12 fine traditions of the Tatmadaw at risk of your lives, and to improve the science and technology of the Tatmadaw while lending yourselves to the drive for national development.

Also present on the occasion were Member of the State Peace and Development Council General Thura Shwe Mann of the Ministry of Defence, Secretary-1 Lt-Gen Ye Myint, Quartermaster-General Lt-Gen Thida Thura Tin Aung Myint Oo, Chief of Armed Forces Training Lt-Gen Kyaw Win and Lt-Gen Tin Aye of the Ministry of Defence, Commander-in-Chief (Air) Lt-Gen Myat Hein, Commander of Central Command Maj-Gen Ye Myint, ministers Maj-Gen Htay Oo, U Aung Than, Maj-Gen Saw Tun, Brig-Gen Ohn Myint, Maj-Gen Thein Swe, Brig-Gen Thein Zaw, Brig-Gen Lun Thi, U Thaung, Dr Kyaw Myint, Brig-Gen Thein Aung and Col Zaw Min, Military Appointment-General Maj-Gen Hsan Hsint, Judge Advocate-General Maj-Gen Soe Maung, Maj-Gen Kyi Win of the Ministry of Defence, Vice-Chief of Armed Forces Training Maj-Gen Aung Kyi, 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 Sein Lin, Maj-Gen Aye Myint and senior military officers, Mandalay Mayor Brig-Gen Yan Thein and departmental officials, Commandant of DSTA Brig-Gen Win Myint and officials, parents and relatives of the cadets and guests. Commander-in-Chief of Defence Services Senior General Than Shwe inspected cadet companies. Next, the cadet companies marched past the Senior General.

Afterwards, the Senior General presented Best Cadet Award to Cadet Soe Arkar Tun, Excellence in Training Award to Cadet Hlaing Bwar and Excellence in Study Award to Cadet Myo Thet. Next, the Senior General left the parade grounds. After the graduation parade, Senior General Than Shwe met with three outstanding cadets and their parents at the parlour of DSTA.

YANGON, 24 Dec—With the aim of enabling the people to buy a variety of traditional medicines at a single place at reasonable prices, the fifth Traditional Medicines and Medical Equipment Exhibition continued for the ninth day at the Tatmadaw Convention Hall on U Wisara Road here today.

A wide range of Myanmar traditional medicines produced by PP Traditional Medicines Industry, Sayagyi U Thein Maung Traditional Medicines Industry, Seinbayet Traditional Medicines Industry, Sayagyi U Sein Tho Traditional Medicines Industry, Shweinhamin Traditional Medicines Industry, Waizamyelet Traditional Medicines Industry, Sandhi Brothers Trading Co Ltd and Traditional Medicines Department were put on display.

The exhibition was crowded with members of the Sangha and people and it continues tomorrow.

MNA

Chinese goodwill delegation goes back home

YANGON, 24 Dec — The Chinese delegation led by Chairman of Chinese People’s Association for Friendship with Foreign Countries Mr Chen Haosu who visited here at the invitation of Yangon City Development Committee Chairman Mayor Brig-Gen Aung Thein Lin, left for home by air this morning. — MNA
**MINISTRY OF RAIL TRANSPORTATION**

**ROAD TRANSPORT**

**INVITATION FOR TENDER**

NO. 004/RT/ 2004-2005

Sealed Tenders from eligible Suppliers are invited for the supply of 1650 Tyre Sets with Tube and Flap Size 9.00 x 20 x 14 PR Rating - Lug Type, prices to be quoted in Myanmar kyats Yangon.

(a) Tender Documents are available at the office of Procurement & Stores Department, Head Office, Road Transport, No. 375 Bogyoke Aung San Road, Yangon, commencing on the 23rd December 2004.

(b) Tender will be closed on 7th, January 2005 at (16:00) hours.

(c) Road Transport reserves the right to reject any or all Tenders.

(d) Detailed information will be available at the office of the Procurement & Stores Department, Phone Nos. (01-252574) (or) (01-376549).

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**CLAIMS DAY NOTICE**

**MV MINDORO VOY NO (7)**

Consignees of cargo carried on MV MINDORO Voy No (7) are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on 27.12.04 and cargo will be discharged into the premises of Myanmar Port Authority 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 AGENT DEPARTMENT**

**MYANMA PORT AUTHORITY**

**AGENT FOR: TOKO KAIUN KAISHA LTD, JAPAN**

Phone No: 256924/256914

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**Invitation to Bid**

Integrated Community Development Project

1. We hereby solicit interested suppliers, manufacturers or the supply of following two items for Integrated Community Development Project (MYA/01/001):-
   a. **Treadle Pump** — 320 units
   b. **Compound Fertilizer** — 4,500 bags

2. Interested Suppliers may obtain further information and detailed specification of above items at the following address:

   Address of Office: General Services Unit, UNDP, No. 6, Natmauk Road, Tamwe Township Yangon
   Telephone & Fax: 95-1-542911 (Ext:214)/ Fax 95-1-545634

3. Sealed bids must be delivered to the above office on or before 16:30 hrs. on 5 January 2004. Late bids shall be rejected.

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**Russian oil, gas output up in first 11 months**

Moscow, 23 Dec — Russia increased its oil production by 6.3 per cent in the first 11 months of the outgoing year to yearly on average 419.3 million tons, the Federal Statistics Service said Wednesday.

Oil giant YUKOS, whose main production unit was sold for paying back part of its huge back tax bill, was still the biggest producer during the period with some 78.4 million tons of oil output. Lukoil produced 76.6 million tons of oil in January-November, followed by Surgutneftegas with 54.4 million tons.

Russia’s natural gas output hit 537.3 billion cubic metres during the period, up 1.85 per cent year-on-year. The state-owned giant Gazprom produced 485.9 billion cubic metres of gas.

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**Chinese Seismological Bureau**

The China Seismological Bureau has assigned as the director of the Agency of Sport to replace Yuan Weimin.

Yuan Weimin, pointed as director of the Asian Committee. Liu Peng was appointed as director of the State General Administration of Sport to replace Yang Waimin.

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**China reassigns several ministerial officials**

Beijing, 23 Dec — China’s State Council appointed several ministerial officials recently, following a series of reshuffles of several top provincial posts a week ago.

Wang Taihua, born in 1945, becomes the director of the State Administration of Radio, Film and Television (SARFT), leaving his former post as the secretary of the CPC Anhui Provincial Committee.

Liu Peng was appointed as director of the State General Administration of Sport to replace Yang Waimin.

Chen Jianmin, replacing Song Ruxiang, was assigned as the director of the China Seismological Bureau.

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**Bangkok, 23 Dec** — The dropping Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) in addition to the slowdown in sector reform, productivity, education and a possible housing bubble may put a brake on Thailand’s economic growth next year, an investment bank has warned.

The bank said in a recent report that as the FDI drops, Thailand is under pressure to make itself more attractive as a destination for international capital lest it gradually lose out to other countries.

“FDI has actually fallen so far this year compared to last year while that into China continues to soar. Both Thailand and the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) need to improve their competitiveness and economic integration to maintain their attractiveness,” the company was quoted by The Nation newspaper as saying on Wednesday.

According to the Bank of Thailand (BoT), FDI went down 13 per cent in September.

Japan continues to provide the bulk of FDI with net negative FDI from North America and ASEAN. The data could be even worse for ASEAN FDI into Thailand although ASEAN was a relatively strong investor in Thailand last year, said the report.

With subdued credit growth and a fewer investment, the economy remains more dependent on consumer spending. Some people even question the sustainability of the economic growth as consumers take on more debt.

The central bank forecast Thailand’s GDP growth would stand between 5.5 and 6.5 per cent for 2005, the same as it predicted for this year. “Although the BoT keeps reassuring investors that they have things under control, it has some questions,” it said.

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**Falling FDI may hamper economic growth in Thailand**

Bangkok, 23 Dec — For the first 11 months of 2004, a total of 435,051 vehicles were manufactured, up 16.2 per cent over the same period in 2003, which was 392,365 vehicles for a total of 420,748 vehicles respectively, according to the statement.

Out of the total vehicles sold during the period, 136,100 units were national vehicles and the remaining 136,100 units were non-national vehicles. MAA said in a statement released here.

Both the national and non-national vehicles saw significant increase in terms of sales compared with sales at the same period last year, which was 273,479 units and 100,793 respectively, according to the statement.

During the period of January-November 2004, a total of 420,748 vehicles were manufactured, up from 392,365 vehicles for the same period in 2003, the statement said.

With oil money and foreign technology, Malaysia has been making tremendous efforts to develop its national automobile industry.

Malaysian National Automobile Corporation (Proton), the national car maker, was established in 1985 as part of Malaysia’s industrialization programme. Importing technology and some parts from Japan, Proton has grown rapidly in the past decades.

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**Malaysian vehicles sale up in first 11 months**

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**Internet**

**Don’t smoke**
**Democratic Republic.** — Mr Chanthavy Bodhisane, Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the Democratic Republic of Korea, called on Yangon International Airport by departmental heads, led by Deputy Minister for Foreign Affairs U Kyaw Than. The ambassador met with departmental officials. He heard reports on rural development tasks.

"Breeding tasks for gaining success in implementing the five rural development tasks for narrowing the gap between rural and urban areas. He stressed the need to extend livestock breeding and agricultural tasks. In addition, departmental officials are to make field trips to grassroots level for prevalence of law and order and security in cooperation with officials and local people."

"They left for Sittway in the evening. This morning, Li-Gen Khin Maung Than, accompanied by Brig-Gen Tun Aung of Sittway Station and staff officers, met with Tatmadawmen and families of residents and units at Sittway Station. Li-Gen Khin Maung Than gave instructions on agriculture and livestock breeding tasks to be carried out for staff welfare. After cordially greeting the Tatmadawmen and families, they left for Yangon.— MNA"

**Myanmar delegation arrives back from LPDR**

**Yangon, 24 Dec** — The Myanmar delegation led by Deputy Minister for Foreign Affairs U Kyaw Thu arrived back here by air this evening after attending the 6th Ministerial Meeting of the ASEAN-Mekong Basin Development Cooperation held in Vietiane, Lao People’s Democratic Republic from 21 to 22 December.

"The Myanmar delegation was welcomed back at Yangon International Airport by departmental heads, senior officials of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Mr Chantavy Bodhisane, Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the Embassy of the Lao People’s Democratic Republic. MNA"

**Passport Issuing Division inspected**

**Yangon, 24 Dec** — Minister for Home Affairs Maj-Gen Maung Oo accompanied by Deputy Director-General Col Zaw Win of Yangon Police Force met with members of the Special Investigation Department at the Passport Issuing Division on Pansodan Street, here, yesterday evening.

"The minister gave instructions on passports to be issued to the applicants as soon as possible."

"Next, the minister inspected the functions of the division.— MNA"
China sets tennis target for Beijing Olympics

BEIJING, 24 Dec — Chinese tennis players will aim at a medal in the women's doubles event at the 2008 Olympic Games in Beijing, a leading sports official said here on Thursday.

This target seems far away from China's Olympic gold-medal performance in the Athens Games this summer, where Chinese duet Sun Tiantian and Li Ting won the doubles title.

But Sun Jingfeng, director of the Chinese Tennis Administrative Centre, looks the matter the other way. "To be frank, China don't have the absolute capacity to win a medal in the (doubles) event. Chinese players have never reached the last four in the four Grand Slam tournaments and our best result is the women's doubles last eight at this year's Australian Open," Sun said.

For goals in other events, Sun said, China would try to go further than the first round in the women's singles while in men's competition, Olympic qualification is the only goal.

Mourinho needs stable player to give midfield some help

CORSHAM (England), 24 Dec — Jose Mourinho and his billionaire boss Roman Abramovich may dabble in the transfer market next month, though the Chelsea manager has ruled out any big-name signings.

Mourinho said he might strengthen his midfield after Scott Parker broke his foot, an injury likely to keep him out of action until March.

"If we do something it won't be a big buy. I don't need top, top, top players," the Portuguese manager said after a session at the club's new training ground in the Surrey countryside 50 kilometres outside London.

"Anyway, to get better midfield players than we have got already, I wouldn't know where to find them. "We would need a stable player to give the midfield some help. Forget Joaquin, forget Dfoe, forget big names," he added.

Dozens of players have been linked with Chelsea because of Abramovich's unique spending power, with Real Betis winger Joaquin and Tottenham striker Jermaine Defoe among the most prominent.

Mourinho said the decision on whether to go shopping would depend on Parker's progress.

The 24-year-old, often used to understudy Claude Makelele in a defensive midfield role, may need surgery on the metatarsal bone in his left foot.

Arrigo Sacchi hopes to revive Real's fortunes

MADRID, 24 Dec — Real Madrid's new director of football Arrigo Sacchi says he has not come to the club with a magic wand in his hand, but is confident the team will recover after a miserable year of underachievement.

"For me it is a great honour to be here at a legendary club and my aim is to work as hard as I can to help it improve,"

the former AC Milan and Italy coach told a news conference in Madrid on Thursday.

"I'm not a magician, but I do have confidence in myself, the players and the club and believe that we will get out of this situation. I'm a positive person who always sees the glass as half full rather than half empty."

Sacchi watched from the stands as Real slipped to a 1-0 defeat at home to Sevilla on Wednesday, a loss that meant they dropped to fifth place in the Primera Liga, 13 points behind leaders and arch-rivals Barcelona.

"If we play like we did yesterday then we will lose the league," he said. "But last season Barcelona were 18 points behind us at this stage and ended up finishing ahead of us so there is room to manoeuvre if we change.

"There is no doubt that the club is in a difficult situation and we all have to work together to try and resolve the problems it now faces. Everyone at the club is clear that things can and should improve."

COC denounces steps taken by US against sport

HAVANA, 23 Dec — The Cuban Olympic Committee (COC) denounced the worsening of the blockade imposed by the US Government against the island in particular against Cuba's sports, local Press said Wednesday.

The declarations was adopted Tuesday by the Annual General Assembly of COC, which condemned the application by the present government of the United States of "arbitrary and unfair measures" which damage "the normal performance of our noble mission for peace and understanding among nations and men.

"The text reminds that despite the limitations caused by the blockade "relations of sports exchange between the United States of "arbitrary and unfair measures" which damage "the normal performance of our noble mission for peace and understanding among nations and men."

"Nevertheless, over the past years, this exchange encouraged by the Olympic committees of both countries has become so drastically reduced that it is on the verge of disappearance," said COC, headed by Vice-President Jose Fernandez. — MNA/Xinhua

Chinese striker poised to join Sheffield United

BIRMINGHAM, 24 Dec — China striker Ilao Ilaiidong is poised to join English club Sheffield United on a four-year deal at the cost of one pound (1.9 US dollars), according to Chinese media reports.

A talismanic figure for China, the 24-year-old will join United for a symbolic transfer fee initially as a player but then as part of the club's training staff.

Sheffield United manager Neil Warnock has lined up Ilao following protracted negotiations in a bid to gain access to the Far East's lucrative market.

Ilao's club Dalian Shide have allowed him to go as a free agent after his contract was terminated.

"I was really keen to come to Atletico as it is one of the big teams in Spain and is known throughout Europe. It's fantastic to have arrived at this club and I hope that I can play some good football here,"

Grønkjaer joined

BIRMINGHAM City from Chelsea for 2.2 million pounds last July, but failed to settle at St Andrews and manager Steve Bruce allowed him to move on.

The 27-year-old, who will sign a two-and-a-half-year deal with Atletico for a reported fee of 2 million euros (2.68 million US dollars) could make his debut against city rivals Real Madrid on January 8. "It would be great to play by first game against Real," he said. "It would be a magnificent way to make my debut in the Spanish league. It's a great derby and one of those games any player would like to take part in."

Hawaii's Bobby Nash shoots over Southern California's Greg Guenther during the first half of the final game of the Rainbow Classic in Honolulu, Thursday, on 23 Dec, 2004. In the background is Hawaii's Matthew Gipsom. — INTERNET

MNA/Reuters

FOR IMAGE CREDIT USE THE FOLLOWING:

Hawaii's Bobby Nash shoots over Southern California's Greg Guenther during the first half of the final game of the Rainbow Classic in Honolulu, Thursday, on 23 Dec, 2004. In the background is Hawaii's Matthew Gipsom. — INTERNET

MNA/Reuters

MNA/Xinhua

MNA/Reuters
Three star pianists to play in HK next month
HONG KONG, 24 Dec — Three award-winning pianists, Angela Cheng, Alan Chow and Alvin Chow, will perform at a concert in Hong Kong next month, according to the Hong Kong Government website.

Presented by the Leisure and Cultural Services Department of Hong Kong government, the “Piano Concert with One to Many Hands by Angela Cheng, Alan Chow and Alvin Chow” will be staged at 8.00 pm on 23 January, 2005 at the Auditorium, Shatin Town Hall.

The pianists will perform Chopin’s “Ballade No. 1 in G Minor, Op 23” (Piano Solo), Milhaud’s “Scaramouche” (Two Pianos), Brahms’ “Hungarian Dances” (One Piano, Four Hands), Scriabine’s “Nocturne, Op 9, No 2” (Piano Solo, left hand alone), Szymanowski’s “Waltz” (One Piano, Three Hands), Dvorak’s “Slavonic Dance in G Minor, Op 46, No 8” (One Piano, Four Hands), Ravel’s “Frontispice” (One Piano, Five Hands) and Bernstein’s “West Side Story” (One Piano, Six Hands).

Angela Cheng, a gold medalist at the Arthur Rubinstein International Piano Masters Competition as well as a prize winner of the Montreal International Piano Competition, is hailed by critics for her remarkable technique, tonal beauty and musicianship and considered to be one of Canada’s most distinguished and respected pianists.

Alan Chow has won the first prize at the Concert Artists Guild International Competition, the UCLA International Piano Competition and the Palm Beach International Piano Competition. — MNA/Xinhua

IMF projects 5.5% economic growth in Uganda next year
KAMPALA, 24 Dec — The International Monetary Fund (IMF) has projected that Uganda’s economy will grow by 5.5 per cent during 2005 due to favourable macro-economic indicators.

IMF resident representative Peter Allum was quoted by The New Vision newspaper on Thursday as saying that if the Ugandan Government implements structural reforms across the board, growth prospects are high. “Macro-economic performance is favourable. The underlying inflation rate is good and revenue collections are on course. If the government tackles all these problems, Uganda will post growth in 2005,” Allum told the state-owned newspaper.

However, he said there is need to improve management of the economy by strengthening revenue collection because the 12-per cent contribution to gross domestic product is still low, even according to African standards. — MNA/Xinhua

Brazil’s Congress gives final approval to bill for infrastructure
BRASILIA (Brazil), 24 Dec — Brazil’s Lower House gave final approval on Wednesday to a bill that should help pump billion of dollars into investments in the countries failing roads, ports, bridges and railways.

Investors have been watching the bill, which will allow the government to strike partnerships with the private sector in funding public works projects and provide a major source of direct investment for South America’s biggest economy.

Congress gave its final approval to the bill on Wednesday, allowing it to be signed into law in coming days by President Luiz Inacio Lula da Silva and end two-year-old in office on 1 January 2005.

Lula expressed his optimism over the bill’s passage through the Senate earlier on Wednesday, saying that Brazil would occupy a space “much greater and more secure” in the international arena. — MNA/Reuters

Earthquake report
(Edited at 10:00h MST on Today)
Earthquake of very strong intensity (8.1) Richter Scale with its epicenter outside of Myanmar about (6,000) miles Southeast of Kaba-Aye seismological observatory was recorded at (21) hrs (41) min (43) sec MST on 23th December 2004.

Weather report


Weather
Friday, 24 December, 2004
Summary of observations recorded at 09:30 hours MST: During the past 24 hours, weather has been generally fair in the whole country. Night temperature were (3°C) to (4°C) below normal in Kayin State, Yangon and Taninthayi Divisions, (5°C) to (6°C) below normal in Chin and Shan States, Bago Division, (3°C) above normal in upper Sagaing Division and about normal in the remaining areas. The significant night temperature were (1°C) in Hakha, (3°C) inreach in Namsam, Moeokk and Pinlone.

Maximum temperature on 25-12-2004 was 91°F. Minimum temperature on 24-12-2004 was 56.5°F. Relative humidity at 9-30 hrs MST on 24-12-2004 was 73%. Total sunshine hours on 23-12-2004 was (8.4) hours approx. Rainfalls on 24-12-2004 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 at central Yangon. Maximum wind speed at Yangon (Kaba-Aye) was 12 mph from Northeast at (12:30) hours MST on 24-12-2004.

Bay influence: Weather is cloudy in the Southwest Bay and generally fair elsewhere in the Bay of Bengal.

Forecast valid until evening of 25-12-2004: Weather will be generally fair in the whole country.

State of the seal: Sea will be slight to moderate in Myanmar waters.

Outlook for subsequent two days: Fair weather in the whole country. Forecast for Yangon and neighboring area for 25-12-2004: Fair weather.

Forecast for Mandalay and neighbouring area for 25-12-2004: Fair weather.

Weather outlook for last weekend of December 2004: During the coming weekend weather will be fair in Yangon and Mandalay Divisions.
**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

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YANGON, 24 Dec — Vice-Chairman of the State Peace and Development Council of the Union of Myanmar, Deputy Commander-in-Chief of Defence Services, Commander-in-Chief (Army) Vice-Senior General Maung Aye received Vice-Chief of General Political Department of the Vietnamese Army Lt-Gen Phung Khac Dang and goodwill delegation members at Zeyathiri Beikman Hall on Konmyinttha, here, at 9 am today. Also present at the call were Members of the State Peace and Development Council Lt-Gen Aung Htwe and Lt-Gen Maung Bo of the Ministry of Defence, Chairman of Yangon Division Peace and Development Council Commander of Yangon Command Maj-Gen Myint Swe, Commandant of National Defence College Maj-Gen Moe Hein, and Director-General U Thaung Tun of the Political Department of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

The Vietnamese delegation was accompanied by Vietnamese Ambassador Mr Pham Quang Khon and Military Attaché Senior Colonel Le Van Thanh. — MNA

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**Kachin State USDA approves of successful implementation of seven objectives, nine future tasks of AGM (2004) and plans**

YANGON, 24 Dec — Chairman of the meeting Secretary of Kachin State USDA U Yawungoun said that now the Tatmadaw government’s endeavours have contributed to peace, tranquillity, and development the length and breadth of the nation. The government is taking systematic measures effectively for the flourishing of democracy in the (See page 6)