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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

Bypass and development tasks inspected in Myeik



Lt-Gen Tha Aye of Ministry of Defence inspects developments of Myeik Myothit and Pho Lamin jetty.—MNA

NAY PYI TAW, 21 Dec—Lt-Gen Tha Aye of the Ministry of Defence went on an inspection tour of Sub-printing House under the News and Periodicals Enterprise of the Ministry of Information in Myeik, Taninthayi Division on 17 December.

Lt-Gen Tha Aye looked into progress in printing and distributing newspapers, the press room and storage of newsprint and breeding Golden Brown layers, fish and pig in the farm of the Coastal Region Command.

Next, he oversaw progress in building the bypass near Myeik and then presented cash assistance for the rural development tasks upon his arrival at Padauk village.

(See page 8)

Water supply projects being extended to provide potable water to Meiktila and its environs

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



Office of Mahasi underground water tapping project seen in Aungzayar Ward, two miles from Meiktila Lake.

Since my childhood, I had heard the song for children about Meiktila Lake although I had never been there. Recently, I had an opportunity to make a trip to Meiktila for the first time.

Meiktila is situated by Yangon-Mandalay Highway in Mandalay Division. It is a junction of Meiktila-Kyaukpadaung Road, Meiktila-Myingyan Road and Meiktila-Thazi Road. Meiktila is a part of the arid plain region of central Myanmar. A total of 4.64 square miles area of the town is home to over 95,000 people. Significantly, the area of Meiktila Lake is equal to the residential area of the town. Up to now, the firm evidence has not been found as to when the Meiktila Lake was built. However, the successive Myanmar kings managed to maintain the lake. Actually, the local people have been relying on the water from the lake for agricultural purpose and for drinking since yore.

(See page 7)

PERSPECTIVES

Monday, 22 December, 2008

Safeguard independence and sovereignty for perpetuity

Myanmar has been a sovereign nation with its own culture and customs, standing tall in the world since time immemorial.

Myanmar lost its sovereignty as the imperialists waged three aggressive wars on Myanmar and annexed it. However, it regained independence and became a sovereign nation again through the struggle and united strength of the entire people.

Myanmar will soon celebrate its 61st anniversary of independence regained through sacrificing lots of lives, blood and sweat of national people. It is the duty of the entire people to continue to safeguard the independence that was built by our ancestors with full Union spirit and patriotism.

The government is striving for all-round development of every sector upholding the national policy of non-disintegration of the Union, non-disintegration of national solidarity and perpetuation of sovereignty. At the same time, it is implementing the seven-step Road Map and building a genuine new modern, developed discipline-flourishing democratic nation in accord with the new constitution approved by the entire people.

Thus, it is necessary for the national people to actively participate in democratization and nation-building task, safeguarding independence and sovereignty for perpetuity.

Prize-distribution ceremony of Pyinnyatazaung Literary Contest held

YANGON, 21 Dec—The prize-distribution ceremony of Pyinnyatazaung Literary Contest for 2008 was held at Myatpyinnya Hall of Yankin Education College of the Education Planning and Training Department yesterday morning with an address by Deputy Minister for Education U Myo Nyunt.

Next, Chairman of Pyinnyatazaung Administration Board U Than Oo extended greetings.

Next, the master of ceremonies announced the

list of prize winners and the vice-chairman explained matters on assessment of the contest.

Afterwards, Chairman U Than Oo presented certificates and prizes to Sayagyi U Hla Oo, Sayagyi U Sein Tun and Dr Aung Myint Oo; Vice-Chairman U Thaug Htut, to Pyinnyatazaung writers who won National Literary Award and Sarpay Beikman Manuscript Award and the heads of department under the Ministry of Education, to other prize winners.

MNA

People's Desire

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

Prizes awarded to winners in colour photo contest marking 61st Anniversary Independence Day



Information Minister Brig-Gen Kyaw Hsan together with departmental heads and photo technicians pose for documentary photo at the prize presentation ceremony of the colour photo contest to mark the 61st Anniversary Independence Day for 2009.—MNA

YANGON, 21 Dec—A ceremony to award prizes to winners in the colour photo contest entitled “Modern and Peaceful Myanmar” to mark 61st Anniversary Independence Day, which was organized by Information and Public Relations Department of the Ministry of Information was held at Central Hotel, here, this morning, attended by Minister for Information Brig-Gen Kyaw Hsan.

Minister for Information Brig-Gen Kyaw Hsan awarded

Moderate earthquake jolts

YANGON, 21 Dec—According to the (05:57) hr MST of Kaba Aye Observatory today, a moderate earthquake measuring 5.2 Richter Scale shook Myanmar, the distance of 380 mile from the northeast of Kaba Aye observatory, said Metrology and Hydrology Department.

MNA

prizes to winners on the occasion. Chairman of Committee for Selecting Prizes U Chit Naing explained the purpose of holding the contest.

The minister presented first prize to Aung Kyaw Tun (Patheingyi), second to Thein Oo (Myananda) and third to Kyaw Win Hlaing (University of Culture).

Consolation prizes were awarded to Ko Ko Sunny (Theingyi Shweyi), Saw Min Aung

(New Asia Photo), Wai Kyi Moe, U Nyunt Kyi, Naung U Phoe Cho, Kyaw Win Hlaing (University of Culture), AK Moe (Biology) and Sai Kham Lin (Hawk Eyes) by Director-General of MRTV U Khin Maung Htay, Managing Director U Soe Win of News and Periodicals Enterprise, Managing Director U Aung Myo Myint of Myanma Motion Picture Enterprise, Director-General of Information

and Public Relations Department U Chit Naing.

On behalf of the winners, Aung Kyaw Tun (Patheingyi) spoke words of thanks. After the ceremony, the minister cordially greeted those present and then he together with heads of department and winners posed for a documentary photo.

Next, the minister and guests viewed photos on display at the hall.—MNA



Information Minister Brig-Gen Kyaw Hsan and distinguished guests observe prize-winning colour photos marking the 61st Anniversary Independence Day for 2009.—MNA



An Iraqi traffic policeman is treated for his wounds at hospital in Baghdad, Iraq.—INTERNET

Iraq parliament rejects draft law on non-US troops

BAGHDAD, 21 Dec — Iraq's parliament rejected for the second time on Saturday a draft law allowing foreign troops from countries other than the United States to remain after the end of the year, lawmakers said.

The law drafted by the government of Prime Minister Nouri al-Maliki would allow all foreign troops other than Americans to stay in Iraq until the end of July 2009. It was rejected earlier in the week and is expected to be approved in another vote after Christmas.

Those opposed to the draft law were primarily lawmakers loyal to radical Shiite cleric Muqtada al-Sadr.

A separate agreement approved recently by the Iraqi government and parliament allows the US to retain troops in the country until the end of 2011. The accord, which takes effect on 1 January, gives Iraq strict oversight over the nearly 150,000 American troops now in the country. "Voting was carried out in parliament on the draft law and it was rejected and turned back to

the government," Kurdish lawmaker Mahmoud Othman said.

Britain will withdraw its 4,000 troops by the end of May. After the 31 December expiration of the UN mandate authorizing military operations in Iraq, the only coalition troops to remain will be the US, Britain, Australia, El Salvador, Estonia and Romania.

Australia has the largest force among the last four countries with 1,000 troops, followed by Romania with 501, El Salvador with 200 and Estonia with 40.

Internet

US military deaths in Iraq war at 4,210

WASHINGTON, 21 Dec — As of Saturday, 20 Dec, 2008, at least 4,210 members of the US military had died in the Iraq war since it began in March 2003.

The figure includes eight military civilians killed in action. At least 3,397 military personnel died as a result of hostile action, according to the military's numbers.

The British military has reported 176 deaths; Italy, 33; Ukraine, 18; Poland, 21; Bulgaria, 13; Spain, 11; Denmark, seven; El Salvador, five; Slovakia, four; Latvia and Georgia, three each; Estonia, Netherlands, Thailand and Romania, two each; and Australia, Hungary, Kazakhstan and South Korea, one death each.—Internet

Italian general Bruno Sato convicted over Iraq suicide attack

ROME, 21 Dec — An Italian general has been convicted of failing to provide proper security at a base in southern Iraq where 19 Italians died in a 2003 suicide attack, ANSA news agency said today.

But General Bruno Sato was spared any jail time by the military court judge that heard his case in Rome, and handed him a suspended two-year

sentence.

Sato, another general and a colonel were charged last year with "omissions of military defence measures".

General Vincenzo Lops was acquitted while Colonel Georg Di Pauli still faces military justice.

The two generals were successive commanders of Italy's then 3000-strong contingent in Iraq, while

the colonel commanded a special police unit headquartered at the Nasiriyah base.

In the November 2003 attack, a small truck burst through the guard post at the entrance to the base before exploding, destroying the three-storey barracks.

Internet



A woman is brought out of a hospital in Baghdad, Iraq, after she was injured in a twin bombing.—INTERNET

Four militants killed, five more arrested in S Afghanistan

KABUL, 21 Dec — The US-led Coalition forces killed four armed militants and detained five suspected militants during an operation targeting the Taliban's roadside bomb network in Zabol Province of southern Afghanistan, said a Coalition statement released here on Sunday.

Coalition forces targeted a Taliban militant known to traffic weapons and coordinate roadside bomb attacks along Highway One in Qalat district of Zabol on Saturday, the statement said.—Internet

Taleban kill Afghan on charge of spying for US troops

KABUL, 21 Dec — Taliban insurgents fighting Afghan and international troops have killed a person on charge of spying for the US troops based in Afghanistan's eastern Khost Province, a local official said on Sunday.

"Several armed insurgents sneaked into the house of a man named Toryalai in Ismail Khil district on Saturday night and shot him dead," Daulat Khan Qayumi, the district chief of Ismail Khil, told Xinhua.

He also said those committed the crime were dressed in army uniform. Meantime, Zabihullah Mujahid who claims to speak for Taliban fighters told media from undisclosed location that militants executed Toryalai on charge of spying for the US forces stationed in the province. Taliban militants have assassinated over a dozen persons on similar charge in Afghanistan as well in Pakistan's tribal areas along the border over past one year.—Internet

Supply line threat

Three Pakistanis died and one was wounded when their fuel trucks were hit by rockets as they returned through the Khyber Pass from supplying Western forces in Afghanistan.



Map locates the Khyber Pass between Pakistan and Afghanistan, where a convoy was attacked by militants.

INTERNET

Militants kill three in latest convoy attack

PESHAWAR (Pakistan), 21 Dec — Militants in Pakistan launched rockets at two trucks returning from delivering fuel to Western forces in Afghanistan, killing three people, an official said on Saturday — the latest in a string of attacks targeting a supply route critical to the US fight against the Taliban.

US and NATO forces in landlocked Afghanistan transport up to 75 percent of their supplies through Pakistan, and any serious disruption of that pipeline could hamper operations.

American officials have so far said the uptick in attacks has not affected their ability to operate in Afghanistan so far, but have acknowledged they are looking for ways to improve security along the route and are investigating

alternative ways to deliver supplies.

Militants struck the oil tankers on Friday as they traveled through the Khyber Pass, said Fazal Mehmood, a government official in the lawless Pakistani tribal area for which the route is named.

The three Pakistanis killed in the attack included a passenger and both drivers, who were taking their vehicles back to Pakistan without the paramilitary escorts that often accompany the convoys on their way to Afghanistan, Mehmood said.

Despite the escorts, convoys also are often attacked in Afghanistan, where US and NATO forces toppled the hard-line Taliban regime in 2001 but have been battling a resurgence by the group.—Internet



Workers decorate the centre of the Chechen capital Grozny with portraits of Russia's Prime Minister Vladimir Putin (top L), visiting Palestinian President Mahmoud Abbas (top R) and Chechen President Ramzan Kadyrov, on 20 Dec, 2008.

INTERNET

China to send three ships to Somalia to battle pirates

BEIJING, 21 Dec—China's Navy will send three ships to the waters off Somalia this week to protect Chinese vessels and crews from pirate attacks, state media said.

Two destroyers and a supply ship will leave the island province of Hainan in southern China on 26 Dec, the official *Xinhua News Agency* said.

They will patrol the Gulf of Aden and areas off the Somali coast, Foreign Ministry spokesman, Liu Jianchao, said in a statement issued late Saturday.

"Their major task is to protect the safety of Chinese ships and crew on board as well as ships carrying humanitarian relief material for international organizations," Liu said.

Piracy has taken an increasingly costly toll on international shipping, especially in the Gulf of Aden, one of the world's busiest sea lanes. Spurred by widespread poverty in their homeland, the pirates have made an estimated \$30 million hijacking ships for ransom this year, seizing more than 40 vessels off Somalia's 1,880-mile (3,000-kilometre) coastline.

Earlier this week, Liu said about 20 percent of the 1,265 Chinese ships passing through the area have come under attack so far this year. Seven hijackings have involved Chinese ships or crews.—*Internet*

Winter weather blasts nation from end to end

DES MOINES, 21 Dec—Successive waves of wintry weather gripped much of the country on Saturday, frustrating holiday travelers from coast to coast and keeping the lights off for thousands of people who lost power after ice storms just days ago. Iowa public safety officials urged motorists not to travel as heavy snow

began to fall in the morning. The state expected winds up to 35 miles per hour and wind chills of minus 25 just two days after being slammed with sleet, ice and snow. Washington state braced for hurricane-force winds as a storm blew in from the Pacific. The temperature dipped to minus 18 on Saturday in Spokane, which

expected up to 6 inches of snow on top of the 25 that fell over the past three days, said Johnny Burg, a National Weather Service meteorologist.—*Internet*

Gunmen attack vessels in Nigeria, kidnap Russians

ABUJA, 21 Dec—Gunmen in speedboats attacked three oil services ships and kidnapped at least two Russians in separate incidents in Nigeria's Niger Delta, private security and industry sources said on Saturday.

The Falcon Crest and Falcon Wings were attacked late Friday off the coast of southern Nigeria's Akwa Ibom state near crude oil facilities operated by Canada's Addax Petroleum.

A Filipino captain on one of the vessels was killed, one security source said. The gunmen were believed to have fled to nearby Cameroonian waters.

No group has claimed responsibility.

Akwa Ibom, which shares a border with Cameroon, has seen an increase in piracy and kidnappings in the past few months.

Nigeria handed over the

nearby oil-rich Bakassi peninsula to Cameroon four months ago, angering many Nigerians whose families have since resettled in Akwa Ibom.

Militants in the area have objected to the 14 August transfer, which complied with a World Court ruling.

Friday's attacks took place in the offshore area known as OML 123, referring to the 370 sq-km license area controlled by Addax. Six similar incidents occurred earlier this year, the most recent two weeks ago, a security source said.

Addax and police officials were not immediately available for comment.

A third ship, operated by Nigerian oil company Monipulo, was attacked by pirates early Saturday near the Abana offshore oilfields, located close to the Nigeria-Cameroon border.

Internet

Ariane rocket launched, sending satellites into orbit

PARIS, 21 Dec—An Ariane rocket was successfully launched on Saturday from the Kourou space center in French Guiana, sending two communication satellites into orbit.

Europe's Arianespace broadcast live the launch. The Ariane 5-ECA rocket was blast off from Kourou centre at 22:35 GMT.

The rocket carried two Eutelsat communication satellites, Hot Bird 9 and W2M, which separated from the rocket soon after it reached the outer space. The satellites remain in temporary orbit before entering the geosynchronous orbit a few days later.

Hot bird 9, built by EADS-Astrium, will beam television programmes to Europe, the Middle East and North Africa, while W2M, built by EADS-Astrium and Indian space agency Isro, will feed central and eastern Europe as well as Indian Ocean islands.—*Internet*



The Ariane-5 rocket, with Vietnam's VINASAT-1 and Brazil's Star One C2 satellites attached, takes off at a spaceport in Kourou, French Guiana on 18 April, 2008. XINHUA



An Israeli surveys the damage caused by a mortar bomb fired by Palestinian militants in Gaza, in Kibbutz Kfar Aza on 20 Dec, 2008.—INTERNET

Israel strikes Gaza day after truce expires

GAZA CITY, 21 Dec—An Israeli airstrike against a Palestinian rocket squad killed a militant on Saturday, the first death in Gaza since Hamas formally declared an end to a six-month truce. Palestinians fired 10 rockets and at least 23 mortar shells from Gaza into Israel, causing some property damage but no casualties, the Israeli military said. An Israeli airstrike at one of the rocket squads in northern

Gaza killed a militant, said the army and Palestinian medics.

The Al Aqsa Martyrs' Brigades, the armed wing of Palestinian President Mahmoud Abbas' Fatah movement, identified the dead man as one of its fighters. Hamas, which controls Gaza, said it was behind the mortar fire.

A six-month truce that expired on Friday had curbed violence between Israel and Hamas in Gaza

though sporadic fighting has continued. Hamas declared on Friday that it would not continue the truce.

Also on Saturday, a boat carrying a Qatari delegation, Lebanese activists and journalists from Israel and Lebanon sailed into Gaza City's small port in defiance of a border blockade. It was the fifth such boat trip since the summer and the first official Arab delegation to reach Gaza.

Internet



Photo taken on 20 Dec, 2008 shows the celebration marking of the Chinese television affairs and 50th anniversary of China Central Television (CCTV) held in Beijing, capital of China.—XINHUA

All items from Xinhua News Agency

China celebrates 50th anniversary of CCTV

BEIJING, 21 Dec — China celebrated the 50th anniversary of its television broadcasting service and founding of the *China Central Television Station (CCTV)* here on Saturday.

The CCTV is an important window through which China knows about the world and the world learns about China, said Chinese President Hu Jintao in a congratulation letter.

Corresponding with the development and changes of domestic and international situation, the country will build modern media system and enhance

the power of news media for domestic and world service so as to create a favourable social environment and atmosphere for public opinions, Hu said.

He hoped the *CCTV* to make itself a leading media group with strong international influence, advanced technologies, rich contents and good coverage.

Former Chinese President Jiang Zemin hoped the *CCTV* to become a world-class media with strong international influence in a calligraphy work he presented to the TV station.—Xinhua

Lebanon committed to fighting terrorism

BEIRUT, 21 Dec — Lebanese President Michel Suleiman pledged here on Saturday that his country's army is committed to striking terrorism, local Naharnet website reported.

Speaking to participants in a conference on United Nations Interim Forces in Lebanon (UNIFIL), Suleiman stressed that the main challenge facing the Lebanese army and UN peacekeepers in Lebanon is "confronting terror".

Terrorism is a "global threat" that strikes in any state, he added.

The Lebanese army fought 15-week battle against Islamists in north Lebanon's Palestinian refugee camp of Naher al-Barid in 2007, in which more than 160 Lebanese soldiers died.

The Lebanese army is in need for improved military equipment and training.—Xinhua

Jumbo jet goes off runway in Denver, US

WASHINGTON, 21 Dec — A plane carrying more than 100 passengers and five crew members went off the runway during takeoff from the Denver International Airport, Continental spokeswoman Mary Clark said on Saturday evening.

The Boeing 737 plane, belonging to the Continental Airlines, was heading to Houston before the accident.

Reports from Denver said at least 36 people were taken to local hospitals. But there were no immediate reports of serious injuries in the accident.

Xinhua

France Telecom ship sent to fix cables under Mediterranean

PARIS, 21 Dec — France Telecom sent a ship on Saturday to repair broken cables under the Mediterranean disputed Internet and phone communications across the Middle East and Asia, a French source said.

With this "very rare situation," a spokesman from France Telecom said a ship had been sent by the company in order to fix the lines between Sicily and Tunisia, and services were expected to return to normal by the end of

December.

Three submarine cables, owned by different operators including France Telecom, were damaged on Friday. The cause of the cut remains unclear.

Xinhua

Argentine vice president escapes from carjacking attempt

BUENOS AIRES, 21 Dec — Argentine Vice President Julio Cobos escaped from a robbery attempt when a group of unidentified men tried to stop and rob his car in Argentina's western province of Mendoza on Saturday.

A spokesman for Cobos said several men stopped the vice president's car and tried to open its door, but the driver was quick to steer clear of the hijackers and sped away to safety.

The vice president, together with his secretary and body guard, was on his way to a meeting with local entrepreneurs.

Police were investigating the incident, but they said this was more likely a criminal case of robbery, not politically motivated.

Xinhua



A girl takes part in the Children's Calligraphy and Painting Competition held in Yichang city of central China's Hubei Province, on 19 Dec, 2008. Over 400 children showed their accomplishments in calligraphy and painting by making artworks on the spot of the competition on Friday. —XINHUA

Nine injured in blast in southern Moscow

MOSCOW, 21 Dec — At least nine people were injured Saturday in an explosion occurred at a market in southern Moscow, Russian news agencies reported.

The incident, which occurred on Saturday afternoon in a street market near the Prazhskaya metro station, injured nine people, including a child, RIA Novosti cited a police source as saying.

The blast was caused by an unknown explosive device, the source said, adding that the remains of the explosive device have been already discovered.

However, a spokesman for the

Emergency Situations Ministry said the explosion was caused by fireworks that went off accidentally.

According to a Moscow police spokesman, people have been evacuated from the market and police have inspected the market for other possible explosive devices.—Xinhua

At least nine people were injured on Saturday in an explosion occurred at a market in southern Moscow, Russian news agencies reported. —XINHUA



1,000 evacuees from Malaysian landslide still not allowed home



Rescue workers help survivors evacuate after a landslide in a residential area in Kuala Lumpur, on 7 December. More than two weeks after a landslide in Kuala Lumpur's up-market northeastern suburbs killed four people, close to 1,000 evacuees have yet to be allowed home, according to reports. —INTERNET

KUALA LUMPUR, 21 Dec — More than two weeks after a landslide in Kuala Lumpur's up-market northeastern suburbs killed four people, close to 1,000 evacuees have yet to be allowed home, according to reports.

Central Selangor police chief Khalid Abu Bakar told the New Straits Times daily two-thirds of the 3,000 residents evacuated on 6 December amid fears of further structural collapses could return home.

He said an initial report by the Public Works Department verified the safety of most structures in the area but 1,000 residents would have to wait for further tests. —Internet

Taj Mahal hotel and Trident hotel to open on Sunday

MUMBAI, 21 Dec — The Taj Mahal hotel, which was attacked by a terrorist attack on 26 Nov, will again open at 7.00 pm on Sunday, an official from the Taj told *Xinhua*.

Restaurants and eateries, including Shamiana, Masala Kraft, Aquarius, Souk, Starboard, La Patisserie and Zodiac Grill — some of which were marred by the indiscriminate violence — will host guests once again. The

Tower wing of the hotel will reopen, and 268 rooms will be made available, the official said.

On Sunday, the hotel will host a high tea at around 4:00 pm "The who's who of the corporate world, celebrities, socialites, and foreign heads and ambassadors will be there," said the official on Saturday

evening.

The Oberoi group's Trident hotel will open on Sunday as well, according to the web of Oberoi.

The two landmark hotels in South Mumbai were attacked by terrorists. A total of 172 people, including nine of the 10 gunmen, were killed in the attacks.

Internet

Gas leakage kills at least three in N Egypt

CAIRO, 21 Dec — At least three people have been killed during a gas leakage in the northern Egyptian port city of Alexandria, the state MENA news agency reported on Saturday.

The three workers died from the gas leakage of a large petroleum tank in the El-Ameraya Petroleum Refining Company in Alexandria, some 220 km northwest of Cairo, said the report.

Some 17 others suffocated in the accident, said the report, without elaborating details of the tragic event. The Egyptian general prosecution has ordered to carry out an investigation into the mishap, added MENA.

Internet

5.6 earthquake jolts eastern Indonesia

JAKARTA, 21 Dec — An earthquake measuring 5.6 on the Richter scale jolted Jayapura in eastern Indonesia's Papua on Sunday, said the Indonesian Meteorology and Geophysics Office (BMG).

The quake occurred at 00:44 local time (1544 GMT on Saturday) with its epicenter located at 180 km northwest Jayapura at 20 km below sea level.

There was no immediate report of casualty or material damage so far.

BMG has recorded a total of 32 earthquakes occurred in Indonesia in November and 26 earthquakes in December.

Internet

Areva, Mitsubishi Heavy to tie-up in nuclear fuel

TOKYO, 21 Dec — Japan's Mitsubishi Heavy Industries and major French nuclear energy company Areva will form a capital tie-up in nuclear fuel production, according to a report.

Areva will buy a roughly 30 percent stake in Mitsubishi Nuclear Fuel Co and Mitsubishi Heavy will become the nuclear company's leading shareholder, the business daily Nikkei reported, without citing sources.

Areva's new investment will expand its existing ties with Mitsubishi Heavy to building nuclear plants and supplying fuel to them, it said.

Areva's stake will fall short of the 33.4 percent needed to veto decisions at general meetings, the report said. The supply of nuclear fuel is expected to tighten as construction projects of nuclear plants are on the rise in the world. —Internet

Egypt finds 4,000 years-old pyramid built for ancient queen

Egyptian archaeologists have discovered a pyramid buried in the desert and thought to belong to the mother of a pharaoh who ruled more than 4,000 years ago, Egypt's antiquities chief said.

The pyramid, found about two months ago in the sand south of Cairo, probably housed the remains of Queen Sesheshet, the mother of King Teti, who ruled

from 2323 to 2291 BC and is missing is Shesheshet, which is why I am sure it belonged to her," Hawass said. "This will enrich our knowledge about the Old Kingdom."

"The only queen whose pyramid



The pyramid probably housed the remains of Queen Sesheshet who ruled from 2323 to 2291 BC and founded Egypt's Sixth Dynasty, archaeologists said.

Police: pizza man's cheesy weapon foils a stickup

Police say a pizza delivery man fought back with the one weapon he had handy when a gun was pulled on him in a stickup: A large, hot pepperoni pizza.

Delivery man Eric Lopez Devictoria, 40, flung the steaming pie at the gunman, buying time as he ran for safety, police said.

At least one shot was fired as Devictoria fled, but the deliveryman wasn't hurt and was able to quickly call police, according to authorities.

NEWS ALBUM



Ovens and pottery, rare decorated vases and bone tools found at site show that its inhabitants were already skilled artisans nearly 7,000 years ago, the ministry said.

Greek pipeline workers discover stone age homes

Archaeologists in central Greece have unearthed the remains of a Neolithic settlement discovered by workers laying a gas pipeline, the Greek Culture Ministry said.

Ovens and pottery, rare decorated vases and bone tools found at the site near the city of Larissa show that its inhabitants were already skilled artisans nearly 7,000 years ago, the ministry said.

"The site was unknown until works for the installation of a natural gas pipeline started," the ministry

said in a statement.

Archaeologists said the red-coloured ruins of the houses showed the settlement had burned down. The homes were made of wooden poles, branches and mud.

When they started excavating seven months ago, archaeologists also discovered 15 graves from Hellenistic times in the soil above the settlement. Last month, researchers in northern Greece unearthed the base of a 58-square-metre Neolithic house.

Lebanon finds 2,900 years old Phoenician remains

They said more than 100 jars were discovered at a Phoenician site in the southern coastal city of Tyre. Phoenicians are known to have thrived from 1500 BC to 300 BC and they were also headquartered in the coastal area of present-day Syria.

"The big jars are like individual tombs. The smaller jars are left empty, but symbolically represent that a soul is stored in them," Ali Badawi, the archaeologist in charge in Tyre, told Reuters.

Badawi and a Spanish team from the Pompeu Fabra University in Barcelona have been excavating at the Phoenician site for years. The site was first discovered in 1997 but archaeologists have only been able to dig up 50 square metres per year. "These discoveries help researchers who work on past Phoenician colonies in Spain, Italy and Tunisia, to pin down a large number of their habits and traditions," said Maria Eugenia Aubet, who leads the Spanish team.



Lebanese and Spanish archaeologists have discovered 2,900-year-old earthenware pottery that ancient Phoenicians used to store the bones of their dead after burning the corpses.

Water supply projects being extended to provide potable water to Meiktila and its environs

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

(from page 1)

The clean water can be supplied from the lake. Surprisingly, water from the wells near the lake is salty.

The news crew of the Kyemon Daily observed undertakings of Meiktila Township Development Affairs Committee in supplying water from the lake.

At present, Meiktila Lake is supplying water to 11 wards out of 14 in the urban area. Six water pumping stations of the Township Development Affairs Committee are being operated to supply 0.44 million gallons of water to the residential area daily. In so doing, No. 1 water pumping station is installed with three 100 HP pumps, No. 5 water pumping station with one 40 HP pump, one 50 HP pump and one 25 HP pump. Likewise, No. 2 water pumping station is equipped with three pumps, No. 3 pumping station with three pumps, No. 4 water

pumping station with two pumps and No. 6 water pumping station with two pumps.

For ensuring equitable supply of water and minimizing loss and wastage, a total of 4,869 water taps at residences have



"All the people of the ward are delighted for the availability of clean water."

U Soe Myint Kyaw-townseller Aungzayar Ward, Region No. 9

been equipped with water meters.

To supply the clean water to the town dwellers, six water pumping stations were installed with eight chlorine mixers and water filtering tanks constructed.

In the successive eras,

the water from Meiktila Lake has been supplied to the local people. As part of efforts to provide the safe water for the increasing population of the town, more fresh water resources were explored. Therefore, Mahasi under-

ground water tapping project was implemented in Aungzayar Ward, two miles from Meiktila Lake.

In the 2004-2005 financial year, the project was started with K 174.5 million contribution of the government. At that time, three four-inch di-

ameter test-wells and five 10-inch diameter tube-wells were sunk. Moreover, the installation of power line to 500 KVA transformer, the construction of a 200,000-gallon-capacity water tank, the building of five water pumping stations, the installation of four-inch water pipes and the water compressor pump station, the laying of water pipeline from the tube-well to the water tank and the installation of five 20 HP water pumps and their equipment in the water supply were undertaken.

In accord with the instructions to continue the implementation of Mahasi water supply project and providing of clean water to the local people, the installation of motor, pump and water pipelines and construction of water tanks and water taps were carried out for 6,400 people of the urban area. Moreover, a total of 170 more water taps were constructed in No. 9 region and No. 16 region of

Aungzayar Ward.

The news crew had an interview with a resident Daw Win Win Than at the water tank for the public. She said, "We all are lucky persons due to supply of water. I use the water for drinking and cooking. I store water in the tanks. In the past, we faced difficulty as water was scarce. We bought water daily then. We have overcome such difficulties for over one year now.



"Water is being supplied free of charge. Now, we do not have to worry about it."

Daw Win Win Than Aungzayar Ward, Region No. 9

Water is being supplied free of charge. Now, we do not have to worry about the water."

In an interview, townselder U Soe Myint Kyaw said, "All the people of the ward are delighted for the availability of clean water. Needy persons are convenient for the supply of water. So, I thank the government as well as the department for their efforts in water supply facility."

At present, Meiktila Township Development Affairs Committee is providing safe water from Meiktila Lake and Mahasi underground water tapping project. As a future plan, efforts are being made to lay water pipelines and install water pumps for supplying potable water from Mahasi underground water tapping project site to the whole town.

Translation: TTA Kyemon: 9-12-2008



Principal U Tin Win of Sports and Physical Education Institute (Yangon) presents prizes to winners.—NLM

Myanmar traditional Anyeint troupe entertains service personnel

NAY PYI TAW, 21 Dec — A Myanmar traditional Anyeint troupe of Fine Arts Department under the Ministry of Culture is entertaining service personnel for their rest and recreation. Shwe Myanmar Anyeint troupe performed at the Ministry of Immigration and

Population here on 20 December evening.

Among the audience were Minister for Immigration and Population Maj-Gen Saw Lwin, Deputy Minister Brig-Gen Win Sein, directors-general and the staff families. — MNA

Horizon Streetball Basketball tourney held

YANGON, 20 Dec — Organized by Myanmar Basketball Federation and Horizon International Education Centre, the fourth Horizon Streetball Basketball tourney took place in conjunction with a prize-presentation ceremony in Bahan Township. Among the spectators were Principal U Tin Win of Sports and Physical Education Institute and General Manager Mr Murat and Principal Mr Safak of Horizon International Education Centre and officials.

In men's event (age 17 and above), the first prize went to Fox, the second to KKS (A) and the third to Furious. In the event (below age 16), the first went to Naga, the second to Eagles and the third to The Truth Reunited. In the event (below age 14), the first went to Phoenix, the second to The Phenomz and the third to Time's Up. In the event (below age 12), the

first went to 1 Air, the second to Crew Dogs 31 and the third to Swrs' Haste. Other awards such as the best player award and fair play award were also presented.

In women's event (age 17 and above and age 16), the first prize went to Friendship-B, the second to Friendship-A and the third to Bohemian. In the event (below age 14), the first went to Black Kera, the second to Icy Hot (TTC) and the third to B'Devilz. Other awards such as the best player award and fair play award were also presented.

Altogether 121 teams with more than 500 athletes participated in the tournament. The first prize winning team was awarded K 150,000, the second prize winning team K 100,000 and the third prize winning team K 75,000.

NLM



University of Technology (Myeik).—MNA

Bypass and development tasks...

(from page 1)

At mile post 18 miles and 5 furlongs of Daw-Dhathway-Mazawpyingyi road section, he inspected preparatory tasks for the construction of Bailey bridge. On the following day, he viewed a ceremony to broadcast summer paddy seeds in the field of farmer U Maung Nge.

Upon arrival at Kabin dam project in Myeik Myothit, he looked into land preparation for the main dam and construction of the intake structure.

At the meeting hall of University of Technology

(Myeik), he met with principals and faculty members and inspected the students pursuing education and the convocation hall.

Next, he oversaw conditions of already-built structures in Myeik Myothit, the jetty being built by Annawa Soe Company, Phoe Lamin Company's jetty and loading and unloading of cargo and flow of commodity at U Kyauk Sein jetty.

On arrival at Kyweku-Kyaukpyar bridge of Myeik, Lt-Gen Tha Aye inspected traveling of passengers

and durability of the bridge. Next, he viewed developments of Kyweku model village by car.

At Taingyanaung Hall of Myeik, he met with military officers, servicemen and their families of Myeik Station and entrepreneurs at Pale Yadana Hall.

Next, Lt-Gen Tha Aye oversaw power generated from bio-fuel digesters in Kalwin ward.—MNA

Yangon 30-mile radius greening project ongoing

YANGON, 21 Dec—The Supervisory Committee for Management of the Project for Greening 30-mile Rodius of Yangon held a meeting at the briefing hall of model agriculture project of Dagon International Limited this afternoon, with an address by Chairman of the Management and Supervisory Committee Chairman of Yangon Division Peace and Development Council Commander of Yangon Command Brig-Gen Win Myint.

At the meeting, the Managing Director of Myanma Perennial Crops Enterprise, the Secretary of

Yangon Division PDC, the Chairmen of District PDCs, departmental officials presented reports to Commander Brig-Gen Win Myint on sector-wise measures.

After attending to the needs, Brig-Gen Win Myint made concluding remarks. While in Hlegu Township, the commander and party inspected water pumping tasks of Malit. Next, the Head of Division Water Resources Utilization Department and officials presented reports to the commander and party. After hearing the reports, the commander fulfilled the requirements.—MNA



Myanmar Book Centre.

Press meet on opening of Myanmar Book Centre-2 held

YANGON, 21 Dec— A press meet on opening of Myanmar Book Centre-2 of Myanmar Book Centre Co Ltd was held at Mr Brown Restaurant on Mahabandoola Gardens Street in Kyauktada Township here yesterday morning.

First, Managing Director of the company Dr Thant Thaw Kaung extended greetings.

English version books for kids, books of international syllabus, publications for English language learners and arts and science students, books on computer science, management, marketing and economics, informative and entertaining books, dictionaries, encyclopedia and teaching and learning aids for teachers are available at the book centre at reasonable prices. The new book centre is open daily from 9 am to 6 pm, and it will launch other programmes for kids including story telling and game and learning with fun starting from January 2009.

Myanmar Book Centre-1 is at No. 55, corner of Baho Street and Ahlon Street, Ahlon Township, Yangon (Tel 221271, 212409, 214708), and the newly opened Myanmar Book Centre-2 is at No. 561/567, Room-3 (Ground floor), MAC Tower-1, Merchant Street, Kyauktada Township, Yangon (Tel 370532, 384508).—MNA

Lolane's hair show 2008 held

YANGON, 21 Dec—Hair show 2008 organized by Grand Wynn Enterprises Ltd to mark 15th crystal anniversary, was held at Park Royal Hotel, here yesterday.

At the show, Managing Director U Hla Win made greeting words. After that, Administration Manager Daw Aye Aye Thar Tun explained details related to cosmetics.

Next, Former Resident Mr. Prasertsak Arnakom from the Beauty Culture Association and Hair

Technique Worldwide Trainer and Professional Hair Stylist demonstrated various hair styles by using hair cosmetics.

Afterward, responsible persons presented gifts to best selling agents and artists.

Those wishing to be agents or members may contact Grand Wynn Enterprises Ltd No. 40, 67th street, Botahtaung Township (Tel: 294045, 290170 and 291318) and (Email: grandwyn@myanmar.com.mm) —MNA



Managing Director U Hla Win of Grand Wynn Enterprises Ltd extends greetings at Hair Show 2008 to mark 15th Anniversary of Lolane.—MNA

Defence Services C-in-C's Shield football tournament continues

YANGON, 21 Dec—The second round of the 47th Defence Services (Army, Navy and Air) Commander-in-Chief's Shield football tournament continued in the Central Command (Mandalay) zone.

Northern Command won over

North-West Command 4-2 in the group-AA in Bahtoo Stadium while Yangon Command routed Camp Commandant's Office of the Ministry of Defence 3-1 in the same group in Aung Myay Mandalay sports ground.

MNA

Sale Fertilizer Factory to boost production

NAY PYI TAW, 21 Dec—Minister for Energy Brig-Gen Lun Thi on 16 December inspected No (1) Fertilizer Factory (Sale) in Sale, Magway Division.

The minister called for boosting production of fertilizer, and technological measures

for regular operation of the factory. He observed the production line, and granted assistance for regular supply of electric power and natural gas for the factory.

On arrival at Chauk oilfield under the Myanma Oil and Gas Enterprise, the minister

stressed importance of averting national decline by maintaining the current production rate of oil and gas for ensuring sufficient domestic supply of fuel, minimizing loss and wastage, and fire preventive measures.

MNA



The General Manager of Oil Field explains matters relating to exploration of oil and gas to Minister Brig-Gen Lun Thi.—MNA

Commemorative fun fairs for Independence Day to be held at Ngwehsaung Beach

YANGON, 21 Dec—Commemorative fun fairs for the 61st Anniversary Independence Day for 2009, which falls on 4 January, will be held at Ngwehsaung Beach.

Prize money K 150,000, K 100,000 and K 50,000 will be presented to first, second and third winners. In addition, varieties of dances will also be presented on a

grand scale after opening food stalls.

Those wishing to participate in Kayin cultural dance "Donyein" may dial Tels-502681 and 502682).—NLM



ES4E Language and Training Centre holding Parents' Day ceremony.—MNA

ES4E Language and Training Centre holds Parents' Day ceremony

YANGON, 21 Dec—ES4E Language and Training Centre held Parents' Day ceremony at the school at No 51 (C/D) on Kaba Aye Pagoda Road, here, on 20 and 21 December.

Corporate Advisor Mr Shinji Arima extended greetings on the occasion while principal Dr Soe

Win explained the purpose of opening the language and training school.

Pre-school students presented English songs, poems, and speaking and varieties of dances to the guests on 20 December morning and so did weekend and regular class students on 21 December.

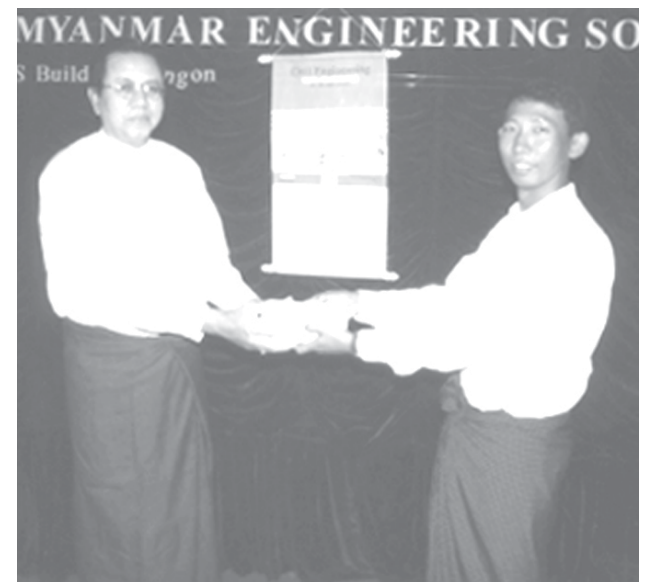
Pre-school courses, courses ranging from KG to Basic Education High School level and GCE courses are available at ES4E Language and Training Centre. Summer courses for 2009 will be open on 3 March and if necessary, please dial Tel-662971, 663820 and 662937).—MNA

Cash donated for respect paying ceremony

YANGON, 21 Dec—Old students (Civil) of Yangon Institute Technology and Yangon Technological University donated cash for holding the 3rd respect paying ceremony at the meeting hall of Myanmar Engineering Society yesterday.

Chairman of organizing committee U Ohn Kyaw accepted K 536,000 donated by the old students in Yangon from U Kyaw Hmwe, K 1.5 million by the old students in Nay Pyi Taw from U San Kyu, K 800,000 by the old students from Hydropower Department,

and K 1,480,000 by old Pinyinana from U Ye students in Toungoo and Maung, ('94).—NLM



Chairman of Myanmar Engineering Society U Ohn Kyaw accepts cash donated by old students.—NLM



Visitors view home-use items displayed at Casabella Luxury Home Furnishing Centre.—MNA

Casabella Luxury Home Furnishing Centre opens sales centre for home-use items

YANGON, 21 Dec—Casabella Luxury Home Furnishing Centre opened a sale centre for home-use items at the centre at No 22 on Pyay Road in Mayangon Township, here this morning.

Managing Director of Nat Ray Co Ltd Daw Khin

Marla explained the purpose of opening the sale centre and conducted those present round the centre.

Casabella Luxury Home Furnishing Centre will sell mattresses, home-use items, modern equipment for health, decorated wallpaper with

latest designs.

As part of marking the opening of the sale centre, lucky draw programs will be launched with the special discount until 31 December. Special service to decorate your homes is available at Casabella Centre.—MNA

Myanmar Flower Festival appealing to local and foreign guests

Article: Po Thaw Zin



Floral Myanmar map on a flower bed.

(from page 16)

organization of the Ministry of Forestry in compliance with the guidance of the Head of State. The festival is aimed at enabling visitors to observe a variety of species of flowers at the National Kandawgyi Gardens at a single place and to attract the attention of local and foreign visitors by holding the flower festival annually.

The 15 shows of floral designs are Myanmar Flora 2008; Two Lions; mountains; Nanmyint Tower; stairs; hill of mushroom; eight flower beds; aeroplane; ship; snow flower; Teddy Bears and Christmas Tree; Two Dragons; Four Vases; and Cake. The festival is teeming with visitors.

At the festival, decorated lawns are also being shown to draw the attention of the visitors. Visitors are found enjoying rich fragrance of flowers of various species and observing floral works for relaxation.

The Flower Festival continues till 31 December. Htoo Trading Co Ltd had to start making arrangements on 17 November for the festival. The area of the flower festival is extended to four acres from 1.26 acres of the Second Flower Festival.

Eight foreign species and 318 local hybrid species of orchid are on display in the high-standard

orchid garden in the National Kandawgyi Gardens. The purposes of the orchid garden are to enable people to observe local and foreign species of orchid, to enable foreign researchers to do research on orchid species, to establish a large orchid garden of Myanmar orchid species for foreign tourists to study and to distribute hybrid species of orchid to orchid lovers.

Htoo Trading Co Ltd has hired National Kandawgyi Gardens on a long-term contract, and launched the plan on 17 November 2008 to upgrade it to an international level garden by 2009, then to an internationally-recognized botanical garden. The garden has trees and plants of more than 10,000 species.

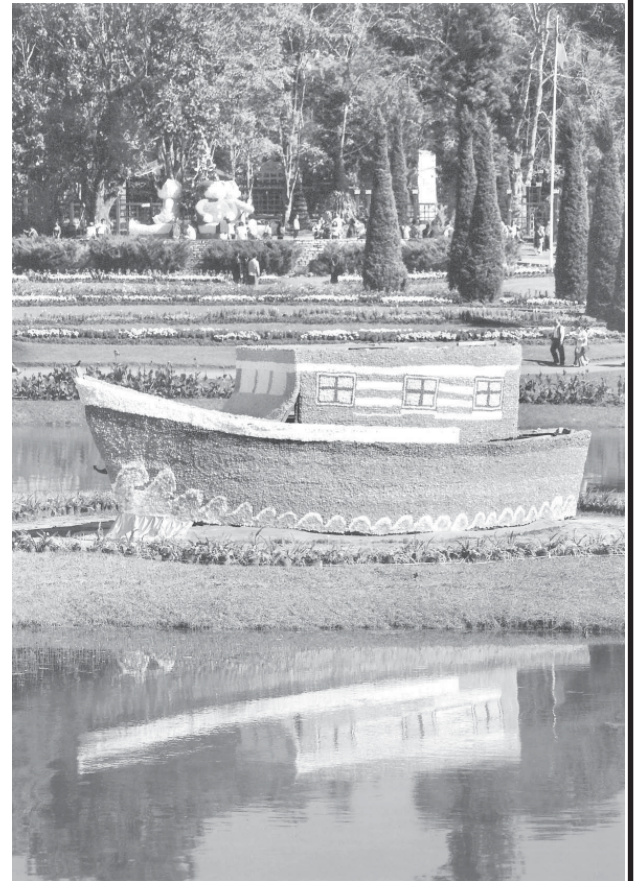
The National Kandawgyi Gardens has an area of 400 acres and is a habitat of many species of animals including parrot, Indian pied hornbill, pheasant, peacock, Brahminy duck, sarus crane, goose, gibbon,



Floral aeroplane made of flowers of local and foreign species.

deer, wild cat, vulture, kite, eagle, hawk and so on. It also has a takin hatchery camp, which is the only one in Myanmar.

The bird cage in the garden will be upgraded to a bigger one with more species of birds with a butterfly house. The company has a plan to show more and more



Floral ship made of flowers of local and foreign species.

species of flowers next festivals. The National Landmarks Gardens next to National Kandawgyi Gardens is now celebrating its second anniversary and the amusement park constructed by Htoo Trading Co Ltd was opened on 11 December.

The whole area is filled with scent of more than seven million flowers at the Flower Festival, which is packed with visitors daily. People are invited to the festival to smell fragrance of the flowers.

Translation: MS



National Kandawgyi Gardens in PyinOoLwin attract visitors.



White anthurium flowers in bloom at the Flower Festival.

Chinese, Japanese youth ends year-long exchange programme

BEIJING, 21 Dec — A total of 2,008 young people from China and Japan on Saturday concluded a year-long youth exchange programme between the two countries.

Chinese Premier Wen Jiabao and former Japanese Prime Minister Fukuda Yasuo joined the youth at the closing ceremony in Beijing University of Aeronautics and Aerospace.

In their half-hour meeting before the ceremony, Wen and Fukuda, who decided on this programme during their talks in Singapore last year, hailed the exchange programme “reached its expected aims”.

The programme coincided with the 30th anniversary of the signing of the China-Japan Peace and Friendship Treaty, which Wen said “made the exchange activities more significant.” Under the programme, more than 12,000 youth from China or Japan paid visits to the other country since the programme was launched in March in Beijing.—MNA/Xinhua



In this photo is shown a Continental Airlines Boeing 737 on Sunday, 21 December, 2008 in Denver. Thirty-eight people suffered injuries including broken bones, and two were in critical condition with fractures after the plane crashed on Saturday evening upon takeoff, according to officials.—INTERNET

Australian frigate rescues injured French yachtsman

SYDNEY, 21 Dec — An Australian frigate plucked injured French yachtsman Yann Elies to safety from the Indian Ocean on

Saturday after he fractured his leg while sailing in a round-the-world race.

Elies, a 34-year-old Breton, was competing in the Vendee Globe round-the-world solo yacht race when a large wave struck his yacht late on Thursday while he was changing sails, throwing him to the deck and breaking his left femur and several ribs.

In pain and unable to handle his boat, Elies managed to drag himself into his cabin, send a call to his team for help and lie on his bunk while awaiting rescue, his team manager said.

Australia’s Defence Ministry said the frigate *Arunta* found Elies aboard his 60-foot yacht *Generali* late on Saturday, about 850 miles from Australia’s west coast. The *Arunta* launched an inflatable boat whose crew boarded the *Generali* and managed to transfer the injured yachtsman to the *Arunta*, where a doctor confirmed that he had broken his left femur and several ribs.—MNA/Reuters

Russian destroyer Admiral Chabanenko sails into Havana’s bay on 19 December, 2008.
XINHUA

Iraqi troops kill al-Qaeda leader north of Baghdad

TIKRIT, 21 Dec — Iraqi soldiers killed on Saturday a local al-Qaeda leader in an ambush in Salahudin Province north of Baghdad, a local police source said.

Based on intelligence reports taken from local citizens, the troops early in the morning ambushed and killed Salih Jad Allah al-Ajeeli on the main road between the provincial city of Tikrit and the town of Tuz-Khurmato to the east, the source told *Xinhua* on condition of anonymity.

MNA/Reuters



European Parlt urges Gulf home-grown democracy

MUSCAT, 21 Dec — Gulf Arab states should pursue democratic reform without feeling that they must follow models not in line with their tradition, the president of the European Parliament said on Saturday.

“Democracy in the region must be homegrown according to their traditions and values,” Hans-Gert Poettering told *Reuters* during a visit to the Omani capital Muscat. “They should not be pressurised by the West to adopt the democracy path followed by Europe,” he said. Oman has a 84-member consultative council, an elected representative advisory institution that can review legislation.

Set aside Kuwait, which has an elected legislature that has a history of challenging the government, other oil-exporting Gulf Arab monarchies are still inching slowly towards a measure of popular representation.

Saudi Arabia, the region’s largest country, has an appointed council that advises the government and Bahrain has an elected house which shares its powers with an appointed council. Qatar has missed a 2007 target for its first parliamentary election and said in March it was still preparing the legal framework for democracy.

MNA/Reuters

Iraq releases officials arrested over terrorism charges

BAGHDAD, 21 Dec — Iraqi security officials who arrested earlier this week over charges terrorism have been released, the *Mashriq* independent newspaper reported on Saturday.

“All the officials who were arrested earlier have been freed and interrogations proved that they were clean, including from a charge of linking to the Awda group (The Return),” Brigadier General Abdul Kareem Khalaf was quoted as saying.

MNA/Xinhua

Two killed in small plane crash in US

LOS ANGELES, 21 Dec — A small plane crashed on Saturday in a rural area near San Diego, about 100 miles (160 kilometres) south of Los Angeles, killing two people on board.

The plane crashed at around noon, and no casualties on the ground were reported, authorities said. The cause of the accident was still under investigation, said the Federal Aviation Administration, which has dispatched investigators to the scene. Authorities said there was no immediate information about where the aircraft took-off and where it was heading. — MNA/Xinhua

Iranians wear traditional clothes as they celebrate Yalda the longest night of the year in Teheran, on 20 Dec, 2008. Iranians recited poetry and shared stories and food on Saturday in all-night celebrations of the longest night of the year, a tradition going back several thousand years to a time when Zoroastrianism was the predominant religion of ancient Persia.

INTERNET



**“Happy Birthday”
22-12-'08**

To,
Myint Zeyar Aung @ Samson Nyo
Wishing you a world of love on your first
birthday today and always ...

From morning's
first light to
evening's last star,
always remember
how special
you are.

From
Pho Pho, Phwa Phwa
Phay Phay, May May & Oo Nge!
Phwa Phwa Gyee - Daw Khin
Htay Phyu, May Sue, Teddy, Ni Ni
Phyu Lay & Chan Chan



Pakistani fire fighters try to put out a fire of a four-story building in Rawalpindi, Pakistan on 20 Dec, 2008.—INTERNET

**Three dead, rescuers
trapped in Pakistani
building collapse**

PESHAWAR, 21 Dec—Three people died just outside the capital when a building collapsed after it was ravaged by a fire for several hours, a government official said on Saturday — a day after militants launched a deadly rocket attack on two trucks returning from delivering fuel to US led forces in Afghanistan.

The building collapse in Rawalpindi also injured 40, said Haseeb Athar, an official in the garrison town just outside Islamabad. Two people were found dead in the rubble of the four-story shopping plaza and another died after reaching the hospital, he said.

At least six rescue workers who had been trying to put out the fire were still feared trapped by the debris, said Rizwan Naseer, head of a state-run rescue service.

Local television footage showed teams of firefighters spraying water on the twisted wreckage of the building as smoke billowed out in thick, dark clouds.

Internet

Bank Holiday

All Banks will be closed on 25th December (Thursday)2008,being public holiday under the Negotiable Instrument Act.

Central Bank of Myanmar

**6.5-magnitude
quake off
Japanese coast**

TOKYO, 21 Dec—A strong earthquake centred about 90 miles off Japan's east coast, measuring a 6.5 magnitude, was recorded by seismologists at the US Geological Survey (USGS) on Saturday.

There were no immediate reports of damage from the quake, which happened at 7:29 pm (5:29 am ET).

The quake was centred at a depth of 10 kilometres (6.2 miles) underground and 170 kilometres (105 miles) east of Mito, on the main Japanese island of Honshu, the USGS said.

Tokyo is about 255 kilometres (160 miles) west-southwest of the quake's center, the agency said.

Internet

Police at the scene of what is believed to be a murder-suicide in Dallas that left a mother and her two kids dead.

INTERNET



Mother, two kids found shot to death in Dallas home

DALLAS, 21 Dec—Police are investigating the possibility of a murder-suicide in the shooting deaths of a mother and her two young children, whose bodies were found in their Dallas home on Friday.

The deaths of 49-year-old Jeanmarie Geis, her 8-year-old son and her 4-year-old daughter come after a series of alleged attacks on the family over the last two weeks, according to police reports. Police said they are now looking into whether those attacks actually occurred.

“We are looking to determine whether or not they were valid offenses and whether they occurred the way they were reported,” Lt Craig Miller said.

No official ruling on the deaths has been made. Dallas police spokesman Senior Cpl Kevin Janse wrote in an e-mail to *The Associated Press* that “we are still waiting for tests to come back to determine if it was in fact a murder/suicide.”

Internet



Members of Indonesian anti-terror unit evacuate a mock hostage during an anti-terror drill at a hotel in Surabaya, East Java, Indonesia, on 21 Dec, 2008. Indonesian security forces stormed airports, glitzy hotels, passenger ships and the Jakarta Stock Exchange building on Sunday in a massive anti-terrorism drill.

INTERNET



Iranian warships sent to Somali waters

TEHERAN, 21 Dec—A group of Iranian warships steamed into the Gulf of Aden, joining an expanding list of navies sent to protect shipping routes from Somali pirates, state-run media reported

on Saturday.

The report from *Fars News Agency* comes just weeks after the European Union launched its first Naval operation to protect vessels and just days after China revealed its own plans to patrol the Horn of Africa's volatile coastline.

Iran, along with other countries, has seen commercial ships fall prey to pirate attacks that have dramatically increased in

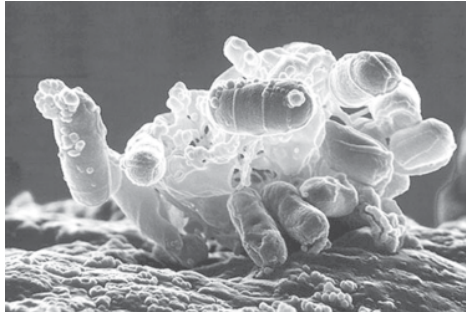
recent months. This year, pirates have attacked almost 100 vessels off Somalia's coast and hijacked nearly 40, according to the International Maritime Bureau.

The attacked vessels include freight and cargo ships, cruise liners and private yachts. In many of the hijackings, pirates have taken the crew and passengers hostage while they demand a ransom.

Internet

A file photo shows a ship rusts in the Shatt al-Arab waterway near central Basra, 420 km southeast of Baghdad.—INTERNET

Study shows Ecoli bacteria can be altered to make fuel



Colourized electron micrograph of a cluster of Ecoli bacteria is shown in this undated handout from the US Department of Agriculture.—INTERENT

LOS ANGELES, 21 Dec — E coli, a strain of bacteria found in human digestive tracts, can be genetically altered to make fuel, a new study showed.

Scientists at the University of California in Los Angeles (UCLA) have for the first time produced Ecoli that can generate alcohol with five carbon atoms per molecule, instead of the normal two or three, according to the study published in the December edition of the scientific

journal Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences.

Alcohol molecules with eight carbon atoms may also be possible, the researchers said in the study.

Ecoli, which is usually associated with polluted beaches, can be modified so that each cell can generate “long-chain alcohol,” an advance that could reduce global warming and increase fuel efficiency by using the bacteria to excrete a better form of fuel, said the researchers.

The genetically modified Ecoli has the potential of making jetfuel, gasoline and other petroleum products that deliver much more energy, the study noted.

The new Ecoli bugs would be unleashed on organic material, much like Ethanol is produced from corn. But Ethanol has only two carbon atoms per molecule, and the greater the number of carbon atoms from the bacteria will increase the density of the biofuel, the study said. —Internet

A vehicle belonging to Lebanon’s joint border security force stands near an illegal crossing point used by smugglers on the border with Syria in Sammaqiyeh, east of Arida on 17 Nov, 2008 handout photo.

INTERNET



Man brutally attacked, killed by grandson’s pitbulls

RUBIDOUX, 21 Dec — A 60-year-old man was mauled to death by a pair of pit bulls on Friday in the backyard of his rural Southern California home.

The man was taking a break when the male and female pit bulls attacked him shortly after noon, said Sgt Dennis Gutierrez of the Riverside County Sheriff’s Department. The man, who was the grandfather of the dogs’ owner, died at the scene. His name was not released.

County Animal Services spokesman John Welsh said the dogs were euthanized later in the afternoon. The male dog weighed 107 pounds and was about 3 years old, while the female weighed 52 pounds and was about 6 years old.

Welsh said it was unclear why the dogs suddenly attacked the man, who was familiar with them and had played with them before. But he noted that neither dog had been spayed. —Internet

Gaza militants launch more rockets into Israel

JERUSALEM, 21 Dec — Barrages of rockets fired from Gaza hit Israeli towns on Sunday and the Israeli air force responded with a missile strike as violence surged after the expiration of a shaky truce.

Israeli rescue services said one rocket struck a house in the town of

Sderot, but no injuries were reported. A worker at a farming community near Gaza was lightly wounded by shrapnel in a separate rocket strike, the Israeli military said.

The Palestinian militant group Islamic Jihad took responsibility for Sunday’s rocket fire.

An Israeli aircraft fired a missile at a rocket launcher that had been primed and was ready to fire in northern Gaza, the Israeli military said. Militants typically prepare rockets for launch and then fire them from cover a safe distance away. There were no reports of casualties in the strike.

On Saturday, militants fired more than 30 rockets and mortar shells into Israel, and the Israeli air force killed one militant who was launching rockets.—Internet



An Israeli sapper searches for the remains of a rocket which was launched from the Gaza Strip and landed in the Israeli kibbutz of Kfar Aza on 20 December. A senior Israeli defence official said on Sunday that a military clash in the Hamas-ruled Gaza Strip was unavoidable as militants again targeted southern Israel with rockets.—INTERNET

Canadian doctors change lung transplants

TORONTO, 21 Dec — A team of doctors in Canada has pioneered a procedure that preserves human lungs outside the body for up to 20 hours.

The surgeons at Toronto General Hospital helped devise a procedure that allows lungs to be preserved and nourished outside of a human body three times longer than ever before possible, The (Toronto) Globe and Mail reported on Friday.

“A lot more patients will be able to receive a lung transplant and not die waiting,” said Chris Jaynes, product manager with Vitrolife, a Colorado company that supplied the Toronto team with some of the materials needed to

perform the transplants. With the new technique, instead of cooling the lungs after being removed from a donor, doctors place the organs within a clear bubble-like container that keeps them sterile and mimics the warm and humid conditions of the human body.

Internet

Members of a drug gang are shown to the media at the Attorney General’s office in the suburb of Escobedo, on the outskirts of Monterrey on 20 Dec, 2008. The Mexican army arrested 13 men in a wealthy neighbourhood of this northern city early Saturday in possession of drugs, weapons and uniforms of the federal agency of investigations, according to local media. The capture is part of the Nuevo Leon-Tamaulipas joint operation against drug trafficking.—INTERNET



British nuclear plant sold to US firm

LONDON, 21 Dec — The British government has announced that its remaining stake in the Atomic Weapons Establishment at Aldermaston has been sold to a US company.

The announcement came on Friday as Parliament began its break for the Christmas and New Year holiday, and was made through a short statement on the Web site of the BNFL, the government nuclear firm, The Independent said. Officials did not say how much was paid. The buyer is Jacobs Engineering Group based in California.

“The AWE is critical to Britain’s nuclear deterrent capability and we find it astonishing that the decision regarding the increase in US involvement in the company was not announced to Parliament,” said Gerald Howarth, a Conservative leader. “It is now imperative that the Government spells out its understanding of the implications of this move for the United Kingdom and our nuclear deterrent.”

US companies already owned two-thirds of the AWE.—Internet

SPORTS

Viduka returns to action facing an uncertain future

NEWCASTLE, 21 Dec—As Mark Viduka prepares to start his first game of the season for Newcastle, the Australian striker's long-term future at the club has again been thrown into doubt.

Viduka, who is likely to play against Tottenham at St James' Park on Sunday, has recovered from an Achilles tendon injury which threatened his career at one stage earlier this year.

Now manager Joe Kinnear expects Viduka, 33, to make a major impact on the second half of Newcastle's season in the Premier League.

But Kinnear, optimistic last month about his



Mark Viduka of Newcastle, prepares to start his first game of the season for Newcastle.—INTERNET

prospects of keeping Viduka next season, has admitted that the Australian international is not certain to be at the club after his current two-year contract expires at the end of June.—INTERNET

Kim takes the lead at Chevron Challenge

THOUSAND OAKS, 21 Dec—Anthony Kim put himself into position on Saturday for the Tiger two-step.

Kim finally figured out some flaws in his putting, hit an exquisite shot with a wedge from a buried lie in the side of a hill, and wound up with a 5-under 67 on Saturday to build a one-shot lead over Jim Furyk in the Chevron World Challenge.

If Kim can hang on to win, maybe this time Tiger Woods can congratulate him in person. "I'm excited to be here," Kim said. "And obviously, when Tiger's name is attached to anything, you're willing to play." The trophy comes attached with a \$1.35 million check, which wouldn't be bad, either.—INTERNET



Anthony Kim hits his second shot on the fourth hole during the third round of the Chevron World Challenge golf tournament at Sherwood Country Club in Thousand Oaks, Calif, on 20 Dec, 2008.—INTERNET

Answers to yesterday's Crosswords Puzzle

1	S	I	G	H	T	4	A	S	I	A	N				
7	H	M	U			8	A	T	R		I				
10	U	N	A	R	M	E	D	11	A	C	T	E	D		
	N	G	E					13	R	E	F	U	S	A	L
12	C	H	E	E	R			15	U	L	N	A			
	H							17	M	O	U	S	E		
								19	R	E	V	E	L		
21	A		L					22	F	A	L	L			
								23	A	L	L				
25	B	O	Y	C	O	T	T	27	E	A	G	L	E		
	O	M	U					28	E	A	G	L	E		
29	D	E	P	O	T			30	A	V	A	R	I	C	E
	E		I	D					S	N	L	L			
								31	T	A	B	O	O		
								32	S	T	U	D	Y		

Fergie tips Ronaldo to emulate Pele and Maradona

YOKOHAMA, 21 Dec—Cristiano Ronaldo has all the attributes needed to become a legend with Sir Alex Ferguson tipping him to emulate the likes of Pele and Maradona.

The 23-year-old Portuguese winger, who beat Barcelona's Lionel Messi and Liverpool striker Fernando Torres to win the Ballon D'Or this month, has time on his side. "Cristiano is superb," said Ferguson.

"He's only 23 and still a very young lad and there's a lot of things in his favour to go on and prove himself as a legend. The next few years, when he reaches 28 or 29, I

think you will get your answers." Ferguson's praise comes amid another row with Real Madrid over Ronaldo, with both sides trading barbs after reports that there was an agreement for the player to move to the Bernabeu at the end of the season.

Internet



Manchester United forward player Cristiano Ronaldo.

Higuain strike gives Real Madrid coach Ramos's first win

BARCELONA, 21 Dec—An early goal for Gonzalo Higuain was enough to give Real Madrid a 1-0 victory over Valencia on Saturday and the first win for Juande Ramos as coach.

Real bounced back from the 2-0 defeat in the clasico against Barcelona last weekend to score after just three minutes with Higuain firing home after good work from Arjen Robben.

In Saturday's late game, Atletico Madrid moved to second spot in the table, eight points behind leaders Barcelona, thanks to a 3-2 victory at Espanyol with the help of two goals from Maxi Rodriguez.—INTERNET



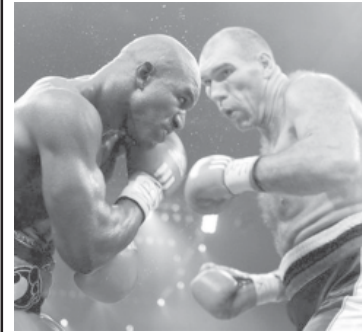
Real Madrid's forward Gonzalo Higuain kicks the ball during their Liga football match against Valencia at Santiago Bernabeu stadium in Madrid. Higuain was enough to give Real Madrid a 1-0 victory over Valencia on Saturday and the first win for Juande Ramos as coach.—INTERNET

Eight in a row Inter go nine points clear

ROME, 21 Dec—Inter Milan stretched their lead at the top of the Serie A table to nine points, for a day at least, after a crucial 2-1 victory at Siena on Saturday.

Brazilian full-back Maicon was the hero with both goals, either side of an equaliser from Moroccan Houssine Kharja, as the reigning three-time champions won for the eighth league match in a row. Inter have not dropped points since October and will take a lead of between six and nine points into the three-week winter break, depending on how Juventus fare on Sunday at Atalanta.—INTERNET

Valuev stops Holyfield by majority decision



Russian WBA heavyweight champion Nikolai Valuev, right, and Evander Holyfield from the United States exchange punches during their WBA heavyweight boxing world championships fight at the Hallenstadion venue in Zurich, Switzerland, on 20 Dec, 2008.—INTERNET

ZURICH, 21 Dec—Nikolai Valuev likely ended Evander Holyfield's last chance at winning a fifth heavyweight title, narrowly defending his WBA title by majority decision on Saturday night.

The 46-year-old American, attempting to become the oldest heavyweight to win a major belt, started the fight by moving around the ring to neutralize Valuev's long reach advantage.

The 7-foot Russian, the tallest and heaviest champion ever, struggled to close down Holyfield early but began asserting his jab as Holyfield tired.

One judged scored the bout a draw, while the others had Valuev winning 116-112 and 115-114.—INTERNET

Former tennis No 4 Dokic wins wildcard into Australian Open

MELBOURNE, 21 Dec—Australia's former world No 4 Jelena Dokic won a wildcard into the main draw of next month's Australian Open here on Sunday.

The former Wimbledon semi-finalist, 25, outlasted fellow Australian junior Monika Wejnert, 6-7 (3/7), 7-5, 6-3 in just over two hours in the final of a playoff tournament for wildcard entry into the year's first grand slam. Dokic said she will try

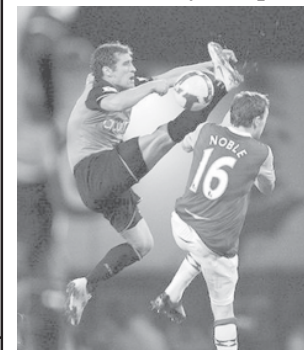


Australia's former world No.4 Jelena Dokic.

to qualify for lead-up tournaments in Brisbane and Hobart over the coming weeks before taking her place in the field for the 19 January- 1 February Australian Open.—INTERNET

O'Neill dismisses Villa title talk

LONDON, 21 Dec—Martin O'Neill insists his Aston Villa side have yet to prove they can mount a sustained challenge for the Premier League title despite moving into third place with a 1-0 win away to West Ham.



Aston Villa's Stiliyan Petrov (L) challenges West Ham United's Mark Noble during a Premiership football match at Upton Park in London. Aston Villa moved above English champions Manchester United and into third place in the Premier League after an own-goal by Australia international Lucas Neill gave them a 1-0 win at West Ham.—INTERNET

Saturday's entertaining game here at Upton Park was settled with 12 minutes remaining when home captain Lucas Neill, the Australia international, deflected a cross from Villa winger James Milner past his own goalkeeper.

The three points lifted O'Neill's side, who had already pushed Arsenal into fifth, above champions Manchester United — in Japan for the Club World Cup — and to within touching distance of second-placed Chelsea.

Internet

**A sleep in Jesus
Mr John Benjamin
(Aged 102)**

Son of Mr & Mrs J Benjamin (deceased) beloved husband of late Mrs Lydia Benjamin and beloved father of (Miss Blossom) was called to his heavenly home on Sunday the 21st Dec 2008 at his residence, No. 68, Shwe Dagon Pagoda Road (St Gabriel's (SPG) Church compound) Yangon at 3:00 p.m.

Funeral Service will be held at his residence on Monday the 22nd December 2008 at 12:00 noon and thence to Yayway Chistian Cemetery for Burial.

The Memorial Service will be held on Saturday the 27th December 2008 at No. 68, Shwe Dagon Pagoda Road (St Gabriel's (SPG) Church compound) Yangon at 11:00 a.m.

(The buses will leave from the residence at 1:00 p.m)
Bereaved family

**U Khin Maung Win
Age 71 years**

Son of late (U Ko Ko Gyi, former Minister for Trade-Daw Tin Tin Aye), beloved husband of Daw Kyi Kyi Khin of No.35-B on Innya Myaing road in No.1 Ward, Golden Valley in Yangon, brother of late (U Tin Tun-Daw Tin Tin Yi), father of Dr Kyaw Zaw Win (Wollongong University)-Daw Ni Ni Aung, Daw Thet Mar Win (S.A.T-No.1 BEHS, Bahan), Daw Cho Mar Win (U Moe Kyaw Aye), Daw Mo Mo Win, Ma Naing Mar Win, Ko Kyaw Swa Win, grandfather of three grandchildren, passed away at above-mentioned residence at 12:10 p.m. on 21 December, 2008. The remains will be cremated at Yeway cemetery at 11 a.m. on 23 December, 2008. (Cortege will leave from the residence at 9 a.m.).

Bereaved Family

Iranian official stresses need of investment for oil industry

TEHERAN, 21 Dec— Iran's Oil Minister Gholam-Hossein Nozari has stressed the need of investment for the country's oil industry, local satellite Press TV reported on Saturday.

As one of the oil producing countries, investment is needed for Iran because it "is the only way to guarantee the energy safety of consumers", Nozari said.

"If the oil consuming countries want a continued production of oil and its supply to the markets, they should pave the way for investment in the oil rich countries and avoid double standards," he was

quoted as saying.

Nozari was in London on Friday for an energy conference after attending a ministerial meeting of the Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC) in Algeria's Oran city.

During the Oran

meeting on Wednesday, the OPEC agreed on a deepest-ever net cut of 2.2 million barrels per day (bpd) as of on 1 January, bringing the total output cut in 2008 to 4.2 million bpd, in another attempt to bolster sagging oil prices under the global economic slowdown.

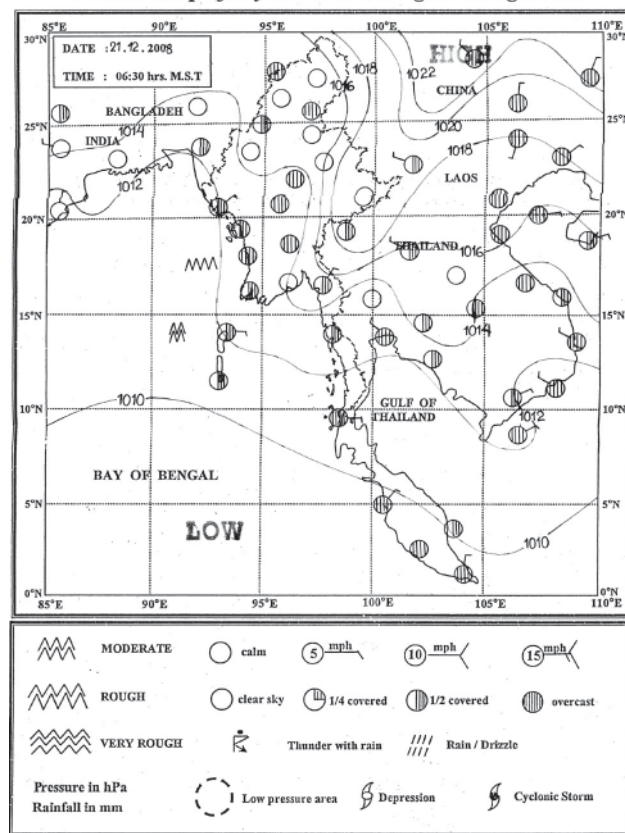
MNA/Xinhua



People make their way amid snowfall on a street in Tianjin municipality on 21 Dec, 2008. Snow and freezing weather have swept large parts of northern China causing, travel chaos for thousands, state television and the meteorological department said on Sunday.—INTERNET

**Take
Fire
Preventive
Measures**

Weather Map of Myanmar and Neighbouring Areas



WEATHER

Sunday, 21 December, 2008

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

Maximum temperature on 20-12-2008 was 87°F. Minimum temperature on 21-12-2008 was 60°F. Relative humidity at (09:30) hours MST on 21-12-2008 was 70%. Total sunshine hours on 20-12-2008 was (8.6) hrs approx.

Rainfall on 21-12-2008 was (Nil) at Mingaladon, Kaba-Aye and Central Yangon. Total rainfall since 1-1-2008 was (110.31) inches at Mingaladon, (120.95) inches at Kaba-Aye and (140.94) inches at Central Yangon. Maximum wind speed at Yangon (Kaba-Aye) was (5) mph from Southeast at (12:30) hours MST on 20-12-2008.

Bay inference: Weather is partly cloudy in the Andaman Sea and Bay of Bengal.

Forecast valid until evening of 22nd December 2008: Possibility of isolated light rain or thundershowers in Kachin, Shan States and upper Sagaing and weather will be partly cloudy in Chin State, lower Sagaing, Mandalay, Ayeyawady, Yangon and Taninthayi Divisions and generally fair in the remaining States and Divisions. Degree of certainty is (40%).

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

Outlook for subsequent two days: Likelihood of slight decrease of night temperatures in the Eastern Myanmar areas.

Forecast for Nay Pyi Taw and neighbouring area for 22-12-2008: Partly cloudy.

Forecast for Yangon and neighbouring area for 22-12-2008: Partly cloudy.

Forecast for Mandalay and neighbouring area for 22-12-2008: Partly cloudy.



**Monday, 22 December
View on today**

- 7:00 am**
1. မင်းကွန်းဆရာတော်ဘုရားကြီး၏ ပရိတ်တရားတော်
- 7:25 am**
2. To be healthy exercise
- 7:30 am**
3. Morning news
- 7:40 am**
4. Nice and sweet song
- 7:50 am**
5. Cute little dancers

- 8:00 am**
6. "စက်မှုတပ်ဆင်လုပ်ငန်းတွင်" (မင်းမော်ကွန်း၊ ဇင်ဝိုင်း၊ မိုးမိုးမြင့်အောင်) (ဒါရိုက်တာ-ဝင်းထွန်းထွန်း)
- 8:10 am**
7. Musical programme
- 8:20 am**
8. Song of national races
- 8:30 am**
9. International news
- 8:40 am**
10. အတီးပြိုင်ပွဲ
- 4:00 pm**
1. Martial song
- 4:10 pm**
2. Musical programme (The radio Myanmar modern musical troupe)
- 4:20 pm**
3. Dance variety

- 4:30 pm**
4. အေးသင်တက္ကသိုလ်ပညာရေး ရုပ်မြင်သံကြားသင်ခန်းစာ တတိယနှစ် (စီးပွားရေးပညာ အထူးပြု) (စီးပွားရေးပညာ)
- 4:40 pm**
5. Songs to uphold national spirit
- 4:50 pm**
6. Musical programme
- 5:00 pm**
7. မြန်မာစာမြန်မာစကား
- 5:10 pm**
8. အဆိုပြိုင်ပွဲ
- 5:20 pm**
9. လက်ဆင့်ကမ်းပေးဂီတတေး
- 5:30 pm**
10. စွမ်းအားပြည့်ထုတ်လုပ်တေး ပလက်စတစ်ထုတ်ကုန်များ

- 5:45 pm**
11. သက်တံရောင်သံစဉ်
- 6:00 pm**
12. Evening news
- 6:30 pm**
13. Weather report
- 6:35 pm**
14. Sing and enjoy
- 7:10 pm**
15. နိုင်ငံခြားဇာတ်လမ်းတွဲ "စူပါမင်းနှင့်မာနရှင်" (အပိုင်း-၁၇)
- 8:00 pm**
16. News
- 8:00 pm**
17. International news
- 8:00 pm**
18. Weather report
- 8:00 pm**
19. နိုင်ငံခြားဇာတ်လမ်းတွဲ "မြင့်မြတ်နန်းလုံးသားပိုင်ရှင်" (အပိုင်း-၁၁)

Myanmar Flower Festival appealing to local and foreign guests

Article: Po Thaw Zin

The 77th anniversary of the National Kandawgyi Gardens, the 2nd anniversary of the National Landmarks Gardens and the Third Myanmar Flower Festival are being held on a grand scale in PyinOoLwin, Mandalay Division, commencing on 11 December. More than seven million flowers of 16 local species and more than 70 foreign species are on display at the Flower Festival, thus reflecting the symbol of

PyinOoLwin.

PyinOoLwin stands at an altitude of over 3510 feet. It is well-known under five names: PyinOoLwin, Maymyo, Flower City, Snow City, and Taungthlaygar (hilly stairs). It is blessed with cool climate pattern, beautiful natural scenes, and pleasant geographical features.

PyinOoLwin, a hill station, is a garden of diverse

species of flora, as well as a tourist attraction and a source of general knowledge. The National Kandawgyi Gardens and the National Landmarks Gardens in PyinOoLwin serve as recreation centres full of interesting things. Visitors to the festival can take great pleasure, observing various shows. Htoo Trading Co Ltd is staging the Third Flower Festival under the (See page 10)



The scenic National Kandawgyi Gardens in PyinOoLwin.



Del Piero eyes 2008 golden boot

TURIN, 21 Dec— Alessandro Del Piero will battle teammate Amauri for the title of 2008's top scorer in Serie A.

The Juventus captain is leading the standings with 19 goals in 37 rounds during the current calendar year, consisting of 14 last season and five in this campaign.

He has already seen off the challenge from In-

ter's Zlatan Ibrahimovic, who failed to net last night against Siena and therefore ends 2008 with 18 goals.

The only player who is likely to challenge Del Piero is his own Juve teammate, Amauri, who also has 18 goals thanks to eight last term with Palermo and 10 this season.

It would be quite an

achievement for Del Piero to top this particular chart, as a Juventus player has not done so since Michel Platini when he bagged 17 in 1985, on a par with Napoli's Diego Armando Maradona.

Alex and Amauri will be fighting it out to score at the Stadio Azzurri d'Italia in Bergamo this afternoon, where Juventus take on Atalanta.—*Internet*

Archaeological discovery: Earliest evidence of our cave-dwelling human ancestors



One of the early stone tools from Wonderwerk Cave.

TORONTO, 21 Dec — A research team led by Professor Michael Chazan, director of the University of Toronto's Archaeology Centre, has discovered the earliest evidence of our cave-dwelling human ancestors at the Wonderwerk Cave in South Africa.

Stone tools found at the bottom level of the cave — believed to be 2 million years old — show that human ancestors were in the cave earlier than ever thought before. Geological evidence indicates that these tools were left in the cave and not washed into the site from the outside world.

Archaeological investigations of the Wonderwerk cave — a South African National Heritage site due to its role in discovering the human and environmental history of the area — began in the 1940s and research continues to this day.—*Internet*

Advance in the battle against 'Gray Mold'

SCIENCE DAILY, 21 Dec — Scientists are reporting identification of the cluster of genes responsible for the toxins produced by "gray mold," a devastating plant disease that kills almost 200 different food and ornamental plants including tomatoes, strawberries and roses.

Their findings could lead to genetically engineered crops or new fungicides to fight this disease, which frustrates backyard gardeners and commercial farmers alike, the researchers say.

The study is in the

current online issue of ACS Chemical Biology, a monthly journal.

David Cane, Isidro Collado, Muriel Viaud and colleagues note that gray mold is so-named because it covers infected plants with fuzzy gray spores that can ultimately kill plants. A fungus named *Botrytis cinerea*

causes the disease. Studies show that the fungus kills by producing two main plant toxins, botrydial and botcinic acid. Conventional fungicides are largely ineffective in destroying the fungus, which can easily spread to other plants.

In the new study, the scientists describe the

identification of five genes involved in producing the enzymes that are responsible for making the toxins produced by the fungus. In lab studies, the researchers showed that inactivating one of the genes, called BcBOT2, blocked the gene cluster's ability to make the botrydial toxin.

Internet

