

Building social and economic infrastructures day in, day out

Smooth transportation plays a major role in the drive for national development. So, the government is expediting the building of social and economic infrastructures day in, day out such as village-to-village roads, highways, and river or creek-spanning bridges, extension of railroads, expansion of port development work, and upgrading of airports. It is not only for ensuring national development but also for building social infrastructures to cement amicable relations among the national races of the Union.

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

(From the message sent on the occasion of 59th Anniversary Independence Day)

*The Government
 opened new
 Pyawbwe-
 Phayangahsu
 railroad for smooth
 transportation in
 the nation.*

MNA



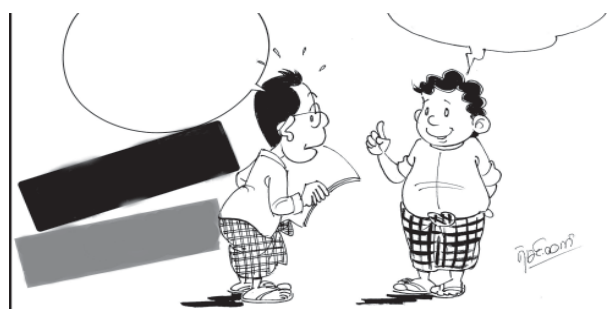
SPECIAL FEATURES TO HAIL 61st ANNIVERSARY INDEPENDENCE DAY

Article

Taste and variety of fruits of independence

An independent and sovereign nation can stand tall with the image of character of a nation in the global community. A nation can lose its independence or sovereignty if it faces disintegration of national unity or alien invasion, and the people betray their motherland for their self-interest or fail to respect independence. Independence by nature can be lost easily once in a while, but it takes very long, it is very hard and a large number of lives will be sacrificed to regain the independence. So, I say independence is the most indispensable and essential asset of a nation.

Cartoon



Achievement of the Transport (Bridge) Sector in 2008



Poem

Preserve our heritage

* Due to British
 colonization
 Anarchy reigned in
 Myanmar
 Lost she her king and
 sovereignty
 Under the subjugation
 Faced she sufferings
 * Under the colonialist yoke
 Race, religion in decline
 And facing
 discrimination
 In the sea of troubles

PERSPECTIVES

Friday, 2 January, 2009

Regenerate economy of storm-ravaged areas

Chairman of the State Peace and Development Council Senior General Than Shwe toured Mawlamyinegyun of Ayeyawady Division on 28 December to inspect township-wise rehabilitation and reconstruction tasks in the storm-affected areas in Ayeyawady Division.

The division is rich in natural resources, so the region has to take full advantage of abundant natural resources to regenerate its economy.

It was said previously that construction of roads and bridges in Ayeyawady Division was virtually impossible and was just a dream. By contrast, now the region has seen many new bridges spanning rivers and creeks and roads as a result of the efforts of the government, thus enjoying progress in trade, education and health sectors and that is a dream come true.

In his guidance, the Head of State stressed the need of innovation for effective utilization of land resources, restoration of economic enterprises and measures for better transport.

The government has provided a great deal of assistance for development of agricultural farming and fishing, and it will continue to render necessary assistance in that case. Local people on their part have to work hard together for economic development and helping urban and rural areas possess due characteristics.

Moreover, it is required to set up some associations to conduct courses designed to disseminate methods on healthy lifestyle and diet for ensuring longevity of rural folks and sanitation work and agricultural methods along with vocational training for rural development.

Local people are to join hands with the government in rehabilitation and reconstruction tasks for helping storm-hit areas enjoy economic development with all characteristics of a town or a village.

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

Health Dy Minister and Kayin State PDC Chairman inaugurate Hlaingbwe Township People's Hospital

NAY PYI TAW, 1 Jan—Secretary of National Health Committee Deputy Minister for Health Dr Mya Oo and Chairman of Kayin State Peace and Development Council Brig-Gen Zaw Min attended the opening ceremony of Hlaingbwe Township People's Hospital in Kayin State on 28 December.

The deputy minister and chairman of Kayin State PDC viewed the hospital and met with members of health committee, members of social organizations, townsenders and staff.

Likewise, after looking into Shwegon Station Hospital, the deputy minister and the



Health Deputy Minister Dr Mya Oo meets with members of health committee and social organizations at Shwegon Station Hospital.

HEALTH

chairman also met with members of health committee and social organizations.

Afterwards, their hospital of Tayoathla tours ended with the model village in Hpa-an.

MNA

UMFCCI to hold talks on 3 Jan

YANGON, 1 Jan—The Union of Myanmar Federation of Chambers of Commerce and Industry (UMFCCI) is holding talks and discussions on subject-wise monthly. The UMFCCI will hold talks and discussions with the assistance of Fortune

International Co., Ltd at No.29, Minigala Hall of UMFCCI office Tower on Min Ye Kyaw Swa Road, Lanmadaw Township here on 3 January. Every one may attend it and make contact with Ph-214344 for further information.

MNA

Collected Jataka stories published

YANGON, 1 Jan—Copies of the collected Jataka stories in Myanmar version compiled by Maung Hsanda (Lewe) are on sale today.

Myat Pan Yagon Book Centre at No. 194, 29th Street in Pabedan Township, Yangon, (GSM: 095139450) publishes the book at K. 300 per copy. Those wishing to buy four copies and more for personal reasons may contact direct to 01-392305 to enjoy special prices.—NLM

Showroom, sales promotion launched for electronic equipment

YANGON, 1 Jan—Pyae Sone Win Naing Co. Ltd launched the showroom and the special sales promotion on the ground floor of New Mingala Market, here, today.

The company sells electronic equipment such as Panasonic Aircon, washing machine, refrigerator, Sakura Aircon, TV, DVD, radio, Orchid TV, DVD and radio at the showroom in Yangon and through the sale agents across the

nation. Service centres are opened in the entire nation.

For further information, may contact Showroom-1 at No. 23/25 at the corner of 108th Street and Myanma Gonyi Street in Mingala Taungnyunt Township, Tel: 01-203484, 203485, 292565 and 296787 and Showroom-2 at No. 1 on ground floor at New Mingala Market on Setyon Road in Mingala Taungnyunt Township, Tel: 01-291322.

MNA



The opening of showroom and special sales promotion of Pyae Sone Win Naing Co Ltd in progress on the ground floor of New Mingala Market.—MNA

ကယက်၊ ဝဇိက်၊ ပနောကံ၊ အလုပ်သုံးပါး၊ အလုပ်ကောင်းမှ ကံကောင်းမည်...

ကံသုံးပါးဆိုင်ခြင်ပွယ်

စေတီဝတ္ထုများ
မောင်ဆန္ဒ (လေးထပ်)

Cover of book featuring collected Jataka stories of Maung Hsanda (Lewe).
NLM

A look at violence numbers in Afghanistan in 2008

KABUL, 1 Jan—The following are estimates of violent deaths in Afghanistan in 2008 compiled by *The Associated Press* based on figures from Western and Afghan officials. The count is not definitive and relies heavily on official statements.

Afghan officials are known to exaggerate Taliban deaths, for instance, and NATO's International Security Assistance Force does not release figures of militants it kills.

US FORCES: A record 151 died in 2008, in part because more forces are in the country and have moved into new regions, but also because roadside bombs have become deadlier and militant attacks more sophisticated. In 2007, 111 US forces died.

AFGHAN POLICE: At least 850 were killed this year. Some 925 died in 2007. Police have less training and weapons than Afghan soldiers and bear the brunt of militant attacks.

CIVILIANS: Overall at least 1,160 civilians were

killed in insurgency related violence. US or NATO troops killed about 370 civilians, while Taliban or other militants killed 770. In 2007, the AP count showed 875 civilians died, including 360 by US or NATO action and 485 from Taliban or other militant action.

MILITANTS: At least 3,800 militants died on the battlefield in 2008, an estimate that is likely quite low because NATO does not release battle death estimates. Last year AP recorded 4,500 militant deaths, but a NATO official later said the alliance estimated close to 7,000 had been killed.

OVERALL: In 2008, AP recorded the deaths of 6,340 people in Afghanistan from insurgency-related violence, slightly less than the 6,533 AP recorded in 2007. Insurgency-related violence includes battlefield deaths, military operations such as airstrikes, and Taliban attacks such as suicide or roadside bombings.— *Internet*



Angry Afghan demonstrators throw stones at a vehicle which believed to be driven by foreign soldiers, after two boys were injured by a car accident involving foreign troops in Kabul, Afghanistan, on 30 Dec, 2008. According to Afghan police, hundreds of Afghans demonstrated following the incident.

INTERNET



An unidentified Afghan victim of the suicide bombing rests in the bed at a hospital following the blast near the Parwan governor's compound in Parwan, north of Kabul, Afghanistan on 29 Dec, 2008. A suicide car bomber struck a governor's compound on Monday while US troops were inside, officials said.—INTERNET

US military deaths in Iraq war at 4,221

WASHINGTON, 1 Jan—As of Wednesday, 31 Dec, 2008, at least 4,221 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 3,400 military personnel died as a result of hostile action, according to the military's numbers. The British military has reported 178 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*

Eight people killed, 57 injured in N Iraq violence

MOSUL, 1 Jan—Bomb attacks and gunfire killed eight people and wounded 57 others in Iraq's northern province of Nineveh on Wednesday, a provincial police source said.

Five people were killed and 45 others injured when a booby-trapped car parked at a marketplace in the town of Sinjar, 120 km west of the capital city of Mosul, detonated on Wednesday afternoon, the source told *Xinhua* on condition of anonymity.

The powerful blast de-

stroyed several nearby shops, stalls and civilian cars, the source said.

In northern Mosul, two people were killed and 12 others wounded when two roadside bombs went off coordinately at a residential area, the source added.

Also in the city, unknown armed men gunned

down a Sunni Arab politician in Bab al-Tob in central Mosul, he said. Muwaffaq al-Hamdani, a member of the National Gathering of Nineveh, was due to participate in the election of the provincial council slated for 31 Jan, he added.

Internet

Royal Marine killed by explosion in Afghanistan

LONDON, 1 Jan—A soldier was killed in Afghanistan on Wednesday by an explosion during a routine patrol, the Ministry of Defence here said.

The Royal Marine from 45 Commando was killed in the Sangin district of the troubled southern Helmand Province, where British troops are based.

"Every death is tragic, yet at the turning of the year, with the celebration and hope it promises, this loss is all the harder to bear," said Commander Paula Rowe, spokeswoman for Task Force Helmand.

"All our thoughts go to his family, friends and colleagues who will be devastated by his sacrifice."

Internet

A US soldier stands guard in the middle of blindfolded prisoners awaiting their release inside a truck in Baghdad's Doura district on 30 Dec, 2008.—INTERNET



US hands over Green Zone in Baghdad as Iraq takes control

BAGHDAD, 1 Jan—Control of Baghdad's fortified green zone, a symbol of the US-led occupation of Iraq, will pass to Iraqi hands today in one of many transfers of power taking place as the country regains its sovereignty almost six years after the invasion. The keys to Saddam Hussein's Republican Palace, which served as the US Embassy, will also be given back to Iraq's

increasingly assertive Government. In addition, US commanders returned control of a swath of Iraqi airspace at midnight and British Forces are due to hand back Basra airport in the south. Some Iraqis welcome the long-awaited transition but others fear that little will alter on the ground, with US forces scheduled to be in Iraq for another three years and the green zone remaining a

walled-off compound.

Major-General Mohammed al-Askari, the Iraqi Defence Ministry spokesman, said that 1 January was an important day, marking the moment that US and British troops in Iraq come under Iraqi government authority after the expiry yesterday of a UN Security Council resolution that has legitimised their presence since 2003.

Internet

All items from Xinhua News Agency



Photo taken on 31 Dec, 2008 shows a view of a street under the blue sky in Beijing, capital of China. Beijing had 274 blue-sky days this year, 28 more than last year, meaning that air quality in the capital improved for 10 consecutive years, according to Beijing Environmental Protection Bureau. —XINHUA

Cambodian Parliament approves Chinese firms to build four dams

PHNOM PENH, 1 Jan—The Cambodian National Assembly (NA) has approved deals with two Chinese companies on Tuesday for construction of four hydro-electric dams in Koh Kong Province, national media said on Thursday.

The investment stands at more than 1 billion US dollars in total, English-Khmer language newspaper the

Cambodia Daily quoted Ith Praing, secretary of state at the Ministry of Industry, Mines and Energy, as saying.

“We will have enough electricity to use in the whole country by 2014.

All kinds of people, businessmen and investors, will be at ease after we have sufficient electricity,” he said.

NA approved a deal of 540 million US dol-

lars for two dams with China National Heavy Metal Machinery, and a deal of 495 million US dollars for the other two dams with the Michelle Corporation, also a Chinese firm, he said.

Construction should start in late 2009 or early 2010, and the power will be sold to the Cambodian government at handsome prices, he added.

Xinhua

Five countries to join

UN Security Council in 2009

UNITED NATIONS, 1 Jan—France is scheduled to takeover the rotating presidency of the UN Security Council for the month of January 2009 on Thursday, as Austria, Japan, Turkey, Mexico and Uganda will join the 15-nation Council as nonpermanent members.

The Security Council, the most powerful organ in the United Nations, has five permanent members and 10 nonpermanent members, five of which rotate each for two-year terms. All nonpermanent members are elected by the 192-member General Assembly.

The five new members for 2009-2010 are replacing Belgium, Indonesia, Italy, Panama and South Africa, whose terms expire at the end of 2008. Britain, China, France, Russia and the United States make up the five permanent members of the Council.

The other five nonpermanent members are Burkina Faso, Costa Rica, Croatia, Libya and Vietnam, whose two-year terms are to expire at the end of 2009.—*Xinhua*



An ambulanceman shows first aid and communication equipment installed with the motorbike ambulances at an emergency centre in Beijing, China, on 31 Dec, 2008.—XINHUA

Exchange of fire reported between Hamas and Israeli troops

GAZA, 1 Jan—A short exchange of fire between Israeli special forces and Hamas militants was reported east of the southern Gazan city of Khan Younis on Wednesday night.

Witness and Palestinian sources said that the fighting has ended and there was no sign that Israel has launched ground operation against Gaza, adding that Israeli special forces used to come into the area and hunting Palestinian rocket launching cells. The spokesperson of the Israel Defence Forces said they could not confirm the report at this time.

Xinhua

Salvadorian troops in Iraq to go home

MEXICO CITY, 1 Jan—El Salvador will pull out its troops from Iraq after the United Nations (UN) mandate authorizing the deployment of the troops as part of US-led coalition force ended Wednesday, said the Salvadorian officials.

Officials in San Salvador said some 200 Salvadorian soldiers in Iraq expect the United States Air Force to provide planes to send them and their equipment home by the end of January or early February of 2009.

El Salvador is the only Latin American country that joined the US-led coalition force in Iraq in 2003. Salvadorian troops are stationed at the Iraqi city of Al Kut to carry out humanitarian missions.

Xinhua

Ecuador, Italian company begin talks on future of oil contract

QUITO, 1 Jan—Ecuadorian Mining and Oil Minister Derlis Palacios and representatives from the Italian oil company Agip began talks here Wednesday on the future of their oil extraction contract.

The talks came after President Rafael Correa on Saturday ordered the suspension of Agip’s production (about 25,000 barrels a day) to fulfill the oil reduction plan set by

the Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC).

According to the plan, Ecuador must cut 40,000 barrels a day of its produc-

tion starting from 1 Jan, 2009, after OPEC decided on 18 Dec to slash 2.2 million barrels a day to stabilize oil prices.

Xinhua

Car bomb explodes in northern Spain

MADRID, 1 Jan—A car loaded with 100 kg of explosives exploded on Wednesday in Bilbao of northern Spain, causing considerable property damages but no casualties, local media reported.

The blast occurred in front of the facilities of Radiotelevision of

Basque Country, shortly after an anonymous call in the name of the Basque separatist organization ETA sounded a bomb alert, local police was quoted as saying.

The building affected by the explosion accommodates the offices of daily newspapers El

Mundo, Deia, Marca and Expansion, radio station Onda Cero, and TV channel Antena 3.

The Spanish Interior Ministry said that ETA’s target was the Basque Radiotelevision, as shown by some ETA documents seized by the ministry earlier in the year.—*Xinhua*



Members of Chinese 25th Antarctic expedition team make cement foundation in Antarctica, on 30 Dec, 2008. The Chinese 25th Antarctic expedition team carried out scientific research on cartography and biologic sampling to study the terrain and environment of Antarctica on Tuesday.—XINHUA

Saudi FM criticizes Palestinians

CAIRO, 1 Jan—Saudi Arabia's foreign minister on Wednesday blamed Palestinian divisions for Israel's onslaught on Gaza, a reflection of US-allied Arab governments' anger at the Hamas militant group.

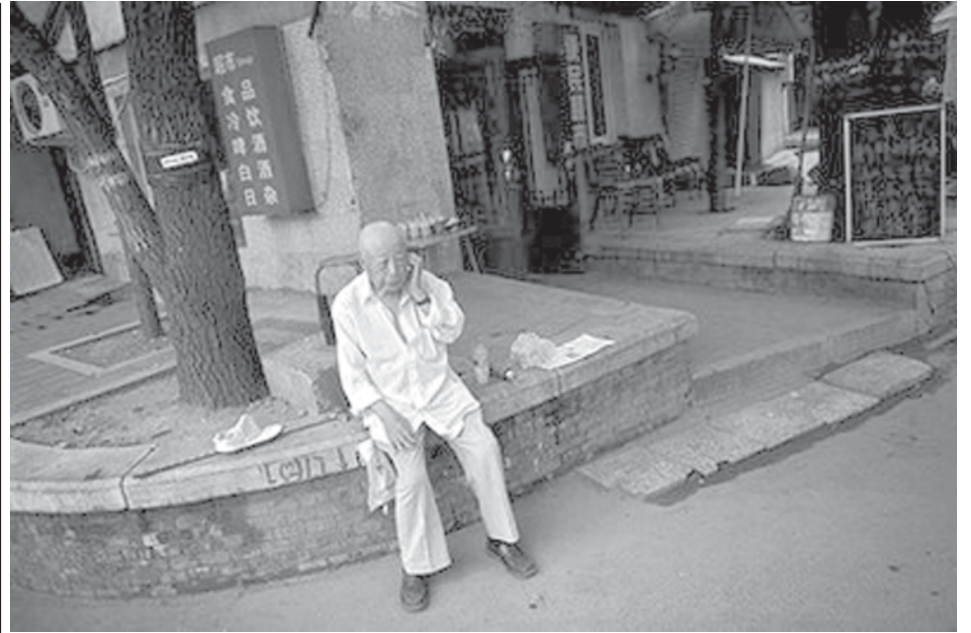
Saud al-Faisal made the comments at an emergency meeting of Arab foreign ministers in the Egyptian capital, convened to try to put together a joint response by the deeply divided Arab nations to the Israeli offensive, which has killed more than 370 Palestinians and sparked outrage



Saudi Arabian Foreign Minister Saud Al-Faisal walks in front of flags of Arab countries as he chairs an Arab foreign ministers emergency meeting in Cairo, Egypt, on 31 Dec, 2008.—INTERNET

across the Middle East.

Pro-US Arab countries — Egypt, in particular — have come under heavy criticism in widespread street protests, as well as from Iran, Hamas, the Lebanese militant group Hezbollah, for allegedly not doing enough to stop Israel or help Gazans. Officials and pro-government media in Egypt and Saudi Arabia have responded by blaming Hamas for provoking Israel and accusing the militant group of being a proxy promoting the power of regional rival Iran.—Internet



An elderly man uses a mobile phone in Beijing in August 2008. China on Wednesday agreed to start awarding long-awaited third-generation mobile phone licences, state media reported, in a move that was expected to help battle an economic slowdown.—INTERNET

China, Vietnam issue joint statement on border issues

HANOI, 1 Jan—China and Vietnam have completed the work of land border demarcation and erecting land border markers along the entire length of their land borders, according to a joint statement Wednesday.

The joint statement was issued during talks between heads of the government delegations of China and Vietnam on border issues between the two countries held on 28-31 Dec.

China and Vietnam ex-

changed views on solving all remaining problems on land border demarcation and erecting land border markers between the two countries and reached agreement in accordance with the 1999 China-Vietnam land boundary treaty, taking into consideration the fundamental interests of the two peoples with the development of traditional bilateral friendly ties as the starting point, the statement said.

The outcome is

achieved under the direct care and direction of leaders of the two countries. It is also the result of concerted efforts of government delegations of the two countries, experts, relevant departments and provinces along the borders, it added.

The completion of the land border demarcation along the entire length of China-Vietnam land border is a major event of historical significance in their relations.

Internet



Chinese Deputy Foreign Minister Wu Dawei (2nd L) and his Vietnamese counterpart Vu Dung (1st R) attend a meeting in Hanoi, Vietnam, on 31 Dec, 2008. China and Vietnam on Wednesday reached an agreement on the remaining issues related to the two countries' land boundary survey.—INTERNET

One killed, three wounded in shooting in south US

WASHINGTON, 1 Jan—One person was killed and three others wounded in a shooting by three masked men in Dallas Tuesday.

The shooting at about 9 pm occurred at a store called Gas Pipe. Two men and two women were inside the store at the moment, local police said. All victims were sent to hospital immediately.

The suspects were still at large. The police said authorities were looking for surveillance video to find out the killers.—Internet

Russia to stop gas exports to Ukraine

MOSCOW, 1 Jan—Russia will suspend gas supplies to Ukraine on Thursday morning, Russia's state gas monopoly Gazprom Chief Executive Alexei Miller said on Wednesday.

Talks on natural gas exports from Russia to Ukraine in 2009 "ended fruitlessly" and Gazprom will completely cut off gas supplies to Ukraine at 10:00 Moscow time (0700 GMT) on 1 Jan, Miller said.

"The Ukrainian side will bear all responsibility for the situation," he was quoted by Interfax news agency as saying. However, Miller said Gazprom will do its best to make sure European consumers receive their gas on time.

Gazprom says Ukraine owes over 2 billion US dollars for gas it imported. While Ukraine said it had transferred 1.5 billion dollars to an account to cover its debt, Miller said Gazprom has never seen on its accounts the money Ukraine paid.

Gazprom had insisted that Ukraine pay 418 US dollars per 1,000 cubic metres of gas next year, more than double what it paid in 2008. The Russian energy giant on Wednesday offered to charge Ukraine a reduced price of 250 dollars, which Ukrainian officials said was still too high.

Internet

Israel sends more troops to Gaza border

GAZA CITY, 1 Jan—Israel sent more troops to the Gaza border Wednesday, rapidly moving forward with preparations for a possible ground offensive as the next stage of its military assault on the coastal territory's Hamas rulers.

Israel rebuffed calls by world leaders for a truce, and Hamas also was cold

to a cease-fire.

Instead, both intensified their fire. Israel bombed a mosque that it said was used to store rockets as well as vital smuggling tunnels along the Egyptian border, and the Islamic militants hammered southern Israeli cities with about 60 rockets.

Israeli troops trudged between dozens of tanks in

muddy, rain-sodden fields outside Gaza, assembling equipment, cleaning weapons and scrubbing out tank barrels. Their commanders moved forward with preparations for a ground operation, said an Israeli defence official who spoke on condition of anonymity because of the sensitive nature of the information.—Internet



Israel's Foreign Minister Tzipi Livni (C) surveys a damaged classroom after a rocket landed in a school in the southern city of Beersheba on 31 Dec, 2008. INTERNET

N Korea vows to strengthen its military

SEOUL, 1 Jan—North Korea ushered in 2009 with an appeal Thursday to unite around leader Kim Jong Il and bolster the country's military, while reaffirming its commitment to denuclearization and breaking with tradition by not criticizing the US.

North Korea traditionally marks New Year's Day with a joint editorial by the country's three major state-run newspapers representing its communist party, military and youth militia force. Outside observers pore over the statement for insight on the reclusive country's policy direction.

This year's message accused South Korea of an "anachronistic confrontation policy" and stressed the need to strengthen the country's 1.2 million-member military—the backbone of Kim's totalitarian rule.—*Internet*

Sri Lanka troops seize key rebel town

COLOMBO, 1 Jan—Sri Lankan troops on Thursday captured a key town from Tamil Tiger rebels in the island's north after intense clashes that left at least 50 guerrillas dead, the defence ministry said.

The fall of Paranthan, near the Tigers' political capital Kilinochchi, has effectively cut off the rebels' main supply line to several other strongholds, the ministry said in a statement.

At least 50 Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE) rebels have been killed and twice as many wounded in heavy fighting since on Tuesday, it added.

The ministry did not say if security forces suffered any casualties.

"Unable to withstand the fury of the combined army and air force onslaught, LTTE terrorists withdrew from the town in total disarray," the ministry said.

Internet



A Palestinian nurse treats Ismail Hamdan, 10 who was wounded in a recent Israeli air strike, and later died of his wounds, at al-Shifa hospital in Gaza City, on 31 Dec, 2008.—INTERNET

Gunman wounds two Israelis in Denmark mall shooting

COPENHAGEN, 1 Jan—A gunman shot and wounded two Israelis working at a packed central Denmark shopping mall Wednesday, police said.

Police spokesman Lars Thede said it was not immediately clear whether the Israelis were targeted because of their nationality. A video surveillance camera showed a swarthy man with a dark mustache and dark hair in his mid-20s pulling out a gun before opening fire. "We cannot say whether he is Palestinian, Iraqi, Iranian or Bosnian, or where he is from," Thede said.

"It is too early to say whether this has something to do with what happens elsewhere," he said, referring to an Israeli offensive under way against Gaza's Hamas rulers in retaliation for rocket fire. The strikes have killed some 390 people so far.

Poul Bjoernhold Loehde, head of the police in Odense, said the Danish Security and Intelligence Service had been informed of the shooting.

"Because of the present world situation, we have contacted them. To us, it is an ordinary criminal case," Bjoernhold Loehde told *The Associated Press*.

No one at the agency was available for comment.

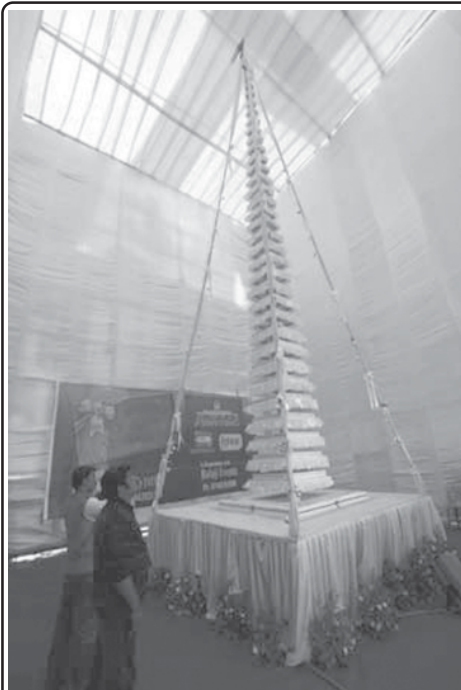
The two wounded men are Israelis in their 20s, Thede said. One of the wounded was shot in the arm and the other in the leg, police said. The wounds are not life threatening, police said. The shooting took place at the Rosengard mall in Odense, 170 kilometres (105 miles) west of Copenhagen. It occurred around 3.30 pm (1430 GMT), when the mall was filled with people doing last-minute shopping before the New Year's break.—*Internet*

Afghanistan shooting prompts investigation

KABUL, 1 Jan—An investigation is under way in Afghanistan after Australian troops were involved in a shooting incident Tuesday that resulted in the death of an Afghan man.

The shooting incident occurred while the Australian soldiers were on an operation supporting the ongoing international mentoring and reconstruction effort in Afghanistan, the Australian Ministry of Defence reported.

Officials say a suspicious man was shot and killed following alleged attempts by Australian soldiers who called on the man to halt his approach toward the soldiers.—*Internet*



A man takes pictures of a 34-foot (10-metre) cake made by Peter's Bakery ahead of Christmas in the southern Indian city of Kochi. The cake consists of 33 layers, weighs 600 kg and was made by 45 people in 15 days.

Detective finds stolen gun in toilet by accident

Authorities said a stolen gun was recovered when a detective tried to use the suspect's bathroom and couldn't get the toilet to work. A detective investigating the theft of a handgun, jewelry and cash from a Jensen Beach home was told a possible suspect might be staying at a Port St Lucie hotel.

The detective met with a 21-year-old suspect and during an interview, the detective asked to use the man's bathroom.

When the detective couldn't get the toilet to flush, he took off the tank cover to see what the problem was. That's when he found the handgun and three magazines with bullets.

The man was charged last Monday with grand theft and grand theft of a firearm.



Cars drive through the customs facilities at the Swiss-German border. Switzerland was ending systematic passport controls at most of its land borders on Friday, becoming the 25th nation to join Europe's continentwide Schengen zone of open frontiers.

Thieves yank ATM machine away from California store

Police said Friday that thieves used a pickup truck to force open a large roll-up door of a warehouse store in California and yank away an ATM machine.

The theft occurred at a Costco store in Carlsbad, more than 100km south of Los Angeles, before police were called to the scene around 3:40 am by a security company, according to Carlsbad police officer Matt Magro.

Store managers told police that a vehicle was driven into the roll-up door near the store entrance and the ATM machine with an undetermined amount of cash was missing.

Four thieves in black hooded sweatshirts used an early 1990s white Chevrolet pickup to force open the door, and left behind a portion of the truck's bumper in the process, Magro said.

Reports of thefts, robberies and other crimes have been on the rise in recent months in many US cities as the economic recession was deteriorating across the country with unemployment rates at multi-year record high.

Bad recycling: pay stub used as bank robbery note

A pay stub with a threatening note on it in a Chicago bank robbery made it easy for investigators to solve the case.

An FBI affidavit said a man walked into a Fifth Third Bank on Friday and handed a teller a note that read "Be Quick Be Quit (sic). Give your cash or I'll shoot."

The robber got about 400 dollars but left half of his note with the teller. Investigators found the other half outside the bank's front doors, thus to make out the man's name and address by a whole.

The suspect was arrested at his home. A judge ordered him held without bond Monday. If convicted of bank robbery, he faces 20 years in prison.



Snow-covered grapes are seen in a vineyard in Weinstadt near Stuttgart, Germany.

NEWS ALBUM

Appointment of Vietnamese Ambassador agreed on

NAY PYI TAW, 2 Jan—The Government of the Union of Myanmar has agreed to the appointment of Mr. Chu Cong Phung as Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the Socialist Republic of Vietnam to the Union of Myanmar.

Mr. Chu Cong Phung was born in Ha Tay Province, Vietnam, on 5 March 1952. He studied at the Hanoi Foreign Language University from 1969 to 1973, and obtained his Bachelor of Arts Degree.

He joined the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Vietnam as Desk Officer of the Asia 1 Department in October 1973, from 1973 to 1975, he studied Chinese Course of Beijing University, China, and served as Desk Officer of the China Department of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Vietnam from 1975 to 1977. Then, from 1977 to 1981, he was posted to the Embassy of Vietnam in China as Interpreter. He was transferred back to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Vietnam as Desk Officer of the China Department. Until 1990, he was posted to the Embassy of Vietnam in China as Second Secretary. During 1990 to 1996, he served as Deputy Director in the North East Asia Research Department of the Institute of the International Relations of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Vietnam and then was promoted to Director. And then, from 1995 to 1996, he studied English Course at the University of Victoria in New Zealand. He served as Deputy Director-General of the Institute of the International Relations of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Vietnam from 1996 to 1999. He was posted as Chief of the Economic and Cultural Office of Vietnam in Taipei, China Taipei as from 1999 to 2002. Then, he was transferred back to the Ministry, and from 2003 to 2007 he served as Deputy Director-General of Asia 1 Department. He has been serving with Director-General rank at the North East Asia Department in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Vietnam since 2007.

Mr. Chu Cong Phung is married, and has 2 children.—MNA

Thongwa creek bridge ...

(from page 16)

Commander Maj-Gen Kyaw Swe made a speech on the occasion, saying that in the time of the State Peace and Development Council, a host of motor roads were built and therefore the public were convenient for traveling from one place to another smoothly in Ayeyawady Division in a short time. Thongwa creek bridge (Kyondainggyi) was opened to mark the 61st Anniversary Independence Day. It is the pride of the local people living in Ayeyawady Division as the opening of the bridge coincided with the New Year day. The bridge is the 217th one in the country and the 44th one in Ayeyawady Division. The newly-constructed bridge will contribute much toward economic, education, health and social fields. In addition, developments will be seen in the rural and urban areas. He urged the local people to make more efforts in their livelihoods than in the past.

Next, Minister Maj-Gen Saw Tun explained the aims and data of the bridge. Afterwards, a local spoke words of thanks. At the auspicious time, Commander Maj-Gen Kyaw Swe, Minister Maj-Gen Saw Tun and Brig-Gen Zin Yaw of Patheingyi Station formally opened the bridge.

The commander and party sprinkled scented water on the stone plaque and walked on the bridge. The bridge is of reinforced concrete type and it is 24 feet wide and 270 feet long and it can withstand 60 tons of load.—MNA

Four objectives of the 61st Anniversary Independence Day

- * All the national people to constantly join hands for ensuring the perpetuity of independence and sovereignty of the State;
- * All the national people to collectively strive for non-disintegration of the Union and non-disintegration of national solidarity;
- * All the national people to harmoniously make all-out efforts for building up a modern, developed discipline-flourishing democratic nation in accord with the new State Constitution that has been approved by the votes of the great majority of national people;
- * All the national people to cooperate in realizing the State's seven-step Road Map with Union Spirit and patriotic spirit

School Family Day commences in Nay Pyi Taw BEHS No. 1

NAY PYI TAW, 1 Jan—The School Family Day for 2008-09 academic year of the Ministry of Education was launched at No. 1 Basic Education High School in Nay Pyi Taw this morning, attended by Commander of Nay Pyi Taw Command Maj-Gen Wai Lwin.

First, 14 outstanding students representing States and Divisions formally opened the ceremony.

The commander and party visited the booth on education development and enjoyed the musical entertainment of the basic education students. Stu-

dents of No. 3 Basic Education Department and Nay Pyi Taw BEHS No. 1 performed dances and songs entertainments to the guests.

Later, gold medalist students of No. 3 BED demonstrated their skills in Wushu sport.

Also present on the

occasion were ministers, deputy ministers, members of the school board of trustees, departmental heads, school heads, teachers, students and guests.

The School Family Day will continue up to 3 January 2009.

MNA

Commander Maj-Gen Wai Lwin views opening ceremony of School Family Day 2008-09 of Ministry of Education

MNA



Chief Executive Officer of Yangon Media Group U Ko Ko speaks at the group's 4th founding anniversary.

MNA

Yangon Media Group celebrates 4th founding anniversary

YANGON, 1 Jan—Yangon Media Group celebrated its 4th anniversary at the Excel Treasure Hotel here this evening.

Chief Executive Officer of Yangon Media Group U Ko Ko extended greetings, and Director of Press Scrutiny and Registration Division of

the Printing and Publishing Enterprise U Tint Swe and General Manager of Myanma Insurance Dr Maung Maung Thein delivered addresses.

Executive Director of Yangon Media Group Daw Myat Myat Soe and Chief Executive Officer

U Ko Ko presented annual bonuses to staff and reporters of the media group.

Outstanding staff and the best reporter of the year of the Flower News Journal and Yangon Times Journal were also honoured at the ceremony.

MNA

HAILING THE 61ST ANNIVERSARY INDEPENDENCE DAY:

Taste and variety of fruits of independence

Tekkatho Myat Thu

Ward off colonialist tricks with patriotism



Independence is the most crucial and priceless asset for a nation, without which it cannot stand on its own feet. Independence means a nation has sovereignty; its people have the rights to exercise the sovereignty as they wish; they own the entire territory of their nation (including territorial waters and air space), natural resources, all the harvested agricultural produce, all goods produced by the factories and mills of the nation; they have the rights to lay down and practise the most appropriate policies in the interests of the nation and the entire people; and the nation is an independent one that is not owned or controlled by any other country.

An independent and sovereign nation can stand tall with the image of character of a nation in the global community. A nation can lose its independence or sovereignty if it faces disintegration of national unity or alien invasion, and the people betray their motherland for their self-interest or fail to respect independence. Independence by nature can be lost easily once in a while, but it takes very long, it is very hard and it has to sacrifice a large number of lives to regain the independence. So, I say independence is the most indispensable and essential asset of a nation.

The global family is made up of more than 200 countries. After the industrial revolution, the western hemisphere saw mushrooming

An independent and sovereign nation can stand tall with the image of character of a nation in the global community. A nation can lose its independence or sovereignty if it faces disintegration of national unity or alien invasion, and the people betray their motherland for their self-interest or fail to respect independence. Independence by nature can be lost easily once in a while, but it takes very long, it is very hard and a large number of lives have to be sacrificed to regain the independence. So, independence is the most indispensable and essential asset of a nation.

factories, and world people were happy with the results, regarding that as progress of human beings because factory products were much better than manually-produced products not only in quality but also in quantity. In that regard, however, an adverse effect was that proprietors of the factories in the western hemisphere became covetous enough to colonize other countries while in search of raw materials needed for their factories. Then they were overwhelmed by the taste of colonizing other countries as they could exploit and take natural resources at will (without paying for them) from hundreds of their colonies. Colonials had advantages of modern weapons; however the peoples of the colonies had advantages of nationalistic vigour, bravery and patriotic spirit. So, they came to launch independence struggles to rise against the colonialists.

The World War II broke out due to a rivalry for colonies between the three new industrial countries (Germany, Italy and Japan) and three old colonial countries (the USA, England and France). When the wars between them were raging, national liberation struggles of the colonies intensified. After the World War II, more than 100 colonies regained independence. Myanmar was one of the colonies that achieved independence, sacrificing a large number of lives.

The poverty of colonies due to colonials' exploitation was further exacerbated by the evil consequences of the World War II. However, they tried to return to normal, exerting the advantages of independence and natural resources. Myanmar

had to give up its parts one after another in the three aggressive wars waged by the colonialists from 1824 to 1885. Then, it lost independence. Myanmar people were under a variety of oppression till the nation regained independence on 4 January 1948. During the period, a lot of natural resources, crops and manual and industrial products went to the treasury of the British colonials. Myanmar people were cruelly and unfairly treated in various areas, and their whole life was a constant battle against poverty.

Irrespective of size and population, an independent nation has the right to cast one vote in the United Nations. The UN Charter prescribes mutual respect for equality and sovereignty, the right of every State to lead its national existence free from external invasion and interference, and the right of self-determination.

The Russian Federation is larger than any other country in the world. It covers 11 of the 24 hour zones of the world. It has an area of more than 17 million square kilometres, and a population of more than 140 million. Canada has an area of over 9.9 million square metres; the People's Republic of China, over 9.5 million square kilometres; and the US, over 9.1 million square kilometres. Monaco is the smallest country with an area of only two square kilometres. Nauru has an area of 21 square kilometres; and Tuvalu, 26 square kilometres. In general, a country has an area of square kilometres of six to seven digits.

(See page 9)

HAILING THE 61ST ANNIVERSARY INDEPENDENCE DAY:

Taste and variety of fruits of independence

Tekkatho Myat Thu

(from page 8)

With a population of over 1330 million, China is the most populous country, followed by India with over 1147 million; the US with over 305 million; and Indonesia, over 245 million. The least populous country is Tuvalu with only 12,177. Other less populous countries are Nauru with 13,770; Palau, 20,600; and San Marino, 29,000. All UN member countries, large or small and heavy or less population, are of equality and have the right to cast only one vote.

An independent country owns territory with the right to become rich through trade of natural resources, economic strength, gems, forest products, oil, agricultural produce, and industrial products. Evil incidents that take place daily in the countries that are still occupied by aliens under lame excuses (without being vested with the permission of the UN to do so) receive well media coverage. Not only many from both sides but also hundreds of thousands of innocent people died and hundreds of thousands of innocent people were injured in the conflicts. A large number of people are being tortured in prisons. So many houses, buildings, roads, bridges, schools, factories, hospitals, markets, agricultural farms, and oil-wells have been ravaged. Businessmen from the invader

country are manipulating the natural resources of the invaded country. That reflects that the country and its citizens have lost sovereignty (independence).

Every independent country can lead a peaceful life and enjoy economic development through their natural resources and products. So, they can lay down and exercise political, economic and social policies that win the public satisfaction. And they can participate in the global affairs with the equality of a country with the right to vote.

Myanmar is a nation that existed with own monarchs from Pontaung Ponnya, the Stone Age to Tagaung Period and Konbaung Period, and that has fine traditions of regaining and safeguarding independence through nationalistic fervour and vigour. It is blessed with abundant water sources, fertile soil, temperate climate, and natural resources.

Now, peace and stability has been restored throughout the whole Union. It has been enjoying development in all sectors and is on the path towards democracy. Myanmar people have been in a position to enjoy the taste of independence due to those positive results. What the people just need to do is to keep on pursuing the goal.

Translation: MS

The poverty of colonies due to colonials' exploitation was further exacerbated by the evil consequences of the World War II. However, they tried to return to normal, exerting the advantages of independence and natural resources. Myanmar had to give up parts of its territory one after another in the three aggressive wars waged by the colonialists from 1824 to 1885. Then, it lost independence. Myanmar people were under a variety of oppression till the nation regained independence on 4 January 1948. During the period, a lot of natural resources, crops and handmade and industrial products went to the treasury of the British colonialist. Myanmar people were cruelly and unfairly treated in various areas, and their whole life was a constant battle against poverty.

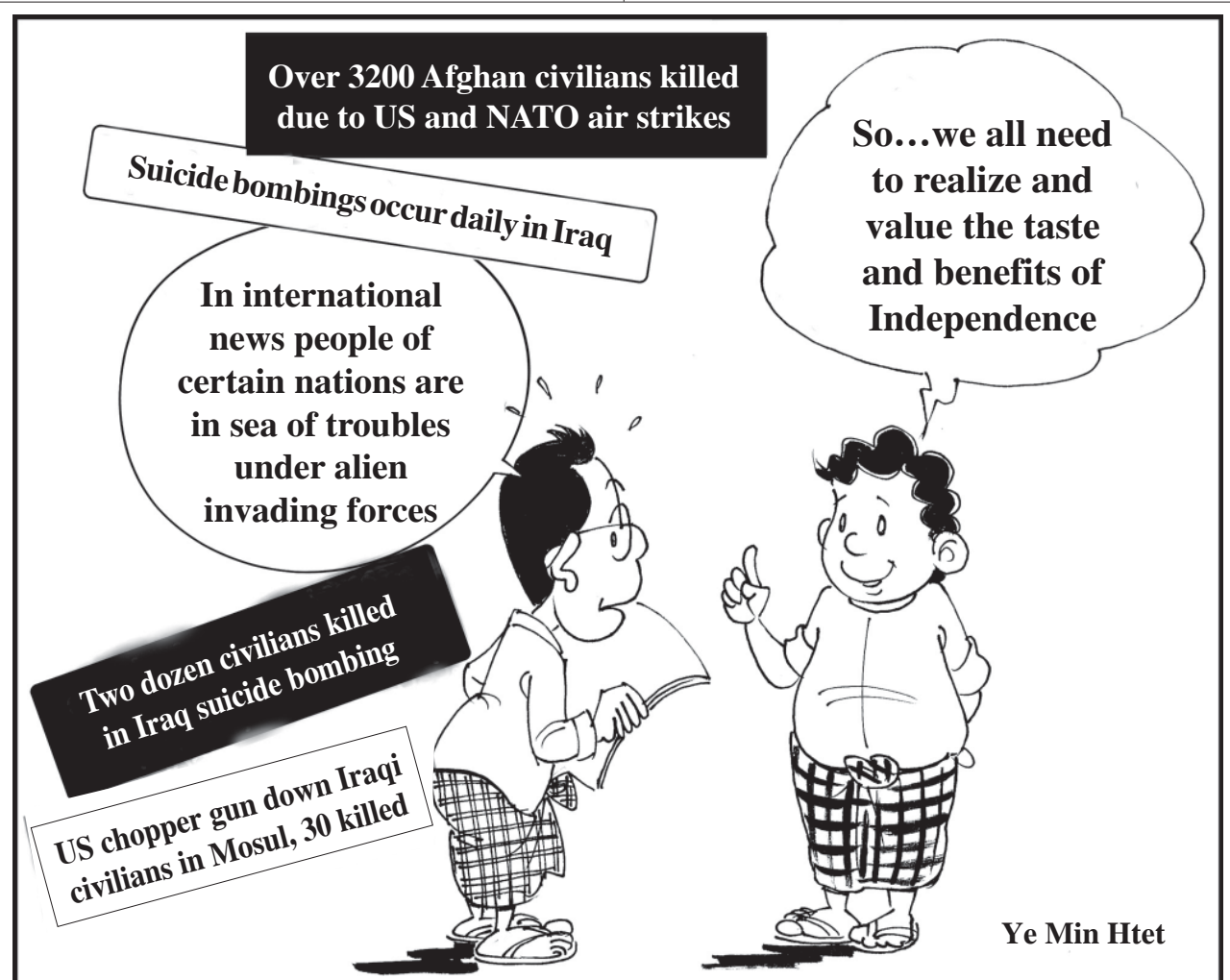
POEM

Preserve our heritage

- * Due to British colonization
Anarch reigned in Myanmar
Lost she her king and sovereignty
Under the subjugation
Faced she sufferings
- * Under the colonialist yoke
Race, religion in decline
And facing discrimination
In the sea of troubles
- * Under colonialist injustice
And lawless acts
Our race lost hope
Like blind and deaf people
In the colonialist quagmire
- * Like chained people
Lost they freedom
Unable to do anything at will
- * Our forefathers
Who loved and cherished
Race and nation
Sacrificed lives, blood, sweat
Freed themselves from the yoke
And regained independence
So precious for nation
- * O, new generation
Pay attention to Independence
With respect for its perpetuity
Independence or the
Nation's lifeblood
Our heritage
We have to preserve

Maung Maung Moe Aung

Hailing the 61st Anniversary Independence Day



ACHIEVEMENT OF THE TRANSPORT (BRIDGE) SECTOR IN 2008



No	Bridge	Location	Length (ft)	Inauguration Date
230	Mezali	Pwintbyu Township, Magway Division	940 ft	2-1-2008
231	U-ru	Homalin Township, Sagaing Division	1090 ft	9-2-2008
232	Kyauktan	Sittway Township, Rakhine State	452.5 ft	21-3-2008
233	Ayeyawady Bridge (Yadanabon)	Amarapura Township, Mandalay Division	5614 ft	11-4-2008
234	Bwetgyi Bridge	Aunglan Township, Magway Division	1770 ft	2-5-2008
235	Sittoung (Moppalin)	Kyaikto Township, Mon State	2392.7 ft	12-7-2008
236	Myaugchaung (Kalay-Gangaw)	Kalay Township, Sagaing Division	186 ft	26-8-2008

HAILING THE 61st ANNIVERSARY INDEPENDENCE DAY:

Photo shows Ayeyawady Bridge (Yadanabon) opened on 11 April 2008.



Photo shows Bwetgyi Bridge opened on 2 May 2008, in Aunglan Township, Magway Division.

Photo shows Sittoung Bridge (Moppalin) linking Kyaikto Township, Thaton District, Mon State, and Waw Township, Bago District, on 12 July 2008.



Israeli offensive so far leaves 400 dead, 2,000 wounded

GAZA, 1 Jan—The Israeli attacks on the Gaza Strip continued on Thursday for the sixth day in a row, with warplanes striking at more targets in the Hamas-controlled territory.

Mu'awia Hassanien, a Palestinian health emergency official, said the offensive had so far killed 400 Palestinians and left 2,000 wounded.

Among the injured, many are children "with 200 of them severely hurt," added Hassanien.

According to local media reports, Israel

added artillery shelling to the war it launches in Gaza, with residents say they heard the sound of shells landing in open areas close to the Israeli border with Gaza.

Five Palestinians were killed Wednesday night, including a man and his wife died in an Israeli bombing in northern Gaza Strip town of Beit Hanoun, another couples in southern Gaza Strip town or Rafah and a militant killed while engaging Israeli troops on the border of eastern Gaza City.

Xinhua

Police probe Thai club fire cause

BANGKOK, 1 Jan—Police in the Thai capital Bangkok are investigating the cause of the New Year's Eve fire at a city nightclub that killed 59 people.

More than 200 people, including at least four Britons, were injured in the fire at the Santika club.

There are suspicions that firecrackers released inside the club may have been the cause of the blaze.

Thai Prime Minister Abhisit Vejjajiva has been to see the charred remains of the building, and met injured victims. "The problem was that fire-

crackers were allowed to be brought inside (the nightclub), that is the issue about which we have to be more cautious and it has to be controlled more strictly," Mr Abhisit told reporters.

Video of the immediate aftermath shows terrified party-goers stumbling out of the blazing club, many of the Police said the fire may have been caused by firecrackers brought into the nightclub by guests or sparks flying from a pyrotechnic New Year countdown display.

A joint roster provided by Bangkok hospi-

tals showed that three Japanese, two South Koreans and one Singaporean were treated while another Singaporean had died.

One of the Japanese casualties was in a coma and suffering from burns over 60 percent of his body, doctors said.—Internet



Rescue workers said the death toll from the nightclub fire could rise.—INTERNET



Give us a smile: The lemon shark gives a grin and picks up a Best Photography award for photographer Bruce Yates. Showing a close-up of a lemon shark's face on the surface at sunset, it was recently selected from more than 20,000 photos as winner of the Oceans division of the international Nature's Best Photography 2008 Windland Smith Rice Awards.—INTERNET

Taleban ambush kills 20 policemen

KABUL, 1 Jan—Twenty Afghan police have been killed in a Taleban attack on the home of a local politician in the southern Afghan province of Helmand, officials say.

The mother of a policeman who arrived at the scene to plead for her son's life was also killed in Wednesday's attack, a provincial official said.

The men had been protecting Mullah Saalam, the district chief of Musa Qala, who was elsewhere at the time. Two Taleban militants were also killed, a Taleban spokesman said.

The fighting in the Kajaki district lasted several hours, the BBC's Martin Patience said from the Afghan capital, Ka-

bul. He said many of the police were from the local area.

Wednesday's attack took place in a region where insurgents operate freely, the Afghan security forces having little reach outside of the main town centres.

The attack came the same day as two Nato soldiers were killed on operations in Afghanistan.

Taleban militants have also carried out a number of recent strikes against government forces.

Policing in Afghanistan is a notoriously dangerous job - more than 1,000 police were killed in 2008, most of them killed in militant attacks.

Internet

Election candidate shot dead in northern Iraq

BAGHDAD, 1 Jan—Mowaffaq al-Hamdani, a candidate for the Sunni Arab party Iraq for Us, was killed by "gunmen" who walked into the cafe in the centre of the city, 390 km (240 miles) north of Baghdad, local media said. One policeman was killed and another wounded when

police gave chase to the fleeing gunmen. The results of the vote, which will choose provincial council leaders in 14 of Iraq's 18 provinces, will set the tone for parliamentary elections due at the end of 2009. The government of Nineveh province, where Mosul is located, has been in the

hands of minority Kurds since many of the Sunni Arab majority boycotted the last provincial elections in 2005. Hamdani, in his late 50s, was nominated governor after a former holder of the office was assassinated in 2004, but was not ultimately appointed.

Internet

A candidate standing in Iraq's provincial elections in January was shot dead in a cafe in the northern Iraqi city of Mosul on Wednesday, police said.

INTERNET



Malaysian helicopter saves Indian ship from Somali pirates

KUALA LUMPUR, 1 Jan—The incident, the first of 2009, involved an Indian ship with a dead weight tonnage of 92,687 tonnes, said Noel Choong, an official from the Kuala Lumpur-based IMB.

A Malaysian military helicopter, taking off from a warship sailing nearby, scared away Somali pirates trying to hijack an Indian vessel in the Gulf of Aden on Thursday, the International Maritime Bureau (IMB) said.

The incident, the first of 2009, involved an Indian ship with a dead weight

tonnage of 92,687 tonnes, said Noel Choong, an official from the Kuala Lumpur-based IMB. "Two small boats carrying pirates came close to the Indian vessel and started firing on the bridge and the accommodation area," Choong told Reuters.

"The pirates tried to board the vessel repeatedly but failed, as the captain maneuvered the ship and increased its speed." A Malaysian warship, KD Sri Indera Sakti, which was about 15 nautical miles from the area, re-

sponded to the Indian vessel's distress calls and sent a helicopter which scared the pirates away, Choong said.

Internet

China extends loan deadline for quake victims

BEIJING, 1 Jan—China has extended the deadline for victims of a devastating May earthquake who cannot repay their loans, the central bank said on Thursday. Individuals who borrowed money before the May 12 earthquake in Sichuan will have until the end of June to pay back loans that were due in 2008, while the grace period for corporations will be extended until the end of 2009, according to a statement on the central bank's website, www.pbc.gov.cn. The earthquake killed more than 80,000 people and left over 5 million people homeless in a swathe of devastated mountain towns. In August, the banking regulator told local banks to provide additional loans in the quake zone, and ordered them to go easy on debtors who could not make their payments.

Internet



In Thailand, performers in traditional dress carried candles during a Buddhist ceremony in the capital, Bangkok.—INTERNET

TRADE MARK CAUTION

LACOSTE, a Company incorporated in France of 8, rue de Castiglione, 75001 Paris, France, is the Owner of the following Trade Mark:-



- Reg. No. 1160/1983
- Reg. No. 484/1986
- Reg. No. 819/1989
- Reg. No. 970/1992
- Reg. No. 291/1998
- Reg. No. 1242/2001
- Reg. No. 1613/2003
- Reg. No. 10013/2005
- Reg. No. 7278/2008

in respect of "Soaps, perfumery, essential oils, cosmetics, hair lotions, tooth-pastes; optical apparatuses, namely, optical glasses, sunglasses, sport glasses, spectacles, frames, cases, chains and chains for the aforesaid, contact lenses, binoculars; jewellery, chronometric and horological apparatuses and instruments; paper, cardboard and goods made from these materials, stationery, paper, bag and plastic materials for packaging, printed matter; leather and imitations of leather and goods made from these materials trunks; travelling and sport bags, umbrellas, parasols and walking sticks; textile goods, bed, table and household linen; clothing, footwear, headgear; embroideries, buttons, press-buttons, slide fasteners, hooks and eyes; sporting articles; retail store services, delivery of samples and prospectus, advertising, hordings and shopsigns for boutiques and corners; organisation of sporting competitions, entertainment services, education services for the practice of sports, publication services; retail stores services".

Fraudulent imitation or unauthorised use of the said Trade Mark will be dealt with according to law.

Win Mu Tin
M.A., H.G.P., D.B.L
for LACOSTE
P. O. Box 60, Yangon
Dated: 2 January 2009

The best time to plant a tree was 20 years ago. The second best time is now.

MYANMA PORT AUTHORITY HOLIDAY NOTICE

As the wharves warehouses and chellan Offices of Yangon Port will be closed on the 4th January 2009 (Independence) Day being the public Holiday. Goods will be received shipped or delivered on payment of Holiday Fees.

Several hurt as trains collide

ANKARA, 1 Jan—Several people were injured when two trains collided in eastern Turkey on Wednesday, Anatolia news agency reported.

The crash in the province of Sivas involved a passenger train and a freight train, the report said. No details were immediately available. Train accidents are not uncommon on Turkey's ageing and often poorly maintained railway network.

Nine people died when a passenger train derailed in western Turkey in January and in July 2004, 37 people were killed when a newly-inaugurated high-speed train derailed in the northwest.—Internet



The dogs grow up with the animals they guard.
INTERNET



Children play near an old monument amidst morning fog, in New Delhi, India, on 1 Jan, 2009. Normal life in capital New Delhi and parts of northern India was affected on the first day of the year as thick cover of fog and cold wave engulfed the capital with rail and air traffic being severely hit.—INTERNET

Guard dogs save Namibian cheetahs

LONDON, 1 Jan—A scheme using dogs to protect sheep and goats from attack by wild animals in Namibia is proving so successful that it has been exported to Kenya.

With their livestock safe from attack, farmers no longer feel the need to hunt cheetahs and leopards. "We have had amazing results," Laurie Marker of the Cheetah Conservation Fund told.

"Since the dogs were imported, the cheetah population had increased by a third," she said. Anatolian Kangal dogs are extremely loyal and are ready to fight to the death. The puppies are given to farmers when they are just eight weeks old.

They grow up with the flocks of goats and sheep they are to guard and bond with them. If a predator approaches, the dogs bark loudly and the flock gath-

ers round them. This is enough to scare most attackers off, Ms Marker says.

The cheetah may go without a meal, but the result is that the farmers don't suffer losses and so they learn to live with the big cats, she says. Instead of shooting leopard and cheetah or putting poison down to kill jackals, farmers will tolerate these predators.

Internet

Whale 'hot spot' discovered

CANBERRA, 1 Jan—One of the world's highest concentrations of dolphins and whales—many of them protected species—has been discovered off the coast of East Timor, local and Australian researchers said on Wednesday.

A "hot spot" of marine cetaceans migrating through deep channels off the Timor coast, including blue and beaked whales, short-finned pilot whales, melon headed whales and six dolphin species was uncovered in a study for the Timor government.

"We were all amazed to see such an abundance, diversity and density of cetaceans. Most of them are actually protected," principal scientist Karen Edyvane told Reuters.

"It's among the world's hot spots for cetaceans," she said. The survey was done by East Timorese researchers and experts from the Australian Institute of Marine Science, working from a traditional 20 metre wooden Indonesian vessel.

Deep ocean channels of the Wetar and Ombai straits, which plummet more than 3000 metres, were a major migratory route for marine wildlife moving between the Pacific and Indian oceans, including large sharks and turtles, the study found.

In just one day, more than 1000 individuals and possibly as many as 2000 whales in eight separate pods — each one containing up to 400 mammals — were spotted over a 50km stretch of coast, Edyvane said.—Internet

Crew blamed for crash near Mount Everest in Nepal

KATHMANDU, 1 Jan—Nepalese investigators probing a plane crash near Mount Everest have blamed the pilots for the accident that killed 18 people, a report said on Thursday.

The report said the two pilots misjudged deteriorating weather conditions and flew inside a patch of fog while trying to land at Lukla airport, which is carved into the side of the

Himalayas at an altitude of 9,200 feet (2,800 meters). The DeHavilland DHC-6 Twin Otter plane belonging to Yeti Airlines then hit a rock on the side of the runway and burst into flames on 8 Oct.

The investigators interviewed several eyewitnesses and visited the accident site in the foothills of Everest.

Of the 19 people on board the flight from

Kathmandu, only the captain survived the crash. Twelve Germans, two Australians and four Nepalese were killed.

The tiny Lukla airport is known for its dramatic scenery and a runway that ends in a steep drop of a few hundred feet (meters). It is an important jumping-off point for trekkers and mountaineers heading to Mount Everest.—Internet

Bus plunges into ravine, kills 10 in Brazil

SAO PAULO, 1 Jan—A bus ran off a road and fell into a ravine in southeastern Brazil, killing at least 10 people, officials said on Wednesday.

Delamar da Cruz, spokesman for the Itapemirim bus company, says the crash occurred late Monday in Minas Gerais State. The driver apparently lost control on a rain-slicked curve.

Cruz said the driver and eight passengers were killed. A police officer later told the Agencia Estado news agency that another body was found in the afternoon.

Two others were unaccounted for, according to Cruz's tally, and may have drowned in a small river at the bottom of the ravine.

Twenty-two passengers survived, and three remain hospitalized.

Internet

Blood sugar linked to elderly cognition

NEW YORK, 1 Jan — Maintaining optimal blood sugar levels, even in the absence of diabetes, may help in preserving cognitive health in the elderly, US researchers suggest. Researchers at Columbia University Medical Center in New York say that although it is widely known that the early stages of Alzheimer's disease cause damage to the hippocampus — the area of the brain essential for memory and learning — studies suggest that it is also vulnerable to normal aging.

Until now, the underlying causes of age-related hippocampal dysfunction have remained largely unknown, the researchers said.

Lead investigator Dr Scott A. Small said that previous research discovered that decreasing brain function in one area of the hippocampus, called the dentate gyrus, is a main contributor of normal decline in memory as people age. In the current study, researchers mapped out the specific areas of the hippocampus impacted by late-life diseases like

diabetes and stroke.

“Showing for the first time that blood glucose selectively targets the dentate gyrus is not only our most conclusive finding, but it is the most important for ‘normal’ aging — that is hippocampal dysfunction that occurs in the absence of any disease states,” Small said in a statement. The findings are published in the *Annals of Neurology*.—Internet



Cuban firefighters battle a fire at a shopping centre in Havana, on 30 Dec, 2008. No injuries or fatalities have been reported so far.—INTERNET

Brides-to-be should take folic acid

WASHINGTON, 1 Jan — Before brides-to-be say “I do,” they should be taking a daily multivitamin with 400 micrograms of folic acid daily, US researchers said. Folate is a water-soluble B vitamin that occurs naturally in foods, such as leafy green vegetables; but folic acid is the synthetic form of folate that is found in supplements and added to fortified foods.

Elizabeth T Jordan, a perinatal clinical nurse specialist and member of the National Healthy Mothers, Healthy Babies Coalition Board of Directors, said that this essential B-vitamin helps build and maintain healthy cells, which is especially critical for the developing fetus. “We know that nearly half of all pregnancies in the US are unplanned and

that the average woman is getting less than one-third of the recommended amount of folic acid,” Jordan said. “We also know that the odds of having a baby born with a neural tube defect could be greatly reduced by women of childbearing age getting the recommended amount of folic acid.”

Despite the food fortification program that began in 1998, which enriched breads, cereals, flours, corn meals, pastas, rice, and other grain products with folic acid, the average non-pregnant Caucasian woman gets only 128 mcg per day of folic acid from fortified food, a study published in the May 2007 issue of the *American Journal of Clinical Nutrition*, Jordan said.

Internet



Iranian women at an Internet cafe in Teheran. Canada has not been granted consular access to detained prominent Iranian-Canadian blogger Hossein Derakhshan in Iran, a foreign affairs spokesman said in Ottawa Tuesday.—INTERNET

Size 14 women happy, size 6 women aren't

LONDON, 1 Jan — It's the most delicious news: women are happiest with their lives and the way they look when they are a size 14. Contentment, it seems, comes with curves. Perhaps that's why Kate Winslet and Nigella Lawson look so pleased with themselves.

In a British poll of 3000 women, size 14s rated their general happiness higher than any other female shape, with a quarter saying they liked their appearance. Almost half said they were

happy with their career, while a third rated their love lives as the best possible.

Second happiest, according to the research, were size 12 women, with almost three-quarters saying they were totally satisfied with their friendships and almost half happy with their careers. Size eights came third in the happiness poll, closely followed by those who wear a size 16 — the average dress size for British women.

Internet

Nokia sells security appliance unit

ESPOO, 1 Jan — Check Point Software Technologies has acquired Finland-based Nokia's mission critical security appliance business.

Nokia signed a deal with US company Check Point Software Technologies for the company to purchase Nokia's security solutions development business unit.

With the acquisition Check Point, which has partnered with Nokia for more than 10-years on mission critical security appliance technologies, will add to its line of security solutions.

“As a pioneer in security appliances, the Nokia security appliance business has been an important strategic partner for Check Point and has helped us achieve early leadership in the security appliance market,” Gil Shwed, Check Point chairman and chief executive officer, said in a statement.

“Adding Nokia's security appliance portfolio into Check Point's broad range of security solutions is the natural conclusion of our long collaboration, and will assure a smooth path forward for our mutual customers.”

Internet

Motorcycle surveillance system launched

OVERLAND PARK, 1 Jan — Kansas-based Digital Ally Inc announced the launch of a new surveillance technology for police motorcycle fleets. Digital Ally released its DVM-500M Digital Video System designed for motorcycles and other mobile police or homeland security applications. Company officials say the DVM-500M, which builds on their line of police car surveillance technologies, is capable of withstanding the potentially harsh weather conditions police motorcycles are subjected to.—Internet

A diver clad in Japanese kimono swims with an eel at Sunshine International Aquarium in Tokyo on 31 Dec, 2008. The special fish-feeding performance in kimono outfit will be held from 1 January to 7 January, 2009.—INTERNET



SPORTS

Gerrard has Benitez's 'full support'



Steven Gerrard.

LONDON, 1 Jan— Liverpool manager Rafael Benitez threw his weight behind club captain Steven Gerrard on Wednesday after the England midfielder was charged earlier this week with assault in an alleged bar brawl.

"Steven is our captain and a key player for us, but more than this, I know him as a nice person," Benitez told the club's official website.

"I sat down with him this morning and had a very good talk with him about the situation and I was also able to speak at length with our club lawyer," the Spaniard added.

"Steven explained to me what had happened and I told him he has my full support and backing,

along with everyone else at the football club," said Benitez, back at Liverpool's Melwood training ground for the first time since his kidney stone operation a fortnight ago.

"He's trained with the other lads this (Wednesday) morning after a couple of days off for the squad and is keen now to focus solely on his football.

"We've worked very hard to get into the position we're in going through to the New Year and all of us are determined to keep that progress going.

"We'll do whatever we can to support Steven in the weeks ahead, but we're now concentrating on our preparation for the FA Cup game at Preston this weekend."

Gerrard, released on police bail, is free to play in Saturday's match. The 28-year-old was charged along with two other men who were also arrested at around 2:30am local time (0230GMT) Monday after the incident at the Lounge Inn restaurant and bar in Southport, near Liverpool in northwest England.—*Internet*

FA confirm Droylsden's Cup expulsion

LONDON, 1 Jan – Non-league Droylsden failed on Wednesday with an appeal against their expulsion from the FA Cup after being found guilty of fielding an ineligible player during their bizarre tie with Chesterfield.

As a result fourth-tier Chesterfield will be away to Ipswich Town, who play in the Championship, the division below the elite Premier League, in the third round on Saturday.

Last week, Droylsden thought they had won their second-round tie against League Two Chesterfield, two divisions above them, at the fourth time of asking after fog, a controversial goal and floodlight failure had foiled three previous attempts to separate the sides.

But it turned out that defender Sean Newton, who scored both their goals in a 2-1 win, was ineligible after collecting his fifth booking of the season on 9 December. According to Football Association (FA) regulations, that meant he was suspended for one match, a ban which should have ruled him out of last Tuesday's fixture.

Droylsden were thrown out by an FA Cup protest sub-committee on Monday, a decision upheld by Wednesday's appeal hearing.—*Internet*

Apologetic Fuller says his future in Stoke's hands



Stoke City's Ricardo Fuller before he was sent off during the match against West Ham on 28 December. Fuller apologised to the club's fans on Wednesday for slapping his own captain during the match.—*INTERNET*

LONDON, 1 Jan – Stoke City striker Ricardo Fuller apologised to the club's fans Wednesday after being sent-off for slapping his own captain Andy Griffin in the Premier League defeat against West Ham last weekend.

But the Jamaica forward was unsure if his words would be enough to keep him with the Potters, whose 2-1 loss to West Ham last Sunday left them in the relegation zone.

Fuller, who accused Griffin of "disrespecting" him, told Sky Sports on Wednesday: "It (the incident) happened and that's all. I'm sorry for the fans especially as we didn't get the three points."

The bizarre flashpoint came just moments after Carlton Cole's equaliser for the Hammers at Upton Park as Fuller lost his cool following a row with Griffin over who was responsible for the goal.—*Internet*

Underdone Aussies ready for Hopman Tennis Cup

PERTH, 1 Jan – Australian pair Lleyton Hewitt and Casey Dellacqua will be hoping to put the injury woes of 2008 behind them when they team up at the Hopman Cup.

Hewitt is a dual Grand Slam winner and Dellacqua is coming off the best year of her career. But both have had their preparations for 2009 interrupted by injury and the host nation is at long odds for a second victory in the unique mixed teams tournament, which starts on Saturday.

Hewitt's season ended in August due to hip surgery and the Hopman Cup is his first step on the comeback trail, while Dellacqua's 2008 campaign also came to a premature end in September due to a nagging shoulder injury.

Internet



Australian pair Lleyton Hewitt, and Casey Dellacqua will be hoping to put the injury woes of 2008 behind them when they team up at the Hopman Cup.—*INTERNET*

Tsonga says he can dominate Djokovic, ahead of Brisbane tennis

BRISBANE, 1 Jan – Frenchman Jo-Wilfried Tsonga believes he can rejuvenate his recent dominance over world No 3 Novak Djokovic if the pair meet during next week's inaugural Brisbane International tennis tournament.

Djokovic downed Tsonga in the final of this year's Australian Open but since then has lost three matches in succession to the 23-year-old Frenchman. Tsonga is the second seed behind the Serb at the Brisbane International and said if his serve was working he would be almost unbeatable. Tsonga was one of the stars of the Australian Open as he won his way through to the final with some occasionally breathtaking stroke play. But he said simply reaching the final had not been enough.—*Internet*



Jo-Wilfried Tsonga (left) of France shakes hands with Novak Djokovic of Serbia after a match in Bangkok, in September.—*INTERNET*

Daly suspended for 6 months by PGA Tour

WASHINGTON, 1 Jan— John Daly smashed one tee shot off the top of a beer can during a pro-am. At another tournament, he returned from a rain delay with Tampa Bay Buccaneers coach Jon Gruden as his caddy. And his most memorable photo this year came in an orange jail suit, eyes half-closed.

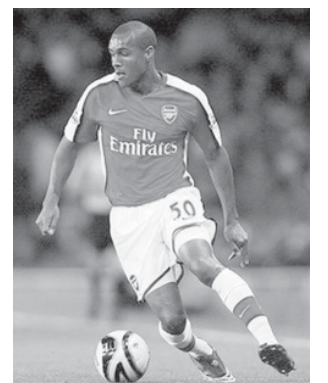
Daly said on Wednesday that such unwelcome publicity is why the PGA Tour suspended him for six months. The two-time major champion confirmed his suspension to The Associated Press, calling this the low point of an 18-year career during which he has made as much news off the course as he has with his prodigious game.—*Internet*

Arsenal loan Simpson to West Brom

LONDON, 1 Jan – West Bromwich Albion, the bottom club in the Premier League have signed striker Jay Simpson on loan from top-flight rivals Arsenal for the rest of the season, it was announced on Wednesday.

The 20-year-old scored twice for a coltish Arsenal team in their 3-0 League Cup win over Wigan in November and Gunners manager Arsene Wenger is letting him leave the Emirates Stadium to gain first-team experience.

Internet



West Bromwich Albion, the bottom club in the Premier League have signed striker Jay Simpson, on loan from top-flight rivals Arsenal for the rest of the season, it was announced on Wednesday.—*INTERNET*

Another reason to avoid High-fat Diet: It can disrupt our biological clock

JERUSALEM, 1 Jan — Indulgence in a high-fat diet can not only lead to overweight because of excessive calorie intake, but also can affect the balance of circadian rhythms — everyone's 24-hour biological clock, Hebrew University of Jerusalem researchers have shown.

The biological clock regulates the expression and/or activity of enzymes and hormones involved in metabolism, and disturbance of the clock can lead to such phenomena as hormone imbalance, obesity,

psychological and sleep disorders and cancer.

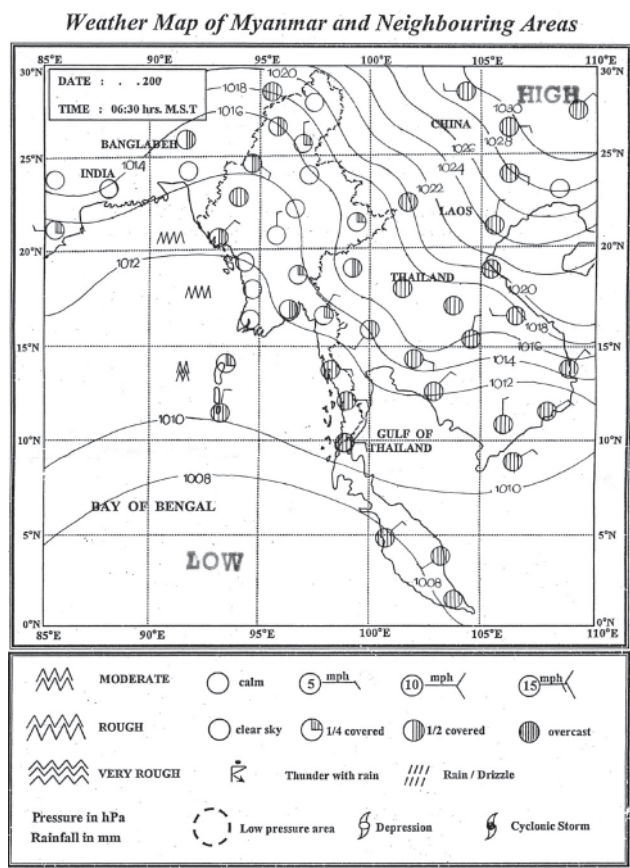
While light is the strongest factor affecting the circadian clock, Dr. Oren Froy and his colleagues of the Institute of Biochemistry, Food Science and Nutrition at the Hebrew University's Robert H. Smith Faculty of Agriculture, Food and Environment in Rehovot, have demonstrated in their experiments with laboratory mice that there is a cause-and-effect relation between diet and biological clock imbalance.

The researchers fed

mice either a low-fat or a high-fat diet, followed by a fasting day, then measured components of the adiponectin metabolic pathway at various levels of activity. In mice on the low-fat diet, the adiponectin signaling pathway components exhibited normal circadian rhythmicity. Fasting resulted in a phase advance. The high-fat diet resulted in a phase delay. Fasting raised and the high-fat diet reduced adenosine monophosphate-activated protein kinase (AMPK) levels. This protein is involved in fatty acid

metabolism, which could be disrupted by the lower level. The researchers suggest that this high-fat diet could contribute to obesity, not only through its high caloric content, but also by disrupting the phases and daily rhythm of clock genes. They contend also that high fat-induced changes in the clock and the adiponectin signaling pathway may help explain the disruption of other clock-controlled systems associated with metabolic disorders, such as blood pressure levels and the sleep/wake cycle.

Internet



Antibiotics before infections save lives-study

AMSTERDAM, 1 Jan — Giving antibiotics to patients in intensive care

units as a precaution saves lives, according to a major Dutch study published on

Wednesday.

The findings in the *New England Journal of Medicine* suggest the benefits of administering antibiotics right away, even before an infection develops, outweigh the risks people will develop resistance to them, the researchers said. "We have seen that using antibiotics clearly results in a reduction in the number of deaths and intensive care units should make use of this knowledge," Anne Marie

de Smet, a researcher at University Medical Center Utrecht, said in a statement.

Drug-resistant bacteria are a growing problem in hospitals worldwide, marked by the rise of superbugs such as methicillin-resistant *Staphylococcus aureus*, or MRSA. Such infections kill about 19,000 people a year in the United States, while more than 4,000 a year in Britain are infected.

Internet



In Hong Kong, half a million people gathered around the historic harbour for the new year countdown.—Internet

WEATHER

Thursday, 1 January, 2009

Summary of observations recorded at 09:30 hr MST: During the past 24 hours, weather has been partly cloudy in Kachin State, upper Sagaing, Yangon and Taninthayi Divisions and generally fair in the remaining areas. Night temperatures were (3°C) to (4°C) below January average temperatures in Chin State, upper Sagaing and Magway Divisions, (3°C) to (4°C) above January average temperatures in Mon State, Taninthayi Divisions and about January average temperatures in the remaining areas. The significant night temperatures were Hakha (-1°C), Loilem (0°C), Namsam and Heho (4°C).

Maximum temperature on 31-12-2008 was 93°F. Minimum temperature on 1-1-2009 was 61°F. Relative humidity at (09:30) hours MST on 1-1-2009 was 66%. Total sunshine hours on 31-12-2008 was (10.0) hrs approx.

Rainfall on 1-1-2009 was (Nil) at Mingaladon, Kaba-Aye and Central Yangon. Total rainfall since 1-1-2009 was (Nil) at Mingaladon, Kaba-Aye and Central Yangon. Maximum wind speed at Yangon (Kaba-Aye) was (4) mph from Northeast at (18:30) hours MST on 31-12-2008.

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

Forecast valid until evening of 2nd January 2009: Possibility of isolated light rain in Taninthayi Division, weather will be partly cloudy in Kachin State, upper Sagaing and Yangon Divisions and generally fair in the remaining areas. Degree of certainty is (40%).

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

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

Forecast for Nay Pyi Taw and neighbouring area for 2-1-2009: Generally fair weather.

Forecast for Yangon and neighbouring area for 2-1-2009: Partly cloudy.

Forecast for Mandalay and neighbouring area for 2-1-2009: Generally fair weather.



Friday, 2 January
View on today

- 7:00 am
 1. တောင်တန်းသာသနာပြုဆရာတော် ဘုရားကြီး၏ 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. ပြန်ကြားရေးဝန်ကြီးဌာန

- နိုင်ငံတော်ဆိုင်းဝိုင်းကြီး ဖျော်ဖြေတင်ဆက်မှုအစီအစဉ်
- 8:05 am
 6. “လူကူးမျဉ်းကျားမှကူးမယ်” (A)
- 8:15 am
 7. အကပြိုင်ပွဲ
- 8:30 am
 8. International news
- 8:45 am
 9. The mirror images of the musical oldies
- 4:00 pm
 1. Martial song
- 4:10 pm
 2. Songs of national races
- 4:20 pm
 3. မြန်မာစာမြန်မာစကား
- 4:35 pm
 4. အဆိုပြိုင်ပွဲ
- 4:45 pm
 5. အဝေးသင်တက္ကသိုလ်ပညာရေး

- ရုပ်မြင်သံကြားသင်ခန်းစာ ဒုတိယနှစ် (သမိုင်းအထူးပြု) (သမိုင်း)
- 5:00 pm
 6. Songs to uphold national spirit
- 5:10 pm
 7. Songs of yesteryears
- 5:20 pm
 8. “ကျေးဇူးတင်ပါတယ် DOTS” (လွင်မိုး၊ ထွန်းထွန်းဝင်း၊ အိန္ဒြာကျော်စင်၊ ခင်သန်းနွယ်) (ဒါရိုက်တာ-စိုးကျော်ဆန်း)
- 5:35 pm
 9. Musical programme
- 5:45 pm
 10. (၆၀)နှစ်မြောက်လွတ်လပ်ရေးနေ့ ဂုဏ်ပြုအစီအစဉ်
- 6:00 pm
 11. Evening news

- 6:30 pm
 12. Weather report
- 6:35 pm
 13. သုတစုံလင်ရွှေညောင်ရှင်
- 7:10 pm
 14. နိုင်ငံခြားဇာတ်လမ်းတွဲ “ကုန်သွယ်မှုနိတိ” (အပိုင်း-၄၀)
- 8:00 pm
 15. News
 16. International news
 17. Weather report
 18. အချုပ်အခြာအာဏာ ဓွန်ရှည်ကြာခိုင်မာစေမှုပို့ရေးစု (နှစ်ဆယ့်လေးဒေသတစ်ခွင် အလှဆင်ရေးစုံပွင့်လန်း အလှပန်း) (အပိုင်း-၂)
 19. နိုင်ငံခြားဇာတ်လမ်းတွဲ “ပင်လယ်ဖျော်မင်းသား” (အပိုင်း-၆၀)

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

Thongwa Creek Bridge (Kyondainggyi) commissioned into service

YANGON, 1 Jan—Thongwa Creek Bridge (Kyondainggyi) on Pantanaw-Einme road in Pantanaw Township of Ayeyawady Division, built by Bridge Construction Project Special Group-5 of Public Works of the Ministry of Construction, was opened at the pandal near the bridge this morning.

It was attended by Chairman of Ayeyawady Division Peace and Development Council Commander of South-West Command Maj-Gen Kyaw Swe, Minister for Construction Maj-Gen Saw Tun, departmental officials at division, district and township levels, officials of Public Works, members of social organizations, teachers, students and local people.

(See page 7)



South-West Command Commander Maj-Gen Kyaw Swe, Minister for Construction Maj-Gen Saw Tun and Brig-Gen Zin Yaw of Patheingyi Station formally open Thongwa creek bridge (Kyondainggyi).—MNA

Hlawga Park opens on Independence Day

YANGON, 1 Jan— The Forest Department issued an announcement on 29 December 2008 that the Hlawga Park will be kept open from 8 a.m. to 4 p.m. daily. The park will be kept open from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. on 4 January 2009 (the Independence Day) for the public relaxation.—MNA



The opening ceremony of Thongwa Creek Bridge (Kyondainggyi) in progress.—MNA