

## Senior General Than Shwe sends message of felicitations to Emperor of Japan

NAY PYI TAW, 23 Dec — On the occasion of the birthday of His Majesty Akihito, Emperor of Japan, which falls on 23 December 2007, Senior General Than Shwe, Chairman of the State Peace and Development Council of the Union of Myanmar, has sent a message of felicitations to His Majesty Akihito, Emperor of Japan. — MNA

## Prime Minister General Thein Sein felicitates Japanese counterpart

NAY PYI TAW, 23 Dec — On the occasion of the birthday of His Majesty Akihito, Emperor of Japan, which falls on 23 December 2007, General Thein Sein, Prime Minister of the Union of Myanmar, has sent a message of felicitations to His Excellency Mr Yasuo Fukuda, Prime Minister of Japan. — MNA

## Lt-Gen Myint Swe awards championship trophy to Yangon Command team in Tatmadaw Football Tournament

YANGON, 22 Dec — The final match of the 46th Defence Services Commander-in-Chief's Trophy Tatmadaw (Army, Navy and Air) Football Tournament 2007 was held at the Aung San Stadium, here, this afternoon, attended by Lt-Gen Myint Swe of the Ministry of Defence.

Yangon Command clinched the title with a 3-1 win over Southern Command.

At the prize presentation ceremony, Commander of Mingaladon Air Base Brig-Gen Zin Yaw presented individual prizes to the players of third prize winning Defence Services (Navy) team and second prize winning Southern Command team.

Commander of Ayeyawady Naval Region Command Commodore Win Shein handed individual prizes to the players of first prize winning Yangon Command team.

Commander of Yangon Command Maj-Gen Hla Htay Win presented best player awards and fair play award to respective teams.

On behalf of the Commander-in-Chief of Defence Services, Lt-Gen Myint Swe of the Ministry of Defence gave championship trophy and duplicate trophy to first prize winning Yangon Command team.

The Yangon Command football team has won the championship trophy for 21 times in the Defence Services Commander-in-Chief's Trophy Tatmadaw

(Army, Navy and Air) Football Tournament.

Among the spectators were senior military officers, diplomats, servicemen and family members and members of social organizations.

MNA



Lt-Gen Myint Swe presents championship trophy to Yangon Command team.—MNA

### 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

### INSIDE

The government is building bridges over the Ayeyawady River one after another. Local people will, therefore, be able to enjoy better living conditions in the near future.

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PERSPECTIVES

**Emergence of the State Constitution is the duty of all citizens of Myanmar Naing-Ngan.**

## PERSPECTIVES

Sunday, 23 December, 2007

### Emergence of more river-crossing bridges improves people's socio-economic life

Building roads and bridges all over the nation effectively spurs the development of a region in various sectors especially in the economic, social and health sectors.

Thanks to the smooth transport, local people can travel from one region to another with convenience and grab the opportunities to enjoy economic growth to a greater degree.

Now, the government is constructing transport facilities throughout the country with the aim of ensuring equitable development of all regions. The flow of commodities has become swift, as a result.

The Ayeyawady Bridge (Yadanabon) Project being implemented over the Ayeyawady River is nearing completion. Upon completion, the bridge will link Sagaing Division with Mandalay Division.

The main bridge of the Ayeyawady Bridge (Yadanabon) is of steel beam type. The 5614-foot-long facility has a 49-foot-wide motor road and two pedestrians on it. It will be able to withstand each motor vehicle weighing 60 tons in maximum.

Indeed, the bridge is a fruit of the hard work Myanmar engineers have exerted day in, day out. Now, it is coping with traffic.

The government is building bridges over the Ayeyawady River one after another. Local people will, therefore, be able to enjoy better living conditions in the near future.

### China chosen as guest country of Europolia 2009

BRUSSELS, 22 Dec — China has been chosen as the guest country of Europolia 2009, the Chinese ambassador to Belgium said here on Wednesday.

Under consensus between the Belgian King Albert II and Chinese President Hu Jintao back in 2005, Europolia 2009 chose China as the primary guest country, said Chinese ambassador Zhang Qiyue and Kristine De Mulder, director general of Europolia International.

The biennial cultural and artistic event, to be held between September 2009 and February 2010, is a great opportunity to showcase China's cultural heritage and modern achievements, Zhang told a Press conference.

Former Belgian ambassador to China, Claire Kirschen, who has been tasked to plan the event for the Belgian side, said there are so many activities to choose from given the richness of the Chinese culture.

Europolia, a major cultural and arts festival in Europe, has been held every two years in Belgium since 1969, featuring the culture and arts of a selected guest country. — MNA/Xinhua

## 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



### Minister inspects factory projects

NAY PYI TAW, 21 Dec—Minister for Industry-2 Maj-Gen Saw Lwin, accompanied by Deputy Minister Maj-Gen Kyaw Swa Khaing, inspected the machinery factory (project) in Pakokku Industrial Zone in Myaing Township, Magway Division, on 17 December.

Director (Project) U Win Tint of the Myanma Machine Tool and Electrical Industries reported on installation of machines, trial run and machine tools in Die Making workshop, and maintenance of machinery for the project.

The minister viewed the construction of workshops in the project site. Officials conducted him around the site.

He called for timely completion of the projects

ahead of schedule, keeping records systematically, systematic storage of machines, making observations on installation and test running of machines, and supply of electric power and water.

Upon arrival at the Aluminium Wire Factory in Magway Township, Magway Division, on 18 December, the minister heard a report on the project by project director U Win Myint.

The minister gave instructions on the project and viewed the site. — MNA

### MMCWA raises awareness of reproductive health in youths

YANGON, 20 Dec—Myanmar Maternal and Child Welfare Association conducted talks on reproductive health at Pale Yadana hall in Myeik yesterday.

On the occasion, Chairperson Daw Khin Than Htay of Taninthayi Division MCWSC extended greetings and Professor Dr Tun Yi of MMCWA gave talks on reproductive health.

Next, Secretary of Taninthayi Division MCWSC Dr Moe Swe and Executive Dr Than Oo briefed on reproductive health problems in youths and changing behaviors in reproduction.

After the talks, Dr Tun Yi and Dr Than Oo donated K 1.4 million and medicines to Taninthayi Division MCWA through the chairperson of Taninthayi Division MCWSC.

Present on the occasion were CEC members of MMCWA.—MNA

### Foreign Minister sends message of felicitations to Japanese counterpart

NAY PYI TAW, 23 Dec — On the occasion of the birthday of His Majesty Akihito, Emperor of Japan, which falls on 23 December 2007, U Nyan Win, Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Union of Myanmar, has sent a message of felicitations to His Excellency Mr Masahiko Komura, Minister for Foreign Affairs of Japan. — MNA

### Deputy Minister for Labour meets industrial zone management committees and entrepreneurs

YANGON, 21 Dec — Deputy Minister for Labour Brig-Gen Tin Tun Aung this morning made inspection tour of Shwepyitha, Hlinethaya and Shwepaukkan industrial zones where he met with those from the industrial zone supervisory committees and entrepreneurs and held a discussion with them. Next, deputy minister briefed matters on weaknesses of industrial sector and remedial measures to be taken. The deputy minister heard reports by the entrepreneurs and fulfilled the requirements. — MNA

# China says US must do more on climate change

BEIJING, 21 Dec — China is glad a climate change roadmap agreed last week in Bali has drawn the United States to the negotiating table, but the world's only superpower must do more to tackle global warming, a top official said on Thursday.

Yu Qingtai, China's climate change ambassador, said Beijing was satisfied with the hard-won plan, finally agreed after two weeks of talks overran by a day into a dramatic final session marked by tears, booing and a series of standing ovations.

Nearly 200 nations agreed to launch negotiations on a new pact to fight global warming after a last-minute reversal by the United States allowed a breakthrough.

The deal is important because it draws in countries that currently do not have a binding international obligation to cut greenhouse gas emissions, Yu said, but they could still do more to help others.

"The United States is an important contributor of emissions both in total and on a per-capita basis. It has both advanced technology and ample funds," he told a briefing.

"So on the issue of tackling climate change, America should display a more positive, more constructive role."

China says rich nations should bear much of the burden for tackling global warming in the short term because of their historic responsibility for causing the problem.

MNA/Reuters



Brazilian painter Candido Portinari's oil painting "The Coffee Worker" is seen in this handout photograph released by the Sao Paulo Museum of Art on 20 Dec, 2007. —INTERNET



Venezuela's President Hugo Chavez, right, shakes hands with Cuba's acting President Raul Castro, during the inauguration of the IV Petrocaribe summit in Cienfuegos, Cuba, on 21 Dec, 2007. — INTERNET

## INTERNATIONAL NEWS

### US probes Iraq police death in fight with Marine

BAGHDAD, 21 Dec — The US military said on Thursday it was investigating the killing of an Iraqi policeman in what appeared to be knife fight with a US Marine at a joint security station in the western Anbar Province.

Major Jeff Pool, a spokesman for the US military in western Iraq, said the investigation was still at an early stage but the

death "appears to have resulted from an argument escalating into a physical altercation" on 17 December.

He said in an e-mail statement that the policeman died of his wounds, while the Marine was taken to a military hospital. Both men received lacerations in the fight. The statement did not identify either man.

The incident comes less than a week after a US Marine reservist was sentenced to a bad-conduct discharge after a Marine jury convicted him of negligent homicide for killing an Iraqi soldier a year ago in the city of Fallujah, 50 kilometres

(30 miles) west of Baghdad. Pool said US military commanders met with tribal leaders in Anbar Province to discuss the latest killing.

He said both sides "regret this incident and are working to assure incidents such as this do not occur in the future".

MNA/Reuters

### Israeli forces kill four Gaza gunmen in raid

GAZA, 21 Dec — Israeli tanks and troops backed by helicopter gunships raided the central Gaza Strip on Thursday, killing at least four Palestinian gunmen, militant sources and hospital officials said.

They said Israeli forces operating east of Maghazi refugee camp, a few hundred metres (yards) in from Gaza's boundary fence, exchanged fire with groups of gunmen, killing four.

Several other Palestinians, including a seven-year-old boy and a Reuters Television soundman, Nihad Odehtallah, were wounded. —MNA/Reuters

Columns of smoke rises from the site of T2 Laboratories, Inc, on 19 Dec, 2007 in Jacksonville, Fla. T2 Laboratories, Inc manufactures chemical solvents and fuel additives.

INTERNET

### Chinese, Bolivian FM's vow to boost bilateral ties

BEIJING, 21 Dec — Chinese Foreign Minister Yang Jiechi held talks with his Bolivian counterpart David Choquehuanca here Thursday. Both sides agreed to boost bilateral ties. Yang said since China and Bolivia established diplomatic ties, their relations have developed smoothly and the presidents of both countries had reached consensus in deepening bilateral relations.

New progress has been made in their cooperation in political, economic and trade, cultural and educational fields and the two countries has kept sound cooperation in dealing with international affairs, Yang said. —MNA/Xinhua

### Bush proposal threatens Lebanon stability

BEIRUT, 22 Dec — Hizbollah said on Friday a proposal by US President George W Bush for Lebanon's Western-backed governing coalition to elect a new president unilaterally was a threat to the country's stability.

Hizbollah MP

Hassan Fadlallah told Reuters that Bush's comments on Thursday had further complicated efforts to forge a deal between the governing coalition and the Syria-backed opposition, which have been locked in a power struggle for more than a year.

MNA/Reuters





People walk in Red Square, with St Basil Cathedral in the background, decorated for New Year celebrations in Moscow, on 21 Dec, 2007.—INTERNET

## Family abuse kills 32 old people in Japan

TOKYO, 21 Dec — More than 30 old people in Japan died due to abuse by family members in the year to March, the government said in a report.

Half the 32 victims were murdered, six died due to violence and 10 because of neglect, all by family members who were taking care of them, the Welfare Ministry said.

Sons were to blame for 10 of the deaths, said the report released on Wednesday. Over half the victims were women, with seven women being killed by their husbands, it said. The report highlights the challenge Japan faces as it

tries to care for a rapidly ageing population with a shortage of nursing care workers and rising medical costs.

Nearly 13,000 cases of abuse by family members were confirmed, along with 54 cases at nursing homes, figures which experts called the tip of the iceberg.

“Abuse takes place in a closed room. In order for the government to catch such cases, the community and officials need to have a better awareness of abuse,” said Emiko Kishi, an associate professor at the Japanese Red Cross College of Nursing.

Earlier this month, a

survey by a research centre in northern Japan found nearly 500 cases of abuse at nursing homes, 10 times the number in the government report.

MNA/Reuters



A visitor looks at Toshiba Corp's liquid crystal display (LCD) televisions at an electric home appliances shop in Tokyo on 21 Dec, 2007. Toshiba plans to buy large LCD panels from Sharp Corp as part of an alliance in the flat panel business, sources from the two companies said.—INTERNET

## Pakistan urges safer culling after bird flu outbreak

ISLAMABAD, 21 Dec — Pakistan is urging provincial authorities to obey health guidelines to stop any bird flu outbreaks after fears lapses in poultry culling methods led to eight people being

infected with the H5N1 virus. The Health Ministry is sending out messages via radio and pamphlets to villages and farms in North West Frontier Province, where the eight people, including a veterinarian

involved in culling, were infected in South Asia's first human cases.

The vet's brother died of bird flu. A third brother also died but it is unclear if he was also infected with the virus.—MNA/Reuters

## Suicide bomber kills 13 in N-E Baghdad

BAGHDAD, 21 Dec — A suicide bomber blew himself up at an anti-Qaeda militant group station in the province of Diyala on Thursday, killing 13 people and wounding eight others, an Interior Ministry source said. “A suicide bomber wearing an explosive belt blew himself up at the Awakening Council

station in the town of Kan'an, 20 kilometres south of the provincial capita of Baquba,” the source told Xinhua on condition of anonymity.

The blast killed 13 members of the Awakening Council, including Sheik Nasir al-Mandlawi, a local tribal leader, and wounded eight others, the source said.

US troops were at the scene during the attack, but the source could not tell whether US soldiers sustained any casualty.

The US military had no immediate comment on the incident.

Earlier, a provincial police source said the suicide bomber targeted a gathering of people in the town.—MNA/Xinhua

## Vietnam sets up diplomacy orientations in 2008

HANOI, 21 Dec — Vietnam will, in 2008, continue to reinforce and strengthen relations with other countries in substantial, effective and stable manners, while promoting its role as a non-permanent member of the United Nations Security Council, a spokesman for Foreign ministry said on Thursday.

Next year, Vietnam will actively make contributions to international forums, deal with global affairs, participate more deeply and fully in international economic entities and sub-regional economic arrangements, the country's Foreign Ministry spokesman Le Dung said at a regular Press briefing. Vietnam is to

develop economic diplomacy and improve investment environment to attract stronger foreign investment, expand commodity and labour export markets, and welcome more foreign tourists.

The country will also keep on completing border demarcation with neighbouring countries as schedule, while settling issues relating to land border and territorial

waters, he said, noting that it advocates solving border disputes through peaceful negotiations.

Vietnam will, in 2008, continue to well implement polices on overseas Vietnamese, such as simplifying entry-exit procedures, facilitating business environment, creating favourable conditions for them to buy real estates, and reinforcing national unity.—MNA/Xinhua

## Syria says working for end to Lebanon crisis

DAMASCUS, 21 Dec — Syria is working to help resolve Lebanon's presidential crisis, the Foreign Minister said on Thursday, responding to reports that

France's patience was wearing thin with Damascus over a stalled presidential election.

In a rare session devoted to Lebanon with journalists, Walid al-Moualem said Syria wanted an election as soon as possible to fill the presidency, empty since 23 November when the term of pro-Syrian Emile Lahoud ended.

Mualem said the United States was obstructing a deal by ignoring the principle of consensus, not majority rule, as the main factor in Lebanon's sectarian political system.

“The American role in Lebanon should be sidelined because it is not balanced. Syria is playing a constructive role. We are facilitating a solution, but at the end the solution is a Lebanese one,” Moualem said.—MNA/Reuters



A worker shovels artificial snow to cover the terrace at the first floor of the Eiffel Tower in Paris, on 19 Dec, 2007. French environmentalists on Thursday slammed a decision to coat part of the Eiffel Tower with artificial snow for the festive season, saying it was a costly waste of water.—INTERNET

## WTO rules against some US anti-dumping vs Mexico

GENEVA, 22 Dec—A World Trade Organization (WTO) panel ruled on Thursday against some US anti-dumping measures to combat imports of Mexican stainless steel, in another rebuff for a controversial US trade remedy.

But the panel said the controversial method of calculating penalty duties on imports sold at unfairly low prices — known as

“zeroing” — was permissible in some circumstances.

A senior diplomat in Mexico’s WTO mission said the panel’s report was a victory for Mexico even though the panel did not agree with some of Mexico’s claims.

“We see it as a victory for the Mexican claim, as they find that zeroing is prohibited in original investigations,” Carlos

Vejar Borrego, an expert on trade disputes, told *Reuters*.

Mexico was considering whether to appeal against the panel’s ruling to try and clarify the rules on anti-dumping, as the panel had backed some of the US measures, he said.

Both Mexico and the United States have 60 days to decide whether to appeal.—MNA/Reuters



A view of the assembly line at the new Toyota plant outside St Petersburg. Toyota inaugurated its first car assembly plant in Russia as the country’s car market booms and the Japanese automaker aims to become the biggest producer in the world.—INTERNET

## Oil jumps \$2 on slump in US stockpiles

NEW YORK, 21 Dec — Oil prices vaulted two US dollars higher on Wednesday as a slump in US crude oil stockpiles to their lowest level in nearly three years rekindled worries of a winter supply crunch.

US crude rose 2.15 US dollars to 92.23 US dollars a barrel by 2:00 EST (1900 GMT). London Brent rose 2.08 US dollars to 92.20 US dollars.

The US Energy Information Administration reported that crude stockpiles in the world’s largest energy consumer

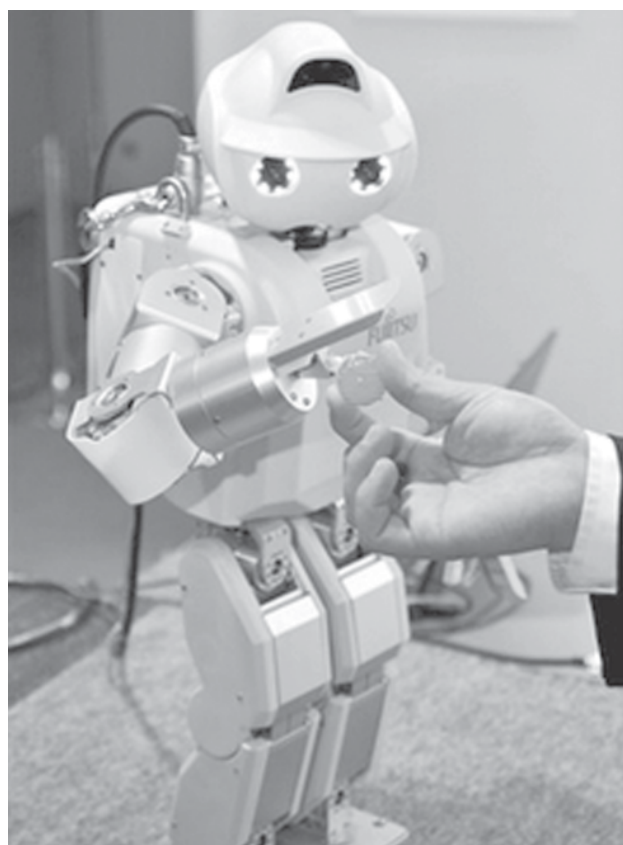
dropped 7.6 million barrels last week to 296.9 million, the lowest since February 2005.

MNA/Reuters

A stainless statue to commemorate the success of the first phase of the Chang’e Lunar Probe Project is put up in Beijing Space City on 19 Dec, 2007. It is 6.6 m tall and 13.2m wide.—INTERNET



Fujitsu’s 60 centimetre (24 inch) tall humanoid walking robot HOAP tries to pick up a ball during a demonstration prior to the awarding ceremony of Japan’s Robot of the Year award in Tokyo on 20 Dec, 2007.—INTERNET



## ECONOMIC NEWS

### Dutch firms fined for illegally distributing spyware

BRUSSELS, 21 Dec— Dutch telecommunications watchdog OPTA has fined three companies and their two directors a total of one million euros (about 1.44 million US dollars) for the illegal distribution of “adware” and “spyware”, local newspaper *Financieel Dagblad* reported on Wednesday.

This is the first time fines have been imposed for the distribution of “adware” in Europe, OPTA was quoted as saying in a statement on Tuesday.

“Adware” (advertising-supported software) is any software programme which is silently installed on a computer and causes a torrent of “pop-up” advertisements ranging from recommendations for pornography and ring tones to adverts for companies.

Like adware, “spyware” is also secretly installed on a computer and keeps track of the infected computer’s surfing and other activities without the user’s knowledge.

MNA/Xinhua

## Indonesia introduces on-line ex-im services at ports

JAKARTA, 22 Dec—The Indonesian Government will expand the on-line

permit service for importers and exporters that was introduced earlier this week at Jakarta’s Tanjung Priok Port to nine more major ports next year.

By next April, the government would introduce the system called the National Single Window (NSW) at Belawan Port in North Sumatra, Tanjung Mas in Central Java, Tanjung Perak in East Java, and Makasar Port in South Sulawesi, local newspaper

The *Jakarta Post* reported Friday.

The extension of the scheme to another five ports — Panjang in South Sumatra, Pontianak in West Kalimantan, Batam, Bali and Banjarmasin in South Kalimantan — was expected to follow later in the year.

“So far, it’s been successful at Tanjung Priok Port,” Edy Putra Irawadi, a deputy to the Coordinating Minister for Economics, was quoted as saying.—MNA/Xinhua

## Malaysia seizes over 2m pirated optical discs

KUALA LUMPUR, 22 Dec — More than two million pirated optical discs worth 54 million ringgit (15.88 million US dollars) were seized by Malaysian Domestic Trade and Consumer Affairs Ministry this year, local media reported on Friday.

Until 2 December, the ministry has conducted 58,000 raids. However, only 2,420 people were prosecuted, the *New Straits Times* reported.

“We confiscated 2.35 million pirated discs from raids on night markets, shops and illegal factories,” said Deputy Minister S Veera-singam after closing the ministry’s Kennelman

Course at the police K-9 Unit near Sepang, central state of Selangor.

Seven enforcement officers from the ministry received their certificates from Vee-rasingam after completing the four-week tracker dog handling course conducted by the unit. The seven will become trailblazers in the recently set-up tracker dog unit after a pioneer project involving two Labradors, Lucky and Flo, which sniffed out pirated discs worth millions of ringgit.

The unit is the world’s first tracker dog unit under a domestic trade and consumer affairs ministry.

MNA/Xinhua

# Panama makes nat'l mourning day for US invasion

PANAMA, 21 Dec — Panama's legislature declared on Thursday 20 December, 2007 the anniversary of the 1989 US invasion, as a day of national mourning.

This year marked the 18th anniversary of a US military invasion of the Central American

country, designed in part to oust former president Manuel Antonio Noriega, who ruled the country from 1983 to 1989.

Meanwhile, a "truth and reconciliation" commission was established to investigate how many people civilians and servicemen alike, were

killed in the invasion.

Government estimates put the death toll of Panamanians at 472 to 500, but human rights groups say more than 1,000 died. Some 25,000 US troops were involved in the invasion and 23 were killed.

MNA/Xinhua

# Indian PM warns of intensified terrorists violence

NEW DELHI, 21 Dec — Indian Prime Minister Manmohan Singh said here on Thursday that Indian intelligence agencies have warned of possible intensified terrorist violence in the country, according to NDTV.

At a chief ministers' conference on internal security, Singh asked the states to establish specialized, dedicated forces to cripple left wing extremism which he said continued to be the single biggest security challenge confronting his country.

"While left-wing extremism may be

restricted in its scope to some regions, the larger problem of terrorism affects all states equally. Terror attacks may have happened so far only in some locations. But the reach of terrorists is such that no one can say that they are fully immune from such attacks," Singh said.

"While the actual perpetrators of terrorist violence may belong to a few known organizations, we need to guard against their attempts to recruit local sympathy and support", he said.

Referring to terror attacks this year in

Hyderabad, Rajasthan, Punjab and Uttar Pradesh, he said the terrorists were able to network across states and even international boundaries organizing coordinated strikes. — MNA/Xinhua



An officer from National Commission for Bird Flu gives information to the public during a bird flu handling simulation in Tangerang, outside Jakarta, this month. Indonesian bird flu officials said they were investigating several recent avian influenza deaths where the victims were believed to have not come into contact with infected poultry. —INTERNET

# Study says no proof airport security makes flying safer

WASHINGTON, 21 Dec — Airport security lines can annoy passengers, but there is no evidence that they make flying any safer, US researchers reported on Thursday.

A team at the Harvard

School of Public Health could not find any studies showing whether the time-consuming process of X-raying carry-on luggage prevents hijackings or attacks. They also found no evidence to suggest that

making passengers take off their shoes and confiscating small items prevented any incidents.

The US Transportation Security Administration told research teams requesting information their need for quick new security measures trumped the usefulness of evaluating them, Eleni Linos, Elizabeth Linos, and Graham Colditz reported in the *British Medical Journal*. "We noticed that new airport screening protocols were implemented immediately after news reports of terror threats," they wrote.

"Even without clear evidence of the accuracy of testing, the Transportation Security Administration defended its measures by reporting that more than 13 million prohibited items were intercepted in one year," the researchers added.

MNA/Reuters



In this photo released by the Florida Keys News Bureau, Jason Schwenke is towed by a Christmas wreath-decorated sea scooter in the Florida Keys National Marine Sanctuary off Key Largo, Fla, on 20 Dec, 2007. —INTERNET

*Willcom Inc's W Zero3 handset is demonstrated for a photograph during an unveiling in Tokyo. Carlyle-controlled Japanese handy-phone firm Willcom Inc and a group led by mobile phone operator KDDI Corp won licenses to supply high-speed wireless Internet access on Friday. — INTERNET*



# Broken track possible cause of Pakistan train accident

ISLAMABAD, 21 Dec — General Manager of the Pakistan Railways Asad Saeed said on Wednesday that broken track joint might have caused the train derailment in southern Pakistan.

State-run PTV quoted Saeed as saying, "A welded track joint broke. Tracks shrink in winter. There are many forces on

the track and sometimes this joint breaks".

Giving probable reasons behind the tragic accident, Saeed ruled out possibility of terrorism.

The railway tracks are old and the government is in the process of replacing them, he added.

Saeed said that an investigation had been

ordered to ascertain cause of the accident.

He said that search and rescue activities were continuing and aid workers were struggling to cope with rising number of casualties.

He assured that the accident did not affect the arrival and departure of other trains.

MNA/Xinhua

## Second Malaysia-Thailand bridge opens

KUALA LUMPUR, 22 Dec — The second bridge across Sungai Golok along the Malaysia-Thailand border, which is expected to spur economic growth and further enhance bilateral relations, was officially opened by the prime ministers of the two countries in Jeli, Malaysian northern Kelantan State on Friday.

Malaysian Prime Minister Abdullah Ahmad Badawi and his Thai counterpart, Surayud Chulanont, chalked up another milestone in 50 years of diplomatic relations between the two countries when they signed the plaque in the

middle of the 9.2-million-ringgit (2.7-million-US-dollar) bridge to mark the opening. The bridge took 11 months to complete.

In his speech televised live in Malaysia and Thailand, Badawi said the opening of the bridge, which links Bukit Bunga in Jeli with Ban Buketa in Narathiwat, Thailand, would contribute to the growth of economic and social activities for the benefit of the peoples on both sides of the border.

This is not an ordinary bridge. It is a project planned and identified under the Joint Border Development Strategy which was started

in 2004," Malaysian national news agency *Bernama* quoted Badawi as saying.

The people of Kelantan would directly benefit from the opening of the bridge in line with the Malaysian Government's aspiration and efforts to bring rapid development to the state, including the development of human capital, he said. Badawi also invited Thai investors to invest in Kelantan, which is one of the states under the East Coast Economic Region (ECER), and also other states under the Northern Corridor Economic Region (NCER).

MNA/Xinhua

## German police bag huge heroin haul

BERLIN, 22 Dec — German authorities found 150 kilos (330 pounds) of heroin in a truck in northwestern Germany in one of country's biggest seizures of the drug, police said on Friday.

The heroin, worth around six million euros (8.6 million US dollars) according to the prosecutor's office in Muenster, had been stashed in travel bags inside a truck from Turkey.

The vehicle was stopped in Bocholt, near the border with the Netherlands, and the 32-year-old driver was taken into custody, the Federal Criminal Police Office said in a statement.

"This is one of the biggest-ever seizures in Germany," the statement said, adding that most heroin smuggled into Western Europe originates in Afghanistan and often comes via Balkan countries.

In 2006, Germany made 6,763 drug seizures, confiscating 879 kilos (1,933 pounds) of heroin, the office said. Investigations into the latest seizure were continuing.

MNA/Reuters

## China unveils first locally developed regional jet

SHANGHAI, 22 Dec — China unveiled its first domestically developed regional aircraft on Friday, moving a step closer to its goal of becoming an aviation giant and challenging the dominance of Boeing and Airbus.

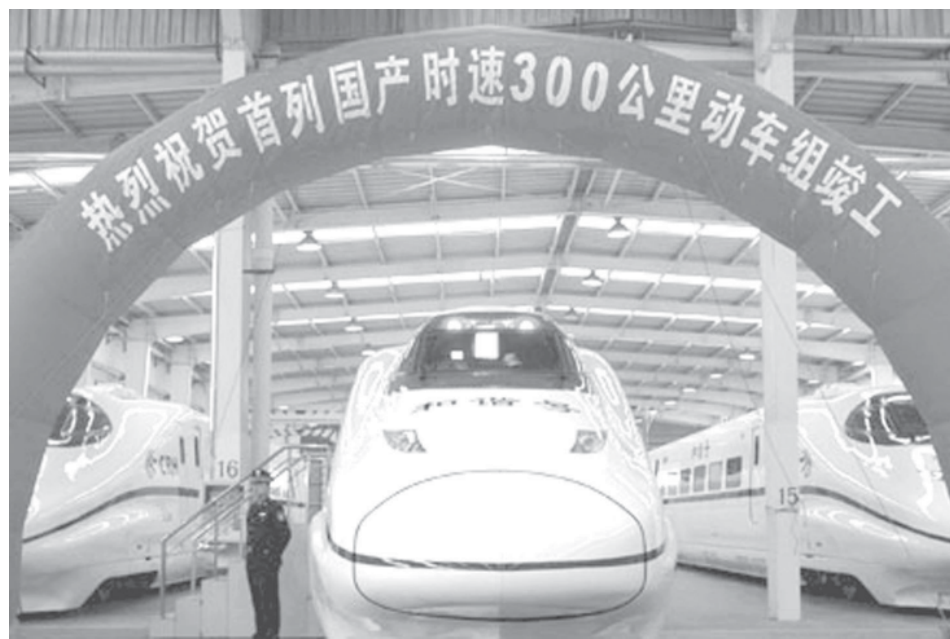
The white 90-seat ARJ21-700 jet with three curved blue stripes on the fuselage, named *Xiang Feng* or *Flying Phoenix*, was displayed to a crowd of government dignitaries and industry officials at the assembly plant in Shanghai where it will be produced.

"We are witnessing this unforgettable moment with extreme excitement," Lin Zuoming, general manager of state-owned manufacturer AVIC I, said in a ceremony broadcast live on state television.

The event was off-limits to most international and local media, except those directly controlled by the government.

AVIC I also announced 100 new orders for the *Flying Phoenix* from Kunpeng Airlines, a venture between China's Shenzhen Airlines Ltd and US-based Mesa Air Group.

That increased total orders for the jet — due for its first test flight next spring and delivery from the third quarter of 2009 — to more than 170, almost entirely from domestic carriers.—MNA/Reuters



*The first bullet train designed and manufactured in China with a speed of 300 kilometers per hour rolled off production line on 21 Dec. — XINHUA*



*Bonnie Oldham climbs out of the window of her flood damaged home that was swept onto railroad tracks in Stockton, Minnesota on 21 Aug, 2007.*

INTERNET

## Putin may become Gazprom chairman

Moscow, 22 Dec — President Vladimir Putin may become the next chairman of Russian gas export monopoly Gazprom when he steps down following a presidential election in March, *Vedomosti* business daily reported on Friday.

The newspaper cited two sources close to Gazprom and one source close to first deputy prime minister and current Gazprom chairman Dmitry Medvedev, whom Putin has designated as a preferred candidate to

succeed him.

Gazprom and the Kremlin declined immediate comments. Medvedev has said he would step down as the chairman of Gazprom, the world's largest gas producer and supplier of a quarter of Europe's gas, if he becomes president, but did not say who could replace him.

Putin has said he could become prime

minister under Medvedev. He has repeatedly denied plans to head a major state energy company, such as Gazprom or oil champion Rosneft.

Gazprom's chairman plays an important strategic role, while the firm's day-to-day operations are managed by its chief executive, Alexei Miller.

MNA/Reuters

## Japanese tourist missing in India

NEW DELHI, 22 Dec — A Japanese tourist has been reported missing in the Indian tour city of Agra where the Taj Mahal is located, according to the *Indo-Asian News Service* on Friday.

The Japanese tourist, Ogawa, who checked out from his hotel Thursday afternoon, has been untraceable thereafter. Police started searching for the man after taxi driver Rajeev, who had been hired by the tourist, reported to the police that Ogawa did not come out

of the hotel though he was booked on a train to Varanasi, the Hinduist Mecca Thursday evening.

A Japanese tourist named Kota disappeared in Agra last year and is still not found. In September, two Japanese women tourists were allegedly kept in confinement and raped by three men in the city.

Between October 2006 and December 2007 half a dozen cases of attacks on Japanese tourists have been reported.

MNA/Xinhua

## Yangon Command Commander attends opening of workshop on road safety



Commander Maj-Gen Hla Htay Win delivers an address at workshop on road safety. —MNA

YANGON, 22 Dec —Chairman of Yangon Division Supervisory Committee for Ensuring Secure and Smooth Transport Chairman of Yangon Division Peace and Development Council Commander of Yangon Command Maj-Gen Hla Htay Win this morning attended opening of workshop on road safety for students organized by Yangon Division Supervisory Committee for Traffic Rules Enforcement held at No 2 BEHS of Sangyong here.

Also present on the occasion were Deputy Commander Brig-Gen Kyaw Kyaw Htun, officials of Myanmar Police Force, No 3 Basic Education Department and YCDC, the Secretary of Yangon Division PDC and departmental officials, division,

### Home Affairs Minister meets personnel in Toungoo, Mawlamyine

NAY PYI TAW, 22 Dec — Minister for Home Affairs Maj-Gen Maung Oo together with officials met with State/District/Township level service personnel of General Administration Department, Myanmar Police Force, Bureau of Special Investigation and Myanmar Correctional Department under the ministry at the Khabaung Hall in Toungoo on 20 December and members of State/District/Township social organizations at the State Hall in Mawlamyine yesterday.

The minister briefed on the present conditions of the State and called for participation of all service personnel unitedly in implementing the objectives of the respective departments. — MNA



Minister Maj-Gen Maung Oo meeting State/District/Township level departmental service personnel of the Ministry of Home Affairs in Toungoo. — HOME AFFAIRS

district and township education officers, school heads of basic education schools and teachers.

The commander in his speech said that with an increase in the number of vehicles and population, emphasis is to be placed on enforcement of traffic rules for schools. He continued to say that it is incumbent upon teachers to train their students to abide by traffic rules in order not to lose any human resources due to traffic accidents.

Next, JAT Daw Saw Thida Moe of No 1 BEMS of Dagon, Headmistress Daw Myo Sanda Aye of No 9 BEPS of Sangyong Township demonstrated educative programmes on traffic rules and Police Major Soe Myint Oo and Police Captain Myint Aung gave educative talks on traffic rules.—MNA

### Electric Power No 2 Minister meets personnel in Sittway

NAY PYI TAW, 22 Dec —Minister for Electric Power No 2 Maj-Gen Khin Maung Myint gave instructions on matters related to producing more electricity in Rakhine State to State/District/Township level service personnel at Rakhine State Electrical Engineer Office in Sittway on 19 December.

After hearing reports on distribution of electricity from department-owned generators and private-owned paddy husk-fired power stations, progress of tasks being implemented to meet the targets and growing of physic nut plants presented by U Khin Yu Zaw, the minister stressed that it is necessary to carry out the Generation Transmission and Distribution works harmoniously and attended to the needs. The minister inspected the office and cash counter. —MNA

## Commander asks after cleft lip and palate patients in Monywa People's Hospital

NAY PYI TAW, 22 Dec — Chairman of Sagaing Division Peace and Development Council Commander of North-West Command Brig-Gen Myint Soe and wife, accompanied by Vice-President Dr Daw Tin Lin Myint of Myanmar Maternal and Child Welfare Association and members and officials asked after cleft lip and palate patients and comforted them at Monywa People's Hospital on 7 December.

The medical team led by specialists treated 125 patients from 4 to 7 December and planned to cure 170 patients in total. The cash donations presentation ceremony for cleft lip and palate patients was held at the hospital on 8 December and the commander attended it.

The Vice-President explained the purpose of the cash donation. Next, the commander, wife and the Vice-President accepted cash donated by wellwishers. Afterwards, the wife of the commander handed over cash donations to officials of the hospital.

After the ceremony, the commander and party comforted the patients round the hospital. The cash donations were K 17,431,400 in total.— MNA

## With belief NC can grant genuine democracy NLD's acts unacceptable

### 72 NLD members of Ayadaw quit

NAY PYI TAW, 22 Dec—Seventy-two members of Ayadaw Township National League for Democracy of Sagaing Division including U Han Nyunt, U Win, Daw Hmat Shein, U Kyaw Lwin, U Than Hsaung, U Tin Thein, U Than Maung, U Aung Myint, U Kan Chun and U Hla Kyu of Wet Khe village-tract on 28 October sent their resignation letters to the NLD (Headquarters) and local authorities concerned.

The letters said that they believed that National Convention that had been completed could grant genuine democracy, adding that they no longer accepted the acts of the party and they resigned from the party of their own accord.—MNA

## Young man stabbed to death in Mingala Taungnyunt Tsp

YANGON, 22 Dec — A young man was stabbed to death on Ahtet Mandalay Street in Kandawgalay (North) Ward in Mingala Taungnyunt Township at about 2.30 pm today.

The young man named Min Ko Ko, 19, son of U Arnt Ku of No 43, Daw Thein Tin Street, Kandawgalay (East) Ward was stabbed in the left chest with the 8-inch knife by Maung Maung Lay, 29, son of U Lu Maung of No 24 on Ahtet Mandalay Lane-3 in Kandawgalay (North) Ward while they were quarrelling with each other.

The body of the victim was taken to the Yangon General Hospital. Mingala Taungnyunt Police Station has brought a charge against Maung Maung Lay with FIR No 1051/2007 under section 302 of the Penal Code.—MNA



## Nay Pyi Taw Command Commander on inspection tour of hilly regions in East Nay Pyi Taw Pyinmana

NAY PYI TAW, 22 Dec—Commander of Nay Pyi Taw Command Maj-Gen Wai Lwin accompanied by officials concerned on 20 December went on an inspection tour of Nan Cho hydro power project in East Nay Pyi Taw Pyinmana. At the briefing hall, Assistant Director U Linn Naing Aye reported on progress of work and future tasks.

After giving necessary instructions, the commander inspected progress of construction of the tunnel and drilling of the stone wall.

Situated on Nan Cho creek, the project will be able to generate 152 million kwh per year upon completion.

On arrival at We Pauk village, the commander met with departmental personnel and local people. And he donated stationery for 97 students and robes for members of the Sangha.



Commander Maj-Gen Wai Lwin presents stationery for the students to a responsible person. —MNA

Afterwards, departmental officials presented traditional costumes and publications to local people and gifts to service personnel. The commander then went to Gamong Taung village where he looked into construction of rural health care centre and paid homage and offered robes to the Presiding Sayadaw of the village.

After giving necessary instructions to officials and local people, the commander donated K 1 million for the health care centre and provided 129 students with stationery.

Afterwards, the commander proceeded to Paung Laung dam project where he heard a report on the salient points of the project. On completion, the project will be able to

generate 454 million kwh per year.

Next, the commander visited Padatchaung village where he met townelders and local residents and presented robes and stationery.

While in villages in hilly region, the commander and party also donated robes, stationery and others.

MNA

## FAO Senior Adviser and party tour of Kengtung

YANGON, 22 Dec—Senior Adviser of FAO Dr Masao Sasaki and Director of Livestock Breeding and Veterinary Department Dr Ohn Kyaw on 1 December met with lab technicians of Yangon and Mandalay who jointly conducted disease diagnosis and monitoring together with staff of Kengtung District LBVD at Shan State LBVD Office and Laboratory in Kengtung.

At the meeting, Dr Masao Sasaki and Director Dr Ohn Kyaw made suggestions on control of avian influenza and disease diagnosis and monitoring. And they made a field trip to Naungngin Village, Kathtaik Village and Mongzin Village which were struck by an outbreak of bird flu and inspected the disease diagnostic and monitoring measures as well as breeding of chickens and ducks in villages out of disease control zones. They also looked into the systematic utilization of equipment provided under the bird flu control programme.

Furthermore, the two officials attended the talks on control bird flu organized by LBVD, Health

Department and UNICEF at Kengtung City Hall on 2 December and workshop on providing information and training about bird flu held at New Kengtung Hotel from 3 to 5 December.—MNA

## Minister visits Tikyit...

(from page 16)

with the use of computers, Turbines No (1) and (2), operation of the turbines and stockpile of coal.

Later, the minister visited Shan Yoma Nagar coal mine of Shan Yoma Nagar Co Ltd where Chief Engineer U Hlaing Win Aung reported on mining of coal, coal refining, production of quality coal and supply of coal to the factories. The minister next explained matters related to the quality of coal and coal demand. He then inspected production of 200 tons of coal per day, coal mining work with the use of conveyor belts and the vehicles and left necessary instructions. — MNA



Dr Masao Sasaki and party conduct disease diagnosis and monitoring in Kengtung Township. — MNA

## District News in Brief



Bago Division (West) Development Affairs Committee Director U Soe Lwin hears reports on matters related to vehicles and heavy machinery of Thegon Township DAC presented by Executive Officer U Maung Maung Thwin. —TOWNSHIP DAC



ROAD REPAVED: Twantay Township Development Affairs Committee is repaving Bayintnaung Road spending the cash donated by wellwishers. On 12 December, Director U Khin Maung Cho of Yangon Division Development Affairs Committee and Deputy Superintending Engineer U Zaw Myo Aung inspect tarmacking of the road. — TOWNSHIP DAC

## Personnel urged to ensure durability of libraries

MAGWAY, 17 Dec — Magway Division Information and Public Relations Department Assistant Director U Wai Lwin, met Pakokku District IPRD Staff Officer U Tin Win, the head of Township IPRD and staff of Seikpyu Township in Seikpyu on 2 December, and gave instructions on durability of the libraries.

They visited self-reliant libraries in Gwaybin and Htanbingyaung villages and urged local people to set up the trust-funds for the libraries.

Township IPRD



On 14 December, Executive Officer U Myo Kyaw Latt and Senior Engineer U Ba Thein supervised construction of Hlegu-Zeebinwe-Moksoenyaungbin village-to-village earth road being undertaken with the use of heavy machinery by Hlegu Township Development Affairs Committee. —TOWNSHIP DAC



*The world's oldest surviving Rolls-Royce is seen in this undated handout. The world's oldest surviving Rolls-Royce revved up two new records when a private British collector paid 3.5 million pounds (\$7.22 million) for it at auction. — INTERNET*

### WB says \$256m for Ethiopia health, power line

ADDIS ABABA, 22 Dec— The World Bank said on Friday it had approved 256 million US dollars in grants and credit to help Ethiopia boost basic services like health and education, and aid power transmission to Sudan.

“Of the total, 215 million US dollars is International Development Association (IDA) grant to Ethiopia to continue promoting basic services,” the Bank said in a statement from its office in Addis Ababa.

“The remaining 41.05 million US dollars is credit to Ethiopia to help finance its portion of a new transmission line connecting Ethiopia to Sudan’s power grid,” it added.

“The project will enable Sudan to replace domestic thermal generation with surplus hydropower surplus from Ethiopia.” — MNA/Reuters

### Poll finds Brown facing electoral “meltdown”

LONDON, 22 Dec — British Prime Minister Gordon Brown's woes piled up on Friday as a new poll showed him facing a "meltdown" at the next election and the opposition accused him of breaking a pledge to deport foreign criminals.

As Brown prepared to take a rare holiday over Christmas, a YouGov poll for *The Daily Telegraph* found his personal approval rating had slumped to an all-time low and the ruling Labour Party was lagging the opposition Conservatives by 12 points. If replicated at a national election, the result would give the Conservatives a Parliamentary majority while 100 of the 352 Labour members of Parliament would lose their seats, *The Daily Telegraph* said, saying Brown was “staring at meltdown”.

Brown, who took over from Tony Blair in June, does not have to call an election until 2010.

The poll found 60 per cent of people were now dissatisfied with Brown as prime minister compared with 27 per cent in July. Brown's popularity has been eroded by gathering economic clouds, the first run on a British bank in more than a century and the government's loss of half the population's personal data. Another row flared on Friday when the Conservatives said a leaked Prison Service memo showed immigration officials had “no interest” in deporting foreign prisoners who had spent less than a year behind bars.

They said the memo was at odds with Brown's tough pledge in September

to throw out “any newcomer to Britain who is caught selling drugs or using guns”. — MNA/Reuters

### China vows to boost bilateral ties with Micronesia

BEIJING, 22 Dec— China on Thursday vowed to boost bilateral relations with Micronesia, proposing to cement two-way cooperation in areas such as trade, fisheries, public health, sports and tourism.

“China-Micronesia relations have already entered into an important stage of development,” said Chinese President Hu Jintao during his talks with visiting Micronesian President Emanuel Mori

at the Great Hall of the People in downtown Beijing.

Highlighting the recent growth of the bilateral relations, Hu said the two countries should fortify political mutual trust, economic cooperation and friendship to forge joint efforts with the aim to promote peace, cooperation and development in the world.

He also expressed his appreciation to the importance Micronesia attached to the ties with China and the country's adherence to the one-China policy.

Mori said Micronesia-China relations were founded on the basis of mutual respect, Micronesia would continue its efforts to work closer with China in the areas of

transport, clean energy, fisheries and private business.

He also stressed that the one-China policy composed the basis of Micronesia's foreign policy and his country would unswervingly stick to it.—MNA/Xinhua

Department of Justice to do just that?” Kennedy replied at the hearing. The judge said he would issue a ruling later.

The CIA disclosed on December 6 that it destroyed hundreds of hours of tapes in 2005 showing the interrogation of two suspected al-Qaeda suspects, Abu Zubaydah and Abd al-Rahim al-Nashiri.

The taped interrogations were believed to show a simulated drowning technique known as waterboarding, which rights activists have condemned as torture.

The CIA maintains that it destroyed the tapes lawfully to protect the agents involved in the interrogations.

MNA/Reuters

## Lawyer urges judge to open CIA tapes inquiry

WASHINGTON, 22 Dec — A lawyer for a group of terrorism suspects held by the United States told a court on Friday that trusting the Justice Department with an inquiry into the CIA's destruction of interrogation tapes would amount to putting the fox in charge of the hen house.

A Justice Department lawyer told the same hearing, however, that an independent court inquiry being requested by the suspects' lawyers could damage a joint investigation being carried out by his department and the CIA's inspector general.

David Remes, the lawyer for 11 Yemeni

detainees in the US prison camp at Guantanamo Bay, had asked District Judge Henry Kennedy for a legal probe to determine whether the CIA's action violated a 2005 court order to preserve evidence of detainee mistreatment at the naval base in Cuba.

“Why should the court not permit the

### Chinese marrow donors hit record high

BEIJING, 22 Dec— The China Marrow Donor Programme (CMDP) has hit a record 700,000, meaning that more than 60 per cent of those suffering blood disease can successfully find data that matches their own disease in the initial stages.

CMDP director Hong Junling attributed the rise to Chinese people's deeper understanding of marrow donation and increasing support from the government in recent years.

Last year, the number of marrow donors was 580,000, up from 336,500 in 2005. The programme was launched in 2001.

MNA/Xinhua



*A handout photo shows bikers fall during the eleventh stage of the Giro d'Italia cycling race, 198 km (123 miles) from Serravalle Scrivia to Pinerolo. — INTERNET*



*Chinese peers perform acrobatic performance in Beijing, capital of China, on 21 Dec, 2007.*  
XINHUA



*A view of a sand sculpture, at Las Canteras beach in Spain's Canary Island of Gran Canaria.*  
INTERNET



*The X-ray image of conjoined boys is seen after a medical examination at a hospital in Beijing on 21 Dec, 2007. — INTERNET*



*In this photo provided by the San Francisco Zoo, Bulldozer, a 5-month-old male giraffe calf, is fed by Santa Claus at the San Francisco Zoo, on 20 Dec, 2007 in San Francisco. — INTERNET*



*A ship is pounded by waves as it sits offshore of the Aleutian Island chain. A powerful 7.2 magnitude earthquake struck Alaska's Aleutian islands on 19 Dec.—INTERNET*

# Images of the Day

## Grow more food in cities, UN agency tells Asia

GENEVA, 21 Dec — Asian nations, many at risk from climate change, must invest more in urban and indoor farming to help feed the hundreds of millions of people in their growing cities, the World Meteorological Organization said on Wednesday.

Of the 10 countries most affected by extreme weather in 2006, seven were Asian — Afghanistan, China, India, Indonesia, North Korea, the Philippines and Vietnam, said the WMO, the UN agency looking at weather, climate and water problems.

Asia needs secure food supplies for its rising

population, and “indoor and urban agriculture is receiving special attention to make most efficient use of space using controlled environments”, WMO Secretary-General Michel Jarraud said in a statement after a three-day meeting in Hanoi on sustainable farming.

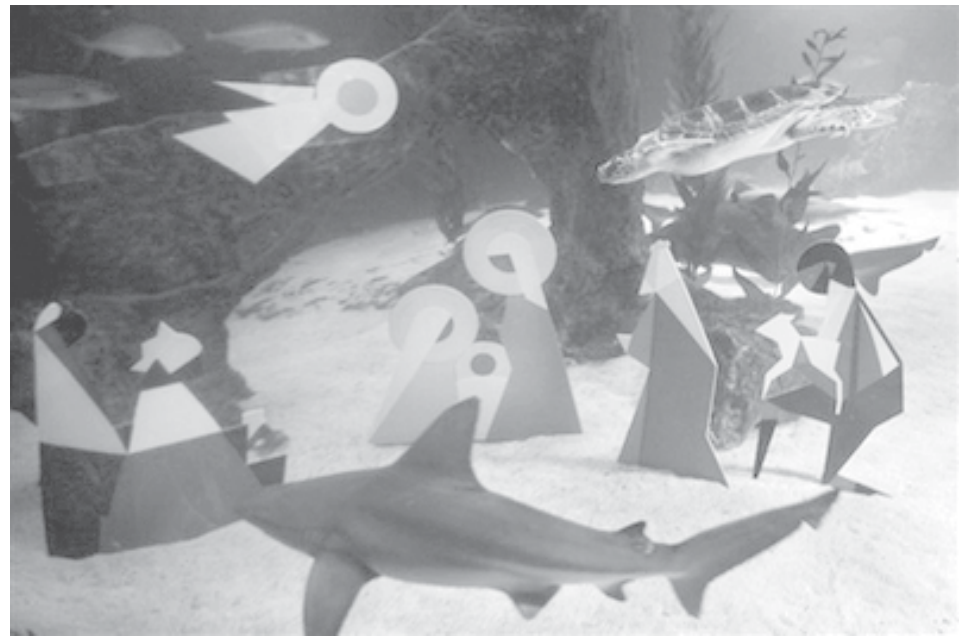
Weather problems affecting Asia range from drought in recent years in Afghanistan and other central and southwest Asian countries to floods this year in China and Bangladesh.

The WMO said it was necessary to improve seasonal prediction, early warning systems, and monitoring for regional droughts, to help farmers

decide which crops to grow. Forecasts could also help experts improve their ability to control the spread of pests and diseases.

The agency called on countries to provide the latest information on the impact of climate change on water resources, and assess whether modern or traditional methods of collecting rainwater were best for them.

MNA/Reuters



Sharks, and a turtle and other fishes swim in front of Christmas nativity figures displayed in an aquarium in Madrid, on 21 Dec, 2007.—INTERNET

## Over 200 migrants land in southern Italy

ROME, 21 Dec — More than 200 illegal immigrants crammed into a 16-metre long wooden

fishing boat landed on the southern Italian island of Lampedusa on Wednesday, news agencies reported.

Illegal immigrants desperate to escape poverty in North and sub-Saharan Africa typically cross the Mediterranean to Italy in rickety, overcrowded vessels in summer, to take advantage of warm weather and calm seas. Such voyages are unusual in winter.

The 211 migrants, including seven women, probably set sail from Libya and were in good

condition, news agencies said.

Authorities have said the overall number of migrants landing on Italian shores has dropped sharply this year, but illegal immigration remains a high-profile and divisive issue in Italy.

At least 21 migrants drowned off the southern Italian coast in late October in two separate incidents, prompting Egyptian and Libyan police to intensify a crackdown on illegal migration.

MNA/Reuters

## WHO donates medical goods to Angola

LUANDA, 22 Dec — The World Health Organization (WHO) here on Thursday donated to the Angolan Ministry of Health 300,000 US dollars worth medical equipment and materials including computer equipments, hospital protection materials and kits for the treatment of cholera and other endemic diseases.

At the handover ceremony, WHO Representative in Angola Fatoumata Diallo said the WHO, with the donations, intends to help Angola improve the capacity of preparing and responding to health challenges in terms of matters relating to education, communication, community mobilization as well as reinforcement of cholera treatment centres in the country.

The WHO official also handed over radio recorders to media professionals working with the health sector in the northern provinces of Uige, Kwanza Norte, Malanje, Bengo and Zaire.

MNA/Xinhua

## Chinese, Guinea's FMs vow to enhance bilateral ties

BEIJING, 21 Dec — Chinese Foreign Minister Yang Jiechi met here with his Equatorial Guinea counterpart Pastor Micha Ondo Bile here Thursday, both vowing to promote bilateral relations.

China-Equatorial Guinea relations have seen all-round and rapid progress in recent years, which features political mutual trust, com-

plementary economies and fruitful cooperation, Yang said.

Yang stated that China appreciates the Equatorial Guinea Government's adherence to the one-China policy, and it will work to implement the consensus reached by the leaders of the two countries to boost bilateral relations and cement mutually beneficial cooperation.

Pastor Micha Ondo Bile said the Equatorial Guinea-China relations have witnessed increasing development in 37 years since the two forged diplomatic ties in 1970, adding that Chinese Government has provided sincere assistance to the Equatorial Guinea, which the Equatorial Guinean Government highly appreciated.

MNA/Xinhua



This handout photo provided by the Italian Culture Ministry shows a 4th century BC marble statue still bearing traces of blue and red paint of a helpless deer attacked by winged griffins, which was returned to Italy by the J Paul Getty Museum, on display at the Quirinale Presidential Palace, in Rome.—INTERNET

## World's lightest giant panda cub grows in S-W China

CHENGDU, 22 Dec — The lightest ever giant panda cub has grown from 51 grams to 36 kilos since it was born 16 months ago in a panda breeding centre in southwest China.

“Its survival is almost a miracle,” said Zhang Zhihe, director with the Chengdu Giant Panda Reproduction and Research Centre.

Baby giant pandas usually weigh more than 100 grammes, while those weighing less than 80 grammes rarely survive as they are too small to hold onto their mother's teats, according to Zhang.

The three daily meals of the giant panda, named “Wushiyike”, meaning 51 grammes in Chinese, are prepared by nutritionists specializing in animal care, Zhang said.

He has grown soundly with a regular life of sleeping, eating and playing, Zhang added.

The Chengdu centre successfully brought up a 61-gramme cub in 1993. The giant panda is among the world's most endangered animals. Around 1,590 pandas are thought to be living in the wild, mostly in the mountains of southwest China.—MNA/Xinhua

**Drive  
with  
care**

## Whales may have evolved from racoon-sized creature

CHICAGO, 21 Dec — In the search for a missing evolutionary link to modern whales, scientists have come up with an unlikely land cousin — a racoon-sized creature with the body of a small deer.

Prior molecular studies have proposed the hippo as the closest land relative of today's whales, but researchers reporting in the journal *Nature* on Wednesday suggest a four-footed creature from India known as *Indohyus*, which probably hid in water in times of danger.

Scientists have long known that whales had ancestors that walked on land. Now a team lead by Hans Thewissen of Northeastern Ohio

Universities Colleges of Medicine and Pharmacy have pieced together a series of intermediate fossils that trace the whale's evolutionary journey from land to sea.

The wissen and his team studied the structure and composition of hundreds of fossils of *Indohyus*, which is part of the larger group known as *raoellids*. *Raoellids* lived at about the same time as the earliest whales — about 50 million years ago.

The wissen's team

found key similarities in the skull and ear that suggest a link to cetaceans, a family that includes whales, dolphins and porpoises. *Indohyus*, for example, had an outside layer that was much thicker than similarly sized mammals. This is something typically seen in slow-wading mammals. They found further evidence in the chemical make-up of *Indohyus*' teeth, which resembled those of other aquatic animals. —MNA/Reuters



Photo taken on 20 Dec, 2007 shows a piece of embroidery made by Miao ethnic group in the Leishan County of Miao-Dong Autonomous Prefecture of Qiandongnan in southwest China's Guizhou Province. Miao paintings with a history of hundreds of years are a kind of colorful patterns produced with a technique of line drawing. These pretty patterns are usually used for decoration of women's dresses or adornments. —XINHUA

**A family watches television in an undated photo. Obese children who watch a lot of television are more likely to have high blood pressure than heavy children who don't spend as much time in front of the tube, the results of a new study shows. —INTERNET**



## Snakey smells help squirrels stay safe

WASHINGTON, 22 Dec — It is scary being a little, tasty squirrel, but some species of the rodents have come up with an intimidating camouflage — snake smells.

California ground squirrels and rock squirrels chew up rattle-snake skin and smear it on their fur to mask their scent, a team at the University of California Davis reported.

"They're turning the tables on the snake," Donald Owings, a professor of psychology who helped lead the research, said in a statement.

Barbara Clucas, a graduate student in animal behaviour, watched ground squirrels and rock squirrels chewing up pieces of skin shed by snakes and then licking their fur.

MNA/Reuters

## Air France pioneers mobile phone services on int'l flights

PARIS, 21 Dec — Air France has launched the first ever mobile phone services on international flights in a move that will allow passengers to use their Internet enabled laptops to send and receive SMS, MMS and e-mail, the airline said on Thursday. Currently, only Australia's Qantas airline has a similar service that is offered strictly on domestic flights.

The service to be operated on a six-month experiment basis is to be rolled out on a single Air France plane, an *Airbus A318* with a sitting capacity of 123 passengers operating various European cities, which will vary depending on the day and time, according to the

airline.

"Passengers will only be informed of the existence of the service after boarding the plane," company spokesman Marina Tymen said.

The next step will be to experiment on voice

calls "while ensuring that the journey is a time of comfort and well-being", the Air France spokesman said without specifying a date for rolling out the second phase of the project.

MNA/Xinhua

## Ancient merchant boat raised from the depths of the South China Sea

BEIJING, 21 Dec — He noted that the Song Dynasty was the first peak of porcelain industry in Chinese history, when the products were exported to east, south and west Asia, as well as the east coast of Africa, and the use of porcelain was seen as a

symbol of social status.

□□□□The boat, buried in two-meter-thick silt, has archaeological value as well, Wei said.

□□□□"It is a sample of how wooden cultural relics could be well preserved for a long period," he said. □□□□According to Huang Zongwei, professor with the Guangdong-based Sun Yat-Sen University, the boat was a proof of the "Marine Silk Road".

□□□□As early as 2,000 years ago, ancient Chinese traders began taking china,

silk and cloth textiles and other commodities to foreign countries along the trading route. It started from ports at today's Guangdong and Fujian provinces to countries in southeast Asia, Africa and Europe.

□□□□The 'Marine Silk Road', like the ancient Silk Road that connected China with south, west and central Asia and Europe, is also a bridge connecting eastern and western cultures, "Huang said," but evidence for existence of the path was rare."

□□□□Judging from the position of the sunken boat, whose head was pointing southwest, experts deduced that it could be heading to west Asia or the Middle East.

Internet



**A merchant boat, dubbed the Nanhai No. 1, or "South China Sea No. 1," is raised from the depths of the South China Sea in south China's Guangdong Province, on 21 Dec, 2007. —INTERNET**

# SPORTS

## Benfica end poor run with 3-0 win over Amadora

LISBON, 21 Dec — Benfica ended a mini-slump in the Portuguese league when they beat Estrela Amadora 3-0 on Thursday, ending a three-match run without a victory.

League leaders Porto play away at Nacional Madiera on Friday. Porto have 35 points after 13 games, while Benfica are on 28, having played an extra game.

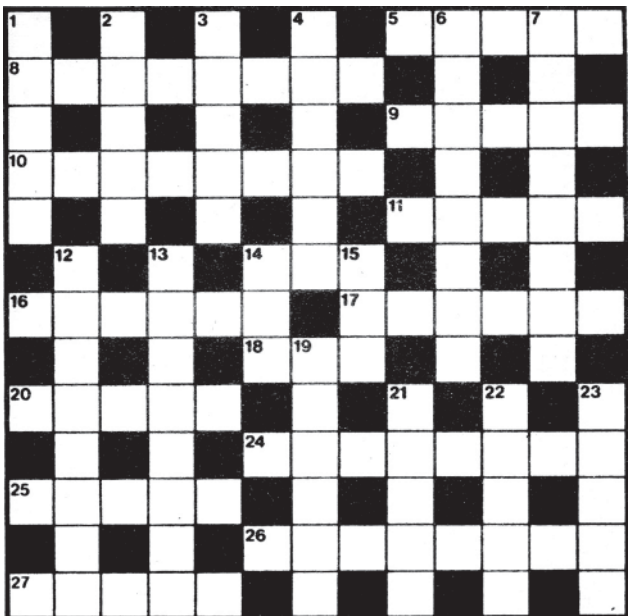
Benfica went ahead when Paraguayan midfielder Cristian Rodriguez headed in Augustin Binya's cross from the right after 52 minutes.

Oscar Cardozo doubled the lead for the Lisbon side from the spot after 70 minutes after Brazilian David Luiz was brought down by Amadora defender Mauricio. —MNA/Reuters



Antonio Giachino, UEFA Competition Manager, prepares the pots with the balls containing the names of the soccer clubs, prior the drawing of the games for next round of the Champions League 2007/08 at the UEFA Headquarters in Nyon, Switzerland, on 21 Dec, 2007.—INTERNET

## CROSSWORDS PUZZLE



### ACROSS

- 5 Shaving implement
- 8 Interrogate
- 9 Type of angle
- 10 Foot soldiers
- 11 Vagrant
- 14 Epoch
- 16 Excellent
- 17 Abhor
- 18 Resting place
- 20 Sea foam
- 24 Infrequent
- 25 Moon goddess
- 26 Our price (anag.)
- 27 Stop

### DOWN

- 1 Fit out
- 2 Muscular
- 3 Work period
- 4 Dread
- 6 Correct
- 7 Sanguine person
- 12 Catch unawares
- 13 e.g. Waterloo Station
- 14 Flow back
- 15 Total
- 19 Specialist
- 21 Fish
- 22 Allow in
- 23 Contempt

## Olazabal wins PGA recognition award

LONDON, 22 Dec — Jose Maria Olazabal emulated Seve Ballesteros, Nick Faldo, Ian Woosnam and Colin Montgomerie by winning the Professional Golfers' Association's (PGA) annual recognition award on Friday.

"Jose Maria reflects what I consider to be the consummate tournament professional," said chief executive Sandy Jones at the PGA's annual lunch and charity fund raiser in London.

"His talking is all done on the golf course and his record stands comparison with all modern greats. It's a privilege for the PGA to present him with the recognition award for his great achievements."

Olazabal won the US Masters in 1994 and 1999 and has 21 other European Tour victories to his name.

He has played in the Ryder Cup seven times and established a formidable partnership with fellow-Spaniard Ballesteros.

Olazabal, 41, whose year has been blighted by injury, will be one of Faldo's vice-captains when Europe defend the Ryder Cup at Valhalla, Kentucky in September. —MNA/Reuters

## Boca Juniors coach Russo quits

BUENOS AIRES, 22 Dec — Coach Miguel Angel Russo has quit South American champions Boca Juniors five days after their 4-2 loss to AC Milan in the Club World Cup final, club president Pedro Pompilio said on Friday.

"We came to an agreement not to renew the contract which finishes on 31 December," Pompilio told the Buenos Aires radio station La Red.

Russo, who won the Libertadores Cup during his one year in charge but no domestic tournaments, said he had disagreed with the club's decision to replace two members of his training staff.

"They offered me the chance to carry on with some changes and I didn't accept," said the 51-year-old, who replaced Ricardo La Volpe after joining Boca from Velez Sarsfield. "Pompilio has the right to make the changes he deems necessary for the structure of the club...but to do something like that would lose me respect." —MNA/Reuters



Porto's Lisandro Lopez (L) challenges Nacional's Fernando Cardozo during their Portuguese Premier league soccer match at Funchal stadium in Madeira island on 21 Dec, 2007.—INTERNET

## Van der Sar signs new 12-month contract

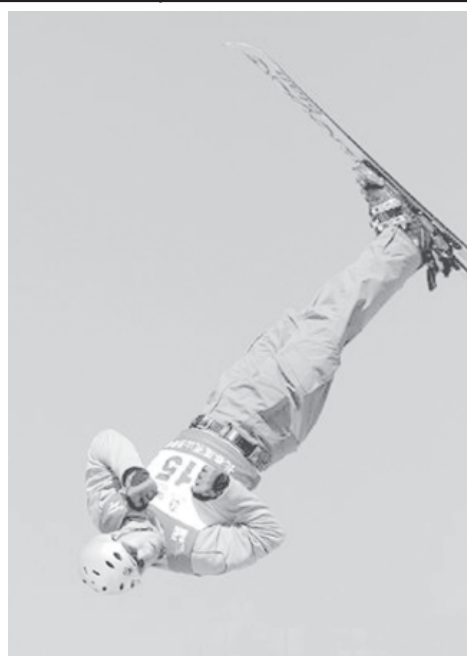
MANCHESTER (England), 22 Dec — Manchester United goalkeeper Edwin van der Sar has agreed a new 12-month contract to stay at Old Trafford next

season. "Van der Sar has signed a new contract for another year. He will be here as a player next year," manager Alex Ferguson told reporters on Friday.

"We are pleased with that because his consistency and experience has been a great help to this club."

The former Ajax and Juventus goalkeeper joined United from Fulham in June, 2005 and helped United regain the English Premier League title last season.

Van der Sar, 37, recently announced that he plans to retire from international football after playing for the Netherlands in the 2008 European Championship finals. But he is evidently keen to prolong his club career, with Ferguson welcoming the competition he will have for the goalkeeping position next season when the highly-rated Ben Foster will also be fit following a long-term knee injury. —MNA/Reuters



Anton Kushinir of Belarus competes in the men's aerials event at the 2007-2008 freestyle FIS World Cup held in Changchun, northeast China's Jilin Province, on 21 Dec, 2007. Kushinir took the second place of the event with 237.33 points.

XINHUA



Orlando Magic guard Kenyon Dooling (center) shoots for two points against Houston Rockets defenders Rafer Alston (left) and Shane Battier (right) in the first half in Houston on Wednesday. Orlando won 97-92.—INTERNET

## Milan's home woes continue with Catania Cup defeat

MILAN, 21 Dec — AC Milan's dreadful run at home continued on Thursday when they lost 2-1 to Catania in an Italian Cup last 16 first-leg match.

The European champions, who beat Boca Juniors 4-2 on Sunday to win the Club World Cup, returned to domestic action on a high but the loss means they have failed to win against Italian opposition at the San Siro this season. Milan coach Carlo Ancelotti fielded a weakened side with one eye on Sunday's league derby with Inter Milan but paid the price.

Gionatha Spinesi and Giuseppe Mascara netted first half goals for Catania, midtable in Serie A like their hosts, with Milan reserve striker Alberto Paloschi scoring after the break. The rest of the last 16 first legs were spread across December with Inter winning 4-1 at Reggina on Wednesday and holder AS Roma losing 3-1 at Torino. The second legs are scheduled for 16 January. —MNA/Reuters

### Britain's Channel 4 fined over phone-ins

LONDON, 22 Dec — Channel 4 has been fined 1.5 million pounds by the broadcasting watchdog Ofcom for breaking rules in two phone-in competitions.

Ofcom said on Thursday the broadcaster breached regulations with the "You Say We Pay" quiz on the Richard & Judy show and on a viewer competition on "Deal Or No Deal", the game show hosted by Noel Edmonds. The fine follows a string of cases involving viewer deception that has shaken the television industry this year.

Ofcom said callers to "You Say We Pay" were urged to ring a premium rate number to take part in the competition, even after the finalist had been chosen.

They stood no chance of being selected and had wasted their call, which cost about one pound.

The "Deal Or No Deal"

breaches amounted to "systematic deception", Ofcom said.

The phone-in system meant that viewers did not have an equal chance of winning the prize. Late callers were statistically worse off. —MNA/Reuters



### Russian contractor suspends completion of Bushehr plant

MOSCOW, 22 Dec — Iran's first nuclear power plant, Bushehr, will not be completed and operational as scheduled by the end of next year, the Russian media cited the Russian contractor as saying on Thursday.

"The plant's launch

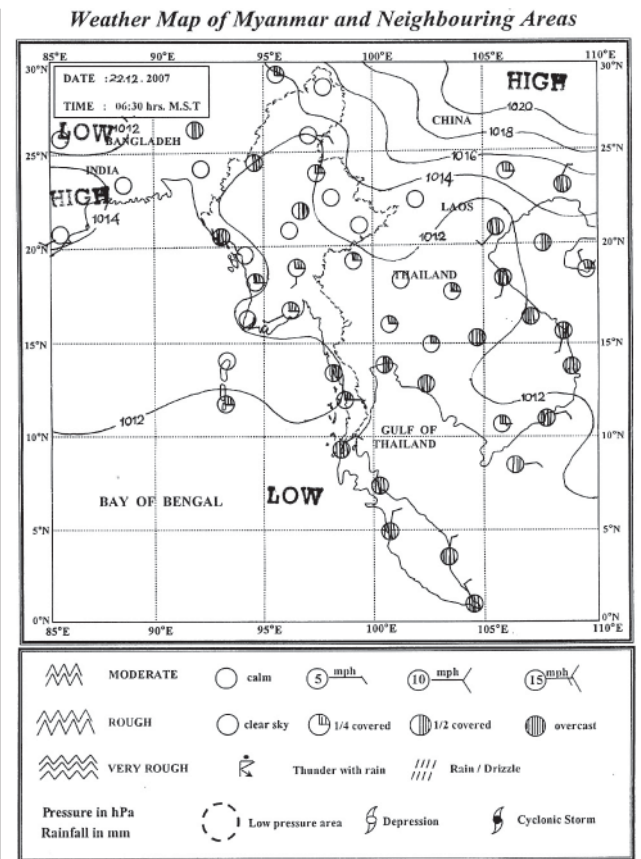
cannot be guaranteed before the end of 2008," Sergei Shmatko, president of the Atomstroyexport company that is building the plant, said during a visit to China.

Shmatko said that Russia and Iran have agreed on the new schedule for the completion of the Bushehr plant, but he refused to specify the dates.

Russia has delivered the first batch of nuclear fuel to Iran this week following year-long negotiations, and all the fuels are expected to be shipped within two months. — MNA/Xinhua

**A bunch of baby snakes at a zoo. Vietnamese airport officials said they discovered a cargo of 700 live snakes on a Thai Airways flight from Indonesia but destroyed them after no-one claimed them.**

INTERNET



### WEATHER

Saturday, 22 December, 2007

**Summary of observations recorded at 09:30 hours MST:** During the past 24 hours, weather has been partly cloudy in Taninthayi Division and generally fair in the remaining areas. Night temperatures were (3°C) to (4°C) below December average temperatures in Chin and Rakhine States and Magway Division, (3°C) to (4°C) above December average temperatures in Southern Shan and Mon States, Bago and Taninthayi Divisions and about December average temperatures in the remaining areas. The significant night temperatures were Haka (0°C), Putao, Namhsam and Mogok (5°C) each.

Maximum temperature on 21-12-2007 was 96°F. Minimum temperature on 22-12-2007 was 66°F. Relative humidity at 09:30 hours MST on 22-12-2007 was 74%. Total sunshine hours on 21-12-2007 was (8.2) hours approx.

Rainfall on 22-12-2007 was (nil) at Mingaladon, Kaba-Aye and Central Yangon. Total rainfall since 1-1-2007 was (136.57) inches at Mingaladon, (141.38) inches at Kaba-Aye and (144.29) inches at Central Yangon. Maximum wind speed at Yangon (Kaba-Aye) was (4) mph from Northwest at (11:30) hours MST on 21-12-2007.

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

**Forecast valid until evening of 23-12-2007:** Weather will be partly cloudy in Kachin State, upper Sagaing and Taninthayi Divisions and generally fair in the remaining areas.

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

**Outlook for subsequent two days:** Generally fair in the whole country.

**Forecast for Nay Pyi Taw and neighbouring area for 23-12-2007:** Fair weather.

**Forecast for Yangon and neighbouring area for 23-12-2007:** Fair weather.

**Forecast for Mandalay and neighbouring area for 23-12-2007:** Fair weather.



Sunday, 23 December

View on today

7:00 am

1. Recitation of Parittas by Missionary Sayadaw U Ottamathara

7:25 am

2. To be healthy exercise

7:30 am

3. Morning news

7:40 am

4. Nice and sweet song

7:55 am

5. ယဉ်ကျေးလိမ္မာ(၃၈)ဖြာမင်္ဂလာ

8:10 am

6. အဆိုပြိုင်ပွဲ

8:15 am

7. ကံတင်ဘီးလင်းရေလှောင်တံခံ

8:25 am

8. အကပြိုင်ပွဲ

8:30 am

9. International news

8:45 am

10. Say it in English

11:00 am

1. Martial song

11:10 pm

2. Musical programme

11:25 am

3. Round up of the week's international news

11:40 am

4. ထက်မြက်ပျော်ရွှင်အိမ်ထောင်ရှင်

12:10 pm

5. Myanmar movie "လျှို့ဝှက်သောနင်း" (လွင်မိုးလှမင်းညွန့်ဝင်း၊ စိုးမြတ်နန္ဒာ၊ နီလာအောင်အောင်၊ ဒါရိုက်တာ-စင်ရော်မောင်မောင်)

2:20 pm

6. တောင်ပေါ်မြေပြန့် ရင်ခွင်မဲပန်းတို့ကွန်းခိုရာ "နန်းဦး"အေးရိပ်သာယာ

2:35

7. သက်ဝင်လှုပ်ရှားပန်းချီပွဲရိုက်များ (Best Paintings of the Year 2007)

2:45 pm

8. International news

4:00 pm

1. Martial song

4:15 pm

2. Song for uphold National Spirit

4:30 pm

3. English for everyday use

4:45 pm

4. အေးသင်တက္ကသိုလ် ပညာရေးရုပ်မြင်သံကြား သင်ခန်းစာ-ပထမနှစ် (သမိုင်းအထူးပြု)(သမိုင်း)

5:00 pm

5. Dance of national races

5:10 pm

6. Musical programme

5:25 pm

7. Sing and enjoy

6:00 pm

8. Evening news

6:30 pm

9. Weather report

6:35 pm

10. "အသက်ကလေးရယ်တဲ့ရှည်စေလို" (ဦးအောင်လွင်၊ ဦးကြည်စိုး၊ မေထွဋ်ခေါင်) (ဒါရိုက်တာ-ကြည်စိုး)

6:45 pm

11. Musical programme

7:05 pm

12. နိုင်ငံခြားဇာတ်လမ်းတွဲ "နေပြည်ဆမ်းမှ" (အပိုင်း-၁၈)

8:00 pm

13. News

14. International news

15. Weather report

16. နိုင်ငံခြားဇာတ်လမ်းတွဲ "ချိုမြိန်သောအချစ်နေ့" (အပိုင်း-၆)

17. The next day's programme



Sunday, 23 December  
Tune in today

- 8:30 am Brief news
- 8:35 am Music: -X'mas Eve
- 8:40 am Perspectives
- 8:45 am Music -My only wish
- 9:00 am National news
- 9:05 am Music: -X'mas in Jamaica
- 9:10 am International news
- 9:15 am Cultural images of Myanmar
- 9:20 am -Myanmar conventional bullock cart
- 9:25 am Music
- 9:30 am -Last X'mas
- 9:35 am News/Slogan
- 9:40 am Children's delight (story)
- 9:45 am -The fox who shared the fish
- 9:50 am Song for children
- 9:55 pm Weekly news review
- 10:00 pm Article
- 10:05 pm Music/LIETS
- 10:10 pm -X'mas story
- 10:15 pm -Merry X'mas darling
- 10:20 pm News/Slogan
- 10:25 pm PEL

# People's Desire

- ★ We favour stability.
- ★ We favour peace.
- ★ We oppose unrest and violence.

## Minister visits Tikyit Coal-fired Steam Turbine

NAY PYI TAW, 22 Dec — Accompanied by officials, Minister for Electric Power No (1) Col Zaw Min arrived at Tikyit Coal-fired Steam Turbine in Pinlaung Township, Shan State (South) on 20 December. At the briefing hall, Factory Manager U Kyaw Htwe reported on power generation through Turbines No (1) and (2), facts about the turbines, annual supply of electric power, annual utilization of coal, test-generation of electricity with the use of Kalewa coal and generation of electricity with the use of Kalewa coal and Tikyit coal. Managing Director of Hydro-

power Enterprise U Kyi Tha and Superintending Engineer U Khin Maung Oo gave supplementary reports. In response to the reports, the minister gave necessary instructions and fulfilled the needs. Next, he explained condition of power supply and work programmes.

Afterwards, the minister inspected laboratory, water treatment plant, thriving four-acre plantations of garlic and cabbage, power control room where electricity is being generated  
(See page 9)



Minister for Electric Power No (1) Col Zaw Min looks into Tikyit Coal-fired Steam Turbine in Pinlaung Township. — MNA

## Objectives of the 60th Anniversary Independence Day

- (a) All the national people to constantly join hands for safeguarding the perpetuation of independence and sovereignty of the State;
- (b) All the national people to collectively strive for non-disintegration of the Union and non-disintegration of national solidarity;
- (c) To ensure emergence of an enduring constitution in line with the fundamental principles and detailed basic principles adopted by the National Convention that has been completed successfully;
- (d) All the national people to harmoniously make all-out efforts for building of a modern, developed discipline-flourishing democratic nation;
- (e) All the national people to cooperate in realizing the State's seven-step Road Map with Union Spirit, patriotic spirit and the spirit of sacrifice.

## Significant night temperatures

Haka	(0°C)
Putao, Namhsam	(5°C)
Mogok	(5°C)

- ★ RFA, VOA and BBC airing skyful of lies
- ★ RFA, VOA and BBC saboteurs, watch your step!
- ★ The public be warned of killers in the air waves — RFA, VOA and BBC