**Bounden duty**

The entire people are duty-bound to safeguard the motherland through the might of national unity for ensuring non-disintegration of the Union, non-disintegration of national solidarity and perpetuation of sovereignty, while keeping a watchful eye on attempts of neo-colonialists to harm the sovereignty of the country.

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 the 61st Anniversary Independence Day)

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**8th Myanmar ICT Week Exhibition 2009 and Yatanarpon Cyber Hall opened**

NA Pyi Taw, 27 Dec—The opening ceremony of the 8th Myanmar ICT Week Exhibition 2009 and Yatanarpon Cyber Hall was held in front of Yatanarpon Cyber Hall in Yatanarpon Myothit in PyinUlayTwin Township, Mandalay Division, yesterday morning.

The ceremony was attended by Chairman of Mandalay Division Peace and Development Council Commander-in-Chief of Central Command Maj-Gen Tin Ngwe, Chairman of Myanmar e-National Task Force Minister for Communications, Posts and Telegraphs Brig-Gen Thein Zaw, Mandalay Mayor Brig-Gen Phone Zaw Han, deputy ministers, the commander of PyinUlayTwin station, executives of Myanmar Computer Federation, (See page 6)

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**Hailing the 62nd Anniversary Independence Day:**

The whole nation has seen a network of roads and bridges due to cooperative efforts

Maung Maung Htwe (MNA)

Geographical conditions in the Union of Myanmar pose various kinds of natural barrier to its regions. Such natural barriers are the Ayeyawady, Chindwin, Sittoung and Shweli rivers, creeks and mountains and hills.

With difficult road transport, the national brethren once had to live as if they had been far away from each other.

At present, the whole nation has seen a network of roads and bridges due to the Head of State’s wisdom and farsightedness plus his goodwill attitude towards the national people. All corners of the Union are now easily reachable.

As a journalist, I have been to different regions of the Union many times. When I took trips to the whole Ayeyawady Delta known as the region of five major rivers and 500 creeks, (See page 8)

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**Four political objectives**

- Stability of the State, community peace and tranquillity, prevalence of law and order
- National reconciliation
- 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
Upgrade old factories, produce household and industrial items

The development of the industrial sector plays a pivotal role in building a modern and developed nation. In this regard, the government is establishing more industries and is producing machines and machine tools and personal goods through import-substitute factories and new factories.

Head of State Senior General Than Shwe on 26 December arrived at No (2) Tyre and Rubber Products Factory (Bilin) under the Ministry of Industry-2 where he gave guidance, saying that those responsible are to upgrade the old factory to a modern one, while building new factories, and only then will it be possible for the old and new factories to satisfy the tyre demand of the nation; and that the rubber factories are also to produce other types of household and industrial items.

No (2) Tyre and Rubber Products Factory (Bilin) is near Yangon-Mawlamyine Road in Bilin Township, Mon State. The factory project was launched in September 2008. So far, construction of the main factory building, installation of machines and engineering works have been completed cent per cent. And now, preparations are under way for trial run.

According to the production capacity, the factory can produce 300,000 units of 11 types of tyres a year. No (1) Tyre and Rubber Products Factory (Thaton) and No (2) Tyre and Rubber Products Factory (Bilin) will be able to satisfy the annual tyre demand of the nation.

The emergence of a large number of modern factories and import-substitute factories in the industrial regions and industrial zones contributes to getting new production techniques and generating job opportunities for local people as well as regional development.

The birth of the industrial regions and industrial zones complete with modern factories and mills reflects the development of the industrial sector. The upgrading of old factories into new ones for boosting production capacity while building new factories, and running of factories and mills at full capacity will surely pave the way for industrial development with added momentum.

**PEERSPECTIVES**

Monday, 28 December, 2009

**Lt-Gen Myint Swe of Ministry of Defence attends opening of YCH’s new building**

YANGON, 27 Dec—Lt-Gen Myint Swe of the Ministry of Defence attended a ceremony of extended building at Yangon Children’s Hospital in Dagon Township where the minister unveiled the stone plaque. The ceremony was also attended by Chairman of Yangon Division Peace and Development Council Commander of Yangon Command Maj-Gen Win Maung Win, Minister for Health Dr Kyaw Myint, Chairman of Yangon City Development Committee Mayor Brig-Gen Aung Thein Linn, Deputy Minister for Health Dr Paing Soe, departmental heads, members of the supervisory committee for building the hospital, members of YCH supervisory committee, medical superintendents, professors, specialists and donors.

The commander, the minister, the deputy minister and donors opened the new building. Afterwards, Lt-Gen Myint Swe unveiled the stone plaque by pressing the button. Lt-Gen Myint Swe together with the commander, the minister, the mayor and the deputy minister sprinkled scented water on it. Lt-Gen Myint Swe inspected new building of YCH.

Afterwards, at the meeting hall of the new building, the commander explained the purpose of opening the new building. — MNA

**Diamond City Hyper Mart offers special sales**

Diamond City Hyper Mart launched special sales on 25 December evening. Various designs of clothes, consumer goods, household utensils, foodstuff and electronics are on sale at discount in addition to game programmes of Happy World for kids. On 31 December evening, shoppers can take buffet, Japan Suki Hot Pot and grilled food and enjoy the entertainment of Nan Su Yati Soe, G-Latt, Lin Htut and famous vocalists with Young Boy Music Band. Model shows will also be staged during the special sales.

The special sales of Diamond City Hyper Mart will be held from 8:30 am to 9:30 pm daily till 31 December. The hypermarket is located at the corner of Bayintnaung Bridge and Punthaing golf resort. With over 100 shops and wide space car park for over 150 automobiles, the shopping centre is said to be one of the best in its kind in Yangon. — MNA

**Inter-School Cricket Challenge Shield of Yangon Division continues**

YANGON, 27 Dec—Jointly organized by No. 3 Basic Education Department and Myanmar Cricket Federation, the 4th Inter-School Senior Cricket Challenge Shield 2009 of Yangon Division took place at the sport ground of No. 1 Basic Education High School in Lammawad Township on 25 December. Among the spectators were President of Myanmar Cricket Federation U Nyunt Win and CEC members, officials from No. 3 BED and cricket fans. At the girls’ round event, Ahlon BEHS No. 4 sailed into the final with four wins in four matches. At the boys’ round event, Taungnyunt BEHS No. 4 beat Dagon BEHS No. 2 by 53 runs while Ahlon BEHS No. 4 won over KyimyindineBEHS No. 3 by 5 wickets. — MNA

**Inter-School Senior Cricket Challenge Shield of Myanmar Basic Education**

Inter-School Senior Cricket Challenge Shield of Myanmar Basic Education jointly organized by No. 3 Basic Education Department and Myanmar Cricket Federation, the 4th Inter-School Senior Cricket Challenge Shield 2009 of Yangon Division

All this needs to be known

- Do not be frightened whenever intimidated
- Do not be bolstered whenever flattered
- Do not be softened whenever appeared

* 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
Troops deaths in Afghan war seen rising with surge

**Kabul, 27 Dec** — The arrival in Afghanistan of tens of thousands of reinforcements to fight the Taliban will lead to a higher death rate among foreign troops, adding pressure on Western leaders to get out altogether, officials say.

Militants fighting for the overthrow of the Kabul government promised to turn Afghanistan into a “flaming tandoor oven” for the foreign forces as well as their Afghan allies through suicide attacks, roadside bombs and face-to-face clashes”, he said.

“They will transform Afghanistan into a flaming tandoor oven for the foreign forces.” — Internet

A policewoman uses a metal detector scanner to check residents outside Kadhimiya shrine in Kadhimiya District, northwestern Baghdad on 26 Dec, 2009. — Internet

US bombing suspect is linked to Britain

**London, 27 Dec** — Police searched a string of London properties on Sunday for links to a British-educated Nigerian student predicted to have tried to blow up a US airliner.

Prime Minister Gordon Brown said the government was working closely with the United States on the case and backed the police searches, which included an upmarket flat where the suspect, Umar Farouk Abdulmutallab, was said to have lived.

A mid reports that the 23-year-old had been a student in London, University College London (UCL) confirmed that a man of the same name had studied mechanical engineering at the institution between 2005 and 2008.

But it was unable to confirm this was the same man charged with trying to blow up the Northwest Airlines flight from Amsterdam to Detroit is thought to have lived. — Internet

**Taliban commander dies in shootout**

**Kabul, 27 Dec** — A heavily armed Taliban commander was killed during an pre-dawn shootout at a mosque in eastern Afghanistan, NATO said as it reported Taleban spokesman, who spoke to AFP by telephone from an undisclosed location.

Militant forces would “attack the foreign forces as well as their Afghan allies through suicide attacks, roadside bombs and face-to-face clashes”, he said.

“They will transform Afghanistan into a flaming tandoor oven for the foreign forces.” — Internet

**A police van pictured outside a building in central London where a Nigerian student who is alleged to have tried to blow up a US airliner flying from Amsterdam to Detroit is thought to have lived. — Internet**

**New START treaty “practically ready”**

**Moscow, 27 Dec** — A new strategic arms reduction treaty expected to be signed between Moscow and Washington was “practically ready,” said Russian Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov on Saturday.

“The (new) START treaty is practically ready. I hope the experts will finalize it quickly enough,” said the Russian top diplomat in a TV interview. Russia and the United States have been in intense talks over the past few months, trying to clinch a deal on a replacement document to the Strategic Arms Reduction Treaty (START-1) that expired on 5 Dec.

Lavrov also said the new treaty “is based on some fundamentally new principles,” such as “equal rights, parity, and reciprocal trust.”

“For the first time in history the levels of strategic offensive arms will be unprecedentedly low,” said the minister as quoted by the Interfax news agency. Lavrov said Russia-US relations “do have prospects,” due to a “new, decent economic dialogue in progress.” — Xinhua

**Tribal leader, police officer killed in Iraq's violence**

**Baghdad, 27 Dec** — A tribal leader and a police officer were killed while 10 people were wounded in several bomb attacks in Iraq on Saturday, the police said.

Mahmoud Hussein al-Obiedi, a Sunni chieftain, was killed in a bomb explosion outside his house in Baghdad’s western suburb of Abu Ghraib, a local police source told Xinhua on condition of anonymity.

In separate incident, Mallooky al-Jumaily, a police Lieutenant General, was killed in the morning by a bomb explosion in front of his house in the city of Fallujah, some 50 km west of Baghdad, a anonymous source from the city police told Xinhua. — Xinhsa

**Bomb kills five in eastern Baghdad**

**Baghdad, 27 Dec** — A string of attacks on Saturday against Shiite pilgrims in eastern Baghdad killed five, the latest round of violence to strike worshippers during a revered mourning observance.

Militants have targeted Shiite pilgrims, killing dozens and wounding more than 100 this week in an attempt to re-ignite sectarian violence.

The attacks began on Saturday morning when a bomb was planted near a tent that offered drinks and food to pilgrims, a police official said. The blast killed three and injured 16, he said. A medical official confirmed the casualties. — Xinhsa

**Shahad Saad, 8, a victim of bomb attack, is comforted by her mother at a hospital in Baghdad, Iraq, on 26 Dec, 2009. — Internet**
Half of stranded Air Comet passengers rescued

MADRID, 27 Dec—Special charter flights have rescued nearly half of the 7,000 passengers left stranded by the collapse of Air Comet, according to information released on Saturday by Spain’s airport authority.

Spain suspended Air Comet’s operating licence on Tuesday after the airline filed for protection from creditors and laid off all of its 666 employees.

Thousands of travelers were left stuck at airports in Spain and Latin America, and the Spanish government said on Wednesday it had chartered four planes to take them to their destinations.

A 400-seat charter flight took off from Madrid’s Barajas airport for Lima on Saturday, according to a spokesman for Aena, Spain’s publicly-owned airport manager.

Air Comet said its troubles came to a head when a British court ordered nine of its aircraft to be impounded at the request of German bank Nordbank which said the airline had failed to make aircraft lease payments.

Motivation tips offered to achieve fitness

SCHILLER PARK, 27 Dec—For those putting fitness at the top of their New Year’s resolutions, US fitness experts suggest signing up for a race to stay motivated.

Fitness experts at Life Fitness, a firm that designs and manufactures exercise equipment, suggest taking a deep breath after a stressful season of juggling job demands, family responsibilities, gift shopping and holiday parties to plan how to stay motivated in a fitness plan for 2010.

Some New Year’s resolution suggestions from the exercise experts at Life Fitness include:

— Sign up for a race once a month, whether it’s a swim competition at the local fitness centre, a triathlon, or a 5K walk or fun run to raise money for a charity.
— Know how many, if not thousands, of people will be cheering you on as you cross the finish line will keep you motivated to train.
— Find a fitness friend. The buddy system will keep you on track to exercise and eat right.
— Do what you think is fun. Some find a casual walk outside preferable to walking on the treadmill.
— Sign up for classes or activities. You’ll be more likely to show up to exercise if people are expecting you on a regular basis.

Need for power coal threatens Zimbabwe national park

HWANGE, 27 Dec—Zimbabwe’s already dim electricity supply faces a new threat, as the country’s main power plant says it needs to dig for new coal reserves under a river inside a national park to keep running.

As cars become vastly more complicated than models made just a few years ago, Baur is often turning down jobs and referring customers to auto dealer shops. Like many other independent mechanics, he does not have the thousands of dollars to purchase the online manuals and specialized tools needed to fix the computer-controlled machines.

“Lately I find myself going back out. I’m more reluctant to take complex jobs on.”

13 injured in Karachi

ISLAMABAD, 27 Dec—At least 13 people were injured on Saturday night in a blast in the southern Pakistani city of Karachi, according to local TV reports.

The private Dawn TV quoted police as saying that a car exploded near a graveyard in Paposh Nagar of Karachi, adding that it seemed to be result of a faulty CNG kit of the car.

However, as the blast took place at a time when a Muharram procession was passing through Paposh Nagar, police and rangers reached the site for further investigation.

The injured, including rangers personnel and children, have been shifted to nearby hospitals.

High-tech vehicles pose trouble for some mechanics

LOS ANGELES, 27 Dec—A sign inside the Humming Motors auto repair shop says, “We do the worrying so you don’t have to.”

These days, owner David Baur spends a lot of time worrying in his full-service garage near downtown Los Angeles.

As cars become vastly more complicated than models made just a few years ago, Baur is often turning down jobs and referring customers to auto dealer shops. Like many other independent mechanics, he does not have the thousands of dollars to purchase the online manuals and specialized tools needed to fix the computer-controlled machines.

“Lately I find myself going back out. I’m more reluctant to take complex jobs on.”

Passengers of Spanish airlines Air Comet wait in Barajas airport in Madrid on 23 December. Xinhua

In this on 3 Sept, 2009 photo, independent auto mechanic David Baur, owner of Humming Motors, poses for a photo at his shop in Los Angeles. Internet

Photo: In this on 3 Sept, 2009 photo, independent auto mechanic David Baur, owner of Humming Motors, poses for a photo at his shop in Los Angeles. Internet

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Hamas rejects AL secretary general criticism

GAZA, 27 Dec— Gaza, ruling Hamas movement on Saturday rejected the criticism of Arab League (AL) Secretary General Amr Moussa, who said he can not find one reasonable reason why Hamas does not ink the inter-Palestinian agreement.

In a special statement, sent to Xinhua, Sami A bu Zuhri, Hamas spokesman in Gaza, accused M oussa of “eluding from his responsibilities by making such statements,” adding “Hamas wouldn’t accept any blackmail attempt, and be obliged to change its stances.”

Earlier on Saturday, M oussa told a meeting of Arab parliaments representatives in Cairo that he cannot find one reasonable reason that makes Hamas does not sign the reconciliation agreement.

On 25 Oct, Egypt had presented to the Palestinian factions, including Hamas and President Mahmoud Abbas’ Fatah party, a reconciliation pact, in a bid to end the feud between the two groups and hold general elections in June 2010.

Fatah party accepted the reconciliation pact, and expressed readiness to sign it in Cairo. However, Hamas movement refused and said some articles in the pact need amendment.

Xinhua

Freed fishermen handed over to Indian authorities

LAHORE, 27 Dec— Pakistan Saturday handed over 100 freed Indian fishermen over to the Indian authorities, officials said.

The fishermen were brought in two buses from the southern Pakistani city of Karachi and handed over to the Indian officials on the Wagha border in the eastern Pakistani city of Lahore.

The fishermen were freed as a humanitarian gesture from a prison in K arachi on the instruction of Pakistani Prime Minister Yousuf Raza Gilani.

The fishermen were earlier scheduled to be released on 24 Dec but delayed due to some technical problems.

There is no clear demarcation in the Arabian sea, separating the Indian and Pakistani territorial water borders, and this leads to poor fishermen from both countries being frequently arrested and lodged into jails.

On 14 Dec, Pakistan arrested 16 Indian fishermen and seized four boats in case of alleged territorial water violation by them, the third such incident in last two months.

Xinhua

Xinhua to publish its first national financial magazine

BEIJING, 27 Dec— China’s Xinhua News Agency said in a Press release on Sunday that its first financial magazine — Economy & Nation Weekly — will reach newstands nationwide on Monday. Xinhua says the magazine aims to provide comprehensive and authoritative information by capitalizing on its global information collecting network and its diversified think tank resources. The weekly also aims to become a world-class financial magazine by providing prospective, insightful and professional reporting on economic and financial news in China and other parts of the world.

Priority of its news reporting will be attaining valuable information from high-level policy makers and research achievements by top think tanks and academies.

The weekly’s target readers are government officials, business chiefs and managers, scholars and others who are interested in financial news.

The weekly is run by Xinhua’s Outlook Weekly conglomerate, which also publishes the Globe Weekly. Its first edition will be available to readers at airports and newsstands in major Chinese cities on Monday.

Xinhua

Malaysia to attract investment from China more actively

KUALA LUMPUR, 27 Dec— Malaysia has lined up 10 initiatives to attract businessmen from China in a more active way to promote China-M alaysia’s bilateral trade, a Malaysian official said here in an interview with Xinhua recently.

Wong Lai Sum, Deputy Chief Executive Officer of Malaysia External Trade Development Corporation (MATRADE), said this is in tandem with the fully implementation of the China-ASEAN Free Trade Area (FTA).

MATRADE has planned to carry out high-level visits to China next year with Malaysian International Trade and Industry Minister Mustapa Mohamed leading a delegation, she said.

Wong told Xinhua that MATRADE will actively participate in trade fairs held in China, among which are the China-ASEAN Expo and the Shanghai World Expo.

Wong said that China-ASEAN FTA construction has been making good progress since 2005, and in Malaysia, business communities have actively participated in tours to China organized by MATRADE.

Xinhua

Four bodies recovered after ferry sinking in Philippines

MANILA, 27 Dec— At least four bodies were recovered on Sunday from the sea following the sinking of a ferry off San Agapito, Verde Island in Batangas Province of the Philippines on Saturday night.

The fatalities were an eight-month old female, a 15 to 18-year-old female, another female aged 18 to 24, and a male aged 30 to 40 said Senator Richard Gordon, chairman of the Philippine Red Cross.

According to the Philippine Coast Guard authorities, the bodies will be sent to the Batangas pier, where relatives are waiting for identifying the fatalities.

The ferry with 88 passengers and crew sank off Batangas Province at around 11:30 pm local time. It is reported that many passengers on the ferry had no time to put on life vests when the ship sank.

The ferry, Baleno 9, left the Port of Calapan in Oriental Mindoro before at 11:00 pm local time and was bound for Batangas City when tragedy struck about 40 minutes later.

Xinhua
Myanmar, Indonesia mark 60th anniversary of establishment of diplomatic ties

YANGON, 27 Dec—The Union of Myanmar and the Republic of Indonesia marked the 60th anniversary of establishment of diplomatic relations between the two countries at the National Theatre on Myoma Kyuang Road in Dagon Township here this afternoon.

On the occasion, the national anthems of the two countries were played to open the ceremony. Minister for Foreign Affairs U Nyan Win and his wife, Indonesian Ambassador to Myanmar Mr Sebastianus Sumarsono and wife attended the ceremony and posed for documentary photos.

The Indonesian ambassador and the minister delivered speeches.

Construction Minister inspects Razudaing Bridges

NAY PYI TAW, 27 Dec—Minister for Construction U Win Khaing Maung Myint yesterday arrived at the briefing hall of Razudaing Bridge Project, where he heard the report on the progress of road works.

He then inspected the drilling of the bridge and installation of steel girder type of Razudaing Bridge No (1), which is one way bridge with a 60-ton load. It has a length of 780 feet and 6 inches long on Myoma Kyuang Road and 177 feet and 6 inches long on Kyaikpi Bank. The wide of motorway is 20 feet and the pedestrian have 2 feet and 3 inches wide. The bridge can withstand 60-ton load. It is expected to complete in the next two years.

The minister instructed the officials for completing the project on schedule.
Independence is, indeed, like the lifeblood of a nation. In an independent, sovereign country, the people have the right to govern themselves in the territory of the country in line with their own cultures, customs and traditions. Having independence and sovereignty means that a nation has the right to freely exercise its three sovereign powers, namely legislative power, executive power and judicial power.

Occupying a strategic location, the Union of Myanmar is gifted with temperate climate patterns, fertile soil and a vast range of natural resources in abundance.

Myanmar, a pleasant, naturally beautiful and resource-rich land, stood tall as a sovereign one with own monarchs, cultures, literatures, and languages in the world. In retrospect, King Anawrahta (1044-1077) unified the First Mianmar Empire in Bagan Period; King Bayinnaung (1551-1581), the Second Mianmar Empire in Toungoo Period; and King Alaung Phaya (1752-1761), the Third Mianmar Empire in Konbaung Period.

However, Myanmar fell under the yoke of servitude in consequence of colonialism and capitalism. After the First Anglo-Myanmar War in 1824, Myanmar had to give up Rakhine, Taninthayi, Assam and Manipura; after the Second Anglo-Myanmar War in 1852, Lower Myanmar including Hanthawady and Bago; and after the Third Anglo-Myanmar War in 1885, Upper Mianmar including Mandalay Yadanabon and Bago, which almost loss of national culture and character. For Mianmar people, falling under alien subjugation is a bitter pill to swallow, as well as an unforgettable nightmare.

Inspired by unyielding spirit, the people under the leadership of patriotic heroes armed themselves with whatever arms they had got and fought back the invaders at risk to their lives. A very strong sense of patriotism, tenacity, and bravery of the revolutionary led to the regaining of independence. To achieve independence took more than one hundred years. The great achievement was due to the fact that the entire people acted in harmony, sharing joys and sorrows in independence struggles.

Mianmar became an independent sovereign nation at 4:20 am on 4 January 1948 (Sunday). That morning, the National Anthem was played to the accompaniment of the band was the sweetest music to the ears of the people. On the auspicious occasion, the whole country was continuously reverberating with sounds of bells, vessel sirens, and explosions of fireworks in honour of independence. The sounds of artillery fires appeared in parallel with Independence Day fireworks displays in the sky. Gradually, the Union Jack was falling down, whereas the State Flag of the Union of Myanmar was being hoisted up atop the mast, and for the people that scene was certainly something to be rightly proud of in the course of Myanmar’s history. And that inspired the people to equip themselves with a stronger sense of patriotic spirit and patriotism and renewed vigour.

To regain the independence was a very demanding task. To restore the independence and sovereignty is a formidable duty. So, all younger generations are duty-bound to restore the independence that cost life and limb of a great number of people, in order that the nation will never lose independence again.

Protect Myanmar’s independence forever

Theint (Institute of Economics)

To regain the independence was a very demanding task. To restore the independence and sovereignty is a formidable duty. So, all younger generations are duty-bound to restore the independence that cost life and limb of a great number of people, in order that the nation will never lose independence again.
The whole nation has seen a network of roads and bridges due to cooperative efforts

Maung Maung Htwe (MNA)

Safeguard independence and sovereignty through might of patriotism

I passed along such river-crossing bridges as the Bo Myat Tun, Pyapon, Daydaye, Maubin, Myaungmya, Einme, Pannawady and Ngawun. From Yangon, I have been to Ngayokkaung, a seaside region of Ngapudaw Township, by car many times.

I have also travelled to various regions by passing along river-spanning bridges, including Thanlwin, Mpalin, Mwalamyine and Bala M in Htin. I have attended bridge opening ceremonies. I still remember a foundation-laying ceremony that I attended as well as the inauguration of Pannawady Bridge in Ayeayawady Division built by Myanmar women engineers of the Ministry of Construction and gathered news.

I travelled by car to the whole Rakhine State, which relied solely on the water transport and airways in the past, passing through Nawaday Bridge in Pyay. I have collected news from various bridge construction projects, including Mael Bridge at Mael road section on Yangon-Kyaikpu Road, Lonedawpauk Bridge and Minkyuang Bridge.

I, therefore, have known the importance of the road transport sector and the value of a bridge by looking at the past, present and future.

When Myanmar was under the colonial rule for over 100 years, the colonialists blasted the bridge in World War II. In the post-independence period, the Head of State once said: “Looking back to Myanmar’s history in the post-independence period, instead of cooperating in national development tasks, some groups, with various isms, narrow-minded racism, egotism, arrogance, sectarianism and personality cult, rose against the State causing losses of public property and people’s lives. A gain in 1988, with outside instigation, some persons and parties created riots resulting in anarchy and tragedies in the nation.”

The country had bitter experiences in the past. It did not long ago. Nonetheless, our nation has made good strides since the Thanlwin unavoidably took over the State duties in 1988.

As national reconciliation has been cemented under the leadership of the Head of State, most of the regions that lacked peace and development for many years have been able to carry out regional development tasks with the strength of the national people.

Now the national brethren have enjoyed the taste and fruits of peace and development that were just a dream in the past. As to the road transport sector, there have been 18 bridges across the Ayeyawady, Chindwin, Thanlwin and Sittoung rivers although there were only five in 1988.

Among them, eight Ayeyawady River-crossing bridges namely Nawade, Maubin, Bala M in Htin, Bo Myat Tun, Anawrahta, Maugay, Daydaye and Yadanaon were constructed as milestones of the nation.

Efforts are being made for the construction of new Ayeyawady River-crossing bridges such as Sinkham, Malun, Pakokku and Nyangdon to complete almost at the same time.

The Ayeyawady Bridge (Pakokku) to link Letpanchepaw Village of NyaungU Township on the east bank of the Ayeyawady River and Pakokku Township on the west bank will emerge as the longest bridge in the Union of Myanmar. The main bridge will be 11431 feet (2.16 miles) long, and it will be the rail-cum-road bridge. The bridge is of reinforced concrete steel truss type, and it will have 28 feet wide two-way motor road and 14 feet wide area of railroad. The clearance of the bridge will be 52 feet high, and the facility will have three feet and three inches wide pedestrian way on either side.

In order to narrow the development gap between the regions on the west bank of Ayeyawady River and those on the east bank, the bridge will be built as a milestone reflecting the profound goodwill, loving-kindness and compassion of the Head of State for the national people.

Likewise, Public Works of the Ministry of Construction have built 233 above-180-foot-long bridges and 2931 under-180-foot-long small bridges in the entire Union from 1988 to date in accord with the guidance of the Head of State.

Moreover, the inter-village roads, the roads linking rural and urban areas, the inter-district roads, the inter-Region Division roads and the highways were constructed as the road networks across the nation. Therefore, the country has built over 41,700 miles long roads in total from over 21,000 miles long roads in 1988. So far, over 39,400 miles of rural roads have been constructed with a view to ensuring development of the rural regions.

In addition, the government is implementing the highway projects in cooperation with the regional countries. They are: the Asian Highways to link with Thailand, Laos, China, India and Bangladesh, the ASEAN Highways to link with ASEAN countries, the Greater Mekong Sub-region economic corridor highways, the BIMSTEC highway, the

(See page 9)
Hailing the 62nd Anniversary Independence Day:

The whole nation has seen a network of roads and bridges due to cooperative efforts

Maung Maung Htwe (MNA)

(Translation)

The list of bridges built since 1988 to date.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No</th>
<th>State/Division</th>
<th>Under 180-feet</th>
<th>Over 180-feet</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Kachin State</td>
<td>413 bridges</td>
<td>18 bridges</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Kayah State</td>
<td>24 bridges</td>
<td>1 bridge</td>
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<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Kayin State</td>
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<td>7 bridges</td>
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<tr>
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<td>Chin State</td>
<td>17 bridges</td>
<td>3 bridges</td>
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<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Sagaing Division</td>
<td>408 bridges</td>
<td>16 bridges</td>
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<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Taninthayi Division</td>
<td>116 bridges</td>
<td>7 bridges</td>
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<td>7</td>
<td>Bago Division</td>
<td>171 bridges</td>
<td>18 bridges</td>
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<td>8</td>
<td>Magway Division</td>
<td>164 bridges</td>
<td>19 bridges</td>
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<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>Mandalay Division</td>
<td>212 bridges</td>
<td>11 bridges</td>
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<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>Mon State</td>
<td>131 bridges</td>
<td>4 bridges</td>
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<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>Rakhae State</td>
<td>259 bridges</td>
<td>36 bridges</td>
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<td>12</td>
<td>Yangon Division</td>
<td>66 bridges</td>
<td>30 bridges</td>
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<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>Shan State (East)</td>
<td>168 bridges</td>
<td>4 bridges</td>
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<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>Shan State (South)</td>
<td>185 bridges</td>
<td>5 bridges</td>
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<tr>
<td>15</td>
<td>Shan State (North)</td>
<td>80 bridges</td>
<td>7 bridges</td>
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<tr>
<td>16</td>
<td>Ayeyawady Division</td>
<td>312 bridges</td>
<td>47 bridges</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Total</td>
<td>2913 bridges</td>
<td>233 bridges</td>
</tr>
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</table>

The list of over 180 feet bridges that had been constructed, under construction and planned for construction since 1988.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No</th>
<th>State/Division</th>
<th>constructed (Bridges)</th>
<th>under construction (Bridges)</th>
<th>plans for construction</th>
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<tr>
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<td>Kachin State</td>
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<td>2</td>
<td>Kayah State</td>
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<td>Kayin State</td>
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<td>Sagaing Division</td>
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<td>6</td>
<td>Taninthayi Division</td>
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<td>Bago Division</td>
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<td>Magway Division</td>
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<td>Total</td>
<td>233</td>
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Objectives of the 62nd Anniversary Independence Day (2010)

* 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 to build up a modern, developed discipline-flourishing democratic nation in accordance with the new State Constitution that has been approved by the votes of the great majority of the people,
* All the national people to cooperate in realizing the States seven-step Road Map with Union Spirit and patriotic spirit.

Poem

Myanmar’s resolve

* Independence, first
  Independence, second
  Independence, third
* Thundered with pride
  Our forefathers
  Sacrificing lives in thousands
* And restored independence in unity
  Truly valuable inheritance
* Fell the Union Jack to ground
  Our National Flag
  The Flag of victory
  Flying with pride
  High in the air
* In January every year
  In whole country
  Flying the flags of victory
  Independence our inheritance
  Love we in past and present
  For perpetuation of independence
  National races with courage and perseverance
  Safeguarding it without fail
  That’s Myanmar’s resolve

Tekkatho Nyo Nyo Thant (Trs)

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

The second best time is now.
Lashio, famous town for hot spring camp

Byline and Photos: Tin Htwe (MNA)

Lashio is the capital of Shan State (North) and lies on the border trade route. More than 40 bus lines run to every corner of the country from Lashio. The train transports passengers and commodities to Lashio, Hsipaw, Kyaukme, Naunggyo, PyinOoLwin and Mandalay daily. Myanmar Airways operates flights to Yangon-Heho-Lashio-Heho-Yangon every Sunday, Saturday and Thursday.

Opening of Defence Services C-in-C’s Trophy Tennis Tourney

NAY PYI TAW, 27 Dec—The opening ceremony of the Defence Services Commander-in-Chief’s Trophy Tatmadaw (Army, Navy and Air) Tennis Tournament took place at the tennis course of South-East Command on 18 December. It was attended by Chairman of Mon State Peace and Development Council Commander of South-East Command Maj-Gen Thet Naing Win, division level staff officers, state level departmental officials, commandants, officers and other ranks, and their families. The Commander enjoyed the match of first day after giving opening speech. — MNA
French airport tightens security

**PARIS, 27 Dec**—The Charles de Gaulle airport in Paris has tightened security on Saturday, especially for flights heading to the United States, after a failed attempt to bomb a US-bound airliner Friday.

Security officials would be stricter on body frisking and extra checks on hand baggage, which may take longer boarding time, said Patrick Espagnol, the deputy prefect of the Roissy Department where Charles de Gaulle airport locates. All passengers destined for the United States have to go through the tighter checking procedures before boarding, Espagnol told reporters. Since Saturday morning, flights to the Americas have been delayed for one hour on average, local media reported. There are around 30 flight delays from Paris to the Americas every day.

A Nigerian attempted to set off an explosion device on a Delta international flight shortly before the flight landed on the Detroit Metro Airport in Michigan on Friday. The device failed to explode, causing only injuries to the suspect himself and two other passengers.

Airports in Britain, Finland, Italy and other countries have also reportedly increased their security procedures.

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Swiss bank secrecy emerges from 2009 with holes

**GENEVA, 27 Dec**—Switzerland’s finance minister acknowledges that he had a tough time this year after the Swiss bowed to international pressure on banking secrecy under the onslaught of US lawsuits and a crackdown on tax evasion.

Yet, the Swiss banking industry insists that it was stirred rather than shaken by a tumultuous year that hollowed their sacrosanct secrecy, threatened to sap billions from their vaults and left their battered flagship bank UBS wheezing.

“You could describe it as a challenging year,” James Nason, a spokesman for the Swiss Bankers Association, told AF. “Privacy remains the default setting.” He insisted nonetheless, as the chairman of the association, private banker Patrick Odier, toyed with “Rubik”—the buzzword for plans to anonymously register clients—told AF.

David Pogue, personal technology columnist for The New York Times, points to Apple’s iPod, introduced in 2001, as among the most influential devices of the decade, but also casts a vote for the Flip pocket camcorder from Pure Digital Technologies. —**INTERNET**

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Six members of family shot to death in north Mexico

**CIUDAD JUAREZ, 27 Dec**—Prosecutors in the Mexican state of Chihuahua say they found the bullet-riddled bodies of six members of the same family in a mountainous area. No motive was given for the killing, but drug trafficking, illegal logging and drug cultivation are all common in the northern region.

State prosecutors’ spokesman Eduardo Esparrza says the victims are men between the ages of 45 and 55, and all from the same family.

He said the bodies were found late Friday near a dirt road. Chihuahua state police said Saturday that two army battalions posted in the border city of Ciudad Juarez to fight drug-fueled violence would be rotated out, with fresh troops replacing them. The statement said such 60-day rotations are routine. —**INTERNET**

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A ship passes the Tianzixiaohou highway-railway Bridge in Wuhan, capital of central China’s Hubei Province, on 27 Dec, 2009. Built at a cost of 11 billion yuan (1.6 billion US dollars), the 4,657-meter cable suspension bridge opened to traffic on Saturday. —**Xinhua**

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New Zealand airports increase security after attempted attack in US

**WELLINGTON, 27 Dec**—New Zealand’s Auckland International Airport on Sunday tightened security measures for passengers flying to the United States after an alleged attempt to blow up a passenger jet as it came to land in Detroit.

A Nigerian man, Umar Farouk Abdulmutallab, has been charged with attempting to destroy an aircraft with a high explosive and with placing a destructive device on a plane.

New Zealand’s aviation security service general manager Mark Everitt said passengers flying to the United States will be separated from other international passengers, after routine screening, Radio New Zealand reported.

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At least one Hamas member killed in southern Beirut

**BEIRUT, 27 Dec**—At least one Hamas member was killed in a car bomb in Hezbollah’s stronghold Dahiya in southern Beirut on Saturday night, the official National News Agency (NNA) reported.

One Hamas member was killed, one severely injured and some other people also injured in the incident, according to NNA report. However, the local LBC TV channel and News Lebanon website reported that two Hamas members were killed by the blast.

A source with Lebanese Interior Security Force told Xinhua on condition of anonymity that the explosion caused death, but he is unclear about the number of the killed. “There is no official statement right now,” said the source. The local Mustaphal newspaper website quoted a Hamas official as saying that the incident aimed at a senior Hamas official Ali Baraka. The blast occurred near his office.

Hezbollah and Lebanon security persons cordoned off the area immediately. Hezbollah refused to talk about the incident. —**Xinhua**

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People run to refill buckets of water to use in preventing homes from catching fire in Valparaíso city, 121 km (75 miles) northwest of Santiago, on 26 Dec, 2009. More than 500 hectares (1235 acres) of land have been burnt due to multiple fires near Valparaíso city but with no reported cases of deaths or injuries, local authorities said. —**INTERNET**
14,000 passengers stranded as fog continues to blanket SW China

CHENGDU, 27 Dec — More than 14,000 passengers were stranded as heavy fog continued to blanket the Shuangliu International Airport of Chengdu, Sichuan Province, on Friday.

The fog forced the closure of the airport for six and a half hours, delaying 126 flights and causing cancellation of 24 flights while another 17 flights landed in nearby airports, said Liu Junming, a publicity official of the airport.

More than 1,000 passengers had been staying at the airport since Thursday when the fog started to blanket the region and forced the closure of the airport.

The airport staff were providing food and water as well as ticket refunding services to the passengers, he said.— Xinhua

Britain urged to crack down on remedies

LONDON, 27 Dec — The British government and doctors should do more to crack down on those who promote remedies such as curing AIDS with vitamins, a researcher says.

David Colquhoun of the University College London wrote in an editorial in the Christmas issue of the British Medical Journal that colleges “avoid the hard questions by setting up committees,” while the government’s department of health refers the hard questions to the Prince of Wales’ Foundation for Integrated Health, which was asked to draft “national occupational standards” for “make believe subjects like ‘naturopathy.’”

Colquhoun cites two recent examples that illustrate the problem.

The recent homeopathy “evidence check” conducted by the House of Commons Science and Technology Select Committee was “eventually coajled into admitting that there was no good evidence that homeopathy worked but defended the idea that the taxpayer should pay for it anyway,” Colquhoun says.

Cord tissue yields many, many stem cells

PITTSBURGH, 27 Dec — Umbilical cord tissue could be a source of plentiful stem cells, US researchers said.

Brigid Deasy of the University of Pittsburgh School of Medicine has raised the possibility of harvesting stem cells from the umbilical cord’s gelatinous material — called Wharton’s jelly — and from vessel walls.

These cells could be expanded to a greater number, remain remarkably stable and might not trigger strong immune responses, Deasy said.

Deasy and colleagues analyzed umbilical cords donated to research. The study, published online in the Journal of Biomedicine and Biotechnology, indicated at least 21 million stem cells, and possibly as many as 550 million, could be banked from the umbilical cord of one baby.

“So, the cord could become an accessible source of a multitude of stem cells that overcomes many of the restrictions, such as limited quantity as well as donor age and donor sex issues, that come with other adult stem cell populations,” Deasy said in a statement.

Death toll from A/H1N1 flu reaches 106 in Egypt

CAIRO, 27 Dec — Egypt on Friday reported three more death cases of influenza A/H1N1, bringing the worldwide death toll to 106, said the Health Ministry in a statement.

A 35-year-old woman in Cairo and another 21-year-old woman in Assuit, 330 km south of Cairo, said the statement, adding that he suffered from pneumonia and dyspnea.

The third case was a 35-year-old man in Assuit, 330 km south of Cairo, said the statement, adding that he suffered from severe dyspnea.

Earlier on Friday, four million doses of A/H1N1 vaccine were received at Cairo International Airport ahead of a vaccination campaign for school students starting next week, reported Egypt’s MENA news agency.

Up till now, Egypt has reported more than 8,500 cases of the novel flu, according to the Health Ministry.

Too much TV, juice in home child care


Researchers at Oregon State University in Corvallis surveyed 300 family child care providers and found two-thirds of those caring for children under age 5 have the TV on most of the day.

Study leader Stewart Trost pointed out the American Academy of Pediatrics discourages TV viewing for children younger than age 2 and recommends no more than two hours daily for children ages 2 to 5.

Trost said 78 percent of the children ages 2 to 5 were not getting enough physical activity and 63 percent had active play or exercise restricted as a punishment.

Acetaminophen may ease a broken heart

LEXINGTON, 27 Dec — Aacetaminophen, the active ingredient in Tylenol, may not only ease physical pain, but the pain of social rejection as well, US researchers found.

Psychologist C Nathan DeWall of the University of Kentucky said physical and social pain appear to overlap in the brain — relying on some of the same behavioral and neural mechanisms.

In the first experiment, 62 healthy volunteers took 1,000 milligrams daily of either acetaminophen or a placebo. Each evening, participants reported how much they experienced social pain using a measurement tool accepted as a valid measure of social pain.

Feelings and social pain decreased in those taking acetaminophen, while no change was observed in subjects taking the placebo, DeWall said.

In the second experiment, 25 healthy volunteers took 2,000 milligrams daily of either acetaminophen or a placebo. A few weeks of taking the pills, subjects participated in a computer game rigged to create feelings of social rejection. Functional magnetic resonance imaging used during the game revealed acetaminophen reduced neural responses to social rejection in brain regions associated with the distress of social pain and the affective component of physical pain.— Internet

Sri Lankan fishermen put out to sea at Unawatuna in southern Galle. People across Asia have paused to remember the day five years ago when an undersea earthquake unleashed a devastating wave that killed more than 220,000 people.— Internet
Heart transplants may up skin cancer risk

ROCHESTER, 27 Dec—Many heart transplant patients develop multiple skin cancers, researchers at the Mayo Clinic in Rochester, Minn, found. Dr Jeremy D Brewer and colleagues reviewed the records of 312 patients—average age 47.4—who had received heart transplants from 1988-2006. Forty-six percent of the patients had developed skin cancer during the 19 years of follow-up.

The study, published in the Archives of Dermatology, found patients were more likely to develop squamous cell carcinoma if they had other types of cancer after their transplant, were older or had a known cause for their heart failure.

Infection with the herpes simplex virus, being older and using the medication mycophenolate to suppress the immune system were associated with an increased risk of basal cell carcinoma, the study said.

“Although a considerable tumor burden was found in this study, the rate of death due to skin cancer was surprisingly low,” study authors said in a statement. “Only one patient died of skin cancer, of a melanoma.”

For better skin, ditch risky behaviours

CLEVELAND, 27 Dec—Smoking, being overweight, not using sunscreen and having had skin cancer is associated with sun damaged and aging facial skin, US researchers say.

Kathryn J Martinis of Case Western Reserve School of Medicine in Cleveland and colleagues studied 65 pairs of twins attending the 2002 annual Twin Days Festival in Twinsburg, Ohio.

A total of 130 individuals provided information about skin type, history of skin cancer, smoking and drinking habits and weight. Clinicians assigned each participant a score based on such characteristics as wrinkling and change in pigmentation, Martinis said.

The study, published in the Archives of Dermatology, finds higher levels of sun-related damage, or photodamage, included a history of skin cancer, smoking and drinking habits and weight.

“The Twins Days Festival provides a rare opportunity to study a large number of twin pairs to control for genetic susceptibility.”

Gaza children recycle rubbish into useful materials

GAZA, 27 Dec—The Gaza-based Creative Women Association hosted on Saturday a gallery for children displaying recycled rubbish materials into useful items for household use.

The project entitled “The Environment Club” is funded by the Welfare Association, a local non-government organization, and it was implemented by the help of 150 students from five elementary schools for both genders in the Gaza Strip.

Raw material was used in the creating of items of this gallery including old unwanted trash and plastic.

The cost of the 3-month course project has reached 34,000 US dollars, and was supervised by 15 teachers and 5 coordinators distributed as follows: 3 teachers and one supervisor per school.

Aiaa El Ghoul, a 10-year-old student and a participant in the project said “I worked in the environmental club and I created items that we can use in our life, I used unwanted plastic bottles to make an artificial tree that can be placed as a natural scene in an office or a home.”—Xinhua

Refurbished computers aid Kenyan farmers

KATUMANI, 27 Dec—Refurbished computers are changing the fortunes of farmers in central Kenya by accurately and instantly predicting the weather, officials said.

The digital age arrived two years ago and since then has often meant the difference between a good crop and no crop at all, The Independent reported on Saturday.

“It’s helping them to decide which crops to plant, which fertilizer to use and when to plant,” Jackson Mwangangi, who runs the local weather station near Katumani, told the British charity Computer Aid equipped Jackson’s station with refurbished computers and taught him how to use them.

Now forecasts are available to anyone with an Internet connection or phone, and they’re also circulated via a motorcycle rider who carries the forecasts to hundreds of small farmers in the region.

Bangladesh to restrict credit facilities for polluting industries

DHAKA, 27 Dec—The Bangladeshi central bank has decided to restrict credit facilities for polluting industries in an initiative to protect environment and combat climate change, leading English newspaper The Daily Star reported on Sunday.

“No more credit facilities for the industries which will pollute environment,” Bangladeshi Bank Governor Atiur Rahman said while he was speaking for the central bank officials at a seminar on “Climate change management”.

Atiur said action would be taken against those banks which would provide credit facilities to the industries responsible for environment pollution,—Xinhua

Fishermen sort the fish after ice fishing at the Jingpohu Lake in Mudanjiang, northeast China’s Heilongjiang Province, on 26 Dec, 2009. Fifty tons of fish are caught in the first day of ice fishing on the aquafarm.—Xinhua

Male and female Birman cats take part in an international cat show in Moshav Beit Hefer near the coastal city of Netanya, north of Israel, on 26 Dec, 2009.—Xinhua

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Mancini opens Premier League with victory

**LONDON, 27 Dec**—Roberto Mancini started his English Premier League journey in charge of M anchester City with a 2-0 home win over Stoke City on Saturday. City came to the lead on 28 minutes through Bulgarian winger Martin Petrov’s far post tap-in and Carlos Tevez poked home before the break to double the advantage for home side.

The Stoke side have lost their last five league matches and settled in 11th place. City, playing their first game under Italian Mancini since Mark Hughes’s 18-month reign as manager ended last Saturday, remained sixth following their eighth league win of the season. —Xinhua

Liverpool wins over 10-man Wolves

**LONDON, 27 Dec**—Steven Gerrard and Yossi Benayoun scored in second half to hand Liverpool a 2-0 win over 10-man Wolves at Anfield on Saturday. The Reds were frustrated by M ick McCarthy’s team until referee Andre Marriner sent Stephen Ward off just after the interval.

A rgentinian left back Insauro burst clear down the left and floated a cross over that Gerrard reached first to head into the corner of Hahnemann’s net. Gerrard scored his first goal in almost two months, his fifth in Premier League, to put Liverpool ahead.

Spurs held by in-form Fulham

**LONDON, 27 Dec**—Tottenham missed a chance to move into the top four as Fulham dominated Saturday’s 0-0 draw between the London rivals at Craven Cottage. Harry Redknapp’s side would have gone above fourth-placed Aston Villa with a victory, but were forced to settle for a point that left them in fifth. Redknapp opted to drop England striker Jermain Defoe to the bench as captain Robbie Keane partnered Peter Crouch in attack, while Ledley King and Luka Modric were among the Spurs substitutes after recovering from injury. Fulham were unchallenged following their 3-0 win over M anchester United on Saturday and they started brightly with Damien Duff testing Tottenham goalkeeper Heurello Gomes in the opening moments.

Takahashi secures Olympic berth at Japan nationals

**OSAKA, 27 Dec**—Daisuke Takahashi won the Japan national figure skating championships Saturday to secure a place in the Vancouver Olympics. Takahashi, who was first after the short program, made several mistakes in Saturday’s free skate but was good enough to finish first with a total of 261.13 points.

“I’m happy to be Japan champion but I’m not completely satisfied with my performance tonight,” Takahashi said. “I have some time to practice before the Olympics and need to improve physically and mentally.”

Takahashi stumbled on his opening quad toe loop and a triple loop later in his routine but finished 17 points ahead of Nobunari Oda. Oda, who has already secured a place in Vancouver, fell on his opening quad toe loop but was solid the rest of the way and finished second with 244.30 points. —Internet

Chelsea holds scoreless at Birmingham

**LONDON, 27 Dec**—Chelsea failed to break their under-par jitter on Saturday as the Premier League leaders, grabbing one win out of last five, were held to 0-0 at Birmingham City in holiday fixture.

Grangrourke Zola’s West Ham United climbed out of the relegation zone with a 2-0 home win over Portsmouth. Tottenham Hotspur remained in fifth place after a 0-0 draw at Fulham and the points were also shared at Sunderland, who drew 1-1with Everton. Wigan Athletic also tied Blackburn Rovers 1-1. The same happened to Wigan Athletic, fall on his opening quad toe loop but was solid the rest of the way and finished second with 244.30 points. —Internet

Ex-Liverpool striker Sinama-Pongolle heads for Sporting

**LISBON, 27 Dec**—Former Liverpool striker Florent Sinama-Pongolle has agreed to move from struggling Spanish side Atletico Madrid to Sporting Lisbon, the Portuguese team announced on Saturday.

“A game in principle has been reached with Atletico M adrid and Florent Sinama-Pongolle in view to a transfer on January 1,” said a Sporting statement. A cording to the Diario de Noticias newspaper, French international Sinama-Pongolle will cost Sporting, who are in fifth and 12 points behind leaders Sporting Braga and Benfica, around six million euros. —Internet

Wenger relishing Gunners title challenge

**LONDON, 27 Dec**—Arsenal manager Arsene Wenger, who has been at the Gunners helm for 13 years, believes his side are in great shape for a Premier League title challenge despite a trophyless four years. Arsenal have not won anything since the 2005 FA Cup triumph against M anchester United, by far the longest barren spell since the Frenchman arrived in 1996.

“The last four years have been the most challenging,” admitted Wenger. “It’s not linked with the fact we have won no trophies. I think it is moving into the new snadium and keeping the team at the top. “For me the best period at the club is the last four years but unfortunately it is also the period where we have not won trophies.” —Internet

Fellaini’s late strike rescues Everton

**SUNDERLAND, 27 Dec**—Marouane Fellaini rescued Everton as the Belgian midfielder’s late equaliser snatched a 1-1 draw at Sunderland on Saturday. David Moyes’ team trailed to Darren Bent’s early goal at the Stadium of Light, but Fellaini levelled with five minutes left to hand the Toffees their fourth successive Premier League draw.

Everton remain only two points above the relegation zone, but M oyes can take heart from the way his players battled to the end. Sunderland stay marooned in mid-table after failing to win for the sixth successive match. —Internet

Answers to yesterday’s Crosswords Puzzle

**SHOOTING**

**ST-char**

**SU**

**SVE**

**RMD**

**EPL**

**RATH**

**ENC**

**EVR**

**ALO**

**REM**

Sunderland’s striker Darren Bent scores the opening goal of their English Premier League football match against Everton at the Stadium of Light in Sunderland. —Internet

Gold medalist Daisuke Takahashi, center, silver medalist Nobunari Oda, left, and bronze medalist Takahiko Kozuka smile on the podium following the men’s free skating event at the Japan National Figure Skating Championships, on 26 Dec, 2009. —Internet

Takahashi, center, silver medalist Nobunari Oda, left, and bronze medalist Takahiko Kozuka smile on the podium following the men’s free skating event at the Japan National Figure Skating Championships, on 26 Dec, 2009. —Internet
China-ASEAN FTA to greatly benefit Cambodia and region: officials

PHNOM PENH, 27 Dec— Cambodian government officials expressed their belief that the establishment of the China-ASEAN free trade area (FTA) on Jan. 1 will be sure to promote the development of trade and economic cooperation of the region and benefit greatly the country and the people.

“We are looking forward to and paid great attentions to the building of the China-ASEAN Free Trade Area scheduled on 1 Jan. 2010.” Keat Chhon, minister of economy and finance, told Xinhua recently. “Cambodia is a open country and our National Assembly has already approved the agreement of the China-ASEAN FTA,” said Keat Chhon on the 4th annual Export-Import and Economic Cooperation of the region and benefit greatly the country and the people.

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Only with stability and peace will the nation develop
Only with stability and peace will democratization process be successful

Anarchy begets anarchy, not democracy
Riots beget riots, not democracy
Democracy can be introduced only through constitution

People’s Desire
- We favour peace and stability
- We favour development
- We oppose unrest and violence
- Wipe out those inciting unrest and violence

Lashio, famous town for hot spring camp

VOA, BBC-sowing hatred among the people
RFA, DVB-generating public outrage
Do not allow ourselves to be swayed
By broadcasts designed to cause troubles

I made a field trip to townships in Shan State (North) based at Shweli Guest House in Lashio. During the trip, I visited Hsenwi, Kukkai, M use, K Uni ng, Chinshwehaw, Laukkai, Tangyan, Mong yai via Lashio as a base. While I was in Lashio, I felt hot in the afternoon as it was in September. About one mile trip from the right of Lashio-Muse road is Hot spring camp. It is situated about four miles from Hsenwi on Lashio-Muse road. Taking a bath by mixing natural hot water with cold water refreshed me. Hot water contains sulphur, so it can cure skin diseases.

In the past, it was a natural hot spring. In 1991, it was opened as hot spring camp by building bath rooms. The admission fee is K100 per head for locals and US$ 3 for for eigners. Lashio hot spring is famous like Khaungdaing hot spring of Inlay because of its being a natural hot spring.

Foreign visitors are pleased to take a bath in Lashio hot spring. So, visitors should go to the hot spring camp when they visit Lashio. While in Lashio, I visited Sub-Printing House (Lashio) of News and Periodicals Enterprise under the Ministry of Information. I witnessed that in-charge officer (See page 10)

Myanmar’s resolve
* Independence, first
  Independence, second
  Independence, third
Thundered with pride
Our forefathers
Sacrificing lives in thousands
And restored independence in unity
Truly valuable inheritance