**Four political objectives**
- Stability of the State, community peace and tranquillity, prevalence of law and order
- National reconsolidation
- Emergence of a new enduring State Constitution
- Building of a new modern developed nation in accord with the new State Constitution

**Four economic objectives**
- Development of agriculture as the base and all-round development of other sectors of the economy as well
- Proper evolution of the market-oriented economic system
- Development of the economy inviting participation in terms of technical know-how and investments from sources inside the country and abroad
- The initiative to shape the national economy must be kept in the hands of the State and the national peoples

**Four social objectives**
- Uplift of the morale and morality of the entire nation
- Uplift of national prestige and integrity and preservation and safeguarding of cultural heritage and national character
- Uplift of dynamism of patriotic spirit
- Uplift of health, fitness and education standards of the entire nation

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**Vice-Senior General Maung Aye attends Defence Services Commander-in-Chief’s Trophy Tatmadaw (Army, Navy and Air) Golf Tournament**

_NAY PYI TAW, 7 Dec—The Defence Services Commander-in-Chief’s Trophy Tatmadaw (Army, Navy and Air) Golf Tournament kicked off at Nay Pyi Taw Golf Course and Yaypyar Golf Course, here, yesterday morning, attended by Vice-Chairman of the State Peace and Development Council Deputy Commander-in-Chief of Defence Services Commander-in-Chief (Army) Vice-Senior General Maung Aye.

Also present on the occasion were Member of the State Peace and Development Council General Thura Shwe Mann of the Ministry of Defence, Prime Minister General Thein Sein, Secretary-1 of the SPDC Quartermaster-General Lt-Gen Thiha Thura Tin Aung Myint Oo, SPDC member senior military officers of the Ministry of Defence, the Commander-in-Chief (Navy), the Commander-in-Chief (Air), senior military officers of the Ministry of Defence, the commander of Nay Pyi Taw Command, the ministers, senior military officers, members of the organizing committee and golfers of 16 teams.

On behalf of the Defence Services Commander-in-Chief, Secretary-1 of the SPDC Quartermaster-General Lt-Gen Thiha Thura Tin Aung Myint Oo opened the tournament by teeing off tracer ball at Nay Pyi Taw Golf Course.

The golfers took part in the first round competition.

The second round of the tournament continued this morning at Nay Pyi Taw Golf Course and Yaypyar Golf Course.

At 6 p.m., the prize presentation ceremony followed. The Secretary-1 awarded the first prize to Central Command team in the team handicap event with 538 net strokes, the second prize to the office of the Commander-in-Chief (Navy) team with 582 and the third prize to Eastern Command team with 588; the first prize to the office of the Commander-in-Chief (Navy) team with 664 net strokes in the team scratch event, the second prize to Yangon Command with 709 and the third prize to South-East Command with 730.

SPDC member Lt-Gen Tin Aye of the Ministry of Defence presented first, second and third prizes to the winners in the individual handicap and scratch events.

Lt-Gen Myint Hlaing of the Ministry of Defence gave prizes to par, birdie and eagle award winners, daily best scorers in the handicap and scratch events, longest drive and nearest pin winners and the best golfer and team.

MNA

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_Vice-Senior General Maung Aye tees off in Defence Services Commander-in-Chief’s Trophy Tatmadaw (Army, Navy and Air) Golf Tournament._ —MNA

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MNA

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_Secretary-1 Lt-Gen Thiha Thura Tin Aung Myint Oo presents first prize to Central Command team._ —MNA

_Secretary-1 Lt-Gen Thiha Thura Tin Aung Myint Oo awards Commander-in-Chief (Navy) Office team._ —MNA

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8-12-08 NL 1 7/29/10, 11:47 AM
Success of tea-growing calls for concerted efforts

The government is making its utmost efforts for boosting production of tea. Tea-growing is a lucrative business. Cultivation acreage is extended every year.

In Chin State, a hilly area in the west of Myanmar, tea can be grown well as it is a fertile region for growing tea. The state has an area of over 8.9 million acres. Only 500,000 acres of land have been put under crops and thus many acres are left to grow tea. Tea is widely grown in Shan and Chin States. Model plantations of tea are being established in Nataykantaung region in Ngaphe Township in Minbu District and Mt Popa garden area in Kyaukpadaung Township.

Natyaykantaung region in Ngaphe Township is a favourable region for growing tea. Tea can easily be transported to the markets in Pyay in Bago Division (West), Magway Division and Rakhine State.

The government is making arrangements for implementation of 2,000 acres of tea in 2009 under the supervision of the Ministry of Forestry after promoting investment opportunities to the private investors.

Tea will be grown on every available land of Mt Popa garden area of Forest Department in Kyaukpadaung Township which has a favourable condition for tea.

Growing of tea contributes towards not only increasing job opportunities but raising socio-economic life of the people in those regions.

Yangon Division Supervisory Committee for Secure and Smooth Transport meets

YANGON, 7 Dec—A work coordination meeting of Yangon Division Supervisory Committee for Secure and Smooth Transport took place at the meeting hall of All Private Bus Lines Control Committee (Head Office) on Laydaungkkan Street in Tamwai Township here on 5 December afternoon.

Chairman of Yangon Division Peace and Development Council Commander of Yangon Command Brig-Gen Win Myint attended the meeting and gave a speech on enforcement of traffic rules and regulations and Smooth transport.

Next, officials from universities and colleges, departmental officials and chairmen of private bus lines reported on enforcement of traffic rules and regulations and measures taken for safety of passengers.

The meeting ended with the concluding remarks by the commander.

IBTC Open Golf Championships commence

YANGON, 7 Dec—The IBTC Open Golf Championships as the third leg of Myanmar Golf Tour 2008-2009, jointly organized by Myanmar Golf Federation and Myanmar PGA and International Beverages Trading Co Ltd, was held at Lashio Golf Club in Lashio, Shan State (North) this morning.

The golfers took the designated positions. Commander of North-East Command Maj-Gen Aung Than Hlut, Chairman of Myanmar Olympic Committee Minister for Sports Brig-Gen Thura Aye Myint, Patron of Myanmar PGA and MGF Maj-Gen Win Hlaing (Retd), President of Myanmar PGA and MGF U Teza and Executive Director U Tint Oo of International Beverages Trading Co Ltd opened the competitions.

After the first round, Zaw Zaw Latt (Srixon) and Myint Shwe (Srixon) led the professional golfers division by firing two-under-par 70 each. Min Naing (Srixon) put his position behind the leaders by shooting one-under-par 71 and Thein Zaw Myint (KM Golf Centre), 72.

In the amateur golfers division, Nay Bala Win Myint fired a three-under-par 69, followed by Soe Moe Aung and Aung Win (Forestry), two-under-par 70 each and Myo Win Aung, 71.

With the aim of turning out Myanmar golfers, the championships was sponsored by International Beverages Trading Co Ltd together with co-sponsors Air Bagan Ltd, Hotel Yangon, Ruby Dragon (Jade and Gems) Co Ltd, KBZ Bank Ltd, Alpine Purified Drinking Water, MY Associates Co Ltd, Srixon, Tiger Head Cement, KM Golf Center, Acel, International Co Ltd (Canon) and Lifeline (DHEA-Plus). Han Event Management performed the functions of the championships.

The second round of the championships continues tomorrow.

MBF President Cup Men’s and Women’s Basketball Tournament begins

YANGON, 7 Dec—Myanmar Basketball Federation President’s Cup Men’s and Women’s Basketball Tournament 2008 started at the Aung San Gymnasium at 9 a.m today.

On the behalf of Chairman of Myanmar Olympic Committee Minister for Sport, Secretary-General of Myanmar Olympic Committee Director-General of Sports and Physical Education Department U Thaung Htay made an opening speech at the occasion.

It continues until 18 December. A total of 25 men’s and women’s teams are taking part in the tournament.
Police say bombs and shootings kill six in Iraq

BAGHDAD, 7 Dec — Bombers and gunmen targeted Iraqi police recruits and US-allied Sunni guards in a series of attacks on Saturday that killed at least six people and wounded dozens, officials said.

Iraqis, meanwhile, welcomed the US indictments of five Blackwater Worldwide security guards in last year’s shooting that killed 17 Iraqi civilians at a central Baghdad square. A bomb also exploded inside a Baqouba cafe that is frequented by so-called Sons of Iraq, the name given to the Sunni groups working with the US, wounding eight of them and 11 civilians, police and hospital officials said.

In Baghdad, a bomb attached to a police truck exploded near a popular vegetable market in a southern neighbourhood, killing a Sunni tribal leader who was a member of a group that has joined forces with the Americans against al-Qaida, and his driver, police and hospital officials said.

The Sunni revolt in Iraq has been one of the key factors in a sharp decline in violence over the past year, and members of the group have frequently been targeted as insurgents try to derail the security gains.—Internet

Afghan spokesman says nine Taliban killed in gunbattle

KANDAHAR, 7 Dec — A shootout between police and Taliban fighters in southern Afghanistan left nine militants dead and three police seriously wounded, a government official said on Sunday.

The Taliban attacked a police checkpoint in Gereshk district on Saturday, sparking a two-hour gunbattle, said Dawood Ahmad, a provincial governor’s spokesman. Six others Taliban were wounded in the clash.

Police captured two of the wounded militants and were in pursuit of the other four, Ahmad said.

Elsewhere on Saturday, US-led coalition forces killed three insurgents and captured four others in a firefight outside Afghanistan’s capital, the US military said.

The troops were pursuing members of a group led by warlord Gulbuddin Hekmatyar when they came under fire in Kapisa province, the military said in a statement on Sunday. The soldiers returned fire, killing the militants.

Another two people were killed on Saturday when NATO’s International Security Assistance Force clashed with insurgents in southern Helmand province.

The force said in a statement its troops came under fire and had to call for air support when they were unable to get out of the area.

Six people were wounded in the fighting and treated at a nearby base, it said. The statement did not say if those who were killed and wounded were insurgents or civilians. It said the incident was under investigation.

Twelve-year-old Omar Abdullah stands in front of his home destroyed in twin truck bombings in Fallujah, Iraq, on 5 Dec, 2008, rests in a hospital.—INTERNET

Two anti-Qaida fighters killed in shooting attack northeast of Baghdad

BAGHDAD, 7 Dec — Two Awakening Council group fighters were killed and two others injured on Saturday in a gunfire attack on a security checkpoint in the city of Baqouba, capital of the volatile province of Diyala, a provincial police source said.

“Unknown gunmen attacked early in the morning a security checkpoint manned by Awakening Council Fighters and policemen in theal-Wajihiyah town some 12 km northeast of the provincial capital Baqouba,” the source told Xinhua on condition of anonymity.

The attack resulted in the killing of two fighters and the wounding of two others, the source said.

Iraqi security forces immediately sealed off the main roads leading to the scene and immediately began a search operation seeking for the attackers, he added.

The Awakening Councils involve local armed groups, especially some powerful former insurgent groups, who fight the al-Qaida network after the latter exercised indiscriminate killings against both Shiite and Sunni Muslim communities.

Diyala, including Baqouba, some 65 km northeast of Baghdad, has long been the hotbed of insurgency since the US-led invasion of Iraq in 2003, despite the ongoing security crackdown in the province conducted by US-backed Iraqi security forces.

Twelve-year-old Omar Abdullah stands in front of his home destroyed in twin truck bombings in Fallujah, Iraq, on 5 Dec, 2008.—INTERNET

Thirteen militants killed in Pakistani forces operation

ISLAMABAD, 7 Dec — Thirteen militants were killed and five others injured on Saturday when Pakistani security forces bombarded militants hideouts in the country’s northwest, said the military in a press release.

The military used cobra helicopters in the operation and a huge cache of explosives in a town in the restive Swat valley was also destroyed in the bombardment, it said. One soldier was martyred in the operation, said the press release of the Swat media centre.—Internet
New US troops will focus on Afghan capital

NEW YORK, 7 Dec — Most of the additional US troops heading to Afghanistan early next year will be deployed near Kabul, reflecting worries about the capital’s vulnerability, The New York Times reported on Sunday.

Citing US military commanders in Afghanistan, the Times said the plans for incoming brigades would result in fewer or no reinforcements being available, at least for the time being, for areas of Afghanistan where the insurgency is most acute.

The focus on the capital also meant most of the new troops would not be deployed with the main goal of containing the cross-border insurgent flow from their rear bases in Pakistan — something US commanders would like and Afghan President Hamid Karzai has also recommended, the Times said.

Violence in Afghanistan has surged to levels not seen since the 2001 US-led invasion toppled the country’s former Taliban rulers, prompting commanders to call for more troops.

US and NATO commanders said the need to protect the capital, hit new Taliban strongholds in Wardak and Logar provinces adjacent to Kabul, and provide security for development programs there were immediate concerns, the newspaper reported.

Bolivia, Brazil to build international bridge

LA PAZ, 7 Dec — Bolivia and Brazil will build an international bridge over Mamore River, which will link the city of Guajara-Mirim in Brazil with Guayaramer city in Bolivia, a Bolivian transport official said Saturday.

A joint commission responsible for collecting data and feasibility study has been set up, Deputy Transport Minister Jose Kimm Franco said.

The bridge, to be completed in 2010, will help facilitate traffic between the South American countries, Franco added.

The construction of the bridge is part of the integration process in South America, a reality that has been understood by governments of the continent.

Trucks torched at Pakistan terminal used for NATO

PESHAWAR (Pakistan), 7 Dec — Pakistani police say suspected militants have killed a policeman and torched 62 trucks at a terminal used to supply NATO and US troops in Afghanistan.

Police official Kashi Alam says about 30 assailants attacked the terminal near the northwestern city of Peshawar with rockets and guns early Sunday.

Alam says fire engulfed 62 trucks and containers likely carrying supplies to foreign forces in Afghanistan.

A series of similar attacks in recent weeks have raised concern that Taliban militants are seeking to disrupt what is a vital supply line for NATO and US forces through the Khyber Pass.

Three killed in storming of southern Russia hotel

ROSTOV-ON-DON (Russia), 7 Dec — Police stormed a small hotel where armed militants were blockaded in the southern Russian province of Dagestan on Saturday, and two rebels and a policewoman died, the regional Interior Ministry said.

Details of the attack on the two-story hotel with about 10 rooms near the regional capital, Mukhachkala, were sketchy. But the ministry’s southern Russia division said the action was launched after police failed to negotiate a surrender with the militants.

Earlier reports said there were about four militants of uncertain affiliation blockaded in the hotel, but it was not clear if any guests or employees were inside at the time.

The storming came as police and soldiers clashed with militants in Ingushetia, another republic in the restive Northern Caucasus.

In Nazran, Ingushetia’s principal city, two militants were killed in a gun battle with police after they were cornered in a house, the Ingush Interior Ministry said. As investigators were combing the site after the shooting, attackers fired on them, wounding two officers and three people in the crowd watching the events, the ministry said.

The ministry also said attackers opened fire on a military post in the village of Troitskaya, but reported no injuries in the 10-minute exchange of fire.

Dagestan and Ingushetia both border Chechnya, where separatists have fought two full-scale wars with Russian forces in the past decade-and-a-half.

Journalists become targets in Mexico’s drug war

CIUDAD JUAREZ (Mexico), 7 Dec — As the photographer pulled his 2000 Ford Explorer into a soccer field, the crackle of his police scanner was broken by a lone accordion riff.

What he didn’t know was what he was about to witness. Hector Dayer had photographed a friend — a veteran crime reporter from a rival newspaper — shot dead in his car as his 8-year-old daughter sat shaking in the passenger’s seat.

On this day, none of the bodies belonged to journalists. Dayer grabbed his camera, pulled up the collar of his jacket to hide his face, and stepped out to photograph the carnage.

“We should wear ski masks, like the police,” said Dayer, a father of two who works for the newspaper El Norte. “We are so public. Everyone can see us and identify us.”

People inspect the aftermath of twin truck bombings in Fallujah, Iraq, on 5 Dec, 2008.—INTERNET

Lebanese soldiers fire artillery guns near UN French peacekeeper artillery vehicles during a live training exercise, near the United Nations Interim Force in Leba-non (UNIFIL) headquarters in Naqoura, southern Lebanon, on 4 Dec, 2008. The exercise was held by the Field Artillery Group as part of UNIFIL’s quick reaction force and falls within the group’s regular training schedule to hone its skills and expertise.—INTERNET

In this 20 Sept, 2007 file photo, an Iraqi traffic policeman inspects a car destroyed by a Blackwater security detail in al-Niscoor Square in Baghdad, Iraq.—INTERNET

Hector Dayer already knew that as he looked out at the seven bodies, bound, beaten and beaten repeatedly shot. What he didn’t know was whether yet another colleague was among the victims.

Two weeks earlier, Dayer had photographed a friend — a veteran crime reporter from a rival newspaper — shot dead in his car as his 8-year-old daughter sat shaking in the passenger’s seat.

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INTERNET
Senior leader hails Chinese medical assistance in foreign countries

BEIJING, 7 Dec — Chinese foreign aid medical workers have played an irreplaceable role in promoting friendship between China and other countries, Vice Premier Li Keqiang said here on Friday.

Li, also a member of the Standing Committee of the Political Bureau of the Communist Party of China (CPC) Central Committee, made the remarks at an awarding ceremony for outstanding medical workers stationed overseas.

China sent its first medical aid team to Algeria in 1963. It has since sent more than 20,000 medical workers abroad, helping 260 million patients in 69 countries and regions across the world.

Chinese foreign aid medical workers have overcome difficulties of working overseas, away from their homeland and families, and have provided excellent services for people in need in a selfless manner, Li said.

He said sending medical teams to work abroad is key to maintaining friendly ties with other developing countries, building a responsible image for the country, and building a favorable international environment for China’s development.

He urged relevant authorities to improve the benefits and the working conditions of Chinese medical workers abroad, and to provide more financial support and trainings for them.

Xinhua

HIV vaccine likely due in five years

STOCKHOLM, 7 Dec — A therapeutic vaccine to treat HIV infection is likely to be developed within five years, said Nobel Prize laureate in medicine Luc Montagnier on Saturday.

“IT is not impossible to do it within a few years,” he told a news conference together with Francoise Barre-Sinoussi.

The two French scientists shared half of this year’s Nobel Prize for medicine for discovering the virus of AIDS. The other half goes to a German scientist for finding the cause of cervical cancer.

The 76-year-old director of the World Foundation for AIDS Research and Prevention said that his colleagues had been working on such vaccine for a decade, but he did not elaborate as to why he believed it can be developed in “four to five years.” —Xinhua

Iran, Ecuador call for expansion of ties

TEHERAN, 7 Dec — Iran’s President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad and his Ecuadorean counterpart Rafael Correa Delgado called for the expansion of ties between the two countries, Iran’s official IRNA news agency reported.

In a joint press conference here on Saturday, the visiting Ecuadorian president said “We are determined to consolidate the current friendship with Iran.”

Referring to the growing relationships between two countries, especially those of the commerce, Delgado said the embassies of the two countries would be opened in Teheran and Quito in the near future.

Meanwhile, Ahmadinejad highlighted the potentials in the cooperation between the two countries in a number of areas, including the international issues, economic and industrial projects, energy, banking, tourism, technological-know-how, electricity and water.

“The Islamic Republic of Iran sees no limit to transfer its invaluable achievement and experience to Ecuador,” he added.—Xinhua

Lebanese Defence Minister says Russia will equip Lebanese Army

BEIRUT, 7 Dec — Lebanese Defence Minister Elias Murr revealed on Saturday that Russia will supply the Lebanese Army with modern military equipment unconditionally. Naharnet website reported.

Murr, who will visit Russia next week, said he will discuss with Russian defence minister what could be provided to the Lebanese Army.

Murr made the remarks when meeting with head of Russian Federal Service for military and technical cooperation Mikhail Dimitriev on Saturday.

Dimitriev said after the meeting that Russia is interested in regional stability, especially in Lebanon.

“We wish to provide a new pulse to our bilateral relations and technical fields,” he added.

The Lebanese Army’s need for modern equipment and advanced arms has been a controversial issue. Media reports said that the United States is willing to supply the Lebanese Army with military equipment, but would not go too far to disturb Israel. —Xinhua

World largest ethylene complex to inaugurate in Iran

TEHERAN, 7 Dec — An Iranian petrochemical official said that his country was counting down the inauguration of the world’s largest ethylene unit in Iran. Energy and Oil Information Network (SHANA) of Iran reported on Saturday.

Iran’s Deputy Oil Minister for Petrochemical Affairs and the head of National Iranian Petrochemical Company Adel Nejad-Salim said that Jam Petrochemical Complex (JPC), the world’s largest ethylene unit, would be opened on Monday in Asalouyeh in Iran’s southern Boushehr Province.

Iran’s President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad is to officially inaugurate JPC in Asalouyeh in the presence of local and the country’s officials, according to the report.—Xinhua

Forty percent of Australian PM office’ staff quit

CANBERRA, 7 Dec — Only one year after Kevin Rudd became Australian Prime Minister, his staff have been overworked, and many of them are leaving.

Fairfax report said on Sunday that Rudd has lost about 40 percent of staff in his private office since last December, and his deputy Julia Gillard has lost nearly 50 percent.

Finance Department figures revealed about a quarter of ministerial staffer appointed between December last year and October this year have fled.

The department showed there had been 65 departures of the 270 ministerial staff appointed over the past year.—Xinhua

All items from Xinhua News Agency

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Citing security, Australia says Qantas must stay Aussie

SYDNEY, 7 Dec — Qantas must remain Australian-owned for reasons of national security, even if a potential merger with British Airways goes ahead, Transport Minister Anthony Albanese said on Sunday.

The two airlines announced last week they were in talks to create a global carrier worth an estimated eight billion Australian dollars (5.2 billion US) to help cope with the global financial crisis.

Albanese acknowledged that consolidation was inevitable for the industry, which has been buffeted by previously high oil prices and now declining passenger numbers.

But he said that needed to be “balanced” with the national interest.

“There are national security issues, particularly for an island continent located on the globe where Australia is, for having a national airline,” he told the Australian Broadcasting Corporation (ABC).

Under Australian law, the carrier popularly known here as the “Flying Kangaroo” must remain Australian-owned, with its headquarters in the country.

The minister also said that given international air service agreements, which are negotiated between countries rather than airlines, it was necessary for Qantas to remain in Australian hands.

“For example, only a 51 percent Australian-based airline is eligible to fly from Australia to Japan,” he said. — Internet

Zimbabwe to issue Z$100m banknotes

Zimbabwe’s central bank will introduce new higher denomination banknotes of up to 100 million Zimbabwe dollars, as it battles to contain hyperinflation, state media reported.

The Herald newspaper said the Reserve Bank of Zimbabwe had unveiled new Z$10, Z$50 and Z$100 million notes that would go into circulation today.

The previously highest denomination was Z$1 million.

Bank withdrawal limits would also be raised, just days after soldiers, reportedly angry they could not draw cash from banks, turned on residents and currency dealers.

“The release of the new notes follows the recent review of cash withdrawal limits to $100 million and $50 million for individuals and company account holders per week respectively,” the Herald said.

Man uses candy cane to subdue attacker with knife

A man using a candy cane lawn ornament fended off a knife-wielding neighbour who had been attacking holiday guests at a Sacramento home, police said.

Police said the man with the knife was arrested on suspicion of assault with a deadly weapon. The guest who took up the candy cane was not arrested because police determined he acted in self-defense.

Man allegedly assaults girlfriend with burger

A Vero Beach man faces a domestic violence charge after authorities said he assaulted his girlfriend with a cheeseburger.

An Indian River County Sheriff’s Office arrest report said a 22-year-old man and his girlfriend got into an argument as they sat in a car in front of their home.

The report said the man would not let the woman out of the vehicle, so she threw his drink out of the car. In response, the man allegedly grabbed her arm and smashed the cheeseburger into her face. The pair got out of the car, and the girlfriend said the man then took her McDonald’s sandwich and put it on her face.

The man was released on $1,000 bond on Wednesday.

Afghan officials investigate eight deaths at prison

KABUL, 7 Dec — Afghan officials are investigating the deaths of eight prisoners at the country’s largest prison during a clash between guards and prisoners, a Justice Ministry official said on Saturday.

Prison officials on Thursday tried to search cell blocks for weapons, knives and cell phones, but prisoners resisted the search attempt, said Mohammad Qasim Hashimzai, the deputy justice minister. Prisoners set fire to mattresses and pillows, and smoke billowed out of the prison.

In response, prison guards entered the block and fired their guns. Eight prisoners were killed and 10 prisoners and three guards were wounded in the clash, Hashimzai said.

“Right now an investigation is under way to learn how these prisoners were killed, if it was by gunfire or by prisoners’ knives,” Hashimzai said.

Prison officials searched the cell blocks on Saturday and collected prisoners’ telephones and knives and “whatever equipment they were using against our guards and against the other prisoners,” he said. — Internet

Nine dead, 19 injured in Malaysian bus crash

KUALA LUMPUR, 7 Dec — A bus skidded off a highway, smashed into a tree and plunged into a ditch in southern Malaysia early Sunday, killing nine people and injuring 19 others.

The bus was heading to neighbouring Singapore when it spun out of control in southern Johor state and crashed, a police spokesman told The Associated Press.

All of the victims were Malaysian, he said on condition of anonymity because he was not authorized to speak to the media.

The cause of the accident was not immediately known and no other details were available, he said.

Malaysia has a high-quality highway system with a speed limit of 70 miles (110 kilometres) per hour. But speeding is common and many drivers often do not follow safety procedures. — Internet

Photo shows a part of a dish made up with odd stones during the 8th China Ornamental Stone Exhibition held in Hefei, capital of east China’s Anhui Province.

Shoplifting suspect uses Taser on Wal-Mart worker

Two suspected shoplifters are arrested after one of them zapped a Wichita Wal-Mart employee with a Taser. Police said that two Wal-Mart workers on Wednesday afternoon confronted a pair of women who tried to leave the store without paying for merchandise. At that point, one of the women fired an electroshock from the Taser.

The employee who was shocked was not seriously injured. The two workers were able to hold the suspects until police arrived and placed the women under arrest on suspicion of theft and battery.

NEWS ALBUM
New push to eliminate nukes worldwide

Bush. Even Iran is considered a potential supporter, he said in an interview. “If there is growing support by nuclear powers and public opinion worldwide, I think it becomes harder for any government, including Iran, to cross that barrier,” Burt said.

The group, Global Zero, is proposing deep cuts in US and Russian nuclear arsenals, a verification and enforcement system, and phased reduction leading to the elimination of all stockpiles.

After the kickoff meeting, delegations will go to Moscow for talks with Russian officials on Wednesday and to Washington to see Bush administration officials and possibly advisers to President-elect Barack Obama on Thursday.

Ultimately, the planners are hoping to stage a world summit in January 2010.

Australia not prepared for 21st century challenges

Canberra, 7 Dec — Media tycoon Rupert Murdoch said on Sunday that Australia was not adequately preparing itself for the challenges of the 21st century.

Murdoch, the News Corp chief, said while poor societies were becoming richer, rich societies were at risk of becoming complacent.

Speaking at the last of his six Boyer Lectures for the ABC to look at Australia’s future in the global economy, Murdoch said at this time in our history, “the gravest threat to Australia’s freedom and prosperity does not come from war or terrorism, it comes from the comfort that can make us content.” “Australia’s open economy, free society and strategic location give us many advantages. They also give us a clear choice - Australia can be a model for the world or we can be a land of squandered opportunity. That is the challenge we face,” he said.

As every country’s greatest asset was her people, Australia must unlock the abilities of all her citizens to advance in the global community, he said.

Murdoch also noted that instant flows of information, the advance of trade and the rise of economies that reward risk and enterprise nowadays were all combining to create a world where the opportunities ahead would be greater than anything we’ve seen in human history.

Scientific development can help offset economic downturn

Beijing, 7 Dec — A senior Chinese official on Sunday said an ongoing campaign to educate Communist Party of China (CPC) cadres on “scientific development” should provide the impetus for the country to cope with current economic difficulties.

Li Yuanchao, head of the Organization Department of the CPC Central Committee, said this was desirable because the ultimate goal of the campaign was that China achieve sustainable, broad-based development under the leadership of the CPC.

Li made the remarks at a meeting, at which a group of inspectors sent by the CPC Central Committee reported how Party members and officials nationwide had studied and implemented the Scientific Outlook on Development.

The Scientific Outlook on Development represents important guiding principles for China’s economic and social development. It was initiated by the CPC in 2003 and written into the CPC’s constitution during the 17th National Congress of the Party in 2007.

The principles emphasize a people-first approach, while requiring comprehensive and sustainable development with a dual emphasis on speed and quality.

Stomach cancer rate among young Chinese doubles

Beijing, 7 Dec — The prevalence of stomach tumors among young Chinese people has nearly doubled since the 1970s, from 1.7 percent to about 3.3 percent, said a senior Chinese medical expert.

Among patients under 30 years of age, less than 10 percent were diagnosed at an early stage, Dr Ji Jiafu of the Beijing Jiafu of the Beijing Oncology Hospital said on Saturday at a forum. Early diagnosis improves the survival rate to 95 percent, Ji said.

The doctor also said 400,000 new stomach cancer patients are found on the Chinese mainland every year, accounting for 42 percent of new cases worldwide.

Ji said the major causes for the increasing incidence of stomach tumors among younger people are work stress, lack of sleep, an unhealthy diet and pollution.

Ji suggested more frequent screening in areas with a high incidence of the disease and improved public education efforts.
Research paper reading session of archaeological excavation held

NAY PYI TAW, 7 Dec—A research paper reading session of archaeological excavation was opened at the assembly hall of the Ministry of Culture here this morning, with an address by Vice-Chairman of Myanmar National Culture Committee Minister for Culture Maj-Gen Khin Aung Myint.

Vice-Chairman of Myanmar National Culture Committee Minister for Culture Maj-Gen Khin Aung Myint made a speech on the occasion, saying that the ministry is holding department-wise paper reading sessions. Now is the fifth time. Research findings conducted from the previous paper reading sessions were satisfactory. Based on these findings, tasks are being carried out. Research findings helped a lot to strengthen national spirit and patriotism. Myanma cultural bronze- and iron artifacts are rich in old Mongmaw city, U Myat Swe of Archaeology, National Museum and Library Department (North) read out the paper on research findings of old Mongmaw city, U Myat Swe of Archaeology, National Museum and Library Department (North) on research findings of hill No.27 and 28 of old Hanlin city.

In the afternoon session, Deputy Director U Myo Min Kyaw of Archeology, National Museum and Library Department (Loikaw) read out the paper on research findings of archaeological artifacts and review of respective eras, Director U Myo Nyunt of Archeology, National Museum and Library Department (North), the paper on architecture study of pre-Bagan period, Rector U San Shwe of Archaeology Department of Yangon University, the paper on ink inscription and wall painting of Bagan period and Deputy Director U Sein Win of Archeology, National Museum and Library Department (North), the paper on Myanma archaeological industries.

Afterwards, resource persons replied to queries raised by researchers. It was attended by Vice-Chairman of Myanmar History Committee Dr Toe Hla and Secretary Dr Kyaw Win as alternate chairmen and Dr Khin Maung Nyunt, U Kyaw and U Myint Aung as members.

In the evening paper reading session, Director U Aye Maung of Archeology, National Museum and Library Department explained the purpose of holding the paper reading session.

EP-2 Minister inspects suspension towers in Pantanaw

YANGON, 7 Dec—Minister for Electric Power No. 2 Maj-Gen Khin Maung Myint looked into maintenance of No.147 suspension tower of 230 KV cable line crossing Ayeyawady River which is set up in the river near Kazintaw Village in Pantanaw Township yesterday.

Project Manager U Saw Win Maung of Myanma Electric Power Supply Enterprise (South) and Project Director U Thein Hlaing reported on prevention against erosion at suspension tower and substituting tension towers.

Next, the minister met with local residents, and inspected maintenance of No.147 suspension tower, river crossing cable lines and No.146 suspension tower at Kazintaw bank.—MNA

AFF Suzuki Cup 2008 continues

YANGON, 7 Dec—The Group (A) matches of the AFF Suzuki Cup 2008 continued at the designated venues at 5 p.m. local time today.

In the match, Singapore National Team beat Myanmar National Team 3–1.

Products of Concordia Int’l introduced, December’s Sales held

NAY PYI TAW, 7 Dec—Concordia International Co Ltd introduced Fuji Xerox-brand products such as copiers and printers, IT gadgets, hospital and medical equipment, engineering equipment and GPS and opened December’s Sales at Office Room No 144 and the Sales Centre of Thiri Yadana Shopping Complex here on 3 December morning.

Things displayed at the sales were Fuji Xerox latest model multi-purpose copiers, colour and black and white copiers and laser printers, A3 colour scanners, projectors, electronic unit boards, information gadgets, Intensive Care Unit accessories, medical equipment, laboratory equipment, digital pressure cuffs, first-aid kits, Germany-made Omnitests, Japan-made Topcon differential GPSs with the use of satellite, Ohaus digital scales.

All the products of Concordia International Co have warranty cards and its service centre is open at Shwegon Plaza on Kaba Aye Pagoda Road in Yangon (Ph: 01-544199, 544824), at No.5, Ground Floor, 8Y Building, 30th Street between (77th x 78th), Chanayethazan Township, Mandalay (Ph: 02-36478, 095067172) and at No.144 of Thiri Yadana Shopping Complex in Nay Pyi Taw (Ph: 067-420819, 067-421362). For more information, contact U Kyaw Kyaw Lin of Concordia Int’l (Ph: 067-420819, 067-421362).
A&I Minister receives foreign delegations

NAY PYI TAW, 7 Dec—Minister for Agriculture and Irrigation Maj-Gen Htay Oo received the delegation led by General Manager Mr Hiyoyuki Osome of Sojit Asia Pte Ltd (Singapore) at the ministry here on 5 December morning. On the same day, the minister also received Chairman of China Construction International Corporation Mr Rong Chang Jun at the ministry here. They cordially discussed promoting of Myanmar’s agriculture sector and work plans for boosting of production. MNA

Upper Paunglaung hydropower project diverts river water

NAY PYI TAW, 7 Dec—Minister for Electric Power Col Zaw Min on 5 December attended a ceremony to divert river water of Upstream Paunglaung hydropower project being implemented by No-1 Construction. Next, he inspected the diversion weir and cordially greeted those present. After presenting gifts to the staff of the project, the minister looked into progress in construction of diversion weir and sites for building the main dam, intake structure, hydropower plant and switch yard. He also inspected the site for construction of batching plant of Hi-Tech Co. The project is of RCC concrete type. Upon completion, it will generate 454 million kilowatts of electricity per year and the project has completed by 28.20 percent. MNA

Deputy Foreign Affairs Minister arrives back

NAY PYI TAW, 7 Dec—The Myanmar delegation led by Deputy Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Union of Myanmar U Kyaw Thu arrived back by air on 5 December 2008 after visiting Japan from 30 November to 5 December 2008 to attend the Myanmar Investment Seminar sponsored by ASEAN-Japan Promotion Centre on Trade, Investment and Tourism.

They left for Japan by air on 30 November 2008. The deputy minister was accompanied by Director-General U Khin Soe of Directorate of Investment and Company Administration under the Ministry of National Planning and Economic Development, Director (Adviser) Daw Kyi Kyi Aye of Directorate of Hotels and Tourism under the Ministry of Hotels and Tourism and Deputy Director U Myo Thant Pe of Political Department under the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

The deputy minister and party attended the Myanmar Investment Seminar at Grand Prince Hotel Akasaka in Tokyo on 2 December. They expressed the overview of economic, industrial and commercial development of Myanmar and the business and investment opportunities in Myanmar as well as Japanese investment in Myanmar.

On 3 and 4 December, Deputy Minister together with Myanmar Ambassador to Japan U Hla Myint visited Kobe and met with the honorary consul. During the visit, Vice-Minister for Foreign Affairs of Japan Mr Mitoji Yabunaka hosted a working dinner for Deputy Minister U Kyaw Thu on 1 December 2008. Myanmar Ambassador to Japan U Hla Myint also attended the dinner. During the meeting, the two sides cordially discussed matters concerning the promotion of friendly relations and cooperation between Myanmar and Japan as well as international affairs.—MNA
Upgraded Homalin Airport in focal point of upper Chindwin region

“Planes flying Monywa-Mandalay-Yangon flight and Yangon-Mandalay-Monywa-Homalin flight from Homalin Airport.”

U Okkar San, Department of Civil Aviation

We saw many passengers came to the airport building. Among them, we had interviews with some passengers.

In the first interview,

Daw Nan Hla May of Moebye Village said that she had never visited Homalin before. She would visit her sister who was assigned duty in Homalin. She came from Moebye of Kayah State. She started the trip to Mandalay by car and proceeded to Monywa by boat. She spent one night in travelling by boat.

It would be her first trip by air and she knew in advance that she would arrive in Mandalay in a short time. Her return trip was much convenient.

Another interviewee was merchant U Kyaw Myint from Naungpakyit Ward of Homalin. He said, “I will go to Monywa by flight. I have travelled by flight for about 15 times. It can save precious time. The vessel passengers have to spend a night in the trip to Monywa. The flight takes about 30 minutes. I am residing in Homalin for 18 years. Since 2003 when the airport was inaugurated, I have been travelling by air. I specially thank the government for upgrading the airport.”

The news team made the last interview with a family comprising Daw Kyant, Daw Thin Thin Aung and Ma Myint Myint Sein. Daw Kyant, 64 years old, lives in Naungpakyit Ward of Homalin. To receive medical treatment in Mandalay, she would take flight. Since 2003 when the airport was inaugurated, I have been travelling by air. I specially thank the government for upgrading the airport.”

The national people are now enjoying the fruits of better transport and the good results of transport and social development will in turn enhance the economic growth of Sagaing Division.

Dr. Aung Myint, Minister of Transport, said Daw Thin Thin Aung.

Indeed, Homalin is difficult of access in the transport sector. With a view to developing the region, uplifting the living standard of the local people and ensuring better transport of the region, the government has upgraded the airport. The national people are now enjoying the fruits of better transport and the good results of transport and social development will in turn enhance the economic growth of Sagaing Division.

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Translation: TTA Kyemon: 4-12-2008

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US investigates death threats to Serb prosecutor

BELGRADE, 7 Dec — The office of Serbia’s war crimes prosecutor said on Saturday authorities in the United States were investigating several people suspected of sending him death threats.

Vladimir Vukcevic has received threatening letters and telephone calls for heading the team hunting Bosnian Serb wartime general Ratko Mladic, indicted for genocide by the United Nations tribunal in The Hague.

The letters have mostly come from US cities with large Serb communities.

“We have been informed through the US embassy in Belgrade that several individuals have been put under investigation for their involvement in death threats to prosecutor Vukcevic,” said Bruno Vekaric, spokesman for the prosecutor’s office.

Vekaric did not confirm Belgrade media reports that three people had been arrested in the United States.

“Every time there is an intensive action to locate Mladic, threatening letters are sent,” he said.

Vekaric said that the last threatening letter was received after a police sweep to locate Mladic on Thursday.

World Bank warns of possible Gaza bank collapse

GAZA, 7 Dec — The World Bank said on Saturday Israel’s tightened blockade of Hamas-run Gaza had created cash shortages that could lead to the collapse of its banks.

Bank branches across the Gaza Strip have been shut since Thursday for lack of sufficient money to operate normally.

Israel has stiffened Gaza border closures in the past month as cross-border violence rose, choking off cash supplies.

“The ongoing closure of Gaza and severe restrictions on the flow of goods and people continues to be a cause of grave concern,” the World Bank said in a statement.

A “serious cash shortage had been caused by Israeli restrictions on the transfer of banknotes into Gaza,” the statement said.

“The liquidity crisis could lead to the collapse of the commercial banking system in Gaza,” it added, warning also that this could entail “serious humanitarian implications.” — MNA/Reuters

UN says countries still giving to disaster fund

UNITED NATIONS, 7 Dec — Donor countries are still giving generously to a UN emergency aid fund to deal quickly with sudden disasters, despite the global financial crisis, the UN aid chief said on Friday.

At a conference on Thursday, more than 60 countries pledged a total of 380 million US dollars for 2009 operations by the Central Emergency Response Fund, set up after the 2004 Indian Ocean tsunami, John Holmes told a news conference.

Although that was less than the 420 million US dollars pledged a year ago, Holmes said that because of the sharp appreciation of the US dollar currencies were giving more in terms of their own currencies—435 million US dollars at last year’s exchange rates. This year’s pledges also fell short of the target of 450 million US dollars but Holmes said extra contributions usually come in after the initial pledging conference.

The contributions will rise in 2009,” he said. UN officials are worried, however, that rich countries’ overseas development budgets will decline in the next two years and one ambassador told Thursday’s conference that pledges were poor compared with billions in bailouts for banks and firms.

A Chinese man swims in frozen lake at a park in Shenyang, China’s on 6 Dec, 2008.—INTERNET

Four children killed in bomb attack south of Baghdad

BAGHDAD, 7 Dec — Four Iraqi children were killed on Saturday by a bomb explosion in the town of Iskandiriya, south of Baghdad, a local police source said.

The incident occurred after midday as children less than eight years old were playing football in a popular playing field near their houses in the town, some 50 kilometres south of Baghdad, the source told Xinhua on condition of anonymity. The powerful blast resulted in the killing of four children and in the damaging of several nearby houses, the source said, adding that an explosive ordnance disposal team rushed to the scene and had started a search operation seeking for more bombs.

Explosives found in Indian hospital

MUMBAI, 7 Dec — Police on Saturday said they found explosives in a hospital in the western Indian city of Nagpur after doctors there said they had received a call warning a bomb had been left in the building.

“We rushed the bomb disposal squad and the sniffer dog and they found some explosives in a plastic bag. We have removed it,” Nagpur Joint Commissioner of Police Babasheb Kangale told Reuters. Nagpur is home to the Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh organization, a Hindu nationalist group.

Over 60% of French support Sarkozy’s economic stimulus plan

PARIS, 7 Dec — Over 60 per cent of French citizens support the economic stimulus plan unveiled by the country’s president, one of the French leading newspapers Le Figaro reported on Saturday. According to the latest poll by the IpsosWay Institute, 61 per cent of the respondents believe the 26-billion-euro stimulus package will mitigate the impact of the financial crisis in France.

Some 65 per cent approve the efforts by French President Nicolas Sarkozy in countering the financial crisis and 56 per cent think the president has done a good job in exercising his presidential duty amid spiraling financial difficulties.

The two-year stimulus plan includes expansion of public investment and financial aid to real estate business and car industry.

A landslide killed three people in a suburb of the Malaysian capital early on Saturday, tearing down houses and forcing the evacuation of thousands of people, police and local media said. —INTERNET

Residents carry their belongings past a damaged house from a landslide in Kuala Lumpur on 7 Dec, 2008. A landslide killed three people in a suburb of the Malaysian capital early on Saturday, tearing down houses and forcing the evacuation of thousands of people, police and local media said. —INTERNET

Residents carry their belongings past a damaged house from a landslide in Kuala Lumpur on 7 Dec, 2008. A landslide killed three people in a suburb of the Malaysian capital early on Saturday, tearing down houses and forcing the evacuation of thousands of people, police and local media said. —INTERNET

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Ships on anti-piracy watch off Malaysian island

KUALA LUMPUR, 7 Dec — Ships were warned to maintain a strict watch for suspected Indonesian pirates off Malaysia’s coast following four attacks in recent months, a maritime official said on Sunday.

The International Maritime Bureau issued an alert to all ships transiting the South China Sea off Tioman island after pirates armed with guns and machetes robbed three vessels and hijacked a tug and barge, said Noel Choong, who heads the IMB’s piracy reporting centre in Kuala Lumpur.

“We advise ships to maintain a strict watch in this area because it will help to prevent the attacks,” Choong told The Associated Press.

Waters off Tioman island, located on the east coast of Malaysia, are not known for piracy. Malaysian police believe the same group of pirates is responsible for all four attacks, Choong said.

Pirates in two speedboats attacked a tug towing a barge loaded with coal as it sailed on 1 Dec from Singapore to Thailand, Choong said. Pirates stole cash and cell phones from the crew before fleeing.

The boldest attack came in September when 15 pirates in wooden boats hijacked a tug and barge.

Choong said pirates operating near Tioman had intercepted seven crew members off Tioman and fled. Thai marine police recovered the tug and barge a few weeks later.

Russian warship docks at former US base in Panama

PANAMA CITY, 7 Dec — A Russian military vessel has docked at a former US Navy base after making a historic passage through the Panama Canal.

The destroyer Admiral Chabanenko is the first Soviet or Russian warship to traverse the canal, which was off-limits to the Soviet Union during the Cold War.

It arrived on Saturday at the former Rodman Naval Station, which the US turned over to Panama nearly a decade ago along with control of the canal.

Vice Admiral Vladimir Korolev said the trip is aimed at showing “the Russian fleet’s presence in the strategic areas of the world.”

The voyage reflects Russia’s growing influence in the region and anger with the US for using warships to deliver aid to Georgia after its August war with Russia.

Yemen seizes smugglers’ boat from Somali

SANAA, 7 Dec — A boat carrying Somali refugee-seekers has been seized on Yemen’s southern shores, the Interior Ministry said on Saturday.

The boat was intercepted by Yemeni Coast Guard ships off the town of Ahwar in Abyan Province, the statement said in a statement.

The 101 illegal migrants on board, including 35 women and children, were transferred to refugee camps under the supervision of the United Nations.

Smugglers are known to cram Somali fleeing conflict in their country into small boats during the journey to Yemen across the Gulf of Aden.

Somali officials said that the number of Somali refugees who had arrived in Yemen illegally has reached over 700,000.

Australian authorities intercept suspected people smugglers

SYDNEY, 7 Dec — Australian authorities said on Sunday they had intercepted a suspected people-smuggling boat off the country’s west coast, amid concerns about a rise in illegal immigration.

The vessel with 44 passengers and three crew was met by border protection officials off Western Australia’s far north after being spotted by air force surveillance, Home Affairs Minister Bob Debus said.

Those onboard will be detained while their immigration status is processed, he said.

“The nationalities and intentions of the people on board are yet to be determined and no significant health issues have been identified at this stage,” Debus said in a statement.

The vessel was intercepted just days after Immigration Minister Chris Evans said that escalating violence in Afghanistan and Sri Lanka could result in more illegal immigrants making the hazardous voyage to Australia.

“The situation in Afghanistan has got very bad and as a result people are looking to flee,” Evans told reporters on Friday.

Water buffalo rampage leaves two dead in Vietnam

HANOI, 7 Dec — A water buffalo went on a rampage in central Vietnam, killing two villagers and injuring four others before soldiers shot the beast dead, police said on Sunday.

The ordeal started on Saturday when the buffalo suddenly charged 64-year-old Nguyen Van Quyet, who was gored and killed, while four others were injured.

Four soldiers later cornered the beast in a rice field and shot it dead.

An autopsy found the animal had a large tumor in its stomach, and authorities suspect the buffalo went mad from the pain, he said.

Water buffalos are commonly used by farmers in Vietnam to plow rice fields and pull carts.

Thua Thien Hue province.

Over the next four hours the buffalo ran wild through three villages.

Villagers used large wooden sticks in a bid to tame the buffalo, but it charged and gored 50-year-old Tran Dinh Chien, who was gored when he died hours later.

Soldiers later cornered the beast in a rice field and shot it dead.

A speed boat of Dutch special forces, right, guards the MV Ibn Batouta anchored outside the port of Mogadishu, Somalia on 6 Dec , 2008. The Ibn Batouta is carrying 7,000 tonnes of sorghum for the UN World Food Program to distribute in Somalia. The ship took four days to reach Mogadishu, from the Kenyan port of Mombasa.—INTERNET

A woman and her son watch as the “Admiral Chabanenko” enters the Panama Canal becoming the first Russian warship to use the Canal since World War II.—INTERNET

MYANNA PORT AUTHORITY
HOLIDAY NOTICE

As the wharves warehouses and chellan offices of Yangon Port will be closed on the 9th December 2008 (Bakarittd Day), 25th December 2008 (Christmas Day) and 27th December 2008 (Kayin Newyear Day) being the public Holiday. Goods will be received shipped or delivered on payment of Holiday Fees.

INTERNET

File photo from August 2001 shows some of the 434 refugees rescued by the Norwegian cargo ship Tampa in the Indian Ocean relatively close to Australia. Australian authorities have said they had intercepted a suspected people-smuggling boat off the country’s west coast, amid concerns about a rise in illegal immigration.—INTERNET

INTERNET

INTERNET

INTERNET
Brazil said to blame US pilots in Gol crash

SÃO PAULO, 7 Dec — The Brazilian Air Force will release a report next week blaming US pilots who operated a Legacy jet that collided in mid-air with a Brazilian Gol commercial airliner for causing Brazil’s second-worst air disaster, a local paper said on Saturday.

O Estado de S Paulo daily, which had access to details of the report, said pilot error in the Embraer Legacy jet, operated by Long Island-based ExcelAire, was the “central point in a chain of errors” that caused the Gol plane to crash in the jungle killing 154 on board in 2006.

David Rimmer, executive vice president of ExcelAire, said later on Saturday that the newspaper’s portrayal of a 300-page report to be released on Wednesday was “a gross misrepresentation” of the Air Force’s investigation.

The newspaper said the report focussed blame on one of the US pilots who “inadvertently turned off” the Legacy’s transponder, which would have prevented the Legacy’s winglet from slashing through the larger Gol airliner, sending it hurtling 37,000 feet (11,300 metres) to the jungle floor.

The Legacy managed an emergency landing with minor damage on a remote airstrip.

Cuts of pork. The Irish government said on Saturday it was recalling all pork products made in the Republic of Ireland after the discovery of a toxic substance in slaughtered pigs.—INTERNET

Official says bomb in Istanbul wounds three

İSTANBUL, 7 Dec — A percussion bomb exploded in front of a bank in central Istanbul on Saturday, wounding three people, a local official said.

The area was cordoned off to prevent traffic passing through for fear of a possible second bomb attack, he said.—INTERNET

People line up to attend a screening of the film ‘Che,’ a biographic movie about Argentine-born revolutionary hero Ernesto ‘Che’ Guevara, during the Latin American Film Festival at the Yara Theater in Havana, on 6 Dec, 2008. The movie is starred by Puerto Rican actor Benicio Del Toro and was directed by US Steven Soderbergh.—INTERNET

28 killed in Somalia fighting

MOGADISHU, 7 Dec — Clashes erupted in Somalia over the weekend, leaving 28 dead in incidents, according to a hospital spokesman and witness accounts.

Heavy fighting between Islamist militia groups in the town of Guurel, 230 miles north of the Somali capital, killed 12 and wounded more than 20, said hospital spokesman Mohammed Hagi Ali.

The two sides shot at each other Saturday, he said, bringing businesses to a standstill and forcing residents to take shelter.

Earlier Friday, witnesses said, mortar shelling by Ethiopian forces in Mogadishu killed at least 16 residents.

“The fighting is so heavy, and a barrage of mortar bombs is hitting many parts in our town, killing people and causing heavy damages of buildings,” Mogadishu resident Abas Haji Ali said.

Ahmed Abdul-Salam, Somalia’s Ethiopian-backed Deputy Prime Minister, could not verify the attacks.

Ethiopia invaded Somalia two years ago to expel Islamist forces who had conquered Mogadishu.—Internet

Scientist says ancient technique cuts green house gas

POZNAN (Poland), 7 Dec — An ancient technique of plowing charred plants into the ground to revive soil may also trap greenhouse gases for thousands of years and forestall global warming, scientists said on Friday.

Heating plants such as farm waste or wood in airtight conditions produces a high-carbon substance called biochar, which can store the greenhouse gas carbon dioxide and enhance nutrients in the soil. Plants absorb carbon dioxide from the atmosphere as they grow. Subsequently storing that carbon in the soil removes the gas from the atmosphere.

“I feel confident that the (carbon storage) time of stable biochar is from high hundreds to a few thousand years,” said Cornell University’s Johannes Lehmann, at an event on the sidelines of UN climate talks in the Polish city of Poznan. Lehmann estimated that under ambitious scenarios biochar could store one billion tons of carbon annually — equivalent to more than 10 per cent of global carbon emissions, which amounted to 8.5 billion tons in 2007.

Lehmann cited experiments on 10 farm crops suggesting biochar can also increase yields by up to three times, because the organic matter holds on to nutrients.—MNA/Reuters

UN agency warns of food shortage in Gaza due to Israeli blockade

Gaza, 7 Dec — An UN agency in Gaza warned on Sunday that food aid would run out within the coming couple of days due to the ongoing Israeli tight blockade imposed on the Gaza Strip for a month.

Adnan Abu Hasna, spokesman of the United Nations for Relief and Work Agency (UNRWA) in Gaza told reporters that the humanitarian crisis in Gaza is mounting and food aids would run out within two days.

UNRWA has urged an international interference to Israel to reopen Gaza crossings to allow food aids and products,” Abu Hasna said, adding that “there are 750,000 people of Gaza population who depend on the UN aid.”

He said that although Israel has shortly opened Gaza commercial crossings and allowed some trucks loaded with food, “the amount was not enough amid the ongoing closure of the crossings.”—INTERNET

A local visits the “Chinese Culture Centre”, a Chinese culture shop, after it opened in Larnaca, south Cyprus, on 6 Dec, 2008.—INTERNET

Miss France 2009 Chloe Mortaud from the Albigois Midi Pyrenees region surrounded by Miss France committee President Genevieve De Fontany (R) reacts after winning the title in Le Puy du Fou, western France, on 6 Dec, 2008.—INTERNET

The New Light of Myanmar Monday, 8 December, 2008 13
Ronaldos sweats on hip injury as United keep pace

Manchester United's player Nemanja Vidic celebrates his goal during a Premier League football match against Sunderland at Old Trafford in Manchester. Vidic's injury-time goal finally saw Manchester United overcome spirited Sunderland side to win 1-0 at Old Trafford here on Saturday.—INTERNET

No dressing room rift over Scolari, insists Chelsea assistant Wilkins

BOLTON, 7 Dec — Chelsea's assistant manager Ray Wilkins dismissed suggestions of dressing room dissent after Luiz Felipe Scolari's side returned to winning ways at Bolton.

Scoldi appeared to fail for the post-match press conference following the 2-0 victory on Saturday, just hours after reports emerged that senior players at Stamford Bridge were unhappy with the Brazilian's training methods.

According to the newspaper reports, England internationals John Terry and Frank Lampard had voiced their concerns that Scolari's sessions were not intense enough and had become too predictable.

Yet Wilkins laughed off rumours of unrest after goals by Nicolas Anelka and Deco earned Chelsea a first win in four outings at Bolton on Saturday.

Asked directly if there was any unrest, Wilkins said: "None whatsoever. If you're looking at that angle, that team might have fallen apart. You can't perform like that if there is dissent about.

Bolton Wanderers' forward Johan Elmander (left) heads the ball against Chelsea's midfielder John Obi Mikel during their English Premier league football match at The Reebok Stadium in Bolton. Chelsea won 2-0.—INTERNET
Electric shock kills Palestinian smuggler in Rafah tunnel

GAZA, 7 Dec—A Palestinian contrabandist was killed on Saturday when an electric shock hit him inside a tunnel beneath Gaza border with Egypt, medics and witnesses said. Mu’awia Hassanasien, a health ministry emergency official, said the body of Asad Abu Jamel, 20, was taken to Abu Yousef al-Najjar hospital in southern Gaza Strip town of Rafah.

The witnesses said the young man was working inside the underground tunnel when his body touched a cable of the lighting network about nine metres deep in the ground in Rafah. More and more inexperienced people go to work in smuggling goods from Egypt into the Israeli-besieged Gaza Strip through hundreds of tunnels. They bring along fuel, clothes, vehicle’s spare parts and various household items.

Flood leaves 122 dead in southern Brazil

BRAZIL, 7 Dec—The death toll caused by floods which hit several towns in Brazil’s Santa Catarina state reached 122, the authorities said on Saturday.

The Civil Defence Department of the state confirmed the death of two more people who were missing in the town of Gaspar, putting the total death toll at 122.

Most of the deaths were caused by mudslide, said the department, noting 29 others remained missing.

However, local media said the number of missing people may reach 84. Some 42,000 people have managed to return home as the water receded in several towns, while about 33,000 others still are staying at relatives’ or friends’ homes, or being sheltered in churches, schools and gyms.

Besides Santa Catarina, several towns in the Brazilian states of Rio de Janeiro and Espirito Santo have declared state of emergency also due to heavy rains.—MNA/Xinhua

WEATHER

Sunday, 7 December, 2008

Summary of observations recorded at 09:00 hr MST:

Durung the past 24 hours, weather has been partly cloudy in Kachin, Shan, Chin and Rakhine States, upper Sagaing, Mandalay and Taninthayi Divisions and generally fair in the remaining areas. Night temperatures were (3°C) to (4°C) below December average temperatures in Magway, Yangon and Taninthayi Divisions, (3°C) to (4°C) above December average temperatures in Kachin and Mon States, (5°C) above December average temperatures in upper Sagaing Division and about December average temperatures in the remaining areas. The significant night time temperatures were Hakha (4°C) and Pinlaung (5°C).

Maximum temperature on 6-12-2008 was 92°F. Minimum temperature on 7-12-2008 was 63°F. Relative humidity at (09:00) hours MST on 7-12-2008 was 74%. Total sunshine hours on 6-12-2008 was (9.6) hrs approx. Rainfall on 7-12-2008 was wind speed at Yangon (Kaba-Aye) was (6) mhp from Northwest at (9:30) hours MST on 7-12-2008.

Bay influence: According to the observations at (12:30) hrs MST today, the depression over the South-west Bay crossing South of Trincomalee (Shrilanka) is centered on the land at (about) 80 miles South-west wards of Trincomalee (Shrilanka) and it is forecast to move South-west wards. Weather is partly cloudy in the Andaman Sea and South Bay and generally fair elsewhere in the Bay of Bengal.

Forecast valid from 08th December 2008: Weather will be partly cloudy in Kachin, Rakhine and Shan States, upper Sagaing, Yangon 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: Likelihood of slight increase of night temperatures in the Northern Myanmar areas.

Forecast for Nay Pyi Taw and neighbouring area for 8-12-2008: Generally fair weather.

Forecast for Yangon and neighbouring area for 8-12-2008: Generally fair weather.

Forecast for Mandalay and neighbouring area for 8-12-2008: Generally fair weather.
Round robin matches of Tatmadaw (Army, Navy and Air) football tourney continues

YANGON, 7 Dec.—The round robin matches of the 47th Defence Services Commander-in-Chief’s Shield Tatmadaw (Army, Navy and Air) football tournament continued in designated zones today.

Nay Pyi Taw Command won over No. 99 LID 4-2 in the group-A of South-East Command zone (Mawlamyine), Air Force beat Southern Command 2-0 in the group-B of South-West Command zone (Pathem), Central Command trounced Northern Command-B 6-0 in the group-C of North-West Command zone (Monywa), Camp Commandant Office of the Ministry of Defence beat Triangle Region Command 5-0 in the group-D of Central Command zone (Mandalay), No. 66 LID beat No. 101 LID 5-2 in the group-E of Southern Command zone (Toungoo) and North-East Command beat No. 44 LID 3-0 in the group-E of Southern Command zone (Toungoo).—MNA

Upgraded Homalin Airport in focal point of upper Chindwin region

In the third week of November 2008, we, members of the news team of the Kyemon Daily felt the cold winter in Chindwin region. Mist was covering the sights till 8 a.m. Meanwhile, the freezing air crossing the river surface chilled us.

We planned to proceed from Khamti to Homalin along Chindwin River. The distance between Khamti and Homalin is 127 nautical miles.

The speed boat was somewhat slow in runs along downstream of Chindwin River because of difficulties in searching the proper water course. At 8 p.m., we safely arrived in Homalin.

We left Monywa to cover the news on progress of Sagaing Division. The long trip upstream of Chindwin River started from Homalin.

Carbon dioxide helped ancient Earth escape deathly deep freeze

LONDON, 7 Dec.—The planet’s present day greenhouse scourge, carbon dioxide, may have played a vital role in helping ancient Earth to escape from complete glaciation, say scientists in a paper published online today.

In their review for Nature Geoscience, UK scientists claim that the Earth never froze over completely during the Cryogenian Period, about 840 to 635 million years ago.—Internet

Virtual faces created with emotions, moods and personality

MADRID, 7 Dec.—A team of researchers from the University of the Balearic Islands (UIB) has developed a computer model that enables the generation of faces which for the first time display emotions and moods according to personality traits.

“The aim of this work has been to design a model that reveals a person's moods and displays them on a virtual face”, SINC was informed by one of the authors of the study, Diana Arellano, from the UIB’s Computer and Artificial Intelligence Graphics and Vision Unit. “In the same 3-D space we have integrated personality, emotions and moods, which had previously been dealt with separately”, Arellano explained to SINC.

The researcher pointed out that emotions (such as fear, joy or surprise) are almost instantaneous mood alterations, in contrast to emotional states (such as boredom or anxiety) which are more long-lasting, or personality, which normally lasts someone’s entire life. The designers have followed the theories of Albert Mehrabian to draw up the model, based on the five personality traits established by this American psychologist: extraversion, neuroticism, openness, conscientiousness and agreeableness.

Growing of tea contributes towards not only increasing job opportunities but raising socio-economic life of the people in those regions.