Prime Minister General Thein Sein receives Chinese Ambassador

*NAY PYI TAW, 27 Dec—Prime Minister of the Union of Myanmar General Thein Sein received Ambassador of the People’s Republic of China to the Union of Myanmar Mr. Guan Mu, who had completed his tour of duty, at Zeyathiri Beikman on Konmyinttha in Yangon at 3 p.m. yesterday.

Also present at the call were Deputy Minister for Foreign Affairs U Kyaw Thu, Director-General Col Thant Shin of the Government Office and Director-General U Kyaw Kyaw of the Protocol Department under the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

Prime Minister General Thein Sein receives Chinese Ambassador Mr. Guan Mu, who has completed his tour of duty, at Zeyathiri Beikman on Konmyinttha.

Prime Minister General Thein Sein shakes hands with Chinese Ambassador Mr. Guan Mu, who has completed his tour of duty, at Zeyathiri Beikman on Konmyinttha.

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

Established 1914

Prime Minister General Thein Sein
PERSPECTIVES

Sunday, 28 December, 2008

Participate in public health care with might and main

The Graduation Parade of the 10th Intake of Defence Services Medical Academy took place at the parade ground of DSMA in Yangon the other day, with an address by Commander-in-Chief of Defence Services Senior General Than Shwe.

In his speech, the Senior General said, “I would like to urge you to try your best to become reliable and responsible medical officers with mental and physical prowess; to make a constant study of modern wars from military and medical points of views and to improve your military skills to be always ready to carry out national defence duties if necessary; and to consolidate national cohesion by doing your bit with heart and soul in public health care in the regions where you are posted.”

Being members of medical corps, the newly-graduated officers will have to take disease control measures and give educative talks apart from medical service in order to help every serviceman keep healthy and fit and be ready to engage in combats.

It is also compulsory for them to provide health care not only to servicemen and their families but also to local people of the regions where they are in service. In particular, they have to show great goodwill and kindness in giving treatment to local people in rural areas who make up the majority of the nation’s population in order that the latter can lead a healthy life.

Not to mention, newly-graduated medical officers are duty-bound to play whatever role they are in national defence duties as they are also servicemen of Defence Services. They have to stay in touch with advancements in warfare, and effectiveness of sophisticated weapons such as chemical and biological ones. Only then will it be possible for them to avoid with military awareness the causes that are likely to sustain injuries and harm health and fitness of combat soldiers.

It is, therefore, believed that the newly-qualified medical officers will be able to dedicate their lives to national defence duties and public health care, while undergoing constant training to improve physical and mental calibres in conformity with the fine traditions of the Tatmadaw for they are medical doctors as well as triumphant elites.

Talks on Blue Ocean Strategy 1 Jan

YANGON, 27 Dec—Myanmar Hoteliers Association will organize the educative talks with the sponsorship of Silver View Resort (Ngwe Saung Beach) at Yuzana Hotel (Shwegondine), here, on 1 January 2009.

Professor Dr. Aung Tun Thet will give talks on Blue Ocean Strategy. Anyone may attend the talks. The MHA will organize the talks on every Thursday in the first week of month.—MNA

Mass walk in Nay Pyi Taw

NAY PYI TAW, 27 Dec—A mass walk took place as part of December mass sports activities here this morning. On behalf of Chairman of Myanmar Olympic Committee Minister for Sports Brig-Gen Thura Aye Myint, Deputy Director-General U Thein Aung of Sports and Physical Education Department, officers and other ranks of ministries concerned and their families and local people totaling 8257 took part in the walk.

They walked from the gathering point of Nay Pyi Taw Myoma Market to Thabyaegon roundabout along Taungdwingyi-Taungnyo-Nay Pyi Taw Pymnana Road and then they went back to the gathering point.

Next, they took physical exercises volumes I and II together with staff of SPED. Staff families of the Ministry of Sports and A1 Co served them refreshments. – MNA

Respects paid to 104 teachers

YANGON, 27 Dec—Old students of Yangon Institute of Education Practising School who had passed matriculation examination in 1998 held a ceremony to pay respects to the teachers at the school in Kamayut Township this morning.

Headmaster Dr. Nanda Tun gave a speech. On behalf of the teachers, Daw Khin May Yi and Daw Khin Nwe Tint gave advice. Later, the old students paid respects to 104 teachers.—MNA

AXESSTEL products introduced

YANGON, 27 Dec—AXESSTEL products of Mobilemate Telecommunications Co Ltd were introduced at the Park Royal Hotel on 23 December. Responsible persons of the company explained the functions of the company and facts about CDMA 450 MHz, AXESSTEL CDMA 450 MHz fixed wireless phone (PX310RF) and AXESSTEL products.

A X E S S T E L PX310 CDMA 450 MHz can be available in the cities with the network of CDMA 450 MHz. It has a variety of features such as voice, SMS, data, e-mail, FM radio, security alarm and speed dialing system and its battery has a long lifespan to meet the customer’s satisfaction. — MNA

THE NEW LIGHT OF MYANMAR Sunday, 28 December, 2008

Perspectives

- 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

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Suicide bomber hits foreign forces in Afghanistan

HERAT, Afghanistan, 27 Dec — A suicide car bomber targeted a convoy of foreign troops on Friday in Afghanistan’s western Herat Province, wounding one US soldier and two Afghan civilians, a provincial official said.

Violence has surged sharply this year in Afghanistan, the bloodiest period since the Taliban’s ouster in 2001, sparking fear the country may slide back into anarchy despite the increasing numbers of foreign troops.

The attack hit the convoy as it was coming out of Herat’s airport, said security officer Qadir Agha, adding two vehicles in the convoy were damaged.

Both NATO and the US-led troops operate in Herat which has faced a number of attacks by the Taleban this year.

One Afghan woman was also wounded in the leg during the operation, it added. The Taleban could not be reached for comment.

US coalition says it kills 11 Taleban in operation

KABUL, 27 Dec — The US coalition said Friday its forces killed 11 Taleban militants, including the leader of a bomb-making cell, during an operation in southern Afghanistan.

The raid in Kandahar Province on Thursday targeted a bomb-maker responsible for roadside bomb attacks that killed NATO soldiers, a coalition statement said.

Militants barricaded themselves inside a home during the raid and opened fire on the coalition forces. After giving time to allow women and children to leave, the coalition forces fired on the militants with guns and grenades, it said.

One woman who remained in the building was wounded in the leg. She was evacuated to a coalition medical facility, it said.

Coalition forces found dozens of land mines, grenades, AK-47s and bomb-making materials in the home, the coalition said.

Overnight raids by elite Special Forces troops have been a sore point with some Afghans, including President Hamid Karzai. Afghan officials say innocent civilians are often wounded or killed during the risky operations.

Karzai last week attended a memorial ceremony for three Afghans killed in an overnight raid in Khost Province. Afghan officials said the three were innocent civilians; the US coalition said.

Residents gather at the site of a bomb attack in Baghdad’s Shula district on 25 Dec, 2008.—INTERNET

Roadside bomb kills Canadian soldier in Afghanistan

OTTAWA, 27 Dec — A Canadian soldier was killed and three others wounded in Afghanistan’s Kandahar region, bringing to 104 Canada’s death toll since its military mission began there in 2002, the Defence Ministry said Friday.

The soldier was killed when an improvised explosive device blew up close to their vehicle in the Zhari district, 24 kilometres (15 miles) west of Kandahar city in southern Afghanistan.

The injured soldiers were evacuated by helicopter to the Kandahar military hospital and they are reported to be in good condition,” army spokesman Major Greg Pohlmann told AFP.

Three other Canadian soldiers were killed in Kandahar’s Arghanjand district on 13 December, also following a roadside bomb.

Seventeen killed and seven injured in Iraq

BAGHDAD, 27 Dec—Seventeen Iraqis were killed and seven injured Friday in continuing violence in Iraq. In Ramadi, 14 people were dead after al-Qaeda militants launched a pre-dawn breakout from a police station in the city, triggering a shoot-out. Meanwhile, three were killed and three injured when a bomb exploded in the Baladruz district in Baquba.

The Ramadi prison breakout attempt caused police to impose a curfew in the city.

During an exchange of fire between prisoners trying to escape and police officers in the station, seven policemen and seven prisoners were killed, al-Arabiya news channel quoted provincial police chief Tareq al-Dulaimi as saying.

Three prisoners managed to flee. However, one was re-arrested, al-Dulaimi said.

He added that another four policemen were wounded in the shoot-out in the centre of Ramadi.

The predominantly Sunni Arab city of Ramadi, capital of Anbar Province, was a safe haven for al-Qaeda insurgents in Iraq following the US-led invasion of the country in 2003 and the toppling of former leader Saddam Hussein. But since 2006, local Sunni tribesmen, backed by the US military, have fought al-Qaeda and managed to push them out of the region.—INTERNET

An Iraqi man inspects a damaged restaurant after car bomb explosion in Shula, Baghdad, Iraq, on 25 Dec, 2008. The bombing outside a restaurant frequented by police killed four people and wounded 25 others in the Shiite neighborhood of Shula.—INTERNET

An Afghan policeman stands next to a destroyed vehicle after a suicide car attack in Herat Province on 26 Dec, 2008. A suicide car bomber targeted a convoy of foreign troops on Friday in Afghanistan’s western Herat Province, wounding one US soldier and two Afghan civilians, a provincial official said.—INTERNET

Army surgeon from NJ killed in Iraq

TRENTON, NJ, 27 Dec — The Department of Defence reports a New Jersey doctor, who was a well-known trauma surgeon at the Hospital of the University of Pennsylvania, has been killed in Iraq.

In a statement issued Friday night, the DoD said 42-year-old Maj John P Pryor of Moorestown died Christmas Day when a mortar round hit near his living quarters. He was serving with a forward surgical team with the Army’s 1st Medical Detachment, based in Fort Totten, NY.

Pryor’s colleagues say they’re devastated by the loss of the New York City native, who was a married father of three.

Pryor wrote of his experiences as a surgeon confronting violence in Iraq and inner-city Philadelphia in articles published in The Philadelphia Inquirer and The Washington Post.—INTERNET
Pakistan redeploying troops to Indian border

ISLAMABAD, 27 Dec—Pakistan began moving thousands of troops from the Afghan border toward India, officials and witnesses said Friday, raising tensions between the nuclear-armed neighbors and possibly undermining the US-backed campaign against al-Qaeda and the Taliban.

The country also announced that it was canceling all military leave in the aftermath of last month’s terrorist attack on the Indian financial capital of Mumbai. India has blamed Pakistani militants for the terrifying three-day siege. Pakistan has demanded that India back this up with better evidence.

Pakistan’s latest moves were seen as a warning that it would retaliate if India launches air or missile strikes against militant targets on Pakistani soil—rather than as an indication that a fourth war was imminent between the two countries. The United States has been trying to ease the burgeoning crisis while also pressing Pakistan to crack down on militants.

Washington says were likely responsible for the Mumbai attack. The siege left 164 people dead after gunmen targeted 10 sites including two five-star hotels and a Jewish centre.

Pakistan is expected to slip into recession or even a technical recession,” Najib, who will become prime minister in March, said in an interview with the Edge Weekly on Saturday.

“I am not adverse to putting in place another fiscal stimulus plan,” he said.

“Pakistan will experience a slowdown in terms of economic growth, but we are not expected to slip into recession or even a technical recession,” Najib, who will become prime minister in March, said in an interview with the Edge Weekly on Saturday.

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China marks 115th birthday of former leader Mao Zedong

SHAOHAN, Hunan, 27 Dec — The newly inaugurated Mao Zedong Square in his hometown of central China's Hunan Province on 26 Dec, 2008, to mark the 115th birthday of the former Chinese leader.

Thousands of people gathered at the square near Mao's birthplace, Shaoshan Village, after midnight to cherish the memory of the “Great Helmsman” who led the nation to found New China in 1949 and served as top leader until he died in 1976.

People paid tribute in front of Mao’s 10.1-meter-tall bronze statue — many presented bouquets and some brought birthday cakes. Most people hummed along when “The East is Red”, a song in tribute of Mao, was played.

Mao’s grandson, Mao Xinyu, was also in the crowd to pay his tribute.

Nearly every Shaoshan villager had noodles for breakfast Friday, a traditional Chinese food to celebrate birthdays as people believe long noodles bring long lives.

“Chairman Mao is always alive in our hearts and we eat his birthday noodles every year,” said village official Mao Yushi.

The local government set up six huge pots and 20 tables outside its office building Friday morning, offering free noodles to passersby.

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Chinese FM talks with Indian, Pakistani counterparts over phone

BEIJING, 27 Dec — Chinese Foreign Minister Yang Jiechi held telephone conversations on Thursday and Friday with his Indian and Pakistani counterparts, Pranab Mukherjee and Shah Mahmood Qureshi, respectively, pledging to push forward relations with the two South Asian neighbors in 2009.

During the conversations, Yang and the two ministers spoke highly of the sound development of China-India and China-Pakistan relations in the outgoing year and vowed to make concerted efforts in 2009 to score new achievements in bilateral relations.

The Chinese foreign minister also exchanged views with Mukherjee and Qureshi on last month's Mumbai terror attacks and the security situation in South Asia. Yang reiterated China's strong condemnation of the attacks, noting that both India and Pakistan have voiced their determination to combat terrorism.

China hopes that India and Pakistan, both important neighbors of China, would bear in mind regional peace and stability, properly handle related issues through dialogue and consultations, and continue to improve their relations and to push forward the peace process between the two countries, Yang said.

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Israel reopens crossings to allow truckloads of humanitarian supplies into Gaza

JERUSALEM, 26 Dec — Israel reopened the border crossings with the Gaza Strip on Friday, allowing tens of truckloads of humanitarian supplies into the impoverished area, reported local news service Ynet. The move, which seems unusual as Israel normally keeps the border shut down as long as the barricade continues, is probably a tactical decision, said Ynet.

Israeli sources were cited as saying its objective is to allow some 1.5 million Palestinians in the coastal strip to lay in basic necessities and thus mitigate the humanitarian situation during the possible Israeli incursion.

Meanwhile, a convoy of Egyptian aid offered to the Palestinians in the besieged Gaza Strip also entered the coastal enclave on Friday, the official MENA news agency reported.

The first batch of the aid, which was provided by the Egyptian Red Crescent Society, crossed into Gaza via the Israeli-controlled Kerem Shalom crossing. After the arrival of this batch of aid, including medical equipment, the remaining relief materials are expected to reach Gaza in the coming week, head of the society Mamoud Gabr was quoted as saying.

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Pakistan President says Bhutto’s ideas still alive

ISLAMABAD, 27 Dec — Pakistani President Asif Ali Zardari Saturday said former Prime Minister and chairman of the People’s Party Benazir Bhutto’s ideas were still alive.

In a message to the nation on the first death anniversary of Bhutto, Zardari said “the tyrants and the killers have killed her but they shall never be able to kill her ideas that drove and inspired a generation to lofty aims.”

“Benazir Bhutto will always be remembered as the leader who gave voice to the muted turbulence of the spirit of a vanquished people,” said the message.

“She gave voice to the voiceless, strength to the weak and motivation to the people to strive for a goal higher than life,” Zardari said in the message.

Zardari pointed out that the attack on Bhutto was actually an attack on the viability of the state and for undermining the efforts to build democratic structures for fighting militancy. He urged democratic forces to reeducate themselves to fighting militancy and extremism by strengthening democratic institutions.
Oil above $37 on UAE supply cut and thin trade

NEW YORK, 27 Dec—Oil climbed in thin post-holiday trade on Friday after the United Arab Emirates said they will deepen supply cuts in line with OPEC’s biggest-ever output cut announced last week and the dollar weakened against the euro.

Blast in central China village kills at least 13

BEIJING, 27 Dec—An explosion happened in a village in China’s central Henan Province early on Saturday, killing at least 13 people and injuring five others, the official Xinhua news agency said.

The blast, in Dong-ganceng village, happened just after 1 am, Xinhua said, citing officials with the local work safety office.

Initial investigations showed that explosives intended for civilian use had gone off, Xinhua said.

Oil above $37 on UAE supply cut and thin trade

US crude settled at $37.71 a barrel, up $2.36, London Brent rose $1.76 to settle at $38.37. The gains broke a nine-day stretch of losing sessions.

“The only positive news (for the market) ... came from the UAE,” Olivier Jakob of Petromatrix wrote in a report. “For now at least, Saudi Arabia and the UAE seem to be fully complying with the cuts.”

Abu Dhabi National Oil Co (ADNOC), the main producer in the UAE, the world's fifth-largest oil exporter, said it would cut February supplies of Murban and Upper Zakum by 15 percent and Lower Zakum and Umm Shaif by 10 percent each.

A source with an Asian refiner said the ADNOC cuts were more than expected.

“ADNOC had already allocated January volumes, but they reversed the decision, so that messes up our schedule,” the source said. “For February, the reduction volumes are very large, so we may need to adjust our ship loadings.”

Ex-Cambodian King fighting cancer

PHNOM PENH, 27 Dec—Cambodia’s former King Norodom Sihanouk is fighting his third bout with cancer but is optimistic he will recover and return to his homeland from China, according to a message on his Web site.

The 86-year-old Sihanouk, in a statement dated Wednesday, said he was being treated by Chinese doctors in Beijing for lymphoma B cancer and would not return to Cambodia as planned in February.

Sihanouk, a dominant figure in Cambodian politics for six decades, abdicated in 2004, citing poor health. He was succeeded by one of his sons, Norodom Sihamoni, and has since spent much of his time in China.

In recent years, he has suffered from a number of ailments, including colon cancer, diabetes, hypertension and two strokes.

Stolen cake sparks bank data alert in Germany

Two couriers at a package distribution centre stole a cake destined for a German newspaper and mailed in its place a package of credit card data, prosecutors said Friday. The mix-up triggered an alarm over lost bank customer details.

A batch of microfilmed data including names, addresses and card transactions ended up at the Frankfurter Bundeshaus daily last week instead of the cake.

Police advised credit card customers with Landesbank Berlin to check their accounts for inconsistencies.

But the incident turned out to be less sinister than feared. Frankfurt prosecutors said that two couriers stole a Stollen, a German-style Christmas cake, at a distribution centre in Mainz.

In an attempt to cover up the theft, the men instead sent one of several packages of credit card billing details destined for Landesbank Berlin to the newspaper, the cake’s intended recipient.

Doris Moeller-Scheu, a spokesman for Frankfurt prosecutors, said the suspected thieves didn’t open the package and “could not know what was in it,” so no harm came to customers.

She said the two men had admitted to the theft. Prosecutors did not name the courier service involved or identify the two suspects.

Friendly camels: Camels gather in the desert of Tozeur, near the town of Douz, as the 41th International Sahara festival closed.—INTERNET

Man eats 7 pounds of latkes to win NY contest

That’s a lot of latkes. A 23-year-old mechanical engineering student has downsized 46 of the potato pancakes in eight minutes to win a contest at a Long Island deli.

Pete Czerwinski (sir-WIN'-ski) says he’s a power eater” whose brain never signals he’s full. But the incident turned out to be less sinister than feared. Frankfurt prosecutors said that two couriers stole a Stollen, a German-style Christmas cake, at a distribution centre in Mainz.

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Girl charged for attempted suicide in Malaysia

A 16-year-old girl was charged in the Court for Children in northern Malaysia with attempting to commit suicide, local newspapers reported on Thursday.

A 2,500 ringgit (about 695 US dollars) bail was set for the teenager.

The teenager was alleged to have committed the offense at her local mosque. The teenager was alleged to have committed the offense at her local mosque.

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While others in Germany were overwhelmed with snow over the weekend, this kid in Berlin struggled to find enough snow for a decent-sized snowman. While more of the white stuff is on the way in the coming days, temperatures are supposed to rise again by mid-week.

NEWS ALBUM
Taunggyi College alumni pay respects to old teachers

YANGON, 27 Dec – The 10th respect paying ceremony of old students of Taunggyi College was held at YMCA Hall here this morning. Firstly, vocalists Nann Win, Hla Myint Win, Yi Yi Thant and Hnin Yi Thant presented a song written by Nann Win to mark the ceremony.

Next, old students paid respects to 71 old teachers and the teachers gave advice. Old students presented gifts to the teachers and the ceremony came to an end after speaking words of thanks by an old student. MNA

Respect paying ceremony of the old students of Taunggyi College in progress. MNA

Old law students pay respects to faculty members

YANGON, 27 Dec—The third ceremony to pay respects and get-together for 2008 of old students who graduated from Law Department of Yangon University from 1982 to 1988/91 was held at Universities’ Dhammayon in Kamayut Township this morning.

The old students paid respects to 51 old faculty members. On behalf of the old faculty members, Supreme Court Justice Dr. Tin Aung Aye and member of Myanmar Academy of Arts and Science Professor (Retd) Daw Than Nwe gave advice. Chairman of the organizing committee U Ba Tint Swe spoke words of thanks. Treasurer of the committee Staff Officer Daw May Tun Tun Aye explained the financial report.

The first respect paying ceremony was held at Diamond Jubilee Hall of Yangon University from 1982 to 1988/91 was held at Universites’ Dhammayon in January 2003, the second ceremony at Universities’ Dhammayon in January 2006, the third ceremony at the same venue in December 2008. They decided to set up medical trust-funds for the old faculty members.

The registration of participants for Medical Conference on 10 Jan

YANGON, 27 Dec – The 55th Medical Conference of Myanmar Medical Association will be held at the hall of MMA from 14 to 20 January 2009. Those wishing to attend the conference may register at MMA, No (249), Theinbyu Road, Mingala Taungnyunt Township during the office hours starting from 10 January. MNA

Roads and bridges in Sagaing Div, Kachin State inspected

NAY PYI TAW, 27 Dec – Minister for Construction Maj-Gen Saw Tun inspected condition of Kyaybinat dam detour on Shwebo-Myitkyina Road on 22 December.

Next, the minister went to the worksite of construction of Zawchaung bridge and attended to the needs.

On 23 December, the minister looked into maintenance of Thebyuchaung bridge on Shwebo-Myitkyina Road. Next, the minister inspected road works at the border of Kachin State on Shwebo-Myitkyina Road and fulfilled requirements. – MNA

Inter-School Cricket Challenge Shield concludes

YANGON, 27 Dec—Myanmar Cricket Federation and No. 3 Department of Basic Education jointly organized the 3rd Inter-School Cricket Challenge Shield 2008 at the cricket training ground in Bahan Township yesterday afternoon.

After the final matches, Mingala Taungnyunt BEHS No. 4 secured the championship shield and K 70,000, Latha BEHS No. 1 the second prize and K 40,000 and Kyimyindine BEHS No. 3 the third prize and K 20,000 in the boys’ event. In the girls’ event, Ahlon BEHS No. 4 clinched the title with K 70,000, Kyimyindine BEHS No. 3 the second prize and K 40,000 and Bahan BEHS No. 1 the third prize and K 20,000.

Best Bowler Award went to Zawmin Htet Lin Tun of Kyimyindine BEHS No. 1 and Best All-Rounder Award to Kyaw Min Aung of Mingala Taungnyunt BEHS No. 4. They were awarded K 15,000 each.

Likewise, Aye Nanda Lin of Bahan BEHS No. 1 won the Best Batsman Award, MjaMya Htet Lin Tun of Kyimyindine BEHS No. 3 the Best All-Rounder Award. They were presented K 5,000 each.

President of MCF U Nyunt Win presents championship trophy to No.4 BEHS of Mingala Taungnyunt township. MCF

All this needs to be known

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

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NAY PYI TAW, 27 Dec — Lt-Gen Tha Aye of the Ministry of Defence, accompanied by Chairman of Mon State Peace and Development Council Commander of South-East Command Maj-Gen Thet Naing Win, Chairman of Kayin State Peace and Development Council Brig-Gen Zaw Min and officials inspected agriculture and livestock breeding tasks in Phayagon Village in Hpa-an Township, maintenance and upgrading of Eindu-Zarthabyin road and digging of canals for water supply to farmlands on 23 December.

Next, Lt-Gen Tha Aye looked into construction of Kyawtywa-Dawlan-Nabu Road and Win Sein-Naungmatok-Minzii road section near Win Sein village and maintenance of Naungkatok embankment near Natkyun Village and reclamation of farmlands.

Lt-Gen Tha Aye inspected bridges along Nabu-Dawlan-Kyawtywa road section, maintenance of Dawlan bridge and learning of students at Basic Education High School (Branch) in Dawlan Village in Hlaingbwe Township. He met with teachers and presented computers and accessories for the school and cash assistance to the teachers.

Lt-Gen Tha Aye went to station hospital in Nabu Village in Kawkareik Township and presented hospital equipment and medicines, and cash assistance to patients.

Lt-Gen Tha Aye observed sale of goods at Winthizar shop of the Ministry of Industry-1 in Hotkawko Village. He met with Tatmadaw members and their families at Aung Zeya Hall of Kawkareik station and provided them with food and cash. He inspected new 100-bed hospital in the township. Lt-Gen Tha Aye attended collective harvesting of monsoon paddy and cultivation of winter crops at the farmlands of farmer U Saw Tun Shwe in Kyondoe.

Next, Lt-Gen Tha Aye looked into resurfacing of road section between mile post No 39 and 40 of Hpa-an-Eindu-Gyaing-Kyondoe road, road section linking Kyargalay-Kyonphe-Zarthabyin Villages, cultivation of summer paddy at the farmlands of farmer U Ba Hein in Thanhle Village, construction of gravel road and Khayapin Bridge.

NAY PYI TAW, 27 Dec — The Nay Pyi Taw Traffic Rules Enforcement Supervisory Committee organized the prize presentation for the second traffic rules educative exhibition and contest at Nay Pyi Taw City Hall, here, yesterday morning, with an address by Patron of the Supervisory Committee Commander of Nay Pyi Taw Command Maj-Gen Wai Lwin.

Next, Minister for Rail Transportation Maj-Gen Aung Min made a speech.

Deputy Director General Police Brig-Gen Zaw Win of Myanmar Police Force and Director U Thein Oo of Road Transport Administration Department gave lectures on traffic rules.

The commander accepted cash donation from wellwishers and presented certificates of honour to them.

Minister Maj-Gen Aung Min awarded the first prize to Major Thant Zin (Retd) (Tethkatho Maung Thant Zin) in the novel genre, the first prize to Daw Yin Myo Khaing (Shwewunyan), the second prize to U Aye Ko (Maung Aye Ko Paungtale) and U Win Thein (Kyungsay Ko Ko) in the short story genre.

Deputy Minister Thura U Thaung Lwin presented first, second and third prizes to U Win Myint (Ye Yint Thurein-Nay Pyi Taw), Daw Khin Wut Yi (Wut Yi Khin-Bago) and U Zaw Lin (Ye Ye-Pyinmana) in the article genre; Deputy Minister U Pe Than, first, second and third prizes to U Aung Tin (Sein Yi Hlyan), U Maung Than (Maung Thet Hnin-N/Okkalapa) and U Myo Hlay (Win Nwe-Forest) in the poem genre; and Police Brig-Gen Zaw Win, U Zaw Min (Min Zaw Oo), U Tin Ni Win (Ko Ni-Yankin) and U Myo Min Zaw (Myo Ko Htet-Pyinmana) in the cartoon genre.

Deputy Command Col Min Zaw presented gifts to members of the scrutinizing committee.

The commander attended the second traffic rules educative exhibition and contest at Nay Pyi Taw Pyinmana BEHS No. 1 this morning and viewed works of contestants at the booths.

Next, the commander and party visited the automobiles and cycles manufactured by industrial zones and the showrooms.

Mass walk activity organized in Yangon

NAY PYI TAW, 27 Dec — The mass walk activity in sports month of December was organized at Myoma Ground in Dagon Township this morning. Chairman of Yangon Division Peace and Development Council Commander of Yangon Command Brig-Gen Win Myint and Chairman of Yangon City Development Committee Mayor Brig-Gen Aung Thein Lin also took part in the mass walk.

After that, the participants in the mass walk took the physical exercises collectively.

Next, the commander and the mayor opened the repaved 26th Street in Pabedan Township and strolled along the street.
Industry-2 Minister inspects Thagaya Industrial Region

NAY PYI TAW, 27 Dec—Minister for Industry-2 Vice-Admiral Soe Thein inspected construction site of Technical Training School (Thagaya) and construction of streets in the training school in Thagaya Industrial Region in Yedashe Township, Bago Division, this morning. The minister instructed officials to complete construction of the buildings in January 2009. Next, the minister viewed completion of machine workshop, metal machining and assembly workshop, rivet welding and punching and heat treatment workshops of Hydropower Turbine and Generator Factory. He also looked into construction of machine shop (1), machine shop (2), assembly shop and heat treatment shop of Multi-purpose Diesel Engine Factory.

At Bulldozer and Excavator Factory, he viewed installation of machine parts for the heavy machinery. He gave instructions on production of heavy machinery, reducing of imported CKD parts and manufacturing of necessary machine parts for other factories, and fulfilled the requirements.

Minister Vice-Admiral Soe Thein visits construction site of Technical Training School (Thagaya).

Golf tourney for readers of Golf Masters magazine organized

YANGON, 27 Dec—Han Golf Masters Pte Ltd organized the golf tourney for the readers of Golf Masters magazine at Myanmar Golf Club at 9th mile, here, on 24 December. After the golf tourney, Chief Editor U Hsan Tun of Golf Masters magazine awarded the first prize to Myint Soe with 69 strokes, the second prize to Zaw Phan with 69 strokes, the third prize to Ye Lwin Oo with 69 strokes, the fourth prize to Tin Win with 69 strokes and the fifth prize to Aung Kyaw Lin with 70 strokes in the handicap 0-16 class. Director U Ko Ko Lay presented prizes to the winners in the handicap 17-24 class. Editor-in-charge U Soe Myint gave prizes to the winners of nearest pin award, Marketing Executive Daw Cho Cho Khairng of Pahtama Group Ltd, the winner of the longest drive award. Later, those participants took part in the lucky draw programme.

The golf tourney was sponsored by Han Golf Masters Pte Ltd with co-sponsors Srixon, Cleveland, Cross Creek, XXIO, Pahtama Group Ltd, C-Care, Dagon Brewery Co Ltd, GP Watch, Royal Modern Furniture, and First Image Fashion Shop.

Inter State/Division U-13 Football Tourney ends

NAY PYI TAW, 27 Dec—Chairman of the Myanmar Olympic Committee Minister for Sports Brig-Gen Thura Aye Myint watched the final match of the 11th Inter State/Division U-13 Football Tournament in Padetha Sports Ground in South Okkalapa Township here this afternoon. Sagaing Division lifted the trophy, defeating Kayah State 1-0. Officials presented individual prizes to the prize winners.

The minister presented the cup, duplicate cup and cash awards to the champions.—MNA

Crude palm oil mill operating at high capacity in Kawthoung District

NAY PYI TAW, 27 Dec—Minister for Industry-1 U Aung Thaung inspected Kawthoung oil palm farm near Khamaukkyi in Kawthoung District, Taninthayi Division, yesterday.

Managing Director of the Myanmar Pharmaceutical Industries U Than Shwe, Deputy General Manager U Myint Wai and in-charge of the farm U Soe Han and head of crude palm oil mill reported on the farm and production of palm oil. The minister gave instructions on the farm and fulfilled the requirements.

The factory general manager conducted the minister round the farm and the crude palm oil mill.

On arrival at the crude palm oil mill of Golden Oil Palm Co Ltd, the minister viewed the production processes.

He also inspected Win Thuzar Shop in Kawthoung.—MNA

Minister for Electric Power No-1 inspects Kon Creek Hydropower Project

NAY PYI TAW, 27 Dec—Minister for Electric Power No-1 Col Zaw Min visited Kon Creek Hydropower Project being implemented by Construction-3 of Hydro Power Department, on Kon Creek, about nine miles west of Pyu Township, Bago Division on 25 December.

The minister inspected earth work, quality control work, construction of spillways and afflux dam. The minister inspected digging of the entrance of the intake tunnel, installation of frames for laying concrete and retaining of earth in the tunnel and preparation for construction of power station. The 60-megawatt project is 70 per cent complete. The minister went to Yenwe Dam and power station and inspected storage of water, running of generators in the control room and switch yard and power distribution.

The 25-megawatt Yenwe power station generates 123 million kilowatt hours annually.—MNA

Humans And Chimps Register Faces By Using Similar Brain Regions

Recognize their pals by using some of the same brain regions that switch on when humans register a familiar face, according to a report published online on 18th December in Current Biology, a Cell Press publication. The study—the first to examine brain activity in chimpanzees after they attempt to match fellow chimps’ faces—offers new insight into the origin of face recognition in humans, the researchers said. “We can learn about human origins by studying our closest relatives,” said Lisa Parr, a researcher at the Yerkes National Primate Research Center, Emory University. “We can discover what aspects of human cognition are really unique and which are present in other animals.”—Internet
Natural pozzolan abundant around extinct volcano Mt. Popa (1)

(From page 16)
Since the time many years before the existence of Portland cement, Greeks had used natural cement by mixing natural pozzolan, lime and water. Some edifices built with the use of natural pozzolan and lime in combination in the time of Roman Period are still in good condition. After its invention, Portland cement started to take the place of natural pozzolan due to its advantages such as it can be produced on a larger scale and it gains strength in a shorter time. Natural pozzolan is used to reduce the heat, which comes into existence when cement reacts with water, in the concrete production process, and to generate resistance to the sulfate of concrete.

The extinct volcanoes in some regions of Myanmar are deposits of natural pozzolan. Of them, the areas around Mt. Popa that erupted in BC 442 for the last time and the areas around the cluster of volcanoes downstream the Chindwin River have greater potential for sources of natural pozzolan.

A test showed that natural pozzolan produced around Mt. Popa is of high quality. It is learnt that 66 percent of the cement used in constructing Roller Compacted Concrete Dam of ongoing Yeywa Hydropower Project is natural pozzolan.

The main purpose of using natural pozzolan is to avoid unnecessary cracks in concrete works by reducing the heat. Some experts made comments that natural pozzolan was unique to the regions with volcanoes, and it was rarer than gold. So, Myanmar people can be proud of their motherland's rich natural resources.

Translation: MS
Myanma Alin:
26-12-2008

A scene of Mt. Popa that erupted in BC 442 for the last time.
Three kids, four adults killed by Philadelphia house fire

PHILADELPHIA, 27 Dec.—A duplex fire apparently caused by fuel spilling from an overfilled kerosene heater killed seven people in a basement that had only one exit, a survivor and firefighters said.

That injured survivor described standing in a shower with the water running in a desperate bid to escape the initial flames, then running for his life.

Three of the victims of the Friday night blaze were children, including a 1-year-old who was cradled in the arms of another victim, authorities said. Six of them were huddled together, and the seventh was found near the exit.

Four people survived the fire at a three-story, brick duplex in a working-class neighborhood close to Philadelphia International Airport, fire Commissioner Lloyd Ayers said. —Internet

Suicide bombing kills five, wounds six in S Afghanistan

KABUL, 27 Dec.—One suicide bomber Saturday evening exploded his explosive-laden car near a police checkpoint in southern Afghan province of Kandahar, leaving 5 people dead and six others wounded, a police official said.

The police officer Mohammad Akbar told Xinhua on the spot that the incident took place at around 5:45 pm local time (1315 GMT) when a suicide attacker drove a car and blew himself off at one police checkpoint on Kandahar-Herat highway, some 20 kilometers west of Kandahar city. “The blast killed three policemen and two civilians at the checkpoint while four more policemen and two other civilians were injured,” Akbar said.

The police official said Canadian troops and Afghan police forces were looking over suspected vehicles on the highway when the bombing hit the checkpoint. —Internet

Falling container kills crane operator in Singapore

SINGAPORE, 27 Dec.—A falling container killed a crane operator in Tuas, southwest part of Singapore on Saturday.

According to Channel NewsAsia reports on Saturday night, the 40-year-old man, who was operating the crane at the time of the accident, was crushed by a 40-foot container and pronounced dead at the scene.

Rescuers from the Singapore Civil Defence Force (SCDF) rushed to the scene and managed to extricate the body from the wreckage. The police are investigating the cause of the accident.

It is one of such accidents that took place in the city state this year. In February this year, three workers were killed and two injured when a crane at the construction site of the National University of Singapore collapsed. —Internet

200 killed, 750 wounded in Israeli strikes against Gaza

GAZA, 27 Dec.—Two hundred Palestinians were killed and 750 others wounded on Saturday in a series of rapid and intensive Israeli air strikes on the Hamas-ruled Gaza Strip, Palestinian officials said.

“The number of martyrs reached 200 and the wounded people are 750, including a number of civilian women and children,” said Mu‘awia Hassanien, chief of emergency and ambulance services in the Palestinian health ministry.

Israel launched air strikes against the Gaza Strip from 11:30 am local time (0930 GMT), hitting more than 30 targets, most of them security compounds run by the Hamas movement.

“It was like an earthquake. Within a few minutes hundreds were killed and injured and dozens of buildings and cars were completely destroyed,” said Gaza storekeeper Ahmed Ghanam.

The bodies of the people killed were piled in the al-Shifa hospital’s corridors because the morgue could not contain the large number of corpses.

According to Hassanien, the number of the dead is the highest ever to be recorded in a single day since the 1967 six-day war in which Israel occupied the Gaza Strip and West Bank. Palestinian President Mahmoud Abbas condemned the attacks and called on Israel to stop them. —Internet

An Iraqi inspect the site of a car bomb attack in the Kadhimiyah neighbourhood of Baghdad. A massive bomb tore through a crowd gathered near a bus station in the Shiite neighbourhood, killing at least 22 people and wounding 54.—INTERNET

Iraqi Army: at least 22 die in Baghdad car bomb

BAGHDAD, 27 Dec.—A bomb tore through a busy square in Baghdad at midday Saturday, killing at least 22 people and wounding 54, the Iraqi Army said.

An Iraqi soldier and two other people were killed in a separate bombing south of the capital, police said.

Police also said a suspected al-Qaeda in Iraq fugitive was killed in a gun battle with police in the western city of Ramadi. He was one of four suspected al-Qaeda in Iraq members who escaped during a jailbreak and ensuing riot at a Ramadi police station on Friday that left six policemen and seven insurgents dead.

The US military and Iraqi officials said the blast occurred at al-Zahra square, in the northern Baghdad Shiite neighborhood of Kazimiyah. Associated Press Television News footage of the scene showed scorched vehicles peppered with shrapnel and an engine block that was all that remained of the car bomb. —Internet

Residents make paper cuts to mark the coming Year of Ox in Chinese lunar calendar, at Siping Street Community in Shenyang, capital of northeast China’s Liaoning Province, on 27 Dec, 2008. —INTERNET

Firefighters gather at the scene of a house fire in southwest Philadelphia on 27 Dec, 2008, apparently caused by an exploding kerosene heater that killed seven people, most of whom were found huddled together in the basement, a survivor and firefighters said. —INTERNET
Marriage Announcement

Maug Lu Moe,
The Son of [U Wan Kaung]+ Shout May, residing at No.58, Shan Zu North Quarter, Myitkyina married to
Oo Oon Khin (a) Ei Ei Khanga
The daughter of U Huang Chun Sein + Daw Wan Thee, residing at No.164, Shan Zu North Quarter, Myitkyina on 20.11.2008 by entering marriage Agreement before Manda-lay Division Court and their wedding ceremony was held successfully on 7.12.2008 at Myo Daw Restaurant, Myitkyina.

Parents of both sides
Maug Lu Moe, Ei Ei Khanga

Conjoined twin dies in hospital

LONDON, 27 Dec—Conjoined twin Faith Williams died on 25 December, 23 days after the death of her sister. Faith and sister Hope were joined at the chest when they were born on 26 November. Hope died in an operation to separate them on 2 December. Faith’s mother Laura, 18, from Shrewsbury, Shropshire, and father Aled, from Anglesey, were at her bedside when she died. Great Ormond Street Hospital said it was a sad but not unexpected outcome. A hospital spokesman said: “We were always clear that Faith was very sick.”

Faith underwent surgery earlier this month to assist with her circulation. A spokeswoman for the hospital said: “The aim was to ensure more blood flowed to her body and less through her lungs.”

Faith’s mother Laura, 18, from Shrewsbury, Shropshire, and father Aled, from Anglesey, were at her bedside when she died. Great Ormond Street Hospital said it was a sad but not unexpected outcome. A hospital spokesman said: “We were always clear that Faith was very sick.”

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The Norwegian Pearl is on a seven-day Caribbean cruise.—INTERNET

Boy killed by hand grenade

JOHANNESBURG, 27 Dec—A 10-year-old boy was killed by a hand grenade he found outside his home in Hlanakalake near Witbank. Mpolamanga police said on Friday. “He saw a bucket out-side the yard and found something like an avo-cado inside, which he took into the yard where he and his friends began playing with it,” said Cap-tain Leonard Hlathi.

While playing with it on his own on Wednesday evening he pulled the pin. It exploded, killing him. A 14-year-old boy standing nearby was slightly in-jured. Police were still inves-tigating were the grenade came from. No arrests had been made.—INTERNET

Cruise passenger reported overboard near Cancun

MEXICO CITY, 27 Dec—Three Mexican Navy boats and a helicopter were searching the waters off the Caribbean resort of Cancun on Friday for an American woman who reportedly fell from a cruise ship, authorities said.

A US Coast Guard search-and-rescue crew using a Falcon jet halted its efforts to find 36-year-old Jennifer Feitz late Friday, but will resume Saturday morning using a larger C-130 aircraft, said Petty Officer Third Class Nick Ameen. Feitz’s husband reported her missing from the Norwegian Pearl cruise ship just before 5 am EST Friday. Her hometown was not available.

Mexico’s Fifth Naval Regional Command said in a statement that by late Friday it had found no sign of Feitz and was having to deal with “adverse conditions” and strong waves in the search taking place just over 17 miles (27 kilometres) east of Cancun.

“The search is being carried out for an American woman who fell into the sea from a cruise ship east of Isla Mujeres,” an island just off the coast from Cancun, the statement said. Norwegian Cruise Line says the ship left Sunday from Miami for a seven-day western Caribbean cruise.—INTERNET

Dead baby found near HK airport

HONG KONG, 27 Dec—Police in Hong Kong on Friday appealed for help to identify a baby boy found dead near Hong Kong International Airport on 25 December. The clothed body of the boy, aged around one month, was found lying on a rock on coastline by a walker in Chek Lap Kok near the city’s busy airport on Thursday afternoon.

A police spokesperson said there were no obvious injuries on the body of the infant who was 52cm long and wearing a white top patterned with stars. A post-mortem is due to be conducted Monday.

Dead bodies from neighbouring mainland China sometimes wash up in Hong Kong waters after drowning or being dumped in southern China’s densely popu-lated Pearl River region.—INTERNET

Financial crisis bites for dogs too

BERLIN, 27 Dec—In a sign of the times in Eu-ope’s biggest economy, poodles, pinchers, terrier-ers and sheep dogs are queuing up for rations at Berlin’s first soup kitchen for pets.

The venue is a disused night school in the former communist east Berlin where the smell of straw, dry food and wet dog lin-gers in the air as a Jack Russell in a chequered coat waddles past on its way to the kibbles line for biscuits. Pensioners and those on the dole qualify for the free pet food buf-fet, which opened in the district of Treptow in mid-October, allowing those with no disposable in-come the chance to hold on to their beloved dogs and cats.

“We’ve already signed up nearly 400 people and our stocks are dwindling fast. Today cat owners are just getting a single tin each,” said Julia Raasch, who heads the capital’s sole animal soup kitchen, run by Tier tafel (Animal Dining Table), a pet wel-fare association.Berlin, where unemployment hovers around 13 per cent, has some 100,000 regis-tered dogs, many of them owned by pensioners.

India’s Reliance starts world’s biggest refinery hub

NEW DELHI, 27 Dec—India’s Reliance Petro-leum has started process-ing crude oil at its new re-finery in western India, creating the world’s big- gest refining complex. The company opened its 580,000 barrel a day refinery in Jamnagar in the western state of Gujarat on Friday, Reli-ance Petroleum Limited (RPL) said in a statement. Combined with an ad-jacent 660,000 barrel a day refinery, the new unit will make the Jamnagar com-plex the world’s largest, with a capacity of 1.24 million barrels a day. “We will leverage our competi-tive advantages of scale, complexity and capability to process a wide range of crude oils and flexibility to produce high quality trans-portation fuels,” company chairman Mukesh Ambani said.—INTERNET
Coral springs back from tsunami

Jakarta, 27 Dec — Scientists have reported a rapid recovery in some of the coral reefs that were damaged by the Indian Ocean tsunami four years ago. It had been feared that some of the reefs off the coast of Indonesia could take a decade to recover. The New York-based Wildlife Conservation Society (WCS) found evidence of rapid growth of young corals in badly-hit areas. A spokesman said reefs damaged before the tsunami were also recovering. Some communities were abandoning destructive fishing techniques and even transplanting corals into damaged areas, the WCS said. “This is a great story of ecosystem resilience and recovery,” said Stuart Campbell, co-ordinator of the WCS’s Indonesia Marine Programme. “These findings provide new insights into coral recovery processes that can help us manage coral reefs in the face of climate change.”

Ove Hoegh-Guldberg, a reef expert from the University of Queensland in Australia who did not take part in the study, said the findings were not surprising since corals typically recovered if not affected by fishing and coastal development.

First drug to promote eyelash growth OK’d

Washington, 27 Dec — Latisse — the first drug to promote the growth of eyelashes — has been approved for use in the United States.

Latisse, made by Allergan, is to be available by prescription in early 2009, according to the study’s principal investigator. The drug provides beneficial to cancer patients who lose eyelashes through chemotherapy. — Internet

Cancer drug aids transplants

Chicago, 27 Dec — A drug used to treat cancer has proven effective at stopping the body from rejecting a transplanted organ when other treatments failed, a study published on Saturday found.

US researchers administered the drug, bortezomib, to six patients whose immune systems were attacking transplanted kidneys and who did not respond to traditional anti-rejection treatments. In each case, the drug promptly reversed the rejection, improved organ function, provided prolonged reductions in antibody levels and suppressed recurrent rejection for at least five months.

“This has significant implications for transplantation and auto immune disease,” said study co-author Steven Woodle, chief of transplant surgery at the University of Cincinnati in Ohio. Woodle’s team is currently conducting four clinical trials to expand upon these preliminary findings.

The drug’s side effects proved to be both predictable and manageable and toxicity levels were much less than those associated with other anti-cancer agents, the study found. “We are pleased to see its toxicities are similar in transplant recipients suffering from treatment-resistant mixed organ rejection,” said study co-author Jason Everly, an oncology pharmacist at the University of Cincinnati.

“We hope it will be a viable therapeutic treatment option in this patient group.”

Previous studies had found that B-cells play a large role in organ rejection by making immune proteins that attack transplants. — Internet

Child ADHD linked to mom’s medical care

Oakland, 27 Dec — A child’s diagnosis of attention deficit hyperactivity disorder is linked to his or her mother’s use of health services, US researchers said.

“The diagnoses and health care utilization that a mother receives prior to having her child is predictive of having a child who is diagnosed with ADHD,” lead author G Thomas Ray of Kaiser Permanente in Northern California said in a statement.

Using records from a Northern California Kaiser Permanente database, the researchers identified three groups — mothers of children with ADHD, mothers of children without ADHD and mothers of children with asthma.

The study, published in the January issue of the Journal Medical Care, found mothers of children with ADHD spent about $1,000 more on healthcare in the year before and in the two years following the birth of their child, compared to mothers who did not have children with ADHD, and they had more illnesses than mothers of children with asthma did.

“The mothers of children who are diagnosed with ADHD are more likely to be diagnosed with health conditions such as depression and anxiety disorder and use more health services in the year prior to, and the two years after, the birth of their child, than mothers of children without ADHD or the mothers of children with asthma,” Ray said in a statement. — Internet

Rural areas have much higher injury rate

Morgantown, ( W.Va.), 27 Dec — Country life may provide scenic tableaus but a US study found injuries requiring hospitalization occur at much higher rates in rural areas than elsewhere.

West Virginia University researchers analyzed all reported injuries of people who were admitted to US hospitals for treatment in 2004. They found hospitalization rates for injuries were 35 percent higher in sparsely populated rural counties and 27 percent higher in more populated rural counties.

“The perception is that life in rural areas is peaceful, tranquil, serene,” Dr Jeffrey H Coben said in a statement. “If you just look at violence — person against person — the rates are higher in urban areas. But for virtually every other cause of trauma, the risks are substantially greater in rural areas.”

The study, published in the American Journal of Preventive Medicine, found that as population density decreases, the risk continues to increase. — Internet

An air and sea search has been launched for a swimmer believed to have been seized by a shark in the sea off an Australian beach, according to police and reports. The 51-year-old man was snorkelling with his 24-year-old son at a popular Port Kennedy beach south of the West Australian capital Perth early in the morning when he disappeared. — Internet

Dr Christopher Stremme (K), project manager of the Veterinary Society for Sumatran Wildlife Conservation (VESSWIC), carries a Sumatran tiger before returning it to its habitat in Banda Aceh, Aceh Province on 26 Dec, 2008. The two-year-old male tiger was snared in a trap set by villagers six weeks ago after it had been seen wandering around the village. — Internet

Divers have been helping restore Indonesia’s coral reefs. — Internet

The study, published in the American Journal of Preventive Medicine, found that as population density decreases, the risk continues to increase. — Internet

An air and sea search has been launched for a swimmer believed to have been seized by a shark in the sea off an Australian beach, according to police and reports. The 51-year-old man was snorkelling with his 24-year-old son at a popular Port Kennedy beach south of the West Australian capital Perth early in the morning when he disappeared. — Internet
Wilkins revels in Chelsea form

LONDON, 27 Dec—Ray Wilkins expects Chelsea to see in 2009 in style after watching West Bromwich Albion 2-0.

Victory left the Blues just a point behind Premier League leaders Liverpool and they could end the year on top of the table if they beat west London rivals Fulham on Sunday and the Reds slip up against Newcastle.

Chelsea hardly had to break sweat in sweeping aside Tony Mowbray’s bottom-of-the-table team, cruising to victory here at Stamford Bridge on Friday thanks to an early strike from Didier Drogba and Frank Lampard’s effort in first-half injury time.

A polished performance suggested Chelsea have banished any doubts over their Liverpool future with two goals in a 3-0 win over Bolton Wanderers here at Anfield.

The Republic of Ireland striker, who also netted in the 1-1 draw at Arsenal last Sunday, helped keep Rafa Benitez’s team at the top of the Premier League by adding to Albert Riera’s first-half volley with his two first-half goals.

Keane has struggled to make an impact at Liverpool since his 20 million pounds arrival in July from Tottenham Hotspur and there had even been reports the 28-year-old could be sold by Benitez in January. —Internet

Lee insists Reds always Keane on Robbie

LIVERPOOL, 27 Dec—Robbie Keane faces Newcastle United at St James’ Park on Sunday having banished any doubts over his Liverpool future with two goals in a 3-0 win over Bolton Wanderers here at Anfield.

The Republic of Ireland striker, who also netted in the 1-1 draw at Arsenal last Sunday, helped keep Rafa Benitez’s team at the top of the Premier League by adding to Albert Riera’s first-half volley with his two first-half goals.

Keane has struggled to make an impact at Liverpool since his 20 million pounds arrival in July from Tottenham Hotspur and there had even been reports the 28-year-old could be sold by Benitez in January. —Internet

Ferdinand injury a worry for United

STOKE, 27 Dec—Rio Ferdinand faces a 10-day lay-off after being forced to pull out of Manchester United’s victory over Stoke City with a recurrence of a back injury.

The centre-back was named on the team-sheet at the Britannia Stadium but was withdrawn minutes before the Boxing Day kick-off when the problem flared up and he was deemed unfit to start the game. Ferdinand’s place was taken by young Northern Ireland defender Jonny Evans and the England international has now been ruled out of the rest of the Christmas and New Year programme. —Internet

Cahill winner at sorry Boro moves Toффees up to sixth

MIDDLESBROUGH, 27 Dec—Tim Cahill made sure Everton maintained their impressive away record in the Premier League by scoring the game’s only goal in a precious 1-0 away win at Middlesbrough on Friday.

Cahill scored in the 51st minute of a match which really only came to life in the second half, the Australian’s winner keeping David Moyes’ side within sight of the coveted European places. —Internet
About 2.3 million people visit Cuba in 2008

HAVANA, 27 Dec—Cuba is expected to see an unprecedented number of 2.3 million foreign visitors in 2008, Cuban Tourism Minister Manuel Marrero was quoted as saying by local media Friday.

The expected foreign tourist arrivals “reaffirm that neither hurricanes of “Gustav”, “Ike” and “Paloma” nor the world financial crisis could stop the (development of) tourism in this country,” said Marrero.

The minister said high season began in November, attributing the rise to improved hotel facilities. In 2007, Cuba received 2.1 million foreign tourists, reaping an income of some two million US dollars. Marrero said that Canada continues to be Cuba’s main source of tourists, with more than 800,000 visitors, followed by Italy, Spain and Britain.—MNA/Xinhua

Mexico suspends purchases from 30 US meat plants

CHICAGO, 27 Dec—Mexico suspended purchases from 30 US meat plants due to sanitary issues, which sent US cattle and hog prices sharply lower on Friday and prompted speculation the ban was retaliation against a US labeling law. Early on Friday, US analysts said the bans were likely because of Mexico’s opposition to a recently enacted meat labelling law. The law, commonly called Country-of-Origin Labelling or COOL, requires that meat packages in US supermarkets carry labels stating the countries where the meat animals were raised. Mexico and the

US Agriculture Department both denied the retaliation charge. “Countries would go through dispute settlement under either (the North American Free Trade Agreement) or (World Trade Organization)—not use the action of plant-by-plant delistment,” said Amanda Eamich of USDA Food Safety and Inspection Service.

USDA listed the affected plants on its website on Friday, but the suspensions became effective on Tuesday. The listed plants produce beef, lamb, pork, and poultry and can be found here.

MNA/Reuters

Dense fog halts Houston Channel shipping

HOUSTON, 27 Dec—Dense sea fog was keeping about 40 ships from entering or exiting the Houston Ship Channel to the busiest US petrochemical port on Friday morning, according to the US Coast Guard. The shutdown began on Thursday morning when ship pilots stopped steering vessels through the 60-mile waterway to refineries and petrochemical plants in Houston and Texas City, Texas, after fog reduced visibility to unsafe levels, the Coast Guard said.

Twenty-one ships were waiting to enter the ship channel from the Gulf of Mexico and 19 were waiting to exit on Friday morning. Eight refineries in Houston and Texas City account for 12.5 per cent of US refining capacity.

MNA/Reuters

Weather

Saturday, 27 December, 2008

Summary of observations recorded at 09:30 hr MST: During the past 24 hours, isolated light rain or thundershowers in Kayin and Mon States, upper Sagaing and Mandalay Divisions, weather has been partly cloudy in Kachin and Rakhine States, lower Sagaing, Bago, Yangon and Tanintharyi Divisions and generally fair in the remaining States and Divisions. Night temperatures were (3°C) below December average temperatures in Shan State, (3°C) to (4°C) above December average temperatures in Kachin and Rakhine States, Mandalay, Bago, Yangon and Tanintharyi Divisions, (5°C) to (6°C) above December average temperatures in Shan, Kayah and Mon States and about December average temperatures in the remaining States and Divisions. The significant night temperatures were Hakha (1°C) and Lodem (4°C). The noteworthy amounts of rainfall recorded were Homalin and Meiktila (0.12) inch each and Hpa-an (0.08) inch. Maximum temperature on 26-12-2008 was 91°F. Minimum temperature on 27-12-2008 was 64°F. Relative humidity at (09:30) hours MST on 27-12-2008 was 76%. Total sunshine hours on 26-12-2008 was (6.0) hrs approx.

Rainfall on 27-12-2008 was (Nil) at Mingaladon, Kaba-Aye and Central Yangon. Total rainfall since 1-1-2008 was (103.3) inches at Mingaladon (120.95) inches at Kaba-Aye and (140.94) inches at Central Yangon. Maximum wind speed at Yangon (Kaba-Aye) was (4) mph from Southeast at (09:30) hours. MST on 27-12-2008.

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

Forecast valid until midnight of 27th December 2008: Possibility of isolated light rain in Kachin, Shan, Mon and Kayin States and Tanintharyi Division, weather will be partly cloudy in Rakhine and Kayah States, upper Sagaing, Mandalay, Bago and Yangon Divisions and generally fair in the remaining areas. Degree of certainty is (40%).

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

Outlook for subsequent two days: Likelihood of slight increase of night temperatures in the whole country.

Forecast for Nay Pyi Taw and neighbouring area for 26-12-2008: Partly cloudy.

Forecast for Yangon and neighbouring area for 28-12-2008: Partly cloudy.

Forecast for Mandalay and neighbouring area for 26-12-2008: Partly cloudy.
When we got to the foot of Mt. Popa, a land of magnolia, my wristwatch showed 1 p.m. The scenery of the area in the morning sunshine in the cold season was found so beautiful and pleasant that it was like an artistic painting.

Factories and mills throughout the country are seen operating at full capacity. During the period from 1988 to date, the number of State-owned factories has increased to 793 from 624, and private-owned factories to 113,000 from 35,000.

While in Popa region, we seized a good opportunity to visit Pozzolan Factory of the Hydropower Implementation Department under the Ministry of Electric Power No. 1. The visit was very rewarding because we gained a lot of knowledge of natural pozzolan. Natural pozzolan is ash of lava forced out in volcanic eruptions. When a volcano is active, hot lava and ash are forced to get out of it. They become gradually cold when they touch air outside the volcano. After all, they form themselves into crystals. Based on the formation, some volcanoes take a long time, but some take a short period to become cold after their eruptions, and in this regard, the time gap has effect on formation and size of lava and ash. If process is quick, they do not have enough time to form themselves into crystals, and the size of the particles are small. Silica and alumina in ashes react well with lime and water when they are still mild. If so, the product’s characteristics are the same as that of cement.

Pozzolan was named after Puzzuoli in Italy that came under ashes of volcano Mt. Vesuvius in AD 79. Ash of a volcano is called natural pozzolan, and coal ash, which take pozzolanic reaction, pozzolanic material.

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